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Christian Family Movement

Ask Questions. Receive Answers

First CFM Leader and Member Poll

This winter, CFM leaders and members responded to a poll via CFM's website. Although the survey wasn't scientific, demographic data indicate that those who responded were fairly typical of CFM, with age distributions and family sizes corresponding to CFM's membership.

Of those who responded, 95 percent were married, 42 percent had been married 15 years or less, and 50 percent had three or four children.

Members overwhelmingly find CFM benefits their lives directly. 80 percent said it helped them be a better spouse, 77 percent said it helped them be closer to their spouse, 89 percent said it helped them be a better parent, 94 percent said it helped them grow spiritually.

Over 90 percent of both leaders and members find the meetings help them act as Christians in the world while 47 percent of members say they wish their CFM group did more service together.

One thing that is evident from the results of the membership survey is that people who stay in

CFM do so because they enjoy the company they keep. One member responded, "My husband and I joined the group to meet other families with the same Christian values. We also hoped that we would learn from each other." But another said, "Our group recently discussed that we would not still be together if CFM were only social. The program and faith sharing have bound us together."

Eighty-three percent of leaders said lack of time is the biggest factor in getting people to join CFM. Interestingly enough, only two percent of members thought CFM took too much time. One leader commented, "Time commitment is the biggest hurdle to overcome, but once a member feels connected, this is a much smaller issue."

The vast majority of leaders say personal invitation is the best way to get new members (95 percent).

In direct response to leaders' desire for easy-to-use resources, see page 4 for a description of CFM's new "Lessons in Leadership" feature.

Complete results of the members' poll are posted at www.cfm.org.

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Presidents' Perspective

by John and Lauri Przybysz

Letter to the Groom

David Przybysz, son of John and Lauri Przybysz, first met Lisa Simkoke, daughter of Dave and Olga Simkoke, of Clinton Township, Mich., at a CFM convention when both were twelve years old. They were married this March.

David Przybysz gave us permission to share this letter from his father with CFM.

Dear Dave,

When your mother and I got married, we used the standard vows right out of the book. I did not even know what my promises would be until the priest read them to me at the rehearsal. Just in case you have not read ahead, they go like this:

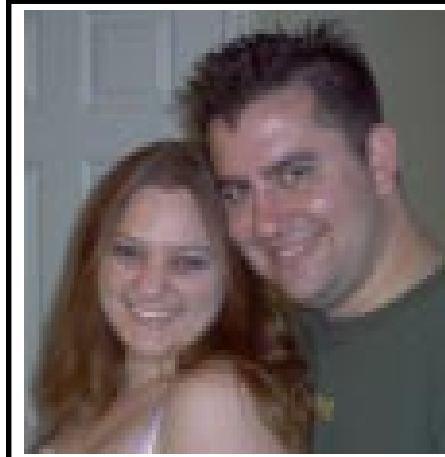
"I, David, take you, Lisa, to be my wife. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life."

No trick phrases. No hidden clauses. These vows are simple enough for Forrest Gump.

"I take you to be my wife," is a very vague job description. Who will cook? Who will clean? Fix the car? Mow the lawn? Change the diapers? Different couples work it out different ways. It is not about

who does what. The important thing is with whom you do it.

In the Song of Songs, the groom says, "There are sixty queens,



Lisa and David Przybysz

eighty concubines, and maidens without number. One alone is my dove, my perfect one." (Songs 6:8-9) There are beauty queens, video stars, and girls everywhere you look. This vow says, "Of all the girls, in all the world, you are the one for me. I take you"

"I promise to be true." No cheating. No fooling around. Enough said.

"I will love you." Do not confuse romance with love. Romance is an unreliable feeling that incites romantic notions such as, "I will climb the highest mountain for you. I will fight dragons for you. I

will die for you." Real life poses a different challenge:

You are sitting on the couch, watching TV, and go looking for a snack during a commercial. You find some apples in the refrigerator and pick out a good one. Then you call, "Lisa, do you want an apple?" "Sure, Dave. Thanks." But there is no second apple that looks good. Heading back to the couch, you ponder which apple to give her. Romance says, "I will die for you." Real life asks, "Are you going to give her the good apple?" Love says, "Yes, give her the best."

