

Vol 54 • No. 1  
January-February, 2001

*ICCFM World  
Assembly  
July 25-29, 2001  
Maceio, Brazil*

*A delegation from the U.S.  
is being organized  
and US CFMers  
are invited to attend.*

*Contact the national office for  
more information.*

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## Christian Family Movement

### Passing It On

*by Steve and Nicole VanderVoort*

We were skimming through a recent edition of ACT the other day when a squib on the back page leapt out at us, "Mary Kay & Tom Halpin Start CFM Group at St. Vincent's Parish in Omaha." The Halpins! Yes, they were a wonderful young couple that we had "recruited" to be in the second CFM Group we had formed at St. Clement Parish in Chicago several years ago. They were such a joy, Tom with his laid-back sense of humor and Mary Kay with her low key but effective way of seeing that things always managed to get done. But St. Clement Parish is, for many young couples like the Halpins, a stopping off point at a very transient period of their lives. They move on to the suburbs or out to other areas of the country. And the Halpins did, too, after a few years, back to Nebraska where Mary Kay was originally from. We really missed them for a few months, but then other things came into our lives, until, that is, we saw their names in ACT. We dropped them a brief note saying how happy we were to have seen their names and learn that they are still involved with CFM. A few days later, we received an e-mail from them that said, in part:

"In getting the new CFM Group going at St. Vincent's, we shared some of our experiences in our wonderful St. Clement's Group. In particular we told the story of how we first got "cajoled" into attending a CFM meeting. We

met you folks at a Ministry Fair at St. Clement's and before we knew it, you were picking us up to take us to a CFM meeting. We talk about how we almost cancelled out, but couldn't do it because you guys were picking us up. And how glad we are at the way things turned out."

And we replied: "We just hope that a few years from now someone sends you as nice a note as you just sent us. Actually, we got involved in CFM over thirty years ago because one Sunday after Mass, an "older couple" shoved a cup of coffee in our hands and told us about a CFM meeting that was taking place the following week. We'd only been married a month or so when that happened, but that first CFM Group somehow changed our lives. Since we knew that we could never repay that couple for the kindness of that initial invitation in a way that they could make sense of, we just tried to pass it on by starting new CFM Groups wherever we went."

Well, the "older couple" we referred to was **Pat and Patty Crowley**, one of the founders of CFM. And now with Tom and Mary Kay Halpin passing it on, that's a third generation! At St. Clement we're now up to seven groups, and we hope to be soon starting our eighth. And, you know, we still feel we have not paid our original debt of Pat & Patty Crowley!

## CFM Service Team Meets

The CFM Service Team met the weekend of Nov. 17-19 in Ames, Iowa, the home of the National Office of the Christian Family Movement. The Service Team is composed of the national CFM officers. They meet once a year, in the fall, to assist the national presidents in carrying out the work of the movement between board of directors meetings.

Those attending were CFM presidents **Jan and Chuck Rogers** of Winchester, VA; vice-president, **Jane Buchbauer**, Winchester VA; treasurers **Jean and Terry Smith**, Des Moines, IA; chaplain **Father Bill Young**, Highland Hts OH; and past presidents **Jane and Paul Leingang**, Evansville IN. The meeting was hosted by executive directors **Kay and Gary Aitchison**.

The weekend's work involved discussion of CFM's five year plan and laying ground work for the future in the areas of programming, membership, and leadership development. The group also took advantage of the opportunity to visit the national office located on the second floor of the post office

building in downtown Ames.

The Ames Federation hosted a lasagna supper on Saturday evening for the group, and Ames CFMers

**Mary Kay and Bill Vogel, Judy and Frank Maly** and the **Franciscan Friars of St. Cecilia Parish** provided hospitality for the weekend.



*Front: Jean Smith, Jan Rogers, Jane Buchbauer, Jane Leingang, Kay Aitchison, Marlene Weisshaar (office secretary). Back: Fr. Bill Smith, Terry Smith, Chuck Rogers, Paul Leingang, Gary Aitchison.*



*At the Social hosted by the Ames Federation: Jane Leingang, Bill Vogel, Mary Kay Vogel, Paul Leingang.*



Andy Pozdol is the new CFM "webmaster." He has been improving the website since late last summer, and you can recognize the pages he has worked on by their yellow backgrounds. The website now has information on the history of CFM as well as "contact" lists and a map of the U.S. which you can click on to find CFM groups,

## Meet the CFM Webmaster

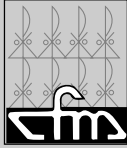
based on information from Kay Aitchison at the national office.

