

Christian Family Move-  
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A Look at CFM.  
ADT 8020



A  
LOOK  
AT  
CFM

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY MOVEMENT

## OPENING PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your divine love. Send forth Your Spirit, and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray.

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit instructs the hearts of the faithful, grant us by that same Holy Spirit ever to love and cherish what is right and just, and constantly to enjoy His consolations. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*This booklet is designed to introduce the Christian Family Movement. Use it as a guide for a few bi-weekly meetings of five to seven interested couples. If after the fourth meeting you agree to continue, send for the regular beginning book called For Happier Families from which these meetings are taken, and join thousands of others who find in CFM a way to cultivate dialogue between husband and wife, parents and children, and families and the community. We must learn from one another and learn to love one another.*

*Use the order blank on inside back cover.*

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## THE ROLE OF THE LAYMAN

"I have known lay apostolate groups which are closed sections, study groups, friendly gatherings, in which the participants split hairs four ways, carry on endless discussions on nothing, and drain their minds and hearts dry. They beat around the bush; they never go to the center of things. They admire each other and do nothing. They bore each other methodically. They fear the world of time, they are afraid they may slip into it. They have no spirit, they have no courage, they have no daring. Inevitably, people who are worth anything stay away from such groups. The lay apostolate will not attract worthwhile human beings unless it is engaged with the human, and therefore with the things of time. More than ever the current of history is toward action, toward whole hearted action, and not toward talk—talk which is childish, niggling inanity alongside the profound transformation for which the world is waiting. There are methods for training altar boys. These methods are not suited to lay apostles, because the aim of the lay apostolate is not to form altar boys. Its aim is to bend social pressure in the direction of life.

"We have to drop double-talk . . . Matter exists. The body exists. Society exists. We can't get along without matter, without the body, nor without society. A disembodied lay apostle would be the practical negation of these realities in the midst of which we live and which are part of ourselves—matter, the body, society. It would constitute the sin of angelism.

"In taking flesh, the lay apostolate comes out of its dream and gets into reality, into the social, the material, the economic, and the temporal. It acts."

Let the Lay Apostolate Take Flesh,  
Cardinal Saliege, Archbishop of Toulouse, France.

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## INTRODUCTION

### What Is the Christian Family Movement?

It is a married couples' movement. Couples come to meetings together; they do most of CFM's work together.

It is concerned that people live fully human and Christian lives. The genius of CFM is that it offers us a way to show Christ-like love not only for our own family but also for other families and indeed all other people. So, we know from the start that the title, *For Happier Families*, means "for happier families and people everywhere."

Each group in CFM is made up of five or six couples, usually from the same parish, who meet in one another's home:

- to know Christ more deeply through what he said and did;
- to learn about Christ's action in the liturgy and to discover how to be more fully a part of the worshipping people of God;
- and to work out how to join this worship to daily life.

The method CFM groups use to carry out this plan, especially the last part, is the Inquiry. In an Inquiry a group discusses a situation on the basis of facts they have gathered between meetings, makes a judgment on it, and decides to act.

### What Is a CFM Meeting?

**I CHRIST THE WORD** — The SCRIPTURE part of the meeting (*about 15 minutes*) enables couples to share their reactions to Scripture passages. Couples are usually pleased to discover how much more meaning they find when they talk about Christ—sometimes for the first time in their adult lives—that they meet Christ as a person—hear him speak to them intimately as he did to the apostles—in the gospel.

A few simple questions are printed to help get discussion going.

**II CHRIST THE LIFE** — The LITURGY part of the meeting (*also about 15 minutes*) is a time to look at the Church as the people of God. In this introductory book we talk over how and why we worship as a people. We come to see how the sacraments bring us close to God. And we explore the idea of the people as the Church.

Again, a few questions are raised—not student-teacher questions but discussion-starters.

**III CHRIST ACTING THROUGH THE PEOPLE** — In the SOCIAL INQUIRY, the most important part of the meeting—*about 45 minutes*—the couples look at the world around them and ask themselves, "Would Christ feel that all measures up to his human and divine

standards in our families, in our neighbors, in our parish, at our work, in our community, in our political life, in the affairs of nations, in our cultural life?"

