



COUPLES FOR CHRIST

Families in the Holy Spirit Renewing the Face of the Earth

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COUNCIL MEMO:

TO : The CFC Global Family

RE : **LOOKING AHEAD**

Greetings of peace!

The dialogue with the bishops is over. We prayed for unity but it did not happen. But we trust in the Lord's wisdom, as expressed through his bishops, and so we accept whatever He wills. The crisis shook us but now we see what the Lord's message is for us – the crisis has allowed us to set new directions for our community.

It is indeed time to move on. As we face the future, we would like to exhort all of you, our CFC global family, to reflect upon the past events. Not to dwell on them, but to be enriched by them. Not to be afraid but to draw strength from them, from the knowledge that everything happened because of the Spirit working in and around the events.

Our Mandate

We quote from the 5-page statement issued by Bishop Gabriel Reyes, Chairman of the Episcopal Commission on Lay Apostolate: **“In the light of this, the original CFC, with Gawad Kalinga as one of its ministries, retains its recognition as an international private association of the faithful, which was given by the Pontifical Council for the Laity in 2005. It also retains its recognition as a national private association of the faithful, which was given by the CBCP in 1996.”** This is our mandate, this is our call to truly prove ourselves worthy of the recognition we have received. During the dialogue, we committed to work at attaining closer ties with the bishops, our shepherds, and to fully submit to them in matters of faith and morals. We thank them once again for their patience and concern in allowing us to speak from the heart.

The Separation

It is time to fully accept that Bro. Frank Padilla has chosen to separate from the CFC global family. We went into the dialogue hoping for unity but the reality is that the separation of Bro. Frank's group, Foundation for Family and Life (FFL), was already a fait accompli, even from the very day that it was announced (July 30). We wish Bro. Frank Godspeed in his own spiritual journey.

We would also like to reiterate that the separation was between CFC and Bro. Frank's group, FFL. It is not, as has been reported in some news articles, between CFC and Gawad Kalinga. CFC remains

committed to living the fullness of its mission and vision through the 7 pillars. There is no undue focus on GK although CFC is the backbone of GK and each one draws strength and inspiration from the other.

Relating in Love

The Lord's message is clear: Relate in love and respect to each other, even to those who have left us. We ask everyone to avoid negative talk and thoughts and to discuss issues in a balanced, objective manner. We need to accept that discernment is both an individual and a continuing process. We enjoin everyone to respect the decision of those who wish to join FFL. We also request that all of us welcome with open arms those who would choose to come back.

In the face of negative talk and divisive actions, **BE STILL**. But continue to protect our beloved community, not by vengeful actions but by the witness of our love and concern. The one striking thing that we have seen as a community in this crisis is how the Holy Spirit has made His presence felt in our hearts. The God-cidences are too plentiful, the transformation of hearts too compelling to ignore. God has been with us through all these difficulties. He will be with us in the years to come.

The Pastoral Congress

The International Council is committed to address concerns in all our ministries and pillars. We now have the perfect avenue within which to discuss, formulate plans and programs, revisit our mission and look closely at our relationships, particularly with the clergy, in the coming Pastoral Congress. We commit to sift through all the inputs and to discern how to integrate all the inputs into our life and mission. We urge you all to be deeply involved in the conferences leading up to the Pastoral Congress. This month, the various sectors, provinces and countries will be meeting in separate conferences to discuss the Congress topics. The Congress proper will be on November 17 to 18. Pray for all those who will participate in the final sessions and who will draft the roadmap for our community for the next 25 years.

Looking Ahead

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith. For the sake of the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross, despising its shame and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God.”

Hebrews 12:1-2

The worst is over, the best is yet to come. The strength we have gained from the past difficulties and challenges will sustain us for the work that lies ahead of us. Keep the faith. Focus on the Lord of the work. Rejoice in the Lord for He is good. God bless us all.

THE CFC INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL