



July 26, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings of Christ's peace to each and everyone of you!

Having been appointed by the International Council in Manila as your new Country Coordinator in CFC-USA, it is with great trepidation that I have accepted this new assignment, being a mere earthen vessel. I take solace and strength from St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians' that "**We are afflicted in every way, but not constrained; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body.**"

In the light of current conflict within our community, let us continue to pray for all our community leaders and our Bishops that the Lord will use them mightily once more to bring about a more unified and spirit filled CFC worldwide, a CFC that is :

1. Focused on our vision and mission of **bringing glad tidings to the poor** through our mission and evangelization, our pro-life initiatives, and through our work with the poor in Gawad Kalinga, as **FAMILIES IN THE HOLY SPIRIT RENEWING THE FACE OF THE EARTH.**
2. Focused on the Lord, and not on men or personalities. No one is permanent in his position or responsibility. **Most important is the continuity of God's work in and through our community.**

We would like to thank our brother Frank Padilla for all that he has done – and he has done so much -- for our community in the past 25 years. **Nobody can ever fill his shoes. But now that he has resigned and no longer at the helm, let us move on.**

3. Concerning the issues about CFC and GK, many of these had already been addressed, or are on their way to being resolved. If there are any more unresolved issues, together, we can work on them, so our work with the poor continues undisturbed, **for Jesus is on the side of the poor.** We all need to be united in prayer and action, to work cooperatively and help one another to do God's work. I will surely need your help because clearly, I would not be able to do it by myself.

Let us work together. No more pointing fingers and making judgment on anyone. We are brothers and sisters in the Lord, so we must be faithful to that special relationship of brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ to which God has called us as members of our community. *Regardless of what you have so far heard or seen or learned about this present crisis in our community, we all need to remain calm, peaceful and collected as a body.*

Yes, it is sad and unfortunate that we see disagreements, even conflicts happening among our leaders but the reality is: this is a common event in any human organization including the church. Historically, in fact, during the time of Sts. Peter and Paul, they also had a conflict – and a serious one- which threatened to divide the then struggling Christian

community. But in the end, the community survived, and even continued to thrive, such that in less than two centuries, Christianity was solidly planted.

I also want to add here, that our disagreements should not and must not divide us. Rather, let us agree to disagree, without being disagreeable. **Eventually, in His time, in God's truth and in His love, we can resolve whatever our disagreements are and come out even stronger, more united and more fruitful, experiencing the rewards of restoration which is His peace and His joy.**

During the past few weeks, we have witnessed hurtful and negative email exchanges among our CFC brethren, some bordering on personal vilification. **It is time to live out our calling, and faithfully follow His example in relating with one another as His brethren. We call ourselves Couples for Christ, so we carry our Lord's name in epitomizing His meekness, His humility, His love, His mercy and forgiveness.**

The new International Council is working for the settlement and resolution of issues with the Bishops. Let us give them a chance to work out the issues, to do their work and fulfill their mandate. Pls. see attached email. I understand that some of you may have formed your conclusions and judgments and I am not here to convince you otherwise. All I ask is for openness of mind, listen to both sides and in prayerful solitude, hear out God's message on what He wants us to accomplish as a unified CFC. **For man, it is impossible. But for God, all things are possible!**

Let us go beyond this chapter in the life of our community. Let us move on. Let us continue to love one another and to give our all to God Who is our Real Leader, and look forward to a brighter future ahead of us. Let us Rejoice!

God bless us all!

Your Brother in Christ,

Ricky Cuenca

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