

**COUPLES FOR CHRIST**  
**FOUNDATION FOR FAMILY AND LIFE**  
**STATUTES**

**Preamble**

We are a deeply privileged people, having been shown God's mercy and grace, accepted even in our sinfulness, and used as His instruments to proclaim Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to the whole world.

We have been called to community, in order that we might help each other grow in holiness and live out our covenant, and in order that we might serve the Lord in fullness of gifts and in the strength of His Spirit.

We are committed to live for God and to help build His kingdom on earth, even as we look forward to being with Him eternally in heaven.

**1.0 Nature and Purpose**

- 1.1** COUPLES FOR CHRIST FOUNDATION FOR FAMILY AND LIFE (CFC-FFL) is a private association of lay faithful committed to the work of evangelization and family life renewal.
- 1.2** CFC-FFL is a missionary body, and the families and individuals that make up this association are to strive to be instruments of the Holy Spirit in renewing the face of the earth.

**2.0 Vision and Mission**

- 2.1** The family is God's work and CFC-FFL is called to defend and strengthen it. CFC-FFL is called to bring families back to the plan of God. It is called to bring the Lord's strength and light to those who are struggling to be truly Christian families in the modern world.
- 2.2** CFC-FFL works for Christian family renewal at various levels—the individual, the family, the larger community.
- 2.21** *Individual renewal.* CFC-FFL takes the basic message of Christianity and proclaims it anew so that those who hear it can make a renewed commitment to God in a way that will enable them to participate more fully with the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives and in the world.

- 2.22** *Family renewal.* As individuals renew their commitment to God, they also renew their commitment to their spouse and to their Christian family life. Gradually, the new life that they find in the Lord filters down to all their family relationships.
- 2.23** *Church renewal.* As individual families are renewed, they form a network of committed Christian families that not only support one another but also strengthen the local churches of which they are members.
- 2.231** CFC-FFL is committed to work for Catholic re-evangelization first and foremost, but looks to the ideal of Christian unity and will also serve the other Christian Churches whenever possible, in full respect and in conformity with the Catholic identity of the association.
- 2.232** CFCFFL is committed to building up vibrant Christian communities in the parishes and dioceses where its members congregate.
- 2.24** *Societal renewal.* CFC-FFL, in raising holy Christian men and women, likewise raises responsible members of society, who seek to apply their faith in the daily situations they encounter, being salt and light in the world.
- 2.3** CFC-FFL carries out its mission of renewal by focusing on three basic areas—evangelization and mission, family life renewal, and total Christian liberation and development.
- 2.31** *Evangelization and mission.* CFC-FFL exists to evangelize. Every CFC-FFL member is to be an evangelizer and is to live an evangelistic lifestyle.
- 2.311** CFC-FFL is a missionary community. It is committed to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth, and in this regard, will field missionaries on an ongoing basis.
- 2.32** *Family life renewal.* CFC-FFL’s work of evangelization, formation and support is situated in the context of vibrant Christian family living.
- 2.321** CFC-FFL is committed to the defense and strengthening of families and of Christian family values.
- 2.33** *Total Christian liberation and development.* CFC-FFL is committed to work for the liberation of the human person from the chains of personal and corporate sin, through its three thrusts of work with the poor, work for justice, and work for life.
- 2.4** CFC-FFL places a particular emphasis on promoting and defending the Culture of Life.

### **3.0 Our Core Values**

**3.1** Our Core Values describe who we are and what we are called to do in the world. They provide parameters and constant guideposts in our moving on in our life and mission.

**3.2** CFC-FFL has 7 Core Values.

- \* Centered on Christ.
- \* Evangelistic and missionary.
- \* Focused on the family.
- \* Being community.
- \* Living a preferential option for the poor.
- \* Exercising servant leadership.
- \* Being a servant to the Church.

## **4.0 Membership**

**4.1** Membership in CFC-FFL is open to any validly married Catholic couple, and to other individuals through its Family Ministries.

**4.11** Though a Catholic community, CFC-FFL is open to membership by non-Catholic Christians, who can join as associate members. Associate members can participate fully in the non-sacramental life and mission of CFC-FFL, and must recognize and defer to the Catholic nature of the community. Non-Catholic associates, though remaining faithful to their Church, have to accept, respect, and defer to the principles and teachings of the Catholic Church on marriage, human sexuality and the family.

**4.12** CFC-FFL also looks to providing pastoral care for those who in one way or another cannot or will not avail of regular membership, such as those in irregular unions.

**4.2** Those who want to join CFC-FFL go through a seminar called a Christian Life Seminar (CLS) for adults, or a Youth Camp for young adults. The CLS and Youth Camp are integrated courses leading to a renewed understanding of God's call to Christians, to a personal response of accepting Jesus as Savior and Lord, and to receiving a renewed outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Young children also join CFC-FFL through a Kids Camp.

