



August 16, 2007

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Couples for Christ-USA,

Like Joshua, today we crossed the river Jordan under the continuing guidance of the Lord.

Just like most of you, I had agonized and struggled with the conflict within CFC. I had prayed unceasingly for unity and reconciliation, and spent sleepless nights trying to understand on how things had developed this way. **I was amazed at how the evil one is really so cunning that he was able to bring so much havoc to our CFC brothers and sisters, and at how many good God-fearing men could write with so much venom and spite.** I realized then that our fight is not just with an individual or a group but against a much stronger force that only prayer and God could counter - the evil within each one of us. I continued to pray and waited on the Lord for enlightenment, fully trusting that HE will let me know what HE wants me to do, just as HE has guided me through all these years.

It is with a heavy heart that I relay to you the Joint Statement of Frank Padilla and the CFC International Council declaring the split. This Joint Statement comes after Frank Padilla's Restoration Movement formally announced separation from CFC in his Jul. 30 and Aug.1 letters.

This new development also gives a clear mandate for **Couples for Christ USA** to move on. Although saddened by the Joint Statement of the split and its impact on the community, it may on the other hand be the best solution for greater transformation of the two groups, as a house divided will also have difficulty moving forward.

Brothers and sisters, just like many of you, I had suffered in pain and agony, seeking hope for reconciliation. After a deep soul searching and prayerful discernment, **I honestly and firmly believe that the Holy Spirit is urging me to support the CFC International Council, in accord with our values, principles and established process in Couples for Christ. My direct, actual and personal experiences with both sides before, during and after the elections in Manila have also led me to this decision.**

The 7 man CFC International Council are capable leaders, honed in the CFC culture and values. True to the leadings of the Holy Spirit, they are united, of one heart and of one mind, together with the CFC Board of Elders and the overwhelming majority of the 200 plus CFC Elders' Assembly.

The **Couples for Christ** that we love, that we are all part of, where we all grew spiritually and served the Lord vigorously, where we developed deep, long lasting relationships, laughing, working, crying, praying, and worshipping together has not changed and will not change. **It can only change if we, the present members, will allow it to change by our separating from it.**

Remain and stay within Couples for Christ.

Together, we will continue with our vision, mission and evangelization work of Couples for Christ in the USA, Africa, Latin America, Caribbean and other countries. We will persevere in the 7 pillars and conduct our Mission, Evangelization and Formation programs with even greater zeal pursuing our Pro-Life programs with passion, and further sustaining our work with the poor through Gawad Kalinga. As a Catholic Church mandated organization, we will continue to be guided by the Bishops.

Brothers and sisters, the present **CFC International Council HAS NOT and WILL NOT deviate from our vision / mission of “ Families in the Holy Spirit renewing the face of the earth and bringing glad tidings to the poor ”** - for CFC is God's organization having been ordained by Him to fulfill a mission. So much time and effort have been wasted on debates, justifications and even personal attacks. It is time to stop and continue God's work.

For those of you who are undecided or still discerning, here are some personal thoughts:

1. Amidst the apparent confusion, do not worry. For while there is a universe of truths, with each side taking its own slice or portion of the truth, **God knows the whole truth.**
2. Jesus did not come for the righteous but for those in need and poor in spirit who, unfortunately, may be the temporary casualty in this separation. Let us, however, stop judging or demonizing others for anyway " **By their fruits you will know them.**"
3. Let us remember that **the purpose of all life is to glorify God**, and whatever choices we make should be to fulfill that end. **We have a collective responsibility to take care of our flock in bringing them closer to God, not to personalities.**
4. The way to discern is **to spend time with the Lord in prayerful solitude, in complete abandonment to HIS will, and listen in silence as the Lord speaks to your heart.**
5. If you are still undecided and discerning, **remain and stay with Couples for Christ. The truth will set us free in God's time.**

For those of you who have decided to join Frank's group, we respect your decision and wish you well as you move on. You remain as our brothers and sisters in Christ but we appeal to all to stop all these negative emails, accusations and personal attacks on certain leaders and all other conduct unworthy of Christian leaders. **Please give members breathing space and freedom to make their own decision and most importantly, allow the Holy Spirit to move freely within each one - as this is what Jesus would do.**

I am assuring everyone that our Couples for Christ organization will remain steadfast and firm as we remain faithful to our calling as Couples for Christ leaders. Because of the decision of some leaders to join the other group and in accord with International Council guidelines, I am compelled to announce the following **interim CFC USA Council appointments effective immediately**, allowing all of us to move on in continuing God's work that has been interrupted far too long:

1. **Rod Bustos**
2. **Carl Sinsay**
3. **Norman Canete**
4. **Joe Duran**

The remaining three Council members will be appointed shortly. Joe Duran will act as National Director. For those who have opted to stay and have some concerns, please direct your inquiries to me

via email rickyafc@rogers.com or call me at 905 564 8539.

Please be assured that the organizational structure and policies of CFC remain the same.

I call upon you, dear brothers and sisters in Christ in all humility and sincerity, to join the rest of our brethren in storming heaven with our supplications for a smooth passage in this truly difficult and painful stage in our community life. Eventually, His light will dispel the darkness that has engulfed us. Though some of us will end up taking different sides, let us remain as brothers and sisters in Christ, treating each other with love. For **“If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal.”**

May God continue to bless us and our beloved community of Couples for Christ!

Your brother in Christ,

RICKY CUENCA

CFC USA Country Coordinator