Andy has posted tables of contents of program books (1983-present) ACT (2000-present) and "Taking the Time to Make a Difference" columns by Paul Leingang. If you'd like to see ACT in full-color before it arrives in your mailbox, and if you'd like to read Paul's column weekly, check the website!

Andy looks forward to expanding the site's program resources and local contacts, and to including sets of "tips" on such issues as training leaders, setting up groups, picking and running social and spiritual

activities, hosting meetings, recruiting members, etc. When you've navigated the site, send Andy a note (pozdol@home.com) and let him know your reactions and your wish-list.

Andy and Judy are the parents of Melanie, 12 and Allison, 14. They have been in CFM since 1982, have attended three national conventions, and served as section leaders for Our Lady of the Wayside CFM (115 families) in 1999-2000. Andy is manager of data administration at TTX Company, a railcar rental firm headquartered in Chicago.



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CFM news articles and photos welcome. Subscriptions are free to members and \$8.00 for non-members.

Want to touch base with CFMers from around the country? Join CFM's e-mail exchange by contacting [cfm-exchange@cfm.org](mailto:cfm-exchange@cfm.org)

Parent to Parent  
by Mary Lou Gorman



God's Winter Gift

Let's stop all the grumbling and growling about snow. With fifteen snowstorms in the Midwest alone, God must be sending us a message. We should teach our children about the beauty of ice and snow. Point out to them the wonder of a snowflake by taking them outside with a hand lens and let them examine its beauty. The beautiful designs will awe them. Go for a walk after a snowstorm and point out the beauty of the snow as it clings to trees and evergreens. Show them how the snow sparkles like diamonds.

God really intends to *take away* some of our stress by slowing us down during and after a storm. Traffic moves slower and we walk slower. In a traffic jam, we can sit back and listen to our favorite music or the radio. We gather with the family by a fireplace. A snow day brings the family together to enjoy one another. Even neighbors become more helpful during a

storm emergency. Once, neighbors brought us milk for our baby when we couldn't get out. Neighbors share snowblowers to ease the shoveling that needs to be done.

Yes, we grumble when we need to clear the snow; but think of the fun the family has tobogganing, snowboarding, sledding, ice skating, and skiing. Building snowmen and making angels is a wonderful family pastime.

If you live the warmer parts of our country, you really miss a great deal of pleasure. Consider a winter vacation!

So remember to use a snowfall as a gift from our Creator. Let our children and grandchildren recognize the creativity of God whenever we can. Share with them all the fun and beauty God has created for us in his beautiful gift of snow.

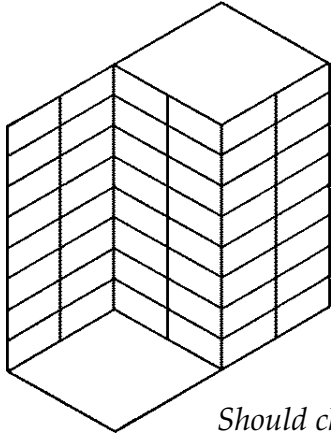
Let's go on a sleighride, and let it snow, let it snow!

(It sure creates more fun than rain!)

CFM at St. Edith, Livonia, Michigan:



Twenty-six families participate in CFM at St. Edith Catholic Church in Livonia, Michigan. Members are pictured surrounding a special altar cloth that the group has made over the years, adding new families each year.



## Idea Exchange

*Should children attend bi-weekly action group meetings? We do not seem to agree on whether this is a good idea or not. We have eighteen kids in our group and some parents insist that they would not attend the meetings if their children do not participate. Our thanks again in advance for sharing your wisdom.*

**Tere and Carlos Lopez**  
Miami, FL

### Meetings without Children plus Family Events

At St. Lawrence Martyr CFM, the children don't come to the "action meetings" which we hold about every three weeks. We have a very large membership, with about ten groups. We have family events about once a month (ice skating, Thanksgiving feast, bowling, etc.) We publish a list of babysitters and even have a group of girl scouts who babysit in the church hall on many meeting nights. Sometimes, people miss meetings or one parent stays home if no babysitting can be found.

