



Vol 57 • No. 7  
November 2004

## IN THIS ISSUE

Presidents' Perspective .....	1
Parent to Parent .....	3
Leader to Leader .....	4
Chaplain's column .....	5
Taking the Time .....	6
Your Marriage .....	7
SPOTLIGHT .....	8



## Christian Family Movement

### CFM group takes action through prayer

by Karen Burnard

St. Mary Student Parish, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Our CFM group formed in 2000 as a new initiative within our St. Mary Student parish of Ann Arbor, Mich. The past four years have found us growing as a community of faith and support for each other. We have shared meetings, holidays, service projects, sorrows and joys. This past year, we were particularly drawn together by the need to pray.

In the autumn, one CFM family faced a number of challenges. We looked for a way to show our support. From the book *Out of the Ordinary* by **Joyce Rupp**, we adapted a ceremony which was originated by **Rachel Naomi Remen** who wrote *Kitchen Table Wisdom*. It is called the courage stone. We brought a stone to our meeting as a symbol of strength and courage, remembering Peter and the early church. We opened with Psalm 18: "God is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer, my God my rock in whom I take refuge." Then each member in turn held the stone while sharing a story from their lives when they faced hardship or challenge, and recalled what gift or grace helped them. The stone thus became a symbol of each gift, such as patience, perseverance, hope, and peace of mind. We closed with a final prayer, and the stone

was given to the family as a reminder of our support and love.

We traditionally gather for a Christmas potluck and bring gifts for a family in need within the community. Before eating, we started a new tradition called the blessing circle, based on ideas and prayers found in two books, *The Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*, by the **U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops**, and *Sabbath*, by **Wayne Muller**. We formed a circle around the food and Advent wreath and shared a prayer:

*Blessed are you,  
Lord God of all creation  
in the darkness  
and in the light.  
Blessed are you  
in this food  
and in our sharing.  
Blessed are you  
as we wait in joyful hope  
of the coming of our savior,  
Jesus Christ.  
May our hearts be lifted,  
our spirits refreshed  
as we light the  
(Advent or Sabbath) candles.  
May the light  
fill our lives  
with kindness and peace.  
Blessed is God.*

—continued on page 4



## Presidents' Perspective

by Peter and Jane Buchbauer

### *The Father's Blessing*

"I guess we haven't handled that very well."

The mother of one of my students sat across from me, tired, drawn and worried about her daughter's problems. I looked empathetically at her and could only say, "We've all been there."

Not a one of us has been gifted with the perfect handbook on raising children. For all the manuals, baby books, psychoanalysis, and self improvement books out there, no two children are alike so who's to say which advice will work for whom. With four children in our household, we have run the gamut of decisions, problems and crises—all different, all individual to the children involved. All I can say is: Thank you, God.

That's not a facetious "thank you." No, indeed, that is a very grateful "thank you"—for getting us through them. You see, I just don't know how one parents without God.

When our parish was going through a crisis and it became impossible to give our children the Catholic school education we had always planned for them in our parish school, we prayed for an alternative. Our answer to prayer came in a school thirty minutes north of our community in a neighboring parish that we had not even realized had a school until

then. I was not working at the time and the commute was made manageable with the help of a carpool of other parents who had decided to make the same move. The experience was a positive one. Thank you, God.

---

*With four children  
in our household,  
we have run  
the gamut of  
decisions, problems  
and crises  
—all different,  
all individual  
to the children  
involved.*

---

When my oldest son came home from his first year of college, confused and miserable about being without a goal. I could only pray. He had decided that the course he had originally set for himself was not what he wanted to do, and this was a problem I could not relate to. My answer to prayer came from a friend who directed me to a career aptitude testing service that put him right on track. He will graduate with his degree in the next year. Thank you, God.

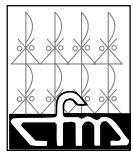
When my youngest son was invited to be a student ambassador to Australia and New Zealand as a middle schooler in the fall of 2001 after the disaster of September 11, I had to pray for the strength to give him the opportunity to spread his wings. After six months of preparation, I left him at Dulles Airport with his delegation and said a trembling prayer that I had made the right decision. His trip was a wonderful experience. Thank you, God.

