



THE ROOSTER CROWS

CURSILLO DIOCESE OF SOUTHERN VIRGINIA

2025 Summer Newsletter Edition

SAVE THE DATE

CURSILLO #175 OCT. 2-5—JOHN VANCE LAY RECTOR



A MESSAGE FROM OUR LAY DIRECTOR

MARK CROSTHWAITE

My Cursillo Family,

It's with great joy that I share some exciting news as we prepare for **Cursillo Weekend #175!** Our own John Vance is faithfully leading the charge as Rector, and his team is already hard at work preparing for what promises to be a Spirit-filled weekend this fall.

As we await our candidates, I encourage each of you to prayerfully reach out to your brothers and sisters in Christ who have not yet experienced a Cursillo weekend. Sometimes all it takes is an invitation and a gentle nudge to say “yes” to a life-changing encounter with Christ.

A Personal Reflection

Let me take you back in time—over 25 years ago—when I made my own Cursillo weekend in the Diocese of Indianapolis. I was active in church, believed deeply in God, and desired to follow Christ. Yet over time, my spiritual life had become... predictable. I sensed that something was missing.

Cursillo offered me the chance to reconnect—not just with Christ, but with His call to live as His disciple in the daily rhythms of life. Over the course of those three short days, I experienced grace in a profoundly personal way. Through powerful talks, deep prayer, genuine worship, and open-hearted conversations, I rediscovered what it means to be fully alive in Christ. And then came something even more beautiful: Christian community.

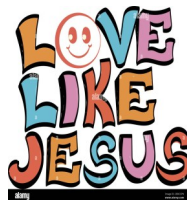
People I had never met became dear friends—companions on the journey—who reminded me that we are never meant to walk alone. That same sense of community is still alive today, here in Southern Virginia, through our 4th Day gatherings, weekends, and everyday friendships rooted in grace.

An Invitation

So, take a moment. Look around your parish. Is there someone you know who seems hungry for something more—someone feeling the nudge to go deeper in their faith?

Invite them. Encourage them. Walk with them.

Cursillo is not just a retreat—it's a beginning. A doorway to a renewed vision of Christ's love in action and a clearer understanding of our role in His body, the Church.



Let's keep the spirit of Cursillo alive and growing as we look toward the fall. Applications for Cursillo #175 are now open—and we would love nothing more than to welcome new pilgrims to the table.

De Colores,
Mark Crosthwaite
Lay Director, Secretariat
Cursillo Diocese of Southern Virginia



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CURSILLO #175 FALL WEEKEND OCT. 2-5, 2025

SAVE THE DATE!

“My name is John Vance, I attend St. Matthias Episcopal Church in Midlothian Virginia, I made Cursillo number 96 in the Diocese of Southern Virginia, and I sat at the table of St. John.” (Actually, I don’t remember my table name, so I thought St. John would be easier to recall.)

How many times have you heard such an introduction? Even if you only attended your own weekend, you heard it a lot, and with each team you may have served on you heard it many more. Looking at the Cursillo data I see that the first weekend in the Diocese of Southern Virginia was in the spring of 1978. After 47 years and 168 weekends (some weekends had numbers, but did not occur) how is it that Cursillo is still going on? Even though the weekends are basically the same, each is still unique and offering something that we all yearn for with every fiber of our being, the **theme of every Cursillo weekend: An Encounter with Christ.**

Cursillo #175 is being held at Camp Chanco the weekend of October 2-5 with team meetings starting July 19 at St. Matthias’ in Midlothian. We currently have a unique and talented team of 35 with a prayer team of four, and though this group will be going through the same weekend structure that has happened 168 times before, the weekend will be unique. There has never been this combination of people, coming together at this particular time to put on a weekend in just this way.

In trying to build a team I have already encountered Christ is so many individuals with so many gifts they would like to share. Gifts ranging from a mastery of music to simply being a calming spiritual presence. As the Apostle Paul describes we have many members, playing many roles, but we are all one team.

So, there will be many gifts to share, and many ways to make the presence of Christ known.

With such a team it will be a great opportunity not only to serve, but to serve those to be attending the weekend. Chanco in the fall with the changing trees, and the vast expanse of the James River is an enchanting time and place. A place where people can not only encounter the Christ in each other, and through the liturgy, but through the environment.

