

# Embracing the Mission



A Program Guide for the  
Christian Family Movement



Every Christian is called to be a disciple of Jesus, to live out the call of our baptism as active agents of Christ's saving mission.

In *Embracing the Mission*, CFM groups will find 8 meeting topics to help them live their faith in practical, everyday ways. Each chapter is designed to enliven our personal encounter with Jesus Christ, support our families' faith journey, strengthen our commitment to the Gospel, and deepen the spiritual life of our CFM groups.

As a bonus, *Embracing the Mission* provides three fun, prayerful, and educational Family and Community Meetings. These gatherings are ideal for inviting more families to participate in the mission of Jesus through the Christian Family Movement.



*Embracing the Mission*

*An Inquiry Book  
Published by the  
Christian Family Movement*

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**\*About Family and Community Meetings:**

Family & Community Meetings included in this book are optional. Groups may decide to schedule them at any time of the year, although some chapters suggest them as actions. These meeting plans are offered as models. Individual CFM action groups may wish to create a somewhat different event. The main focus is to engage the whole family and to invite perspective CFM members, both from the parish and from other parishes, to join and get a feel for the Christian Family Movement.

# Acknowledgements

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Scripture quotations in this work, unless otherwise noted, are from *New American Bible*, revised edition (NABRE), Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C., 2010.

# Outline of a CFM Meeting

CFM groups usually meet in homes. If this is impossible because of the size of members' homes or geographical distances involved, groups sometimes meet in a church facility. The group members take turns hosting and leading the meeting.

## GATHER AND REPORT ON ACTIONS

Take a few minutes to let one another know how your life has been since you last met. Group members report on the progress of CFM actions taken individually, as a family, or by the group.

## OPENING PRAYER AND SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

God's word and our prayer move group members out of their busy lives and toward the issues of the meeting. Prayer helps them to focus on these issues from a Christian perspective.

## SOCIAL INQUIRY - Observe, Judge, Act

### OBSERVE

Members should "get the facts." At this stage of the meeting, members should refrain from expressing their opinions about facts. They should try to simply report, like any good objective newspaper reporter. The knowledge and experience of group members are valuable, but the group must go beyond its own members to gather facts from the larger world and report them objectively. One can editorialize later.

### JUDGE

For CFMers, to judge is not to find another person sinful or holy; it is rather the comparison of how things are with how things should be, in accord with Gospel values. To make such a comparison requires objective observation of how things are, as well as a sincere effort to determine the teaching of Jesus.

## ACT

If the group judges through prayer, observation, and reflection that things are not as they should be, then ways to bring about a change will come forth from the group. Actions listed in the book are suggestions. The best actions come from the group. They may be directed toward improving family life relationships, or toward the community and beyond.

## TAKE CFM HOME

Simple questions are provided at the end of each chapter to facilitate carrying the conversation into the home with children and other family members.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer is supplied for each meeting, but this is also a good time to offer prayers for the intentions of the group.

## SOCIAL TIME

A short social with simple and inexpensive refreshments helps members to know and understand one another better and builds community.

# Hosting a CFM Meeting

Many CFM groups rotate hosting the meeting each month. The host often facilitates the meeting, or another member takes this role.

Call the couples in your group 3 to 4 days before the meeting to remind them to come, give directions, etc. Encourage them to do their Actions and Observations before the meeting.

Try to involve your children in the preparation for the meeting. The night of the meeting, ask them to help welcome everyone...help take coats, put out the snacks, etc. Keep refreshments simple.

Provide beverages (soft drinks, coffee, tea) and some sort of dessert after the meeting.

Start on time and end on time. Remember the social time after the discussion is also important for the building of community...and relaxing! If the discussion goes too long it will mean less social time.

Ask for volunteers to read sections of the chapter. It is good to hear many different voices read. Be aware of the time and “keep it rolling” in order to progress from OBSERVES to JUDGES to ACTS...the whole sequence is the CFM meeting. If you’re spending more time on one question, call a “time out” to get on track or skip a question or two to keep things moving.

Don’t be afraid of silence. Often people need time to organize their thoughts before they respond. Leave time for this to happen.

Try to stick to the questions. If a really good side discussion happens, encourage people to continue it during social time.





## Introduction

All Christians are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ. In *Forming Intentional Disciples*, we read that this call, our life vocation, “emerges from a sustained encounter with Christ. It is a transforming, sanctifying path and work of love to which Christ calls us. A vocation builds on our natural qualities but carries us far beyond what we would imagine.”\*

As disciples, the members of CFM humbly and fervently work to create an environment that enlivens their personal faith and the spiritual life of their group, while it strengthens their group’s commitment to the evangelization of the Good News. We are able to do powerful work for the Kingdom of God because of the active, sustained support of our action groups.

This CFM inquiry book strives to help form members into intentional disciples, by offering ways they can bring the Good News of the Christian message to their immediate communities of parish, neighborhood, schools, and society. The Christian Family Movement is a discipleship program for parents and children.

The heart of CFM is the action of its members and the result is changed lives. Families find that the Social Inquiry process of Observe, Judge, Act, ultimately becomes part of who they are.

They are strengthened, as individuals and together, to interpret the signs of the times and act to bring about the Kingdom of God. Each meeting in this book includes suggestions for actions related to the meeting topic. These are suggestions only. Groups are encouraged to adopt an action that evolves from their own discussion. Some actions may be simple and brief. Others times the group may identify and commit to an ongoing action over an extended period of time.

\*Weddell, Sherry, *Forming Intentional Disciples*, Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2012, p. 89.



## ONE

### **Called to Be Disciples:**

*Living, Professing and Bearing Witness of Our Faith*

#### **GATHER**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

Jesus, our Teacher:

You inspired your Apostles and the first generation of your church with your words, your acts of mercy, and your love for the poor.

The Apostles continued your teaching and your good works, accompanied by the Holy Spirit.

May we, in this generation, live your Gospel of love and mercy by doing what you taught us to do

and by teaching what you taught us to teach.

May we be remembered as your disciples. Amen.

#### **REPORT ON ACTIONS**

*Take time to report on how you engaged in action recently. It is encouraging to hear what others are doing and prompts us to put our faith into practice more intentionally.*

#### **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

A reading from the holy gospel according to John (14: 6-12).

“Jesus said to Thomas, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.’ Phillip said to him, ‘Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been

with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Phillip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, “Show us the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?’ Amen, Amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father.”

1. What was Philip, the Apostle, looking for when he said, “Master, show us the Father”?
2. What did Jesus mean by stating, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father”?

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY**

By definition, a disciple is a follower, one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another. A Christian disciple is a person who accepts and assists in the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ

Jesus tells us how discipleship must look in our lives. In the Sermon on the Mount, (Matthew 5: 1-10), Jesus gives us the Beatitudes, which call us to exhibit virtues of humility, mercy, purity of heart, peacemaking, suffering persecution for justice sake, and joy.

When we look at Jesus for a model in the Gospels, we see that his ministry begins with baptism, proceeds despite temptation and opposition, and culminates in suffering and death, with vindication an unseen hope requiring faith. He is the vine, we are the branches.

We need to stay connected to Christ in order to be true disciples. Our mission for Christ requires a new attitude toward material things and calls for a new lifestyle that puts allegiance to Jesus first.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church: “The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it: ‘All however must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow him along the way of the Cross, amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks.’ Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation: ‘So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.’” (CCC, 1816)

From your personal experience, **OBSERVE:**

1. Which discipleship actions (or “Acts”) of your parish or CFM group in the past year inspired others to action or discipleship? Why did they work (or why not)?
2. Name some contemporary figures whose actions reflect Jesus’s model of compassion and practice. What is their “style” of discipleship?
3. What are the ways each of the sacraments strengthens us as disciples?

In the light of Christ’s teaching, **JUDGE:**

1. What is the understanding of discipleship in your parish and local community?
2. Why is God calling you to practice and promote discipleship? What is your personal discipleship mission? Is it the same for everyone? How, why, or why not?
3. Are there members in your local community that you would consider disciples? What are the signs of their discipleship?

Based on what has been discussed, **ACT:**

1. Organize a social evening for friends in your local community or parish featuring a video or reading from the life of a modern day “disciple”. Talk about it over refreshments- does that “disciple” inspire you or others into ACTION?
2. Design a poster or an article for the parish bulletin that would help people recognize their good deeds as works of a disciple of Jesus.
3. Prepare a sticky note that reads, “Look, a Disciple.” Place it on your home mirror for two weeks.
4. Specifically contact someone you see as a disciple in your community and tell them; that their actions inspire you to be a better disciple.

### **TAKE CFM HOME**

1. Encourage family members to be observant about how God is working in their day and around them.
2. Every Sunday share with one another one thing you saw God do that week.

### **LOOK AHEAD TO THE NEXT MEETING**

*Take a look at the Observes for the next meeting to see what needs to be done in preparation*

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time** \_\_\_\_\_ **Place** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Phone or email host if you cannot attend.
2. Look ahead at the Observe questions for the next meeting.
3. Who could you invite to join our group?

