

Christian Family Movement

Starting Your Parish CFM Chapter



Parish
Program
2019

Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers. James

The Church speaks clearly of the duties of family members to one another that build a radiant faith... But the Church doesn't stop there; it also speaks of the relationship between families and the larger culture, the duty of service, working for the common good, welcoming strangers, and giving voice to the Christian conscience. That is the message; you are the messenger.

- "A Radiant Faith: The Gift of Families to Families."
Address of the Most Reverend Anthony M. Pilla, Bishop of Cleveland
Christian Family Movement National Conference, August 5, 1995

Starting a Parish CFM Chapter is easy!

1. Dear new Leaders, thank you for responding to the inspiration to start CFM in your parish! Your parish leader may have appointed you, or you may be the one who introduced CFM to your pastoral team. Thank you!
2. Consult with your pastor and parish staff about your CFM group. If they have not yet seen this manual, give the pastor or staff member the *Why CFM?* handout on page 8 and the special letter addressed to them on page 9.
3. Next, identify a Starter Group of 4 to 6 couples or individuals who want to grow in their faith. Ask them to make a commitment to meet for 6 to 12 months to get CFM started and help you organize and manage your new chapter.
4. The Starter Group members are potential leaders of additional parish CFM groups within your parish chapter, known as "Action Groups." They will be able to decide about leading a new group after their Starter experience.
5. Introduce your team to CFM by sharing this leader manual with them and exploring the CFM website with them, <http://www.cfm.org>.
6. Share the work. Assign the roles and responsibilities to the group members. **See the list of roles on P. 4.**
7. Meet with your team and choose one of CFM's Program Books, either print or digital books. Most groups start with *For Happier Families* or *Meeting Jesus Changes Everything*, but any of the program books can be used. Program books are a benefit of membership. Descriptions may be found on the Program Books page of the CFM website. <https://www.cfm.org/program-book-descriptions>.
8. In order to solidify and strengthen their relationship, the Starter Group should try to meet every 2 weeks for either a meeting from the Program Book or a social or service event. This frequency is important to develop strong relationships within the group.
9. Become members of the Christian Family Movement. See why your membership matters on page New members join CFM for \$10/family dues for first-year members. We encourage you to join online at <http://www.cfm.org/join-renew>. A paper membership form is also provided at the end of this booklet.
10. Your Mentor: Each new Parish Chapter is matched with an experienced CFM Leaders who volunteers to serve as mentors. You are welcome to schedule a video conference

Spiritual Advisor

It is not necessary, but certainly recommended, to have a Spiritual Advisor for CFM in the parish. This may or may not be a member of the clergy.

The role of the Spiritual Advisor is to help form the Starter Group members in their development as future Action Group Leaders and to serve as a spiritual resource to CFM member. They can also help by meeting with the Starter Leaders and reviewing the study materials with them before the group's meetings.

call with your mentors or schedule a visit, if possible. Call 800-581-9824 or <mailto:office@cfm.org> to set up a call.

11. Many of the programs come with a leader guide to provide background for you and enrich the discussion. Leader guides are free to download from CFM.
12. Next, schedule the first meeting in your home (preferred) or a parish meeting room. Decide if you want to provide babysitting for children and make arrangements.
13. Follow the simple meeting plans in your program book. See page 5 of this guide, too.
14. Between meetings, call the persons who were invited, but who did not attend.
15. Call to remind people of upcoming meetings.

Maximizing the Growth of CFM in Your Parish

At the end of the initial 6 to 12 months, the Starter Group ends. The individuals and couples from that group are now ready to form and lead their own Action Groups and become mentors to future Action Group Leaders. **Promotional materials, page 10-11.**

During their first year as Action Group leaders, the Starter members continue in their roles as social events coordinator, group actions coordinator, membership coordinator, and treasurer for the chapter as a whole. The leaders in your parish CFM chapter, with the spiritual advisor, meet to choose the CFM program for the year.

We recommend that Action Groups meet weekly or twice a month until the group is well established. For one meeting a month, use the program book from CFM. Each Action Group should plan a second gathering each month to do a social or service project that includes the whole family.

Plan 3 chapter-wide events for the year -- service, social or spiritual -- and invite new people to experience CFM as members of an Action Group. The most successful chapters shuffle the composition of the action groups each year.