"I will honor you." This was the surprise vow for me. I did not expect to make a promise to honor her. But I gave it a try, and it worked out well. I stopped teasing her and made it a habit to defend her and take her side when friends or family wanted to pick on her.

Honor is the most unappreciated vow. Some husbands make jokes about their wives, with little put-downs that are supposed to be funny. These are bad jokes. They cut, they wound, and they destroy trust. A marriage can die the death of a thousand tiny cuts. Avoid negative humor. It is not funny.

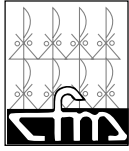
Honor is about respect. Treat her like a queen. Make your children respect their mother. Don't let anyone put her down. She is your lady, and your lady always gets treated with respect.

God bless you, Dave.

Love,

Dad

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.

Parent to Parent

by Mary Lou Gorman



Wants and Needs

Our children today have so much. I'm sure we all thank God every day that our children are so well taken care of. I was talking with a Mom the other day and I thought she had a very good idea. When her children ask for and receive new clothes, or a new toy, she has them pick out a corresponding item they already have to put in a bag for the poor.

Children do accumulate stuffed toys, cards, books and many other kinds of toys. It is important for them to learn to share, and also for them to realize that other children are not as well supplied with clothes and amusements as they are.

"Too much is more than enough" is the saying this mother repeats over and over. One of her goals is to bring order to her household, and teaching her children to share and to be content with less "stuff" helps her in this endeavor.

Many families have found that having children earn the money for some of what they want helps them understand the relationship between work and money, helps them value the things they have, helps them set priorities for themselves, and helps them develop patience.

Talk with your children about the difference between "wants" and "needs."

One mother had an interesting conversation with her daughter in

the mall. The mother had said "no" to purchasing an item the daughter wanted. The daughter was irritated, saying that the mother often said "no" to her but always bought anything she wanted for herself.

What a surprise this was to the mother, who, in fact, rarely bought things for herself. The daughter, having seen her mother buy things, but not having heard her mother make silent decisions of self-denial, was totally unaware that "no" was said to anyone but her.

Sometimes it can be very helpful to children to learn how parents make decisions that affect themselves, and how they make decisions about issues like housing, cars, tuitions, vacations, and major purchases that affect the whole family.

I'd like to suggest some "Buy Rules:"

1. Buy what you *need* first.
2. Don't buy extras when you don't have enough money to pay for them. In other words, live within your means.
3. Give what you don't need, or have an excess of, to the poor and less fortunate.

How blessed are we, who receive the great gift of God himself, who satisfies our every need and trains our hearts to desire what is good!

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

Some Reflections on CFM in St. Bernard Parish

by Sheila Osterhaus
Omaha, Neb.

CFM at St. Bernard Parish has gone through some changes in the past two years. Two long-time member families moved away, and another is building a new home some distance away. But God is good! He has sent us new members to keep our group alive and thriving! We have a new young couple with an infant son, a lady from **Zimbabwe**, and another who came to us by way of "Catholics Returning Home" and the RCIA program. They join the three couples from St. Bernard and one lady from St. James Parish who returned from last year. Our discussions have been lively and we are finding spiritual growth utilizing the *Discovering Jesus* program book.

Our group is not afraid to get involved. We decided early in the year to do some fundraising so we would have some working capital. We sold frozen cookies and pie certificates and now have a "healthy" treasury. At Christmas we combined old traditions with new: It's our tradition to go caroling to parish shut-ins before our Christmas party and gift exchange. This year we decided to support Heifer International, a program that gives farm animals to families around the world who then pass on the first female offspring to another family. We took up a collection at our Christmas party and exchanged "white elephants" among ourselves after caroling. Then at our annual Epiphany party (a group tradition for over 25 years) we chose the animals to donate: a goat and a trio of rabbits. We are excited about the prospect that our gifts will multiply and help additional families as times goes on!