*If children have come to the meeting with their parents, gather them to join you in the closing prayer.*

## CLOSING PRAYER

We thank you, Lord, for bringing us together as a group of aspiring disciples of Jesus Christ, and for having this CFM group as our classroom and classmates. You have helped us to realize that we are one with you and with each other. Give us the grace of hearing your voice and allowing your inspiration to move us to act, knowing that we are your disciples in this time and in this place.

And let us pray the Prayer for the Christian Family Movement (found on Page 80).

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### **CFM in Action**

A Christian Family Movement group in Altoona, Pennsylvania “observed” the rundown condition of a small city playground situated in a struggling neighborhood. One warm Autumn Saturday the families with children set out with equipment and picnic baskets. At day’s end weeds were removed, grass cut, a swing set repaired and a fresh coat of paint applied where needed. All went well, except for two cases of poison ivy. Looking back after the day’s work, all saw themselves as disciples of the Lord, spreading the love of Christ.



## TWO

# Forming Our Families to Be Disciples

*Following our call to be the Domestic Church*

### **GATHER**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, we gather in love and friendship to explore the family's identity and mission. Help us to observe wisely, to judge prayerfully and to take action that will lead to positive change. We pray that our time together will be fruitful and that our CFM connection will provide support and friendship for us to embrace our mission with our families, marriages, relationships and communities. Amen.

#### **REPORT ON ACTIONS**

*Take time to report on how you engaged in action as a result of the last meeting. It is encouraging to hear what others are doing and prompts us to put our faith into practice more intentionally.*

#### **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark (4: 1-9).

“On another occasion he began to teach by the sea. A very large crowd gathered around him so that he got into a boat on the sea and sat down. And the whole crowd was beside the sea on land. And he taught them in length in parables, and in the course of his instruction he said to them, ‘Hear this! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came



and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep. And when the sun rose, it was scorched and it withered for lack of roots. Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it and it produced no grain. And some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit. It came up and grew and yielded thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.’ He added, ‘Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear.’”

1. Imagine sitting with the crowd on the shore and watching and listening to Jesus teach. What are you seeing, hearing, and feeling?
2. How does this scripture reading apply to family life?

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY**

“The family is almost the most beautiful image of the union uniting Christ and the Church — the union of Christ with the Church makes the church fruitful and makes the Church increase. It is true of every family, whether black or yellow or white; and it is not merely true of Christian families but of any family.”

- “On the Family and Its Mission,” Cardinal Joseph Cardijn, Spiritual Founder CFM, 1950

“(Families) we know you face obstacles as you try to maintain strong family ties and to follow your calling as a church of the home. The rapid pace of social change; the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of our society; the revolution of values within our culture; the intrusion of mass media; the impact of political and economic conditions: all these place families under considerable stress.”

- *Follow the Way of Love, A Pastoral Message to Families* from the U.S. Catholic Bishops for the 1994 International Year of the Family

“Dear families, you know very well that the true joy which we experience in the family is not superficial; it does not come from material objects, from the fact that everything seems to be going

well... True joy comes from a profound harmony between persons, something which we all feel in our hearts and which makes us experience the beauty of togetherness, of mutual support along life's journey. But the basis of this feeling of deep joy is the presence of God, the presence of God in the family and his love, which is welcoming, merciful, and respectful towards all. And above all, a love which is patient: patience is a virtue of God and he teaches us how to cultivate it in family life, how to be patient, and lovingly so, with each other. To be patient among ourselves. A patient love. God alone knows how to create harmony from differences. But if God's love is lacking, the family loses its harmony, self-centeredness prevails and joy fades. But the family which experiences the joy of faith communicates it naturally. That family is the salt of the earth and the light of the world, it is the leaven of society as a whole.”

- Pope Francis' "Homily for the Family Day on the Occasion of the Year of Faith," 2013

Researchers across the country and around the world have found that strong families have a wide variety of qualities that contribute to a family's well-being. The first step in developing the strengths of one's family is to consider those areas in which the family is doing well and those areas in which the family members would like to improve. Below is a list of six qualities that researchers at Michigan State University identified as indicators of a strong family:

- They show each other appreciation and affection. For example, they help each other, keep promises, and show affection to each other.
- They are committed to each other. Strong families are very loyal to each other, share responsibilities, make decisions together, allow members to make their own decisions with support, and find it easy to trust one another.

- They practice positive communication. Families that eat together regularly communicate (as long as the phones and TV's are turn off). They like to share feelings with each other and cue into each other's feelings. Putdowns and sarcasm is rare.
- They have strong coping skills. Families with healthy well-being tend to be resilient. Crisis brings them closer together and they are supportive of one another. They look for something good from a bad situation and tend to accept the things they can't change.
- They have a healthy spiritual well-being. It is easy for them to share spiritual values and beliefs with each other. A positive attitude is the norm and they have a sense of peace.
- They truly enjoy spending time together. There is shared a common interest with strong families. They have lots of fun together and often laughter is plentiful. Unplanned spontaneous activities together are common.

- "Traits of a Healthy Family," Terry Clark-Jones

From your personal experience, **OBSERVE**:

1. What did you learn from your parents by example? What do you hope to teach your children/grandchildren?
2. What have you found to be the greatest help in your effort to form a whole and holy family?
3. What are opposite qualities of family relationships from those listed above?
4. Name the ways the Christian Community helps parents and grandparents develop and nurture strong Christian families?

In the light of Christ's teachings, **JUDGE**:

1. What steps or methods can Christian parents take to help their family deal with rapid social change, the diverse religious ethnic and cultural aspects of our society and the revolution of values within our culture?
2. How does interacting with others who share your values and beliefs strengthen and support your marriage/family?
3. How can families best nurture and support one another?
4. How can you help your family make Christ more a part of your everyday life?

Based on what has been discussed, **ACT:**

1. Identify a new family in your neighborhood and welcome them to the community. Invite them to join you for a family gathering.
2. Establish one time every week as your regular time to celebrate your family. If you have children, let them help decide and plan the activity--anything that everyone in the family can participate in and enjoy.
3. Create a weekly time to say a 'thank you' prayer as a family.
4. Ask a family new to your parish to sit with you at Mass for one Sunday--and to join you for a meal afterward.

### **TAKE CFM HOME**

Have each family member create a collage that represents them portraying important aspects of the person's character, including their likes and dislikes. Ask each to include something they believe makes them valuable to the family. Once completed, have each family member explain their collage. Glue the collages together onto a board with the family name printed below. Hang it in a

place where family members will be able to reflect upon it regularly.

### **LOOK AHEAD TO THE NEXT MEETING**

*Take a look at the Observes for the next meeting to see what needs to be done in preparation.*

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time** \_\_\_\_\_ **Place** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Phone or email host if you cannot attend.
2. Look ahead at the Observe questions for the next meeting.
3. Who could you invite to join our group?

*If children have come to the meeting with their parents, gather them to join you in the closing prayer.*

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Jesus, you humbled yourself by becoming one of us. Because you lived in a family, you experienced the joys and sorrows of family life. Please walk with us on our journey as a family. Help us to meet the challenges ahead. Give us a loving commitment, a caring nature and a strong sense of family spirit. Guide us to make wise and careful decisions in our work, our study and our play. Grant us a sense of hospitality and service to others. May your peace be with us, may we do your will in all that we say and do and may you be the heart of our home. Amen

And let us pray the Prayer for the Christian Family Movement (found on Page 80).

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## THREE

### **The Everyday Vocation of the Lay Disciple**

*Becoming missionaries and catechists  
by and in our laboring life*

#### **GATHER**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, you are always with us:  
in our work and in our leisure.  
You listen to our hearts,  
and bless even the most ordinary tasks by your grace.

We pray that, by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
we may be inspired and strengthened in our vocations  
as lay members of your body,  
and that we may live in the joy of Christian hope.  
Amen.

#### **REPORT ON ACTIONS**

*Take time to report on how you engaged in action as a result of the last meeting. It is encouraging to hear what others are doing and prompts us to put our faith into practice more intentionally.*

#### **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke (3:10-14).

“And the crowds asked [John the Baptist], ‘What then shall we do?’ And he answered them, ‘Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.’”

Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, ‘Teacher, what shall we do?’ And he said to them, ‘Collect no more than you are authorized to do.’ Soldiers also asked him, ‘And we, what shall we do?’ And he said to them, ‘Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation and be content with your wages.’”

A reading from the first letter of Peter (2:9).

“But you are ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises’ of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

1. Reflect upon each designation in this passage: chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation people of his own. What does each mean to you?
2. From what darkness into what light have we been called?

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY**

Cardinal Joseph Cardijn, whose work with the Young Christian Workers in Europe inspired the founding of the Christian Family Movement, insisted that lay people, both women and men, have a vital part to play in the mission of the Church. He said of the layman, “His workbench is his altar.”

