

WALK TO EMMAUS

for the development of Christian leaders

A JOURNEY WITH CHRIST The Gospel of St. Luke relates the story of the risen Christ appearing to two who are going along the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Two friends were walking together, sharing their hearts' deepest concerns. The risen Christ joined them and explained the scriptures as they walked, how it was ordained that Christ should suffer and so enter His glory. This experience on the road was a heart-warming experience as the risen Christ walked and talked with them. The illuminating climax of the experience was when Christ took bread and said the blessing, then broke it and gave it to them. The two had their eyes opened and they recognized him as the risen Christ and they rushed back to Jerusalem to tell the others. (Luke 24:13-35)

WHAT IS THE WALK TO EMMAUS? The above story provides the image for Emmaus, an Upper Room program that calls forth and renews Christian discipleship. Like its predecessor, Cursillo de Cristiandad (Spanish for "short course in Christianity"), the Walk to Emmaus is a three-day experience which takes a New Testament look at Christianity as a lifestyle. It is a highly structured weekend designed to strengthen and renew the faith of Christian people, and through them, their families, congregations and the world in which they live. Emmaus is a combined effort of laity and clergy toward the renewal of the church.

WHAT HAPPENS AT EMMAUS? The "Walk to Emmaus" is a 72-hour weekend experience beginning on Thursday and ending Sunday evening. Your Walk will involve three concentrated and very enjoyable days, usually at a retreat center. You will study, discuss and experience God's grace in community. Discussions will center on 15 presentations led by lay and clergy around the theme of God's grace and how that grace comes alive in the Christian community and expresses itself in the world. You will discover how that grace is real in your life and can be shared with others. You will have opportunity to participate in worship and daily celebration of Holy Communion so as to understand more fully the presence of Christ in our midst and in His church. You will also personally experience God's grace through the prayers and acts of service of the living community.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER EMMAUS? One of the primary strengths of Emmaus is the follow-up. The weekend lasts only three days, but each person is invited to build on it for the rest of his or her life. Following this weekend, those who attend a Walk to Emmaus are encouraged to: 1. Expand their own spiritual lives through study and congregational participation; 2. Become more active disciples of Christ in the world through their churches. To nurture this process of discipleship, the Emmaus movement offers specific opportunities. First, reunion groups of four to six people meet weekly to reflect on their quest for spiritual growth and encourage one another in their discipleship. Second, there will be monthly meetings called "Community Gatherings." All people in a particular Emmaus community or area are invited for fellowship, worship, and informal instruction. Third, through a newsletter, members become aware of support needs for upcoming Walks to Emmaus. Opportunity is given to work in a variety of ways during future weekends.

HISTORY OF EMMAUS Originating in Spain in the late 1940s, Cursillo moved to America in the late 1950s. It was primarily a Roman Catholic movement until the 1970s. As Catholic centers started accepting applications from Protestants, efforts began among some groups to make the Cursillo experience available to all Protestants. In the late 1970s, The Upper Room (a unit of the Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church) formed The Upper Room Cursillo Community in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1981, by mutual agreement between the National Secretariat of the Roman Catholic Cursillo movement and The Upper Room, the

name of the Nashville Protestant community was changed to Emmaus. The Emmaus movement is ecumenical.

PURPOSE OF EMMAUS The focus of Emmaus is God as known in Jesus Christ and how that finds expression in the local church. The objective of Emmaus is to inspire, challenge, and equip local church members for Christian action in their homes, churches, and places of work. Emmaus lifts up a way for our grace-filled life to be lived and shared with others. Emmaus is open to members of any denomination.

ARE YOU INTERESTED? We invite you to join in a refreshing weekend spent meeting Jesus as He comes to you through other Christians.