

FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES 45TH ANNIVERSARY - 2013 - PRESIDENT'S HISTORY





It is the year....**2013**. The Forty-Fifth Anniversary of the Federation of Christian Ministries. It seemed an appropriate time to gather some FCM history from past and present Presidents of FCM. With the help of Deborah Burke, FCM Newsletter Editor, who gathered information from past Diasporas, and the response from the letter sent to the presidents, which appears on the next page, we came up with the following history. I hope you will enjoy these personal words from our presidents.

The 2013 FCM Assembly was held July 12-14 in Essington, Pennsylvania a suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was hosted by the FCM Northeast Region with Vice Presidents Patricia and Paul Stubenbort and their committees planning the assembly. The title of the assembly was "Spirituality The Heart Of Ministry". Patricia and Paul created a DVD of FCM History that brought down the house with cheers.

At the assembly in July is when the newly elected FCM members are introduced to the membership and begin their elected or appointed term of office after the assembly. Tom Cusack, Treasurer and myself Antoinette Marold, Chairperson, were ending two terms of office (six years) Tom Stricker, Chairperson, Ken Knapp, Treasurer, and Bea-Broder Oldach, Secretary were beginning their terms on the Executive Committee. Michaelita and Tom Quinn, Presidents were beginning their sixth year as presidents. A complete list of the 2013-14 Circle Members can be found at the end of this report.

The letters in this report have either been sent by hardcopy or email to be published in this History.

Thank you to all who made a contribution.



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**Antoinette M. Marold, Chairperson**

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Phone: 440.232.6212

To: Past President of The Federation of Christian Ministries,  
From: Antoinette Marold, FCM Chairperson

Dear FCM Past President,

The Circle of Directors have been working on gathering a history of FCM. We thought perhaps we could have a short video presentation recorded or an audio; however, that would include just a few members telling the history of FCM.

While deciding how this history would be recorded, the Circle was working on a redetermination by the IRS as a Community of Churches. The final request of the IRS was additional information regarding FCM's past history. Bill and Mary Manseau compiled documentation highlights and recorded them on a disc. They did an excellent job. We sent the disc along with additional past FCM information to the IRS. I am happy to report that FCM was awarded the request from the IRS and is now a Community of Churches.

Because we would like this history to be personalized by those serving in office during these past 45 years, we would like to have your input.

Would you please send us a history of the time that you served as President(s). The history should include the names of your Circle members (if you have their names ) and the Executive Committee along with the year-dates that you served. Please share with us your trials and well as your triumphs. Anything of interest, as well as photos. What your vision and mission was during your term. Make it as personal as you would like. Give us the facts. Suggested length is one to ten pages.

I hope you will decide to leave this legacy for future FCM members. If you need help putting the information on a disc, you can send it to me, [chairperson@FCMmail.org](mailto:chairperson@FCMmail.org) or via snail mail to Antoinette Marold - P.O. Box 46738 - Bedford, Ohio 44146 and I will record it for you and send you a copy.

Please send your information by May 31, 2013. Thank you in advance for considering this important history. When the project is finished we will send you a copy of the history for you to enjoy.

Wishing you many blessings,

Antoinette Marold, Chairperson  
Federation of Christian Ministries

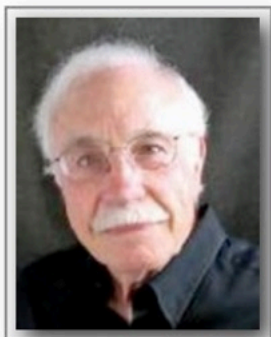
[www.federationofchristianministries.org](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org)



## FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

### PRESIDENTS

1969 - 1971	Eugene Bianchi
1971 - 1973	Bernard McGoldrick - Deceased
1973 - 1976	William Manseau
1976 - 1980	Gerald and Marita Grudzen
1980 - 1984	Paul and Susana Schlesinger (Paul Deceased)
1984 - 1988	Mary Jane Schutzius
1988 - 1992	Joseph Ruane
1992 - 1996	William Leahy - Deceased
1996 - 1998	Tom Leonhardt and Carolyn Horvath
1998 - 2004	Bridget Mary Meehan
2004 - 2008	Clem DeWall and Eileen Mackin
2008 - 2014	Tom and Michaelita Quinn



## FIRST PRESIDENT of SPFM/FCM

Eugene Bianchi 1969 - 1971

I've been asked by Antoinette Marold to reflect in a personal way on my memories of being in the original group of founders. Much of our early history is covered in William Power's *Free Priests* (1992). Also Bill Manseau recently sent out a CD of our earliest documents. And I wrote a memoir *Taking a Long Road Home* (2011) that covers my first involvement with SPFM.

My first Ah-Ha experience about all this was on a bus trip from Manhattan to Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania to give a talk on ecumenism in 1966. I was a young Jesuit priest finishing up doctoral work at Columbia and Union Theological Seminary and serving as an assistant editor of *America*. I was reading Will Herberg's *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* when I had a "vision" that actually moved me emotionally. Yes, quiet tears. Vatican II had ended only a year before and many windows seemed to be opening. I imagined starting a new kind of religious order. Others had done it. Why not me? This order would have men and women working together equally in the spirit of the Gospel. It would be made up of married priests and lay people without the divisions of clericalism.

For the next two years, I taught religious studies at Santa Clara University in California. During that time I had more contacts with Protestant friends at Stanford like Robert McAfee Brown, John Duryea, the Catholic pastor at St. Anne's Parish in Palo Alto and others in campus ministry there like Methodist Barbara Troxell and Donna Myers Ambrogi who would soon marry Tom Ambrogi, a Jesuit theologian and friend. In San Jose I got to know the Grail community and its women ministers, especially Marie Mohr (now Grandstaff) who worked with me to set up a Center for the Study of Contemporary Values at SCU.

The period of the late Sixties and early Seventies was a major transition time for priests and nuns who were wondering about their traditional vocations and new options. Many wanted to continue some form of ministerial service but not necessarily as celibates. For example, the woman who would become my first wife left her order with five others to form a community of their own, called Fides. By 1967 I was questioning the soundness of religious life for me. Another Ah-Ha experience was seeing an older priest in cassock and biretta reading his breviary on the way to breakfast on a foggy morning. I had a powerful sense that I could not or even should not be doing that when his age.

Among the reasons for leaving the Jesuits and the clerical priesthood that I shared in writing with friends was wanting to pioneer new ways of living as a priest. My early

thoughts were to keep on saying Mass and doing other pastoral things even though the official church would disapprove. No doubt the bold spirit of the times was at work in civil rights and women's movements. Acting outside the rules could be interpreted as a kind of civil disobedience and a following of one's conscience. Soon I would write an article in *Commonweal* along these lines; I also developed a column in *The National Catholic Reporter* that kept progressive themes alive.

I heard about the meetings in St. Louis in 1967 that were agitating for some kind of organization of former priests. I can't remember my first meeting with Tom Durkin, a married priest from Philadelphia, who would become the first secretary of SPFM. Tom did very important communication work for the group in its first period. I probably met Tom in the California Bay Area where he and Gail had moved. After our wedding in July 1969, Cathryn and I flew to Boston to pick up my car which had been driven there by a former nun friend from Atlanta. In Dorchester we met Bill and Mary Manseau. Bill was and has remained a remarkable leader in SPFM/FCM, and Corpus. Shortly after we met Gerry and Marita Grudzen in Yonkers; the latter have been well-known, creative persons in FCM.

I recall the organizing meeting in Detroit organized by Pat Best, where I was chosen as President of SPFM and Rocco Caporale became Vice President. Rocco was an Italian Jesuit who taught Sociology at St. John's University in New York City. Rocco was spirited and very capable with a broader view of the Catholic Church. He would eventually marry an actress in NYC. Our main meeting that year was our first convention in a church renewal center in Washington, D.C. I wrote a vision statement for that event which still seems to read well in Bill Power's book, pp. 50-51.