I was recently thrown a curve ball when the father of a student I traveled with this past summer informed me that he was an avowed atheist. Once a seminarian, he is now convinced that there is no one else "out there," and he thinks he's done a fine job raising his three children without any supernatural help! Then his wife offered me that knowing look that told me that he didn't need to do the praying: she'd been doing it in spite of him! He'll go to his grave ready to take on anyone who wants to have a theological debate with him on the existence of a creator; but in her quiet, loving faith, his wife has been pulling that duty.

Life is a wonderful gift from God, but it comes with many challenges, trials and tribulations. That's okay: with that gift comes an opportunity for grace, the grace that comes from falling on your knees and turning it all over to the one who loves you more than you can ever imagine. More than the way you love the children you are praying for, your Father in heaven is there for you. And that is a treasured blessing!

---

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



ACT is published up to eight times a year by the Christian Family Movement.

CFM National Office  
P.O. Box 925  
Evansville IN 47706-0925

Telephone: 812-962-5508  
Fax: 812-962-5509  
E-mail: office@cfm.org  
Web page: <http://www.cfm.org>

Presidents  
**Jane and Peter Buchbauer**

Executive directors  
**Jane and Paul Leingang**

Newsletter editor  
**Kathleen Miller**

Webmaster  
**Andy Pozdol**

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](mailto: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.

## Parent to Parent

by Mary Lou Gorman



### *Teaching about Money*

In today's world, teaching children how to handle money is a necessity. By the time a child is in third grade, they are able to understand the value of an allowance and count back change. Many families have found a weekly allowance of \$2.00 a good start, and although some correlate it directly with household chores, it is often more effective to assign chores and issue allowances simply because a person is a member of the family.

Talking over what the child should do with the allowance is the primary reason for giving it to them: some for saving, some for

As the child grows older, it is even more important to review their spending habits periodically, to make sure they are saving and remembering charity and church giving. Saving for college and for gifts encourages good values. Don't forget to take them with you when you bargain hunt, to explain how you save at grocery and department stores, to share your deliberations on major purchases, and, in age-appropriate ways, to outline family expenses.

Discourage foolish spending: remind them, for example, that CD's, movies and books can be checked out free from the library.

Frank financial communication with your college student is also important. Credit card companies saturate the college market, and credit card debt has serious ramifications for both students and parents. Also explain the traps they can get into with gambling. Let them know you'll always listen and advise them when it comes to money problems.

Your children will be handling money the rest of their lives, and will thank you for good spending and saving habits as they become adults.

Remember that God loves a cheerful giver and blesses one who lives within his means. Good advice for all of us!

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

---

*Your children  
will be handling  
money  
the rest  
of their lives.*

---

church or charity, some to put aside and save for something they really want, some for treats. Generally, an allowance should remain consistent for a period of time, perhaps a year.

Depending on how the child handles it, the allowance could be increased dramatically as he grows older, along with the responsibility to choose and budget for clothes, school supplies, recreation, school lunches, gifts, vacation souvenirs, and so forth.

## July Conference to Appeal to All Ages

Make plans now to attend the marriage and family life conference CFM is planning for next summer in the Chicago area. It promises to send a message of hope and challenge to those families involved in the movement and others interested in Christian family life. "Fanning the Fire of Faith" will be held July 15 and 16 at Holy Family Parish in **Inverness, Ill.**

The weekend will kick off Friday night with **Doug Brummel**, Catholic comedian who will present a program for the whole family designed to tickle the faith and nourish the soul. Doug is a national presenter who works through storytelling and song to preach the Gospel to all ages.

On Saturday, **Father Pat Brennan**, pastor of Holy Family Parish, will challenge families to spread the fire of faith through living a Christian family life. Father Brennan is a national speaker on

the topic of evangelization and well known for his dynamic preaching.

**Andrew and Teri Lyke** will urge us to become a community of married couples who actively encourage others who live as



faithful partners. Andrew and Terri have a nationally syndicated column and an active ministry in marriage enrichment in the Chicago area.

