



ICCFM 13TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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ICCFM President Couple For
The Year 2005 – 2007

MINUTES OF THE 13TH ICCFM GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Sta. Clara University
Santa Clara, CA USA
Saturday, July 31, 2004

Attendance:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1) Canada | 10) Malta |
| 2) Colombia | 11) Mexico |
| 3) Croatia | 12) Panama |
| 4) El Salvador | 13) Peru |
| 5) Ghana | 14) Philippines |
| 6) Guatemala | 15) Portugal |
| 7) Hungary | 16) Spain |
| 8) Italy | 17) Thailand |
| 9) Japan | 18) USA |

OPENING

Monsignor Charles Vella, ICCFM Chaplain, led the Opening Prayer.

Nop and Elma Muangkroot, ICCFM President Couple, made the Opening Remarks.

1. OPENING OF THE 13th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1.1 ICCFM President Couple Nop and Elma Muangkroot (report attached)

Nop and Elma focused their efforts in promoting the implementation of the four resolutions of the Maceio World Assembly: education, social action, personal formation and communication. In the past three years, they attended several National and Continental Conferences and Congresses: the Continental Asia Conference in Bangalore, India; the Continental Latin America General Assembly in Costa Rica; and the European Congress in Zagreb, Croatia; the National Assemblies of CFM/USA in Florida and MFC/USA in California. They visited ICCFM Vice-Presidents Carlos and Magda Hita in Brazil and visited the CFM in the Manila and Cebu, Philippines; Mumbai and Bangalore, India; Singapore and Panama.

The ICCFM website initiated by Past Presidents Joe and Margarita Pich and designed by Balazs Menesi finally became a reality in 2002, maintained by ICCFM webmaster Andy Pozdol. Four issues of the 12-page ICCFM Newsletter LINK/LAZO were published, translated into Spanish by Emilio Wong. Communication became much more efficient because of e-mail.

The ICCFM continues to maintain relationships with respective Bishop Conferences, the Vatican Pontifical Council of the Laity, the UN in Vienna and New York, the Service Foundation of Asia on Family and Culture and the International Academy of Marriage Spirituality.

They hope that more CFM activities will be promoted at the international level.

They read a message sent by ***Carlos and Magda Hita, ICCFM Vice President Couple*** from Brazil, encouraging the assembly participants to take a step further in the service of God's Kingdom, to listen to the clamor of God's people and to give them an appropriate response. (message attached)

1.2 ICCFM Chaplain Monsignor Charles Vella

Monsignor Charles Vella outlined the following Challenges to the ICCFM: (message attached)

- Establish more contacts with bishops.
- Be prophets of hope.
- Focus on the Special Mission of Ecumenism.
- Work with world churches. "Cast your votes not only among Catholics but among Christians and past Christians. Attend and bring back to the Church single parents, divorced and separated couples."

1.3 Past ICCFM President Couple Jose and Margarita Pich of Spain

Jose and Margarita Pich related: "Most of our friends are from the CFM spread all over the world. We have attended ICCFM and Continental Assemblies for the past three years to keep in touch. We also attended the European Congress in Zagreb Croatia, the Continental Asia Conference in Bangalore, India, and ICCFM General Assembly in Thailand, Brazil and now in San Jose, USA."

1.4 Special Representatives Wayne and Sue Hamilton

Appointed Special Representatives by ICCFM President Couple Nop and Elma Muangkroot to work on two Projects, ***Wayne and Sue Hamilton*** reported the following: (report attached)

- Project 1 – Updating Contacts with Africa
 - "We sent 15 letters and few emails to Africa since 2002 and we received partial information from 5 countries. It took four to five months for mails to reach addressees. Ordinary people from Africa join CFM Africa."
 - "Visas for prospective participants to this ICCFM General Assembly were denied."
 - "We believe that a Regional Assembly in Africa will be more realistic and fruitful."

- Project 2 – Special Representative to United Nations – New York
 - “Most of the work of United Nations Committee on the Family takes place in Vienna.”
 - “We are now working through CFM USA National Chaplain Fr. Don Conroy who will introduce us to the United Nations Family Committee Officers in New York.”