In order to do this "looking around" is an orderly way, CFM uses a method proven by other groups in the lay apostolate and singled out for high praise by Pope John XXIII (in his encyclical, *Christianity and Social Progress*), called

### **OBSERVE**

### **JUDGE**

### **ACT**

- a. The members of the group OBSERVE the life around them (a quick glance at the index on pages 4 and 5 will give you an idea of some of the topics).
- b. They JUDGE what they see in the light of the Church's teaching or, in other words, Christ's teaching, notably his teaching through the Popes and the Council; in the light of what is fully human, fully Christian.
- c. They agree to ACT, as they think necessary—a simple action that will make a situation or condition of life more pleasing to Christ.

### **Some Things That CFM Is Not**

... *CFM is not a social club.* Couples get to know and accept each other on a different basis than in the usual social gatherings. And they do find friendships more enduring and more solidly grounded.

... *CFM is not intended solely for "personal spiritual development."* Of course, every organization of the Church has this as its goal, because every Christian has this as his goal. And members of CFM state as their most common reaction to CFM that it has, in fact, been of great help in developing a deeper spiritual life within them.

Still, the main effort of CFM is to direct the concerns and the efforts of its members outward

- toward that *neighbor* whom we must love, because he is Christ,
- toward that *world* which Christ so loved that he died to redeem it,
- toward that world of *lay life* in which we, as laymen, can especially help to complete his redemption.

... *It is not* confined to improving one's own family, or even to those concerns that we readily agree are family concerns. As one cardinal put it, "It is wrong to contain the apostolate of the family within the walls of the family. The apostolate of the family is as wide as the apostolate of the Church."

## **How Can We Start CFM?**

Talk with your parish priest. Explain to him that you would like to start CFM and ask him about a chaplain.

Often the priest may suggest other couples who might be interested. Before starting, you should find out if there are other CFM groups in your diocese. They may be able to help you start. (The CFM office at 1655 Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60612, has a list of groups.)

If yours is the first CFM group in your parish, a common plan is to rotate the leading of the meeting until every couple has led once, and then to choose a leader. Often the chaplain names the leader. Sometimes one couple emerges as the natural choice of the group: they have the time, the ability, the interest. Your group will be the *section*: the basic CFM group.

If there is already a section in your parish, a couple from the section will be leading your group, which is called an *action group*. But leadership is a part of every CFM couple's future; so some groups rotate the leading of the Scripture and Liturgy portions of the meeting in order to give everyone experience.

## **Outline of a CFM Meeting**

OPENING PRAYER (Inside front cover)

Sometimes groups sing a hymn which expresses the feelings of the group. Some groups find that spontaneous prayers reflect the concerns of the group. Anyone should feel free to offer such a prayer at the beginning or end of the meeting.

## **SCRIPTURE**

## **LITURGY**

CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

These should be brief. The accent should be on saying what encourages. The chaplain can highlight good insights of the members, suggest unifying threads in a scattered discussion, add ideas at times.

REPORTS

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY**

Social Inquiries are introduced at the end of one meeting and dealt with at the next. The members preview the up-coming meeting by reading the Observes and making assignments as needed, to be sure that a good set of facts will be available. More on this below.



## CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

The chaplain should be present at the meetings of the nuclear group in each parish, called the *section*. But except on rare occasions he should not take part in the discussions. If he were to talk during the meeting, even to answer questions, everyone would defer to him as an expert and this might discourage members from thinking for themselves, from speaking their thoughts and feelings. He speaks briefly twice at each meeting—after the liturgy discussion and at the end of the meeting.

The handbook, *CFM and the Priest*, can help a chaplain to understand this new style of guidance and its meaning in forming lay apostles. His remarks should not just be on the "pious side." He can reassure the members that concern with problems of lay life really is a big part of their human concern and of a genuine spiritual growth. He may reinforce their will to take actions, even when they are difficult. And he will tell them again and again, in words and manner, that he believes in them, has confidence that they will grow in goodness and competence.