Our Epiphany party always includes a visit to the crèche in church. The wrapped canned goods we bring as gifts to the baby Jesus are distributed by our local St. Vincent de Paul group. The past two years we have also played non-competitive games that we found in

and socks for people at four local shelters. The shelters are always grateful. The party when we sort some 1500 pieces of underwear is always fun and full of hijinks! And did I mention that we eat at all these activities!?! Pizza seems to make the work go faster and



*Musical chairs at the Epiphany party at St. Bernard's.
Fitting everyone on one chair isn't easy!*

the program book two years ago. Our favorite is musical chairs. There is much laughter when the whole group ends up on one chair!

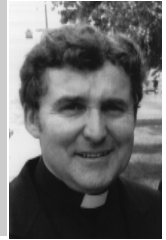
In February we made Valentines for the shut-ins in our parish and for the children at Madonna School (a school for special-needs students). This is another traditional project that connects us with the people who may feel isolated and left out at times. So far, no one has complained about our rather elementary artistic skills! This was followed by our fifteenth annual "Undie Sunday" February 12, when three parishes collect underwear

dessert rewards us for a job well done.

Our group has done a lot of serious reflection during the meetings. Some of the sharing has been very moving. While we manage to have lots of fun, we haven't forgotten that Jesus is in our midst. As a group we remind ourselves that our observes are essential to good meetings. We do commit to actions resulting from the meetings although we aren't yet as consistent in completing them as we want to be. However, the Observe, Judge, Act methodology remains effective for us.

From the National Chaplain

by Father Don Conroy



Becoming a Community of Life and Love: A Spirituality for Families

During the past two centuries, the Church has grappled with a serious challenge: how to develop a theology and a spirituality suitable for the laity and acceptable to the Magisterium of the Church.

*Through most of church history, clerics dealt with theology and lay people were not expected either to create it or to apply sophisticated concepts to spiritual life. During the last century, in part through the insights of people like **Cardinal Joseph Cardijn**, whose ideas inspired the founders of CFM, and in part through saints and spiritual writers, including **Popes John XXIII** and **John Paul II**, lay people began to take a much more active role both in sharing ideas with the church and in the quest for active holiness.*

*How could the church describe lay theology and spirituality in a way that would express the dreams of liberals like **Karl Rahner** and **Hans Kung** and also capture the imaginations of more conservative thinkers like **Joseph Ratzinger** (now **Pope Benedict XVI**) and **Hans Urs von Balthasar**?*

*This article describes an approach called **Communio theology**. Since CFM is in many ways in the forefront of lay spirituality, these ideas may well inspire us as we embark on the challenges of a new millennium.*

"The Church is God's Family in the world," proclaims Pope Benedict XVI in his recent encyclical letter "God Is Love" (*Deus Caritas Est*), published this year. In it, the Holy Father explains how the Church as a "community of God's love" is intimately interrelated with the indwelling Triune God and is called to justice and charity.

An important connection also exists between Pope John Paul II's message "To Christian Families" (*Familiaris Consortio*), which speaks of a "community of life and love," and the encyclical letter of Pope Benedict that has as a central theme the Church as "the community of love" (*DCE*, 19-36). A vital link is evident between the Christian family as domestic church and the wider gatherings of God's family in the parish community and the local diocesan church.

As we grapple with the future of the family and CFM itself as a family-centered ecclesial movement, we are searching for a spiritual vision and a deeper theology to unite us as we move forward in the 21st Century.

In this search, consider the importance of what is called the theology of "Communio" or "Koinonia" theology. To use the Latin and Greek forms. Its basic outline in official teaching has

emerged in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and in the writings coming from the International Synod of Bishops in 1985.