1.5 Treasurer Couple Pete and Carolyn Broeren

Pete and Carolyn Broeren reported that “Our goal is to work and request volunteers to serve in the ICCFM without regard to cost.”

“Seven years ago in the Netherlands, as in Bangkok and Maceio Brazil, it was mandated that we collect membership fees of \$1.00 per couple member. In reality, we don’t have any money and we continue to struggle.”

“ICCFM has received \$ 4,445 but we have a deficit of more than \$6,000.00. We hope to raise some money in the Gala Dinner raffle. In addition to \$1.00 per couple membership fees, we need donations.”

1.6 Fires Representative Fr. Donnon Murray

Fr. Donnon Murray, FIRES Chaplain and FIRES Representative accompanied by Balazs and Krisztina Menesi, CFM couple from Hungary, highlighted the following:

- FIRES is a Special service to ICCFM. FIRES means F=Families I=Intercommunication R=Relationship E=Experiences and S=Services. Forty three years ago, the first FIRES program, the Marriage Encounter (ME), was developed. Now, there are 21 Fires programs.
 - FIRES is not a movement, it is a service particularly to CFM.
 - FIRES Programs have provided faith experience and conversion among its participants as in:
 - ∴ Youth reconciliation with and appreciation of their parents after a FIRES Encounter.
 - ∴ Baptism of an alcoholic and the conversion of non-Christian.
 - ∴ Forgiving of an unfaithful wife.
 - ∴ Reconciliation of father with children.
- He asked ICCFM “What we can do? FIRES work! 90% of those who attended FIRES Encounters join the CFM.”

Rev. Fr. Gabriel Calvo, FIRES Founder, was acknowledged by all participants. Fr. Calvo challenged the ICCFM participants to “Bring your children with you. Have programs ready for them during your Assembly.”

1.7 Tony and Lily Gauci, ICCFM Representatives to the Vatican and the UN in Vienna

Tony and Lily Gauci, Special Representative to the Vatican Pontifical Council of the Family and to the United Nations in Vienna reported the following: (report attached)

- Europe has historically firm Christian roots but its Constitutions do not acknowledge it.
- CFM has good relationship with Bishops and Cardinals. In the late 1980’s, the ICCFM was formally recognized by the Vatican’s Pontifical Council of the Laity as a lay association in accordance with Canon Law.
- CFM in Europe is flourishing as shown in past three Congresses since 1997, the latest on “The Family as Successful Life- Long Community” in Zagreb, Croatia, last July 2003. In 2000, the Congress was held in Prague, Czech Republic, and in 1997, in Braga, Portugal.
- They visited CFM Lithuania and Latvia. They went to Croatia three times in preparation of the Fourth European Congress which was attended by seventeen countries.
- They were at Vatican to celebrate 25th Anniversary of *Familiaris Consortio*, the Magna Carta of Family Life. They visited Sicily with Monsignor Charles Vella and offered FIRES ME. They also visited Romania where, after three years, the bishop started to work on CFM Family and Life
- The United Nations Economic and Social Council granted the ICCFM a “Consultative Status” in the early 1980’s, making it a member of the NGO Committee on the Family in both New York and Vienna.
- Representing the ICCFM both in the Vatican and at the UN in Vienna is an expensive hobby and it needs financial support.
- They introduced George and M’ Louise Sammut from Malta as the new President Couple of Europe.

2. Continental and Country Reports

2.1 Continental Asia CFM/CFSM President Couple Mel and Emma Ricafrente gave the following highlights of the submitted Continent of Asia CFM: (report attached)

- Continental Asia CFM is presently made up of seven countries namely; Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India, South Korea and Hong

Kong (China). The last two countries membership with ICCFM may need to be confirmed.