Cardijn told workers, “It is according to the plan of Providence that the working classes—the labourer and his family—are necessary collaborators with God, with Christ, and with the Church, in the work of Creation and Redemption. In this sense work and the worker have an apostolic significance. “Without labour there is no wine, no host, no altar, no Mass.” In this sense the worker’s life is a prayer and a sacrifice; daily Mass extended throughout his working day, so that his life is a real vocation and apostolate. He becomes a missionary and catechist by and in his labouring life.”

- *"The Life and Work of Cardijn: The Spirit of the Layman"*



“The lay apostolate is an indispensable complement to the priestly apostolate, which can only achieve its end fully and completely if laymen are faithful to their own apostolate. When this happens, the Mass offered by the priest at the altar will become a Mass prolonged on all those altars of the secular life: the worktable, the loom, the lathe, the joiner’s bench, the typist’s desk. ...The Gloria and Sanctus will rise in praise not only from the Church but from Christian lives which have become a prayer, an atonement, an act of grace. And all the environments of secular life will be transformed into temples where laymen truly render glory to God.”

- Cardinal Joseph Cardijn, *Laymen into Action*, p. 40

“There can be no lay apostolate...without the apostolate of the priest. There can be no other apostolic channel, because he alone can give Christ to the people. It must be added at once, however, that without the lay apostolate, the priestly apostolate is powerless to carry out the human Christian transformation of the world. The union and the reciprocal collaboration between priests and laymen is therefore essential to the unity of the Church and her mission, and to the fulfillment of every apostolate.

- Cardinal Joseph Cardijn, *Laymen into Action*, p.122

“Before God, no occupation is in itself great or small. Everything gains the value of the Love with which it is done.”

- St. Josemaria Escriva

From our own experience, **OBSERVE:**

1. Based on your experiences in the workplace, volunteer settings, and other situations, what sort of expressions of faith and Christian service come most naturally to you?
2. In what ways do you bring your personal style to your workplace/community (e.g. fashion, mannerisms, favorite

sports, social media presence)?

3. What unjust practices and prejudices have you observed in the workplace or society?
4. How easy is it for those who interact with you to discern your identity as a follower of Jesus?
5. Who have you seen bring their faith into the workplace? How did they transform a situation?

In the light of Christ's teachings, **JUDGE**:

1. Review your personal "environments": e.g., workplace, parents' organizations, professional associations, leisure (sports leagues, community and neighborhood circles), and family (his and her sides of the family, old friends). In which environments do you find it easiest/most difficult to share your faith by actions or by words? What characteristics of those environments make sharing easy or difficult?
2. In what ways can your CFM group work with the clergy in your parish and diocese to help one another become better disciples and build a stronger church community?
3. Sexual harassment, racial slurs, and unjust practices rooted in prejudice are common in many settings. How can Christians stand up for Christian values in such situations? How can Christians support one another to promote justice and mutual respect?
4. Profanity and using God's name in vain are common occurrences in the secular realm. How can Christians work as leaven for change?

Based on our discussion, **ACT**:

1. Identify an area in one of your environments which needs change. Then, envision what would be a better situation, and steps toward improvement you could take. If possible, begin implementing the first step.
2. Meet with your parish priests. Share with them your experience of CFM and CFM's mission. Invite them to a meeting.
3. The next time you find yourself in one of your "environments," (e.g., a family party, a work meeting, among the playground moms), take a moment to pray, asking God to point out someone who needs encouragement. Take action and reach out to that "someone" with a simple kind word. Report back on whether it helped the person and/or environment.
4. Discuss and plan a time to hold the Family and Community Meeting, "Working Together." See Page 30 for directions.

### **TAKE CFM HOME**

1. Share your own lists of personal environments from question 1 of the JUDGE section, and help your children develop their own lists. Using some of the insights from the meeting, encourage your children to think of ways to serve God in their "workplaces."
2. When you discuss potential summer jobs and careers with your children, encourage them to think of ways that they might add a faith dimension to their work.
3. Discuss how you can show your priest that you appreciate them. Ask them to dinner or another family activity.

## **LOOK AHEAD TO THE NEXT MEETING**

*Take a look at the Observes for the next meeting to see what needs to be done in preparation*

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time** \_\_\_\_\_ **Place** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Phone or email host if you cannot attend.
2. Look ahead at the Observe questions for the next meeting.
3. Who could you invite to join our group?

*If children have come to the meeting with their parents, gather them to join you in the closing prayer.*

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, the disciples you chose were quite ordinary, and none of them had achieved prominence in the eyes of the world.

We come to you tonight as ordinary people.

And we know that, by your grace, your Holy Spirit can use us to accomplish extraordinary results.

Thank you for counting us among your friends and collaborators.

Please make your instructions clear to us.

Use us to build your kingdom here in our little corners of the earth.

Our Father, who art in heaven ...

And let us pray the Prayer for the Christian Family Movement (found on Page 80).

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FAMILY &  
COMMUNITY  
MEETING



## Working Together

The meeting as presented here is a model. Individual CFM action groups may wish to create a somewhat different event. The main focus is to engage the whole family and to invite prospective CFM members, both from the parish and from other parishes, to join and get a feel for CFM.

*The purpose of this evening is to demonstrate the power of working together toward a common goal. Choose activities for the evening which seem most appropriate for your space and group size. The facilitator should reinforce the purpose of each game by a brief discussion following the activity. Consider breaking the group into teams of 4-8 that will work together for the whole evening.*

### **GATHER**

Gather the group in one big prayer circle. Welcome everybody to the gathering. Begin with a song that emphasizes the theme of community. A simple one is "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands."

### **OPENING PRAYER**

Father, I pray for a spirit of cooperation and eagerness to contribute to the needs of the whole body, so that Your Church is built not just with sweat, bricks, and mortar but with love, care, and cooperative teamwork. Then we will go forth in unity and purpose as we do our part in building each other up encouraging others to use their God-given talents and acquired skills, all the

while striving for unity in the faith. In our service we desire to please You even as we serve and strengthen one another. In the name of Jesus, we commit ourselves to faithful service. Amen.

- With permission, <http://www.dailyencouragement.net/>,  
<https://adailyprayer.wordpress.com/2010/07/06/a-prayer-for-cooperation-2/>

## **FUN COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES**

### **Ice-Breaking Team Tasks**

*Divide into groups of 4 people, at least one adult in each group*

- Team task #1: How many words can you make using the letters from all team members' names?
- Team task #2: Find something everyone in the group has in common.
- Team task #3: Find something that is different about everyone. No two people can share the same response.
- Team task #4: Invent Superhero names for everyone in your group.

*Share something you now know about each person that makes you feel a little more connected to them.*

### **Musical Chairs (Two Versions)**

*This works best with 10-20 people ages 3 to adult*

First, play the game in the usual way. Everyone is seated on a chair when the game is explained. When the music begins, players must rise and march until the music stops. As players march, remove one or more chairs. (If you take away more than one, play progresses faster. When music stops, players must seat themselves. Those who find no chair are eliminated. Play continues until there is only one remaining.)

Cooperative version: Play the game again, but this time explain that the object is for everyone to find a place to sit down (laps are OK.) Continue to play until everyone is attempting to sit on one chair. This version emphasizes the joy of collaboration over competition

*Discuss the difference in the way the game feels from the first way it was played.*

### **Balloon Game**

Divide the group into groups of 6-8 people. Give each group a blown-up balloon. Groups are to travel from one end of the room to the other, keeping the balloon aloft. If the balloon falls to the ground, they must return to their starting place. (This is usually not difficult.) Repeat the exercise again, but this time only half of the people in the circle can use their hands. The others must put their hands behind their back. Repeat again with only two people using their hands and the rest with their hands behind their back.

### **Piece of the Puzzle**

- Ahead of time the evening's leaders cut poster board into puzzle pieces of 6-10 pieces.
- There needs to be one poster board puzzle for each team.
- Teams can be a mix of children and adults, not necessarily family members.
- Each member of the team decorates a piece of the puzzle in a way they believe represents them and what they feel they can contribute to the group.
- When they are finished, paste the pieces together to form a whole.
- Discuss the impact the completed puzzle has compared to separate pieces.



**At the close of the evening, the leader gathers the group for quiet reflection and leads a discussion.**

1. How did you feel when you were working together as a team? How did you feel about your team?
2. How did you feel when not everyone helped accomplish the goal that you were working toward?
3. Can you think of real situations where people have to work together to accomplish something? Can you think of times when you have been part of a group that didn't work together well? What happened?
4. What have you learned tonight?

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Leader: A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (12:24b-27).

Reader: "But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior members, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it."

Leader: Let us close with a prayer to God thanking him for all the gifts he has given us to help each other. (*Form a prayer circle.*)

Leader: Dear God, thank you for the people you have sent into our lives and the skills they have to serve you. Teach us to share our talents, to help each other, and to live in peace in your kingdom. Let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us.

All: (Recite the Lord's Prayer.)

End with the traditional song, "This Little Light of Mine." Include verses that relate to places that the participants live, work and go to school.

