



# **POLICY COMMITTEE**

## **Essentials Training Handout**

### **Key Points and Take-Aways**

### **From the TD Essentials**

**ORIGINAL DATE:** December 2021

**REVISED:** R4.2 – March 13, 2023

**TDI SECRETARIAT APPROVAL:** March 17, 2023

**DISTRIBUTED TO COMMUNITES:** April 14, 2023

## TDI ESSENTIALS TRAINING

This handout is designed to help you get the most out of this Essentials training. Please take notes in the handout or use it to highlight key points that are relevant to you and / or your community or things that you didn't know prior to this training. Or just use it to write down questions that you want to get answered today. We are glad that you are here today and we look forward to helping you learn and apply these core Essentials.

What I most want to get from this training is \_\_\_\_\_.

Pre-Weekend:

---

---

---

---

---

---

Weekend:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Post-Weekend:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Secretariat:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Purpose:** The purpose of this document is to provide an additional tool in summarizing or critiquing the Essentials of Tres Días. It should be used in conjunction with the specificity and integrity of the larger document.

**General Considerations:** When preparing or critiquing a presentation of the Essentials, there are a number of factors to keep in mind. They include:

- Being true to the integrity of the document as intended by the original authors.
- To drive home the importance of the Essentials. They are not suggestions, they are “Essential.”
- To memorably distinguish between the Essentials and community traditions.
- To recognize that the Essentials are the foundation for all communities universally, while traditions may vary from community to community.

### **1.0 PREAMBLE - Key points:**

- TD was developed as an ecumenical form (intended for all protestant Christian churches) of the Roman Catholic Cursillo de Cristianidad (Short Course in Christianity)
- As an ecumenical movement, it is designed to focus on what all Christian churches have in common while respecting their differences, with the exception being a church or denomination that does not adhere to the qualifications for community leadership or the Tres Dias statement of belief. Such churches have no place within the Tres Dias ministry.
- The purpose/goal of TD is to bring people to a closer personal walk with Jesus Christ while encouraging leadership and Apostolic action (sharing their faith).
- The main teaching of TD is God’s unqualified love for each of us through grace.
- TD consists of three phases: the pre-weekend, the cloistered weekend and the 4<sup>th</sup> day.
- Main areas of growth emphasized are: piety (devout Christian living), study (of God’s word) and action (the application of what is learned).

### **Take-Aways:**

- Individuals should come away with the concept that growth in piety, study and action through grace is important for all Christians that are interested in spiritual formation and growth.

### **Cautions:**

- The Essentials are viewed by some as mere suggestions. It is important to remember the difference between Essentials and best practices for TD Communities. A possible best practice would be to encourage communities to create a day-by-day list of Essentials vs. traditions.

### **2.0 ESSENTIALS OF THE MOVEMENT – Key points:**

- TD is not a church. It is an ecumenical ministry designed to strengthen the local church.
- TD is a non-profit, lay-led ministry intended to develop Christian leadership.
- Clergy have an important spiritual support and teaching role in the ministry.

**Take-Aways:**

- TD is a lay-led ministry with clergy support whose goal is to strengthen Christian leadership in the local church.

**Cautions:**

- TD was never designed to take the place of a local church, but rather to support and strengthen it. Be careful to not make it any more or less than it is intended for.
- Often candidates are so moved by the weekend experience that they want to renew their commitment by baptism, which is not allowed on a weekend. Instead they should be encouraged to involve family and friends in their commitment at their local church.
- Sometimes clergy want to influence community policy, which is not part of their role of spiritual guidance. The lay-led Secretariats are ultimately responsible for community policy.

**3.0 ESSENTIALS OF THE TRES DIAS METHOD – Key points**

- TD consists of three phases: the Pre-weekend, the Weekend, and the 4<sup>th</sup> Day.
- The Pre-weekend is to prepare people for the weekend and the weekend is to prepare people for the 4<sup>th</sup> Day.

**Take-Aways:**

- The three phases build on each other to help prepare Christians to live lives of piety, study and action in their 4<sup>th</sup> days.

**Cautions:**

- It is easy to focus attention and resources on the weekend itself, ignoring proper sponsorship in the pre-weekend and 4<sup>th</sup> day phases. Highlight the importance of good sponsorship at all community gatherings. The Weekend is not an end unto itself, but is only an intermediate step in the TD method.

**3.1 THE PRE-WEEKEND PHASE – Key points**

- Candidates must be sponsored by a TD community member for all three phases of the TD method.
- Candidates must be 21 years of age or older with minor exceptions compelled by the local community. The minimum age to attend a weekend is 18 years old.
- TD is a once in a lifetime experience. A person can only attend a weekend as a candidate one time whether through Tres Dias or an equivalent weekend experience.

**3.2 THE CLOISTERED WEEKEND PHASE – Key points**

- What the weekend is and is not.
- All rollos must be presented and critiqued at team meetings prior to the weekends.
- This section includes the qualifications and role of clergy in TD weekends.
- The weekend team is led by the Rector who is under the authority of the local Secretariat.
- The “weekend”, as it is referred to, means any continuous 72 hours which includes the 15 rollos and 5 meditations.