**4.21** After the CLS or Youth Camp, those who finish are considered underway members, and after the Covenant Recollection (CR) are invited to join CFC-FFL as full members, demonstrating their commitment by accepting the CFC-FFL covenant.

**4.3** Other forms of membership may be authorized by the Servant General, such as for clerics and religious, or for auxiliaries and affiliates.

**4.4** Membership may be terminated by the leadership for any of the following reasons:

- \* Serious unrepented wrongdoing.
- \* Gross unfaithfulness to the covenant of CFC-FFL.

- \* Public opposition to CFC-FFL teachings and culture, as well as official Church teachings.
- \* Ongoing disruption of good order in the community.
- \* Any other act that would seriously undermine the life and mission of CFC-FFL.

**4.41** Any member may voluntarily leave CFC-FFL at any time and for any reason.

## **5.0 Corporate Life and Formation**

**5.1** Those who become members of CFC-FFL are made part of a small cell group called a household. The household members meet regularly for mutual support and encouragement in the Christian life.

**5.11** The household meetings, normally held in the homes of the group members on rotation basis, would normally involve some time for prayers, a time for sharing or discussion, and finally some time for fellowship.

**5.2** All members undergo continuing formation both in the Christian life and also in the life and mission of CFC-FFL.

**5.3** Members of CFC-FFL are related to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. As such, their relationship is not to be functional but should reflect the intimacy of Christian love, caring and sharing.

## **6.0 Organization**

**6.1** The household is the basic cell grouping in CFC-FFL. It is in the household where members share their lives more intimately and support one another in their spiritual growth.

**6.2** Households form a unit, units form a chapter, chapters form a cluster, and clusters form a district. All these form a pyramidal structure of pastoral care and governance.

**6.3** The pastoral groupings conform to Church pastoral and territorial structures. Districts conform to the diocese, clusters to the vicariate, and chapters to the parish.

**6.4** CFC-FFL may establish itself as a foundation or corporation or formal association, in accordance with local and/or national laws, for purposes of conducting transactions as a juridical entity, under any appropriate name. Such juridical personality however does not supersede the more basic reality that CFC-FFL is a spiritual movement and a Christian community with its own organization, government and patterns of life.

## **7.0 Leadership and Governance**

- 7.1** There are many levels of leadership in CFC-FFL. Whatever the level, it is to be a servant leadership, following the example of Jesus.
- 7.11** All leaders take responsibility for the life and mission of the body. As such, all leaders must work as a cohesive team, relating with loyalty as brothers to one another, always acting in charity.
- 7.2** Overall leadership and governance are exercised by the Servant General (SG). The Servant General acts as keeper of the charism and governs the life and mission of the worldwide community.
- 7.21** To provide personal pastoral cover, the Servant General has a priest as Spiritual Director. In addition, other seniors provide fraternal correction as needed.
- 7.22** The founder of Couples for Christ is the first Servant General.
- 7.23** The founder serves as Servant General until he dies or voluntarily steps down for reasons of health or incapacity.
- 7.3** The Servant General appoints individuals who will assist him in the leadership and governance of CFC-FFL. The Servant General would normally undertake a process of consultation with other seniors prior to appointments.
- 7.31** The Servant General appoints a Body of Counselors, who help provide wisdom, understanding, direction and discernment.
- 7.32** The Servant General is assisted in governing the worldwide community by Country Servants, District Servants and by Chapter Servants, plus other seniors to whom he would delegate authority to govern.
- 7.33** Other leaders are appointed by the Servant General, or by those to whom he delegates such authority.
- 7.34** Leaders are chosen on the basis of capability, pastoral experience and growth in holiness and discipleship. Leaders are not chosen merely on the basis of seniority in CFC-FFL membership, experience or leadership in other religious organizations, or leadership in secular organizations.
- 7.35** Leaders may be removed if it becomes obvious that they are no longer able to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Such removal is done with due and just process.
- 7.4** When the founder dies or has voluntarily stepped down as Servant General, a successor as Servant General will be elected by a minimum seventy percent (70%) vote of all those physically present in a constituent assembly, the eligible members of which are: (1) all members of the Body of Counselors (Manila), (2) all members of the

International Core of Seniors, plus their spouses, (3) all District Servants in the Philippines, and (4) all Country Servants of countries with at least 300 CFC-FFL members. Persons who are listed more than once will have only one vote.