## **IDEAS FOR FOLLOWING UP SERVICE PROJECTS**

1. Singing cooperatively. After practicing together, they could visit the rectory and sing for the priest or at a neighboring house, street corner, or nursing home.
2. Make "Christmas packets" cooperatively for a homeless shelter, soup kitchen or to keep in your car to distribute when you see someone in need. Things that might be included: cello bags and ribbon ties, gloves, hat, hot chocolate mix, candy cane, the story of Christmas, homemade Christmas cards.
3. Make homemade Christmas cards cooperatively. Distribute at a nursing home/soup kitchen.





## FOUR

### **Transforming Discipleship through Education and Action**

*Clarifying the mission through Observe, Judge, Act*

#### **GATHER**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

God, give me grace to accept with serenity  
the things that cannot be changed,  
Courage to change the things  
which should be changed,  
and the Wisdom to distinguish  
the one from the other.  
Living one day at a time,  
Enjoying one moment at a time,  
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,  
Taking, as Jesus did,  
This sinful world as it is,  
Not as I would have it,  
Trusting that You will make all things right,  
If I surrender to Your will,  
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,  
And supremely happy with You forever in the next.  
Amen.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

## **REPORT ON ACTIONS**

*Take time to report on how you engaged in action as a result of the last meeting. It is encouraging to hear what others are doing and prompts us to put our faith into practice more intentionally.*

## **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

*Consider the following readings:*

“Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

- Matthew 28:20

“You know how to judge the appearance of the sky, but you cannot judge the signs of the times.”

- Matthew 16:3

“Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”

- John 7:24

“If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.”

- John 13:14-15

“Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”

- Luke 11:28

“Be doers of the word and not hearers only.”

- James 1:22

1. Which Scripture quotes speak to you of education? Which quotes are about action?
2. How does the Inquiry method of Observe, Judge, Act help us to live these Scriptures in our daily lives?

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY**

CFM discussion guides bring topics that families deal with every day into a Christian, faith-based discussion. Discipleship is accomplished through teaching one to use the methodology of

Observe, Judge, Act in their daily lives. Pope St. John XXIII speaks of discipleship in his encyclical, *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher):

“In Our view, therefore, formal instruction, to be successful, must be supplemented by the students' active co-operation in their own training. They must gain an experimental knowledge of the subject, and that by their own positive action.

“It is practice which makes perfect, even in such matters as the right use of liberty. Thus, one learns Christian behavior in social and economic matters by actual Christian action in those fields.

“The Lay Apostolate, therefore, has an important role to play in social education especially those associations and organizations which have as their specific objective the Christianization of contemporary society. The members of these associations, besides profiting personally from their own day to day experience in this field, can also help in the social education of the rising generation by giving it the benefit of the experience they have gained.”

- Pope St. John XXIII

“Pope Pius X was talking with a group of cardinals and asked them what they thought was the one thing most necessary for the salvation of society.

“To build Catholic schools,” said one.

“To multiply churches,” said another.

“To increase the clergy,” was a third suggestion, but the Pope shook his head at all the answers.

“No, no,” he said. “What is most necessary at the present time is to have in every parish a group of laymen who are at the same time virtuous, well-instructed, determined, and really apostolic.”

- *The Great Mantle-The Life of Giuseppe Melchior Sarto, Pope Pius X.*

“Action does not precede development. They take place simultaneously. Development through action, therefore, is

essential. Action is the love of Christ through love of others. A mere intellectual development is sterile, apostolically, unless it is used to love others either by direct action or by refashioning institutions which mold human life.”

- Fr. Reynold Hillenbrand, “Basic Ideas of CFM”

From your own experience, **OBSERVE:**

1. Considering the Scripture quotes above, what do they say to you about the act of judgment? How does this compare to your understanding of what "judging" means?
2. List some satisfying actions that your involvement in CFM has inspired you to take.
3. Share ways in which your faith has grown and your spirit has flourished since you began using the Observe, Judge, Act method.

In light of Christ’s teachings, **JUDGE:**

1. Why did you become a member of a CFM action group? Why have you stayed in CFM?
2. How have your family members taken a role in their own formation--and in the formation of the Church--as disciples of Christ? Has this changed from the past generations?
3. How has the Observe, Judge, Act Method helped you better understand who is “my neighbor” and what it means “to love your neighbor as yourself?”

Based on what has been discussed, **ACT:**

1. Learn more about the history of CFM. (Literature is available from the national office or on the [CFM website](#).) Share with the group what you learned and what this means to you
2. Sit together as a CFM group at Sunday Mass.
3. Plan to get together with CFM member from another group or another parish. Ask them about how they deal with specific group problems and challenges. Ask what resources they use and recommend. Share your own resources and successes.
4. Consider being a CFM ambassador, writer, or serve in another way beyond your local action group.

### **TAKE CFM HOME**

1. Identify a current challenge/problem that you have within your family.
2. Using the steps that CFM uses (Observe/Judge/Act), do research into the topic related to the challenge/problem (observe). Follow through with the Judge and Act steps.

### **LOOK AHEAD TO THE NEXT MEETING**

*Take a look at the Observes for the next meeting to see what needs to be done in preparation.*

**\*\* Plan to bring research about the Christian Family Movement to the next meeting.**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time** \_\_\_\_\_ **Place** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Phone or email host if you cannot attend.
2. Look ahead at the Observe questions for the next meeting.
3. Who could you invite to join our group?

*If children have come to the meeting with their parents, gather them to join you in the closing prayer.*

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Adapted from the letter of St. Paul to the Colossians 1:9b-12*

May [we] . . . be filled with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding to live in a manner worthy of the Lord, so as to be fully pleasing, in every good work bearing fruit and growing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with every power, in accord with his glorious might, for all endurance and patience, with joy giving thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in light.

And let us pray the Prayer for the Christian Family Movement (found on Page 80).

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## FIVE

### **The Disciple's Call to Serve**

*Learning to help one another with love and discernment*

#### **GATHER**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

Lord, as we are gathered here today to discuss the topic of service, let us be reminded that we are not only empowered to serve, but we are also specifically called to serve according to our own individual gifts and talents. Your Son not only gave us examples of what a life of service looks like, but also was specific about the repercussion associated with a fruitless life; one void of service. Please guide our lives and lead us according to your will. In doing so, ensure us of a fruitful existence, and make us worthy of your words in Mathew 25:23: “Well done, good and faithful servant.” Amen.

#### **REPORT ON ACTIONS**

*Take time to report on how you engaged in action as a result of the last meeting. It is encouraging to hear what others are doing and prompts us to put our faith into practice more intentionally.*

**\*\*Share with one another what you have learned about the Christian Family Movement since the last meeting.**

#### **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

A reading from the first letter of Peter (4: 8-11).

“Above all, let your love for one another be intense, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace. Whoever preaches, let it be with the words of God; whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

1. What does this passage teach us about how we are called to respond to one another?
2. What perspective does it ask that we take toward “our” gifts?

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY**

The secular world generally defines freedom as the ability to go where we want to go and do what we want to do. While we have the free will to use our freedom to live only for our own enjoyment, living in this way can lead to chaos and disorder. The good news is that our creator has sent us the perfect example of a properly ordered existence. Christ eliminates all confusion on the subject, not only in word, but in action.

As Christians, we are not only empowered to serve, but are also called to serve. We are called to serve, not only on Sundays and on weekends, but also in our everyday lives. In Mathew 25:35 Jesus says “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.” The Catholic Church sums it up in what is termed the Corporal (bodily) Works of Mercy: (1) Feed the hungry. (2) Give to the thirsty. (3) Clothe the naked. (4) Shelter the homeless. (5) Visit those in prison. (6) Comfort the sick. (7) Bury the dead.

Sometimes the answer to serving or helping someone is a lot more

complicated than we want it to be. Some who need help will not take it, while some others take that for which they have no need. There is a phrase called “Choosing the harder right,” which is recited as a part of the traditional West Point cadet’s prayer. It refers to doing the right thing even when it is harder than we thought. Choosing the “harder right” can be especially challenging when we answer the call to evangelization.

The Spiritual Works of Mercy call upon us to “counsel the doubtful” and “instruct the ignorant.” Fear of seeming arrogant can hold us back. Yet, CFM families are often able to reach other families that are marginally connected to Church, or not at all. Those families may become more engaged when we invite them to participate in concrete ways that are meaningful to their lives. They can also embrace those on the margins and extend the healing ministry of the Church beyond the regular members, effecting Pope Francis vision of “the Church is a field hospital.”

From our own experience, **OBSERVE:**

1. Give an example of a time when you helped someone in their daily life and it felt good. What made it feel good?
2. Give an example of a time when you helped someone and it made you feel uneasy instead? What made it feel that way?
3. Tell of a time when you offered a simple way to help someone that really didn’t fix the problem. What more difficult solution might have been more effective?
4. In what ways do the Church, your parish, and CFM act as catalysts to nudge us to serve? Are there forces in your life that are doing the opposite?