- There are about 3,810 active CFM families throughout the continent.
- The latest Sixth Continental Conference of Asia was held in Bangalore, India, on September 2003, on “The Christian Family: Challenges of the Present Times.” The three main resolutions of the Continental Conference in India are the following:
 - Networking and Capacity Building
 - Social Action
 - Animating the CFM Meeting

2.1.1 Philippines

Loy and Trining Marquez, past CFM Philippines President Couple, representing Rolando and Josefa Mesa, the present CFM Philippine President Couple, provided the following highlights of the submitted CFM Philippines: (report attached)

- CFM Philippines is now 48 years old. There are 3,000 family members made up of couples and solos from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.
- New members undergo Unit Prayer Meetings using the following basic Family Evangelization Guidebooks:
 - *For Happier Families*
 - *Growing In Love*
 - *Vision and Commitment*
- Current Family Evangelization Guidebooks for members of over three years are prepared by Family Evangelization Program Committee (FEPCOM). Special unit meetings on topics of national importance normally preceding national conventions are likewise prepared by FEPCOM.
- Top three Family Life Programs are the following:
 - FIRES Marriage Encounter
 - Pre Cana – Pre Marriage Guidance and Counseling
 - CFM Philippines TIPANAN – one-day Marriage Enrichment Seminar
- Other notable country activities are as follows:
 - Launched of the new program Parent-Child Interaction (PCI), a school-based one-day program directed towards improving family spirituality
 - Prepared the evangelization guidebook, *The Filipino Family in Basic Ecclesial Community (BEC)* as an offering to the Philippine Local Church.
 - Launched of the CFM Family Life Appreciation Series (FLAS) program that adjust to the time allotted by the client.
 - Sharing of Family Life Evangelization guidebooks and networking with other family life oriented groups such as Couples for Christ, Focolare

Movement, Neo-Catechumens, Marriage Encounter Foundation of the Philippines (MEFP).

- Work on strengthening relationship with hierarchy

2.1.2 Thailand

CFM National Chaplain **Rev. Fr. Bunsong Hongthong** reported the following highlights of CFM-Thailand profile and activities of the submitted CFM Thailand Report (attached)

- ICCFM members from the country include
 - Christian Family Movement (CFM)
 - Family Life Promotion (FLP-CFM)
- 90% members are couples while 10% are solo parents, widows and widowers
- 64 Families make up CFM and FLP-CFM
- Top three (3) Family Ministry Services are:
 - Marriage Encounter Seminar
 - Family Life Promotions Programs
 - St. Vincent the Paul and Legion of Mary

2.2 Continental CFM Europe

Immediate past Continental CFM Europe President Couple **Tony and Lily Gauci** reports the highlight of their report: (report attached).

- Europe, the old Continent, has a living and lively roots of Christianity and its history, culture and ethics are derived from its Christian Cultures and ethics. However the new Constitution of Europe does not refer to its Christian roots.
- Europe has less respect for life, less love for the values and unity of family life due to lack of knowledge and faith in God.
- CFM is flourishing in many European countries and it started with a visit to Baltic States of Lithuania and Latvia.

2.1.1 Lithuania

After the European CFM Congress in Prague in 2000, they exposed the three Baltic States and Poland to CFM Movement, its mission, Marriage Encounter and Marriage Preparation. They got great encouragement from different Bishops and from the Cardinal of Lithuania in Vilnius. (Tony and Lily Gauci)

2.1.2 Latvia

In Latvia, Bishop Anton Justs, whom they had briefed in Rome, started the family groups. (Tony and Lily Gauci)

2.1.3 Italy

They traveled to Prato, Northern Italy together with Monsignor Charles Vella and National President Couple of Malta John and Marthese Faruga and attended Italian National Assembly. (Tony and Lily Gauci)

2.1.4 Sicily

The CFM held a Marriage Encounter Weekend at the Diocese of Nato together with Monsignor Charles Vella and Tony and Lily Gauci. (Tony and Lily Gauci)

2.1.5 Zagreb, Croatia

They visited Zagreb three times in preparation for the IV European CFM Congress. (Tony and Lily Gauci)

“The 4th European CFM Congress was held in Zagreb with the strong participation of seventeen countries last July 2003 on the theme, “Family as a Successful Life-long Community” Proceedings of the Congress were printed and distributed. (Tony and Lily Gauci)

2.1.6 Romania

Romania is quite fertile ground for CFM growth after three years of information and correspondence. The Bishop of Arcadia is rallying the priests of his Diocese to encourage them to start family groups. (Tony and Lily Gauci)