## PLAN YOUR NEXT MEETING

CLOSING PRAYER (inside back cover)

## (REFRESHMENTS)

This has been placed in parentheses because it is and it isn't part of the meeting. A short social with simple refreshments such as rolls and coffee helps members to know and understand one another better. It should not become more important than the meeting proper.

## More about the Social Inquiry

Married couples have many roles to fill. Carrying out their duties as parish member, employer or employee, and citizens of their nation and of the world *is* their role as lay people in the Church and in the world. All of us agree that it is important to do as well as possible in each of these roles. The problem is: How can we figure out what, concretely, we ought to do—right now.

The inquiry method of OBSERVE, JUDGE, ACT is accepted today as an effective way to give ourselves on-the-job training in how to live out these many roles.

Group discussion of actual happenings is the kind of adult education that can produce practical results and can change the adult in the process. It gives persons who have had experience and are willing to learn more a chance to evaluate a situation.

*In the meeting*, members learn-by-doing and from each other to think through ways to improve daily life—both their own everyday performance and the actual conditions of life around them. They

weigh this reality against what is humanly right, against what Christ teaches.

*Between meetings*, members learn-by-doing, too. They collect facts in conversation with friends, neighbors, those at work, and people one meets casually, in reading, by going to meetings of groups. Having considered the facts, weighed them against what is right, and sorted out the do-able from the impractical, they act.

## Leading That First Meeting

In outline, the first meeting is no different from any other. But in that first meeting you are "saying" many things to those who have come, by the way you work as a leader. You want to create an easy, open climate in which people will say, freely and truly, what they think and feel. It's not like a meeting run with Robert's Rules of Order.

Experts tell us that some very simple guidelines can help to set a new group off on the path to effective thought and work in this new format. Here are a few of their pointers, adapted to CFM's meeting plan:

- Meet, from the very beginning, in homes. It helps to keep things casual, friendly, informal.
- Take time for couples to introduce themselves, with some brief personal detail. Try to get to know the first names of all present.
- The husband of the leader couple actually leads the meeting. The wife can help indirectly to keep the meeting moving along.
- Offer a BRIEF simple explanation of CFM.
- Invite someone to read the scripture passage, identifying this as one of the three key parts of the meeting.
- Wait. Give people time to think, to re-read. Choose your opening sentence for the discussion carefully. Be sure it doesn't invite a "yes" or "no" answer. Make it very open. One might simply ask: "What does this passage mean to you" or "What particularly struck you in this passage?" Then wait—patiently—for someone to venture an answer.
- Listen. Don't interrupt or correct people. You are not a teacher. Don't aim to cover all the ideas in your mind. Your job is to draw ideas from others and to keep the group discussing. *Discussion about the Scripture passage should be limited to 15 minutes.*
- Try to sense when enough has been said and move on.
- Invite someone else (another family, a different sex) to read

the Liturgy selection. Again, *keep your first question open*. Remember, no matter how tempted, don't call on someone to answer. Wait.

- Again, listen. During lulls, help the group to see where they agree; where they are vague. Don't decide. End the discussion before it loses momentum.
- *Try to keep the discussion of the Scripture and Liturgy sections of the meeting short. Sometimes these parts of the meeting take up time that ought to be given to the Social Inquiry.*
- Ask the chaplain for his brief comments on the Scripture and Liturgy discussions.
- Move on to the Social Inquiry. Make clear that this is the main part of the meeting. Begin by saying something like this: "The Social Inquiry of the first meeting is about something near and dear to CFM—neighbors. Let's talk over what we mean by our neighborhood. . . . Who'd like to get us started?"
- When five minutes remain, ask the chaplain for his remarks. When he concludes, lead the closing prayer, and ask the chaplain for his blessing.
- Arrange for the next meeting. ("Who would like to have the meeting at their house?") People usually want addresses and phone numbers.

Quotations from the documents of Vatican Council II are from the following collection:

*The Documents of Vatican II*, an Angelus Book, The America Press, New York, 1966, \$.95.

