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Christian Family Movement

CFM Couple Keynotes Marriage Encounter Convention

by Kathleen Miller

Neil and Kathy Heskin, members of CFM at Our Lady of the Wayside, **Arlington Heights, Ill.**, since 1982, keynoted the International Convention of Worldwide Marriage Encounter Convention July 25-7 in **DeKalb, Ill.**

They have traveled a rocky road in their marriage, claiming that their personalities are as different as personalities can be, and they have a gift for storytelling.

Their message is that it is possible for even a troubled marriage to become strong. When Kathy wrote *Marriage: A Spiritual Journey*, one of the editors at Twenty-Third Publications exclaimed, "If these two people can make it, anyone can."

The first thing most people notice about Neil is that he's tall: he played basketball at Georgetown, became a CPA and worked for Price Waterhouse as an auditor and CBS as a controller. One night in May 1982, he awoke with the inspiration to open a Christian bookstore in Arlington Heights. The bookstore provided 20 years of challenges and blessings.

Kathy is energetic and outgoing, quick to see opportunity in all sorts of situations. She worked in nursing, business, government, and for ten years at the bookstore;

and then returned to school to earn a Master's in Divinity and a Doctorate in Ministry. She now teaches doctoral students and seminarians at Mundelein Seminary of the



Archdiocese of **Chicago** and serves as associate professor at Dominican University, where she instituted a Bachelor's in Ministry program. They have three grown sons and twin grandsons.

On the Relationship between CFM and Marriage Encounter:

Kathy: The Marriage Encounter technique, Couple Dialogue, allows us to Observe, Judge and Act more deeply.

Neil: Marriage Encounter led us to join CFM: On our weekend we decided we needed to change some of our priorities.

—continued on page 5



Presidents' Perspective

by Peter and Jane Buchbauer

A Graced Divorce

As I drove, reflecting on some recent events in our family's life, the radio played "Three Wooden Crosses" by Randy Travis. Part of the refrain goes: "It's not what you take when you leave this world behind you, it's what you leave behind you when you go."

What is it that we will leave behind us when we go?

I had been thinking about my son Michael's friend Kelly. The classmates had recently graduated from their local Catholic School. Kelly's parents, Melissa and Brian, are divorced. Each parent has remarried and had additional children with their new spouse. I don't recall meeting Kelly's dad and step-mom before graduation week. However, during that week, I saw them repeatedly and came to better understand what it is that committed parents can leave their child.

In my limited experience, most divorced couples do not seem to like to spend time in each other's company. Perhaps it is the pain of the divorce, the circumstances of the separation or lingering feelings of anger. However, that is not the case with Kelly's parents. They greet each other warmly and can laugh with one another. At a graduation dinner, I observed Melissa sitting and laughing with her former mother-in-law and Brian's wife, Mary. At the pre-graduation party at Melissa's house, I observed Brian comfortably interacting with Melissa's mom, sister and brother. The children play together like brothers and sisters and cousins. Melissa's

husband Mike warmly welcomes Kelly's father and his family to the home he has made for his family.

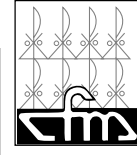
I was amazed to see a family putting aside old hurts and wounds and moving forward as a family. As a family, by fruit of their sacrament, Melissa and Brian had brought Kelly into this world. As a family, Melissa and Brian, together with their spouses and extended family, continue to love, guide and nurture their offspring.

Brian has highest praise for Kelly's step-dad, and Melissa genuinely likes Kelly's step-mom. At times, they look like old school friends. Kelly's grandparents recognize that Kelly is a gift of God, through Melissa and Brian. And so they treat their former son or daughter-in-law and their new spouses with love and respect.

Should this scenario be so unusual? No. But is it? I think it quite unusual indeed.

Current statistics paint a grim picture for the children of divorce. However, I predict that Kelly has a brighter future than most. Her parents still love one other, not romantically, but as people who have been blessed to create with God. Her loving step-parents welcome her and her friends into their lives. Her extended family has forgiven past hurts and chosen as adults, to do what is best for Kelly.

"It's not what you take when you leave this world behind you, it's what you leave behind you when you go." Kelly has a legacy of love. She's one lucky girl.