In 1969 at the Washington meeting, we were thinking in daring ways, but not as broadly as we would understand ourselves a few years later when we explicitly opened the movement to women ministers and began the certifying process. In D.C. one could sense the growing exodus of priests from clerical structures, many of them marrying and most looking for jobs. So the first SPFMers had their hands full. Some had difficult issues with their families of origin. Yet stirring new thought was going on at Catholic U with Charles Curran losing his professorship over his stance on birth control. In this context, I wrote:

"The members of the Society understand themselves as living in the historical tradition of Catholicism. They do not separate themselves from this church, but rather they desire to serve humanity through their church tradition in new and creative ways. In a time of ...transition....the Society intends to be a source of fraternal support and inspiration to priests, particularly those who elect to minister outside official structures."

Two things were clear at this time. We still thought of ourselves as married and unmarried Catholic priests. We were hoping to open dialogue with bishops and other Catholic organizations. We did have a few meetings with a bishops committee at a national episcopal gathering as well as with the superiors of religious orders of men.

Most of us conducted liturgies in homes and performed other clerical services. I spoke about our movement to the Catholic Theological Society of America and to a national meeting of priests councils, led by Frank Bonnike who would soon leave and marry. On Long Island I met with Cardinal Suenens of Belgium who was one of the great progressives of Vatican II who was sympathetic to a married priesthood. We should also note that when a long range history of all this is written in the future, a time when the RCC will have both married priests and women priests, SPFM will be seen as an inspirational first for all subsequent groups not only in the U.S. but in the world.

We knew that such a major change in the RCC would be an uphill slog. Yet the period of Paul VI was closer to Vatican II and less rigid in its opposition. Vatican II-type bishops were still serving many dioceses. Under John Paul II and Benedict a much more conservative episcopate would dominate the church. A litmus test for becoming a bishop consisted of absolute obedience to the Vatican on all teachings. Another aspect of this opposition came from our original religious orders. We had broken ranks and gone off on our own while giving up on celibacy. In those early years of the exodus, we were often enough seen as quitters or renegades or givers of scandal to the faithful. This attitude would gradually change over the years with our orders of origin even though the official church hardened its opposition. Lay people and nuns were much more open-minded toward "defectors." Nuns have been leading the church in the Gospel spirit for a long time. Certainly since Vatican II.

Here I want to mention someone who was at the Washington meeting and became a great supporter of both SPFM/FCM and later Corpus: Mary Lou Zefuss. Mary Lou was a loveable, bright "original" from the Pittsburgh area who had happy and unhappy experiences with priests in her life. Another very important person in the early movement was Joe Burns, a priest from Brooklyn, whom I may have met in these earliest encounters, but I clearly recall him and wife Audrey at the Berkeley convention in 1970. Joe would serve as secretary after Tom Durkin and also as Vice President. I also remember Vicki and Romeo Di Benedetto at the latter meeting while on their honeymoon. They had also attended the first convention in Washington in 1969. Romeo became a minister at large for the organization and publisher of the SPFM newsletter, "Diaspora," while Rocco Caporale was its first editor.

The earliest years of SPFM/FCM combined hope for serious renewal of ministry with many moments of discouragement. The first members were relatively young priests setting out on major changes of direction. They were marrying and seeking employment with very limited resources. They were starting to raise families. They faced opposition from the official church and sometimes from their own families. When I think back on it, I'm amazed that our group lasted as long as it has, and has changed over the years to better meet new challenges. Two other pioneers in the movement are Charley Sullivan and Pauline Fox. Charley was a priest from Alabama who travelled with Pauline to the first convention in D.C. They volunteered to act as ambassadors at large, driving their old camper around the country and living in great simplicity. They have also spent much of their lives in prison ministry and peace movements.

SPFM/FCM was blessed with leaders who picked up the baton, as it were, when the first leaders were flagging in energy. So it was that Bernie McGoldrick was elected second president for the 1971-73 term. He and wife Cappy attended the Berkeley convention in 1970. Bernie, a former Jesuit and professor of Political Science at Fresno State University, shifted the group's attention from theological considerations to ways of understanding and implementing political change in the church. He also wanted to enlarge the movement in international ways. William Powers called McGoldrick's effort as an attempt at "political convergence," trying to rally groups with similar interests for renewal to act more cohesively.

To my mind, the most important transition in the life of SPFM/FCM happened in 1973 on Staten Island when Bill Manseau and Gerry Grudzen became president and vice president of the organization. The name change to FCM signified an ever broader grasp of ecumenical ministry beyond the RCC and welcomed women to every form of ministry. It signaled also the beginning of our certification program for ministers. Our organization could be seen as a precursor of today's women's ordination movement in the RCC.

Now in my eighties, I feel privileged to have been part of our movement and I have been blessed by it both as a teacher of religious studies at Emory University and in the development of my own spirituality. The latter is expressed in my book of poems, "Ear to the Ground: Poems from the Long View" that will appear shortly. The intellectual and pastoral concerns of FCM are expressed in the poems that often do not use traditionally religious language. Spirituality, east and west, and in nature of which we are a part, is suffused with Spirit waiting to be experienced in our joys and sorrows.

Gene Bianchi  
Athens, GA  
May 4, 2013

## **SECOND PRESIDENT**

**Bernard McGoldrick - 1971 - 1973 (Deceased)**

Some history on Bernard's involvement in FCM is mention in both the essay by Eugene Bianchi and William Manseau





### THIRD PRESIDENT

William Manseau 1973 - 1976

William J. Manseau, D.Min.  
President, the Fellowship of Christian Ministries  
Continuing the Society of Priests for a Free Ministry  
September 1973 – September 1976

I was elected as President of the Fellowship of Christian Ministries Continuing the Society of Priests for a Free Ministry on Labor Day weekend 1973 on the basis of a proposal entitled: SEEDS, an acronym for Service, Enablement, Education, Development and Spirituality I had presented to the national conference of the Society of Priests for a Free Ministry (SPFM) meeting that weekend at Mount Manresa Retreat Center on Staten Island, New York. This proposal had been developed in response to calls to disband by the founding president, Eugene Bianchi and SPFM's Executive Secretary, Thomas Durkin. As a Society of Priests we were at a turning point. My predecessor, Bernard McGoldrick, a sociology professor, had attempted to bring about a convergence of the various Roman Catholic reform groups both nationally and internationally without success. He saw our situation through the political lenses of a struggle for power and tried to gear up for it but the tide of renewal had begun to roll back as the institution sought to protect itself from the undertows of structural change and shifting back towards the center moved to the right. Rosemary Ruether, a formidable progressive if there ever was one, urged us and other liberal groups in 1971 to develop a "strategy for survival." I agreed with Rosemary.

I wrote: "As we in the Northeast see it our charge today is not only to be true of our evangelical vocations but also to be sensitive to the great variety of head-changes that have occurred and will continue to occur within our own household of faith, the Roman Catholic Communion. It will produce no good to be strident. We would rather set about the tasks involved in providing for nourishment and shelter during the seasons of dialogue and growth so that our ministry and the ministries raised up by the Spirit may not be found wanting of substance and vitality.

"We are, we feel, a handful of seeds in God's hands. He is the Sower (Mt. 13:3). He asks only that we be faithful and act responsibly according to our capabilities.

"We propose then that we be what we are, that we stand firm in the fellowship of the Roman Catholic Communion, opposing Peter and others to their face when need be and encouraging him and our other brethren with the unique gifts which are ours individually and corporately through ministry. (Gal. 2:11; I Cor. 12:4-31).... It appears

that for the time being the official primary care ministerial office of the Church is in dry-dock. Those who hold it are not inclined to struggle openly for its liberation for a variety of reasons.

