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## Christian Family Movement

# CFM Convention 2002: Fun, Family and Faith

By Bob and Anne Tomonto 2002 National Convention chair

The 2002 National CFM Convention is slated for July 4 -7, in Miami, Florida at St. Louis Catholic Church.

### *"God is in our House"*

Keynote speaker will be **David Thomas**, co-director of the Bethany Family Institute, **Highlands Ranch, Colo.**, and general editor for family life education at Benzinger Publishing. Thomas will set the theme of the convention "God is in our House" with his keynote address on the importance of family spirituality. In 1981 Thomas acted as theological consultant to the U.S. bishops at the synod on the role of the Christian family in the modern world. He was the first layman to act in that role. Pope John Paul II issued *Familiaris Consortio* in response to those discussions.

In a recent article, Thomas reflected on that document. "Twenty years ago families throughout the world were experiencing great difficulties. Today we observe a continuing disintegration of the family. Scholars argue whether this comes more because of changing social and economic realities in the world or if there is simply a diminishment of valuing family relationships coming from within the family itself. It is prob-

ably both. And this further underscores the importance of the family having compelling reasons to continually work on family relationships." Thomas will speak on Friday morning after the opening Mass celebrated by **Auxiliary Bishop Gilberto Fernandez of Miami.**

### *Spirituality and Society*

Saturday morning **Joe Holland** will speak on the social dimension of family spirituality. Holland is professor of philosophy and religion at St. Thomas University in **Miami.** His area of interest is the relationship between religion and society. He is the author of *Catholic Social Teaching: 1740-2000* published this year by Paulist Press.

Other presentations will touch a variety of topics including

- couple spirituality,
- fatherhood, and
- active parenting providing a dual-track program entertaining the various stages of family life.

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## Presidents' Perspectives

by Peter and Jane Buchbauer

It was 1991 and we had been in CFM for seven years. We had four children, ages 9, 7, 2 and 1. The prospect of a drive from **Winchester, Va.** to **Holland, Mich.** was not very attractive. But we made the trip anyway, and we never regretted it.

What was there in Holland, Mich., at Hope College, that made us drive that distance with four small children? A CFM Convention!

We had no idea what to expect when we arrived. But what we experienced as a family was incredible. We recall much of that first convention we attended: The first evening included a beautiful performance at the theater, a meditation on the Virgin Mary performed to ballet. People wept at the beauty. At the socials, we felt welcomed and came to know people who would have a tremendous influence on our lives in the coming decade. During hall monitoring we had deep conversation late into the night. Each day began with "How beautiful, on the mountaintop, are the feet of those, who bring good news."

Over the years, there have been many more opportunities for the CFM family—from East Coast to West Coast, North to South—to gather and share, proclaim and celebrate who we are and what we believe. And in the process, we learned.

We learned about communication from a beautiful couple in

**Cleveland, Ohio, Jim and Mary Lou Beers.** Jim has been unable to speak for many years since a disabling stroke. We learned about who we are and how we can and should and do minister to other families from **Bishop Anthony Pilla.** We celebrated to the music of **Tony Melendez,** the faith-filled troubadour, who has also shared his life journey and faith—one without arms since birth—with the pope. Who can forget the image of the

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pope hugging Tony after he first played for him on one of his U.S. trips? Hearing Tony, first in **Dallas, Texas** and then in **South Bend, Ind.,** brought the image back to life and put flesh on its bones.

A CFM Convention is about celebrating family life. A CFM Convention is about learning about your faith. A CFM Convention is about sharing the gift of your family with families, and receiving from them the gift of their families.

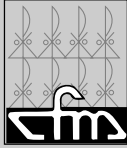
A CFM Convention is the source for a lifetime of memories, memories about the conventions and the goings-on there, but more importantly, memories of the shared experience of family.

