



Blast from the Past



Photo taken from July 1958 ACT newsletter



THE FITZPATRICK FAMILY: Alma (upper left, standing) and Peter (on hands and knees) are proud parents who have made important contributions to CFM.

Save the Date!

Please put **August 3-4, 2024** on your calendar and join us for our 75th Anniversary Celebration at the Mundelein Seminary in Illinois.

For inquiries, photo submissions and other information, please mail to: Christian Family Movement National Office, P.O. Box 266, Dexter, MI 48130. Or email us at: 75thAnniversary@cfm.org.

Making Friends, Making Disciples, Making a Difference



CFM 75th Anniversary Graphic Design Contest

In honor of CFM's 75th anniversary celebration, we invite you to create a design that we will use for our posters, T-shirt and other promotional/souvenir materials.

Theme: Making Friends, Making Disciples, Making a Difference for 75 years

Entries should be submitted by 01/31/2023 to 75thAnniversary@cfm.org.

Winners will be announced on 02/28/23.

Additional competition details and guidelines are available at: https://www.cfm.org/75th_anniversary



Presidents' Perspective:

Brian & Mary Ann Thelen



Christmas & New Years Blessings to you & your family! In mid-December, we were inspired by a phone call we received from a new CFM group starting in Virginia. The phone message we received was: "Feel free to call me at your convenience anytime in the next week. We're slowing down during Advent." When we spoke with her she shared that it wasn't easy slowing down, but was an everyday decision. All we can say is that we're blessed by the intentionality of this young mom to permeate her home with peace.

It is now a few days before Christmas, and we are currently at the airport having concluded a very special visit with our son (celebrating his 10th anniversary to the priesthood). We will be heading home to Christmas celebrations with our parents and our married children. As we celebrate this Octave of Christmas, we pray that you and your families have found a true peace and joy from Christ amongst the busy hustle and bustle of the season. One of our favorite feast days during this Octave is the feast of the Holy Family which falls on December 30th. It is reminder to us that God has elevated the family to be the way he brought salvation into the world, through the incarnation - God made man. Rejoice in the birth of Our Lord and Savior and revel in the richness of the family that God has given you!

May the New Year bring your families and CFM groups many blessings and growth in sharing the love of God in and through the family!

History of the Christian Family Movement

Original article written in July 1955 by Ned & Louise Taylor
(2nd Federation Couple) for Los Angeles, CA Federation

Part 2

"After the first 12 meetings, each couple is encouraged to form their own group and become leaders of it while continuing in the original group. The original group is designated as a "section" and the groups which each couple leads are called "action groups." The chaplain continues to attend section meetings and help prepare each meeting with the section's leader couple, but a priest does not attend the action group meetings for the obvious reason that there aren't enough priests and anyway this is essentially a lay movement."

"As CFM grows in a parish, additional sections are formed. Ideally, every married couple who is raising a family should be a member of CFM. It is the only Catholic organization which is specifically for married couples and contributes to solving the problem of divisionary interests of husbands and wives who have previously had to go to separate men's and women's organizations."

"Above the parochial level, a federation is formed which is composed of the section leaders in the various parishes. At this level, problems are discussed and large group projects are planned. One important activity is an annual married couples weekend retreat. Half the couples go one week while the other half take care of their children, then the procedure is reversed the next week. This is of incomparable value to both husband and wife. They get away from their children for a weekend of rest and do nothing but listen to talks on marriage, take spiritual inventory, pray, read and relax. The retreat master (a priest) and his assistant make a point of having a talk with every couple during the course of the retreat to discuss any personal problems with them. Silence is maintained for the whole weekend except that the married couples may talk to each other in their room."

(More about this married couples retreat will be continued in next month's issue).



Empty Nesting and CFM

As CFM turns 75 in 2024, many of its members (past and present) have been feathering their empty nests. These were members who "dropped out of CFM" as their lives got busier with their young children & the myriad of activities that went with it. Later, as those kids went to college, graduated, got employed, and moved out and had families of their own, some of these members have found their way back to CFM.

Gone are the stolen moments; in comes more discretionary time; gone are the scheduling of date nights around the hectic school schedules & shuttling between sports, music, theater arts, catechism, & scouting activities (plus finding the right babysitters); in comes relaxing date nights just to get out of the daily grind rut (no need to rush home); gone are the days of supervising the children; now they have become spectators.

When responding to the OJA questions, the empty nesters' responses included life with grandchildren; adult children's love interests and careers (the ups and downs); helping their kids maintain/come back to their faith life or accept that their kids no longer practice their religion; sharing how their children repeat their parents' advice or actions with their own children (a validation!); and having more time to do volunteer work that does not need to involve children.

Many former CFM'ers who came back got re-acquainted with fellow CFM'ers from many years ago. It was such a delight to catch up about the blessings and challenges since the last time they saw one another.

There seem to be a new motivation to create something new or outside of their comfort zone; to continue doing what they love but with more energy and enthusiasm; to "re-instate" what was put in the back burner; to re-decorate or renovate the house; to serve others (either paid with dollars or with gratitude); and to inspire a younger generation that they've been there/done that.

The hands & arms that nourished their young children are now reaching out & embracing new friends, reconnecting with old schoolmates, traveling to exotic places, or simply just holding a martini and relaxing at home.

So, if you're an empty nester & you're not in CFM now, what are you waiting for? Come back & inspire a new generation of families! Make new friends, become better disciples, and make a difference!