“Theologically, it appears to us, that it is now commonly accepted that the ministerial powers of Christ are not encapsulated in the Papal, Episcopal or Sacerdotal institutional offices in the way previously believed, but are there radically as they are present in the ministerial activity of any who act faithfully in the name of Christ. (In this regard I would recommend to you Raymond Brown’s interesting little book **Priest and Bishop, Biblical Reflections** published by Paulist Press in 1970.) This is not to deny that the powers of Christ as exercised by those aforesaid officers contain a certain unitive nuance which is characteristically unique in juxtaposition with that unitive impulse present in all Christian ministry. The charge to Peter still resonates in our hearts and encourages us.

“What is required of us now is to join with other men and women in demonstrating especially within the household of the Roman Catholic Communion the universality of power in the Christian ministry as exercised by any man or woman called to it by God. That and that alone at this moment in history appears to us to be the approach which not only will enable the Gospel to be celebrated widely with power, but could also sufficiently flood the dock to free the captive ship once again.

“Accordingly, we propose that the Society become in name publicly what it has already become in fact, a national association of principally Catholic men and women who are individually or in communities seeking to grow in the discipleship of Christian ministries. In order to emphasize our primarily local and regional character with the dimensions of plurality and diversity which these words connote we recommend that the Society be known as a conference. In summation we propose that the Society become the National Catholic Ministerial Conference and that it collaborate in the development of such conferences in other countries as it is able and where it is invited to do so.”

I proposed a five pronged program of action involving service, enablement, education, development and spirituality to serve the communities in which we lived, enable through certification and authorization our own public ministers representing our community, educate the public and ourselves, develop house churches as local expressions of a Catholic Church and root our lives in a rich and vibrant spirituality attentive to human needs. To do so meant that our communities would be necessarily ecumenical, representative as they would be of the plurality and diversity which our Vatican II experience had generated in us.

In the debate which followed my presentation Terry Dosh made a proposal, later accepted by the assembly, that our association take as its name the Fellowship of Christian Ministries as it incorporated three biblical terms in the New Testament which carried the essence of what we were to be: Koinonia or community, Diakonia or service, and Marturia or witness. These terms would express our mission as an ecumenical community of primarily Catholics initially intent on serving the needs of the world in the

company of our Christian brothers and sisters. The members of our ecumenical FCM community would be free to maintain their memberships in their original households of faith. Our models here were the Taize community in France which has both members of the Protestant Churches of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Reformation and Roman Catholics and the United Church of Christ in the USA in which I had Dual Standing as a Roman Catholic through its provision for ecumenical ministries.

The 1973 convention passed a resolution calling for an updating of the Society of Priests for a Free Ministry Constitution and By-Laws to express and enable the changed consciousness of the society and its new name. A Ministerial Competency Credential Committee was established by the Convention to implement the FCM Ministerial Certification program for both men and women. The Assembly decided that during the transition we would be known as The Fellowship of Christian Ministries Continuing SPFM. Mary and I returned home to Dunstable, Massachusetts from the convention and began the process of relocation to Chicago, IL where I had won a national competition for a teaching fellowship at Chicago Theological Seminary which began that fall.

Once established in Chicago I met with the professional leadership of the National Federation of Priests Councils who invited me to attend their House of Delegates Convention in San Francisco as an observer which I did in March 1974. There I listened to a letter to the Convention from Archbishop Jean Jadot, the Apostolic Delegate to the USA which called for a Year of Reconciliation in the Church promulgated by Pope Paul VI in which Jadot stated "In our zeal we all make mistakes..." The words had a fresh sound to them, I thought. Fourth on the list of NFPC's eleven priorities for the year was helping to develop appropriate employment within the Church for laicized priests who desired such service. FCM was seen as the voice of the married priesthood. I met Fr. Scotty McDonald, Director of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office of Priestly Life and Ministry and Bishop Grady of Chicago, the Chair of the Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry.

My work at the Chicago Theological Seminary opened doors to the Protestant community in Chicago and my doctoral project entitled the Chicago Generating Community involving what I termed "Trans Traditional Clergy" brought me into relationships with five different denominations in Chicago to form an experimental community of "tent making", disestablished clergy to explore emerging forms of Christian life and witness from four Protestant denominations (UCC, Episcopal, Presbyterian and Methodist) and the Roman Catholic, with the Association of Chicago Priests representing the Roman Catholic denomination. This introduced the Fellowship of Christian Ministries to a variety of Protestant denomination executives.

I submitted an unsuccessful four page, single spaced funding concept proposal to establish an FCM national resource center for trans traditional ministries to the Lilly Endowment, Inc. of Indianapolis after consulting with a Lilly Endowment staffer who was a married priest. We planned and hosted the FCM August 30 – September 2, 1974 Convention at North Central College in Naperville, IL after having initially secured

Loyola University of Chicago as our site only to be turned down by the University President. The 1974 Convention featured the Rev. Charles M. Olsen, a Presbyterian Minister and Director of Project Base Church in Atlanta, GA who presented on house churches and other small faith communities to help us develop "generating communities" throughout the USA. John Schwarz, a married Jesuit, delivered a major paper on the "worker priest" tradition within Catholicism. Sr. Alla Bozarth-Campbell, one of the original eleven Episcopal women priests in the USA, read a theological paper of Rosemary Ruether's on ministry and led a panel of women reactors. The convention developed guidelines for an enabling program for women who are seeking new ministerial roles. Several women concelebrated the Sunday Eucharist with the Fellowship's officers and Rev. Olsen. The Convention ratified the new Fellowship of Christian Ministries Constitution and By-Laws making it a religious society whose purpose is to worship God and to contribute in a concrete and experimental way to a far reaching renewal of the Church's ministry with a greater sense of collaboration between ordained and non-ordained ministers of the Gospel, and a greater awareness of masculine and feminine expressions of ministry as well as an ever broadening ecumenicity of purpose."

The FCM Board of Directors for the program year 1973-1974 included: William J. Manseau, President (Dunstable, MA); Robert and Lu Duryea, National Executive Secretaries (Los Gatos, CA); Gerald and Marita Grudzen, Vice Presidents (White Plains, NY); Mary Lou Zehfuss, Treasurer (Sewickley, PA); Regional Vice Presidents were Dr. Terrence L. Dosh (San Pedro, CA), John Muggivan (San Antonio, TX); Jack and Mary Lang (Louisville, CO); Gilbert Romero (Dayton, OH); Matthew and Kathleen Robbins (Atlanta, GA); Lee and Carol Ann Breyer (Greenbelt, MD); Raymond LaCasse (Concord, NH); Thomas and Ann Weir (Philadelphia, PA); Representatives At Large: Dr. Bernard McGoldrick (International); John & Lu "Dee" Czaplewski (National); Editor Diaspora, Gilbert Romero; Advisory Board: Gregory Baum, Eugene Bianchi, Frank Bonnike, Rocco Caporale, Bernard Cooke, James Megivern, Rosemary Ruether, Eugene Schallert, SJ.

