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Christian Family Movement



*Laughter
nourishes faith
at Conference*



Children opened the afternoon session with a song.

The 2005 National Marriage and Family Life Conference “Fanning the Fire of Faith” was attended by 250 enthusiastic participants at Holy Family Parish in **Inverness, Ill.** Starting with the Friday evening appearance of the **Doug Brummel** as Estelle, a new member of the “Red Hat Society” to the joyful celebration of the Eucharist and concluding party on Saturday the weekend event was fun filled and uplifting for all ages.

Doug Brummel introduced us to all seven of his characters during

three presentations during the weekend and through their stories helped participants explore their own wit and wisdom of faith and family life. Audiences responded enthusiastically to his gentle humor and humanity.

Keynote presenter and pastor of Holy Family **Father Pat Brennan** shared some of the aspects of family ministry at Holy Family parish and then focused on forgiveness as an aspect of important family life. He

—continued on page 5



Presidents' Perspective

by John and Lauri Przybysz

Father of a teenage daughter

So much of the trouble between fathers and daughters comes from the fact that they speak different languages.

A fifteen year old daughter says things like, "I hate you. You are so stupid. You think you know everything, but you don't know anything. I wish I wasn't part of this family."

A father thinks, "She hates me. She thinks I am stupid. She is ashamed of our family." But that is not what a daughter means. Words have different meanings for daughters.

Translated into Daddy's language, what she means is, "Tell me I'm pretty. Tell me you love me. Tell me that, even after I grow up, I will still be a part of your family."

Experience taught me that it does no good to get angry, shout, hit the teenage daughter, threaten punishment, or other senseless actions.

Here is what works:

Slowly approach the upset daughter. Make no sudden or threatening motions. Gently wrap your arms around her (bonus points if you manage to pin her arms to her sides). Softly and smoothly say, "My baby is so pretty. She is so sweet. She is so smart. Her daddy loves her. I am so lucky to have her for my daughter. She will always be my baby."

Be prepared for thrashing and squirming. Then watch a miracle: the daughter calms down. Peace returns. It is like the old cartoon, where Popeye rubs the alligator's belly, and the alligator goes limp.

A wise dad once told me that a teenage daughter wants to grow up and be independent (you want that too), but she wants to stay part of your family. She is trying to work out that conflict.

You can help. Tell her you love her. Tell her she is pretty. Tell her she will always be your girl.



The convention in Chicago was fantastic! Thank you, again, to the local organizers: Tom and Laura Toussaint, Mary and Phil Whiteside, Lisa and Joe Guerrero, and the members of Holy Family CFM.

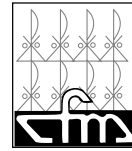
Father Pat Brennan was a gracious host and a powerful keynote speaker. Thank you, Father Pat.

Thank you to all the other CFMers from Chicago, too numerous to mention, who pitched in to make it a success.

God bless you all!

- John

John and Lauri Przybysz live in Severna Park, Maryland, and have been active CFM members since 1980. They are the parents of six children and five grandchildren.



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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.

The other day, a mother asked me what would be the most important things to teach her children. Parents need to be aware and remind themselves, as they work through the stages of their children's lives, what they need to be concentrating on. Life gets so busy that suddenly our children are grown and we ask ourselves where did we go right or wrong. In my opinion, the basic things to teach our children are love for God, a desire to love and help our neighbors, and the rules for good health and safety.

Most parents don't think they know how to teach their children a love for God. They do morning and night prayers, prayers at mealtimes, and take the children to church; but usually they stop there. One of the most revealing ways to talk to your child about God is through nature. Take walks and point out to your younger children all the beauty around them. As they get older and

Parent to Parent

by Mary Lou Gorman



Three Basic Concepts

learn the wonders of science they will come to appreciate the Lord more and more. It's parents who reminds children who created them

What are the most important things to teach my children?

and who created all the wonders in nature. It's parents who remind them that God made them because he loves them and that they in turn should love Jesus for bringing new life. These facts need to be repeated

over and over *by you*.

We certainly teach our children how to love their neighbor by good modeling. If we don't say good things about others, if we don't point out the good in all people, then our children will not work for peace in the world. We need to point out that when they do something good for someone they will feel better, the person will feel better, and the world will be a better place thanks to their actions.

The third very important thing that parents need to keep aware of is teaching their children how to keep safe and healthy. I hear a lot of parents talking to their children about keeping safe but not enough about keeping healthy. Eating the right foods is an important skill to teach and to model. Moderation is a virtue much needed and little appreciated in our culture. The home is the best place to learn and practice virtues of all sorts, so that all of us can build health and fitness of body, mind and spirit.

