

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST

UNIT SERVANT'S MANUAL

A. THE UNIT

1. Definition

A unit in MFC is a grouping of several households located within a certain geographical area. The unit is led by a Unit Servant with Household Servants working under him.¹

A unit is set up by the Chapter Servant as the need arises, usually due to an increase in membership and thus number of households.

2. Purpose

The unit is established for the purpose of providing pastoral and service support to Household Servants. This is done so that they can exercise more effective leadership and care over the members of their households.

As such, a unit:

- a. provides for the pastoral care not ordinarily available from Household Servants;
- b. gives MFC a way of effectively supervising and encouraging Household Servants in their service;
- c. provides an environment for greater interaction among MFC members and for intra-household relationship building (e.g. joint household fellowship activities);
- d. enables the seniors² to spot, monitor and develop potential leaders in a systematic and continuing way;
- e. serves as a channel for information dissemination and feedback.

3. Composition

A unit is ideally composed of 4 to 6 households with a total membership of from 20 to 35 individuals or couples. However, a unit's membership may actually range from lower than 20 to more than 35.

¹ Or her, in the case of units in HFL or of female singles.

² Elders of the community.

B. THE UNIT SERVANT

A unit is headed by a Unit Servant, who is appointed by the Chapter Servant. For couples, the husband is the “Unit Servant,” while both husband and wife are the “unit leaders.”

1. The Role of the Unit Servant

- a. He is the pastor of the members who make up the unit. It is he, not the Household Servants, who takes responsibility for overall pastoral care for unit members. He does this basically by delegating the task to the Household Servants.
- b. He supervises the service of Household Servants in his unit. He follows up and gives feedback to Household Servants in the exercise of their responsibilities. He makes sure Household Servants know and implement the Household Servant’s Manual.
- c. He fosters greater love and unity among unit members by thinking up and implementing various activities that promote interaction.
- d. He draws out and encourages potential leaders.
- e. He implements and takes responsibility for all directives, programs, instructions, etc., coming from the Servant General or Area Council (or Area Servant) as delegated to the Chapter Servant.

2. Qualifications of a Unit Servant

The Unit Servant is selected based on the following criteria:

- a. Availability
 - o Must have the time to take on the added pastoral responsibility of handling the unit.
 - o Able to attend Unit Servants’ meetings.
 - o Able to make a regular visitation of households in his unit.
- b. Experience
 - o As Household Servant
 - o As CLS and MER team head or assistant
- c. Formation
 - o A stable and committed prayer life
 - o Family life generally in good order
 - o Has grasped the vision of MFC
 - o Living out the covenant of MFC

- o Priorities in life worked out and in good order
- d. Personal characteristics
- o Has loyalty and commitment to MFC
 - o Has a servant's heart
 - o Has love for the brethren and a desire to see them grow in the Lord
 - o Able to accept direction and correction
 - o Has zeal for the Lord
 - o Has a good reputation
- e. Tenure
- o Member of MFC for two years
 - o Served as Household Servant for one year
3. Attitude of a Unit Servant
- In order to properly function in a way that would truly be helpful to members of the unit, the Unit Servant needs to have some basic attitudes:
- a. He must have the mind and heart of a servant.³ Just like the Lord Jesus, he must come to serve rather than be served. His service should only be an expression of his love for the Lord. He should be humble in his service and put the interest of his members first. He should be obedient to the Lord and to those whom the Lord has put in charge of his service.
 - b. He must take on a shepherd's heart. With Jesus as his model, he is to care for the members in his unit. While he may not have to do this himself directly, he directly supervises the Household Servants under his authority. He is the "father" of the family that is his unit.
 - c. He is to be a model of what a MFC leader should be like in his personal, family and professional life.
 - d. He must learn to serve by and in the power of the Holy Spirit. He must pray for and be open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, allowing most of all for the Holy Spirit to fill him with the gift of *agape* love.
4. Duties and Responsibilities
- a. Ensures proper functioning of the unit.
 - o Makes pastoral visits to different household meetings to ensure that things are

³ He should be very familiar with and starting to live out the principles in the book "Servant Leadership."