- 7.41** The founder has the option of appointing the Servant General to succeed him, in which case there is no election. On the other hand, the founder also has the other option of designating a list of candidates that can be voted on by the constituent assembly per **7.4**, in which case there are no further nominations.
- 7.411** Subsequent Servant Generals have no such options as in **7.41**.
- 7.42** The Servant General is a male member of any nationality.
- 7.421** If the elected Servant General does not live in Manila, he will have to relocate to Manila, which is the center of the worldwide community.
- 7.43** A Servant General so elected will have a term of six (6) years, subject to a second term of six years if re-elected. He is ineligible for a third successive term. However, he may be elected again after having been out of office for at least three (3) years. Thereafter, the two successive terms and hiatus of three years apply.
- 7.44** When a Servant General dies or voluntarily steps down or his term of six years ends, the process of election in **7.4** is followed.
- 7.45** The Body of Counselors in Manila formulates the guidelines for such elections, unless there are existing guidelines approved by the Servant General.
- 7.451** The Body of Counselors in Manila functions as overseer during the transition election period. As such, it oversees day-to-day life and mission but without making any significant changes in the life, mission and culture of the community. Further, it cannot make any appointment of any senior that is subject to the Servant General's approval. If absolutely necessary, it can designate an acting Officer-in-Charge, whose status is immediately rescinded upon the election of the new Servant General.

## **8.0 Finances**

- 8.1** The work of CFC-FFL is generally financed through the voluntary contributions of its members.
- 8.2** CFC-FFL members are encouraged to also contribute generously to the material and financial needs of their parish.

## **9.0 CFC-FFL as a Servant to the Roman Catholic Church**

- 9.1 CFC-FFL seeks to be a servant to and lay arm of the Roman Catholic Church in the work of evangelization and family life renewal.
- 9.2 CFC-FFL will live out its life and mission in communion with the bishops.
- 9.21 CFC-FFL looks to having a Spiritual Director appointed by the bishop for the CFC-FFL group within his diocese. Such Spiritual Director may be the bishop himself, or at his option, a priest or religious appointed by him. CFC-FFL also looks to having a Spiritual Director for the CFC-FFL group within a parish.
- 9.22 CFC-FFL looks to the bishops, in their role as shepherds, to help provide for the spiritual formation of its members.
- 9.3 CFC-FFL is committed to the work of renewing and strengthening Catholics within the Church.
- 9.4 CFC-FFL will conform to and support official and orthodox Church teachings and stands on issues.
- 9.41 CFC-FFL is committed to rise in defense of the Roman Catholic Church against the forces that seek to destroy or weaken her.
- 9.42 CFC-FFL will be open to and will pursue ecumenical relationships in accordance with the posture of the local Church hierarchy. CFC-FFL will also be open to inter-religious dialogue, under the guidance of the Church hierarchy.

## **10.0 The Worldwide Community of CFC-FFL**

- 10.1 The work of CFC-FFL may be established in any country throughout the world.
- 10.2 The different CFC-FFL communities throughout the world form part of the one worldwide CFC-FFL community.
- 10.3 Manila functions as the center for the work of CFC-FFL throughout the world.
- 10.4 Communities within the worldwide CFC-FFL community have the same Vision & Mission, Covenant, and Core Values. They adopt the same basic formation, pastoral structures of support (households), and patterns of life. Alternative formulations can be allowed upon the approval of the Servant General.
- 10.41 A CFC-FFL community in a particular country can formulate its own statutes as the need arises. Such statutes should be in line with and not contradictory in any way to these International Statutes. Such individual country-specific statutes should have the approval of the Servant General.

- 10.5** A CFC-FFL community within a particular country will decide on its own specific plans and strategies with which to carry out the CFC-FFL vision and mission, but always in line with CFC-FFL's worldwide direction and thrusts.
- 10.51** CFC-FFL communities in the different countries should look to local cultural adaptation, without compromising the essentials of the CFC-FFL life, mission and culture.
- 10.6** Being one worldwide community, the work and well-being of every CFC-FFL community is a matter of concern for all others. All CFC-FFL communities should be open to extending support and cooperation to other CFC-FFL communities in other countries.
- 10.61** CFC-FFL communities should be open to sharing their resources with other CFC-FFL communities. This would include human pastoral resources, finances, teachings, effective programs and strategies, etc.
- 10.62** CFC-FFL communities in the different countries should take initiative in pursuing the CFC-FFL vision and mission, and should work towards being self-sufficient, self-reliant and self-supporting as to the required human, financial and logistical resources.
- 10.7** An International Core of Seniors (ICS) is established in order to further the worldwide mission of CFC-FFL and to strengthen the fraternal bonds among its top leaders, especially those of different nationalities.

## **11.0 Amendments**

- 11.1** Amendments may be adopted upon the approval of the Servant General.

\* \* \* \* \*

**September 6, 2009**