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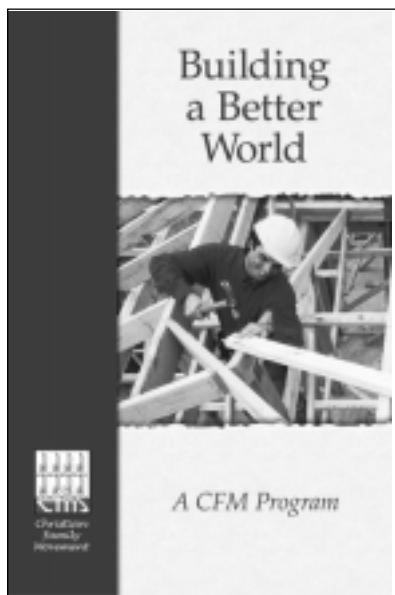
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CFM news articles and photos welcome. Subscriptions are free to members and \$8.00 for non-members.

Want to touch base with CFMers around the country? Join CFM's e-mail exchange by contacting cfm-exchange@cfm.org

CFM's Mission

- ◆ to promote Christ-centered marriage and family life;
- ◆ to help individuals and their families to live the Christian faith in everyday life; and
- ◆ to improve society through actions of love, service, education and example.



New Program Book Explores Faith and Justice

There are tensions in Christian life: between concern for the world around us and anticipation of the world ahead of us; between mindfulness of daily life and focus on life everlasting. CFMers show ample evidence that we understand the call of Jesus to be charitable. In every issue of ACT, the Spotlight feature demonstrates that groups around the country are good at providing meals and other physical support to members of their communities. But Christianity calls us to go beyond charity in our concern for this world.

Building a Better World, the new CFM program for the 2003-2004 year, promises to provide a chance for members to explore beyond Christian charity into the area of justice. The teachings of the Catholic Church over the last one hundred years have stressed the responsibility of lay Christians to build a more just society. These teachings have not been as well understood as they should be, and they are the special province of the laity to implement.

Parent to Parent

by Mary Lou Gorman

Let's Go On a Picnic!



It's a beautiful day, warm and sunny with a soft breeze, and you have so much to do. The kids just want to get outside and you ponder...Go for it! Pack up your family's favorite goodies and take off in the car for the forest preserve. Don't give your "to-do list" another thought because this is the opportunity for a family outing. Think of all the ways you can enjoy a glorious day:

Perhaps just sit under a tree and quietly look around you and become aware of the beauty God has granted. Lie on your back and find pictures in the milky white clouds. Catch a falling leaf and examine its softness. Turn over a rock and watch living creatures crawl from under it. Touch the roughness of tree bark and examine its patterns. Teach your kids how to skip a flat rock over the rippling stream you walk along. Look at the intricacies of a spider's web with sun shining through it. Take off your shoes and feel the coolness of

the earth or the sand or the water. Look up and watch how the sun casts shadows through the trees. Notice all the tiny plants pushing their way out of the cool wet soil. Pick up a rock and just examine it for a while. Notice how it sparkles and see how many shades of color it has.

Point out these simple things to your kids and enjoy them yourself. Follow an ant on its journey pulling a crumb bigger than itself. Watch a butterfly alight on a leaf and see how the colors of its wings match. Then sit and rest and have everyone talk about what they hear and smell.

How can you not believe there's a wonderful God giving us all this magnificence.

Yes, go on a picnic; but enjoy much more than the food!

Mary Lou and Phil Gorman have four daughters and fourteen grandchildren. They have been members of CFM since 1953.

They involve what we do in our homes, our workplaces and our government.

Editors **Margie Murchan, Lauri Przybysz and Jane Leingang** focused in on three key areas of the Church's teaching

- the dignity of the human person and the common good,
- solidarity and concern for the poor, and
- stewardship.

Each topic is examined in the context of family life.

To make the program family-friendly, three of meetings are

intergenerational. Each has a special twist on one of the main concepts of the book. One chapter presents an evening of cooperative games. Another outlines a "hunger banquet" to bring home the issue of distribution of wealth in our world. There is an outdoor activity to bring home lessons about caring for the environment.

This year's book will also have an Internet component. A section on the CFM website, www.cfm.org, will offer background for the meetings, links for further research and action ideas for groups.

—Heskin, continued from page 1

Kathy: I think that couples who have made Marriage Encounter are already familiar with sharing their stories.

On experience with CFM

Neil: CFM helped ground us within the community, and led to lifelong friendships. When we began the store, CFM members helped us put books on the shelves, CFM has been a great source of encouragement.

Kathy: I don't think anybody can be married or raise children alone. CFM has been an extended family for us, has provided role models. When our children were small, we saw older couples who had made it, and we said "Look, they're still laughing!" Our children still remember CFM campouts.

On Changes in society

Kathy: Life has gotten faster and more complicated. We have all sorts of time saving devices, but there now seems to be some sort of status in being too busy, in being distant from family life.

Neil: We're so mobile, it has had an effect on family life. Kathy and I both come from the East, and the families in CFM became our extended family.

