

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST

CHAPTER SERVANT'S MANUAL

A. THE CHAPTER

1. Definition

The one body that is MFC is subdivided into smaller bodies called chapters, which are usually located within a distinct territorial area. A chapter is composed of various units, which in turn are composed of various households.

A chapter functions as a "mini-MFC", with its own life, activities and resources. However, every chapter is very much a part of the one MFC, fully integrated into the mainstream of its overall life and mission.

A chapter is established to accommodate the growth in membership in MFC. It is headed by a Chapter Servant with Unit Servants working under him.

The decision on the establishment of new chapters in an area is made by the Area Council (or Area Servant), in consultation with the Area Coordinator.¹

2. Purpose

Dividing MFC into chapters is intended to achieve the following:

a) Effective governance.

A chapter is an administrative section of MFC. This division of MFC into smaller parts allows the different Area Councils (or Area Servants), and ultimately the Servant General, through the Chapter Servants, to better exercise their governance functions.

b) Better pastoral care.

A chapter is a pastoral section of MFC. Even as the whole MFC grows in membership, a chapter's membership will not grow beyond a certain size where people can no longer be adequately cared for. Also, limiting the overall size of a chapter affords its members the opportunity to know one another personally.

c) Identification and development of leaders.

A chapter is the place where leaders and resource persons needed to sustain and support MFC's work are raised. The Chapter Servant looks to increasing and strengthening pastoral resources within the chapter in order to provide such for new chapters to be

¹ An Area Coordinator is one who oversees our life and work in an area, and lives outside of the area.

established, and also to make available such resources for the larger body.

3. Composition

The ideal size for a chapter is between 100 to 150 couples or persons.² However, the actual size of a chapter could range from less than 70 couples/persons to more than 200. In fact, an established chapter would normally add new members within the year, such that its membership during the year would not be fixed but increasing.

A chapter's membership will not just grow without limit. At a certain point of size, a chapter will be split into two.

The limiting factor in a chapter's size is the limited number of members in every household, including unit households and the chapter household. Ideally, a household should have 5 or 6 members or couples excluding the household leaders. The number of members or couples should not be less than 4 nor more than 7.

4. Qualification

Certain resources should be existent within a chapter. A chapter should be able to:

- a) Develop leaders and resource persons for its CLSs.
- b) Field enough leaders who can give teachings (such as in a CLS and MER) and conduct training sessions. It should provide the majority of the speakers in a CLS.
- c) Conduct its own monthly prayer assembly.
- d) Tap members for music and service ministries.
- e) Handle its own Covenant Recollection (CR) and MER.
- f) Support the Sections and Live-Life of MFC.

5. Pastoral structure

- a) The Chapter Servant is a man (for couples, mixed singles and servants) or a woman (for handmaids and single women). For couples, the husband is the "Chapter Servant." The husband and his wife together are the "chapter leaders." As leader, the Chapter Servant's wife exercises special concern for the well-being of the women in the chapter.

²For non -couples, that is, singles, handmaids and servants.

- b) The Chapter Servant himself³ belongs to a household for his own pastoral care and support (an upper household). This household may be led by an Area Servant, or a more senior Chapter Servant, or be a fraternal household together with other seniors, or some other arrangement. The decision rests with the Area Council (or Area Servant).
- c) The Chapter Servant would normally handle a lower household composed of Unit Servants (referred to as the “chapter household”).
 - * The Chapter Servant may include in this household others who are not Unit Servants, for example, a senior Household Servant soon to become a Unit Servant, or anyone deemed appropriate to be in his household.⁴
 - * The chapter household, just like an ordinary household, should not become too large. The upper limit should be about 7 members or couples.
 - * As the chapter grows, prior to being split into two chapters, and as there are more and more new Unit Servants who cannot be accommodated in the chapter household because of size, the Chapter Servant can form another household of Unit Servants to be led by a senior Unit Servant (normally the one being trained to become a new Chapter Servant), who would himself remain in the Chapter Servant’s household.
 - * The Chapter Servant continues to oversee the service of all the Unit Servants.

B. THE CHAPTER SERVANT

1. Role

The role of the Chapter Servant is to be the overall pastor and governor of the chapter.