There is something for everyone and anyone at a CFM Convention. Your children will be in age-appropriate activities during parent programs. They will meet other children and make friends, and look forward to the next convention when they can see them again. You will meet with other adults and share your life and your stories. You will learn and you will teach. You will make family memories, with shared experiences which are a departure from every day life, shared experiences in a new place, with different people, with new friends.

Our next CFM Convention will be in **Miami** in July 2002. Beginning with this ACT, you will receive information about this exciting family experience. CFMers in Florida have been planning for over one year to make this yet another memorable CFM event. But it won't be the same without you! We are hoping to see you there. And so are our children, ages 20, 18, 13 and 12. You see, they never miss a CFM Convention!

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*Peter and Jane Buchbauer, CFM Presidents, live in Winchester, Virginia. Their children are Joseph, 20; Peter, 18; Michael, 13; and Maria, 12.*



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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

## What Do We Say To Our Children?



As parents pay particular attention to the news in these times of uncertainty, children develop their own sets of questions and concerns.

We must tell our children that terrorists are focused only on themselves and on their anger. Children need to know that anger can be a very destructive emotion. They need to know that evil people stir up other people's emotions and cause them to think as they do and to become as destructive as they are. Peace is never their goal. They want us to be afraid and worried, and when we become afraid and worried they feel successful.

To calm our children, we must tell them that many many people in our country are working hard to protect us all. They need to be reassured over and over again that our government is doing all it can to protect all of us. Children react

to our fears, so we must show them that we will do our best to care for them and to protect them in any way we can.

Keeping our children busy, helping them to think of ways they can help, and encouraging them to be understanding of all people and religions is a great way to start. Talking about how our country is made up of people from all over the world and how we must all learn to live together in peace will help them become more tolerant.

Of course, praying as a family for our dead and injured, praying for our leaders, and praying for those angry people who are causing our concerns is the best way a family can join together to create hope.

Give your children extra hugs these days. We all need them!

God Bless America!

### Spotlight: Responses to 9/11

**Noreen Thomas** reports "Our CFM Group at St. Lawrence Martyr Church in **Redondo Beach, Calif.**, held our annual kickoff last week-end. Every other year we have an auction to raise funds to cover our next two years worth of expenses. After the disaster of September 11th, our Board voted to donate 25 percent of the proceeds from our auction to the victims and heroes of this unforgettable day. We raised over \$6,000 at our auction, so will be able to send a check for over \$1,500 directly to this worthy cause. We are also, of course, keeping all the victims, families, and everyone

touched by this tragedy in our prayers."

**Kathryn Wotta**, leader at St. Margaret of Scotland in **St. Clair Shores, Mich.**, reports that they used the meeting on the Sept. 11 tragedy posted on the CFM website at their kickoff activity. "Thank you for providing that meeting. It was what we were talking about anyway. It worked very well." CFM has expanded to two groups this year to promote better discussion and participation in meetings and is using the current program book, *Love Still Happens in Families*.

## In Memoriam

### Rose Lucey, 1918-2001

by Kathleen Smith, San José, California

*Rose and Dan Lucey were among the giants of the Christian Family Movement. In the early days, they headed the West Coast Federation, and served on the national executive committee. They were members of the first ICCFM board.*

*On Wednesday, September 25, 2001, Rose Marciano Lucey died peacefully in Medford, Ore. from complications due to Alzheimer's disease.*

Rose Marciano was born on March 8, 1918, in Clinton, Mass. to a family of Italian immigrants. Discrimination left its mark on Rose, and all her life she worked for social justice for every nationality, for women, for the downtrodden, and for anyone subjected to any form of discrimination.

In 1941, Rose met and married Dan Lucey. Because of their activity for social justice and their enjoyment of theological discussion, they determined to "make an opening into a new way of being church."

Rose and Dan's map of life included their goal of building a family and their hopes and dreams for building a better world. Speaking of their marriage covenant, Rose wrote:

"That original piece of paper, on which is etched our original map of life, is still a symbol of our fidelity to each other and our willingness to travel together. The map has had many revisions. Using the map on the road we've discovered three valuable signs.