However, the actual beginnings go back to the early modern industrial era with European theologians such as the German Catholic **John Adam Moehler**. In fact, a growing awareness in the 19th century for a renewed ecclesiology paralleled rising consciousness of greater lay involvement in the apostolate. This gave impetus to a theology of the laity and a development of how all the baptized are called to a "Communio of Life and Love" in a believing community in face of growing atheism and secularism.

Before Vatican II, the laity's mission was considered in church practice and in canon law as primarily a participation in and through the bishop's office and not by reason of one's commissioning directly by the Holy Spirit in baptism. The lay vocation to mission was only considered to be an extension of the bishop's mission; not a direct sharing in Christ's own mission empowered by the Spirit.

In the 20th Century, prior to and leading up to Vatican II, two theologians played a prominent

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role in laying the foundations of this new understanding of the life and mission of the ecclesial community. They spoke of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ and the Pilgrim People of God. This moved theological thinking into the mysterious paradox of the Church's communion with God beyond time and its involvement in salvation history.

These two were a Swiss theologian, **Charles Journet**, and a French Dominican priest-scholar by the name of **Yves Congar**. They overcame the problem of the static, and highly juridical, Scholastic teaching of the Tridentine Era which ended with Vatican II's new vision led by the Spirit. The Church Community is more accurately described as a divinely inspired "communion" having a dynamic "mission" to change the world.

A third European theologian, **Henri de Lubac**, greatly furthered the effort toward a synthesis or unified vision in Vatican II. He especially explained how the church is simultaneously a sacramental communion—or mystery—going beyond time and the sinful, pilgrim people of God going through history.

More recently the present Pope connected the mission and the communion of the Church by emphasizing two truths:

The first, he says, is the fact that "the Church's deepest nature [its essence] is expressed in her three-fold responsibility" of proclaiming God's word, celebrating the sacraments, and exercising the ministry of charity. Commenting on this, he states that "these duties (responsibilities) presuppose each other and are inseparable. For the Church, charity is not a kind of welfare

activity which could equally well be left to others, but is part of her nature, *an indispensable expression of her very being*" (Italics mine, DCE, 25).

The second reality pointed out is that, since "the Church is God's family in the world," "in this family no one ought to go without the necessities of life." This connects "justice and charity" to the very essence of the Church's identity and mission. It also connects the domestic church of the Christian family with the mission and ministry of the whole community of God's people (DCE, 25-26).

In reference to the Church and the wider society the Pope says: "Yet at the same time *caritas-agape* (self-giving love) extends beyond the frontiers of the Church." In this way the connection with the wider social teaching and mission of the Church is made very clear.

Of its nature, the Christian family is called beyond itself to share in the total mission and ministry of the Church and to transform the world.

To sustain us as Church, which is a "Community of Life and Love," a new way of living the fullness of the Gospel emerges. This can be

called a new spiritual approach or 21st century spirituality. This path of "Communion and Community" draws its energy from the Spirit sent by the risen Christ from the Father. It is constantly renewed in the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Eucharist.

What are the practical forms of this spirituality?

This is the question to be answered by the family as domestic church. How are we, as Christian families in CFM, participants in this "Communion and Community of Life and Love" to put these profound truths of the Gospel into action? As members of CFM, we can start with our own proper gift or "charism" of Observe-Judge-Act (OJA) applied to our lives within the home, in our parish community and in the wider society.

As we go back to the sources of our faith, we have a renewed awareness of why Pope John Paul II urged: "Family, become what you are!"

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



Father Sam Palmer, long-time mentor of Iowa CFM, and courageous witness to Christ through his struggle with ALS, recently celebrated Mass with CFM members and former parishioners at Mercy Hospice Center, Des Moines, where he resides. Father Sam has been involved with CFM since the late 1960's. Thanks to **Richard Wagner** and **Barbara Hans**, Des Moines Federation.