Time is running out to put your application in for Team 175, but it is also critical that candidates for the fall weekend begin to submit their applications. It will be a spirit-filled weekend, and we would like to share this blessing with as many people as possible. So, pray about who you feel would be blessed by this weekend, and talk to them about it. Be a friend, and bring that friend to Christ, as Christ will be the most important member of the team this weekend.

De Colores,

John Vance, Lay Rector of #175

**Cursillo #175,
calling us to
sponsor
candidates!
Accepting
applications now!**



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CURSILLO #175 TEAM—FALL WEEKEND OCT. 2-5, 2025

SAVE THE DATE! JOHN VANCE LAY RECTOR



Please keep Team 175 and candidates to come in your prayers.

(Team List as of last update prior to publishing)

NAME	POSITION	NAME	POSITION
Laurie Allen	Music	Terri Lensenmayer	Table
Nancy Aschiero	Music	Peter Lowry	Table
Lissa Ballard	Kitchen	Deb Love	Coordinator
Bee Betts	Kitchen	Carol Mahan	Chapel
Casper Bowman	Warden	Julie Noyes	Chapel
Wendy Bowman	Kitchen (H)	Denise Pearsall	Table
Joanne Brothers	Warden	Linda Ricker +	Spirit Director (H)
Ann Butler	Music (H)	Gary Shaffer	Table
Sally Cox	Table	Tina Sinclair	Warden (H)
Mark Crosthwaite	Chapel	Laura Stepp	Kitchen
Joan Forrest	Prayer Team	Susan Summerlin	Warden
Mike Gaydos	Technology	Carol Todd	Prayer Team
Carol Gibbs	Head Chapel	Mac Todd	Back Up Rector
Carol Giles	Chapel	Richard Toll	Music
Susan Grimm +	Spiritual Director	Ronda Toll	Table
Zoe Gurioli	Kitchen	Debbie Vance	Table (H)
Jamey Hooks	Chapel	John Vance	Rector
Marti Jones	Table	Scott Vollmer	Prayer Team
Laura Kallestad	Chapel	Barbara Wells	Warden
Brian King	Music	Courtney Wheeler	Assistant Rector
Joe Klennmannz +	Spiritual Director	Burtin Kirk White Jr.	Music
Margaret Kolster	Kitchen	Pat Wing	Prayer Team



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Cursillo Sunday

**Mark your calendars for the next Cursillo Sunday Services
August 24 and September 24!**

Cursillo Sunday is a new ministry designed to share the Cursillo Method throughout our diocese. We have prayerfully condensed the key elements of the Cursillo weekend into a visiting ministry that can be offered as part of a Sunday service.

If you would like to learn more, please visit: <https://www.cursillodiosova.org>

You are warmly invited to join us at our upcoming services:

Eastern Shore Chapel - August 24

8:00 AM – Presentation during the service
10:30 AM – Presentation with music

Emmanuel Chatham – September 21

11:00 AM
Service followed by a picnic lunch

Do Come and See!

**De
Colores!!!**



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Words from The Very Rev. Dr. Susan Grimm
Head Spiritual Director



It's about this time every year that I am again reminded how early the kids go back to school these days! In my rural county, children and teachers will be back in the classroom on August 11.

I have begun to use that sudden reminder for myself! Each time August rolls around, I begin to do some new study. Remember study? One of the three legs of our stool of piety, study, and action! Of the three I think study often gets the least attention, but is incredibly important for our growth as Christians.

Study doesn't have to be hard. And it's not always just reading a book! As you might recall from your weekend, these days study could be listening to a podcast or an audio book while you drive down the road on your daily commute or a long trip. Study could also be learning how to do something you've never done before, like making an Anglican rosary and learning to use it as part of your daily prayer life. Perhaps study could be learning how to play the guitar, so that you can participate in worship at the nursing home or assisted living center!

In the past, I have found that my group has been a great source of ideas for what my study might be or look like. And if you are a book junkie like me, my friends always know I'm up for the suggestion of something new to read! Here are a few suggestions of things I have read or studied that have informed my faith:

Are you fond of knowing the history of things? One of the best histories of the church I have read in the last 20 years is Dermaid McCullough's *Christianity: the First 3000 Years*.