In the light of Christ’s teachings, **JUDGE:**

1. What does it mean to be “in need?”
2. What should we do if helping someone turns out to be much more complicated than we had anticipated?
3. How much of our own “time” and “treasure” are we expected to give? Whose expectations must we meet?
4. Could we do a better job of using God’s gifts appropriately to serve those in need?

Based on what has been discussed, **ACT:**

1. Set a goal each week of helping/serving others in some way. Keep it simple.
2. As a group or individually work with parish ministries that care for members of the faith community and their families as they prepare for births, baptisms, First Communion, Confirmation, Holy Matrimony, and death.
3. Choose a parish ministry that is struggling. As a group, volunteer to work with this ministry as a long-term committed ACT project. Seek to attract others to this ministry as well.

### **TAKE CFM HOME**

1. Discuss different ways that you can serve each other and the community.
2. Write the ideas down on posters and place them where everyone will see them daily. Make one poster of family service ideas, and one for community service ideas.
3. Review the posters weekly (at dinner?) and discuss if anyone saw others doing any of these activities (or if they did any of activities themselves).

## LOOK AHEAD TO THE NEXT MEETING

*Take a look at the Observes for the next meeting to see what needs to be done in preparation.*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

1. Phone or email host if you cannot attend.
2. Look ahead at the Observe questions for the next meeting.
3. Who could you invite to join our group?

*If children have come to the meeting with their parents, gather them to join you in the closing prayer.*

### CLOSING PRAYER:

Father, as we conclude our discussion on service, please help us to move forward with greater discernment of purpose. May the Holy Spirit always guide us according to your Will so that service ceases to become something we feel awkward or uncomfortable doing, but instead becomes what we love to do. Through service, may we see your face and be reminded of Christ's words in Mathew 25:30: "Whatever you did for the least of these brethren, you did for me".

And let us pray the Prayer for the Christian Family Movement (found on Page 80).

### CFM IN ACTION

Fifty years ago, the CFM Group at Holy Name Cathedral decided to "adopt" a retirement home for people who were not well off. Once a month, members would, as a group, spend an afternoon at the home. Some would bring musical instruments and they'd have a "hootenanny" with the residents. They'd sing some old-time songs and occasionally even dance with them. Later, when things quieted down, CFM members listened as the elders told some fascinating stories about their lives. For young, middle-aged and old, these occasions were joyous experiences.



## SIX

### **Disciples as Forgiven Forgivers**

*Transformation through  
repentance, remembrance, and reconciliation*

#### **GATHER**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

Leader: Our failure to be true even to my own accepted standards.

All: O Lord, forgive!

Leader: Our self-deception in the face of temptation:

All: O Lord, forgive!

Leader: Our choosing of the worse when I knew the better.

All: O Lord, forgive!

Leader: Our failure to apply to myself the standards of conduct that I demand of others;

All: O Lord, forgive!

Leader: Our blindness to the suffering of others and my slowness to be taught by my own:

All: O Lord, forgive!

Leader: Our complacency toward wrongs that don't touch us and our over sensitiveness to those that do:

All: O Lord, forgive!

Leader: Our slowness to see the good in others and the evil in ourselves.

All: O Lord, forgive!

Leader: Our hardness of heart toward our neighbor's faults and our readiness to make allowance for our own:

All: O Lord, forgive!

Leader: Our unwillingness to believe that you have called us to a small work and our neighbors to a great one.

All: O Lord, forgive!

- With permission, <http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=2246>

## **REPORT ON ACTIONS**

*Take time to report on how you engaged in action as a result of the last meeting. It is encouraging to hear what others are doing and prompts us to put our faith into practice more intentionally.*

## **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

A reading from the holy gospel according Luke (15: 31-31).

“He said to him, ‘My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because

your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’”

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Galatians (6: 12).

“Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

1. What model of forgiveness is expressed in the story of the Prodigal Son in the gospel of Luke?
2. In his letter to the Galatians, what are the “burdens” St. Paul is asking Christians to carry for one another?

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY**

“Forgiveness enables the disciples to travel together. Without it, each would travel alone, alienated from others by everything from petty grievance to unimaginable cruelty. A petition charts a single course toward human community: ‘Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors’ (Matt 6:12; cf. Luke 11:4). Repeating these words in daily prayer makes them no easier to live....

“Jesus urged disciples to pray daily for the ability to forgive, reminding them that they too stood in need of forgiveness. As the disciples experienced Jesus’ steady pardon of their fecklessness, their faithlessness, and their need for sleep, Jesus hoped they would find it easier to forgive those who had wronged them....

“The forgiveness that discipleship demands stretches beyond the pardon of isolated offense to open the possibility of a more charitable stance toward the world.... Christians become more forgiving people by living into the Lord’s Prayer: we practice forgiveness. This does not happen overnight; it is a miracle of



grace that forgiveness happens at all. Christian forgiveness transforms us through repentance, remembrance, and reconciliation. Repentance enables disciples to turn away from violence....

“As we pray, ‘Forgive us our trespasses....,’ we remind ourselves that we are all sinners in need of repentance.... Over time and in community God works on us, transforming us into forgiven forgivers. The practice of forgiveness is indispensable for the journey of discipleship, inviting us to live into a promised peace.”

- Martha Stortz, “The Practice of Forgiveness”

“Paul gives this word in Galatians 6:2: ‘Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.’ In that context he was talking about what happens when you find a friend who is struggling with sin. But throughout the Bible we’re meant to care for one another, to love one another, and to help one another. To be a Christian is to be connected with others—to be in relationship. Jesus did not simply call us to love God, but also to love our neighbor. He started a church to be a place where believers would encourage one another, provoke one another and challenge one another to good deeds, and where we would bear one another’s burdens. That’s what it means to be a part of a team.

- Pastor Adam Hamilton, Senior Pastor

From your own experience, **OBSERVE:**

1. What are the injuries that family members often need to forgive one another for?
2. Name ways in which CFM, either within your group or at the national level, has failed to support your discipleship.
3. Explore what reconciliation services your parish or diocese offers.

In the light of Christ’s teachings, **JUDGE:**

1. What is the best way to seek forgiveness?
2. How is it possible to carry another’s burden of sin, or for them to carry yours?
3. Is it best to “forgive and forget”? Why or why not?
4. How can we help others reconcile?

Based on our discussion, **ACT:**

1. Through a prayerful examination of conscience, identify words or acts for which you ought to seek forgiveness. Pray for the courage to do so even if your attempts will not be well received.
2. If someone has come to you because they are struggling with temptation, be there for them unconditionally and without judgment.
3. When you are finding forgiveness particularly difficult, meditate upon the cross of Jesus and the words, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:24).
4. Attend a reconciliation service as a group with your CFM group and your families.

## **TAKE CFM HOME**

The next time an incident within your family causes your children to be angry with you or a sibling, sit down with them. Ask them to think about how it made them feel. Angry? Embarrassed? Disappointed? Sad? Help them state that to the offender (this may be mutual).

Then: *With younger children:* Hand each a pretend balloon. Ask him or her to blow all of those feelings into the balloon. When they are ready to let go of the feelings, they let the balloon sail into the sky. When ready, imagine that the balloon gently pops, spreading a dusting of love and compassion to both parties.

*With older children:* Write a letter, stating what caused the upset and how they feel about it. Then have your child write a compassion statement or one of forgiveness to the offender and to him- or herself. End the exercise by having them rip the letter up into the garbage, signifying the release of forgiveness.

-Jaimie Perillo, "How to Teach Children Forgiveness"

## **LOOK AHEAD TO THE NEXT MEETING**

*Take a look at the Observes for the next meeting to see what needs to be done in preparation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

1. Phone or email host if you cannot attend.
2. Look ahead at the Observe questions for the next meeting.
3. Who could you invite to join our group?

*If children have come to the meeting with their parents, gather them to join you in the closing prayer.*

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

Happy we whose offence is forgiven, whose sin is remitted. Happy we to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, in whose spirit is no guile. We have acknowledged our sins; we do not hide our guilt, we say: "I will confess my offence to the Lord."  
And you, Lord, have forgiven us.

So, let faithful men and women pray to you in the time of need. The floods of water may reach high but they will stand secure. You are our hiding place, Lord; you save us from distress.

Rejoice, rejoice in the lord, exult, you just!

O come, ring out your joy. All you upright of heart.

-*The Lord Forgives*, Catholic Online, with permission

And let us pray the Prayer for the Christian Family Movement  
(found on Page 80).

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## SEVEN

### **Solidarity:** **The Global Dimension of Discipleship** *Engaging the world outside our immediate community*

#### **GATHER**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

GOD of love and mercy, you call us to be your people,  
you gift us with your abundant grace.

Make us a holy people, radiating the fullness of your love.

Form us into a community, a people who care,  
expressing your compassion.

Remind us day after day of our baptismal call to serve,  
with joy and courage.

Teach us how to grow in wisdom and grace and joy  
in your presence.

Through Jesus and in your Spirit, we make this prayer. Amen.

