Adult Catholics may not have experienced the Christian life in a significant way. Since the Christian life is a community life, it needs to be experienced in community in some manner. Realizing that need, Bishop Hervas of Spain began the Cursillo Movement in the early part of the 20th century.

The Christian Experience Weekend is an adaptation of the Cursillo Weekend. In eastern Iowa, the Cursillo Movement had been active since 1966 providing an excellent process of spiritual leadership formation and an active spiritual life. After study and reflection, Sister Carole Freking, OSF, Fr. George Karnik and Fr. Joe O’Brien created the renewal program, Christian Experience Weekend.

“Christian” indicates its ecumenical nature and Christian basis, “Experience” emphasizes the experiential and theological presentations, and “Weekend” clarifies the Friday evening to Sunday format. The first CEW was held in January 1974 in Cascade, IA.

Christian Experience Weekends are generally held in the fall to the spring of each year, November through March.

Parishes/Clusters may sponsor a weekend at their individual locations or at a renewal center. Information about area CEWs is advertised at the local level.

A listing of upcoming CEWs can be found on the Archdiocese of Dubuque website at https://www.dbqarch.org/cew

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Christian Experience Weekends are held in multiple sites in the Archdiocese of Dubuque.

Some parishes/clusters sponsor their own CEW weekends, while others are area-wide, or ecumenically based.

Active CEW locations in the Archdiocese of Dubuque include: Bellevue, Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, Farley, Marshalltown, Scotch Grove, Waterloo, and Waukon. CEWs are also facilitated in the dioceses of Davenport and Des Moines.

Other states with active CEWs include: Wisconsin, Illinois, Texas, Florida, Minnesota, Arizona, and Colorado.

It is very important that Christian Experience Weekend manuals are available for team members, leadership personnel, and presenters of the weekend.

The manuals contain the presentation talks, schedule, and pertinent information for facilitating a CEW renewal weekend.

Leadership training workshops are held each Fall, offering facilitators a deeper understanding of CEW. The workshops are intended for anyone involved with a weekend - before, during and after the event.

The CEW manual, as well as DVDs, CDs, and Mime materials are available for purchase through the Office of Adult Faith Formation, Archdiocese of Dubuque.