

OUR CHANGE OF NAME

We, CFC-FFL, are changing our name to Missionary Families of Christ (MFC), effective October 7, 2019. For a full explanation of this name change, please look to the announcement of the Servant General entitled “A Time of Transition.” But essentially there are 7 basic reasons:

- (1) The new name is reflective of our actual identity, of who we are and what we do.
- (2) For unity and uniformity throughout the world, considering our community currently has over 10 different names in different countries.
- (3) For the sake of mission, since some places are closed to us by bishops simply because of the name we carry, as there is the presence of the other CFC.
- (4) To avoid further conflict with the other CFC and the scandal that accompanies such conflict.
- (5) Because the CFC name is tainted, caused by the scandal of the split of 2007. Some pastors are against CFC and consequently CFC-FFL.
- (6) For the sake of future generations, giving them a clean slate unburdened by challenges attached to the CFC name.
- (7) In consideration of our application for recognition from the Vatican, which would not want to have 2 CFCs, which perpetuates and institutionalizes the scandal of the CFC split.

Q&A

Q: Is there a change in our vision and mission?

A: No. Through the years, God has brought us through different stages and made clear to us what is our vision and mission. Now we have a full picture of who we are and what we are called to do. Our charism is evangelization founded on family renewal. We are families on mission.

Q: Is there a change in our pastoral-organizational structure?

A: Basically, no. Our governance and support structures remain the same. One change is in how we look at our Family Ministries. Rather than looking on the main group as the couples and the rest of the family members as ministries, we now consider all as Sections of MFC. So in MFC there are couples, handmaids, servants, singles, youth and kids.

Q: Is there a change in our formation program?

A: The basic formation programs remain the same, as these have to do with the basics of the Christian life. Just as the Bible does not change, and all our teachings are scripture-based, then what God has given us by way of formation through the years is still valid and relevant.

Q: What will the relationship be between MFC and LCSC?

A: LCSC remains as separate and distinct from MFC. But MFC gives LCSC its full embrace, engaging it as its own. MFC is still the backbone for LCSC. MFC is able to do truly massive evangelization and full support to the mission of our Church through LCSC.

Q: Why change the name now after 38 years?

A: The name "Couples for Christ" was right for the beginning, as we indeed reached out to couples, for 12 years before beginning the Family Ministries. But we have outgrown this name, which is no longer fully reflective of our identity and mission. For some years now, who we are and what we are called to do has been made clear. Our charism is evangelization founded on family renewal. We focus on the 2 most important aspects of the life of Christians in this world, and that is family and mission. We are families on mission. It is time for our name to accurately reflect our identity and mission.

Q: Why make a change if the thing is not broken?

A: As mentioned in the reasons above, the CFC name is broken. Further, as expounded in the article below (the cure of the man ill for 38 years), there are infirmities. But even if there were none of these, a reason for a name change is to keep at the cutting edge of rapid developments in the world we do our mission in. This is the case with secular rebranding (see article below). Corporations that stay on top and in front are those that have bold foresight and deep insight.

Q: How will we deal with CFC Global?

A: From the time of the split, we have not engaged in words or actions against CFC Global. Perhaps now that we have a new name, CFC Global will cease its attacks on us. We wish them well, as there is much to be done by all Catholic associations of good will.

Q: How will this impact on any possible reunification with the other CFC?

A: Through the years, the SG had reached out to the very top leadership of CFC Global, a total of four times. He proposed creative unity by having one CFC but with two branches. Then perhaps, if God willed it, an improving relationship could lead to actual unity. Unfortunately, the other CFC rejected the proposal each time. Now there is no more possibility of unification. This is for the better, as there is much work to be done overall, without having to contend with different visions for a unified work.

Q: What will happen to the past of CFC-FFL?

A: Whatever CFC and CFC-FFL has undergone through the years will remain part of our history. Our founding is reckoned from June of 1981. God brought us through many stages in our life and mission, culminating in the fullness of the vision that we have now. We are thankful for all that God has done for us.

Q: Does this change have the approval of the Church?

A: We cleared this name change with our Spiritual Directors. But the decision is really up to us, as a lay ecclesial movement within the Church. We of course will inform the bishops, both in the Philippines and in other countries, from October 7.

Q: Do we need to ask for recognition from the bishops again?

A: We do not believe so, as the basic reality as a lay association is not changed. But if we had to, we believe recognition will be given without any problem.

Q: Did we not say "Once a CFC, always a CFC; CFC forever"?

A: Maybe some brethren were saying that, but we officially did not say that. A CFC-FFL member remains as such only if he/she is actively living out the CFC/CFC-FFL covenant. Membership is not an inherent right, but a privilege, given to those who are willing to live the CFC-FFL way of life and mission.

Q: I have an attachment to the name CFC-FFL. How should this be handled?