2.1.7 Spain

Enrique and Teresa Hernandez, President Couple of Spain’s Movimiento Familiar Cristiano, presented their report together with a written report. (Tony and Lily Gauci)

2.1.8 Portugal

Antonio and Maria Celeste Moniz, President Couple of MLC Portugal, reported the following:

- MLC Christian Home Movement was founded by Monsignor Joaquin Aloe Bras in Portugal in 1960. It gathers about 150 families. MLC is in ten dioceses.
- The Movement is centered on yearly common themes which include the following:
 - Family Today and Christian Mission.
 - Communion Spirituality, the Basis of Mission in F. (2002-2003)
 - Ecumenical Communion or Dialogue with Non-Catholic Christian and Communion with Non-Believers: Testimony and Dialogue.
 - Family Life, Sanctuary and Announcer of Life’s Gospel based on Pope John Paul II’s encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*. (2003-2004)
 - Family Promoter of Woman’s Dignity and Mission based on Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Letter “*Mulieres Dignitatem*.” (2004-2005)

- MLC belongs to the Permanent Commission of the National Council of the Laity and works with it. It publishes a newsletter *Kairos* four times a year.

2.1.9 Malta

CFM Malta President Couple *George and M' Louise Sammut* reported that they have fifty member families. The members attended the Italian CFM National Assembly. They collect \$10 per couple membership fees. They have no fundraising activities but ask for donation to support CFM work.

2.1.10 Italy

Monsignor Charles Vella reported the following:

- MFC was started in Italy thirty years ago by *Lino and Cettina Zahra*, then President Couple of CFM Malta, with the help of the Family Commission headed by Monsignor Pietro Fiondella, Bishop of Prato, now 88 years old, proposed the insertion of the “Family, a Domestic Church” at the Vatican Council.
- MFC Italy holds national meetings, with the latest one was held in Prato.
- MFC Italy is strongest in Sicily where there are 45 groups. MFC President Couple *Mario and Mariuccia Di Raimondo* and Chaplain *Fr. Salvatore Bellonia* attended the European Continental Congress in Prague, Czech Republic, and in Zagreb, Croatia.
- MFC suffers from the language barriers and therefore limited international contact.
- MFC Italy is proposing to change its name from Christian Family Groups to Christian Family Communities.
- MFC Italy is actively promoting social and political action through the Forum of Families.

2.1.11 Hungary

CFM Hungary President Couple *Balazs and Krizstina Menesi* gave the following report:

- CFM-Hungary is the youngest CFM country in Europe. Until 1989, it was a communist country.
- In 1996, the first CFM unit with three couples started writing books. There are forty CFM groups at present, with 200 families.
- Together with Ukraine, they now have the following FIRES encounters in the countries: ME, ME Retorno, SADE Retorno, Self Encounter and Priest Encounter.

2.1.12 Croatia

Petar-Kresimir Hodzic, MD, of the Croatian Conference Bishops Office for the Family reported the following:

- Central European Catholic Bishops Conference is working on two family issues. President of the Pontifical Council of the Family Alfonso Cardinal Lopez Trujillo has given it his word of encouragement.
- Croatia is working towards getting young couples to join the CFM.
- Objective: Each parish should have one Family Community to represent the voice of the family. Hopefully, this will start in September 2004.

2.2 Continental CFM Latin America

MFC Latin America President Couple **William and Esilda Cheng** reported the following: (report attached)

- MFC Latin America is made up of about 80,000 families present in eighteen countries and divided into the following three zones:

Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3
Mexico	Peru	Uruguay
Guatemala	Venezuela	Argentina
El Salvador	Columbia	Chile
Honduras	Ecuador	Paraguay
Costa Rica	Dominican Republic	Bolivia
Cuba	Panama	Brazil

- MFC Latina America has some dreams – to work in the building the Kingdom of God through delivery of Family Life Services including Marriage Encounter, Family Encounter, Engaged Encounter, Solo Parents and others in several countries. Formation is important, basic and should be promoted to the children of God.
- The World Assembly is part of the Movement and part of our development where we can learn from one another and not to reject each other.
- William and Esilda undertook pastoral visits to many countries. Their causes of concern are the following:
 - Some couples/members leave the MFC.
 - Some MFC teams do not persevere.
 - Some MFC members lack commitment.
- Mexico goes into spiritual retreat to know God. They make visits since world is one place. What is important is human contact. We have to be a LIGHT (model) to others.