#### FCM 1974 – 1975 Program Year

The 1974 FCM Annual Convention held in Naperville, IL from August 31 to September 2 amended the SPFM Constitution in order to describe ourselves as a religious society to provide a rationale based in civil law for our new ministerial certification program. We also elected the following officers and Board members for the period October 1974 to September 1975 since we were elected for one year terms. William J. Manseau, President (Chicago); Gerald and Marita Grudzen, Vice Presidents (White Plains, NY); Peter and Marie Brennan, Secretary-Treasurer (West Hempstead, NY); Regional Vice Presidents: Terrence L. Dosh (Minneapolis, MN), Charles Ara (Cerritos, CA), William Nerin (Oklahoma City, OK), Jack and Mary Lang (Louisville, CO), William Hogan (Chicago, IL), David Cocoran (Niles, IL), James Tuohy (Huntsville, AL), Lee and Carol Ann Breyer (Greenbelt, MD); Harold and Verlyna Furblur (Boston, MA); Thomas and Ann Weir (Philadelphia, PA); Thomas Durkin (Berkeley, CA); Representatives at Large:

Charles Olson (Atlanta, GA), John and Lu "Dee" Czaplewski (Winona, MN); DIASPORA Editor, Gilbert Romero (Dayton, OH); Advisory Board: Gregory Baum, Eugene Bianchi, Frank Bonnike, Rocco Caporale, Bernard Cooke, Rosemary Ruether, George W. Webber.

The priority focus for the 1974 – 1975 program year was the development and implementation of the FCM Ministerial Certification Program. The major event for this priority was the initial certification on October 12, 1974 of Harold Furblur of Boston. On October 14, 1974 the following members were also certified, Gerald and Marita Grudzen, Marita being the first non ordained person to be certified. On October 15, 1974 William J. Manseau and Peter Brennan were also certified. The first certification committee consisted of William J. Manseau, Gerald Grudzen, Marita Grudzen, Peter Brennan, Marie Forcier, Harold Furblur, Emma Walsh, Sean Walsh, Mary Manseau, Lee Breyer and Carol Breyer. The document from which the above was quoted was signed during the evening celebration of the Eucharist because we consider certification to have a sacramental sense. During an afternoon recess Sean Walsh provided us with an expert tour of D.C. We visited with the newly elected officers of the National Association of the Laity who were completing their annual convention in D.C. It was good to see old friends.

In January of 1975 I wrote to our FCM member Frederick J. McCarthy who was a lawyer in Texas to tell him that we had mailed our amended constitution to the Secretary of State in Texas where we were incorporated and wondered if what we had done was sufficient to change our IRS category. I had discovered that there had been two different sets of Bylaws for SPFM and asked him to help us clear up our understanding and status if need be. Our executive committee had voted to establish FCM in a number of states around the country for whatever convenience that might have for our ministerial certification program. As it turned out, Fred did provide direction for us but for some unknown now reason we did not do as he recommended scattered as we were across the country. Many years later we were to learn that our effort to inform the IRS of our new legal identity was not satisfactory and we continued to be identified as a "religious organization" and not as a "church."

Our 1975 annual convention was held at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, MI on the theme of House Church and was hosted by the Plymouth House Church led by married Jesuit John C. Schwarz. We envisioned a national network of FCM house churches. John Schwarz who lived in Ann Arbor, MI agreed to serve as a Regional Vice President along with William Hogan a priest in canonical good standing in the Archdiocese of Chicago who drove a taxi and saw himself as an inner city worker priest. He was the President of the Association of Chicago Priests, which I also joined while we lived in Chicago. I was able to gain their support for our 1974 convention and 550 ACP members received an FCM convention brochure with a covering letter from Fr. Hogan encouraging their participation. Also serving as a Regional Vice President was the Rev. William Nerin, the founder of the floating community of John XXIII in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and an early advocate of the idea for a national ministerial certification

program which I adopted and developed based on what I had learned during my experience with the United Church of Christ in Massachusetts through the Dunstable, MA Ecumenical Experiment and its Free Church approach to the ordination and authorization of clergy.

J.J. Kaufmann of Honolulu, Hawaii also was elected as a Regional Vice President. He later would be responsible for guiding John Dunnigan, a married priest of the Diocese of Buffalo, to contact our FCM Executive Committee. J.J. met John in Hawaii through ecumenical contacts while John worked as an instructor for Youth With a Mission, an evangelical missionary program following his marriage in Korea. John had married a Korean nun while working as a lend lease priest in the slums of Korea as a missionary and had become a member of the Catholic Church of the East which not only had married priests but married bishops and had been led to become one and offered his services to the married priests movement through FCM. I met John in Phoenix to explore options later that year when he had returned to the mainland.

Sean and Emma Walsh of Hyattsville, MD were elected Regional Vice Presidents for the Washington, DC area at the 1975 annual convention. Sean was a married Augustinian priest whom I had met in 1973 at the Mount Manresa Retreat House SPFM Convention when SPFM voted to become the Fellowship of Christian Ministries. He and I met in 1976 with Bishop Warren Boudreau of Beaumont, Texas who chaired the Committee for Outreach of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops as representatives of the married priests community in the USA to ask him to carry our concern for a married priesthood to the annual meeting of the Roman Catholic bishops.

My wife Mary and I organized the 1976 FCM National Convention in Washington, DC where I had accepted employment with the National Association of Community Health Centers in 1974. Our focus was on social justice. Fr. William Callahan, S.J. cofounder of Priests for Equality and the Quixote Center was one of our keynoters. Gerald and Marita Grudzen who had been elected President-Elect in 1975 became the new FCM Presidents and initiated the office of a Dual Presidency following the 1976 convention. My wife, Mary, was elected Secretary-Treasurer and I became Chair of the Board.



## FORTH PRESIDENTS

Gerald and Marita Grudzen  
1976-1980

FCM Co-Presidency of Gerald and Marita Grudzen 1976-1980  
National Vice Presidents for FCM were Mary Catherine Dooley and  
Sharon Reyes and Bill Manseau, Chairperson

At the beginning of our presidency we were living in White Plains, NY and we had numerous FCM events at our home including both local events as well as national board meetings.

Marita and I had established the White Plains Religious Studies Center at Grace Episcopal Church in White Plains in affiliation with New York Theological Seminary. Marita was active with a Women's Center in White Plains directed By Dorothy Payme, Dean of Continuing Education at New York Theological. I was working as a counselor at a high school located in Grace Episcopal Church with whom I was also affiliated as part of an ecumenical team ministry.

Marita Grudzen was the first women certified for ministry by FCM during our term of office. At one of the early board meetings during our presidency in December of 1976, we had present Bill and Mary Manseau, Terry Dosh, Joe O'Rourke, Ron Hart, Bob Springer, SJ (FCM Advisor), Dorothy Payne from New York Theological and New Berith Women's Center in White Plains, Rocco Caporale, Patrick and Christin Lore-Kelly and Ray Kelly. Patrick Kelly was the founder of Priestly Ministries USA and Ray Kelly was active in promoting dialogue with the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers with former members.

In August of 1977 three FCM members, Ray Kelly, Greg Rienzo and myself, helped to form an affiliate of Maryknoll, Maryknoll in Diaspora which was featured in a *New York Times* article.. At the December, 1976 board meeting we discussed the upcoming convention which would be held the following year in Minneapolis/St. Paul area coordinated by Terry and Millie Dosh. Mary Alice Warner was one of the first Protestant women to join FCM and she completed a Master's Degree in ministry with us at the White Plains Religions Studies Center.

In 1978 Marita and I decided to undertake a journey around the United States with our two daughters, Corita and Simone, to meet with FCM members in over 20 cities and complete our missionary travels in San Jose, CA. This journey was supported by a number of FCM members including Bill and Ann Powers where we began it at their home in Long Island. During this three month sojourn we visited many FCM members at their homes who gave us hospitality. Many were involved in experimental ministries, small community development and prophetic social justice actions. Our daughters were able to meet and interact with other children in the over 20 cities that we visited. At the end of the journey, I wrote my analysis of the present ecclesial situation in which we found ourselves entitled *New Age Catholicism*(1979)

I will bring a copy of the book to the FCM convention in Philadelphia as part of the historical record along with a vision statement that I wrote for FCM at the time of 1976 FCM convention held at St. Joseph's Priory in Washington, DC.

The FCM convention in 1978 was held in Phoenix, Arizona at the Franciscan Renewal Center.