It is written historically, but also topically, so if you want to know something about the early Christian church in Asia, you can easily do that. It is also available on Audible, so I was able to listen to portions of it on a long drive.

Would you like to know more about the theology of the church? Or the Book of Common Prayer? Try The New Church's Teaching Series. While it's not so new anymore, it has some excellent small volumes on ethics, history, the BCP, prayer, etc. There are 13 volumes, and I think you will likely find them in some church libraries, or secondhand.

Want to know more about our call to environmental stewardship? I found *Tomatoland* an excellent exposition on how factory farming practices have changed how we eat and how we work. Another older book, but now in its third edition. For me this book began an increased awareness of the many costs of our food production today, not just the dollars and cents.

You might also look around for a group that's doing a particular book study in a topic area that interests you. I specifically recommend the online book groups run by our Diocesan staff, including Canons Willis Foster and Lynn Farlin.

These days, the opportunities for study are endless! I encourage you to check around with your friends, clergy, and online to find some new sources or new topics that might interest you. And I'm always up for a conversation about a topic that might interest you.





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WELCOME NEW SECRETARIAT MEMBERS!



Tommy Sitzler - Servant Community

Tommy made Cursillo #63 in the Diocese of Southern Virginia. Tommy has used his many gifts but one particular is "Music." He has served on many teams as part of the Music Team. Those weekends were blessed by his gift of music each time! Tommy served as Lay Rector on Cursillo Weekend #116.

Tommy serves on the Secretariat as the "Servant Community" Coordinator. He asks the community to come early on Sunday and help break down and clean up the Drill Hall, Chapel, and any other spaces used during the weekend. This is done during Apostolic Holy Hour (AHH) on Sunday. Tommy would appreciate any help from the community to get this done, many hands to accomplish this means those helping can also attend the closing before closing begins.

Tommy is married to another gifted musician, Karey Sitzler. She taught music to students giving them the love of music and the gift of playing an instrument.

Pam Wakefield - Palanca



Pam made her Cursillo #134 in the Diocese of Southern Virginia and sat at the Table of St. Brigid, and worships at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Virginia Beach.

This year Pam agreed to the position of Palanca Chair on the Secretariat where she sends Wall Palanca to other Cursillo Weekends across the country and around the world as she learns of their dates. She also reaches out to request Palanca from other groups to support our weekends in Spirit-filled prayer.

If anyone needs help with Palanca, Pam is your resource. Two years ago she was asked to knit the crosses we use for our nametags. While crochet is her preferred handcraft, thanks to her childhood with Granny Wright, the knitting stitches came back to her and now can almost knit these in her sleep.

Pam is married to Frank Wakefield and would appreciate your sending Palanca for #175!



Bee Betts - Communications

Bee made her Cursillo #133 in the Diocese of Southern Virginia. She worships at Christ and Grace Episcopal Church in Petersburg, Virginia.

Bee was Lay Rector of #154 and comes with much Cursillo experience and a heart for serving not only on the Secretariat but her job as a paramedic which takes her out into the world in many circumstances, some more critical than others. Bee enjoys serving God's people with compassion and determination to meet their needs on every call. If you have information you would like shared with the Cursillo community, Bee would love to hear from you. Contact information is listed later in this article.

Ann Butler - Weekend Coordinator

Ann made her Cursillo #38 in the Diocese of Southern Virginia and worships at Old Donation Episcopal Church in Virginia Beach. Ann graciously accepted the call to serve as the Lay Rector of #100 and again as Lay Rector of #172.

As the Secretariat Weekend Coordinator Ann assists the upcoming lay rectors in their role, providing support, encouragement and knowledge to carry out the next rector's journey.

Ann mentors the Education for Ministry (EFM) program at Old Donation and encourages anyone to pray and consider attending. EFM helps the faithful discover the Christian tradition bringing it into conversation with their experience of the world. If interested Ann's contact information is listed later in this newsletter.

Ann is married to George Butler, also a long time and faithful supporter of Cursillo.

Usually though you will see her standing behind her guitar as part of the music team.