National CFM Office
P.O. Box 4779
Woodbridge, VA 22194-4779
Website: www.cfm.org
E-mail: director@cfm.org
Phone: 800-581-9824

CFM Group Roles and Responsibilities

It works well for leaders to serve in their roles for 2-year terms.

Action Group Leaders

- Coordinates calendar and scheduling
- Review and select Program Book for each year unless this is done by an overall coordinator in the Parish
- Beginning of each year, coordinates someone to take each task (see below)
- Oversees the functioning of the group
- Coordinates the facility, host and facilitator of the meeting
- Prepares for the meeting (with the group's spiritual advisor, if applicable) or using the specific leader guide available at http://www.cfm.org/leader_guides

Social Event Coordinators

- Plan a group social event for the year
- Coordinate, communications, enlist help, etc.

Action Coordinators

- Provide a group action for the year
- Coordinate site, communications, enlist help, etc.
- Suggest additional spontaneous actions within the group

Spiritual Coordinators

- Plan a spiritual event for the large group (group attendance at Mass, living rosary, adoration, etc.)
- Make sure each large group event has some spiritual component)

Registration Coordinators

- Collect membership information and dues
- Order/pay for books and report membership information to national office
- Coordinate assistance for those who need it

Other Helpful Coordinator, as needed

- Babysitting, Communication, etc.

The CFM Meeting Format

Gathering Prayer – The group always begins with a prayer, read or sung, prepared or spontaneous.

Report on Actions – (5 -10 minutes)

Group members report on the progress of CFM actions taken individually, as a family, or by the group. This is the appropriate time to describe needs in your family, parish or community that have come to the attention of the members.

Scripture Reflection – (15-20 minute discussion)

Quiet reflection and discussion about the scripture helps group members to step away from the ordinary pressure and distractions of the day and begin to focus on the issues of the meeting from a Christian perspective.

Social Inquiry – (60 -90 minutes) The Social Inquiry (*Observe* and *Judge* and *Act*) is the heart of the CFM meeting.

The importance of this section of the meeting cannot be over-emphasized. Unless the group reports objective facts during the discussion, the meeting will not lead to action.

OBSERVE – *The world around you.*

Gather information from your community or from your own personal experience. Often facts can be opinions of others, too. At this stage of the meeting, members should refrain from expressing their opinions about facts. 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. The chance to editorialize comes later.

JUDGE – *In light of Christ's teachings,*

judge. For CFMers, to judge is a comparison of how things are with how things would be if in accord with Gospel values. To make such a comparison requires objective observation as well as a sincere effort to understand the teachings of Jesus.

ACT - *To make a difference.*

Members choose an action to bring “the way things are” more in line with “the way things should be.” The best actions come from the group as a result of the discussion. Actions in the program book are just suggestions. An action may be done as an individual, a couple, a family, a small group, or a parish. The key is to take something away from the meeting and resolve to do something to live out the Gospel in your everyday life.

Look ahead to the next meeting – Set the time and place. Aim to meet twice a month as a group, either for an official meeting or informally or to do an action together. Read the Observes for the next meeting.

Prayer – The meeting concludes with a prayer. The program book usually has a suggested prayer or another may be chosen by the group or the discussion leaders. Alternatively, a member of the group might lead a spontaneous prayer.

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

We recommend **sharing the guidelines on this page and page 7** with all of your members. This could be read out loud at the beginning of the first meeting each year and then re-read whenever new members join.

Read through the lesson and decide how you'll share the leadership. Get any needed materials together. You might want to find a special prayer or song to set the mood for the meeting.

Call or email the members of the group 3 or 4 days before the meeting, give directions, encourage them to prepare their observes and report on actions in preparation for the meeting.

Involve your entire family in preparing for the meeting and greeting guests.

Start on time and end on time. Remember the social time after the discussion is also important for the building of community...and enjoyable!

Be aware of time. It is important to complete the OBSERVE, JUDGE and ACT sections for a good CFM meeting. If the group spends too much time on one question, help everyone to get back on track. Decide which of the remaining questions need to be discussed. Keep things moving.