The convention coordinators were Sharon and Adrian Reyes who resided in the Phoenix area.

Sister Allah Bozarth Campbell, one of the original Episcopal women priests, led the liturgy with

several FCM women at her side including Marita Grudzen and several Hispanic women from *La Comunidad* base community in San Jose. This community had been founded by Anthony and Phyllis Soto. Anthony had been pastor of the largest Mexican American parish in San Jose, Our Lady of Guadalupe. Anthony also served as regional VP of FCM for many years and he was also founder of the largest Job training program serving seasonal farmworkers, The Center for Employment Training. Part of our decision in relocating to California was to work more closely with Anthony and Phyllis Soto in developing small faith communities and working in the field of community economic development.

After our move to California I joined the staff of CET and helped them to obtain their present headquarters site in San Jose. The liturgy held at the Franciscan Renewal Center was probably the first instance in which women led a Catholic liturgy in a Roman Catholic chapel.

The 1979 convention was held in upstate New York near Syracuse at Cazenovia Junior College. Frank and Meme Woolever, Jack McCrae and Gus and Noreen Cadieux were among the coordinators and promoters for this convention which was very well attended and featured visits to the social justice ministries taking place in the Syracuse area. At the board meeting prior to the Cazenovia convention, we discussed the meeting held with Hans Kung the previous October in New York city. Twelve FCM members met with Kung at the Riverside Church in NYC. Kung continued to be an active advisor to us



during the years of our FCM co-presidency. Those present at the Cazenovia board were the following: Gerald and Marita Grudzen (co-presidents), Mary Catherine Dooley (national VP), Sharon Reyes (national VP), Clem DeWall, Secretary-Treasurer; Jim Dooley, John and Lu Dee, Marcel Duclos, Tom and Anne Weir, Bill and Ann Laly, Jack McCrea, Gus Cadieux, Julien Olivier, J.J. Kaufman, and Bill Manseau (Chairperson). Anthony Soto agreed to be the coordinator for the 1980 convention to be held at Asilomar in Pacific Grove, CA.

The 12<sup>th</sup> annual convention of FCM began on August 16, 1980 in Pacific Grove, CA. Present at the FCM board meeting were: Jerry and Marita Grudzen, Bill Manseau, Paul and Susana Schlesinger, Frank and Patricia Simoni, Anthony Soto, Joe Ruane, J.J. Kaufman, Bill and Ann Laly, and Bill Powers (Acting Secretary). The keynote speaker for the convention was Thomas Berry who spoke about Ministry in an Ecological Age.

Some of the communities represented at the meeting in a panel were:

Anita Caspary: Immaculate Heart Community based in Los Angeles

John Duryea: Angelo Roncali Community in Palo Alto, CA

Linda Gonzales: *La Comunidad* in San Jose, CA

Hope Garcia: Catholic Living Church of Salinas, CA

Other panels discussed liberation theology, new models for women in the church, Hispanic spirituality, a forum on the professions led by Doctor Berry, a career development panel, and alternatives to Institutionalized religion, education and health care. At the time of the 1980 convention we had an active membership list of approximately 300 members. At this time Frank Simoni was the editor and publisher of *Diaspora*. The convention for 1981 was proposed for the St. Louis area under the direction of Bill Laly. The Asilomar convention had over 120 participants, one of the largest in the history of FCM to that date. Both of our daughters were also baptized at this conference in August of 1980.

It should be noted that the *La Comunidad* base community continues to this day with an approximate membership of 20 which meets twice each month in member homes for liturgy and a communal meal.

*La Comunidad* is a community member of FCM.

Gerald and Marita Grudzen

San Jose, CA

June 12, 2013

## FIFTH PRESIDENTS

### Paul and Susana Schlesinger (Paul Deceased) 1980 - 1984

I regret to report that the letter requesting participation in this history was returned with a note unable to deliver notice from the United States Post Office. I was not able to locate Susana online. If anyone is able to locate her, I would be happy to add her comments to this history. Following are some highlights offered by Joe Ruane:

At the 1980 Pacific Grove Convention, Paul and Susana Schlesinger were elected as the first non-clerical presidents. Paul was a hospital administrator, and had never been ordained. Susana had had a brief experience in the convent. A couple notable events from that convention were the fact that our platform for Thomas Berry was a very early exposure to the environmental movement so prevalent today. The meeting also certified a woman from the La Comunidad from Salinas, and at the certification on Sunday morning about 80 members of her community came to witness her "ordination." Up to that time and even afterwards, FCM was not ready to call certification an ordination. The meeting also stood out as a meeting in which we denied certification to an applicant. We denied a guitar playing applicant who insisted he was Jesus Christ and had a successful Love Community in California. It was the decision of the Certification Committee that we had no authority to grant Jesus Christ the right to minister in the name of FCM. Who were we to certify Jesus Christ!

## SIXTH PRESIDENT

### Mary Jane Schutzius 1984 - 1988

The following is the content of an email reply to the letter sent from Mary Jane Schutzius.

Hi Antoinette,

Your letter came when I was in the midst of health issues, among my usual activities, and I put it aside for later consideration. I am today "catching up" and want to put it aside definitively.

My evaluation of my years as president of FCM is probably best recorded in Diaspora issues -- more a caretaker than a thriving and growth community. Still a lot of clericalism among the males -- and some partners/spouses -- and clinging to theology, morality, and ritual learned in the seminary. It was an all-round learning experience for me, for which I am grateful, but I'm not sure my "leadership" did much for FCM.

You probably don't want to make this part of the history. If I were putting it together, I'd refer to the Diaspora issues of those years. Susana Schlesinger might be able to give you a better insight, if she has time.

Mary Jane Schutzius



## SEVENTH PRESIDENT

Joseph Ruane 1988-1992

Joe Ruane became FCM President at the 1988 convention which was held in Philadelphia. The theme on wholistic health had wide interpretations that called for a spirituality lying deep within us which we can call forth to make healing into a creative, liberating, and fulfilling part of our history. Our spirit can touch the spirit of those suffering and turn contradictions into compliments in pursuing charismatic healing, personal healing, healing ministries, all in a spirituality of caring and a celebration of wholeness. Out of this was a continuation of the efforts of the previous president toward gender equality with the addition of racial equality as emphasized in the liturgical dance of the liturgy. My determination to have an inclusive membership came from my having worked in African American and Puerto Rican parish missions, and having lunched with Dr. Martin Luther King. This took hold when looking to work in South America I was told by an indian in Bolivia, that rather than thinking I might help people in South America, I should go back to the United States and solve our own race problems.

Racial equality became a continuing mission in my life. Reflexion on my own American Indian ancestry made this more paramount. When I started teaching at the university I started a Black Student Union and remained their advisor for 41 years until retirement. As Chair of the Nominating Committee of a mental health Board of Directors for the past 25 years I have maintained a board inclusive on racial, gender, and economic lines.

The work for the new president was to continue and expand the agenda of recognizing the feminine and give women a meaningful independent role in FCM, and to pursue the idea of integrating FCM as an organization open to all races and faith perspectives. This meant working to diminish the male clerical worldview which dominated most of the discussion in FCM. Free Priest paraphrases Ruane as merely "holding the fort" but that was a misinterpretation of the work to maintain the male membership while building the female membership beyond the membership of the wives of married priests. There was forward progress in FCM not understood by the author of Free Priests who wrote from the Catholic male clerical mind set without understanding the fledgling ecumenical perspective of FCM which along with the shifting clerical position toward base communities and gender equality was having some married priests leaving FCM. The desire for racial integration proved more difficult for FCM.