"The first sign came early in our marriage as we discovered life is not divided into sections. We do not live a life of the spirit and a life of the world. We live one life and

the task of a lifetime is to integrate body, mind and spirit.

"The second sign was the understanding that the sacrament of marriage holds no magic. Life's journey is not a straight road; there are hills and valleys and rivers to cross. Periods of dryness come to us, not only in prayer, but also in



Rose Lucey

our relationship, in our attempt to build a home, in the sharing of our bodies, in the work we share.

"Third, we understand that how we live our lives determines a part of the future. The model we struggle to bring into being: two individuals living a full and creative life of companionship, service and love, is important for a new generation."

Her "two most formative influences" were Dan and the Christian Family Movement. Rose's book, *Roots and Wings: Dreamers*

and *Doers* in the Christian Family Movement was published in 1987 by Resource Publications, Inc.

Though the mother of nine children; Maria, Martha, Ann, Monica, Crista, Meira, Christopher, John and Peter, Rose was never totally housebound. She and Dan started bookstores in Conoga Park, Torrance and Oakland, Calif., and together wrote, "The Living-Loving Generation."

Rose entered and became a Co-Member of the Sisters of Loretto in 1989. She had been a recipient of their Mary Rhodes Award, given for women's leadership in peace and justice in 1985.

Following the death of her son, John, Rose became active in AIDS ministry. She was a founding member of "Good Grief" (a grief support group) and for many years was a weekly volunteer at The AIDS Center in Oakland. One of her fellow volunteers, Jan Letson, recalls, "I'll never forget her tender, loving care, patience and understanding for the guests—it was as if each and every one of them was her son Johnny... it was as if she recognized Christ in all his disguises."

Each one of the children of Rose and Dan Lucey has matured into a socially-conscious, loving and caring individual. Rose's greatest comfort in her later years was the affection of her children and grandchildren.

She strongly felt the goodness and potential of every individual. She said: "You are gift. You are a very special gift, and the world is not going to be whole until that gift is expressed."

*The national office has a limited number of copies of Rose Lucey's book Roots and Wings available for a donation of \$10 or more to CFM in her memory.*

# CFM Group celebrates America's Freedom with International Guests

by Theresa Kaye, Harsens Island, Mich.

This June, 44 members of St. Lucy's CFM welcomed 20 residents of Freedom House to experience Harsens Island hospitality. They were responding to the part of the Jubilee Pledge, "to reach across boundaries of religion, race, and ethnicity...to pray for greater justice and peace...to protect human life...to serve those who are poor and vulnerable." After a tour of Freedom House in April, they invited the residents to a day on the island.

Conversation was limited due to language barriers and the constant need to tend to little ones, but there was no barrier to the fun we shared. We spent the day fishing, swimming, tubing, biking, relaxing in the hammock, sunning on the dock, playing volleyball, holding babies, eating our fill, roasting marshmallows, jumping on the trampoline, and listening to music.

The residents appreciated the



change of scenery and the serenity and beauty of the island. "Our children were allowed to experience uninhibited outdoor playtime, which is a treasure. Most of all our residents were treated as equals and not 'refugees,'" said **Erica Thrash**, Freedom House Volunteer Coordinator.

Guests came from

- Cameroon •
- Rwanda •
- Somalia •
- Mali •
- Republic of Congo •
- China •
- Peru •
- Croatia •
- Angola •
- Uganda •
- Ivory Coast •
- Colombia •

Freedom House was founded as the Detroit/Windsor Refugee Coalition in 1983 to assist people escaping persecution in El Salvador. The organization, accredited by the U.S. Department of Justice, now serves hundreds of people of many

nations who are escaping injustice and seeking political asylum. Freedom House provides food, clothing, shelter and social legal services, and works to resettle refugees legally into Canada and the United States.

St. Lucy's CFM sees this event as the beginning of a relationship, an extension of the spirit of Jubilee into the years to come.