Kathy: And even little children now have access to everything that adults have access to. Children are being robbed of childhood before they've had time to form conscience. It's important for parents to look at issues in society and make informed choices with support: that's one of the real values of CFM.

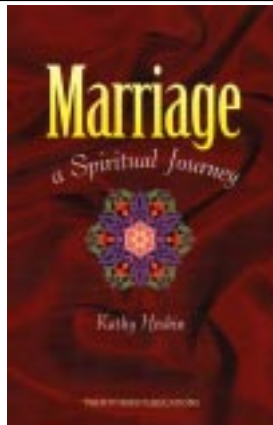
On the Church and social justice

Neil: We're delighted that the next book will focus on the church's social teaching.

Kathy: Catholic social teaching is our best-kept secret. Jesus said little about sex but a lot about

sharing with the poor, a lot about justice.

The church in general doesn't ask enough of our people. Somebody hears God's call in his or her life, and it is hard to find support and challenge to live that call. People are capable of doing much more for the church and the world. No one parish, one person, one movement can solve it all. We have to find a way to integrate our best gifts.



And so one evening Neil and I found ourselves talking about who got what furniture. He could have the bed, it was extra-long, and I would take the sofa. I liked the fabric. He didn't care about the silver and china, and I cared disproportionately. Neil estimated our legal and court fees at about \$1,400, and I pointed out, "For \$1,500 we could go to Europe." And Neil, quite out of his ordinary, asked, "Do you want to go?" We did! That was our first experience of grace in our marriage. I am forever grateful that we were open to it.

—from *Marriage: A Spiritual Journey* by Kathy Heskin. Twenty-Third Publications, 2002. 151 pages.

Each of the 12 chapters includes stories, reflection, and discussion questions for couples.

CFM's founding charism is to observe, judge, and act in the world so the world will become a more just place.

Advice for CFM

Kathy: I'd like to see us start the year with a retreat, and to step back from some of the traditional sorts of service to the parish and so we can develop new ways of meeting needs we observe. And at the meetings we don't need to try to discuss every single question in the book: The thing is to share our stories. Jesus told stories.

Leaders should become comfortable with silence. We don't have silence anywhere, not even in liturgy. If God speaks in silence, what does it mean if we don't have any?

Latest adventure

Neil: We just got back from two weeks camping with twelve young adults from Dominican University. We drove 4200 miles and visited four reservations in South Dakota and Montana. This was Kathy's fifth year and the first time I could come.

Kathy: We looked at issues in Native American life and worked on projects, especially directed toward the issue of diabetes among natives, and the students put together a cookbook. They became involved with the people at a meaningful level. That's conversion.

My experience with the Native Americans is they seem to have time to listen. We noticed that if someone drops by with a problem, that is the most important thing at that moment. We would probably say, "I'd love to talk with you but I've gotta run."

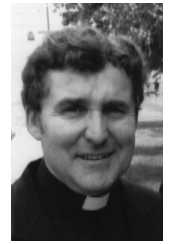
Parting words:

Kathy: We believe in dreams. Dream big. Every one of us is capable of changing the world.

From the National Chaplain

by Father Don Conroy

Eucharist: Building a Better World



CFM has historically helped its members to express Christian perspective not only within marriage and the family but also in the larger society. Our daily life expresses the faith dimensions of the Gospel and the Eucharist. In his recent encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, **Pope John Paul II** expresses the connection between the Eucharistic community and our social mission as Christians.

Catholic social teaching gives us a “wisdom perspective” on our responsibilities to our country and to the planet.

In the encyclical, the Holy Father says:

“Many problems darken the horizon of our time. We need but think of the urgent need to work for peace, to base relationship between peoples on solid premises of justice and solidarity, and to defend human life from conception to its natural end. What should we say of the thousand inconsistencies of a ‘globalized’ world where the weakest, the most powerless and the poorest appear to have so little hope!”

The Holy Father then points out the deep connection between the Eucharistic Mystery and the global society emerging so forcefully in our time:

“For this reason too, the Lord wished to remain with us in the Eucharist, making his presence in meal and sacrifice the promise of a humanity renewed by his love. Significantly, in their account of the

Last Supper, the synoptic gospels recount the institution of the Eucharist, while the Gospel of John relates, as a way of bringing out its profound meaning, the account of service (see John 13:1-20). The apostle Paul, for his part, says that it is “unworthy” of a Christian Community to partake of the Lord’s Supper amid division and indifference towards the poor (see 1 Cor 11: 17-22, 27-34).”

