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## Christian Family Movement

### Presidents' Perspective *The Political Season*

by Peter and Jane Buchbauer

As CFMers, we are called to observe, judge and act. Hopefully, we apply this methodology to our lives, not merely to the inquiries we discuss every two to four weeks in our groups. As you read this, the political campaign season, which already has seemed to last too long, will be on the verge of kicking-off in all of its glory. So then, what is our role in the political process?

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops recently issued a document entitled: *Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility*. This document can be accessed at [www.usccb.org/faithfulcitizenship/bishopStatement.html#1](http://www.usccb.org/faithfulcitizenship/bishopStatement.html#1). It provides a good guide to us all in forming the bases upon which we will participate in the political season, and beyond.

Despite what some pundits proclaim, the document truthfully points out that "A Catholic moral framework does not easily fit the ideologies of "right" or "left," nor the platforms of any party."

"Our values are often not 'politically correct.' Believers are called to be a community of conscience within the larger society and to test public life by the values

of Scripture and the principles of Catholic social teaching. Our responsibility is to measure all candidates, policies, parties, and platforms by how they protect or undermine the life, dignity, and rights of the human person; whether they protect the poor and vulnerable and advance the common good."

As CFMers, we have just concluded a program year that highlighted some of the vast substance of Catholic Social Teaching. We should take what we have learned in our inquiries this year to better form ourselves for the coming political season. We need to measure all of the candidates, at every level, and the parties and platforms, in light of this teaching and our faith.

Faith is not limited to what we do on Sunday. As the Bishops pointed out in *Everyday Christianity*, "Catholicism does not call us to abandon the world, but to help shape it... This does not mean leaving worldly tasks and responsibilities, but transforming them."

So, then, how do we discern the proper persons and parties to

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support with our voices, values, riches and votes this Fall and always? The Bishops suggest the following guideposts to determine these issues:

*Does the candidate, party or platform value human life?*

Because every human person is created in the image and likeness of God, we have a duty to defend human life from conception until natural death and in every condition. Life issues are not limited to abortion, but include euthanasia and assisted suicide, embryonic research, cloning, the intentional targeting of civilians in war or terrorist attacks, the use of the death penalty, and the promotion of war.

*Does the candidate, party or platform value and promote family life?*

The family is the basic cell of society and, for us, the domestic church. Family issues deal with the policies which promote marriage as a union of man and woman; provide or afford economic relief for families; and safeguard, nurture and educate our children.

*Does the candidate, party or platform promote social justice?*

We are called to a preference for the poor. We are called to work for social and economic justice. We are called to work for a society that stands against unjust discrimination, that promotes a right to a safe and secure work environment, that ensures that workers are compensated fairly and can properly

provide for their families; and that offers affordable and accessible health care. We need leaders with a vision and plan to help the poor rise from poverty, secure adequate housing and overcome hunger. Finally, we must seek a society that properly cares for the earth and its natural resources.

*Does the candidate, party or platform have a clear vision of our nation in the global community?*

Here, the bishops say it best: "In a world where one-fifth of the population survives on less than one dollar per day, where some twenty countries are involved in major armed conflict, and where poverty, corruption, and repressive regimes bring untold suffering to millions of people, we simply cannot remain indifferent. As a wealthy and powerful nation, the United States has the capacity and the responsibility to address this scandal of poverty and underdevelopment. As a principal force in globalization, we have a responsibility to humanize globalization, and to spread its benefits to all,

especially the world's poorest, while addressing its negative consequences. As the world's sole superpower, the United States also has an unprecedented opportunity to work in partnership with others to build a system of cooperative security that will lead to a more united and more just world."

We are Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. We are members of every race, come from every ethnic background, and live in urban, rural, and suburban communities in all fifty states. Despite our differences, we are all called to discern our duty as citizens in the selection of our leaders and the governance of our communities, states and nation. Then, let us observe, judge and act for the candidate, party or platform which best conforms itself to what we believe and are duty-bound to preserve; which does no violence to the core of our faith, values and morals. It is our responsibility to be faith-filled people *and* faithful citizens.