Hafeys spearhead new CFM leader resource

by Nicole Rogers

CFM launches *Lessons in Leadership* to encourage growth in leadership for members hosting meetings. Led by CFM National Board members, **Pat and Robin Hafey**, *Lessons in Leadership* provides suggestions and encouragement for a strong and positive experience when facilitating meetings. *Lessons in Leadership* will be distributed via e-mail to the CFM-Exchange mailing list and posted on the CFM website.

One thing unique about CFM, according to the Hafeys, is that all members are able to grow in leadership. "Leading in CFM is really about *facilitating* the sharing process at the meeting," says Robin Hafey.

The Hafeys explain that successful leadership facilitation enables each member to express a point of view, and all members to appreciate each other's perspectives. The CFM books are developed for easy leadership preparation and facilitation. *Lessons in Leadership* will enhance each lesson's observe, judge, and act experience for both facilitators and participants.

Lessons in Leadership will draw from the Hafeys' wealth of expertise and their 28 years of experience in facilitating CFM meetings. The Hafeys have served as CFM group leaders, leadership trainers for CFM couples, and, currently, as members of the National CFM board.

CFM allows everyone "to share our faith with others, to learn, and grow as we observe, judge, and act," says Robin Hafey. "The hope is that the *Lessons in Leadership* weekly blurbs will give all members a chance to grow in leadership."

*Get your kids involved
in getting ready
for the meeting!
Have them help you
set up the chairs
and get the table
ready for dessert.
Have them answer
the door and welcome
people as they arrive!
They can take
coats and show the
guests where the
meeting will be.
It's a wonderful
opportunity for them
to learn about
hospitality and
to get to know
the folks in your group!*

—Lesson in Leadership
from Pat and Robin Hafey

Pat and Robin Hafey, parents of Mike (28), Jessie (26), and Joe (19), are members of St. Gabrielle's Parish in Poway, Calif., and members of the National Board. They will be first-time grandparents in late May. Pat has worked for Proctor and Gamble for 22 years, and Robin is a teacher, specializing in special needs children and adults. Pat and Robin, 28-year veterans of CFM, are dedicated to strengthening other members through Lessons in Leadership. "CFM has been important for our marriage and our family to have friends who value what we value...marriage, community, and an opportunity to give back to the world in social action."

National Board meets in Miami

Sunny days greeted the CFM board of directors as they met for their winter board meeting in South Florida Feb 24-26. St. Louis Parish CFM in **Miami** hosted the group for their semi-annual meeting for the first time. Vice President Couple **Bob and Anne Tomonto** are parish leaders.

The meeting began with dinner at the Tomontos' Friday evening, and a Saturday reflection process assisted by Benedictine **Sister Geraldine Hedinger**. Growth of the movement was of primary concern. Under the leadership of President Couple **John and Lauri Przybysz** the board plans to develop specific strategies for positioning CFM for growth. The day concluded with Mass celebrated by Chaplain **Father Donald Conroy**. On Sunday the group met for a business meeting before most departed for home. **Tom and Laura Toussaint of Arlington Heights, Ill.** and Holy Family Parish in **Inverness, Ill.** were re-elected as members of the board at the business meeting.

The meeting was enlivened by the opportunity to participate in the Festival for the Poor, an annual St. Louis Parish fundraiser. Members purchased lunch from among Cuban, Haitian, Mexican and American offerings prepared by parishioners, browsed booths of handicrafts, and enjoyed an Italian supper to benefit the poor. Many St. Louis CFMers were involved in the festival and in hosting board members during the weekend.

The next board meeting will be July 22-24 in **Winchester Va.**, hosted by Sacred Heart Parish CFM. and board members **Tucker and Becky Conaboy** of Winchester.



Taking the Time to Make a Difference

by Paul R. Leingang

Of lions and fences and freedom

"A lion was taken into captivity and thrown into a concentration camp where, to his amazement, he found other lions who had been there for years, some of them all their lives, for they had been born there."