Afternoon special interest sessions will tackle such subjects as setting family priorities, couple communication, coping with change and the crossroads of faith and work.

Other workshops will give leaders a chance to learn more about

the Chicago roots of CFM and leadership development.

During the adult presentations on Saturday children will enjoy parallel programming with a chance to reconnect with parents during lunch and a second presentation by Doug Brummel.

The day will end with a liturgy and a gala celebration giving a chance to meet and mingle with other who have come to be energized to live a life faithful to the Gospel.

Plans for the week include a pre-conference service opportunity for families on Friday and a post-conference outing on Sunday to complete a fun and uplifting weekend.

Thanks to **Tom and Laura Toussaint** and **Mary and Phil Whiteside** of Holy Family Parish who are working as local committee chairs with Chicago CFMers and the board of directors to bring us a enlightening and uplifting family conference.

—continued from page 1

This was followed by intercessory prayer. Then each person in turn held a small bowl of oil, used to bless and anoint the person to the right, making the sign of the cross on their forehead and offering them a blessing, such as: "I bless you with contentment, [or peace or joy]. We closed with a final prayer:

*God be in our head  
and in our understanding.  
God be in our eyes  
and in our looking.  
God be in our mouths  
and in our speaking.  
God be in our hearts  
and in our thinking.  
Amen.*

This past spring, four of our high school students were confirmed. We invited them to our adult CFM meeting, to recognize that they were becoming adults within the Catholic faith. We began our meeting by offering gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. Each confirmed adult wrote out a specific prayer for each of the confirmation students, using their assigned gift or fruit. We took turns reading them to the student, and the strips were collected in a glass globe to be a reminder of our faith and the graces we hoped for each of them. Example: "Josh, I bless you with the fruit of peace. When you face times of conflict, may the Holy Spirit work through you to bring peace." We closed, circling around the students, each of us touching them,

and offered a closing prayer, from *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*:

*The Lord said to Jeremiah:  
Before I formed you  
in the womb  
I knew you;  
before you were born,  
I dedicated you.  
May God in whose presence  
our ancestors walked,  
bless you.  
May God who has been  
your shepherd from birth,  
keep you.  
May God give you  
peace and grace.  
Amen.*

Through such actions we have shared our spiritual growth. These rituals and prayers have bound us closer as a community of faith.

## From the National Chaplain

by Father Don Conroy

### *A Moving Experience: Families Helping Families*



My experience of relocating from **Washington, D.C.**, to Holy Family parish in **Latrobe, Penn.**, was an occasion to reflect on moving from a spiritual and from a practical point of view; and to wonder how we as Christian families can reach out to families dealing with the disruption of moving.

Two aspects of the experience are noteworthy. To begin with there is the “leave taking” of the old residence. This involves such experiences as saying good-bye to long-time friends, and packing, while anticipating what lies ahead the new location and job.

Then there are the new experiences that accompany arrival: moving into the new house, wondering who will be in the new neighborhood and parish, and the welcoming process, with its kaleidoscope of emotions.

All of these circumstances help us recall that we, as Christians, are a pilgrim people, a people on the move. In the Hebrew Scriptures we see how God’s people dealt with the stress and joy of moving to their new home in the Promised Land. There are many other examples related to people moving and traveling, and even to living in exile and coming back home after a long time away. All of these help us understand how God’s Spirit is present at such moments.

In the New Testament we see the Holy Family traveling to Bethlehem, then to exile in Egypt, and back to Nazareth. Jesus is so constantly on the move that he says “The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head!” In the Acts of the Apostles and Paul’s Epistles we see early Christians like the apostles Peter and Paul and the lay couple Priscilla and Aquila moving from place to place.

The biblical narratives prompt us to question our call to minister in Jesus’ name, to serve those moving: the traveler and the stranger living in exile.

I wonder if our parishes, so often preoccupied with those who are staying, could better reach out to those who are moving, moving out or moving in. Perhaps CFM groups could “observe, judge and act” on the issues and needs of moving families.