*Peter and Jane Buchbauer, CFM Presidents, live in Winchester Virginia. Their children are Joseph, Peter, Michael and Maria.*

Father Young Celebrates 40 Years of Priesthood

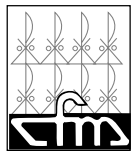
Blessed Sacrament **Father Bill Young** celebrated his 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a priest with family, friends, and parishioners at St. Paschal Baylon parish on June 5. Father Bill served as national chaplain from 1994-2002.

A number of CFM friends traveled to be part of the celebration, among them **Peter and Carolyn Broeren**. The Broerens who were president couple of CFM from 1989 to 1993, and traveled with Father Bill to international CFM meetings in **Prague, Banqkok,**



and **Maceio, Brazil**, spoke at the reception honoring Father Bill about his work with the movement.

During Father Bill's chaplaincy the movement celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> year and refocused its energies for the new millennium.



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### 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.

## Parent to Parent

by Mary Lou Gorman



### You Can Be a Leader Too

Every parent who has raised a child successfully can be called a leader. We never considered ourselves leaders as we were raising our five children. I was teaching and we already had other commitments, so when we were asked to be CFM leaders we said "No." After talking it over and seeing how our CFM discussions helped us and our family lead a more Christ-oriented life, we realized we could get even more benefits by becoming leaders.

We also knew that being an example for our kids had to be a top priority. Showing them how important it was to do Christian action, *and to initiate it*, was a necessity to raising their awareness of social justice and of caring for those who were less fortunate. As leaders we found great satisfaction in introducing more families to the CFM way of life. The CFM program book has always made being

a leader easy. In the beginning we never thought we could do it, but once we jumped in it became easy. A good leader finds others to help ease their job, and we did.

As we accepted other leadership roles in the Movement, we met other great families all over the country and the world. This has deepened our belief in the CFM way and has made us realize how important the leaders of the Movement are. They all have families, jobs, and other commitments. If they didn't "take the time to make a difference," we would all be less fortunate since we would not have had our CFM experiences. Thanks to all the dedicated CFM leaders! Remember you can be one too and enjoy the benefits.

Just say "yes!"

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



*Cassie Quinn reports that her group at Corpus Christi parish in Evansville, Ind. conducted an Easter egg hunt in response to the meeting on "Taking the Time to Build Family Memories" in the introductory book Taking the Time to Make a Difference. "The kids had a blast running around, hunting eggs, snacking and playing. The adults enjoyed socializing with each other on a beautiful April afternoon. As you can see in the picture, we have lots of young kids who really enjoy spending time with their CFM friends."*

## Leader to Leader

By Rosemarie Fagan, St. Edna, Arlington Heights, Ill

### An "Icebreaker" in a Lunchbag

We do this "get acquainted activity" at the first group meeting of the year in September or October.

We mail out a brown paper lunch bag for *each person* to fill and bring to the meeting. (It is important that each person do the activity individually.) Attached to the bag is a notice of when and where the meeting is and these instructions:

"Read the following list of categories. Find any three of the items on the list below. (The item must be small enough to fit in this lunch bag) Try to find items that are 3-D and unique! Please bring the

bag to the meeting. Be prepared to share the items and why you chose them."

We used these categories, but others might work as well. Use your imagination.

- ◆ A hobby or free-time activity that you enjoy
- ◆ One of your favorites (food, color, music, motivational book, etc.)
- ◆ Future plans or goals
- ◆ A place you'd like to visit (by yourself or with your family)

- ◆ Something special about your family
- ◆ A past achievement in your life you are especially proud of
- ◆ Something you really dislike
- ◆ A talent or special ability that you have

During the sharing time, we learn new things about the "old" couples who have returned and even the quiet newcomers start to talk and feel comfortable.

Try it. It might work for your group, too.

### Honoring the Memory of a Priest Devoted to Liturgy and the Social Gospel

A group of parishioners and friends from Sacred Heart in **Winnetka, Ill.** gathered on July 19 at the gravesite of **Msgr. Reynold Hillenbrand** on the grounds of St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, in **Mundelein**, northwest of **Chicago** to honor the memory the man who was pastor of the parish from 1944-1977 on his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Dominican **Sister Catherine Donnelly**, current principal at the parish school as well as a graduate, was one of the organizers of the observance.