The base community effort was an active endeavor of FCM. Several members attended meetings in England and in Salem, MA, while others visited with base communities in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. They learned that all base communities are not alike, and we learned that liberation theology was used beyond religious communities, sometimes in labor unions. Guillermo Cook of Costa Rica taught us that in the religious realm liberation theology helped form base communities in areas of deep poverty, and he questioned whether such base communities could be established in the United States where such deep poverty is not found. He did note, however, that there is "a poverty of the spirit" in the United States that may be a source of new religious communities. Many FCM members were involved in small faith communities in their own regions, but usually these are not part of FCM.

Having experienced Eucharistic liturgies presided over by nuns in Bolivia, and non-Eucharistic liturgies being run by parishioners without a priest in Puerto Rico I incorporated the thinking of Edward Schillebeeckx in my own thinking, evolution and ministry, and it informed my outlook in leadership in FCM. He found many forms of ministry in his analysis of the early New Testament writings of the followers of Jesus. He found "no special problem as to who should preside at the eucharist...however...it was the host who presided...there are no biblical grounds anywhere for a sacral and mystical foundation to the ministry of the eucharist." Such writing by major church scholars enhanced my understanding of the role that FCM could play in communities, especially with the diminishing number of priests in many regions. At that time in 1989 this non-clerical opportunity for members coming into FCM contrasted strongly with the ecclesial concerns of CORPUS members, many of whom were also FCM members, and many who continue to support the divergent interests of both groups. This was also seen in the letters to the editor of the National Catholic Reporter where several individuals actively wrote ideas influenced by the ideas found in Diaspora or at the annual or regional meetings. FCM was made up of active individuals as well as members forming or influencing local house churches or communities. Again, the 1990 annual convention highlighted Home Churches with Robert and Julia Banks of Australia being the keynote speakers, and theologians at a California seminary.

Another awareness that FCM recognized once more was that not many people know of FCM. Of 38 groups at a base community meeting in Salem, no one knew of us, yet when they heard our story and of our activities, they couldn't get enough information about us. We still have that message to get out. It also became evident that there is much room for us to be ecumenical in Protestant circles. We do not abandon our Catholic tradition in following the dictates of our mission statement. This became clear also when I attended the meeting of the International Federation of Married Catholic Priests in Amsterdam in 1990. I expected the host group to be a giant CORPUS yet found their thrust to be much broader, more concerned with renewal than a married priesthood. The Europeans were excited to hear about FCM, and that we were no longer an experiment, but a reality that a married ministry works outside the rectory, and non-ordained ministers can function equally in a variety of ministries, eucharistic and otherwise. I came home with the axiom in mind that FCM could act, and theology would

catch up. The priesthood of the baptized was concretized as FCM is the forward edge of a movement not known to many, but one they are looking for.

While much organizational and theological growth was taking place within this presidency, there was also growth that hurt some members as FCM's open acceptance

of all of God's creations, included our admitting LGBT members into our membership. FCM had to recognize the need to reconcile and explain this position to members disagreeing with lifestyles and beliefs of other FCM members. Other disagreements arose as FCM's lack of adherence to traditional theology offended some, but while following the writings of Edward Schillebeeckx, Bernard Cooke and Hans Kung our praxis strived to be faithful to our founding roots. Yet within the disagreements there was the recognition of the mystic in all of us as we satisfy our inner life that what was happening was good.

The Gulf War in 1990-91 and the U.S. bombings in Panama spawned much activism by FCM members involved in the Peace and Justice Committee. Communities of some members took part in local demonstrations calling for peace, and the end of all war. Their writings cried out for care of the poor caught up in a power seeking world of conflicts rather than looking to authentic peacemakers like Jesus, Gandhi, or King. FCM members were involved in anti-nuclear demonstrations at submarine bases, Others were in healing ministries, some with war victims or military families, others with nursing homes and others who were ill.

Half way through my four years as president the issues seem to be the same. The Board of Directors, today's Circle, reaffirmed that the constitution does not prohibit membership to homosexuals. A concern for an ethic of sexuality pervaded the interest of members, supported by the writings of Richard McCormick, SJ, calling for socially acceptable forms of intimacy for everyone, and Fr. Charles Curran with similar writing in Moral Theology. Richard Penascovik, an FCM member and Chair of the Religion Department at Auburn University tried to keep Curran in his department, but the archbishop swayed the university not to appoint Curran, who then went to Southern Methodist. Some elements of success were noted at the St. Louis convention, Members appreciated our promotion of small faith communities; our focus on the simplicity of Jesus' message as we live the freedom of God's children; enabling, empowering and growing a free ministry; raising consciousness with a prophetic voice; affirming and recognizing women; providing a national certification, now commissioning; a need to market ourselves to women and minorities. Each also is a continuing challenge to FCM.

A survey of FCM membership in 1991 found that 83% saw value in our affirming their ministry, 93% valuing the certification of women, and 89% saw an opportunity for networking. While 73% valued the move toward diversity, 22% were undecided on the issue. Some 55% valued the women's support network, but 16% felt the effort was not valued. Continuity in the tradition in which they were grounded was appreciated by 67%.

A total of 80% valued the ecumenical approach. There seemed to be a continuing interest attached to a Vatican II vision, but consistent with the FCM following the "priesthood of the baptized" as a call to life of ministry with no hierarchical consequences or distinctions. Service is what is important. The survey indicated that FCM was evolving, with most of the membership maintaining their Catholic/Christian values, but in process toward a more ecumenical practice of their Christianity that may or may not entail being seen as a traditional Roman Catholic.

Looking back over the four years the president more than held the fort! Rather than putting an end to FCM, FCM began to grow with new meaning. We became open to receiving members of different faiths, sexual orientations and ecumenical multi-denominational liturgies presided over by commissioned male and female ministers. The stage was set for women to be leaders in the organization, and exercise their own ministries in numbers that increased over four years. We assumed a role in the base community movement, and members were educated about the phenomena of the world wide existence of these communities. FCM began its new role as a catalyst for ministry.

## **EIGHTH PRESIDENT**

**William Leahy 1992 - 1996**  
Deceased

**William K. Leahy**  
May 27, 1935 - January 2, 1999  
By Anthony Massimini

### **ASSOCIATION FOR THE RIGHTS OF CATHOLICS IN THE CHURCH**

In Memoriam William K. Leahy  
**FRIEND \* BROTHER \* FATHER \* GRANDFATHER \* PRIEST OF JESUS CHRIST**

[Link to 1968 Commonweal article by Arlene Anderson Swidler](#)

Let us celebrate the life of Bill Leahy, who was a good man, a good friend and brother, a good father and loving grandfather, and a good priest of Jesus Christ. Let us celebrate him who was both an image of Christ, especially in his compassionate ministry to the poor and outcast, and an image of Job, to whom much was given, from whom much was taken away, and to whom much was restored. Job asked, Oh, would that my words were written down. Would that they were inscribed in a record. Today I want to recount and record Bill's life, as well as celebrate it.

Bill was a good man. We simply have to say that he was an outstanding example of the exceedingly good and fine young men who entered the seminary to honor and serve Christ as his ordained ministers. Bill, for being a good man, may you be blessed forever.

Bill was a good friend and brother. I put the two together because Bill put them together. To John, Maryanne and Edna, whom we call Mike, he was a beloved blood brother and friend. To the rest of us, he was friend and brother, always ready to serve us whenever we had a need. Bill, for being a good friend and brother, may you be blessed forever.

Bill was a good father and a loving grandfather. For those who don't know, about 25 years ago, Bill was asked to take a young, homeless boy into his home for a week or so. Bill came to adopt David as his own son, whom he loved with his whole heart.

Through many very difficult circumstances, Bill always ran out of his house to pick David up, embrace him and give him a party of a new start in life. Bill, for being a good father and a loving grandfather, may you be blessed forever.