CFM uses OPEN SHARING for discussion. Leave the response open to the group. Let the group know that no one is required to answer any specific questions. People can "pass" without answering if they do not wish to share. Be sure that all who wish to speak and share their ideas and questions can do so.

Don't be afraid of silence. People often need time to organize their thoughts before they respond. Allow this to happen. However, it is also important to recognize when to rephrase a question or move on.

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

Encourage couples to **take action** and make their **observations** between meetings. These are the things that actually help us **live out** what we talk about.

CFM Group Agreement

We are here to help and support each other!

In order for this to happen, this must be a safe and comfortable place, and responsibility for the group must be shared. The following guidelines help foster this kind of spirit among us.

1. Confidentiality is essential. Anything said here will remain here.
2. A good listener never interrupts the person who is speaking. Listen with an open mind. Realize and respect that each person sees life from a unique perspective.
3. A good listener does not try to “fix” the situation.
4. Everyone is encouraged to participate to the extent that they wish. Be aware of our limited time frame, however, and allow time for all to share. If a person has a “heavy heart” and needs extra time, we will let the Spirit guide us.
5. Respect each one’s journey of faith. Growth is different for each person. Change and transformation come in many ways!
6. Respect everyone in the group by letting the host know when you will be unable to attend. Attendance at meetings is important in building trust and community.
7. Many groups have a coordinator family or team of coordinating families that take responsibility for organizing the group for the year. Support these people! Help where you can with social activities, outreach and promotion of CFM. Consider serving as a coordinating family for a year or two. Many groups find that rotating leadership responsibilities meets the needs of all families.

Why Membership Matters

The Christian Family Movement functions much like your family. In addition to the great benefits experienced, there are also some simple expectations associated with belonging. We hope each CFM member takes initiative and supports the efforts of their local group leader(s).

Each member of the CFM family is also asked to do their part to financially support the day to day efforts of the larger organization as well as the expansion of the movement. First-year members are asked to contribute \$10/family dues and returning members dues are \$40/family annually. Additional donations are always welcome to help cover those who struggle to contribute financially and reap even greater rewards for marriage and family. We ask each member of the group to join the CFM family using a paper form or online at <http://www.cfm.org/join-renew>.

Membership entitles you to belong to the community of CFMers across the country and globe, select the program materials you will use that year, our monthly ACT e-newsletter. You may also elect to receive Parenting Pointers and/or Marriage Moments by email.

When Someone Asks You: ***Why CFM?***

The Christian Family Movement is a parish-based national network of small groups of Catholics and their families. A typical CFM group consists of five to seven families meeting one to two times a month in one another's homes or at the parish. They follow special programming that focuses on topics of importance to their marriages, families, church and community. Families benefit in at least six ways.

First, CFM provides a Christian community in which individuals, marriages and families are supported and grow. Parents interact with other parents who have similar morals and values. Families socialize together and develop an extended family connection. This interaction between families helps to build a strong family support system.

Second, this experience helps husbands and wives spend time together and develop common interests. Various aspects of the program enhance the couple relationship. Experience shows that CFM is a non-threatening environment for inter-faith marriages. Single parents also find support in a CFM group.

Third, CFM enriches families. Much of what is discussed in the small group meetings of parents is carried back into the family. Parents learn how to be better parents and how to build happier families.

Fourth, CFM nurtures spiritual growth and provides Christian formation for the entire family. CFM challenges participants to be seven-day-a-week Christians. It helps individuals and families apply the gospel to their everyday life.

Fifth, CFM is a catalyst for creating parish and community leaders. CFM challenges individuals to develop their gifts and talents and use them in the service of their communities.

Sixth, CFM increases social consciousness. It helps families to be aware of the problems in their families, neighborhoods and community. CFM encourages them to dialogue and make changes guided by their faith.

CFM Enriches Families and Builds Faith

✓ ***In a recent survey, CFMers said that CFM helped them live their faith.***

CFM meetings are practical and help members see the connection between faith and daily life.

✓ ***The survey said that CFM helped members become better parents.***

Members support each other in tough decisions and give each other new insights into family life.

✓ ***Couples felt that CFM helped them to be better spouses.***

CFM meetings improve communication between spouses on important issues of faith and family. CFMers support each other in living their Christian commitment to marriage and family life.