## Taking the Time to Make a Difference

by Paul R. Leingang

### *Time to offer comfort and respect*

I've been struggling with some words, trying to describe a recent experience. I suspect that my struggle is a result of my wanting not to think about it—but it's too important not to.

There's a tearful side, and a hopeful side, to the story.

On a recent Saturday morning in September, I went to a local cemetery. It was a bright and sunny day, but those who gathered there—several dozen people—were shivering under the shade of a graveside canopy.

Who were these people? They were family members and friends mourning the death of a baby who had not lived long enough to be born.

They were mothers, some who had no living children, because they had miscarried. They were fathers, some who had no children, except for the babies who died before their birth.

There were families there—each of them smaller by at least one, smaller than they had hoped and prayed. There were brothers and sisters in the gathering—but they'd never be able to play with a little brother or sister whose life had ended so soon. Nor would they battle each other for attention and affection.

During a time of quiet prayer, a small voice caught my ear. A father was holding one child, while another stood leaning against his

legs. The small voice came from the child who looked up at the privileged place of someone else in his father's arms: You've held him long enough! Neither child could quite understand the father's sorrow for the child he would never get to hold. We didn't talk about such things when I was the age of the children who were at the cemetery that day. Sometimes I wonder about the baby, the one who would have been my sister. Could she have

*In your community,  
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after its beginning?*

been the last of the children of my parents? Then where would I be? Should I, could I, pray to her? "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you," God says, in Jeremiah 1:5.

A hospital chaplain, Franciscan Sister Jane McConnell, told the families there, "This service is a time to remember your precious babies." She continued: "Your grief

is unique because you are not left with an abundance of pictures and mementos to help you remember, nor are there many people who share or understand the depth of your love for your baby and the loss you feel. Most of you never had a chance to say 'hello' before you had to say 'goodbye.'"

She comforted the families by affirming that "Each life comes into this world with a mission." She said, "for some it may have been just to add a little flicker of love that otherwise would not have been lit within us." For others, "it may have been to bring us closer to God and to each other."

She acknowledged that death "left a huge void in your hearts and lives," but added, "We rest in the comfort and assurance that each of them is with God today in heaven where they will live and grow until someday you will see them and be with them again."



In your community, how is respect shown for a life that is ended so soon after its beginning?

Who comforts mothers and fathers in this situation? Who prays with them?

It's a delicate time, hard to see where good intentions may intrude too far. Find out from a chaplain or a counselor what you can do to help.

You can find others among your friends or fellow church-goers who might want to join with you.

Take the time to make a difference.

*Paul is director of communications for the diocese of Evansville, Ind.; and editor of the Message, the diocesan newspaper. His weekly column Taking the Time to Make a Difference is syndicated in a number of diocesan newspapers. Paul and Jane Leingang are executive directors of CFM.*

# The Power of a Small Group: A “New Normal”

by Sue Hamilton  
Naples, Fla. and Ann Arbor, Mich.

Last week I ran across a quote from Margaret Meade, maybe you remember it: “Never underestimate the power of a small group—indeed it is the only thing that has ever changed the world.” In the past I always thought that this applied to small groups who did good things, like CFM. But it occurred to me that the terrorists have been described as a loosely knit network of small groups in over 50 countries. They do evil—and they have changed the world!



In the past two or three decades some have avoided CFM because spirituality has not been a popular topic. A “cushy” life has lulled many families into abdicating their responsibilities in many arenas, among them marriage, parenting, education, religious training, and spirituality. We came to believe that regulations solved everything — someone else would do it! But “someone else” did not take responsibility for a safe world and we were jolted into reality.

We have been encouraged to “return to our normal life.” I’m not sure returning to that “normal” life is good for families. Maybe it’s time for a “new normal.” What an opportunity for CFM to be a catalyst for this change. We have the structure, the programs and leadership to be a real resource to families who have had their level of awareness elevated by these catastrophic events. What a way to get their attention!