CFMers will remember Msgr. Hillenbrand as the first chaplain of CFM. He was also rector of St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, Ill. from 1936-1944 and a leading figure in the liturgical movement prior to the second Vatican Council.

In response to papal encyclicals urging Catholic action to promote social justice, *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* of Pius XI (1931), Hillenbrand organized the Summer School of Social Action for Priests at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in 1938, sponsored and participated in other labor schools in the late 30s and early 40s, served as an arbitrator in labor disputes, and began his life-long association with movements of the specialized lay apostolate—Young Christian Workers (YCW), Young Christian Students (YCS), and CFM. He was also concerned with fair housing and the civil rights of racial minorities and participated in the **Winnetka, Glencoe**, and North Shore Human Relations Committees.



*Msgr. Reynold Hillenbrand*

Monsignor Hillenbrand's work with YCW and YCS began in 1939 and with CFM in 1945. From the mid 1940s until the 1970s he served as national chaplain for these organizations.

CFM sponsors an award for parish priests who promote CFM named in honor of Msgr. Hillenbrand.

## From the National Chaplain

by Father Don Conroy

### *Role Models of Wisdom*



In mid-summer—July 26 to be precise—the Catholic Community celebrates the feast day of two important saints. They are Saints Ann and Joachim, the grandparents of Jesus. This feast reminds us of the importance of the intergenerational family and of grandparents as an integral part of the family.

Our busy world with its emphasis on a culture of youth often misses a Biblical approach to life. In the scriptures grandparents and seniors in general provide role models for wisdom and images of God's unlimited mercy and love.

I recall a meeting I had with Archbishop Patrick Flores of San Antonio a number of years ago. During our conversation about family ministry the kindly Archbishop told me that he attributed his vocation greatly to his grandparents. While his parents and older siblings were in the fields of Texas working hard to make a living, his grandparents looked after him at home.

In their caring presence they taught him the basics of his faith and his culture, which has stayed with him for life. In these moments his grandmother taught him about Jesus and his religion and his grandfather told him marvelous stories about heroes from his Mexican-American heritage and culture. These wise and wonderful grandparents gave him the deep and early formation that led to his spiritual nourishment and priestly vocation.

Summer time provides us with the opportunities in our fast moving world to pause to be family. At this time we should remember to include grandparents and older people from the wisdom generation around us. In this way we can develop that intergenerational awareness so necessary for the fullness of Christian family living.

Visits to grandparents living at a distance, family reunions and times to share stories of other days and past generations on vacation are precious moments. Together children and teens along with moms and dads have the opportunity to touch the deeper values and the meaning of life. As God used Simeon and Anna who met the Holy Family as they came on pilgrimage into the Temple, the Spirit can touch our souls and prepare us for future challenges through contact with people from older generations.

Our present Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, an example of devoted and energetic aging, has made several pronouncements on the importance of the intergenerational family and the role of elders. He has stressed the need to have three, or even four generations (great-grandparents too!), share the fullness of Gospel living.

Pope John Paul has pointed out that older persons "are guardians of our collective memory, and thus the privileged interpreters of that body of ideals and common values which support and guide life in society" (Letter to the Elderly, #10).

Again in his message through the Pontifical Council on the Laity the Pope also noted: "The younger generations are losing a sense of history and consequently the sense of their own identity. A society that minimizes the sense of history fails in its responsibility to educate young people."

When we speak of the Christian family and the family movements (especially CFM), we should remind ourselves that a broad sweep of contact with persons of all ages forms the vital and live-giving relationships needed for us all to mature. Thus CFM should not focus only on the nuclear family of parents and young children.

By these vital intergenerational connections through the seasons, on vacations and at holidays we keep in touch with meaning of life: sometimes in person through family trips and outings; other times through telephone, notes, and e-mail. Let's not miss these opportunities to make a difference in the depth and quality of our lives.