- going well and households are being handled properly.⁴
- o Sees to the full integration of members into MFC.
 - o Sees to it that members' lives are in good order.
 - o Promotes faithfulness and monitors attendance at household meetings, chapter prayer assemblies and other MFC activities.
 - o Keeps membership list active, current and updated.
- b. Meets with Household Servants of his unit once a month for a service meeting. This is one of the three lower household meetings that he has.
 - c. Monitors and ensures that Household Servants and unit members attend formation courses required for them.
 - d. Promotes, follows through and monitors the practice of person-to-person evangelization by members.
 - e. Fosters brotherhood/sisterhood among unit members by organizing some activities for the purpose, such as a unit fellowship.
 - f. Handles pastoral problems as referred to him by the Household Servants; refers more serious problems to the Chapter Servant.
 - g. Keeps an eye out for members who can perform vital services for the body, such as giving talks, being CLS facilitators or Household Servants, serving in our different ministries, or those who have other service, administrative, worship or musical gifts.
 - h. Encourages members to support the work of MFC financially; follows up on and gives input to Household Servants regarding their members' financial contributions.
 - i. Takes every opportunity to get to know unit members personally.
 - j. Recommends members who may be in need of some financial assistance to the Chapter Servant.
 - k. With clearance from the Chapter Servant, may initiate transfers of members from one household to another.
 - l. Refers to, consults with, and works out with the Chapter Servant the possible dropping from MFC of a member due to absences or other reasons.
 - m. Reports to the Chapter Servant regularly regarding the status of the unit and of unit members, if necessary even outside of the regular service meetings.
 - n. Attends all meetings of MFC leaders.

⁴It is recommended that he makes a pastoral visitation once a month, that is, visit just one household in a month, and then visit the other households in the unit through the subsequent months.

C. RELATIONSHIPS OF A UNIT SERVANT

1. With Household Servants under him

- a. If the unit is compared to a family, the Household Servant is an older brother⁵ while the Unit Servant is the father⁶ to the unit members. Thus the Household Servant cares for his household members but under the direct supervision of the Unit Servant, who has overall responsibility for the life of unit members.
- b. As pastor, the Unit Servant has the authority coming from the Chapter Servant to back him up. He is to act decisively in guiding, directing and/or correcting the Household Servants in his unit.
- c. The Household Servant focuses on facilitating discussion and developing brotherhood/sisterhood in the household group. He is not expected to exercise pastoral headship over his group, but he would normally encounter certain pastoral challenges that he should refer to the Unit Servant.

Some such areas are:

- o Severe or advanced relationship problems between brethren or between husband and wife.
- o Issues which pastorally affect the unit or across units, e.g., financial borrowing without proper consultation and clearance.
- o Unfaithfulness of members to meetings, requiring a decision to retain or drop a member from MFC.
- o Slander or gossip which erodes relationships within the unit or across units.
- o Serious wrongdoing.
- o Moral and theological questions, such as taxes, bribery vs. extortion, penance, the sacraments, the Rosary, etc.
- o Proselytizing and ecumenical relationships.

The Unit Servant, based on reports during the monthly service meetings, decides on what pastoral issues need his personal attention. This does not mean that he handles it himself (he may instruct the Household Servant to handle it and just guide him) but that he is on top of the situation.

- d. The Unit Servant meets with his Household Servants once a month for a service meeting. The meeting shall dwell on any or all of the following:
 - o Reporting in general on how the different households are doing.
 - o Provision of pastoral guidance and direction in handling of members and of household meetings.
 - o Discussion and resolution of problems or issues brought up by the Household

⁵ Or sister.

⁶ Or mother, for unit households composed of women.

Servants.

- o A check on faithfulness in attendance to household meetings, prayer assemblies and other community activities.
- o A check on members' financial support for MFC.
- o Identification and discussion of training exposure for potential leaders.
- o Administrative matters.

2. With the Unit Members

- a. The Unit Servant is directly responsible for the full integration of unit members into MFC and for their continuing growth in the Lord.
- b. As such, the Unit Servant must take every opportunity and exercise his best effort to get to know unit members individually. The various ways open to him are:
 - o Report of the Household Servants (he should keep notes on individual members).
 - o Visitation of households.
 - o Household activities, apart from the regular meetings, such as fellowships
 - o Unit activities, such as outings, teaching nights, etc.
 - o MFC activities (he should seek them out).
 - o Inviting individually a member for a meal or some other activity outside of CFC-FFL.⁷

3. With the Chapter Servant

- a. The Unit Servant is under the direct supervision and authority of the Chapter Servant, who is the overall pastor and governor of the chapter.
- b. In order for the Unit Servant to himself receive pastoral guidance and also as a way for the Area Council (or Area Servant) to "feel the pulse" of MFC, the Unit Servant needs to be in constant communication and coordination with the Chapter Servant. Such might require at least a monthly service meeting, done either informally (only between the Chapter Servant and the Unit Servant) or formally (Chapter Servant together with all the Unit Servants in the chapter), preferably the latter.

D. PASTORAL CARE

The Unit Servant is the pastor of the members in his unit. While he does not necessarily have direct weekly contact with the unit members, he keeps on top of the situation through the Household Servants. Thus occasional feedback and the regular monthly service meeting are essential.

⁷For couples, the Unit Servant should only go out with the husband or with the husband and wife together. It is the Unit Servant's wife who should relate individually with the member-wife.