To better situate his role in the overall authority structure of MFC, we refer once again to the family that is MFC. The familial role of the various heads is as follows:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Role</u>
Household Servant	Big brother
Unit Servant	Father
Chapter Servant	Patriarch

While it is the Unit Servant who is the main pastor of the unit members, the Chapter Servant acts as overall pastor. While the Unit Servant is the one directly concerned with and involved in the lives of his unit members, the Chapter Servant provides overall

³ Or herself.

⁴ Including former leaders who for the moment have no service.

guidance and care. As “father of fathers,” the Chapter Servant has more wisdom and experience, has greater authority, and has direct access to the Servant General through the Area Council (or Area Servant).⁵

2. Qualifications

The qualifications of a Chapter Servant are as follows:

- a) He must have been a Unit Servant, with all the necessary qualifications as such, and he must have done well as a Unit Servant.
- b) He must have a high degree of appreciation for the vision and mission of MFC.
- c) He must have a well-established spirituality -- good prayer life, regular reading and study of the Bible (must have read the whole New Testament at least once) and regular reading of spiritual books (must have read most of the books written by the Servant General).
- d) His family life must be in good order and he can act as a model for being a husband and father (for those who are married).
- e) He must be fully committed to MFC and must assign a high priority to his life and work in MFC.
- f) He must be zealous for God, His work and the brethren placed in his care.
- g) He must be gifted for service and leadership: has exhibited outstanding leadership over people, has the heart of a servant,⁶ has administrative skills.
- h) He must be regularly supporting MFC with his finances, preferably with a tithe.⁷
- i) He must be faithful in attending all his MFC activities.
- j) For those married, he must have a wife who supports him in his service and who herself is an accepted leader among the women.
- k) He must not be addicted to any vice.
- l) He must be able to work under the direction of the Servant Council, and to govern as directed and delegated to do.

⁵ Every member actually can have direct access to the Servant General, who is the servant of all.

⁶ He must live out the principles contained in the book “Servant Leadership” by the Servant General.

⁷ A tithe, by definition, is 10% of one’s income. However, a full tithe is not required.

3. Gifts

The gift level of a Chapter Servant is as follows:

- a) He can call forth respect from others. People tend to follow him easily. His people tend to trust him and open their lives to him.
- b) He can get people to serve faithfully and loyally under him, directly or through the service heads he designates.
- c) He can get people to live the covenant of MFC.
- d) He can get people to grow in commitment to MFC and to one another. He can foster brotherhood and sisterhood.
- e) He has the pastoral wisdom and prudence to help people through many common problems, as well as major decisions and problems.
- f) He can help others to recognize, accept and deal with weakness effectively.
- g) Above all, he can lead people to the Lord, call forth zeal, and help them grow and serve as followers of Christ.

4. Training

The training and exposure of a potential Chapter Servant, aside from what he has received as Household Servant and Unit Servant, would include the following:

- a) Being a team leader for a CLS.
- b) Being a team leader for an MER.
- c) Giving talks (as many of the CLS/CR/MER talks as possible).
- d) Leading a chapter prayer assembly.

5. Duties and responsibilities

The Chapter Servant is responsible for:

- a) The health and vibrancy of life in the chapter.
- b) The vigorous pursuit of MFC's work of evangelization and renewal.
- c) The proper discharge of the duties and responsibilities of Unit Servants and Household Servants.
- d) The support of our Sections and Four Pillars of the LCSC.
- e) Good relations with the Church, especially the parish priest.
- f) The proper and effective implementation of all directives, memoranda, guidelines, etc., from the Area Council (or Area Servant) and/or the Servant Council.

More specifically, the Chapter Servant:

- a) Governs the chapter.
 - * Sees to it that all members are properly integrated in households in particular and in MFC in general.
 - * Appoints new Unit Servants and new Household Servants.
 - * Oversees the work of Unit Servants.
 - * Exercises overall pastoral care of chapter members.
 - * Enforces discipline and good order.
 - * In coordination with the Area Council (or Area Servant), undertakes the regrouping of members, as well as transfers, suspensions and expulsions.
 - * Appoints and supervises an administrative assistant, if any.
 - * Exercises overall pastoral oversight of members' loans with MFC.

- b) Identifies and oversees the development of leaders and other resource persons within the chapter.
 - * Raises up and trains new speakers for our programs.
 - * Ensures proper and adequate training for leaders at all levels.
 - * Plans and carries out training exposure for those being developed as leaders.
 - * Takes occasional inventory of pastoral resources.
 - * Assigns strategic members to proper households for support.