We think it's very important to the family to have adult time for serious discussion away from the children.

*Mike and Sue Fitzsimons*  
Redondo Beach, CA  
(similar response by *Wayne and Sue Hamilton*, Ann Arbor, MI)

### Children's and Teens' Meetings

We offer a choice of meeting times, and assign the groups on that basis. Some groups have arranged to meet in the parish facilities after Mass. One of the older teens entertains the younger children while the parents are having their meeting.

Of course there is always the option of using lessons designed for children or developing a children's supplement to the adult CFM meeting. If several of the children are teens, they might hold their own meeting at the same time using the CFM teen book.

*Ken Grenier*  
Moline, IL

### "Horror Stories;" Analysis of Frustration

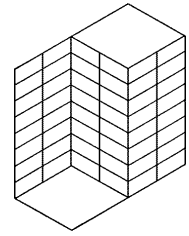
I've noticed that parents of small children seem to want the children there. Maybe it solves the babysitter problem, maybe they have some idealized notion of children sitting at their parent's knee learning tribal values, maybe

they think it won't "matter". In every case, it makes it difficult if not impossible to carry on an adult conversation. One couple tried to have their seven-year-old daughter entertain half a dozen preschoolers for the two hours. At least one of the preschooler's mothers was a nervous wreck by the end of the evening. One couple brought their eleven-year-old son to a meeting. He got an earful, as the subject was intimacy. My personal favorite is a cute toddler that commands the attention of everyone while someone is trying to make a point. At one meeting a father was visibly upset when his heartfelt experiences were upstaged by his own child.

Our groups, over the twenty years we've been in CFM, have worked best when the Action meetings are kept to just adults and non-mobile infants (still cute, but more likely to sleep). Older children are brought to other monthly events. Examples include Christmas caroling, sorting food/clothes for the poor, Seder-like meals, games night, talent shows, etc.

*Mark Maisonneuve*  
Eastpointe, MI

# Children at CFM Meetings



Our personal experience is that it's often been difficult to find babysitters, or the one we've scheduled has needed to cancel and we can't find a replacement on short notice. In this case, we're faced with the decision of taking our daughter to the meeting, one of us staying at home while the other attends the meeting, or not attending the meeting at all.

Other CFM friends have needed to leave meetings early to pick up their children from school functions. We just do our best to accommodate each other's schedules and childcare issues.

As Mark mentioned, the "best" environment for Action group meetings is adult-only or with small infants. However, it's not always possible to have this environment and get people to attend the meetings.

*Carol Jordan  
San Jose, CA*

## Some With Children, Some Without

I'd like to encourage some meetings with children and some

without. The key is to plan in advance so couples can arrange for sitters. One of the goals and benefits of CFM is that it gives couples tools to strengthen their marriages not just their families. A strong marriage makes for a strong family.

*Jan Rogers  
Alexandria, VA*

## Children At Another House

Your group is not alone in finding this difficult to handle. There are CFM program books available to use for children, but you need a leader for the children, and the children have to be old enough to participate. If children are younger, they need someone who will care for them using ground rules that will give parents maximum time to work at the meeting.

Kids can be restless and noisy, and if they are present it can be difficult for adults to concentrate and really open up, especially on more personal topics. That is why some groups offer sitting at one house and meeting at another. I think that is a pretty good idea.

*Jane Leingang  
Evansville, IN*

Next month's question:

*What factors should be considered  
when assigning CFM small groups?*

*What is a good size for a group?*

*How long should groups stay together?*

Respond via e-mail to CFM-exchange ([cfm-exchange@cfm.org](mailto:cfm-exchange@cfm.org)) or write to the National Office.

## The Best of Both: A Hybrid Approach

Our groups are all composed of families with young children. We hold our CFM meetings at church and provide a nursery for the children. I know this isn't the ideal because a "home" atmosphere might seem warmer, but it has worked beautifully for us. Our nursery workers are paid, with each family contributing \$2 for the first child and \$1 for each additional child per meeting.