- Introduction, *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*

#### **REPORT ON ACTIONS**

*Take time to report on how you engaged in action as a result of the last meeting. It is encouraging to hear what others are doing and prompts us to put our faith into practice more intentionally.*

#### **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians (1: 3-8).

“Paul, an Apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy

our brother, to the holy ones and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: grace to you and peace from God our Father. We always give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love that you have for all the holy ones because of the hope reserved for you in heaven. Of this you have already heard through the word of truth, the Gospel, that has come to you. Just as in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing, so also among you, from the day you heard it and came to know the grace of God in truth, as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow slave, who is a trustworthy minister of Christ on your behalf and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.”

1. The early Christians spread the Gospel far and wide, to many different lands and cultures. What would you imagine were some of their challenges in mission? How does this compare to today’s challenges?
2. What does it mean to you when he refers to Epaphras as “fellow slave?”
3. Within your family, are there comparisons to the challenges the Apostles had spreading Christianity?

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY**

“The laity are called to participate in a ‘new evangelization.’ This means sharing the good news of Jesus personally through the witness of our lives. Moreover, the new evangelization is ‘directed not only to persons but also to entire portions of populations in the variety of their situations, surroundings and cultures.’ Its purpose is to challenge, through the power of the Gospel, those values, judgements, patterns of behavior, sources of inspiration, and models of life that are inconsistent with the word of God and the plan of salvation and to affirm the ways God is working in the world today....

“Small church communities offer an important and unique means of formation for the new evangelization. They strengthen their members to persevere in their faith and mission, providing both inspiration and practical support. To be involved in the new evangelization, however, requires that members of such communities be as ready for engagement with the world outside their community as they are for deepening their relationships within it. If the small community is to be a true expression of the mystery of the Church, then it must be ‘a communion of God's people living out the mission of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit.’”

- U.S. Bishops, *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*

We are called to be peacemakers, to grow in friendship and charity with all people, another way of saying we are called to solidarity. We live in an increasingly interconnected world, linked by communications technology and economic partnerships. The Church has members in every nation, each with their own cultures, languages, and civic authorities. All are united in Christ: No longer Jew or Greek, slave or free person, male or female. Because we are one in God’s eyes, each of us must seek greater understanding and awareness of our neighbors.

The Christian Family Movement is found in over 40 countries, united in the practice of the Observe, Judge, Act method of discipleship. Our Movement teaches us to bring the light of the Gospel into society wherever we can have an impact. As the Catechism puts it (no. 1941), “International solidarity is a requirement of the moral order; world peace depends in part upon this.”

CFM-USA is a member of the International Confederation of Christian Family Movements, which has associated movements in more than 45 countries. In 1989, the ICCFM became a Non-Governmental Organization of the United Nations with special

consultative status, using that platform to witnessing to Christian ethics in the public square.

From our own experience, **OBSERVE:**

1. What do you think of when you think of a “small church community?” Besides CFM, what other small Christian communities are in your parish?
2. What are current needs in your local community that a small church community could address?
3. Explore how your CFM group and the other groups in your parish community can network effectively with CFM-USA.
4. Identify a church agency that helps the poor in other countries. Visit their website and learn their projects and methods.

In the light of Christ’s teachings, **JUDGE:**

1. What benefits/problems do you see in collaborating with secular agencies to help the poor and people in need?
2. How can membership in small church communities, like CFM, help us in our ability to help where/when needed?
3. Besides donating funds to church and secular agencies, how can our families be actively involved in helping others and building peace in the world?

Based on our discussion, **ACT:**

1. As a group, identify a pressing need in your community. Research the current providers of services to that ‘need’ and report back on a possible plan the CFM group could take to help the service providers and/or create awareness in the community.



2. Visit [www.iccfm.org](http://www.iccfm.org) and explore how CFM is working for solidarity and family life on one other continent. Report to the group what you learned.
3. Learn more about the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN on the United Nations website.
4. Email a member of a Christian Family Movement in another country and ask them to tell you what CFM is doing there. Contact information can be found for continental presidents at [www.iccfm.org](http://www.iccfm.org). You might discover a pen pal.
5. Discuss and plan a time to hold the Family and Community meeting, “The Hunger Banquet,” found in this program guide on Page 59. The purpose of the “banquet” is to make very real the vast differences in the way the world’s resources are presently distributed.

### **TAKE CFM HOME**

1. Chose a country your family would like to learn more about.
2. Research about the country together. What was the most interesting thing you learned? What surprised you the most?
3. How are that nation and its people like our own? How are they different?

### **LOOK AHEAD TO THE NEXT MEETING**

*Take a look at the Observes for the next meeting to see what needs to be done in preparation.*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

1. Phone or email host if you cannot attend.
2. Look ahead at the Observe questions for the next meeting.
3. Who could you invite to join our group?



*If children have come to the meeting with their parents, gather them to join you in the closing prayer.*

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

God of all peoples, open our eyes to the needs of all our brothers and sisters. Open our hearts to care and open our minds to find creative ways to be in solidarity with them. Bless the Christian Family Movement to continue to form our members to see ourselves as part of a global reality and to be alert to opportunities to take action as your disciples in this world. Amen.

And let us pray the Prayer for the Christian Family Movement (found on Page 80).

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## FAMILY & COMMUNITY MEETING

### The Hunger Banquet

A “hunger banquet” can be a very effective way to demonstrate to a group the imbalance in the distribution of food in our world. This project can be completed by serving a complete meal or by using snacks to illustrate the disparity in the

abundance of food. If the group has many young children, the snack option is a better choice. This activity can be sponsored for a parish or the CFM group could invite other families both from the parish and from other parishes, to join and get a feel for CFM.

#### **Option One (Complete Dinner)**

*This banquet is based on information from the Campaign for Human Development.\* At the banquet, the food is distributed in roughly the same proportion as it is in our world. Three categories of development are designated in this exercise.*

Place the names of all the countries listed below on slips of paper in a paper bag. Each category has a specific color. When guests arrive, they choose a slip of paper from the bag. *You may want to include a statistic about that country which you obtained from the website on the slip of paper.* The slip should indicate the place the individual will sit.

#### **Seating areas are prepared in this way:**

- To represent the highly developed First World countries (for example, United States, France, Italy, Japan, Australia): 10 percent of the group will sit at tables with tablecloths, china dishes, cloth napkins, silverware and a glass. These countries have an abundance of everything.

- To represent the industrialized, expanding Second World, level two (for example, Russia, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic) 30 percent of the group will use tables covered with butcher paper and have paper plates, paper napkins, plastic silverware and plastic cups. These countries have enough, but not more than they need.
- Representative of the less-developed Third World (for example: Bolivia, China, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Peru), 60 percent of the group will have tables without coverings, no eating utensils. They will have wooden bowls and plastic cups. These countries have meager resources.

**When all are seated**, explain the purpose and symbolism of the Hunger Banquet and why the group has been divided in this way.

\*Detailed information for this presentation is available on the Catholic Relief Services Website at <https://diosav.org/sites/all/files/socialservices-ORB-hunger-banquet-setup.pdf>

**Opening Prayer:**

O God,  
 To those who have hunger, give bread.  
 And to those who have bread,  
 Give the hunger for justice.  
 In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**Food is distributed in this manner:**

- The first group will have a complete meal served to them including meat, vegetable, potatoes, bread, desserts and a variety of drinks. These people may have more than one serving if they want.
- The second group will be able to choose one small serving of meat and vegetable, choice of one drink from a serving line.

- The third group will get a bowl of rice for their table and a pitcher of water. Each is given a wooden bowl and a paper cup.
- No utensils are provided to them. This should be the largest group.

\*\*\*It is effective to have a presentation while people are eating. Some groups may want to invite a speaker who has experienced life in a third world country. Former Peace Corps volunteers, missionaries, or refugees are possible choices. As an alternative, show a short video on food, poverty and developing countries.

**After several minutes of eating under these circumstances, participants may be reminded that nothing prevents them from sharing whatever they have.**

### **Discuss:**

After the meal, discuss the following questions as a group of the whole or in small groups depending on the size of the banquet:

1. How did you feel when you realized what country group you had been assigned?
2. How did you feel about those who were assigned to other country groups?
3. What did you learn through this banquet?
4. What can we do to reach out to our neighbors in need after we leave here?

### **Closing Prayer**

After the discussion, the leader may offer a prayer of concern for those in need and all may sing "We Are Many Parts" by Marty

Haugen, G.I.A. Publications, 1980, or another song which emphasizes our connection and call to share our gifts.

### **Option Two (Using snack foods)**

Prepare slips of paper with country names as described in the first option and place in a paper bag.

Share a potluck dinner but do not include dessert as part of the meal. (You may decide not to have dinner and just do the following activity.)

After dinner ask people to come forward to receive their game pieces for the next part of the activity. Every one chooses a country name from the paper bag. Next, they are given 1, 2, or 3 poker chips depending on the wealth of the country they have.