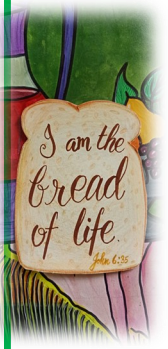




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A NOTE FROM #174 LAY RECTOR

Hello Dear Cursillistas,

My name is Ana Nowland, I made Cursillo #151 in the Diocese of Southern Virginia, I sat at the table of Rahab, and I worship at St. Peter's, Norfolk. I was blessed to be the Lay Rector for Cursillo # 174 (May 15-18, 2025). We had 10 candidates, 5 men and 5 women. All have a special place in my heart.

You all know that Cursillo weekends are all unique and special, but I have to say that Cursillo #174 was the best! On Thursday we started out on the right foot. All the candidates arrived at the same time. We had them checked in and ready to go in no time. They all seemed enthusiastic from the start. The meditations given by our amazing clergy were wonderful and it put us in the right mind set before ending our first day.

It was my a pleasure to enjoy meals with the babe chicks giving me an opportunity to know each of them personally.

Ideal, Grace, Laity, Faith and Piety were the talks for Friday. The first speaker was David Adams and one of the things I took from his talk is that without an "Ideal" we have no direction. We had the pleasure of having Father Todd Delaney join us on his first Cursillo weekend however, he has been active in Walk to Emmaus. His talk on Grace, no doubt given from the heart. A couple of points were "God offers to be present in our lives. There is nothing we can do for God to love us less and that God is our homie." The next speaker was George Butler, and he gave a wonderful talk on Laity. We are all gifted, we all have things we are good at transforming the world through sharing the gospel...use your gifts! The Faith Talk was given by Deacon Dana Vanvliet-Pullin. Her testimony was incredible. God has touched her life in undeniable ways. Her spiritual journey could not have been possible if she hadn't stayed still and listened. So, please listen to that still voice! Pam Wake-

field touched all our hearts with her Piety Talk.

The skits were creative, funny, enthusiastic and showed all of us that they got the point of the day's talks. It is worth mentioning the beautiful weather God blessed us with over the weekend and the presence of Pedro the peacock. He listened intently to all the talks and showed his approval by fanning his tail feathers.

We ended Saturday evening with the healing service followed immediately by the Agape meal. The Chapel and Kitchen teams did a wonderful job! It was a very special and spiritual time during the weekend.

I will share a few things I took from the rest of the weekend talks since it is impossible to cover it all. I loved how Terri said when speaking of "Action" when she is asked, how are you doing? Her response is "absolutely blessed and I hope you are as well" and then wait to see what their response is (good way to open the door). Father Todd in his Obstacles Talk said that there are no real obstacles to grace aside from the ones of your own making. Curt Womble shared how he has changed his environment even at the golf course.

In order to develop our Christian life, we need a plan, a **"Rule of Life."** We are all saints, yes you heard correctly, we are all saints because we are all set aside for God's use. Christian community is a powerful force for change. Plan your work and work your plan. How do we determine what God wants? By seeking what is life giving and soul filling.

Great connections were made, and new friendships were created. There is no doubt that the Holy Spirit's presence was among us!

De Colores!

Ana



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Passing of Our Dear Sister in Christ...

Pat Harris

*in loving
memory*

Link to obituary

<https://www.wakefuneral.com/obituaries/patricia-harris-59/#!/Obituary>

From Marti Womble (she gave permission to share & said it was difficult to separate Brooks and Pat)...

When Curt brought me to Emmanuel in 1989, Pat and Brooks had been here for years. They were practically newlyweds. Their love for God, each other, family and Cursillo were evident in everything they did. Although they left us for North Carolina and to be closer to family years ago, their spirit and friendship still lingers on the friends they met and brought to Cursillo.

Brooks was a loud, loving and proud Marine Colonel who loved to cook. His joy came from being with Pat and serving on Cursillo teams. He loved serving on Kitchen Teams, which I had the pleasure of serving on several with him. His Agape's were breathtaking and unforgettable.