That's the opening paragraph of a story re-told in a book by Anthony de Mello, S.J., entitled *The Heart of the Enlightened*. The story is one of 250 items collected for the book from a variety of cultures.

As the story unfolds, the newly-captured lion discovers that there are several small groups within the camp. Some lions are socializers, some are into show business. Some are dedicated to preserving the customs and tradition of the times when lions were free. Others gathered "to sing moving songs about a future jungle where there would be no fences.

There were literary and artistic lions. There were revolutionaries who met to plot against their captors or against other revolutionary groups.

"Every now and then a revolution would break out," the story continues. Then, "one particular group would be wiped out by another, or the guards would all be killed and replaced by another set of guards."

The newcomer then observed one lion "who always seemed deep in thought, a loner who belonged to no group and mostly kept away from everyone. There was some-

thing strange about him that commanded everyone's admiration and everyone's hostility, for his presence aroused fear and self-doubt."

The loner told the newcomer, "Join no group. These poor fools are busy with everything except what is essential."

The newcomer asks what is essential.

The answer: "Studying the nature of the fence."



The author tells another story to compliment the one about the lion.

"The human condition is perfectly depicted in the case of the poor drunk standing late at night outside the park, beating on the fence, and yelling, 'Let me out!'"



The conclusion from de Mello: "Only your illusions prevent you from seeing that you are — and always have been — free."



Janis Joplin sang, "freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose." Sting sang, ungrammatically but with conviction, "If you love somebody, set them free."

In chapter eight of John's Gospel, Jesus says, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my

disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

In that gospel account, the people wonder what Jesus is talking about. "We are descendants of Abraham, and have never been in bondage to any one. How is it that you say, 'You will be made free'?"

The answer? "Truly, truly, I say to you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not continue in the house for ever; the son continues for ever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."



What is the nature of your fence? What is it that keeps you from the freedom Jesus intends for you? Addiction? Restriction? Peer groups? Fear groups? Or perhaps denial that you are in bondage?

Take a new look at the groups in your society. The challenge is not to judge them harshly for being fools, but to help them to see the nature of the fence that keeps them — and others — captive.

Society seeks to fence off those who would harm the common good, but not all fences are so obvious.

Who are the people who are fenced in — or fenced out — in your community? The poor? The sick? The foreigners? The unborn? The frail elderly?

If you love them, set them free.

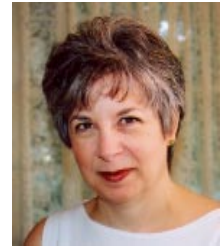
Paul is director of communications for the Diocese of Evansville, Ind.; and editor of the Message, the diocesan newspaper. His weekly column Taking the Time to Make a Difference is syndicated in a number of diocesan newspapers and appears on the CFM website.

Paul and Jane Leingang are executive directors of CFM.

Your Marriage: The Great Adventure

by Lauri Przybysz

Positively Married



Marriage is good for you.

Science has recognized that married men and women are healthier on average than their peers. Some of the supporting research points out obvious reasons for this benefit. For instance, husbands and wives who are close tend to limit each other's excesses like drinking and smoking, but this is not enough to account for their better health compared with

The need for positive attention varies from person to person, and between men and women, too.

singles. Caring couples do many positive things for one another, and the benefits can be great. We often underestimate the power of positive attention, affection, and affirmation.

For instance, successful married couples touch each other. In "Holding Loved One's Hand Can Calm Jittery Neurons," **Benedict Carey** (*The New York Times*, January 31, 2006) reports on a study that measured how women relaxed during MRI scans when their husbands sat beside them and held their hands. The effects of simple caring touch, like holding hands or a light caress of the shoulders, show up on deep brain scans in areas that are involved in stress, fear and alarm: "Married women under extreme stress who reach out and hold their husbands' hands feel immediate relief, neuroscientists

have found in what they say is the first study of how human touch affects the neural response to threatening situations."