In this way we remember the past, celebrate the present and anticipate the future by developing a deeper appreciation of what it really means to live as Christians. We come to see why we are a family-centered Church, not one of isolated individuals.

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



## Taking the Time to Make a Difference

by Paul R. Leingang

### *'None of the above' is not good enough*

Maybe it's the election year news. Or maybe it's a recent conversation at a church committee meeting. I'm not sure of the source of my reflection, but it comes down to these questions: Can you support the good efforts of someone who has moral views inconsistent with your own? Can you work toward a good end with someone who has no moral stance on an issue that is central to your views?

During every election year for as long as I can remember, some writer or comedian or news reporter has made a cynical suggestion—that after looking at the list of candidates, some voters would want to write in "None of the above."

We all know that a vote for "None of the above" could be a valid expression of a citizen's frustration. We all know with certainty that such a vote would be a wasted vote – capable of expressing frustration but totally incapable of doing anything about it.

Selecting "none of the above" is not an acceptable course of action for a committed Christian. The man who buried his talent was judged harshly in the Gospel story.

At a recent parish committee meeting, discussion focused on whether or not it is acceptable to support an organization working for good purposes, if that organization does not take a stand against abortion.

There was no disagreement about the good causes the organiza-

tion is working for. But there was great concern expressed because of the lack of a stance—neither for nor against—on a most significant moral issue.



I couldn't help but reflect on that parish discussion when I read a report from Vatican Information Service. **James T. Morris**, executive director of the World Food Pro-

*Selecting "none of the above" is not an acceptable course of action for a committed Christian.*

gram, was received at the Vatican by **Pope John Paul II**, who said "I am pleased to greet you and to express once more my deep appreciation of all that the World Food Program does to assist those who suffer from hunger and malnutrition throughout the world."

The World Food Program is an agency of the United Nations and is headquartered in Rome. Feeding the hungry is a good action, but I know that there are other programs and projects undertaken by the U.N. that are at times contrary to Catholic moral teaching.



Christian and Jewish leaders joined together in Great Britain on Jan. 27, which was observed as

Holocaust Memorial Day – the anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In London, the Anglican archbishop of Canterbury, **Rowan Williams**, and the Catholic archbishop of Westminster, **Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor**, joined Jewish leaders in warning of the resurgence of anti-Semitism. **Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks** also signed a joint statement, according to a report from the news agency, ZENIT.

In part, the leaders stated, "A truly democratic and tolerant society, free of the evils of prejudice, racism and other forms of bigotry, acknowledges and respects, at all times, the dignity of all its citizens, regardless of race, religion, gender or social condition."



How do you form your political views?

What guides your choice among political candidates?

What are your standards for giving to charities? Or supporting a movement?

Is it possible for an agency or institution to be morally neutral?

Is "the lesser of two evils" an acceptable reason for casting a vote or sending a dollar?



Take the time to become informed on the social teaching of the Church.

Take the time to get engaged in the political process on the national or local level.

You can 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 appears in a number of diocesan newspapers and on the CFM website. Paul and Jane Leingang are executive directors of CFM.*

# Your Marriage: The Great Adventure

by Lauri Przybysz

## Protecting your Marriage from Your Children



Children are a blessing from the Lord. How could it ever be that such a blessing could present hidden obstacles to marital success? In his recent book, *Take Back Your Kids: Confident Parenting in Turbulent Times* (Sorin Books, 2000), **William J. Doherty, Ph.D.**, cautions American parents that their marriage can end up at the bottom of the priority scale of the family. Young parents today face an enormous amount of pressure to focus on their children, even to the detriment of their couple relationship. Do his insights ring any bells with you?

- ◆ “We have gotten a lot better at being sensitive to our children and their needs and a lot worse at setting limits for them.
- ◆ “We are more involved with our children’s sports activities but we have lost the balance between home life and kids’ outside activities.
- ◆ “We know more about raising our children than about nurturing our marriages, which sometimes must be protected from our children’s demands.”

Recall the challenges that the arrival of your first child introduced into your relationship. Think about a recent conflict with a teenager (teens can be adept at playing one parent against the other). As children leave the nest, many marriages are shaken because the partners have to relearn ways to pay attention to one another. Child rearing is such an important task that many couples find their lives consumed by it. Little energy is left for their marriage.