A: We understand. Our name is important, and it is not that easy to discard a name that has become dear to us. But perhaps this is one way for us to be clearer about what God's call truly is. The essence of the call is discipleship, following Christ and his way of life. It should not really be about the organization we join, but about who we have become. In fact, as you deny yourself our previous name, and as you embrace the cross of losing that name, then you are more well on your way to authentic discipleship.

Q: Can we put the caption "formerly CFC-FFL"?

A: Though there would be nothing wrong with that, and at times it might be necessary to tell people, by way of establishing our credentials, that we are the former CFC-FFL, it is best if we just move on. Besides, a number of the reasons for the name change has to do with the tension with the other CFC. So let us now go beyond that.

Q: Can we invite those who left after the split back to community when we become MFC?

A: All are welcome to MFC. We intend to do a wide work of evangelization, but not necessarily bringing people to membership in MFC. But there are those whom God would call to a more committed covenant relationship in community. We will do what is best for those people God sends our way.

The cure of the man ill for 38 years

On this 38th year in the life and mission of CFC/CFC-FFL, we are changing our name. Let us reflect on the story of the cure Jesus did, as told in John 5. "One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years." (Jn 5:5). Now while CFC/CFC-FFL has been and is a great blessing to us all and to the Church, in some ways it had also been ill or infirm.

What were these infirmities or shortcomings? Basically this was about not rising up to the extent of God's plan for us.

- * In 1981 CFC was a part of Ligaya ng Panginoon, and as such was like an independent church, functioning apart from the mainstream Church.
- * With the re-founding in 1993, CFC moved closer to the Church, but was still a parallel church, running alongside the mainstream Church but not intersecting.
- * With the restoration of 2007, CFC-FFL proclaimed itself a servant to the Church, moving still closer to the mainstream, but basically still did not have an accurate vision for the New Evangelization.
- * With the introduction of LCSC in 2011, LCSC, and by extension CFC-FFL as its backbone, became a servant of the Church. But CFC-FFL up to now still has not been vigorous in its

embrace of LCSC, such that the mainstreaming of Catholic lay evangelization is not as yet being fulfilled.

Jesus healed the man. “Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked.” (Jn 5:9). With the grace of the name change, there should also be a corresponding significant change in how we go about our life and mission. We must by now have a clear vision, and steadfastly live out that vision.

Later Jesus told the man, “Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you.” (Jn 5:14). To sin is to “fall short.” It is failure to attain to the fullness of what God intends. The times are too critical today, and we as a community are being thrust by God into the fray. We must step up and strive not to fall short. Otherwise, we will not only experience the difficulties and conflicts we are today experiencing, but even worse.

The nature of rebranding

It has been said, “If it ain’t broke, why fix it?” Well, for the CFC name, it is broke, or perhaps, there are infirmities, as mentioned above. But even if not broken, there are many positive reasons for changing our name. A name is changed not necessarily because it is broken (though that too) but in order to keep the entity at the cutting edge.

Consider the secular examples below. Re-branding is done for various reasons: a shift in strategy, providing a fresh start after a scandal, embracing innovation, the current name no longer representative of what they do, the brand becoming stagnant or controversial, for legal or practical purposes, etc. These seem to be our reasons as well!

Imagine changing “Kraft” to “Mondelez” and “Michael Kors” to “Capri Holdings”!

We of course are not secular but spiritual, not corporate but pastoral. Still, Jesus did commend the dishonest steward, saying that “the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light” (Lk 16:8b).

Michael Kors is just the latest company to announce its intention to change its name, following a precedent set by a number of the country's most famous brands. Most frequently, a name change reflects a shift in strategy, but sometimes it can provide a fresh start after a scandal.

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/09/25/michael-kors-is-changing-its-name-to-craft-a-new-identity-so-did-weight-watchers-priceline-and-kraft.html>

THEY EMBRACED INNOVATION.

<https://www.ehostories.com/rebranding-burberry-case-study/>

They cite three main reasons: First, if the name no longer represents what they do, and may even constrict them; second, because the brand has become stagnant or has gotten caught up in some controversy that tarnishes its name; and third, for trademark, legal or more practical reasons, said Naseem Javed, chief executive officer of ABC Namebank Inc., a corporate image and naming consultancy with offices in Toronto and New York.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/small-business/sb-growth/why-would-a-company-change-its-name/article556291/>

When rebranding, make a strong statement and then stand behind it, even if it seems to be bold or unpopular at the time. Your unwavering commitment and dedication is what people will remember, and suddenly, the bold, fresh step you took becomes the norm. Just look at smoking on airplanes and in restaurants to see an example of this philosophy in action.

<https://neilpatel.com/blog/rebranding/>

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For any further questions, please email the SG at fapcfc@gmail.com.

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