Scriptural quotations are from the *Jerusalem Bible*.

## MEETING 1

PRAYER (see inside front cover)

**SCRIPTURE** (15 minutes)

Ask for a volunteer to read this passage from the Scripture.

### Doing God's Will

Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, 'Rabbi, do have something to eat;' • but he said, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' • So the disciples asked one another, • 'Has someone been bringing him food?' • But Jesus said:

**'My food  
is to do the will of the one who sent me,  
and to complete his work.'**

JOHN 4, 31-34

### DISCUSSION

- What do you think Christ meant by his answer to the disciples?
- Discuss "food" as Christ uses the word here.
- How do we go about doing the will of God each day?

*Many couples have found it helpful to take an individual action based on the scripture discussion.*

*The leader should use questions to encourage people to discuss ideas and express feelings freely. He should not call on anyone by name to answer. If there is a long pause, he should not worry or ask another question. His waiting shows everyone in the group that in CFM the members are responsible for the discussion.*

*Anyone should feel free to start the discussion or to take part in it at any point. This first discussion should be shorter than in future meetings, to allow time for questions the group might have about CFM.*

*Be sure to read the hints and suggestions scattered through the book. They are printed on gray backgrounds to make them stand out from the meeting proper.*

**LITURGY** (15 minutes)

### THE OTHER

When we recognize someone, we normally speak to him or her—people we pass at work, people in the elevator, the mail man, a neighbor, the person who waits on us at the store, and a number more. Why do we speak to others? Why do human beings relate to each other? At times it may be easier not to go out of yourself to

speak to another. Is there something human and natural about presenting ourselves to another through words?

#### CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

The chaplain comments briefly on the Scripture and Liturgy parts of the meeting.

#### SOCIAL INQUIRY (45 minutes)

### Families Make Neighborhoods

In this meeting you are talking about your neighborhood, what it is and how you relate to the people of this neighborhood. Families make neighborhoods. They may be families in the usual sense of the word, or they may be couples whose families have grown and left; widows, widowers, broken families or lonely people who live together as a unit—a family. Families make neighborhoods and Christian families have a mission to this neighborhood: to go out, go forth to the families of their neighborhood. They have to learn to know their neighbor so that they can love their neighbor by meeting their needs.

*For this meeting you will base your Observes on past experience. After this time, you will bring to the meeting the Observes you have made between meetings. Remember, Observes are the reporting of facts. Oftentimes the "facts" are the opinions of others. But the opinions of the group about the facts and discussion of the facts should be voiced during the Judge section of the meeting.*

#### Observe

1. How big is your neighborhood?
2. How well do you know your neighbors? Children's names? Whether someone in a household is ill? Be specific.
3. Give examples of how families have helped their neighborhoods. You can be very specific without giving names.

#### Judge

- Christ is in your neighborhood today. Is he happy with what he sees?
- Probably, when you reported the Observes, everyone told about neighborhoods of different sizes. What did the size seem to depend on?
- What makes some families able to be a good influence?
- What role should you as active Christians play in your neighborhood?



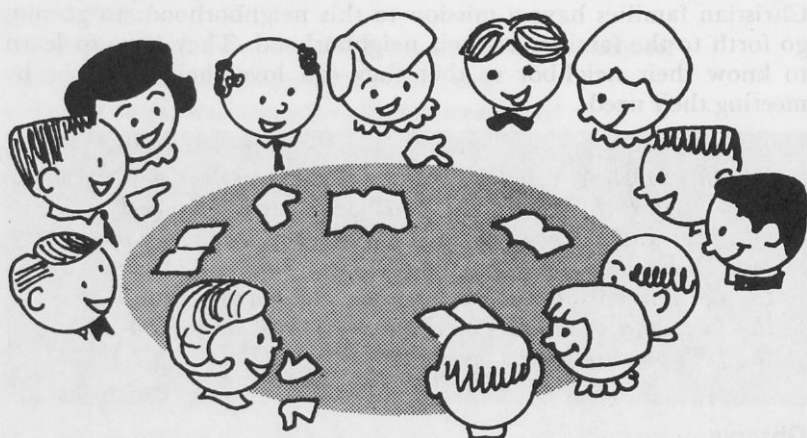
## Act

After all the talk, the group decides on an action. It is this which makes CFM different from a discussion group. The action should be simple. It should be practical. It should grow out of the Judge. It should be one agreed on from among several suggestions. Now and then the book will offer some ideas for action. As a rule, though it is best for a group to work out its plan to do something to put the judgment into practice. After you have chosen an action, check: is it for others?

Write down the Action the group agrees to do.

As an extra action, ask all couples, if they have not already done so, to read carefully the introduction to this book.

**The best actions come when everyone makes a suggestion.**



## PLAN YOUR NEXT MEETING

- Decide which couple will take the next turn as host couple.
- Agree on the time of meeting.
- Have someone read aloud right now the beginning of the Social Inquiry of Meeting 2, through the Observes. Does anyone have ideas about other observations that would make this a good inquiry?
- Do this at every meeting. Allow time for it.
- Get a list of addresses and phone numbers of the group. Ask someone to make a copy for each couple.

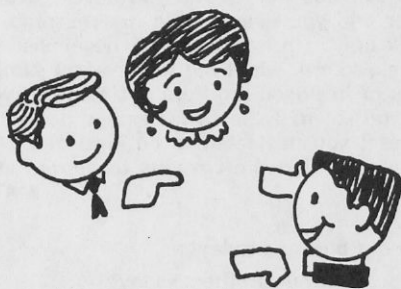
## CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

Before the closing prayer the chaplain is invited to make some remarks on what has been said to help members see better how to show their love of Christ by how they care about others.

PRAYER (see inside back cover)

After the prayer the leader asks the chaplain to give the couples his blessing.

**Simple refreshments help the members to get better acquainted. Serve no more than coffee or soft drinks and cookies, or the like.**



*The group should choose a secretary to make brief notes of the actions decided on by the group and of the place and date of the next meeting. However, each couple should write down in their own book the meeting place, date and action.*

## SCRIPTURE (15 minutes)

### You Did It to Me

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. • All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me." Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?" And the king will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me." Next he will say to those on his left hand, "Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me." Then it will be their turn to ask, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?" Then he will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me." And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life.'

MATTHEW 25:31-46

## DISCUSSION

- Who are the least of our brothers today?
- How do we help the least of our brothers today?
- In whom do we find Christ when we help people in need today? How much is this a part of our day-to-day thinking?

*The couples should read the Scripture passage between meetings. They should think about it themselves and talk it over with each other. They will come to experience Christ through their own reflections. They will come to know him better by telling their thoughts to their spouses and to others. They will experience Christ more deeply by having the reflections of others added to their own, because each one will see different parts of the same story as helpful and important.*

## LITURGY (15 minutes)

### SACRED WORD

People of faith present themselves to *the* person, God, in words. Our own experience tells us that most of our prayer has been set patterns of words, repeated no matter what the occasion. Our non-Catholic friends who pray out of other traditions often do not repeat prayer but speak their own words to God.

—How do you account for differences in approach to prayer?

—What value do you see in each approach?

### CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

### REPORTS

The leader asks the secretary to read the Action agreed on at the last meeting. Then he should let each member report on whether or not he has done the action and describe it briefly. This is the one part of a CFM meeting in which everyone is expected to speak in turn.

## SOCIAL INQUIRY (45 minutes)

### Communications in Marriage

Friendship has a tremendous role to play in the growth of self-knowledge and self acceptance. . . . A couple who take their friendship for granted, who are too busy for each other, can become strangers even while living in the same house. The lack of communication gives way to the haunting suspicion that he doesn't understand or she doesn't care. . . .

One truly great vista of marriage is to see it as a lifetime of friendship. As they (a couple) grow, they will experience more and share more deeply. . . . The mystery of the (whole) person is never exhausted where there is reverence.

