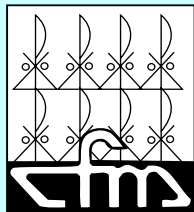


# *Starting a CFM Group*



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## *Starting a CFM group is easy!*

1. In this CFM Family Enrichment Starter Kit, you'll find everything you need to make a difference in your family life and the lives of 3 other families.

- 4 copies of the CFM introductory inquiry book, *Taking the Time to Make a Difference*
- Directions for meetings
- Information for your parish staff
- Information about CFM

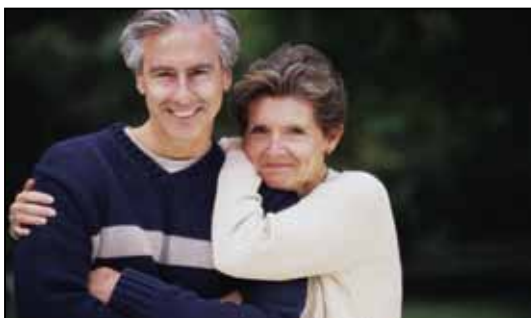
2. Invite three couples who want to grow in their faith to your home for a 90-minute meeting. (You can have a few more members in your group, whatever your living room comfortably holds.

Additional copies of book are available at the reduced price of \$10.)

3. After you have your group identified, schedule the first meeting in your home (preferred) or a parish meeting room. Decide if you want to provide babysitting for the children. Arrange for a babysitter if you choose this option.

4. Provide a welcoming atmosphere at the meeting. Start and end on time. Offer simple refreshments for a social time at the conclusion of the meeting.

5. Meet once a month.



6. Between meetings, call the persons who were invited, but who did not attend.



7. Call to remind people of upcoming meetings.
8. Follow the simple meeting plan in each chapter of *Taking the Time to Make a Difference*. See also page 4 of this guide.
9. Keep your pastor and parish staff informed about your family enrichment group. If they have not already seen this kit, give the pastor or staff member the Why CFM? information pages which follow. Share the DVD with them.
10. View the Christian Family Movement DVD with your group.
11. Send in your membership dues and forms when you conclude the meetings in the introductory book. Choose your next inquiry book. See this booklet for more information about CFM Membership and Inquiry Books.
12. Phone the National Office of CFM to answer any questions. 812-962-5508. [office@cfm.org](mailto:office@cfm.org)

## *The CFM Meeting Format*

**Gathering Prayer** – The group always begins with a prayer, read or sung, prepared or spontaneous.

**Report on Actions – (5 -10 minutes)** Group members report on the progress of CFM actions taken individually, as a family, or by the group. This is the appropriate time to describe needs, in your family, parish or community that have come to the attention of the members.

**Scripture Reflection – (15 -20 minute discussion)** Quiet reflection and discussion about the scripture helps group members to step away from the ordinary pressure and distractions of the day and begin to focus on the issues of the meeting from a Christian perspective.

**Social Inquiry – (60 -90 minutes)** The Social Inquiry is the heart of the CFM meeting. The Social Inquiry method is *Observe* and *Judge* and *Act*.

**OBSERVE – *The world around you.***  
Gather information from your community or from your own personal experience. Often facts can be opinions of others too. At this stage of the meeting, members should refrain from expressing their opinions about facts. The knowledge and experience of group members are valuable, but the group must go beyond its own members to gather facts from the larger world and report them objectively. The chance to editorialize comes later.

*The importance of this section of the meeting cannot be over-emphasized. Unless the group reports objective facts during the discussion, the meeting will not lead to action.*

**JUDGE – *In light of Christ's teachings,*** judge. In the Judge part of the meeting, the group decides by discussion whether the situation or topic is in line what Christ would want us to do. The group should try to refer only to the information brought out by the Observe questions.

**ACT - *To make a difference.*** The best action comes from the group as a result of the discussion. Actions in the meetings are just suggestions. An Action may be done as an individual, a couple, a family, a small group, or a parish. The key is to take something away from the meeting and resolve to do something to live out the Gospel teachings in your every day life.

**Look ahead to the next meeting** – Set the time and place. Preview the Observe section to see if specific assignments are required.