Bill was a good priest of Jesus Christ. Here especially, Bill's life needs to be recounted and recorded. When he entered St. Charles Seminary, he was only 16--just out of his sophomore year at St. Tommy More High School--brilliant, brash, and obviously full of glorious promise. After excelling academically at St. Charles, he was sent to study Theology in Rome. Again, he excelled academically. After ordination, he was sent back to Rome to study Scripture. It was 1961. Only 18 years earlier, in 1943, Pope Pius XII had permitted the Catholic Church to study the Scriptures the way the Jews and Protestants had been studying them. The church, fearful of the modern world, had condemned any accommodation to it, including the modern study of Scripture. When Bill arrived at the Jesuits' Biblical Institute, the school was in tumult. The Vatican authorities were waging war against the new biblical studies and two of Bill's professors were fired for teaching what is totally accepted today. Bill saw that a great struggle was being born in the church, and he got involved in it. He was pulled even deeper into the struggle when he was assigned to be a secretary at the upcoming Second Vatican Council.

Then something happened that became a critical point in Bill's life. A few months before the opening of the Council, then Archbishop, and later Cardinal, John Krol came to Rome and took Bill with him for a personal visit with Pope John XXIII. The pope asked Bill what he was studying and when Bill said, Scripture, the pope's eyes immediately became sad, to the point where he was almost crying. "Be careful!" he said sadly. "Oh, what are they teaching you? They are taking away Adam and Eve. Next they will take away the nativity scene and the Wise Men. What shall we teach the people? What shall happen to the children?" Bill recognized that the pope's advisors were presenting the new Scripture studies to him in a way that was upsetting and frightening him. When they left the pope's study, Archbishop Krol said strongly, "Did you hear what the Holy Father said? I don't want you teaching any of those things." Bill asked himself, "How can I not accept the new insights I am being taught? How will I be able to teach the truth against the opposition of my archbishop and even the pope himself!?" For three months, Bill struggled with these questions in his heart, mind and soul.

Then the council opened, and on the first day, Bill was in St. Peter's to hear the pope say that every day, he had to listen to persons who were not endowed with too much sense of discretion. In these modern times, John continued, these persons could see nothing but prevarication and ruin. Bill recognized that the pope was speaking about his advisors and about their fear of the modern world and modern studies--a fear that they had imposed upon the pope himself. But then, John went on to say that he disagreed with these prophets of gloom. Bill was exultant. The pope had changed. The Spirit had opened a window in Pope John's soul, just as the pope would open a window to the Spirit for the entire church. It was all right for Bill to teach what he was studying. It was all right to dream of the renewed church that John wanted to create. There was a new



way to understand Scripture, a new way to understand the church, a new way to understand the world and the human person. It was all right to teach this new understanding.

Bill plunged ever more joyfully into his Scripture studies. Being as brilliant as he was, he even went to the Dominican University and at the same time, attained a Doctorate in Theology--an almost impossible task. Earlier, under Jesuit Bernard Lonergan, he had taken some advanced studies in philosophy and theological method. At the council, he kept track of all the speeches, and saw the final documents developing step by step. When the American bishops wanted to speak, they would give outlines to Bill and he would write their speeches in Latin. A day or so later at the council, he would then record speeches that he himself had written.

Inspired by Pope John's remarks and filled with idealism, Bill befriended the theologians at the council who were presenting the church with their new ideas. They were men like Hans Kung, Raymond Brown, John Courtney Murray, Cardinal Bea, who headed the ecumenical movement, and Cardinal Lienart of France, who used the council to throw out the curia's list of committee members and to choose their own committee members--a move that opened the council to all the new ideas that, in the end, the Spirit of Christ moved it to promulgate. He was on fire with the spirit of the council and the Spirit of Christ.

Every day at the council, he took the day's speeches, translated them into English, wrote summaries, mimeographed them, and then got on his motor scooter and distributed them to the English speaking bishops all around Rome. There were no limits to this brilliant young man's talents, dreams and energy.

Completely immersed in the counsel, he saw that it had been called not merely to change the liturgy, but to change the entire church. On the one hand, he saw the new teachings developing; but on the other hand, he saw church officials getting Pope Paul VI to insert the old teachings alongside the new ones. In Bill's presence, Vatican officials said they were waiting for the bishops to go home so they could take back the church. He saw that there would be two voices in the church, the voice of retrenchment and the voice of renewal. He chose to be a voice of renewal.

He saw the new church be born and he believed in it. With Vatican II, --he believed that the church is the people of God, who are, as a body, consecrated into a holy priesthood that does not conflict with the ordained priesthood. --he believed that the whole church cannot err in matters of belief when, from the bishops to the laity, it shows universal agreement in matters of faith and morals. He determined that when he returned home, he would help the people discern their belief--what we call the *sensus fidelium*--so they could present their beliefs to the magisterium for authoritative expression.

He knew that the church could change its teachings, as it had done in the past in such

matters as slavery, usury and celibacy. In the council, he saw the church do a 180 degree turn in the matter of respecting the world and learning from it, and in the matters of ecumenism and religious freedom.

Very especially, being a scripture scholar, he knew well that the thing that bothered Jesus most was the bitter fact that the poor of his day were being oppressed. With Jesus and with the Council, Bill believed that as a priest he had a special obligation toward the poor, and that included the marginalized and the outcast.

When the council ended, he prepared to return home to help build the new church. He was warned not to do this. But let's sum up who he was--a brilliant, idealistic, young priest, who had a licentiate in Scripture, a doctorate in theology, advanced studies in philosophy and theological method, an active friendship with the church's leading progressive theologians, an extremely thorough experience and understanding of the Second Vatican Council, and a fierce determination to build the new church and minister with unswerving compassion to the poor and outcast--and he was just coming out of his 20's! Truly he was as blessed as Job.

He was assigned to Philadelphia's St. Charles Seminary and began teaching about the renewed church. In a short time, however, he was fired from the faculty with the words, "Your idea of the church is not the same as ours." A professor at a Catholic college asked him to fill in for a term, but he was immediately stopped by the authorities there. Once he stepped officially out of bounds and was temporarily suspended. That over, he began speaking about the church renewal in public to whoever would listen to him. He was followed by Catholic hecklers, who disrupted his talks, mocked him and even cursed him. Like Job, he became "the sport of his neighbors...a laughing stock." A religious superior referred to him as, "not a priest." His life as an outcast had begun.

Loneliness and depression became his companions, and he slipped into an alcohol induced darkness. The church placed him under suspension, a status he lived with until his death. Like Job he could say, "When I looked for the good, evil came; when I expected light, then came darkness...days of affliction have overtaken me." In those years, also like Job, he did not abandon God, and God certainly did not abandon him. One day, our doorbell rang. My wife answered it and there stood Bill, smiling. He kissed Mary and then turned to me, "It's me," he said, "Resurrexi! I have arisen!..." Beginning in 1975, he stopped drinking. Newly alive, he opened his heart ever wider to dear friends who loved him then, and love him still.

He went to work for a hospital, and being Bill Leahy, he was soon promoted to a high administrative position. But he was not happy. So he simply quit. Another hospital offered him \$85,000 to come to work for them. But that was not him. He refused. Poor and outcast himself, he turned the full force of his priestly compassion to ministering to the poor and outcast of today--the homeless, the addicted, the divorced, people with AIDS, women, gays and lesbians. Bill opened his compassionate heart and loving reconciliation to all of them. He called his ministry the Church of Reconciliation.

Reconciliation--a perfect word for him and his intentions. In his December newsletter, he rejoiced that last year, through his ministry, seven homeless/addicted persons re-established themselves. He is wrong. If we count the spiritually homeless whom Bill touched and reconciled, the number is 70 times seven.