Life without plan becomes haphazard living. Their days can become a series of struggles as they wobble on from crisis to crisis, unless they plan together. *Communication is not merely a comfort; it is essential to common achievement.*

Together they need to discuss their economic state, their social and physical needs, their spiritual needs, the needs of others.

### Observe

1. In conversation with three couples learn if they "are too busy for each other."

Do they do things *together*, or share in mutual interests?

Do they plan together?

Do they really communicate, and if so, how do they accomplish this?

## Judge

- Christ has shown us the value of the whole person. Why is it important that couples know one another, not be too busy for each other?
- Why is it important that couples do things together?
- Do you think that husbands and wives can rely on ordinary ways of communicating and planning, or are there special skills which they have to learn and work on?
- How can our group help couples grow in friendship through better communications in marriage?

*During the meeting the leader should occasionally sum up what has been said. Sometimes he can ask for a volunteer to do this summarizing. Summing up tends to show the progress being made and helps to keep the discussion moving towards the practical conclusion.*

## Act

Some ideas:

- Invite another couple to the next meeting of your CFM group.
- Share a cultural experience: read the same book or magazine article, go to a good movie or play together.
- Pick out a television program which revolves around a family, examine the roles and characteristics of husband and wife which the program depicts.

If you have had a lively meeting, you should come up with an action independent of these hints.

Write the ACTION agreed to at the meeting in this space:

### PLAN YOUR NEXT MEETING

Read the first part of the Social Inquiry of Meeting 3. Are the Observes clear? Are they enough? Too much?

### CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

The chaplain might find it helpful to keep notes on the discussion.

PRAYER (see inside back cover)

### BLESSING

The leader should ask the chaplain to give his blessing to the group.

Note: Keep your refreshments simple.



## MEETING 3

PRAYER (see inside front cover)

**SCRIPTURE** (15 minutes)

### Follow Me

And he was walking along by the Sea of Galilee he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net in the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.' And at once they left their nets and followed him.

Going on a little further, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they too were in their boat, mending their nets. He called them at once and, leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with the men he employed, they went after him.

MARK 1:16-20

### DISCUSSION

- What kind of people did Christ call?
- They left their nets at once. Why so suddenly?
- How does Christ call all of us?

*—Listen, so you can add to what is said.  
—Try to see what Christ's teachings and actions really mean.  
—It is seldom a good idea to spend time on the learned background of the Bible or to quote from books written on the Scriptures.*

**LITURGY** (15 minutes)

### THE PEOPLE'S WORK

When Christians gather to worship as a community of faith-people, this is a liturgical event. The very word liturgy means the people's work: the work of the people in doing worship. People come together to do their work in recognizing their God. They do it as a people. They recognize each other as the other people of faith in the community.

- Do people in your parish realize that the liturgy is the worship event which should involve them as a whole community?
- Do people in your parish feel that the liturgy of the Eucharist is their joint work?

CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

REPORTS

Be exact in reporting. "This is what I did" . . . "I will get my chance to finish this action in the next couple of weeks" . . . "I took no action."

## **SOCIAL INQUIRY** (45 minutes)

### **Parents and Children Grow in Love**

The bishops in Council talked about the love between parents and children. "As living members of the family, children contribute in their own way to making their parents holy. For they will respond to the kindness of their parents with sentiments of gratitude, with love and trust."

(*The Church in the Modern World*, article 48)

They talked also about the value of each person. They spoke about the fact that we must not only have children but also see to their education, to their development as persons. These are part of responsible love.

#### **Observe**

1. Give concrete examples of how parents show love for their children:
  - How do they display affection?
  - How do they show respect for the "special-ness" of each of their children?
  - How do they look to the full development of each one's God-given gifts, each one's power to become a whole person?
  - Do any express their feelings on these points?
2. Give examples of how children show love and respect for their parents; for their brothers and sisters.
3. Give examples of how children show respect for other adults; for other children.

#### **Judge**

- How does having children enable parents to love more—each other, their children, other people?
- How do children learn to love in the home—their brothers and sisters; their parents; other people?
- What factors seem to affect parents' ability to help their children grow and develop?