*Our individual
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Pope John Paul II declares that our individual spiritual lives and our social values must connect if we are to be authentic Christians:

“Proclaiming the death of the Lord ‘until he comes’ (1 Cor 11:26) entails that all who take part in the Eucharist be committed to changing their lives and making them in a certain way completely “Eucharistic.” It is this fruit of a transfigured existence and a commitment to transforming the world in accordance with the Gospel which splendidly illustrates the eschatological tension inherent in the celebration of the Eucharist and in the Christian life as a whole: “Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev 22:20)

Some Christians say they are committed to living a Gospel vision but they see this present world as “passing” and not relevant to their life style and social values. However, the Holy Father points out: “Certainly the Christian vision leads to the expectation of ‘new heavens’ and ‘a new earth’ (Rev 21:1), but this increases, rather than lessens our sense of responsibility for the world today.”

In accord with CFM’s founding principles set forth by Cardinal Cardijn and the founding couples many years ago, the Pope remarks: “I wish to reaffirm this forcefully at the beginning of the new millennium, so that Christians will feel more obligated than ever not to neglect their duties as citizens of this world. Theirs is the task of contributing with the light of the Gospel to the building of a more human world, a world fully in harmony with God’s plan.” (Eccl. #20)

These themes of Catholic social teaching, so astutely championed by the present pope and other popes of modern times expand our adult understanding of authentic spirituality and civic responsibility. They give us a “wisdom perspective” by which we are able, as citizens of our country and the planet to see the Eucharistic celebration and deeper faith dimensions of the Gospel.

Father Conroy is President of the National Institute for the Family in Washington, DC.



Taking the Time to Make a Difference

by Paul R. Leingang

What do you hear? What do you see?

How do you lead people to take action?

That was the topic of a recent conversation, which started with a discussion of the "Observe, Judge, Act" methodology that is used by the Christian Family Movement, Young Christian Workers, Young Christian Students and others.

The three part approach was popularized by a young Belgian priest in the early half of the Twentieth Century. **Canon Joseph Cardijn** adopted and adapted a method of inquiry used among some of the religious and social activists of his time.

The basic explanation is simple enough. The follow-through is much more difficult.

It is just this simple: "Observe the world around you. Judge what you see in the light of Gospel values. Act to make your world a better place."

If I understand the process correctly, moving people to take action is not the hard part. What is most difficult is helping people to "observe" clearly.

Canon Cardijn was always concerned about the physical well-being of the young Christian workers in the new factories of an ever-increasingly industrialized world.

Cardijn was worried about the faith life of his beloved young people, but he was not one to separate physical health from spiritual health. His concern was the whole person.

Enter the method.

In words very similar to these, Canon Cardijn would tell young workers to go into the factory and see what they could see. Don't come back and tell me, "The factory is dangerous." Come back and tell me what you see.

So a worker came back after truly "seeing" the factory conditions

Moving people to take action is not the hard part. What is most difficult is helping people to "observe" clearly.

and Canon Cardijn and the young workers then had an objective basis for coming to the judgment, "The factory is dangerous." The clear and simple observations had made possible a conclusion that was unarguable.

But more than just an accurate and justified conclusion that the factory was dangerous, the workers had a clear understanding of the action that could be taken to improve their working world.

The encouragement to action came from the process itself.



Chapter 11 of Matthew's Gospel describes a question posed

to Jesus, and an answer given. In the text from the Catholic edition of the Revised Standard Version, Jesus tells John to draw his conclusion from what he sees and hears.

"Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?' And Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.'"



As you reflect on your own home today, what do you see? What do you really see? If you say it is a "Christian" home, you are judging before observing.

What do you see?

As you reflect on your workplace or your school, what do you see? I look at my own "Communications Office" and discover 23 voice mail messages remaining on my telephone and I judge that I have not given a timely response to questions asked, and I know where I can make an improvement.

Look at your community, the city or town where you live and do business.

What do you see?

Look at your church community, too.

How do you make a difference? Observe, Judge, and Act!

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.

Your Marriage: The Great Adventure

by Lauri Przybysz

Saturday Night at the Movies



Last Saturday, we stayed up longer than our teenager for a change! With the house to ourselves, we actually watched a movie together: *Family Man* with **Nicholas Cage** and **Tea Leoni**. John had seen it on an airplane and had raved about it. As it happened, I had noticed that title in a new book that came across my desk, *Let's Watch a Movie: Using Popular Videos to Enrich Your Marriage*, by **Mary F. Moriarty**. For each of 38 movies, some new releases, some classics, the book provides a brief description and a page of questions for couples to read and discuss after they've seen the movie. Though I usually don't have enough patience to sit through a whole movie on TV, I joined him on the couch.