How do we welcome newly arriving families and help them adapt emotionally and spiritually to a new home and parish? A ministry of welcome and hospitality could play a big role in building up the local church as well as CFM.

A Protestant Bible Church in **Kenosha, Wisc.**, describes its Men’s Moving Ministry: Men of the congregation help people box and transport their household goods. Their website says: “Our mission is to present an opportunity of service ... to have a method of introducing men in the church to each other while working together for a cause; to alleviate the burden of trying to find help in a stressful time.” I wonder whether CFM groups might adapt this type of service to a family to family ministry.

What other ways can you think of that you and your family could undertake to serve moving families?



*St. Theodore CFM in **Flint Hill, Mo.**, donated an afternoon of car detailing to the parish dinner auction. The auction winners have two large SUV’s! The group had fun washing the cars, contributed some money to the parish, and made parishioners more aware of CFM. In the past, they have also donated Dessert of the Month to the auction. Thanks to **Tom and Kathy Rothermich** for the photo.*

*Father Don Conroy is President of the National Institute for the Family in **Washington, DC.**, and Pastor of Holy Family Parish, **Latrobe, Penn.***



# Taking the Time to Make a Difference

by Paul R. Leingang

## Bringing Light to the Darkness

The first time it happened, I ran to the window. I had just installed a new motion detector lighting system outside, and I wanted to see what it was that had triggered it.

So when the lights came on above the garage door, I went to see what I could see. But try as I might, I saw nothing of any interest, nothing in motion —no intruder, no neighborhood cat or dog, nothing at all.

Maybe the wind blew some branches to wave in front of the motion detector, I thought. I'll have to adjust the sensor to be less sensitive, I thought.

I'll do that, one of these days.

The lights come on fairly often now, but I don't run to the window anymore.

I no longer expect to see anything out there. The neighbor's cats can be quick; so even if one of them crosses our driveway at night, I probably wouldn't be fast enough to see it.

I don't mind this situation. I installed the system for our own convenience and safety. I enjoy having the lights come on when I drive up at night, and when I'm looking for the right key to open the back door.

It's really very much OK with me that I have never yet spotted an intruder.

I won't mind if I never do.



Our sacred scriptures are rich with references to the light.

Jesus is the light of the world, the one who was sent to bring light to those who walked in darkness.

A woman who loses a coin lights a lamp, sweeps the house, and searches for the coin until it is found.

But being found in the light can cause some discomfort, too, as we read in chapter 22 of Luke's Gospel:

*Being found in the light can cause some discomfort, too*

*Then they seized [Jesus] and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. Peter followed at a distance; and when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a maid, seeing him as he sat in the light and gazing at him, said, "This man also was with him." But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him."*



Autumn and Advent are certainly appropriate times to reflect on light and darkness. But those themes may be too big, too vast for us.

The challenge is to bring the

light to our own driveway, so to speak, and all the way to our own back door.

It is right and good to acknowledge that Jesus is the light of the world.

At this time of the year it is important to know that the light of Jesus shines on each of us, on you and on me. And when others see us, you and me, in the light of the faith we profess, what witness will we give?



Where have you been called upon to tell the truth? Where, or how, have others asked you about the things that really matter to you?

A good discussion, for families or friends, might begin with a retelling of the most difficult truth you ever had to reveal. Or even, perhaps, there may be an admission that truth was denied.

A good plan of action might include an exploration of the ways in which light can be brought to our everyday darknesses.

Take the time today to bring something secret out into the open.

Take the time to focus the light of your faith on the needs of the stranger and the poor, the lonely ones, and those who despair.

Bring the light of knowledge to the darkness of ignorance and confusion.

Bring the light of love to the darkness of hatred.

Seek out the ones who have the power to make decisions, and make your voice heard.

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 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

## Beyond Romance



Marriage is more, and less, than it is cracked up to be. Guided only by pop culture, young people end up looking for a perfect “soul mate” that will never disappoint, annoy, or disagree with them. For too long, we have encouraged myths about marriage that set people up for failure.