Try to keep in mind each day these three basic ideas. Raising children with love for God, love for neighbor, and a commitment to strength and health of character is a noble vocation indeed.



St. Thomas More CFM in Peoria, Ariz., ended last year with a campout in the Arizona high country at Greer. Ten families camped in tents and cabins, played games, and ate together for the weekend. They ended the weekend with a prayer service. Photo of one of the games courtesy of Jim Everett.

Mary Lou and Phil Gorman, Arlington Heights, members of CFM since 1953, have four daughters and 14 grandchildren.



Children had fun, made friends.



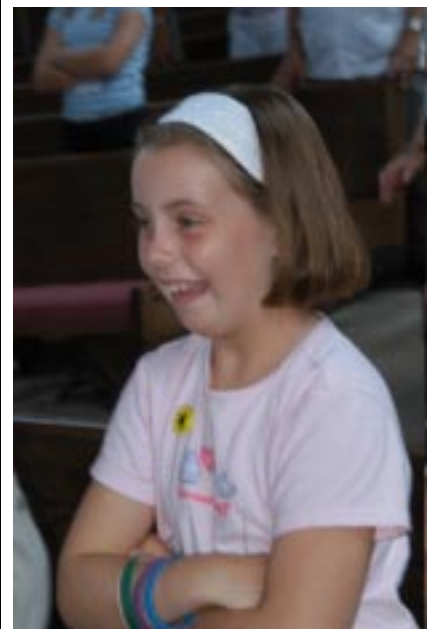
Children and Youth at the Conference

The children's program was led by **Peter Cunningham, Jean Golda, Pam Miller, Greg Dirkes and Lisa Mersereau**, all veteran volunteers of the Children's Liturgy of the Word Program at Holy Family Parish. The children explored the simplest yet most profound "pearls" of our faith—rediscovering that



Jesus came to save us from our sinfulness and that saying "Yes" to Him means taking and telling that Good News to everyone we meet! Fast friendships were formed by children of CFMers across the country.

The teen-agers were led by **Matt Marcheschi, Elise Kopulos, and Danielle DuPré**, volunteer staffers with Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS). They spent the morning discovering that "this isn't just their parents' faith anymore" and the afternoon talking about what it means to be a man or woman of integrity and virtue.



*Conference chairs **Tom Toussaint, Phil and Mary Whiteside.***



*Front: **John and Lauri Przybysz, Jane and Peter Buchbauer, Kay Aitchison, ICCFM Presidents Elena and Nop Muangroot.**
Back: **Father Don Conroy, Gary Aitchison***

Holy Family Parish, Inverness, Ill., hosted the conference.

Conference

—Continued from page 1

emphasized the fact that forgiveness and reconciliation are not identical. Forgiveness is internal while reconciliation is interpersonal, a process of restoring trust in a relationship. Both are necessary for healthy family life. Brennan reviewed the steps forgiveness and noted that forgiving someone can lead to the process of reconciliation. One participant noted that Father Brennan's presentation was "worth the trip all by itself."

Terri and Andrew Lyke spoke to the conference about ways couples encourage each other in their marital commitment. The Lykes noted that CFM groups are a good example of formal communities of faith that can mentor marriage. They asked participants to identify couples who have been examples for them and couples who have walked with them through the trials of married life. The Lykes reminded the audience that young couples are prone to watching the behavior of couples

around them and often identify one to emulate in their marriage. They encouraged participants to tell those who have been good examples to them how they feel.

The afternoon was filled with opportunities to follow up on special interests. **Greg Pierce** spoke on the way one can find God in the "thick places" of life, in the midst of work and child rearing. Pierce is author of the book, *Spirituality@work* published by ACTA.

James Healy gave two popular workshops on communications traps in marriage. **Steve and Kathy**

Bierne spoke about how taking a positive approach to the challenges marriage presents can make all the difference in the outcome. **Mary Louise Kurey** spoke on sexuality and **Robin Hafey** spoke on setting priorities.

A choir of conference participants led by **Colin Colette**, music director at Holy Family, provided the music for the concluding liturgy with presider **Father Don Conroy**, CFM chaplain. Children and youth had special roles to play during the liturgy. A concluding dinner rounded out the celebration.

Many thanks go the local chairs **Tom and Laura Toussaint** and **Mary and Phil Whiteside** and all the local CFMers who helped make the weekend run so well.