The leader announces a treat. She or he has some great treats, some good treats and some average treats, but not enough of any one thing for everybody. The leader will sell the treats for poker chips to the highest bidders!

After the participants have time to experience the unfairness of the situation, but before anything violent happens, allow the group to talk about their actions and feelings. If they haven't come to the decision to share, nudge them towards this.

### **As They Enjoy Their Treats, Discuss:**

1. How did you feel when you realized that you did not have enough to buy a nice treat?
2. How did you feel when you saw others buying nicer treats than yours?
3. How did you feel when we began to share our resources?

## Closing Prayer Service: Luke 12: 15-32

Give previously chosen participants one or more separate sheets of paper upon which is printed a verse the gospel of Luke 12: 15-34. These people come forward and assemble themselves in numeric order and clearly proclaim the Word.

- 15 Then he said to the crowd, “Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one’s life does not consist of possessions.”
- 16 Then he told them a parable. “There was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest
- 17 He asked himself, ‘What shall I do, for I do not have space to store my harvest?’
- 18 And he said, ‘This is what I shall do: I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones. There I shall store all my grain and other goods<sup>19</sup> and I shall say to myself, “Now as for you, you have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry!”’
- 20 But God said to him, ‘You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?’
- 21 Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God.”
- 22 He said to [his] disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life and what you will eat, or about your body and what you will wear.
- 23 For life is more than food and the body more than clothing.
- 24 Notice the ravens: they do not sow or reap; they have neither storehouse nor barn, yet God feeds them. How much more important are you than birds!
- 25 Can any of you by worrying add a moment to your life-span?
- 26 If even the smallest things are beyond your control, why are you anxious about the rest?
- 27 Notice how the flowers grow. They do not toil or spin. But I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of them.

- 28 If God so clothes the grass in the field that grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith?
- 29 As for you, do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not worry anymore
- 30 All the nations of the world seek for these things, and your Father knows that you need them.
- 31 Instead, seek his kingdom, and these other things will be given you besides.
- 32 Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom.
- 33 Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy.
- 34 For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.

Close with the song "We Are Many Parts" or other song which emphasizes our connection and our call to share our gifts.

**Do at Home:**

Families can decorate a box in which to save money to give to an agency that works to relieve world hunger.





## EIGHT

### **Called to Be Disciples, Together with Other Families**

*Nurturing our CFM community and helping it to grow*

#### **GATHER**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

Begin by listening to “Salt and Light.” by Jami Smith.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cd\\_gvnAV8U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cd_gvnAV8U).

Let us pray.

Lord, we love the light.

We surround ourselves with bright and shiny things.

We mix with cheerful and happy people.

We keep our lamps lit, our fires burning and our salt at the ready.

But, Lord, we know

that there are dark and unsavory places inside us:

Places we have not allowed your light to shine;

Activities we have not allowed your salt to flavor;

Dark and unsavory attitudes

that affect the lives of those closest to us;

Dark and unsavory actions and words that hurt

and leave scars we cannot heal.

Forgive us, Lord.

Bring your light and healing touch to every part of our lives:

every relationship, every activity, every word.

And as we begin to experience your forgiveness and healing, help us to move out into the dark and unsavory places around us. Help us to bring your light and hope, your joy and peace to those who need it most.

We pray for those for whom grief and loneliness are constant companions:

for those who have lost loved ones,

for those who have lost their jobs

or whose livelihood is threatened,

for those who have lost their way and have lost hope.

We pray for children growing up in a technological world,

for whom technology has become a substitute for love and affection.

We pray for all of who are suffering especially those

for whom even asking for help is beyond their own ability.

Help us discover your light shining in unexpected places.

Help us find ways to share the flavors of your love

with a hungry world.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

- Ian Webster, "Salt and Light: A Prayer"

## **REPORT ON ACTIONS**

*Take time to report on how you engaged in action as a result of the last meeting. It is encouraging to hear what others are doing and prompts us to put our faith into practice more intentionally*

## **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew (5:13-16).

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine

before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

1. Christ instructs that we *are* the salt of the earth and the light of the world- not that we *can be* or that we *should try* to be. Based on what you know about the qualities and uses of both salt and light, in what examples in your family life do you see ‘salt’ and ‘light’ making a difference?
2. Sometimes light can be too bright, and salt can be too salty. Give examples when you have seen light and salt backfire--in a religious sense.

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY**

### ***Salt***

“When Jesus said, ‘You are the salt of the earth,’ He meant that all of His disciples were to serve as preservatives, stopping the moral decay in our sin infected world...“Those first disciples would have been intimately familiar with this function of salt. Without refrigeration, the fish that they caught would quickly spoil and rot unless they were packed in salt. Once salted, the fish could be safely stored and then used when needed. The spiritual health and strength of the Christian is to counteract the corruption that is in the world. Christians, as salt, are to inhibit sin's power to destroy lives. This in turn creates opportunity for the gospel to be proclaimed and received....

### ***Light***

“In Matthew 5:14, Jesus tells His disciples, ‘You are the light of the world’. As ‘salt,’ the Christian is to counteract the power of sin. As ‘light,’ we are to illuminate or make visible. Our lives are to be an on-going witness to the reality of Christ's presence in our lives. . . .

“In Philippians 2:15, the apostle Paul says, ‘Believers, you are to shine as light in the world.’ The Greek word used here is very similar to the word for the beacon that a lighthouse emits. [A]

beacon is bright and unmistakable in its purpose. It warns of danger. It directs to safe harbor. It provides hope for those who have lost hope... God uses His children, like beacons from a lighthouse, to show the way to Him.”

- Dr. Michael Youssef, "You Are Salt and Light"

“Small groups enable (us) to fulfill the ‘one another’ commands of Scripture. We are told to love one another, instruct one another, pray for one another, bear one another's burdens, even kiss one another. Small groups provide unique opportunities to build relationships where we can hold one another accountable, pray for one another, challenge one another, and support one another. ....Not only can leaders model (this) discipleship, but they can disciple the individuals in their group to do it as well. Everyone should be discipling someone.”

- Dave Dunham, "Small Groups, Big Impact”

Small faith communities, such as CFM groups, serve as beacons.

From your own experience, **OBSERVE:**

1. Name ways you see the salt of God’s grace keeping our society from decay.
2. What areas of darkness in our culture stand out as needing the Light of Christ?
3. Salt heightens the flavor of foods. Name ways CFM has heightened the flavor of your life.
4. Name some first steps your CFM group can take to be a beacon of CFM’s light to other families in your parish.

In the Light of Christ’s teaching, **JUDGE:**

1. How can your formation in CFM help you and your family become salt of the earth, the lamp on the lampstand, and the city on the hill?
2. What do you value the most about the relationships you have nurtured through CFM, and how have they become models for other relationships in your family and community?
3. In what way do you believe you could best attract more families to join CFM?
4. Why do you think many families resist the invitation? How might we overcome this resistance? How do we keep from becoming discouraged?

Based on what has been discussed, **ACT:**

1. Further explore the concept of being “Salt of the Earth” in a concrete way to group members. Work in collaboration with your parish Youth Ministry. Here is an example of a lesson from Creative Youth Ideas:  
[www.creativeyouthideas.com/resources/object-lessons/salt-of-the-earth-an-object-lesson-for-youth/](http://www.creativeyouthideas.com/resources/object-lessons/salt-of-the-earth-an-object-lesson-for-youth/)
2. Discuss a plan to implement the Family and Community Meeting, “Caring for God’s Creation,” found at the end of this program guide, p. 72.
3. Speak to at least two other families in the next month about your experience in CFM and invite them to attend your meeting in the fall and the Family/Community meeting in the summer. These are great ways to grow CFM.
4. As a group, make a plan to mentor a new CFM group in your church or community in the upcoming year.

## TAKE CFM HOME

1. Use a fun song--such as, "He is The Light," [www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzoOmdZrx8--](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzoOmdZrx8--) as an energizing start to a discussion of why and how we are called to light up the world.
2. Get together with other CFM families to share the light of Christ with one another and keep the flavor of your fervor intense.

## LOOK AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

*Set a date to meet again to choose the next program book for the group.*

*Who might serve as a lead couple or contact person for this group, helping to organize communication between members and with the national office?*

*If children have come to the meeting with their parents, gather them to join you in the closing prayer.*

## CLOSING PRAYER

We thank you, God, for the saints of all ages;  
For those who in times of darkness kept  
The lamp of faith burning;  
For the great souls who saw visions of  
Larger truth and dared to declare it;  
For the multitude of quiet and gracious souls  
Whose presence has purified and sanctified the world;  
And for those known and loved by us,  
Who have passed from this earthly fellowship  
Into the fuller light of life with you. Amen

- Frances Sheridan Goulart

And let us pray the Prayer for the Christian Family Movement (found on Page 80).

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FAMILY & COMMUNITY MEETING  
FOR SUMMER

## Caring for God's Creation

This event is an experience of outdoors, both its beauty and the challenges we face in preserving that beauty.