- The cloister begins with the Rector Introduction and ends with the Apostolic Hour (otherwise known as the cross ceremony before the Closing).
  - This section outlines the order and basic content of the three days.
  - Lay talks are only given by laity and clergy rollos and meditations are only given by clergy and all follow the TD outlines.
  - Two Table Chapel visits must happen. The first on the afternoon of the second day and the second preferably on the morning of the third day.
  - Communion is to be offered each of the three days, with the only specified timeframe being after the Sacred Moments of Grace rollo.
  - Candidate self-determination must be respected including scheduled time for informal candidate and team interaction.
  - **If the “spouse” portion of the 4<sup>th</sup> day rollo is used, it must be:**
    - critiqued by the team as part of the team rollo.
    - no more than 5 minutes of the time allotted for the 4<sup>th</sup> Day rollo and the total time of the rollo cannot exceed the 20 minutes time limit as noted in the outline.
    - given only by the spouse of the Rector
    - address only what candidates may expect upon returning home
    - must be limited to information listed under Section II in the “Living the 4<sup>th</sup> Day” outline titled ‘What to Share Regarding Your Tres Dias Weekend.’
- \*While this is technically a violation of the Cloister, this exception has been made by the Policy Committee to permit it, provided communities abide by the above limitations**

#### **Take-Aways:**

- The cloister is an essential part of the weekend experience to get away from the distractions and influences of the world and daily life. The cloister begins with the Rector’s Introduction and ends with the Apostolic Hour (cross ceremony) prior to closing. Cloister applies to candidates and all team members alike (a gopher is excepted when fulfilling their team responsibilities).
- All rollos must be given to the team and critiqued prior to the weekends.
- Respecting candidate self-determination is an important aspect of the TD method.
- Two table prayer chapel visits (outside of the rollo room) are essential. (some communities refer to these as “we prayers”). These are to be done on the full second and third days of the weekend phase.
- Rectors should be well-coached on the community’s policies, practices and expectations in order to effectively implement them during the weekend.

#### **Cautions:**

- There is often concern when a candidate is resistant or slow to participate, but it is important to allow them the freedom to process in their own individual ways.
- The Spousal part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Day Rollo is often not included in the practice rollo or becomes almost a rollo itself. Spouses may contribute to the rollo if the Rector wishes, but only according to the specific guidelines listed above.

- The most critical part of the schedule is the table discussion after each rollo. It is easy to allow many community traditions or activities to over-crowd the weekend experience which may only take away from its lasting impact on the candidates.

### **3.3 THE 4<sup>th</sup> DAY PHASE – Key points**

- Reunion groups are to be encouraged for all, following the weekends for all.
- Secuelas or regular community gatherings are to be held throughout the year, preferably once a month.
  - Each must include a floating reunion group (breaking down into small groups for discussion)
  - Each must include a 4<sup>th</sup> Day talk (discussing impact after their weekend)

#### **Take-Aways:**

- The 4<sup>th</sup> Day phase is the most important of the three phases and should be the culmination of the other phases.
- Participation in reunion / sharing groups should be the outcome of each weekend experience. The purpose of the weekends is for the ongoing reunion groups, not the other way around.
- Local Secretariats should continually monitor and promote involvement in reunion / sharing groups.

#### **Cautions:**

- Isolation of community members over a long period of time can lead to a cooling of passion for community. We are better together.

### **4.0 THE ESSENTIALS OF THE LOCAL SECRETARIAT ORGANIZATION – Key points**

- The local Secretariat is ultimately responsible for the adherence to the Essentials of the TD method.
- Each community must have operational by-laws which include regularly held elections.
- Members of each local Secretariat must abide by the TDI Qualifications for Community Leadership.
- At least one set of weekends a year must be held unless an exception is granted by the TDI Secretariat.

#### **Take-Aways:**

- The local Secretariat is responsible for the community's operation and adherence to the standards set forth by TDI in these ESSENTIALS and Position Papers.
- The community's by-laws contain the "how to" of its operations and can be updated or revised as situations change. The Secretariat should make all team members aware of the Qualifications for Community Leadership and their importance.
- The local Secretariat should have a plan for teaching / reviewing the TD Essentials to each team for each weekend.

#### **Cautions:**

- These are Essentials, not mere suggestions. Tres Dias grants a lot of freedom beyond these Essentials to individual communities in order to determine what is best for their own local community.

Prayerfully submitted,

*Mike Shellman*

Mike Shellman            N. Cal. TD  
Policy Committee Chair

**Policy Committee Members:**

Valerie Mehl	Mid-Hudson TD
Thomas Miller	Abundant Life TD
Susan McDonald	Sabine Creek TD
Merv Chapman	Kansas City TD
Tiffany Chapman	Kansas City TD
Joe Martire	N. Virginia TD
Mark Lake	Vermont TD
John Pennings	Mid-Hudson TD
Sean Flynn	N.E. Georgia TD
David Dailey	Trinity Valley TD
Jeanne Norwood	RIMA TD
Angel Morales	Alamo City TD
Curt Marusik	S.E. Texas TD
Dan Banse	Sabine County TD
Carl Coleman	Nor. Cal TD

**Clergy Board Members:**

John Milam	Central Georgia TD
Neal Surasky	N. Virginia TD
Ginger Brunette	Music City TD
Tim Allen	E. Texas TD
Arcadio Gomez	TD Con Dios
Rich Caliendo	Mid-Hudson TD