Steve and Kathy Bierne, Portland, Or., with Terri Lyke.



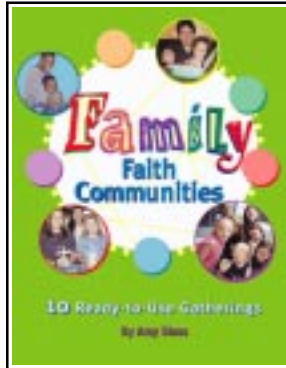
Friday morning, volunteers worked at WINGS (Women in Need Growing Stronger) shelter in Palatine, Il.

Plan to Involve the Kids

Many CFM parents want their kids to accompany them to their CFM meetings. If the meeting space is conducive to movement and relatively stain-resistant, the kids may just be glad to play with their CFM friends and relax with a snack or a movie, while the adults Observe-Judge-Act in the next room. On evenings when a more structured situation is preferable, it is helpful to have some ideas for involving the children. CFM groups planning intergenerational meetings will appreciate a great resource, *Family Faith Communities*, by **Amy Sluss**. With years of experience in family-style small faith community development, Amy has produced easy-to-use, hands-on materials.

Family Faith Communities includes step-by step instructions for ten intergenerational gatherings and ten 8" x 14" Kitchen Table

pages. Each of the gatherings includes prayer, movement, faith sharing, fun activities and social time: just what a group needs to kick off a CFM year, host a mid-year family evening of reflection, or



to close the year. Everyone is active, and there is little sitting and listening. Such an event might be a great expansion tool to invite new families to experience the spirit of CFM. Among the themes are Seasons of Life, Seasons of Faith; Sacraments; The Bible; Finding

Justice, and Caring for others.

The "Kitchen Table" pages are designed for the family to use at home to prepare for the gatherings. However, they might also be used at a CFM meeting to supplement the adult Social Inquiry meetings in the program book. Each family in the group would need its own copy of *Family Faith Communities*. One of the adults or some teens could facilitate the Kitchen Table activity for younger members. Parents and children might do a portion of the Kitchen Table page together at the end of the CFM meeting.

Order *Family Faith Communities* from Good Ground Press, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, 1884 Randolph Ave, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105. \$12.50 each; 5 or more for \$10 each. 1-800-232-5533. www.goodgroundpress.com

Board Briefs

John and Lauri Przybysz were installed as new presidents of CFM at board of directors meeting at Holy Family parish in **Inverness, Ill.** New board members present were **Tom and Mary Kay Halpin, Omaha, Neb.; Tucker and Becky Conaboy, Winchester, Va.; and Robin and Pat Hafey, Pewaukee, Wisc.** The new secretaries of the movement are **Dan and Noreen Thomas from Redondo Beach, Calif.**

With so many new members, the board engaged in some team building activities in order to get better acquainted. One evening's activities included a special home-grown family edition of *Guesstures*.

On a more serious note, the board discussed new directions in programming and meetings. The 2006 winter board meeting will be held in Miami, hosted by members of St. Louis parish. at the invitation of **Vice Presidents Bob and Anne Tomonto.** The summer board meeting will be in **Winchester, Va.,** hosted by Sacred Heart CFMers. Future sites for meetings are **Redondo Beach, Calif., and Evansville, Ind.**

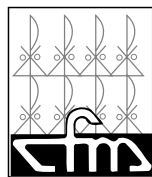
The board noted the hard work of Tom and Laura Toussaint and Mary and Phil Whiteside who acted as local chairs of the summer conference. The board was well pleased with the arrangements and the response to the event.

The generous response to the **Phil and Mary Lou Gorman** Membership Development Fund was noted. The board discussed ways that this fund will be used. Plans were made to have the DVD under development professionally produced.

The board and their children engaged in an outreach activity on Friday morning, July 15 at WINGS, an agency in service to women facing homeless and domestic violence in the northwest suburbs of Chicago. In the afternoon, members met with **Bishop Jerome ListECKi** and **Rick McCord** from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Marriage and Family Life about the bishops' initiative on marriage.



CFM at St. Anthony in **Menomonee Falls, Wisc.**, held a reunion picnic and Mass for all who had been involved in CFM over the past 18 years. Pictured are **Marsha Fox, Mark Fox, Father Tony Klink, and Pam Fox**. Father Tony was the first chaplain. **Sister Nivard Hainault**, pastoral associate and chaplain in some of the early years, also attended. A keepsake DVD of the group's family activities, service activities, family campouts and other family outings from over the years was given to each family. Photos courtesy of **Jim and Mary Robertson**.