Have you picked up a bridal magazine lately? Page after glossy page promises to deliver the wedding of your dreams, happily ever after. Among ads for expensive clothes, food, decorations, and honeymoon packages, you will be hard pressed to find articles on building the qualities couples will need for a community of life and love. What would it take to shift the common perception that marriage is primarily about romance?

Mass communications and the media could be powerful forces to change peoples’ negative perceptions and false expectations about married life. Changes in advertising, TV and movie scripts, and song lyrics could discredit myths that contribute to marital dissolution. If enough journalists over enough time drew attention to the value of better preparation for marriage (rather than mere preparation for an elaborate wedding), they could help create a norm of more intentional preparation for marriage, and reduce the number of impulsive or higher-risk marriages in the first place.

In the last five to ten years, many new programs for marriage preparation, enrichment, and support have been launched by the

helping community. The Smart Marriages Conference, [www.smartmarriages.com](http://www.smartmarriages.com), is in its ninth year, gathering professionals from both the secular and religious arenas to share and promote marriage enriching programs. Some local governments now give discounts on marriage license fees to couples who have invested in pre-marriage counseling. The



*What would it take to shift the common perception that marriage is primarily about romance?*

federal government is funding and hopes to fund many more education programs to help low income and refugee couples stay together.

Still, the best advocates for healthy marriage today may be individual married couples themselves. Just as a person living a Christian life may be the only Gospel anyone ever reads, a married couple that has weathered life’s storms may be the only evidence that marriage can survive.

### Action Ideas

- ◆ Watch the *Story of Us*, winner of the 1999 Smart Marriages Film Award, with your group or as a couple. Director Rob Reiner calls the movie “A film about marriage—what it really is to be married. There are a lot of films about meeting and falling in love and quite a few about the pain and suffering of divorce. But we could recall few, if any, about the ins and outs, the day-to-day wear and tear, of being married.” A do-it-yourself discussion guide is available at [www.smartmarriages.com](http://www.smartmarriages.com)
- ◆ When you see advertising or other media with a healthy marriage message, send encouragement to the merchant or producer.
- ◆ Let your elected representatives know that you support marriage education initiatives of your local or national governments. For more information about the Healthy Marriage Initiative visit [www.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.acf.hhs.gov).
- ◆ Promote celebration of World Marriage Day, February 13, 2005, in your parish or diocese. Tools are available at [www.wmd.wwme.org](http://www.wmd.wwme.org)

*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

**Don and Mary Hardy** are the new leaders at St. Catherine's in **Torrance, Calif.**

**Father Serafin Avinido** is starting CFM at Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish in **Ozona, Tex.** Father Avinido has experience of CFM in the **Philippines.** He is eager to start a Spanish speaking group as well.

**Jack and Lynette Groves** are leaders at St. Francis CFM in **West Des Moines, Iowa** this year. This group enjoys a joint celebration in September after they have formed their groups after an August sign up time. They also gather for a progressive dinner in the spring. They have chosen the book *Families: Whole and Holy* this year.

**Margie and Larry Murchan** made a presentation to a moms' support group at Queen of Apostles parish, **San Jose, Calif.** Several families are interested in starting CFM.

**Tom and Laura Toussaint** report that they are forming a faith cluster for children's religious education with families from their CFM group at Holy Family parish in **Inverness, Ill.**

**Sheila and Ed Osterhaus** report that their group enjoyed *Building a Better World* last year. They conducted the Global Banquet from that book, collected 1500 items of new underwear for four shelters, and created hand made items for shut-ins and nursing homes at Valentine's Day.

The group at Sacred Heart in **Winchester, Va.,** used the family activity in the *Building a Better World* book as their end of the year activity. The event allowed the participants to visit a recycling center as well as a park and talk about the families' impact on the environment. **Gary and Cindy Simmons** are leaders.

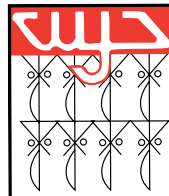
Moving?

Please notify CFM of your new address.

Thank you.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Christian Family Movement  
P.O. BOX 925, Evansville IN 47706



NONPROFIT  
ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
EVANSVILLE, IN  
PERMIT #1072