#### **Act**

- Use daily experiences to develop attitudes of sympathy and understanding in your children.
- Take some action having to do with the relationship between children and people in authority.
- Is there something that your group can do to help communicate your ideas to others?

#### **PLAN YOUR NEXT MEETING**

By now you will have a pattern of meeting-dates and hosts. Follow

this pattern, marking the dates and noting at whose home the meeting will be held.

Read the first part of the next meeting. Need to make assignments?

CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

PRAYER

BLESSING

Note: The social part of the meeting is important to help members become better acquainted.

## RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD

"This Council realizes that certain modern conditions often keep couples from arranging their married lives harmoniously, and that they find themselves in circumstances where at least temporarily the size of their families should not be increased. As a result, the faithful exercise of love and the full intimacy of their lives are hard to maintain. But where the intimacy of married life is broken off, it is not rare for its faithfulness to be imperiled and its quality of fruitfulness ruined. For then the upbringing of the children and the courage to accept new ones are both endangered." (Ibid. The Church in the Modern World, Article 51.)

"Parents should regard as their proper mission the task of transmitting human life and educating those to whom it has been transmitted. They realize that they are thereby cooperators with the love of God the Creator, and are, so to speak, the interpreters of that love. Thus they will fulfill their task with human and Christian responsibility. With docile reverence toward God, they will come to the right decision by common counsel and effort.

"They will thoughtfully take into account both their own welfare and that of their children, those already born and those which may be foreseen. For this accounting they will consult the interests of the family group, of temporal society, and of the Church herself.

"The parents themselves should ultimately make this judgment, in the sight of God. But in their manner of acting, spouses should be aware that they cannot proceed arbitrarily. They must always be governed according to a conscience dutifully conformed to the divine law itself, and should be submissive toward the Church's teaching office, which authentically interprets that law in the light of the gospel. That divine law reveals and protects the integral meaning of conjugal love, and impels it toward a truly human fulfillment." (The Church in the Modern World, Article 50.)

## MEETING 4

### PRAYER

*Are you starting on time? If not, find out if the hour is convenient for all. Do your meetings last more than an hour and a half? If they do, what is the biggest problem in sticking to a schedule?*

### SCRIPTURE (15 minutes)

#### Do This and Life Is Yours

There was a lawyer who, to disconcert him, stood up and said to him, 'Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the Law? What do you read there?' He replied, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.' 'You have answered right,' said Jesus 'do this and life is yours.'

LUKE 10:25-28

#### DISCUSSION:

—How do we love God?

—What does it mean to love another as much as you love yourself?

### LITURGY (15 minutes)

#### DOING JUSTICE

Christian people worship weekly on the day of the Lord. We celebrate the paschal mystery and share in the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ in order to reaffirm in our own lives the presence of the Christ, the risen Lord. We celebrate the *work* of God in the life of man, working to make him just; we celebrate the work of man in God's kingdom, working to be just, to do justice, to bring justice into the world.

To say it another way—we may call it the Good News (the Gospel) being done again and again by God in our life, and the good news of justice being done again and again by man on earth.

We come to celebrate all of God's justice being done here and now. This gives us reason to celebrate the continued presence of our Lord and Savior working here and now—in our lives and through us in the lives of others.

—Do you see God's justice being done in the world today?

—Who are doing the work of God's justice?

—Is our own worship-community involved in working out God's justice? Do we have reason to celebrate?

CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

REPORTS



## SOCIAL INQUIRY (45 minutes)

### Responsible Parents

Vatican Council II talked about the need for couples, "by common counsel and effort," to come to right decisions about family size. Such phrases as "their own welfare and that of their children," "the parents themselves should ultimately make this judgment," "they cannot proceed arbitrarily," "consult the interests of the family group, of temporal society, and of the Church herself," "conjugal love . . . human fulfillment" tell us that we need to know what the teaching church is saying and what families around us are saying and doing about making responsible decisions on family size.

