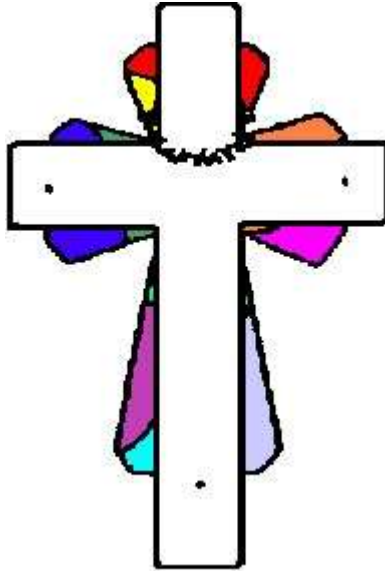


Vida Nueva

A Weekend for Teens

Essentials of the Weekend



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<http://www.vidanueva.net/>

VIDA NUEVA INTERNATIONAL

A Weekend for Teens

Essentials of the Weekend

1.0 Preamble

The Vida Nueva Movement endeavors to bring Christians to a closer, more personal walk with their Lord Jesus Christ and encourage them to Christian leadership and apostolic action in their environments.

Vida Nueva is based on the principles, the method, and the teachings of the Cursillo movement initially proposed by Bishop Juan Hervas, Eduardo Bonnin and their fellow Christians. Each candidate goes through three phases of the Vida Nueva Movement: the pre-weekend, the weekend, and the post-weekend, or Fourth Day. Vida Nueva is a Christian ecumenical movement.

The founders of the Cursillo movement saw a world of great need around them. They knew that the answer to the needs of the world had to be Christ and His Grace; but...they saw Christians who did not live for Christ, and they saw a church that was ineffective and without life. They developed the Cursillo to meet part of this problem; to provide any part of the church which was ready to undertake the formation of the Christian life with all the people it needed. People who would have the deep dedication to Christ and to bringing all peoples to him, people who would undertake a regular program of formation in Christianity, and who would make their Christian life conscious and vital, people who would understand how to be part of a unified apostolic effort.

The main teaching of Vida Nueva is God's unqualified love for each of us through grace. It asks each member of the Vida Nueva community to grow in their personal piety, to study God's word and other Christian writings and to express their love for Christ in Christian Apostolic Action.

The three aspects of Christian growth are stressed in a cloistered environment called "the weekend". An invitation is issued during the weekend for each Butterfly (VN'er) to get involved in their church and youth group, or other small group of their own choosing for continued support, prayer and encouragement.

In order to ensure consistency and stability within the Vida Nueva movement, there must be certain essential aspects to which all Vida Nueva organizations conform. It is the intent of Vida Nueva International to use these essentials as part of the criteria for chartering local communities.

It should, therefore, be the policy of local communities to comply with these Essentials. Policies of local communities which deviate from these Essentials must be reviewed on an individual basis and are subject to the approval of Vida Nueva International. If any community does not adhere these Essentials and the Statement of Faith, they forego the right to use the name "Vida Nueva" and any materials developed by Vida Nueva International.

2.0 The Essentials of the Vida Nueva Movement

1. Vida Nueva is a Christian movement - The ultimate objective of the Vida Nueva movement is to strengthen and extend the Body of Christ. No Vida Nueva organization shall change the teachings or practices of the Vida Nueva movement to accommodate the participation of

non-Christians.

For the purpose of these Essentials, “Christian” is intended to refer to those who are seeking a closer relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

2. Vida Nueva is a Christian ecumenical movement - All Vida Nueva organizations shall actively seek the participation of persons from all the Christian denominations in their environment.

All Vida Nueva organizations shall stress those things which the Christian denominations have in common and respect those things which are different.

All Vida Nueva organizations have the duty and the authority to protect the Vida Nueva ecumenical structure.

3. Vida Nueva is a lay led movement - Vida Nueva is a lay led movement; however, the active participation of the clergy is both essential and is to be encouraged.
 - a. Community Spiritual Directors should not serve in positions which are considered “qualifying” for lay leadership positions.
 - b. Spiritual Directors should not give talks designated as “Lay talks”.
 - c. Directors should be lay persons and not ordained or licensed ministers,
4. Vida Nueva is a non-profit movement - Vida Nueva organizations should pursue prudent fiscal policies. They shall avoid accumulating assets beyond what is required to carry out their part in the Vida Nueva movement.
5. Vida Nueva shall not assume the role of a denomination - Vida Nueva is not a church substitute; rather, it encourages Christians to worship and serve in their home congregations, as leaders.
6. Vida Nueva is not a service organization - The Vida Nueva movement encourages Butterflies to participate in “worthy projects”. Vida Nueva organizations shall limit their activities to those related to carrying out the Vida Nueva method.