Introducing Christian Family Movement



Families benefit in at least six ways from joining CFM.

1. CFM provides a Christian community in which individuals, marriages and families are supported and grow. Parents interact with other parents who have similar morals and values. Families socialize together and develop an extended family connection. This interaction between families helps to build a strong family support system.

2. This experience helps husbands and wives spend time together and develop common interests. Various aspects of the program enhance the couple relationship. Experience shows that CFM is a non-threatening environment for inter-faith marriages. Single parents also find support in a CFM group.

3. CFM enriches families. Much of what is discussed in the small group meetings of parents is carried back into the family. Parents learn how to be better parents and how to build happier families.

4. CFM challenges participants to be seven-day-a-week Christians. It helps individuals and families apply the gospels to their everyday life. CFM nurtures spiritual growth and provides Christian formation for the entire family.

5. CFM builds self-confidence because it challenges individuals to develop their gifts and talents. It is a catalyst for creating parish and community leaders.

6. CFM increases social consciousness. It helps families to be aware of the problems in their families, neighborhoods and community. CFM encourages them to dialogue and make changes.

Dear Pastor, Family Life Director, Adult Faith Formation Leader, or DRE:

You are looking for a way to help families find enriching activities and meaningful, faith-building experiences for their family -- without overburdening your parish schedule!

The Christian Family Movement has the tools lay leaders can use to start small family enrichment groups for themselves! CFM materials are Catholic and are inclusive of inter-church families. They are welcoming to couples and single parents, too.

CFM, a network of small groups of Catholics and their families, that focuses on topics of importance to their marriages, families, church and community. Adults plan ways to include their children in the actions they plan at their meetings.

The U.S. Catholic Bishops recommend CFM in *Follow the Way of Love* and *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*, as well as in their planning materials for the National Pastoral Initiative on Marriage.

CFM is a member of the National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers, NACFLM.

- ❖ In a recent survey, CFMers said that CFM helped them live their faith. CFM meetings are practical and help members see the connection between faith and daily life.
- ❖ The survey said that CFM helped members become better parents. Members support each other in tough decisions and give each other new insights into family life.
- ❖ Couples felt that CFM helped them to be better spouses.

CFM meetings improve communication between spouses on important issues of faith and family. CFMers support each other in living their Christian commitment to marriage and family life.

For more information, please contact the National CFM Office, 800-581-9824 or email office@cfm.org.

The Christian Family Movement www.cfm.org
- Forming Disciples through the Church of the Home

Tools for Inviting More Families to CFM



BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS & TEXT MESSAGES

WHAT IS CFM?

The Christian Family Movement is a new group starting here at St. _____. We are looking for couples who want a place to share values, faith and a place to experience Jesus in their lives and the lives of their family.

CFM is hosting coffee and doughnuts on (date) and (location). Stop in and find out what we are up to and see if CFM is for you.

CFM OFFERS FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT FOR TODAY'S BUSY FAMILY

Families, fun, and faith in action -- that is what the Christian Family Movement is all about. Through prayer, discussion, and action families grow in their faith and provide support and friendship to one another. Families learn to live their faith in their everyday lives, at home, in our communities and in the market place. If you want to learn more about this new group here at St. _____, attend the upcoming information night on (date), at (location).

OBSERVE- JUDGE- ACT in CFM

Observe – Judge –Act is a method that develops everyday Christians. Members of the Christian family Movement are asked to OBSERVE a situation from daily life. They JUDGE whether or not it needs to be changed based on Gospel values. If so, they ACT to make a difference. They undertake a simple action that will help to change the situation; that will bring persons and the world closer to what Christ wants. By this process, they change themselves. They grow in love and understanding of God's world, and develop a way of life that puts their faith into action in their homes, workplaces, and communities.

Helpful hint: Our logo communicates our mission. Copy it from the CFM website and send it to your bulletin editor so they can run the logo alongside your announcement.