Because we all have such young children, complete with illnesses, scout schedules, etc., attendance is sporadic, so we have moved to a "flexible grouping" plan that is working very well.

Since all of the groups are together in one building, we meet in a large group first, share the Gospel reading for the week and make announcements. Then we count off and break up into small groups. Each meeting we are with different people, but we are building a wonderful community. The children join us for the last half hour of the meeting and we have treats and juice/pop.

We only have 20-22 families right now so this is easy to manage. I think other groups could use this model for families with small children. We have had great success.

*Mary and Phil Whiteside  
Inverness, IL*



## Taking the Time to Make a Difference

by Paul R. Leingang

### *I'm mad at them, so I won't help you*

The wrong number was the right number — but more than the number was wrong. A few weeks ago, I learned of the death of a cousin. Visitation was scheduled at a funeral home in a city that is some hours of traveling time away from my home. I called Directory Assistance for the telephone number of the funeral home, so that I could call and confirm the time of the visitation, and so that I could get the address and driving directions. I called the number and a woman answered with a simple "Hello." I asked if I had reached the funeral home and she quickly told me that I had not. I asked if the number I had received from Directory Assistance was the number I had reached and she said it was. She told me the funeral home had been using her telephone number for three years, even though she had complained about it. I said I was sorry that my call had bothered her, but that I was trying to find out the time and the location of the visitation for my cousin. I asked her if she knew the correct number for the funeral home. She told me she was so mad at them, she was not going to tell me. And then she hung up. I called Directory Assistance again to report the problem. I hope it is straightened out now. But I can't help but wonder how many

people in the past three years have suffered an extra insult in their grief as they tried to find out information about a friend or a relative who had died. How many people struggled to learn at long distance about such emotion-charged, final earthly plans? If I understood the situation correctly, the woman should have directed her energies at the telephone company in charge of Directory Assistance. Maybe she

*How many people are caught in the middle of other people's hard feelings?*

and the funeral home could have worked together to get the problem solved. But even if I do not understand the situation correctly, the end result is the same. Because she was angry with someone else, she refused to be of any help to me.

St. Paul encouraged the Christians in Ephesus to "put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." He also told them, "Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and

give no opportunity to the devil." So often I have thought that anger only hurts two people — the angry one and the one at whom that anger is directed. Now I realize that sin has a social impact. The "injury" I suffered was not long-lasting. I found out everything I needed to know from another member of my family. The incident, though, stuck in my mind. How many people are caught in the middle of other people's hard feelings? How much anger — directed at a spouse or a neighbor or even a stranger — hurts a child or a bystander?



Take the time today to examine the impact of anger within your family. If there is a division brought about by hard feelings, take action today to resolve it. Family feuds never seem to stop with those who started them. Examine your parish or congregation. Are there people there who are hurt by disagreements between factions? Do what you can to bring peace. Study the impact of war and disagreement in the world on those who are innocent: How many children are suffering and dying in Iraq because of the anger among nations? How many children are killed or injured by land mines left by warring factions? After you have studied the answers to such questions, contact your elected leaders and convince them to make a difference in the world. Don't let the sun set on your efforts to protect the innocent from anger directed at others.

*Paul is director of communications for the diocese of Evansville, Indiana; and editor of The Message, the diocesan newspaper. His weekly column Taking the Time to Make a Difference is syndicated in eight diocesan newspapers. Paul and Jane Leingang are past presidents of CFM.*

*Excerpts from the eulogy  
by Sally Cadungog*

She was honesty and strength, compassion and caring, love and joyfulness:

She was a terrific mom and the beloved wife of John. Their love was tender and sweet, flowing out and warming everyone in their presence....

For Roz, I think the hardest thing she had to do was to give up her independence. Roz was a "giver." She was always doing things for others, and now she had to be a "receiver." She fought it every inch of the way, hanging on to the last thread of independence as long as she could: Then, she accepted the inevitable, and graciously let all of us do for her...

The Roz we all knew always looked young and beautiful. She was always dressed to perfection,

color-coordinated down to her shoes and socks, jewelry and make-up on, every hair in place. It was as if she was saying, "Life is wonderful. Here I am putting my best foot forward to start a new day." Being with Roz was like refreshing yourself at a spring. You felt



*Roz  
Tate*

stronger and more revitalized after just a short visit. She helped us all put our petty problems and inconveniences into perspective. And the big ones, she helped us to accept or overcome with prayer. The Holy

Spirit lived in Roz, and his love and strength poured out of her. ...