**Prayer** – The meeting concludes with a prayer. The program book usually has a suggested prayer or another may be chosen by the group or the discussion leaders. Other suitable prayers are located on the inside covers of most inquiry books. Alternatively, a member of the group might lead a spontaneous prayer praising God, thanking Him for His blessings, and asking Him to grant special petitions that group members might have.

**Social Time** – A short social with simple and inexpensive refreshments helps members to know and understand one another better and builds community.

## *Invite Your Friends to Try CFM*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Many of us are looking for a way to enrich married life and find meaningful, faith-building activities for our families. Even though we all have busy schedules, we want to make time to build strong families and happy marriages.

We have found a simple way to make this happen and we would like to invite you to try it with us. We are beginning a small Family Enrichment group of three (or four or five) couples at our home.

The group will meet once a month for 90-minutes. (Details of your meetings here: The group may either meet as adults only or they may decide to bring their children with them to the meeting. Some groups like to start their meetings with a meal. Some just offer light refreshments. If the group will have a babysitter at the meeting, explain that here. The details are totally up to each group.)

We will use a program book from the Christian Family Movement – CFM – called *Taking the Time to Make a Difference*. (It is a good idea to ask every family to contribute \$10 for their book, to reimburse the parish or whoever purchased the Starter Kit. This investment makes members more aware of their commitment to the group.) We can take turns hosting each of the 6 meetings in the program book.

If you would like to find out more about CFM, we have a DVD with a short introduction about CFM that we can share with you. You may want to visit their website at [www.cfm.org](http://www.cfm.org). The U.S. Catholic Bishops recommend CFM in *Follow the Way of Love* and other church documents, and CFM is a member of the National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers.

We think it will be fun getting together and talking about family and building our faith at the same time. We hope you can come.

Your friends,

Rose and Chris

## *Tools for Group Formation*

### **SAMPLE BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **WHAT IS CFM?**

The Christian Family Movement is a new group starting here at St. \_\_\_\_\_. We are looking for couples who want a place to share values, faith and a place to experience Jesus in their lives and the lives of their family.

CFM is hosting coffee and doughnuts on (date) and (location). Stop in and find out what we are up to and see if CFM is for you.

#### **CFM OFFERS FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT FOR TODAY'S BUSY FAMILY**

Families, faith and fun, that is what the Christian Family Movement is all about. Through prayer, discussion, and action families grow in their faith as spouses, parents, and families provide support and friendship to one another. Families learn to live their faith in their every day lives, at home, in our communities and in the market place. If you want to learn more about this new group here at St. \_\_\_\_\_, attend the upcoming information night on (date), at (location).

#### **OBSERVE- JUDGE- ACT in CFM**

Members of the Christian family Movement are asked to OBSERVE a situation from daily life. They JUDGE whether or not it needs to be changed based on Gospel values. If so, they ACT to make a difference. They undertake a simple action that will help to change the situation; that will bring persons and the world closer to what Christ wants. By this process, they change themselves. They grow in love and understanding of God's world. CFM is a way of life that develops everyday Christians.

### **A SHORT PULPIT ANNOUNCEMENT**

Many of us are looking for a way to enrich married life and find meaningful, faith-building activities for our families. Even though we all have busy schedules, we want to make time to build strong families and happy marriages. We are starting some small groups at St. \_\_\_\_\_ that will meet once a month for 90-minutes. The groups will set their own schedules and plan their own activities, depending on the interests and ages of their members. We will use a program book from the Christian Family Movement – CFM. The U.S. Catholic Bishops recommend CFM in Follow the Way of Love and other church documents and CFM is a member of the National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers.

An information meeting will be held at \_\_\_\_\_(place, date, time.)

## Schedule of meetings

**Meeting 1 Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting 2 Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting 3 Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting 4 Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting 5 Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting 6 Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ***Building Community***

*Interaction between CFM families helps promote love, improve communication, develop friendship and build community. Here are some examples of group activities that CFMers across the country have enjoyed*

Games night  
Hay ride  
Family bowling  
Pool party  
Laser tag  
Nature hike  
CFM picnic  
Sledding

Apple picking  
Attending Mass together and sharing a meal  
Bonfire and hotdog roast  
Visit places of pilgrimage  
Collecting mittens for the poor  
Helping at a soup kitchen  
Sponsoring a family at the holidays  
Doing yard work for the elderly



***CFM is about families, faith in action and fun.***



# Why CFM?

The Christian Family Movement is a parish and neighborhood network of small groups of Catholics and their families. A typical CFM group consists of five to seven families with the parents meeting one or two evenings a month in one another's homes or at the parish. They follow special programming that focuses on topics of importance to their marriages, families, church and community. Families benefit in at least six ways.