When I read the questions, I could see why the book is designed for couples rather than groups. The questions don't focus on movie criticism or philosophy, but rather

provide a springboard for intimate reflection on your own relationship.

Here are some examples:

Snow appears when Jack is transported in time and place, and again in the final scene at the airport. When has something magical or surprising happened to you in the snow or because of the snow?

Jack works for Big Ed. Describe the work ethic of your family of origin. Do you admire this work ethic? After whom have you modeled your own work ethic?

Other questions gently raise personal subjects: what you admire about your spouse, anniversaries past and present, retirement, frequency of lovemaking, and long and short-term separations. The directions for using this book are very flexible, and you do not have to answer all the questions; just one question may occupy you for a while.

Discussion questions are provided for *A Beautiful Mind*, *Field of Dreams*, *The Patriot*, *Liar Liar*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *The Shipping News*, and many more popular films. For the movie, *Nine Months*, there are questions for couples with children and without children. The movies selected will appeal to men, women, and married and engaged couples of any age. The author notes, "If you find that there is an objectionable theme in the movie you are watching, please understand that the movie was chosen to stimulate discussion between you as a couple; the movie's inclusion in this book is not an endorsement of any questionable behavior."

Why not put the kids to bed and curl up together in front of a great movie? All you need to bring is the popcorn and the gift of your time and attention.

This little book would make a great anniversary, wedding, or Valentine's Day gift. To order a copy from the publisher: 1-800-321-0411 or email ttpubs@aol.com.

For the past two years, along with their chaplain, **Father Kevin Beres**, the CFM families from St. Bernadette parish **Springfield, Va.**, have planned special Lenten activities.

Last year they explored the **Franciscan Monastery in Washington D.C.** and prayed the outdoor **Stations of the Cross**.

This year, families participated in the annual parish "palm splitting" in the vestibule after Mass Saturday morning. The next day, many of the children were convinced that they recognized the palms each of them had split.

"Palm-Splitting"



Let's Watch a Movie: Using Popular Videos to Enrich Your Marriage, Mary F. Moriarty, Twenty-third Publications, 2003. \$9.95. 81 pages ISBN: 1-58595-256-7.

Mary F. Moriarty is Associate Director of the Family Life Office in the Catholic Diocese of **Albany, New York**.

Lauri and John Przybysz live in Severna Park, Md., and are the parents of six children. Lauri is coordinator of marriage preparation and enrichment for the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

SPOTLIGHT

Terry and Jean Smith, leaders at Holy Trinity in **Des Moines, Iowa**, write that their group prepared and served supper at a inner city church in June. Several CFM groups in the Des Moines area participated in this project.

On July 26 through July 28 **Bill and Eric Stimpson**, Sonrise CFM in **Sterling Heights, Mich.**, rode 300 miles on bicycles for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Michigan. **Joyce and Laura Stimpson** worked crew for the same event.

Bob and Clair Trosclair are starting a group at St. Paul of the Cross parish in **North Palm Beach, Fla.**

Dan Thomas reports that **Monsignor Lenihan** has finally taken his trip to the Baseball Hall of Fame, which the CFM

group at St. Lawrence Martyr **Redondo Beach, Calif.**, gave him when he retired at age 75 a year ago. "He is huge baseball fan but has never been there to check the history and nostalgia. He wouldn't let anyone make the arrangements for he drives his own car." Monsignor Lenihan received the Hillenbrand award last November for his outstanding service as a CFM chaplain.

St. Jane Frances CFM in **Pasadena, Md.**, served lunch at a downtown **Baltimore** Catholic Charities soup kitchen, Our Daily Bread, Memorial Day weekend. Eighteen folks, including four teens, waited tables and visited with the guests, who totalled over 500 that day. Since the CFM group needed to serve on a Saturday, they contacted the center about three months in advance to make arrangements to provide the helpers (who had to be 14 or

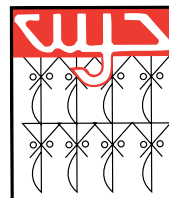
older). Everyone had such a great time that they plan to do it again next year.

St. Philip CFM, **Evansville, Ind.**, provided meals and other forms of support to the family of a parishioner who was called into active service in the recent war in Iraq.

Gaye Wall reports from St. Thomas More parish, **Glendale, Ariz.**, "Since we have four separate CFM groups which are re-formed each year through a hat pull, our members look forward to frequent social events to get together and socialize with people that they no longer see at their formal CFM meetings." Last year our events included a hayride and picnic, a progressive dinner at Christmas time, a hike in the mountains with omelets to order for breakfast after the hike, a road rally and a camping trip."

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