- c) Takes charge of new CLSs, CRs, MERs and follow-up formation programs (may be done together with other chapters).
 - * Decides schedules.
 - * Appoints speakers and teams.

- d) Takes responsibility for the monthly chapter prayer assembly.
 - * Appoints a service team.
 - * Leads the prayer assembly or appoints a senior Unit Servant to lead it.⁸
 - * Checks the attendance and follows up (through the different servants) on those who were absent.

- e) Promotes financial stewardship in members.
 - * Encourages regular monthly contributions by every member.
 - * Follows up specific individuals to urge them on to greater generosity and commitment.

- f) Reports to the Area Council (or Area Servant) as needed or required.

⁸ A senior Unit Servant would lead for training purposes. Such delegation of leading the chapter prayer assembly is done sparingly.

6. Areas of special concern

The Chapter Servant should take particular attention and care for the following areas:

- a) Raising up another Chapter Servant.
- b) Meeting the evangelization targets set by the Area Council.
- c) Chapter members taking responsibility for the financial needs of MFC, especially growing in the area of tithing.
- d) Purging our membership of uncommitted members.

c. **CHAPTER ACTIVITIES**

Being a “mini-MFC,” the chapter has all or most of the elements and resources with which to carry on the life and mission of MFC. Aside from the regular weekly household meetings, the chapter would have the following activities:

1. Evangelization

Every MFC member is to be an evangelizer. We want to encourage our members to do person-to-person, day-to-day, environment evangelization. Our goal should be for each member to bring at least one other person a year to MFC.

The entry point into MFC is the Christian Life Seminar (CLS). The chapter, either by itself or in collaboration with other chapters, should plan out and mount CLSs during the year.

The chapter should try to at least double its membership within the year.⁹

⁹This is based on the principle that every MFC member is to be an evangelizer. If he/she successfully evangelizes and brings in even just one person in a year, then our numbers would double.

2. Monthly prayer assembly

Once a month, MFC members come together for a chapter prayer assembly. Except for those times when there is a joint meeting of the larger MFC, each chapter should arrange for and carry out its own prayer assembly.

Some guidelines for the prayer assembly are as follows:

- a) It can be held at any time and on any day of the month, as decided by the Chapter Servant.
- b) The Chapter Servant leads. Sometimes he may designate one of the more senior Unit Servants to lead, for the purpose of the latter's training.
- c) The prayer assembly would normally be for a period of about 2 hours, with the following ingredients:
 - * Fellowship as brethren arrive; teaching of songs
 - * Worship (about 30 minutes)
 - * Sharings and a short teaching at the Chapter Servant's option (about one hour)
 - * Intercession
 - * Announcements
- d) Attendance is always taken. Attendance sheets should be submitted to the Chapter Servant for his action on absentees.
- e) There should be a tithe table where contributions may be accepted and a receipt given. The collection should be turned in to the MFC office within a week's time.

3. Pastoral Formation program

The MFC Pastoral Formation Program for all members may be held either independently by the chapter or in collaboration with other chapters.

- a) The basic first-year MFC Pastoral Formation Program consists of the following:
 - * Christian Life Seminar (CLS)
 - * Covenant Recollection (CR)
 - * Marriage Enrichment Retreat (MER 1)¹⁰
 - * Evangelization Training (ET)

All MFC members are supposed to take all of the above courses.

¹⁰ There is a counterpart to the MER for singles, handmaids and servants.

b) In addition, MFC offers many other teachings and formation courses, such as the following:

- * Spiritual Gifts (SpG)
- * Foundations for Christian Living (FCL)
- * The Christian and Emotions (CE)
- * Christian Personal Relationships (CPR)
- * Fruit of the Holy Spirit (FHS)
- * Living as a People of God (LPG)

c) Furthermore, MFC offers skills development courses such as the following:

- * Liturgical Bible Study
- * Tongues workshop
- * Prophecy Workshop
- * Healing Workshop
- * Speakers training
- * Music ministry workshop

The Chapter Servant should avail of the above as a way of building up resources not only for the chapter but for MFC in general.

d) The Chapter Servant should also avail of the other resources for formation available in MFC, and strongly encourage his chapter members to:

- * Read, reflect on and discuss in households the writings of the Servant General.
- * Read the books written by the Servant General.