## Convention 2002: Location and Logistics

—continued from page 1

Most conference events will be held at St. Louis Catholic Church. Sleeping accommodations are available at a local Quality Inn, which offers convenient access to restaurants and a major grocery store. Swimming is available at the hotel. The committee estimates total conference costs for a family of four, including registration for all family members, food, and lodging will be under \$600.

The South Florida CFM community has experienced a tremendous increase due to a weekend retreat called Covenant Experience which exposes couples to a faith-filled relationship with the Lord. **Bob and Irene Tomonto**, authors of the Covenant Experience, will discuss the dynamics of this weekend experience in a conference workshop.

South Florida offers a diverse richness of cultures. On Saturday after the opening address by Joe

Holland, convention participants have the opportunity to see some of the unique aspects of the Miami area. Visits are planned to locations where services are offered to the Latin American, Haitian and other immigrant communities that now call this community home.

All CFM Conventions are built around the fun shared with other CFM families, and this Convention will be no different. The hospitality committee is planning several special events focusing on family fun — so bring your bathing suits, beach towels and dance shoes. Prepare to relax and enjoy the place where snow never falls. The convention is located within one hour of the Florida Keys, which shares the warmth of the Florida sunshine, along with the quietness of an island lifestyle. Beaches, sailing, diving along with evening entertainment are only a short distance away from the convention

site. The local community will assist anyone interested in exploring some of the treasures of South Florida area.

St. Louis parish was recently recognized by **Paul Wilkes**, author of the book entitled *Excellent Catholic Parishes, The Guide to Best Places and Practices*. St. Louis offers a dynamic parish community built around a large parish complex which offers CFM tremendous opportunities to build community. The parish is recognized for its fine music program, dynamic and very active youth program and large social outreach program to the surrounding community and to Haiti. The Florida CFMers are thrilled to share their faith-filled community with the national CFM community.

For more information contact **Bob and Anne Tomonto** at TomontoFam@aol.com.

SPOTLIGHT

St. John Vianney leaders **Tim and Maureen Conrad** report that their group in **Bettendorf, Iowa**, is going to repeat an action they did last Christmas at a facility for underprivileged boys. The CFM families bring gifts for the group homes where approximately 90 boys live. The facility provides pizza for all and the kids spend time playing together. Maureen says the activity may be scheduled in a different month this year. The facility tends to get more attention from the community at Christmas than at other times of the year.

**Joe Bettinardi**, leader at St. Alexander in **Palos Heights, Ill.**, reports "I think the CFM has been great for everybody. We are really getting to know other couples on a spiritual level and have been able to help each other during tough times." This group participated in a fund-raiser this summer to pay

medical bills for the nephew of a group member who died from an allergic reaction to medication.

**Pat Gacnik, Arvada, Colo.**, reports that her group is studying peace issues this year by updating older CFM materials for new use, especially the volume *Peaceworks* from 1985. They expect to be writing some new meetings as well. Groups that write special topics meetings are encouraged to share them with the national office so that they can be posted on cfm-exchange and the website.

CFMer **Mary Sturm** is Habitat for Humanity volunteer coordinator at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in **Winchester, Va.** She reports that other CFMers are her biggest source of help for the parish's assigned week of Oct. 22-27. Habitat for Humanity is a

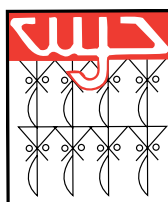
worldwide Christian organization which builds affordable housing.

**Julie Lemke** reports the CFM and small faith community groups of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in **Carmel, Ind.**, took advantage of the fall weather to go camping in Brown County in September. The group gathers there annually as a community-building activity.

**Sister Janet Born** has started a new CFM group at St. Paul's Parish in **Tell City, Ind.** At the information night, she called on parishioners who had been in CFM in the 60s and 70s to give witness about its value for their marriages and parenting skills.

For more *Spotlight*, see page 3

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