Pat was a loving, joyful, sweet lady with the wittiest jokes and with eyes that just sparkled whenever she was with Brooks. Their love was felt by everyone and you couldn't help but smile when you were with them. Although Pat always was first to say "yes" when asked to do anything for the church, she always finished that "yes" with "send Brooks"!

It's hard to separate them when it came to the Cursillo Community at Emmanuel. They were a driving force to get people to attend a weekend. They sponsored many and encouraged many to sponsor others. They were a one-man wrecking team, but in a good way.

May they both rest in Peace in God's Love. They were good and faithful servants and all that knew them are better for it.

DeColores,

Pam Wakefield



*As both Pat & Brooks
were such a blessing to
so many in our Cursillo
Community!*



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The Cursillo Shed



There's a place for all items used by Chapel, Kitchen, Table, Wardens, and Spiritual Directors. Thank you Kimberly Truxell, Susan Summerlin, Laura Kallestad, Carol Gibbs and all others who have helped with organizing the shed. It truly is appreciated by everyone! If you'd like to help keep this shed organized and put back together after a weekend please contact the Lay Director of the Secretariat. Secretariat contact information can be found at: Cursillodiosova.org and later in this newsletter.





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YOUR SECRETARIAT MEMBERS



Lay Director

Mark Crosthwaite

laydirector@cursillodiosovamail.com

Secretary

Marti Jones

secretary@cursillodiosovamail.com

Servant Community

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servantcommunity@cursillodiosovamail.com

Spiritual Director

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Assistant Spiritual Director

Deacon Dana Van Vliet-Pullin

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Weekend Coordinator

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Treasurer

Kimberly Truxell

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Palanca Chairperson

Pam Wakefield

palanca@cursillodiosovamail.com

4th Day Coordinator

Bruce Comfort

fourthday@cursillodiosovamail.com

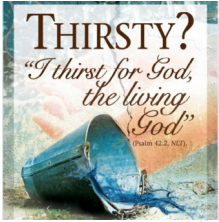


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Cursillo WHAT IS THE FOURTH DAY?



The Cursillo experience takes place over a period of three days. Each day thereafter is known as the "Fourth Day." It is during these Fourth Days that the participant puts into practice what was learned during the weekend thus becoming a more committed follower of Jesus Christ and active church participant. A major goal of Cursillo is to develop a more genuine "Life in Grace" which has three primary elements: Life in Piety - Giving our hearts to God. Growth through Study - Giving our minds to God. Christian Action - Giving our hands and feet to God.

Although the Cursillo experience can never be repeated as a participant, there are many ways to stay involved: Group Reunions; Community Gatherings; Sponsorship; Working on a Team.

All these things contribute to our growth in our relationship with each other and Christ. The purpose of the weekend is to help us put into action our 4th Day which is the rest of our lives.



Please plan to attend and mark your calendars for the next 4th Day on Saturday, November 1, 2025, noon - 4pm at Chanco on the James. Bring a dish to share (no longer offering hotdogs and hamburgers.)

De Colores,
Bruce Comfort
Secretariat 4th Day Coordinator



Hope you are enjoying the Summer Newsletter, share it with a friend, place on your church bulletin boards, spread the word!

If someone didn't receive it, send your contact information to Bee Betts. (contact information is on page 7 in this newsletter.)



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THE KEY TO LIVING YOUR FOURTH DAY

There are many keys to lots of situations as we live out our Fourth Day. After a Cursillo Weekend it can be difficult coming back to the world with busy lives to find ways to be faithful in living out our Fourth Day.



Make a friend.
Be a friend.
Bring a friend
to Christ.

At my weekend I didn't really understand what the "Grouping" part meant or how to go about it. Thankfully my sponsor, Carolyn Beane knew exactly what this meant, she knew what and where the key was to unlock the door. She came along side me and pulled me into a "Group" showing me what "Grouping" was, how to go about it and provided a safe place to talk about where Christ has been in my life since we last grouped.

For me, "Grouping" has been the strongest glue I have found to keep me in place and committed to Group each week. I move other events in my life to stay true and faithful to my 4th Day. It is not easy, don't get me wrong but it is a commitment I seldom break because once I start slipping and the glue is losing its affect, and no longer sticking then I am becoming part of the "world" and not keeping my promise I made when I made my weekend #82 back in the mid 90's.

