

Report to General Synod Te Hīnota Whānui, 2018:

## **Report of the Anglican Cursillo Movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand**

*Cursillo* is a Spanish word. It means “a short course” – as in a cross-country race. The purpose of Cursillo is to *grow disciples* of Christ, to help them *discover their vocation*, and to make them *effective in mission and ministry*.

The heart of Cursillo is a 3-day live-in event that presents a specific method for deepening and living out our Christian faith. Cursillo also provides a strong follow-up and support network of both small groups and wider gatherings for mutual encouragement.

Most participants (*Cursillistas*) find themselves encouraged, enthused, and re-energised in their Christian walk. Many also gain the confidence to become far more active in leadership in their parish and in Christian witness than they would previously have thought possible.

The Cursillo movement originated in a spirit of pilgrimage among lay men in the Roman Catholic Church in Majorca, Spain in 1944. In the intervening 74 years it has spread worldwide, in various forms and into many denominations. It was “gifted” to New Zealand at the invitation of Archbishop Brian Davis by the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane in 1988.

Cursillo is active in five Tikanga Pakeha dioceses: Wellington (since 1988), Christchurch (1996), Waikato-Taranaki (1997), Dunedin (2000), and most recently Waiapu (2011).

In each diocese Cursillo operates autonomously under the oversight of a diocesan “Secretariat” and the patronage of the diocesan bishop. A National Executive (comprising Episcopal Overseer, National Lay Director, National Spiritual Advisor, National Secretary/Treasurer) maintains oversight of the movement as a whole, in collaboration with a Council comprising lay and clergy leaders from each participating diocese. Cursillo is a partnership between laity and clergy, reflecting the ministry of the whole church.

As well as ongoing regular small group reunions NZ-wide, over the period 2016-2017, most of the participating dioceses have held one or two 3-day Cursillo events annually. Follow-up “days of deeper understanding” have been convened, as well as 6-8 other encouragement meetings annually per diocese. A 3-day National celebration was held in Christchurch in October 2016 to mark 20 years in that diocese, and a 30<sup>th</sup> “birthday” celebration for Wellington is planned for 2018.

Looking forward, whilst Cursillo is in good heart, many challenges face the movement. These include: effectively reaching younger church members; connecting 3-day Cursillo event participants with ongoing support activities to sustain them; overcoming barriers to Cursillo being introduced in new places; and the challenges of distance and geography within dioceses.

For those who haven’t yet encountered Cursillo, we encourage you to consider how it might become an effective discipleship tool in your region.

In Christ’s service,

David & Glenda Prosser (National Lay Co-Directors)

[www.cursillo.org.nz](http://www.cursillo.org.nz)