A SHORT PULPIT ANNOUNCEMENT

Many of us are looking for a way to enrich married life and find meaningful, faith-building activities for our families. Even though we all have busy schedules, we want to make time to build strong families and happy marriages. We are starting some small groups at St. _____ that will meet (weekly or twice a month) for 90-minutes. The groups will set their own schedules and plan their own activities, depending on the interests and ages of their members. We will use a program book from the Christian Family Movement – CFM. The U.S. Catholic Bishops recommend CFM in their pastoral letter to families, *Follow the Way of Love*, and CFM is a member of the National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers. An information meeting will be held at _____ (place, date, time.)

Invite Your Friends to Try CFM Sample Invitation



Dear _____,

Many of us are looking for a way to enrich our family life and find meaningful, faith-building activities for our families. Even though we all have busy schedules, we want to make time to build strong families and happy marriages.

We have found a simple way to make this happen and we would like to invite you to try it with us. We are beginning a small group of three (or four or five) couples or individuals at our home. All who want to grow in faith as a family are welcome to join.

The group will meet (recommended: twice a month) for 90-minutes. (Details of your meetings here: The group may either meet as adults only or they may decide to bring their children with them to the meeting. Some groups may like to start their meetings with a meal. Some might just offer light refreshments. If the group will have a babysitter at the meeting, explain that here. The details are totally up to each group.)

For our meetings, we will follow a program book from the Christian Family Movement -- CFM -- a national network of small groups of Catholics and their families. Besides our regular meetings, the group will plan to do a social or service project that includes the whole family. Annual dues are \$10/family for new members; annual renewal is \$40/family. You will receive a program book (title here) that will guide our meetings. We can take turns hosting the meetings in (our homes or at the parish),

To find out more about CFM, visit <http://www.cfm.org>. The FAQ section explains the movement well. The U.S. Catholic Bishops recommend CFM in their pastoral letter, *Follow the Way of Love*, and in other church documents, and CFM is a member of the National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers.

We think it will be fun getting together, talking about issues that matter to our families, planning meaningful activities, and building our faith at the same time. We hope you can come.

Your friends,

Rose and Chris



Christian Family Movement

PO Box 4779
Woodbridge, VA 22194

Phone 800-581-9824

www.cfm.org
director@cfm.org

As a member of the Christian Family Movement, you will receive a copy of a CFM program guide, the ACT e-newsletter, and other helpful marriage and parenting emails as requested below.

Your membership dues support an international ministry to families.

Additional donations are appreciated and help support our efforts to reach out to new families.

Membership Type and Dues

- New Member, \$10/family
- Renewing Member, \$40/family
- Additional Donation _____

Total _____

All donations are appreciated and are tax deductible. CFM is a 501(c)(3) organization.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Note for Returning Members: If your information has not changed in the last year, you may fill out only Name(s), Parish and Email Address.

Name(s), First and Last 	Parish Parish City/State CFM Coordinator Name	Today's Date First-Year Member? Yes No
Preferred E-mail His Preferred Email Hers	Ages of Children 	Home Phone (with Area Code) (____) _____
Member Address 	City, State, Zip 	Cell Phone (with Area Code) his (____) ____ - ____ hers (____) ____ - ____

New and Returning Members: Please fill out all sections below.

<p>All members receive ACT, our newsletter sent via email monthly.</p> <p>Would you also like to receive? His Hers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage Moments <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting Pointers <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Neither, thank you</p> <p>Both are short, weekly emails.</p>	<p>Program book:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I received a book already <input type="checkbox"/> I need a book-please send: _____ (Book Title) <input type="checkbox"/> Do not send book</p>	<p>Please check all that apply:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am the coordinator for CFM at my parish. <input type="checkbox"/> I am a Deacon. <input type="checkbox"/> I work for the Diocese/Archdiocese. <input type="checkbox"/> I am a parish staff member. <input type="checkbox"/> I am a small group leader.</p>
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I, the undersigned, understand that during the course of my membership in the Christian Family Movement ("CFM"), I am entitled and encouraged to submit articles, text, images, drawings, and other creative works to CFM for inclusion in CFM's publications or on CFM's website. I hereby declare that I, as an author, am the exclusive copyright owner of any works which I submit to CFM, and indemnify CFM of any and all potential liability for copyright infringement on such works. Furthermore, by submitting any such creative works to CFM, I hereby grant a non-exclusive license to CFM to use such works in any publication, production, website, or any other creation of CFM.

_____ Date _____

Please sign here