You will know the key and the glue will remain strong by living out your Fourth Day of Piety, Study and Action. With Grouping, attending Ultreyas' serving and worshiping at your church and using the tools Cursillo gave each of us at our weekends I know the glue will remain in place and strong.

DeColores,



Nancy Comfort "Christ can count on me."
Cursillo #82
St. Lucy's Table
St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Norfolk

REMINDER

The Next 4th Day

Saturday, November 1, 2025,
Noon to 4pm at Chanco.

Please mark your calendars
to attend.

Bring a dish to share, no
longer providing hamburgers
and hotdogs.



Saturday, Nov 1st 2025



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“The Green Letter”

De Colores to Southern Virginia Cursillestas!

Recently, we gathered as a community to celebrate the new Cursillestas’ from weekend #174.

Looking back over the years we think each and every one of us can remember the excitement and spiritual growth we experienced on our weekend as well as when we served on a weekend. It is critical that we continue to provide these Spiritual retreats to strengthen our Christian communities throughout the diocese. The last few years have been really tough on our financial ability to provide the services required due to lack of Ultreya’s, Cursillo Weekends and Fourth Day Workshops throughout the diocese, a lot due to Covid-19 and declining church attendance.

As you know, the Cursillo ministry depends on contributions from all of us to carry out these weekends. Each year we receive donations at Cursillo Closings, Ultreya’s and 4th day workshops. This past couple of years those events have been far and few between. However, our financial commitments continue including National Episcopal Cursillo Ministry dues, music & Zoom licensing fees and deposits to Chanco.

We also need to update our website and programs to keep the movement alive and well.

We need your support to help make these dreams come true. We need your gift to bring our relationship with our Lord and Savior to more and more people.

Please prayerfully consider all these things when you consider your annual Green Palanca contribution to this especially important Ministry.

De Colores,

From Your Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Cursillo Secretariat 2025 in Southern Virginia

Ann Butler, Bruce Comfort, Mark Crosthwaite, Susan Grimm+ Marti Jone, Tommy Sitzler, Kimberly Truxell, Dana Van Vliet-Pullin+ and Pam Wakefield

Please mail your Green Palanca contribution to:

Cursillo in the Diocese of Southern Virginia

P.O. Box 11027
Norfolk, VA 23517

Or via Zelle information:
Cursillo in Southern Virginia
757-537-6879



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Still, we are missing Photos on the website. Please check and see if you have the group photo and send to below emails if you have any of these photos. Send to

laydirector@cursillodiosova.org and comfort_1@cox.net

#21	#52	#80	#141
#23	#53	#95	#142
#28	#59	#98	#143
#29	#67	#109	#144
#42	#70	#133	#145
#43	#75	#137	#162
	#78		



Hope finding these missing group photos
turn our sad faces to happy faces.

DeColores!



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There is a wealth of information on the **Episcopal Cursillo Ministry** site, formerly known as the “National Cursillo site. Check it out at:

Episcopal Cursillo Ministry

episcopalcursilloministry.org

Carol Gibbs

Southeast Regional Committee Representative



Reminders

**Please Mark Your
Calendars Now!**

Take care and enjoy your summer, we look forward to:

- **Cursillo Sundays:**

Easternshore Chapel Virginia Beach on August 24th - 8:00 am and 10:30 am services.

Emmanuel Chatham September 21st - 11:00 am followed by a picnic lunch.

- **Cursillo #175 Fall Weekend on October 2-5, 2025, Lay Rector John Vance.**
- ♦ **The Fourth Day Saturday, November 1, 2025 noon to 4:00 pm at Chanco.** Bring a dish to share, we do not provide hotdogs and hamburgers at this time.
- ♦ **Continue to attend your *Group Reunions*.** (need help in finding a group? Contact Mark Cros-thwaite, Lay Director laydirector@cursillodiosovamail.com)
- ♦ **Pray for one another.**
- ♦ **Provide Palanca for Team and Candidates of #175!**
- ♦ **Ways to get your Palanca to Chanco:** Contact a team member, take to Chanco when you take your candidate, or contact someone on the Secretariat.
- ♦ **Remember to sponsor a candidate for #175!**

De Colores!