4. Leadership Training

MFC provides leadership training for CLS group discussion leaders (facilitators), Household Servants, Unit Servants and Chapter Servants. The Chapter Servant should see to it that all leaders of his chapter take the training courses required for them. These are:

a) CLS Training

- * Every potential facilitator or assistant should be given training prior to the start of the CLS.
- * This training consists of one half-day session, with three talks.
- * This training is given by the chapter concerned.

b) Household Leaders' Training (HLT)

- * After the CLS, those persons appointed to handle households should be given the first part of the training prior to assuming their positions. This consists of the orientation session with four talks.

- * Thereafter, the Household Servants are to attend the rest of the training, consisting of one session every month over the period of one year. Household Servants appointed at different times during the year may just join these sessions at any point and continue every month until they finish all 12 sessions.
 - * The orientation session (first phase) is usually handled by the respective chapters. The one-year program (second phase) may be handled by the chapter and/or by the area.
- c) Unit Leaders' Training (ULT)
- * Upon appointment of a new Unit Servant, the Chapter Servant should guide him through the Unit Servant's manual. The Unit Servant should understand well his role and responsibilities before assuming his position.
 - * In addition, Unit Servants will undergo training consisting of monthly sessions done over the course of a year. New Unit Servants appointed at different times during the year may just join these sessions at any point and continue every month until they finish all sessions.
 - * These monthly sessions may be handled by the Chapter Servant.
- d) Chapter Leaders' Training (CLT)
- * New Chapter Servants are usually appointed at the start of every year.¹¹
 - * Prior to assuming their new position, Chapter Servants would go through an orientation session handled by the Area Servant or a senior he designates.
 - * In addition, Chapter Servants would undergo training consisting of monthly sessions done over the course of a year. This training is handled by the Area Servant or a senior he designates.

5. Sections and LCSC

The family renewal work of MFC is accomplished through two basic ministries:
Sections and LCSC .

a) The Sections:

- * Missionary Families of Christ - Kids (MFC Kids)
- * Missionary Families of Christ – Youth (MFC Youth)
- * Missionary Families of Christ – Singles (MFC Singles)
- * Missionary Families of Christ – Handmaids (MFC Handmaids)
- * Missionary Families of Christ – Servants (MFC Servants)

¹¹ Thus, at the end of every year, the Area Council and the Chapter Servants look at how membership and the chapters have grown, and decide on establishing new chapters as needed.

- b) The different chapters are to promote and support the development of the two basic sections according to guidelines issued by the Servant General.

6. Others

The Chapter Servant should plan for any other activities that would help form and develop chapter members (intra-household, intra-unit, whole chapter) and chapter life. Some such activities are:

- a) Chapter Eucharistic celebration.
- b) Special teaching nights. Bishops or priests may be invited.
- c) Sports or social activities.

D. **SERVICE MEETINGS**

The Chapter Servant has a regular service meeting with the Unit Servants under him. For couples, it is preferred but optional that the wives also be present.

1. Purpose

The meeting is a service meeting and is undertaken for the purpose of:

- a) Providing pastoral guidance and direction for the Unit Servants in their service.
- b) “Feeling the pulse” of MFC and its members, thereby enabling the Area Servant to be more responsive to goings-on and needs of the body.
- c) Training the Unit Servants in anticipation of greater tasks ahead.

2. Frequency

A monthly meeting is recommended. It may be held in either of two ways. One-to-one, i.e., only between the Chapter Servant and one Unit Servant; or

- a) As a group, i.e., the Chapter Servant together with all the Unit Servants of the chapter. This latter form is preferable. In this case, the Chapter Servant may use one of his three chapter household meetings for this purpose.
- b) The actual frequency depends on the Chapter Servant’s perception and assessment of how the chapter is doing. He may call for additional service meetings, whether as a group or individually, as needed.
- c) In looking to additional service meetings, the Chapter Servant may use the fellowship portion of a regular household meeting as a service meeting.

E. **REGROUPING**

1. Definition

Regrouping is the movement of members from one household to another.

2. Purpose

Regrouping is a pastoral tool to be made use of by the MFC leadership in order to:

a) Build unity and brotherhood/sisterhood.