2.1.1 Mexico

Mario and Floriana Nunez reported the following:

- MFC Mexico was started in 1958 and is now established in 76 dioceses with 50,000 married couples and 10,000 youth. One of its objectives is to promote Christian values.
- Formation materials are based on OJA and these undergo revision and updating. They believe in OJA but are not yet satisfied. They need to have greater impact, to be more EFFECTIVE.

2.1.2 Guatemala

Erwin dela Paz reported the following:

- MFC-Guatemala just had a change of leadership. MFC Guatemala was founded in 1971 and is now present in 22 states with 3,500 couple families.
- The members are among the poorest segment of society though they do outreach in poor communities.
- They have difficulty in getting visas to come to the USA to attend this General Assembly.

2.1.3 El Salvador

MFC El Salvador President Couple *Ricardo and Nohemy Castaneda* gave the following report:

- MFC El Salvador was founded in 1978. It has 27 years of missionary history. It is made up of 88 communities in 8 dioceses with 38,000 families working with families most in need.
- They have 14 themes in Marriage Encounter. Every Saturday, there is the Family Mass. Retreats are held for families and couples with the help of Fr. Calvo's FIRES Program."
- As many as 10,000 people participate in general assemblies.

2.2 Continental North America

Continental North America CFM President Couple *Gary and Kay Aitchison* reported the following:

- Continental North America is present in Canada in three areas. In the United States of America, CFM has three distinguished expressions: CFM-USA, MFC-USA and MFC-LA.
- Past ICCFM President from Canada Rolando Leroux (1977-1983) was present at the World Assembly.

2.1.1 CFM-USA

Paul and Jane Leingang, CFM-USA President Couple, reported the following:

- CFM-USA publishes a new book each year. Since the last World Assembly the following books have been published:

- Your Marriage: The Great Adventure
 - Evidence of Faith
 - Building a Better World
 - Homemade Disciples (based on the US Catholic Bishops “Follow the Way of Love”)
- CFM USA held a National Assembly in Miami, Florida, in 2002 and it is planning a Conference in Chicago on July 2005.
 - It worked with Andy Pozdol in developing CFM website which is experiencing 150 visitors a day.
 - CFM-USA has developed a relationship with the National Federation of Priest Councils who are interested to listen to it.
 - The CFM-USA President Couple has been selected to serve on the Advisory Board of the Committee on Marriage and Family Life of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.
 - Two major Catholic Magazines have mentioned CFM prominently, drawing much interest in the CFM.
 - CFM Board of Directors hold three meetings and has held three leadership meetings since last the World Assembly to implement deeper exploration and implementation of Cardijn’s Methodology of Observe, Judge and Act.
 - CFM-USA needs to work closely with MFC-USA since the population of USA is becoming more Hispanic. More parishes wish to have both expressions of the Movement.

2.1.2 MFC-USA

President Couple *Mario and Juanita Figueroa* reported the following:

- MFC-USA has 35 active federations in eight regions, 21 dioceses with about 1,843 families in the following places:

Region	Federation	Families
Washington	1	21
North California	10	336
South California	2	116
Tucson	1	38
West Texas	8	138
East Texas	10	1,052
Indiana	1	26
New York	3	116

- The following Conferences were held:

- National Reunions / Meetings
- Three Regional Reunions
- Two National Directors Reunions
- 16 National Directors Meetings
- Various workshops in San Jose, New York, and Texas
- MFC-USA published a National Directory
- MFC-USAQ is are grateful to Chaplain **Rev. Fr. Rafael J. Davila**

2.1.3 MFC-Los Angeles

President Couple **Jose and Maria Elena Marin** reported the following:

- MFC-LA consists of 100% Spanish-speaking families from South America, Central America and Mexico. They are all immigrants living in USA.
- MFC-LA has three levels of Basic Formation Guides and are active in twenty parishes with approximately 500 family members.