3.0 Essentials of the Vida Nueva Method

The three essential phases of an individual’s involvement shall be the Pre-weekend phase, the Weekend phase, and the Post-weekend (Fourth Day) phase.

The objective of the Pre-Weekend phase is to prepare individuals for participation in the Weekend. The purpose of the Weekend, in terms of the method, is to prepare individuals for participation in the Fourth Day.

3.1 Essentials of the Pre-weekend phase.

1. That candidates be sponsored by a VN informed adult and/or teen who knows the candidate well enough to fill out the sponsor application.
2. That candidates be sponsored for participation in all phases of the Vida Nueva movement, not just the Weekend, itself.

3. That candidates be sponsored by someone who has completed a Cursillo-based weekend.
4. That the candidate shows no open rebellion to the Lord.
5. That candidates be accepted from all Christian denominations.
6. That candidates be accepted with application and sponsorship forms.
7. That candidates be at least 15 years of age and no older than 20 by the first day of the weekend.
8. That the team meets, as a team, four to eight times prior to the weekend, to promote community, receive instructions on weekend dynamics and responsibilities, and critique all talks.
9. That team members have previously completed a Tres Dias, Chrysalis, TEC, or similar Cursillo-type weekend approved by Vida Nueva International.

3.2 Essentials of the Vida Nueva Weekend phase

1. That the weekend has the following characteristics:
 - a. It is a weekend of living in a Christian community involving a combination of carefully developed activities and teachings which are meant to lead to a deeper personal commitment to Christ.
 - b. It embodies personal witness, but is not a revival meeting
 - c. It embodies group dynamics, but it is neither sensitivity training nor group therapy.
 - d. It employs theological instruction that encourages the candidates to study their own Christian beliefs, but is not a course in doctrine.
 - e. It is a renewal experience for Christians and is not necessarily a conversion experience.
 - f. It asks for basic faith, openness and a seeking attitude on the part of the candidate, but involves a great amount of dedication, prayer and careful planning on the part of the team.
 - g. It is an encounter with the Holy Spirit, but is not a “charismatic” experience.
 - h. The weekend is a tool of God, and not an end in itself. The weekend will not produce a permanent effect without Fourth Day activities.
2. That the Spiritual Directors be qualified to teach and counsel in spiritual matters.
 - a. That at least one of the Spiritual Directors on the weekend be ordained or licensed to regularly celebrate Holy Communion.
 - b. That there are at least two Spiritual Directors on the weekend, who will be available for counseling, as needed.
 - c. In order to serve as a Spiritual Director on a weekend, the person must be ordained, licensed, or serving in a official capacity in a recognized Christian ministry.
3. If possible, team members should represent a spectrum of Christian denominations.

4. That the Director be a layperson and be responsible for all aspects of the weekend under the authority of the local VN Council.
5. That the team and candidates live in a cloistered environment for the entire weekend.
6. That all talks and meditations follow the Talk Progression and Purpose and outlines authorized by VN International. Lay Talks should be given by members of the Laity and Spiritual Director Talks should be given by members of the Clergy.
7. That the lay talks be informal talks of a witnessing or sharing nature.
8. That the weekend consists of three consecutive days, with the following themes: Dying Day, Rising Day, and Going Forth Day.
9. That the following guidelines be observed:
 - a. That the taking of Holy Communion be optional.
 - b. Jokes and or practical jokes are not permitted during the Vida Nueva Weekend.
 - c. That the Script and Schedule, as provided by Vida Nueva International, be followed as provided, with reasonable changes for physical layout of facilities, etc.
 - d. That the Talk Progression and Purpose, and talk outlines be followed as provided, with the provision that the Single Life talk may optionally precede the Marriage Talk. (Community option, not weekend or Director option).
 - e. Parents or legal guardians may not serve on a team on a weekend where their child(ren) are attending as candidates. This does not apply to anyone assisting with set up or take down.
 - f. No cameras or tape recorders are allowed to be used during the course of a weekend.
 - g. Parents or legal guardians of candidates attending a weekend shall not attend Serenade/ Candlelighting.
 - h. That situations be avoided where any two people would be alone during the course of the weekend.