#### Observe

1. Read Articles 49, 50 and 51 of the *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, for a fuller view of what the Council said about marriage and parenthood. Someone should be assigned to get and circulate these paragraphs.
2. Prior to the next meeting each couple should discuss together:
  - their ideas about the need for every person to grow and to develop fully
  - the personal dignity of husband and wife
  - the qualities of married love
  - and the moral values which they think should guide it.
3. Each couple in the group talk to several other couples. To get a variety of responses, perhaps you will want to make assignments, so that some talk to engaged couples and newly-weds; others, to couples with growing families; others, to older couples with completed families.
  - a. Ask them what factors they believe should enter into a couple's decisions on family size.
  - b. The Council document lists the welfare of the children already born as a factor to be considered. How could their well-being be threatened? How could it be enhanced by additional children in the family? Ask couples for comments.
  - c. Do they consider that all this discussion of family size may seriously lead to a lack of trust in the providence of God?

*Should you really do all of these Observes? More? Others? The list of Observes is not a magic formula. Think hard, ahead of time, about the meeting as a whole—the way the problem is stated, how the meeting relates to others in the book, to the general goals of the program, to the abilities of your own group.*



### **Judge**

- Would you say truly Christian principles were considered by the couples interviewed in discussing the joys and burdens of raising a family?
- Did you think they sufficiently appreciated the value of children to their marriage and to their own personality growth?
- Assess their views about the welfare of children as a factor in determining the size of a family.

### **Act**

- Would a couples' workshop on "Christian Approach to Responsible Parenthood" be a helpful service?
- Promote a Cana Conference in the parish or get another couple to attend one with you.

*A Cana Day is a day of recollection for married couples. Many couples who attend Cana Days are eager to work to improve family life. If you do not have a Cana center in your diocese, you can obtain further information from: The Cana Conference, 720 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or from the Family Life Bureau, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.*

LOOK AHEAD. ARE YOU LOOKING FAR ENOUGH AHEAD?

CHAPLAIN'S REMARKS

BLESSING

The leader should ask the Chaplain to give his blessing to the group.

PRAYER

## CLOSING PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God, may Your grace enkindle in all men love for the many unfortunate people whom poverty and misery reduce to a condition of life unworthy of human beings.

Arouse in the hearts of those who call You Father, a hunger and thirst for social justice and for fraternal charity in deeds and in truth. Grant, O Lord, peace in our days, peace to souls, peace to families, peace to our country, peace among nations. Amen.

Christian Family Movement  
1655 West Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago, Illinois 60612

Dear Friends:

Please enroll us as members of the Christian Family Movement. We enclose \$3.00 for our yearly dues and \$2.00 for a copy of "FOR HAPPIER FAMILIES—An Introduction to CFM."

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(Print or type)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State or Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Diocese \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Since its very beginning  
the CFM has dedicated itself  
through its annual programs  
to objectives which can  
be summarized in these  
words of Vatican II:**

1954  
COMMUNITY

1955  
THE LAYMAN'S ROLE  
IN THE CHURCH

1956  
SOCIAL HARMONY:  
RESPECTING MINORITIES

1957  
PARISH LIFE AND EDUCATION

1958  
FAMILY LIFE AND ECONOMICS

1959  
POLITICAL AND  
CHRISTIAN LIFE

1960  
INTERNATIONAL LIFE

1961  
THE FAMILY, CENTER  
OF SOCIAL REBIRTH

1962  
CHRISTIANITY AND  
SOCIAL PROGRESS

1963  
THE PARISH, LEAVEN  
IN THE COMMUNITY

1964  
ENCOUNTER IN POLITICS  
AND RACE

1965  
INTERNATIONAL LIFE  
AND CULTURE

1966  
FAMILIES IN A TIME  
OF CHANGE

“... Of the many subjects arousing universal concern today, it may be helpful to concentrate on these: marriage and the family, human culture, life in its economic, social, and political dimensions, the bonds between the family of nations, and peace. On each of these may there shine the radiant ideals proclaimed by Christ. By these ideals may Christians be led, and all mankind enlightened, as they search for answers to questions of such complexity.”

THE CHURCH IN THE  
MODERN WORLD,  
ARTICLE 46