

HISTORY OF THE CURSILLO MOVEMENT

The *Cursillo* first formed in Spain in the early 1940's, when the idea of a pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. James at Compostela was born. The first three-day weekend as we know it today was held in a monastery in Majorca on January 7, 1949. Bishop Juan Hervás, Father Sebastian Gaya, Father Juan Capo, and a layman named Eduardo Bonnín together established the "short courses" in Majorca and helped develop the *Cursillo* to the point that it became an active renewal movement in the Church.

In 1957, the movement spread to North America, when the first American *Cursillo* was held in Waco, Texas. In 1959, the *Cursillo* expanded throughout Texas and to Phoenix, Arizona, the first national convention of spiritual directors was held, and *Ultreya* magazine began publication. In 1960, *Cursillo* weekends were held for the first time in the East in New York City and Lorain, Ohio.

Until 1961, all *Cursillo* weekends were held in Spanish. That year the first English-speaking weekend was held in San Angelo, Texas. Also in 1961, weekends were held for the first time in San Francisco; Gary, Indiana; Lansing, Michigan; Guaynabo, Puerto Rico; and Gallup, New Mexico. In 1962, the Cursillo Movement expanded again into the Eastern United States. Weekends were held in Cincinnati, Brooklyn, Saginaw, Miami, Chicago, Detroit, Newark, Baltimore, Grand Rapids, Kansas City and Boston. In the West, the first *Cursillo* weekends were held in Monterey, Sacramento, Los Angeles, Pueblo and Yakima.

The Cursillo Movement in the United States was formally organized on a national basis in 1965. A National Secretariat was formed and the National Cursillo Office (currently in Jarrell, Texas) was established. The movement continued to spread rapidly with the early centers carrying the *Cursillo* to nearby dioceses.

The Cursillo Movement in Palm Beach had its beginnings in 1971, long before the Diocese of Palm Beach was even established, when Father Bob Palmer and a group of Candidates made Cursillo No. 17 in Miami. With a firm base of support and enthusiasm among the approximately 200 Cursillistas in Palm Beach County, the Miami Secretariat announced the formation of the Palm Beach County Secretariat in 1974. In May of 1975, the first *Cursillo* weekend was held in Palm Beach County at Our Lady of Florida Monastery in North Palm Beach.

By 1981, almost all of the 160 dioceses in the United States had introduced the Cursillo Movement. Today, *Cursillo* is a worldwide movement with centers in nearly all South and Central American countries, the United States, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Great Britain, Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Austria, Australia, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and in several African countries. The movement is recognized by the Pope as member of the International Catholic Organizations of the Pontifical Council for the Laity in Rome.