Christian Family Movement

September 2005—August 2006 Membership Year

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Membership: In a group Not in a group Chaplain

Dues level: Action: \$35.00 Sustaining: \$50.00
 Sponsoring: \$75.00 Cardijn Circle: \$150.00
 CFM membership dues are tax deductible. Other: _____

Name/s (Please print all information)		His religion	Sponsoring parish/group name	
Address		Her religion	Diocese	
City, State, Zip Code		His occupation	<input type="checkbox"/> Married	Date of marriage
Phone ()		Her occupation	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced	
His e-mail address	Her e-mail address	<input type="checkbox"/> Send ACT by e-mail only (requires e-mail address)	<input type="checkbox"/> Add me/us to the CFM- exchange mailing list (requires e-mail address)	
Check any that apply <input type="checkbox"/> Group leader <input type="checkbox"/> Parish or chapter organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Board of directors		Year first joined _____ New member? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	Talents to share with CFM (e.g., writing, accounting, marketing) <input type="checkbox"/> locally <input type="checkbox"/> nationally	Inquiry Book: Fill in one. <input type="checkbox"/> Received book already. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not send any book. <input type="checkbox"/> Send book (title):

Membership in CFM supports a national ministry to families. Benefits include a one-year subscription to ACT, the national newsletter of the movement; your choice of program book at no charge; and the assistance of the national office in group formation. The mission of CFM is to promote Christ-centered marriage and family life, to help individuals and their families live the Christian faith in everyday life, and to improve society through actions of love, service, education and example.



Taking the Time to Make a Difference

by Paul R. Leingang

... an extraordinary marriage

"We have an extraordinary marriage."

That's a quotation attributed to a couple who try to approach everyday life from that perspective.

So when a problem pops up—and of course, problems always do pop up—the couple's approach begins with their chosen frame of reference.

"We have an extraordinary marriage," they say. So then they ask themselves, "How would a couple with an extraordinary marriage solve this problem?"

That brief story of a couple's marital wisdom and vision came from **Steve and Kathy Beirne**, who guided the participants in a workshop at the Marriage and Family Life Conference sponsored recently in Chicago by the Christian Family Movement.

The Beirnes are the creators and distributors of a newsletter for young married couples, called *Foundations*. It's available in print, and also on the internet.

Their most recent efforts include an adaptation for marriage of an organizational approach for modern business known as Appreciative Inquiry. It is an approach that has been used as an effective and innovative tool to help businesses rethink themselves and their future, according to the Beirnes.

"Most organizational development systems begin by identifying a problem and working to fix it," said the Beirnes. "This is called the deficit or medical model, because

the company is approached as if there were an illness to be cured, or a problem to be solved."

But Appreciative Inquiry "takes a radically different approach, based on a different guiding principle. AI consultants believe that in every organization something must be working or the

"How would a couple with an extraordinary marriage solve this problem?"

organization would cease to exist. By asking about the strengths of the organization the consultant begins a journey toward the positive . . ."

They continue, "Instead of focusing on what needs to be changed or eliminated AI uses the stories of success and hope to build toward a desired future based on past accomplishments."

If I understand the approach, it is not one that tries to cover up the problems or ignore them. It begins rather from a hopeful point of view and seeks to make whatever changes are needed to bring about a business organization—or a marriage relationship—that is successful.

Among the techniques used in

the Appreciative Inquiry process are asking positive questions and discovering stories of past successes. For example, how did we as a young couple in love approach this problem? Or, how did we solve a similar problem?

Another technique is to create an image of what an organization or a marriage would look like if its best practices became the norm instead of the exception. If a company really and truly put the customer first, what would that mean in practice? If husband and wife really and truly put the spouse's interests ahead of selfish desires, what would that relationship look like?



Matthew's Gospel, in chapter 13, gives us many positive examples of what the kingdom is like. It is like a mustard seed that grows into the greatest of shrubs, the leaven that is hidden in flour, a treasure hidden in a field or a pearl of great value.

What would our homes and parishes and communities be like if we could see such parables in them?



Find out more about Appreciative Inquiry by reading *A Positive Revolution in Change: Appreciative Inquiry*, by **David L. Cooperrider** and **Diana Whitney**.

Find out more about the *Foundations* newsletter from S&K Publishers, Steve and Kathy Beirne, Box 1632, Portland, Maine 04104.

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 and appears on the CFM website.

Paul and Jane Leingang are executive directors of CFM.