3.3 Essentials of the Post-weekend phase

1. Butterflies should be encouraged to actively participate in a local body of believers.
2. Fourth Day activities should be scheduled as often as practical, in order to allow Butterflies to support and encourage each other.

4.0 Essentials of the Local Vida Nueva Governing Organization (Council).

The function of the Council is to conduct an effective program in accordance with the Vida Nueva method.

1. That each local council has a document, approved by its membership, describing its structure and operating procedures. (By-Laws and/or Policies and Practices)
2. That each member of the local council have completed a Vida Nueva, Tres Dias, or similar weekend experience approved by Vida Nueva International.

3. That the local council has a plan for the periodic election of new members.

5.0 Important Areas of Consideration

While not “essential”, the following is critical to the execution of an effective weekend:

1. In relation to the Spiritual Director:
 - a. That Spiritual Directors not leave the Vida Nueva weekend to fulfill other obligations or personal devotions.
2. In relation to the Director and Youth Director:
 - a. That he/she is the person responsible for the Vida Nueva weekend.
 - b. That he/she give the preliminary talk (Director's remarks).
 - c. That he/she make any necessary announcements during the weekend.
 - d. That he/she maintain personal contact with each team member and candidate.
 - e. That he/she follow all guidelines provided by the local council and Vida Nueva International.
3. In relation to the other team members:
 - a. That they all be present during all phases of the weekend.
 - b. That they help with necessary tasks, such as waiting on tables, and that they do so very naturally.
 - i. That they make every effort to know the candidates by name.
 - ii. That they try to create a gradual environment of animation in the weekend.
 - iii. That the night meetings not be unnecessarily prolonged.
 - iv. That they contact as many candidates as possible a month or six weeks after the weekend.
4. In relation to the talks:
 - a. That they follow the ideas contained in the outlines. Personal testimonies are used to enhance and extend the outlines, but they must NEVER add new ideas or change the ideas contained in the outlines.
 - b. The order of the talks must not be changed.
 - c. That the length of each talk be prudent - long enough to get the ideas across, but not unnecessarily prolonged.
 - d. That the talks emphasize the different phases of Vida Nueva.
 - e. That the essential slogans, comparisons, and other key ideas which are traditional to Vida Nueva, not be changed, giving due consideration to their importance in clarifying the main message.
 - f. That speakers not use ideas and comparisons which are part of another talk.
5. In relation to the candidates:
 - a. That they are properly distributed at the tables (distribution of schools, churches, etc.).
 - b. That they take notes and participate in drawing posters.
6. In relation to the various elements of the weekend:
 - a. That the different rooms be properly distributed.

- b. That the weekend not begin at a late hour.
 - c. That the palanca letters be read (most, if not all).
7. In relation to the closing (Clausura):
- a. That only those who have a completed a weekend or those approved by VN International be allowed to attend. Parents of candidates are allowed and encouraged to attend, even if they have not attended an approved weekend.
 - b. That the Director aims the closing toward the proper objectives, which are to give each candidate the opportunity to share about their experience, make announcements about future events, optionally introduce the next Director, and have an activity (joining hands and singing a song) which includes the new Butterflies and the community).

IT IS ACCIDENTAL

1. The number of people at each table (not to exceed 9).
2. That a group photograph be taken.
3. That a morning serenade (team only) be held.
4. That the three consecutive days of the Weekend include Saturday and or Sunday.

TRADITIONS

There are several elements of the Weekend, that while not in the VN Essentials, are an integral part of the weekend. There are also elements of the Weekend, that while not explicitly mentioned in the Essentials, are part of the standard Talk Progression and Purpose.

Some of the elements that are traditions are:

- Table Nicknames
- Serenade/Candlelighting
- Adult couples in the kitchen
- Marriage Talk done by Director and Spouse
- Single Life Talk done by Director, if single
- Beyond VN done by Youth Director
- Table Palanca, Pillow Palanca, etc.
- Skits by the Palanca Team
- Skits by the Kitchen Team
- Handing out crosses
- Singing "De Colores"
- Singing the "VN Song"