Today’s parents can begin to see themselves as “service providers” to their children. Mom or Dad may worry that saying “no” to a child’s request for time and attention will scar him for life. We can develop a pattern of putting our partner’s needs on hold, since after all, we are adults. The problem is that this leaves out the concept of the child’s responsibility as a family member.

We can gently teach our children that putting our marriage first doesn’t mean that they are not important or valued. What do we expect and what are we willing to work on with our children? Key is to start while they are young, and it will seem natural to them. Doherty points out that, in our child-centered culture, children may never learn to respect the boundaries of their parents’ marital relationship.

Advocate for your own time. Doherty and his wife initiated a ritual of couple talk after dinner when their youngest child was about three. Kids were asked to leave the couple alone for 15 minutes, unless something extremely important came up. When the children interrupted for routine matters, the couple would gently but firmly remind them, “We are having our coffee talk.” “Before long, they got the idea and left us in peace for a ritual that became a cornerstone of our marriage,” he says.

Years later, Doherty’s children told him it gave them a secure feeling to know that we were communicating with each other.

“Children’s security rests in the quality and endurance of their parent’s marriage. They can be taught to respect and support the boundaries of that marriage.”

Stepfamilies have special issues, and *Take Back Your Kids* addresses challenges they face. Parents often focus on their sense of obligation to their children from the other marriage, missing the importance of the loyalty claims of their new spouse. Doherty reminds us that the new marriage cannot be put on hold for years until the children grow up. “Marital bonds bring their own obligations to love, cherish and spend time together as partners.”

Finding couple time can be even trickier when you have teens and young adults in the house. When child is too old for bedtime, couples can follow the same principle of asking for respect for alone or couple time in the evening. Doherty suggests that you ask your teen to let you know what he or she needs from you earlier in the evening, then declare yourself at a certain point as “off duty” unless something urgent comes up.

Saving adequate amounts of energy for your marriage will pay off for your children in the end. They will have the security and role model of adults who are a strong parenting team.

*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

**Eleanor Ensroth**, of St. Lucy, **St. Clair Shores, Mich.**, reports that 15 CFMers of all ages gathered at the Gleaners Food Bank, **Warren**, to fill 620 bags of food for the needy in the area. "The youngest of our workers fell asleep for a short time on one of the empty food racks. Needless to say, she earned her little break."

**Sue Hamilton**, **Ann Arbor, Mich.** and **Naples, Fla.**, was honored at the St. Mary-of-the-Woods College Commencement ceremony on May 8 with a Distinguished Alumna Award.

Sue and her husband **Wayne** served as fifth presidents of CFM from 1985-89 and as presidents of the International Confederation of Christian Family Movements from 1989-1995. During their presidency they worked to improve international communication by founding LINK, the

international newsletter. Sue learned Spanish to communicate better with the diverse organization and she and Wayne traveled to New Zealand, the Philippines, Argentina, Italy, Mexico, and Malta during their term of office spreading the message of Observe-Judge-Act to new countries.

Sue once quipped that their high volume of international mail prompted their letter carrier to query, "Don't you people know anyone in the United States?"

Sue is a director of Confluence, a private venture capital firm. She was previously a teacher, owner of Manchester Travel and vice-president of Manchester Stamping Corp. Sue holds masters degrees in Pastoral Theology from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College and in special education from Marygrove College.

*Homemade Disciples*, the new program book from CFM, guides CFM families to see themselves as the domestic church described in Church tradition.

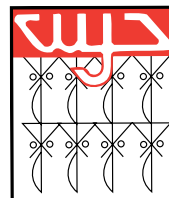
"As Christian families, you not only belong to the Church, but your daily life is a true expression of the Church." That's how Christian families are described by the U.S. bishops in *Follow the Way of Love*, their document on family life published in 1994.

*Homemade Disciples* examines this understanding featuring ten meetings that discover the ways families act as "church of the home." Each meeting contains an additional activity suitable for adults and children.

The book is available from the national office free with your paid membership in the Christian Family Movement.

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