When people would stop me and ask, "How is Roz today?" I'd always answer, "Roz is good." Sometimes they questioned my judgment since Roz was losing ground physically. But when I looked at Roz, I looked past that failing body and saw the dynamic woman within. She was more vibrant and more alive than most people with no physical limitations...

The day before Roz died, we talked about that wonderful smile she had, and how it touched us so deeply. She said it was getting harder and harder to come up with it; and I told her that when that smile came, it was definitely worth the wait. When you think of Roz, remember that special smile.

*Faith,  
Love,  
and Caring  
Connect CFM  
in Two Cities*



CFM has been active in Altoona, PA for thirty years. Currently, there are six families-- Anthony, Bagley, Harkless, Irwin, Labriola, and Stevens, with Chaplain Father Paul Turnbull.

The family that moved away half a dozen years ago, John and Roz Tate, became the group's bond of connection with CFM in Lower Burrell, PA. Shortly after the move, Roz was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). During her illness, members of the Altoona group visited the Tates several

times, helping with weeding a yard work, taking dinner, or just visiting. The real heroes though, says Lynn Harkless of Altoona, were the CFMers of Lower Burrell. Sally Cadungog recruited and organized "Roz Squad" volunteers who cared for Roz throughout her illness.

Roz died at home last July, surrounded by those she loved, family, prayer group, and "Roz Squad" caregivers.

At the first meeting of the Altoona group in September, the group decided to honor Roz by

creating a series of CFM meetings, which has been sent to the National Office and which will serve as an important resource.

Lynn Harkless writes, "This was a uniquely warm and loving woman who touched everyone in a positive way. She was a woman of great faith, beautiful inside and out. We feel luck and privileged to have known her. She was...a guide and mentor that God gave us, to show us how best to serve others and live our lives."

CFM members at Sacred Heart Parish in **West Des Moines IA** started off the year with a "coat drive" donating more than 35 gently used coats to St. Mary's Family Shelter in Des Moines. They held a Family Bowling night in November and had a gift exchange of Christmas ornaments at their December meeting. **Mary and Kevin Emge** are CFM coordinators.

Long time CFM chaplain **Father Ed Hogan** of **Rockaway NY** was privileged to be chosen to concelebrate mass with Pope John Paul II when he attended the Priests' Jubilee Celebration in **Rome** last May. He also attended the 75th Anniversary of the YCW (Young Christian Workers) Movement in Belgium. CFM's roots spring from the YCW movement.

"Love Still Happens in Families" the 2001-02 program is being

critiqued/tested by CFM groups around the country. If your group is interested in critiquing a meeting, please contact the national office.

The **St. Clair Shores MI** group at St. Margaret of Scotland Parish recently held a family games night. The families had a great time teaming against each other in a family trivia game.

**Lori Green** is attempting to start a CFM group at St. Mary's Church in **Muncie IN**.

CFM'ers at St. Louis Parish in **Miami FL** participated in a Parish Ministry Fair in November.

Take a look at CFM's web page [www.cfm.org](http://www.cfm.org) to learn where CFM is active around the country.

Consider offering CFM's *Everyday Christianity - A CFM*

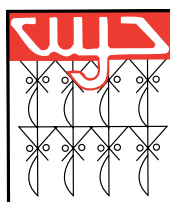
*Response* to your parish during Lent. It may be used as an afternoon or evening of renewal or in six separate sessions. Contact the national office for more information or to order a packet of materials for \$7.00.

Did you know that CFM's papers are on file in the Archives of the **Theodore Hesburg Library** at Notre Dame University in **Notre Dame Indiana**? The Christian Family Movement collection is the largest of the lay movements/organizations of the twentieth century.

The CFM group from St. Catherine Laboure Church in **Torrance, CA** made a Jubilee 2000 pilgrimage to St. John Chrysostom Church in **Inglewood, CA**. Mass was followed by dinner at the CFM group leaders' home of **Chuck and Frances Hardy**.

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