- * As our members are brought into new households and thus meet other brothers and sisters, the network of interpersonal and fraternal relationships within MFC is expanded, thus building unity and community.
- * Households do not degenerate into “islands” providing support and strength to its members but having no meaningful identification or interaction with the rest of MFC.

b) Streamline the membership geographically.

- * As membership increases, members will be more and more grouped proximate to one another.
- * “Make-do” group assignments made during the year can be corrected.
- * Natural “clustering” is to be promoted.

c) Raise new pastoral resources.

- * Potential leaders can be grouped under a strong Household Servant and put on a “fast track” of spiritual development.
- * Strategic persons (e.g., top government officials or business executives) may be grouped together to hasten spiritual growth.

d) Position MFC for further growth.

- * Establish new or reorganized units/chapters as made necessary by the increasing membership.

3. Timing

- a) In principle, new members will not be subject to regrouping until after one year from the time they joined MFC (after the CLS).¹²

¹² They are following the first -year formation track together with their fellow “batchmates.”

- b) However, there are exceptions, such as:
- * A member transfers residence.
 - * A household is depleted by drop-outs or transfers, such that the remaining smaller number of members are better integrated with other households.
 - * Personal request for transfer by a member, the reasons for which have been evaluated and found meritorious.
 - * Strategic members who are not properly placed in a strategic household.
 - * Others. The principle to follow in handling exemptions to the one-year tenure rule is: Will a movement or transfer now be pastorally beneficial to the person concerned?
- c) The regrouping may be general or limited.
- * General regrouping involves the wholesale movement of members, among households as well as among units/chapters. This could be undertaken at strategic times, e.g., at the start of the year.
 - * Limited regrouping would involve a smaller number of members, and would be undertaken as needed, such as in the case of minor transfers or re-assignments, or when integrating new CLS graduates.

4. Principles of regrouping

The decision to regroup is made by the Chapter Servant. Such regrouping should take into consideration the following:

- a) Tenure.
- * A member would normally stay with their CLS groupmates for one year, and only thereafter be grouped more properly.
- b) Two tracks only.
- * Older members (from one year and older) can be freely mixed together.
 - * Thus there are at any time only 2 tracks, i.e., new members and everyone else.
- c) Geography.
- * Cluster members as much as possible.
- d) Various personal characteristics.
- * Age: The difference between the oldest and youngest member of the household should normally not be more than 10 years.
 - * Socio-economic situation: Avoid extremes, e.g., very rich with the very poor, highly educated with low education level, top executives with clerks, etc. They might have great difficulty relating well to each other, thus negating one aspect of having households.
 - * Spiritual maturity: sometimes those growing fast will be put together on an even faster track.

G. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CHAPTER SERVANTS

Because of our work of evangelization, we expect MFC to have sustained growth. As membership grows, we need to create new chapters. To be able to do so, we need new Chapter Servants.

1. Training

A major task of a Chapter Servant is to pinpoint, nurture and raise another Chapter Servant from among his Unit Servants. In order to do so, the Chapter Servant should look to the following:

- a) That the potential Chapter Servant is being formed and is growing in the different areas mentioned under “qualifications” in #2 of Section B.
- b) That he is assigned different talks in the CLS, CR and MER, with the objective of giving as many of these talks as possible.
- c) That he has taken all the courses required of Unit Servants.

Fast Track

The Chapter Servant should also plan ahead and look at potential Chapter Servants even from among new members. It is possible to raise a new Chapter Servant within 3 years of his joining MFC. For certain anointed men, it could even be less time than that.

2. Appointment

New Chapter Servants are appointed by the Area Council (or Area Servant).

H. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REST OF MFC

As has been said, a chapter is a “mini-MFC,” with its own resources, life and activities. However, a chapter is still very much a part of the one MFC. There ought to be unity and interdependence.

1. Some working principles

- a) The chapter’s life and activities are always to be in accordance with the MFC vision, mission and culture.
- b) It is the Servant General that determines the thrust and direction for every year, and the chapters conform to such. The chapters are under the direct authority of the Servant General, through the Area Council (or Area Servant).
- c) While a chapter would basically look to its own resources to carry out its activities, when necessary it may seek help from other chapters.

2. Chapters do not hold their own funds, unless otherwise allowed by the Servant General. Normally, all contributions of members in an area are held in a central fund, under the oversight of the Area Coordinator.
3. Within the parameters stated above, there is a lot of flexibility that can be exercised by the Chapter Servant in building up the chapter.

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