First, CFM provides a Christian community in which individuals, marriages and families



are supported and grow. Parents interact with other parents who have similar morals and values.

Families socialize together and develop an extended family connection. This interaction between families helps to build a strong family support system.

Second, this experience helps husbands and wives spend time together and develop common interests. Various aspects of the program enhance the couple relationship. Experience shows that CFM is a non-threatening environment for inter-faith marriages. Single parents also find support in a CFM group.

Third, CFM enriches families. Much of what is discussed in the small group meetings of

parents is carried back into the family. Parents learn how to be better parents and how to build happier families.



Fourth, CFM challenges participants to be seven-day-a-week Christians. It helps individuals and families apply the

gospels to their everyday life. CFM nurtures spiritual growth and provides Christian formation for the entire family.

Fifth, CFM builds self-confidence because it challenges individuals to develop their gifts and talents. It is a catalyst for creating parish and community leaders.

Sixth, CFM increases social consciousness. It helps families to be aware of the problems in their families, neighborhoods and community. CFM encourages them to dialogue and make changes.



## ***What CFM people get from CFM: Why people join***

- ✓ ***In a recent survey, CFMers said that CFM helped them live their faith.***

*CFM meetings are practical and help members see the connection between faith and daily life.*

- ✓ ***The survey said that CFM helped members become better parents.***

*Members support each other in tough decisions and give each other new insights into family life.*

- ✓ ***Couples felt that CFM helped them to be better spouses.***

*CFM meetings improve communication between spouses on important issues of faith and family. CFMers support each other in living their Christian commitment to marriage and family life.*



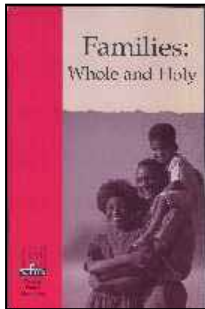
### **CFM also helps you to:**

- ❖ **Pass on Christian values to your children.**
- ❖ **Provide a small community that can make up for distant relatives.**
- ❖ **Create a network of friends to serve as role models.**
- ❖ **Examine and strengthen your faith.**
- ❖ **Provide fun family activities.**

## *What's Next?*

*After your group finishes Taking the Time to Make a Difference, join the Christian Family Movement and choose your next program book from among our many offerings.*

*Here are a few suggestions:*

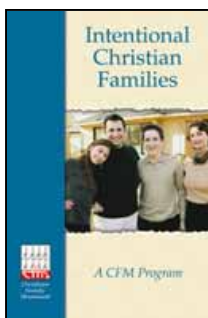
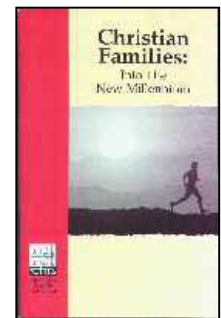


### **FAMILIES: WHOLE AND HOLY**

This 14-meeting program explores holiness - family style. It helps parents to recognize the many ways in which holiness permeates the day-to-day life of a family. Individual chapters deal with issues that affect every family. Parents are challenged to observe and judge how Jesus is working in the ordinary happenings in their families. Then they are called to action.

### **CHRISTIAN FAMILIES: Into the New Millennium**

This program provides firm footing for Christian families who face complex moral issues on their journey into the twenty-first century. Each of the 13 chapters invites families to follow a path of confidence in God and in each other, as they confront the real-life challenges and opportunities of living as Christians in the world today.



### **INTENTIONAL CHRISTIAN FAMILIES**

This inquiry is a timely 10-meeting book, inviting participants to improve their family life by taking control of the things that matter at home and in the everyday world. It is not just about confronting bad behavior, violent entertainment or the evils of materialism. It is about a choice to make God's love a reality in everyday situations and relationships. Each chapter offers practical insights as participants explore how to prioritize their time, tame the tools of technology and incorporate Christian teaching into daily life. This book is for people of faith who choose and confirm their Christianity every day, who want to develop a support system with other individuals and families and who take the challenge of living a life of Christian witness and service. In short, it is for those who choose to live their faith on purpose, as Intentional Christian Families.

