



# International Confederation of Christian Family Movements



LETTER FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT COUPLE, SEPTEMBER 2007

September 19, 2007

Dear ICCFM Members,

Together with offering our best wishes to ICCFM Presidents William and Esilda Cheng and Chaplain Rev. Fr. Jose Majadas, this letter aims to express our deepest feelings at our leave-taking, sharing reflections of the past and hopes for the future. It also incorporates our talks at the World Assembly in Fatima, sharing sentiments meant for all because many of you could not be there.

We thank our dear Chaplain Monsignor Charles Vella, our ICCFM mentor since 1974, for the six years of monthly Masses offered for ICCFM intentions. The sacrament's infinite blessings have definitely sustained the ICCFM through difficult times. We thank the ICCFM Executive Secretariat for accomplishing their specific functions to the extent that they possibly could. We thank Past Presidents Jose and Margarita Pich for training us and for encouraging us with their presence in distant Continental Conventions, and we thank Presidents William and Esilda Cheng for carrying on the work. Most importantly, because they were essential to our presidential function, we thank Webmaster Andy Pozdol, whose indefatigable pursuit of ICCFM website data impelled us to action; and Translator Emilio Wong, whose unconditional faith in us gave us confidence to rise to our presidential role and whose precise Spanish translation makes us sound more eloquent than we are. We could always count on them; their support never failed nor faltered even at the busiest times. Please accept our deepest gratitude, too, Judy Pozdol and Yolanda Wong!

We are proud to have been Presidents of the ICCFM, a Confederation built on prayer and action, gifted with compassion and a prophetic voice. The themes of our World Assemblies in the past 20 years prove that we are visionaries and trailblazers on issues affecting families. We are fortunate to have had as our "think tanks" Fr. Ken Weare and Sue Hamilton (Past President Couple with husband Wayne), among others, who hold advance degrees in theology and who believe that the noblest use of learning is to protect family integrity against an increasingly hostile world.



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**Firstly, ICCFM champions the rights of the poor:**

- **1986 Chicago, USA – “Families: The Voice of the Poor and Suffering”** We questioned the oppressive economic and political systems which defy social justice.
- **1998 Thailand – “CFM Renewal 2000: Christian Families Committed to the Humanization of All Families in the World”** We addressed the dehumanization of families especially in the Third World.
- **2001 Maceio, Brazil - “Ethics of Life in Globalized and Excluding World”** We deplored the irony resulting from globalization which, instead of spreading the wealth, marginalized the poor even more.

**Secondly, ICCFM thinks ahead of the times:**

- **1989 Avila, Spain: “Families: Mystery and Reality, Hope of the Third Millennium”** This early, we already anticipated that families must prepare to face the millennium.
- **1995 Malta – “Towards a Global Community, Visions for the Journey”** We looked forward to the benefits of a universal brotherhood in the age of globalization.
- **2004 California, USA - “Family: Artisans of an Evolving Society”** We admitted that technology has changed human life irreversibly and that families must be ready to face the unknown and rapid changes of a post-modern world.

**Thirdly, ICCFM recognizes that stewardship of the earth is in the hands of families:**

- **1992, Merida, Mexico – “Families of the Earth: Creating New Covenants in a Changing World”** Fifteen years ahead of Alan Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth*, we examined how God has made families stewards of the earth. We took the role seriously and pioneered in environmental protection on the family level.



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Definitely our history is a source of great pride in being ICCFM, an encouragement for us to persevere in attaining our vision for the families God has placed in our care. In performing our task, we take heart in knowing that we are destined for perfection. “Be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48), Jesus charges us. Giving our Heavenly Father as the ideal shows that Jesus calls us to the highest form of perfection. Our mandate to strive for highest perfection is a destination that is being realized day by day. Loving God and neighbor through service to families, with ICCFM as the instrument, is our chosen path, and we are on our way.

As Past Presidents looking back on our cherished experience of the last six years, we feel our hearts overflowing with gratitude to all of you, ICCFM members, for your total commitment, selfless dedication and persistent effort in the service of families. You have been a source of joy and an inspiration. We have been privileged to meet many of you in person, to witness and admire the benevolent work you are doing for families, especially the disadvantaged. Through the years we have learned to love each other more dearly as members of God’s family, united for a common cause.

To acknowledge what you have meant to us, to describe with absolute honesty how you have enriched and exalted six years of our lives, we echo the sentiments of St. Paul in a letter to his beloved Thessalonians: “It was your faith that encouraged us. . . How can we thank God enough for you, for the joy we have in His presence because of you?” (1 Thessalonians 3:7-9) The immense happiness and the real blessing have been truly ours.

With love and prayers always,  
Nop and Elma