3 Levels of Basic Formation Guides

- 1st Level - Exploring one's values as a person and growing as couples
- 2nd Level - Improving our relationship and communication with our children
- 3rd Level - Understanding the importance of growing old as a couple and the importance of serving our communities and helping the MFC expand to other parishes

- It holds hold five Marriage Encounters and Pre-Cana courses every year.
- MFC-LA celebrates two gatherings a year – a special Thank You Celebration for all our Spiritual Assistants and one picnic in December to celebrate the Holy Family Mass.
- MFC-LA publishes a Bulletin every two months.

3. APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

Rev. Fr. Ken Weare, Chairperson of the ICCFM Workshop Committee, presented two resolutions in summary form after a study of the various resolutions arrived at by the six groups in a workshop on the following questions:

PART 1 Questions

1. In your country, what are the culture-specific reasons that people marry?
2. What is the role of married and family life within the culture of your country?
3. What is the impact of Christian Marriage on your culture?

4. What impact do Government, Church and Culture have on marriage and family life in your country?
5. What do you think marriage and family life will be like in the future?
6. What is the true meaning of Christian Marriage considering the status and situations of CFM in various parts of the world?

PART 2 Questions

1. How is the culture of marriage different in your country from the message in the Gospel and Church documents?
2. How is the Christian Theology of marriage relevant today? In the future?
3. How can we bring marriage and family life more in line with the Scripture and Church Document?

The following is a Summary of the Resolutions by Workshop Groups:

- Group I :** Emphasize family spirituality through personal relationships with Christ and through prayers. Start praying with the family. Share resolutions through the ICCFM website.
- Group II:** Pray as individual and as couples. Witness to others. Trust God.
- Group III:** Learn more about Church teachings and be more responsive to communities, to become more effective, to initiate collaboration between clergy and laity.
- Group IV:** Be authentic, faithful and in solidarity with the Church.
- Group V:** Review the OJA Methodology, strengthen and update materials and explain to the whole community (CFM). Strengthen the education of children in the family.
- Group VI:** Affirm the value of human life advocate against all violence, especially domestic violence.

Group Categories of Resolutions:

- 1.) Prayer 2.) Family 3.) Church 4.) Society

Final Resolutions in Brief

Prayer and Action patterned after JESUS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| - As Individual and as Couple | - In the Family |
| - In Community (CFM/BEC) | - In Family Programs |
| - In Church | - In Society |

ICCFM 13th World Assembly Resolutions (in summary form)

Resolution No. 1

We resolve to promote the vision, values and virtues of Christian Marriage and family through prayer: in the family (e.g. meal prayers, Bible study, at family rituals, etc.), in the Church (e.g. at liturgical celebrations, organizational meetings, etc.) and in society (e.g. at civil functions, public gatherings, etc.)

Resolution No. 2

We resolve to promote the vision, values and virtues of Christian marriage and family through action: in the family (e.g. family meals, family meetings, family outreach, family education, etc.) in the church (e.g. programs, liturgies, retreats, CFM, etc.) and in society (e.g. dialogue with government representatives on issues such as war and peace, housing, health care, domestic violence, and the dignity of life, etc.)

4. ELECTION OF THE ICCFM PRESIDENT COUPLE

4.1 Election and Proclamation

World Assembly *Chaircouple Gary and Kay Aitchison* reported that they asked for nomination several months ago from Continental Presidents and the only nominated candidates were *Nop and Elma Muangkroot* who were therefore proclaimed for their second term as ICCFM President Couple for 2005-2007.

4.2 Acceptance of Election by ICCFM President Couple

Nop and Elma Muangkroot graciously accepted the position of ICCFM President for the next term (2005 – 2007) and promised to work harder for a stronger ICCFM.

They thanked CFM North America, its leaders, the Conference Organizing Committee and all the people who helped organize the event as well as all participants for sacrificing their time and resources to be part of the World Assembly.

After announcing that the 10th World Assembly of Families and the 14th ICCFM General Assembly will be held sometime in July-August 2007 in Fatima, Portugal, they declared the 9th World Assembly of Families and 13th ICCFM General Assembly closed.

Prepared by:

MEL AND EMMA RICAFFRENTE
Acting Secretary Couple

Noted by:

NOP AND ELMA MUANGKROOT
ICCFM President Couple