## *Join in the Mission of CFM*

You and the other families in your Starter Group have grown in friendship, understanding, and faith as you experienced this introduction to the Christian Family Movement. You have also experienced the enthusiasm and hospitality of CFMers from the National Office and from groups around the country who have encouraged you. Now, we invite you and your families to join CFM. You will find registration forms in the Starter Kit folder.

As members of CFM, you and your family will be participating in the network of families who want to help other families grow in their faith, strengthen their marriages, and make a difference in their world. CFM members pay \$40 per family annually to support the work of the Movement: Producing quality family-centered programming, forming lay leaders, providing guidance for family group creation and development, and pairing experienced group leaders with starter groups, like yours.

### *What Do Your Dues Do?*

1. **You help other families build faith.** Your membership dues make it possible for CFM to offer the Starter Kit for CFM available to new families at a reduced introductory rate of \$10 per family.
2. **You receive excellent marriage and family enrichment resources.** All members receive ACT, CFM's monthly newsletter, with features on married spirituality and ideas for family faith building activities from family ministry experts and experienced parents throughout the county. In addition to ACT, CFM members receive resources for parenting and faith formation by mail from CFM and can access bonus meeting ideas and family faith activities on its website, [www.cfm.org](http://www.cfm.org).
3. **You help CFM continue to serve families.** CFM maintains a National Office which oversees the editing and printing CFM program materials, family resources, and membership communications, and ACT monthly newsletter. In the National Office, Executive Director, Jane Leingang, brings her expertise as a professional Catholic Family Life minister to the service of CFM families, assisted by a part-time administrative assistant. The National Office is located in the diocesan building of the Diocese of Evansville, Indiana, although CFM is a lay organization which relies totally on the support of its members nationwide.
4. **You support the formation of lay leadership.** CFM's National Board of Directors meets semi-annually to develop the programs and family resources and design CFM's outreach to families. Although most area representatives and officers of CFM travel to board meetings at their own expense, CFM provides for the travel expenses of our National Chaplain and also offers help with travel expenses for some area representatives who otherwise would not be able to participate on the national level.
5. **You touch families around the world.** CFM-USA contributes \$1 per family to the International Confederation of Christian Family Movements, in support of the family movements of the Church in
6. **Additional donations are appreciated.** CFM also depends on the generosity of our members and friends across the US who donate additional financial resources and their time and talents to the mission of CFM. Donations and membership dues to the Christian Family Movement are tax deductible.

|   |  |                              |   |
|---|--|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Christian Family Movement</b><br>National Office PO Box 925 Evansville, IN 47706-0925                              |  | <b>New Member</b>            | <b>Dues -- \$40</b><br><i>CFM Dues are tax deductible</i> |
| Name(s) (PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION)  | His Religion   | Sponsoring Parish/Group Name |   |
| Address   | Her Religion   | Diocese (If known)           |   |
| City, State, Zip  | <input type="checkbox"/> Married _____<br>(date)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced | Number of children _____     |   |
| Phone   | List year of birth for all children under 18<br>_____<br>_____   |                              |   |
| Email address his   | Inquiry book<br><input type="checkbox"/> Received book already<br><input type="checkbox"/> Need Book. Please send<br>_____<br>_____                    |                              |   |
| Email address hers  |  |                              |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Send ACT by e-mail <input type="checkbox"/> Add us/ him/ her to the CFM exchange email list. |  |                              |   |
| His occupation  | Her occupation   |                              |   |

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***Make additional copies as needed. Send forms and payment to the CFM National Office.***

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***Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers  
James 1:22***

*The Church speaks clearly of the duties of family members to one another that build a radiant faith. But the Church doesn't stop there; it also speaks of the relationship between families and the larger culture, the duty of service, working for the common good, welcoming strangers, and giving voice to the Christian conscience. That is the message; you are the messenger.*

Address of Bishop Anthony M. Pilla  
To the Christian Family Movement  
August 5, 1995

**The Mission of the Christian Family Movement is:**

- 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.

*Adopted March 10, 2002*

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