At an initial planning meeting, families gather and volunteer to visit one of the suggested sites before the group gathers together again. It is important that the group cover a variety of sites.

Sometimes two families may wish to make the trip together. This activity can

be sponsored for a parish or the CFM group could invite other families both from the parish and from other parishes, to join and get a feel for CFM.

### Suggested sites:

1. Visit a City Park, National Park or public garden. Pay careful attention to trees, shrubs and plants that provide food, like nuts, cones or berries; water, and shelter for its inhabitants. Try to identify different bird calls and animal tracks along the way.
2. Visit a beach, lake, swamp or everglade park. Observe the condition and quality of the water. Look for animal shelters in grassy areas or brush. What creatures might live in this habitat? What steps are being taken to protect it from erosion or overuse?
3. Visit a farm or orchard. Find out where the fruits and vegetables on your dinner table come from and how they got from the farm, to the grocery and finally to your home. What



measures does the farmer take to grow safe and healthy food for consumers? What does he do to help farmland stay farmland?

4. Go to a recycling center. What do they re-cycle? What does re-new, re-use and re-cycle really mean? How are recyclables sorted? What products are made from recycled materials? What percentage of the population of your city recycles?
5. Tour a landfill. What happens to your “garbage?” Does it stay in your community or is it transferred to another location? Is some of that garbage recycled? Is some of it hazardous and what happens to it then? What animals or insects live at the landfill? What do you see and smell?
6. Go to a water treatment facility. Where does the water go once it disappears down your drain? How does “used” water become clean water that we use to bath, cook and drink? How much water does the average person use? How much is wasted?
7. Each group will need a notebook and a designated recorder to report their observations. Group should also plan to travel with a trash bags to collect litter.

### **THE PLANNING MEETING:**

Come with ideas for a site you and your family would like to visit. Choose teams and make dates with one another to meet at the chosen site. Set a day and time when the participants will meet in a central, pleasant outdoor spot. Plan a potluck picnic for that date. Advise participants to avoid paper, plastic, disposable and pre-packaged food or serving items. Serve in reusable containers and use washable utensils.

*On the day of the picnic:*

### **GATHER AND PRAY**

Leader: Pope Francis tells us, “As stewards of God’s creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling.”

- *Speech in Manila, Philippines, January 18, 2015*

And so, let us pray Psalm 24, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit:

“The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,  
the world, and those who live in it.  
for he has founded it on the seas,  
and established it on the rivers.  
Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?  
And who shall stand in his holy place?  
Those who have clean hands and pure hearts.  
who do not lift up their souls to what is false,  
and do not swear deceitfully.  
They will receive blessing from the LORD,  
and vindication from the God of their salvation.  
Such is the company of those who seek him,  
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.”  
Amen.

### **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

A reading from the book of Genesis (1:26-31).

“Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fertile and multiply,

and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' God said, 'See, I give you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.”

**OBSERVE:**

1. Where did you experience beauty? Where did you experience disgust?
2. Where did you experience concern for the environment?

**JUDGE:**

1. Why was this experience worthwhile?
2. How does the way we live affect other people, the environment and the creatures of the Earth?

**ACT:**

1. Make a list of what families, individuals and communities can do to make the world a safer, cleaner and more beautiful place to live.
2. Write a pledge to recycle; conserve water; buy recycled products; drive less and car pool more; mulch grass clippings and use natural pesticides.

**CLOSING**

Recite “The 10 Commandments of the New Earth,” developed by the Environmental Teach-In Committee of Milwaukee, Wisconsin,

Leader: To All the Children of the Earth:

Readers:

1. You shall live in harmony with all the earth and with every living thing.
2. You shall return to the earth all the organic treasures which she freely gives to you.
3. Do not put greed above duty, nor wealth above wonder.
4. Do not demand useless things for trade for unnecessary things.
5. Every man (woman and child) shall have his fair share of the earth and no more.
6. You shall fight to protect the earth; it is your home.
7. Be masters of the technology and not its slaves.
8. You shall make beautiful and enduring whatever is to be made.
9. You shall keep faith with future generations and be wise guardians of their inhabitance.
10. When all this is done, come together with all your brothers (and sisters) and sing of the joy of life.

Sing or listen to "Canticle of the Sun," recorded by Marty Haugen. GIA Publication Inc., Copyright 1980, or choose another song which praises God for creation.

## **CELEBRATE**

Enjoy your picnic. Use washable utensils.

**Craft Project:** Make "Faith Rocks" and leave them behind for others to find. Directions may be found here:

<http://www.catholicconundrum.com/catholic-rocks-project.html>

# About the Christian Family Movement

When families join the Christian Family Movement, they become part of the national lay movement that is CFM-USA. CFM is a movement because it has a constituency that subscribes to its philosophy, methodology, and theology.

The mission of the Christian Family Movement is to promote Christian marriage and family life, to help people to live the Christian faith in everyday life, and to improve society through actions of love, service, education and example. This is our mission. If we accept this mission, we will support it with our time, talent, and donations.

Membership entitles a family to receive program books and a subscription to ACT, the national newsletter, and supports the development of the Christian Family Movement around the world.

## THE COMMUNITY OF CFM

People group together by accident, choice or design, but community is more than this. Members are united in mutual respect (even when they disagree), and they are willing to be honest about how they think and feel.

As people get to know each other, trust and openness seem to develop around a fellow member in need or for a neighborhood concern. As you work together to answer a need, community forms. Community learns how to laugh at foibles, takes time to relax, play, recreate its humanity, and evaluate its needs and direction.

CFMers look upon one another as friends and allies in the midst of their parish communities. They look to CFM as a source of continuing education, lively support and regular encouragement.

In 2019, CFM celebrates 70 years of forming families to be missionary disciples through action. CFM-USA is a member of the **International Confederation of Christian Family Movements**,



which is active in more than 40 countries with more than 100,000 families. All the members of the ICCFM share the Observe, Judge, Act methodology. Visit

[www.iccfm.org](http://www.iccfm.org) to see explore CFM's worldwide activities.

On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009, CFM held a gala jubilee celebration at the University of Notre Dame, and the Hillenbrand Institute awarded CFM its prestigious Salt and Light Award. CFM participated in the Marriage Summit of Catholic family life organizations, conducted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2012 and 2013, and CFM leaders participated in consultations for the Synod on the Family in 2016.

The National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers presented CFM with its special-recognition award in 1993 for enhancing the quality of life for families. CFM was one of the founding members of the Families against Violence Advocacy Network, and in 1999 received FAVAN's Circles of Peace Award.

In 1987, CFM contributed to a consultation with the U.S. bishops in preparation for the synod in Rome on the Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World. CFM also provided input to the U.S. bishops' 1994 pastoral, *Follow the Way of Love*.

## HOW CFM IS SUPPORTED

The major source of financial support for CFM comes from the annual donations of CFMers. This is the lifeblood of the Movement's continued existence. First-year members are asked to contribute \$10; for continuing members the suggested donation is \$40 per family. Many generous volunteers donate additional time, talent and treasure to make CFM available throughout the world.

Please register at [www.cfm.org](http://www.cfm.org) to belong to CFM, or you may return a membership form provided by your group leader along, with your annual donation to CFM, so that your membership may be recorded and you can receive CFM resources. For more information about CFM, visit [www.cfm.org](http://www.cfm.org), or contact the National Office: [director@cfm.org](mailto:director@cfm.org) or 800-581-9824.

## NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Share your group's actions with ACT, the national electronic newsletter of the Christian Family Movement, by sending information to [director@cfm.org](mailto:director@cfm.org). Photos of groups in action are always a plus.

## CONNECT WITH CFM ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- [www.facebook.com/ChristianFamilyMovement](http://www.facebook.com/ChristianFamilyMovement)
- Share your group's Actions with [director@cfm.org](mailto:director@cfm.org) to be featured on our Facebook page.
- Twitter account @CFMACT. Please use #CFMACT when posting about your group.

## GUIDANCE FOR GROUP LEADERS

You will find leader aids at [www.cfm.org](http://www.cfm.org). Additional assistance for group leaders is published regularly in ACT.

Contact [director@cfm.org](mailto:director@cfm.org) to find CFM group leaders in your area. They will be happy to speak with you on the phone to guide you and share their experience of CFM.

## OUR SYMBOL

The CFM symbol shows the Holy Family in silhouette behind a modern family. The family is an active agent of evangelization, participating in the mission of Jesus. With the model of the holy family to guide them, the CFM family is moving forth to bring the message and the love of Christ to a changing world. Father, mother, sons and daughters are Christian emissaries to the world.



## **Prayer for the Christian Family Movement**

Holy Trinity, you are a family.

We believe you wish our families to reflect your heavenly community.

Jesus has called us to family ministry and asked his heavenly Father not to take us from the world, but to deliver us from evil.

And so, we pray for the Christian Family Movement, that present members may grow in grace and that new families may join us.

Through good example and prayer, may our homes become that which you desire them to be: true domestic churches, temples of your glory, and schools of humanity, ushering in the reign of God.

Amen.