If you attended a wedding this summer, you may have heard the familiar story of the wedding feast at Cana. In the first public sign that he had come to change the world, Jesus keeps the party going at a neighborhood wedding.

When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

(And) Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come."

His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."

Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons.

Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim.

Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it.

And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servers who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him,

"Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now."

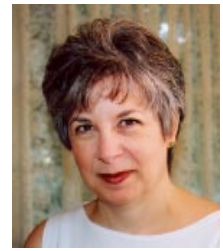
Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

—John 2: 1-12a

In every marriage, at some point the wine runs out. That "wine" includes the feeling of excitement of our courtship and first years together, the thrill of meeting and touching, the joy of spending time together. The daily routine of job, parenting and housekeeping tasks can dull the "kick" we get from one another. We

Your Marriage: The Great Adventure

by Lauri Przybysz



"Pour It On"

may take one another for granted or fall to blaming each other for problems we need to work on ourselves. Gary and Kay Aitchison, in CFM's marriage enrichment program, *Your Marriage*, remind couples to be intentional about keeping the romance alive in marriage: "A marriage either grows or stagnates. The relationship of two unique individuals existing in a changing environment never stands still. Partners who are dedicated to achieving a vital and alive relationship must discover ways to stimulate their marriage."

One of the lessons of Cana, for me, is that the wine-shortage does not need to mean the end of the party. The romance and passion of the first bloom of our love can be restored and renewed indefinitely and Jesus is a key to keeping marriage healthy and happy. When a Christian couple stays close to Jesus, invites him into their lives and into their homes, he will not disappoint them.

Another lesson of Cana is that other people are essential to maintaining the success of the wedding. They draw the water and do what Jesus tells them. With the support and encouragement of others, married couples can ride out some of the storms every marriage goes through. If we are surrounded by negative people, however, it is more difficult to stay positive about our marriages. Staying connected to our

church family and our CFM friends in particular, is good for maintaining the zest of married life.

Act now to enrich your marriage:

- ◆ *As a group or as a couple, use Your Marriage as your next program book.*
- ◆ *Surprise your partner with a special gift, love letter, or other act of kindness.*
- ◆ *Do something romantic that is reminiscent of your courtship days.*
- ◆ *Create an evening for two with music, soft candlelight and special food.*
- ◆ *Express your appreciation to your friends who have been a support for your marriage.*
- ◆ *Host a marriage enrichment event at your parish for all couples, married and engaged.*

Marriage is a sacrament and people can see God at work in it. As Jesus revealed his glory at the wedding feast of Cana, may married couples be a sign to the world that love can still be pledged, shared, and renewed.

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

SPOTLIGHT

Sylvia Fontes reports that the CFM groups for St. Joseph and Teresa of Avila in Auburn, Calif., planned a CFM Mass and BBQ kickoff on August 12 at the Fontes' home. Father Peter Bosque presided with Father Sylvester Kwiatkowski assisting along with Deacon Michael Young. Robin and Stephen Matthews are group leaders.

Holy Family Parish CFM in Inverness, Ill., has a trip to the Wisconsin Dells planned for September. The group has planned to have pizza dinner before their monthly Friday night meetings to simplify life for existing members and to welcome newcomers. Curt and Maureen Rosenwinkel are leaders.

Anthony and Jeannette Ligouri are the new leaders at

Our Lady of Assumption in Wood-Ridge, N.J. They will have Ty Agosta as guest speaker on the Year of the Eucharist for their kick-off meeting .

St. Jane Frances in Pasedena, Md. is hosting two family potluck suppers, one pre-Advent and one pre-Lent. They are calling them "Family Life On Purpose" to introduce people to the CFM inquiry method and invite them to join CFM. Publicity will go out to both school and parish religion program families.

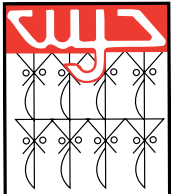
St. Benedict CFM in Evansville, Ind. made a presentation about CFM during the back to school meeting for parents to invite members to join.

While CFM USA was holding its National Family Life Conference in Inverness, IL, July 15-17,

MFC-USA (Spanish-speaking CFM) was meeting in Tucson, Ariz. ICCFM Presidents Nop and Elma Muangroot from Bangkok, Thailand and North American Representatives Gary and Kay Aitchison from Ames, Iowa, attended both conferences. They joined the CFM members for the opening of their convention in Inverness and the MFC for the last half of their conference in Tucson.

Please share your news and upcoming events with us. Send news to Spotlight, care of the CFM office or e-mail act-editor@cfm.org.

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