Following are areas of pastoral concern:

1. Household.
 - o Are the men relating to one another well? The women?
 - o Are they free to share with one another?
 - o Do they worship freely together?
 - o Do they ever do anything together outside of the household meetings?
 - o How is their general attitude towards MFC?
2. Individual members.
 - o How are they growing in Christ?
 - o Daily prayer? Bible reading?
 - o Relationship with spouse? With children?
 - o Relationship with authority? To Household Servant, to you, overall to MFC?
 - o Growth in financial stewardship.
 - o Problems if any.
3. Time and service of Household Servants.
 - o Do they have enough time for themselves, family, job and service?
 - o How are they experiencing their service?
 - o Are they growing in confidence? Do they need more help?

E. VISITATION OF HOUSEHOLDS

1. Definition

To conduct a visitation is to attend a household meeting of one of the households within the unit.

2. Frequency

The Unit Servant should make a visitation of a household at least once a month. It could be more often as the situation requires and as his time and commitments permit. The monthly visitation means that the Unit Servant goes out once a month, visiting the different households turn by turn. It does not mean that each household will be visited monthly.

3. Purpose

The visitation enables the Unit Servant to:

- a. Get to know all the members personally, including glimpses of their spiritual, personal and social life.

- b. Feel the pulse of the unit in general.
 - c. Whenever appropriate, allow some time for household members to ask questions and to dialogue with him.
 - d. Support the Household Servant both in his personal development as a servant and in his position of authority over the household.
 - e. Appreciate much more the reports given to him by the Household Servants, thus enabling him to give better pastoral inputs.
 - f. Be the focal point of unity in the body, thus averting the isolation of households from the rest of MFC.
 - g. Spot potential leaders.
4. Things to observe
- a. Worship time
 - o Are all the elements present, i.e., singing, praising, thanksgiving, petition, spiritual gifts?
 - o Do all the members participate actively?
 - o Is there good order?
 - o Opening of hearts to the Lord.
 - b. MFC culture
 - o Start and end on time?
 - o Household Servant exercising active leadership?
 - o What is the tone of the meeting?
 - Builds brotherhood/sisterhood.
 - Promotes friendship and unity.
 - Not extremes: too serious/too social.
 - o Respect for and acceptance of Household Servant.
 - o Decency and modesty in clothes.
 - o Honor and respect for one another.
 - o Proper speech.
 - c. Discussion
 - o Content of sharing/discussion.
 - o Openness of members.
 - o Healthy interaction.
 - o Good order.

- d. Fellowship
 - o Simplicity of meal or snack.
 - o Closeness to and affection for each other.
 - o Growing in genuine friendships.

5. Your posture

- a. You are an observer and are not supposed to take over the conduct of the meeting. It is supposed to be a regular meeting, the only difference being your presence.
- b. In your words and actions, convey to the Household Servant that you are there to support him, to help him improve in his service and to care for the members of the unit, not to be a faultfinder or critic.
- c. Whenever appropriate, especially during the fellowship, interact as much as possible with the household members. Get to know them as brothers and sisters.
- d. Give feedback to the Household Servant privately, either during the time for fellowship, or after the meeting (stay behind a little while), or some time soon after the household meeting day.

F. TEACHING PROGRAM IN MFC

As Unit Servant, one of your tasks is to see to it that all unit members take the required teachings in MFC. You have the responsibility for scheduling and monitoring their attendance in these activities.

The teaching program in MFC consists of the following:

- o Formation Program for all members
 - o Leadership Training for leaders
1. The Formation Program is designed to help members grow as Christians in their personal, family and corporate lives. It consists of the following:

First year

- o Christian Life Seminar (CLS)
- o Covenant Recollection (CR)
- o Marriage Enrichment Retreat (MER 1)
- o Evangelization Training (ET)⁸

⁸Normally given at the end of every year to all new members, those who joined MFC during the year. This is in preparation for the new round of CLSs that would be mounted the following year.

Second year

- o Spiritual Gifts (SG)
 - o Others⁹
2. MFC offers many other courses that are optional. Members are encouraged to avail of these as well.
3. Leadership Training is designed to equip members for service in MFC. For unit members, it is composed of:
- a. CLS Training
 - o Given to those tapped to serve in a CLS.
 - o A half-day session with 3 talks.
 - o Handled by the chapter.
 - b. Household Leaders' Training
 - o Household Servants go through a one-year training program, normally composed of thirteen separate sessions.
 - o The orientation session, composed of 4 talks, is given right before assuming their positions, normally at the end of the CLS.
 - o The other 12 sessions are conducted once a month over the course 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.
 - o These 12 sessions may be handled by the chapter and/or the Pastoral Formation Office (PFO).
 - c. Unit Leaders' Training
 - o These are monthly sessions over the course of one year.

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⁹For the second and subsequent years, refer to the latest formation track given by the PFO for the other courses.