It is the little things that count. Every day spouses should make tiny connections with each other. **Mira Kirshenbaum**, in *The Weekend Marriage: Abundant Love in a Time-Starved World* (Harmony Books, 2005) says a true connection is not perfunctory. It is an intentional act. "You feel you've deliberately done something to create a little bubble in time and for a moment float away in it. You could make love every night, but a sudden warm hug in the kitchen could make you feel more truly connected." The idea is to treat one another as if you were dating and wanted to keep on dating each other. It is focused attention and appreciation.

The need for positive attention varies from person to person, and between men and women, too. Remember that marriage does not confer mind reading abilities. If you have a need for attention or affection, it is best to express it. In *Defending Traditional Marriage: It Starts with You*, **William F. Harley** (2005) suggests that you make a list of what expressions of love mean most to you. Give your list to your spouse and ask your spouse to make a list too. Work through your lists, one item a day. Some people respond to words than to actions, so the key is to know what works for him or her. Whether it is physical touch, loving words, or thoughtful actions, you and your marriage will benefit now from some positive attention.

In *Holding On To Romance: Keeping Your Marriage Alive After the Honeymoon Years Are Over* (Regal Books), **N. Norman Wright** recommends "practical cherishing."

Cherishing behaviors he suggests include such basic, achievable acts of kindness as:

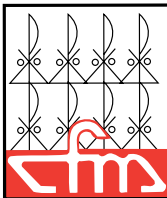
- ◆ Greet me with a hug and kiss before we get out of bed in the morning.
- ◆ Look at me and smile.
- ◆ Call me during the day and tell me something pleasant.
- ◆ Tell the children (in front of me) that I'm a good parent.
- ◆ Date me and make all the arrangements.
- ◆ When we're out, wink or blow me a kiss.

What positive "cherishing behaviors" can you think of that would calm, soothe or delight your mate?

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.

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SPOTLIGHT

St. Lawrence Martyr CFM group, **Redondo Beach, Calif.**, hosted its annual ice skating party in January to benefit Pregnancy Help Center, its second annual "Battle of the Sexes" game night in February, supporting the parish food pantry, and a Lenten evening of reflection for current and past CFM members. Monsignor Paul Dotson, pastor, spoke.

Jason and Susan Battani report that St. Mary of Nazareth CFM in **Des Moines, Iowa**, has grown to 18 families, with three groups meeting monthly. A CFM potluck and game night was held April 1.

On Saturday, March 11, more than 35 CFM members from Sacred Heart of Jesus in Winchester, Va., spent the morning "spring-cleaning" the CCAP building. Congregational Community Action Project is a non-profit, non-denominational

organization that serves the poor of Winchester. The group sponsored "Brief Relief" April 2 to collect new underwear, T-shirts and socks for CCAP. **Maggie and Joe Lewis** are leaders.

Nicole and Steve VanderVoort report that their CFM Group at St. Clement in **Chicago** will help raise money for Misericordia Heart of Mercy, a residential facility for developmentally disabled children and adults.

"We are in the process of forming a seventh CFM Group at St. Clement in Chicago. We did it the old-fashioned way, by personally introducing ourselves to couples new to the parish and asking them if they would like to be part of a group of married couples."

Sue Perek of St. Edna's in **Arlington Heights, Ill.**, says their groups have joined in an annual

Seder meal for the past seven years. and participate in an annual "cleanup the parks day."

Ed and Donna Leeds have started a new CFM chapter at St. Mary parish in **Johnson City, Tenn.** "We have four groups and four leaders with about 35 members." They will host a leadership couples' dinner this spring to plan future activities. The Leeds are transplants from the CFM group at St. Gabriel in **Poway, Calif.**

St. Benedict CFM **Evansville, Ind.**, is helping a family of parishioners moving into a new home after losing everything in a fire. The group will help the couple (who are expecting a baby) with household goods and baby items. They also will purchase a family Bible and hope to make arrangements for the couple to enjoy an evening out before the baby comes.