He served a term as President of the Federation of Christian Ministries, and he worked with his dear friend, Anthony Padovano, President of CORPUS, the organization working for the full restoration of the married priesthood in the Western church--a restoration that has already begun. He was active in Call To Action, the movement for renewal that includes nuns, priests and bishops, but which also includes members in one diocese who were excommunicated, simply for being members. More outcasts to identify with.

Throughout it all, reconciliation was always on his mind and in his heart. For a long time, he kept in close touch with Cardinal Krol, struggling mightily with him in the impossible challenge of achieving official reconciliation. Both men did all they could, but their worlds were too far apart. So Bill continued his own ministry. For him to have done otherwise would be for him to have compromised his integrity. He would not have achieved the humility, compassion, a deep spirituality of suffering, dear family and friends--these are the gifts that, in the end, God bestowed on Bill, just as in the end, God bestowed gifts upon Job. Bill, for being a good priest of Jesus Christ, may you be blessed forever.

You have finally found reconciliation In the loving arms of Christ. From there, I know that you are praying for us to heal the divisions that separate members of the one church from one another. You are praying for us to open the church to the fullness of truth and love. You are praying for us to find ever more compassion for the poor and outcast.

In your December newsletter, you prayed for us, "Happy Christmas and a Blessed New Year! May all the riches of Christ Incarnate, the Word made flesh, be yours each day and forever." Bill, now it's our turn to pray for you. May those same riches also be yours. May our friend and brother, priest and Savior, Jesus Christ, hold you close in his arms and give you peace. May he lead you into the universal community of love that was our deepest dream. And may he bless you, now and forever. Amen.

Given at the Church of the Annunciation BVM, Havertown, PA, January 6, 1999,  
by Anthony T. Massimini 2541 Haven Avenue Ocean City, NJ 08226-2434

## In Memoriam of Father William Leahy

By Father Jim Mallon

A most insightful portrayal of Bill Leahy's animus has already been recorded by a visceral critic. E. Michael Jones in his biography of Cardinal Krol refers to Bill quite often. At face value Jones presents Bill in less than favorable terms. However he has highlighted some basic personality characteristics which anyone who drew close to Bill would recognize as standard Bill Leahy. Perspective dominates perception, and what Jones sees as flaws the renewal communities will hail as virtues. Essentially Bill did not change over the years he just grew and developed.

Particularly, Bill's audience with John XXIII which Cardinal Krol had arranged and which Jones preserves for us highlights characteristics which prevailed throughout Bill's life. Roles, titles and personages did not unduly influence him. He respected authority but would not allow it to dominate his ministry. He listened attentively but would not be persuaded easily. He greatly esteemed friendship and loyalty but spoke with conviction and directness the truth as he perceived it. Just months after ordination alone in the presence of Pope and his ecclesiastical superior Bill openly, clearly and without equivocation revealed his commitment to the spirit of Vatican II.

Bill's adherence to the Council's teachings cost him greatly. But he would most vehemently protest that his own flawed nature and his own human weaknesses also contributed greatly to the darker moments in his life. No one but God can apportion correctly the share which grace and sin play in one's sanctification but it results mostly certainly from the struggle between both.

Bill constantly cautioned me to choose wisely in which battles to engage. Let's recognize that as a legacy he leaves to all anxious for Church renewal. Unity was another ideal Bill cherished and advocated, inner unity and subsidiarity for each group, intergroup unity and solidarity for the renewal community itself.

One final word born out of my own sorrowing over these last few days, let us express how important we are each to the other before death shuts off the opportunity.

### **This essay of Bill Leahy was submitted by Joseph Ruane**

Bill Leahy was brought into FCM as a Development Director in the East. He became President in 1992 at the Assembly at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland, and Joe Ruane moved to Chair of the Circle. Through his efforts, and that of others, his friend Elizabeth McAlister delivered the keynote address. The term annual convention was changed to Annual Assembly, and the term Board of Directors was changed to Circle of Directors to remove the corporate overtones, and to establish a more familiar Christian relationship among members. He saw the possibility of FCM playing a leading proactive role in Church renewal. The quiet growth of base communities was beginning to develop multiple forms of faith communities across the country. He foresaw the day when all baptized people of God would be exercising a wide range of ministries. FCM had been in the vanguard of such activity in recognizing the equality of ministry of men and women in so many diverse ways. FCM according to the reading of the constitution was to be a renewal movement enabling women and men to liberate one another in the

full exercise of public ministry as a visible expression of their faith influenced by the Gospel, the Church, and their personal gifts. He envisioned FCM members being a support group for existing church members and their service work. He hoped to extend the work of FCM members from the grassroots to the international levels by formally joining the international renewal groups. Bill had studied with a few of the leaders of the European groups, and he was a translator from Latin to Italian and English at Vatican II. Bill tried to institute a deeper communal significance to the commissioning ceremony as he saw ordination an affirmation of the call from the community. He recognized the need for ministers to hone their skills in community building, liturgy, spiritual counseling, prayer and the other activities we sometimes take for granted. He saw the need to increase the budget of FCM to accomplish more of the planned training, travel, and growth of FCM as well as provide for the publication of *Diaspora*. One axiom he pushed was that a true minister must overcome the shame of begging. In begging we can relate to the poor and live as our model Jesus in knowing the beggars. He pushed members to see FCM as an organization to support even if they must divert some of their donations to a parish or other community.

Leahy saw the broad agenda of FCM having much to offer the church of the future, The deeply ecumenical and gender-equal dimensions of FCM were important to share with the church and the world. Bill included a welcome to each individual new member in his *Diaspora* message. He worked to make FCM as warm a community as possible even though we were spread across the country. He worked to bond members east and west. Bill met with Anthony Padavano, a friend from Rome, and then president of CORPUS at a meeting in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania to bring the groups closer together, and to facilitate the planning of a joint conference on contemporary spirituality in 1996 in San Diego. They also put out a joint press release on clerical pedophilia. Bill identified FCM as the oldest post Vatican II national renewal organization in the country. It was noteworthy that FCM was part of the founding of COR, and attended the White House along with other COR members to support the nomination of Dr. Joycelyn Elders as Surgeon General. Rather than the bishops being at the White House it was grassroots renewal groups speaking out. Bill joined Joe Ruane and Gerry Grudzen in a visit to the Blythe Street project in Panorama City, in a major venture for FCM to help a developer to refurbish graffiti signed dilapidated apartments, establish social programs and work with youth in a gang infested area marked for assistance by the independent order of sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who had broken from the Los Angeles diocese. Bill as President actively worked for FCM's role there, and FCM received good press in the Los Angeles Daily News. Leahy saw reformers needing to keep a sense of humor, avoid separatist and negative language, not judging personalities, and being ecumenical rather than clerical, all built on a strong spiritual base. From the time Bill became president until the end of his first term FCM grew from 333 members to 477, with 184 women. FCM was meeting the needs of many people, and modeling a loving community, not clerical or authoritarian, and increasingly ecumenical and inclusive. The inclusivity is marked by welcoming a wide variety of life-styles.: singles, divorced, separated, widowed, married, remarried, lesbians and gays, and other categories we may not know of. His dream was for FCM to develop those tools to sharpen leadership,

ministry and education that would support and empower one another. A notable first at the San Diego meeting was the inauguration of the Anthony Soto Award for extraordinary service to FCM. The first recipient was Anthony's wife Phyllis who always worked with her husband, and led the Comunidad de Cristianos after Anthony died.

Bill Leahy had paid his dues. The nephew of a bishop, a strong scholar and intellectual, he was sent to Rome for his theology. He ran around Rome on his Vespa during Vatican II delivering the daily translations to the bishops attending sessions so the bishops would be prepared for the next day's meetings. Returning to Philadelphia his seminary teaching of Vatican II as he witnessed it conflicted with the understanding and desires of John Cardinal Krol. He was removed from his teaching post, and placed in a parish. Shortly afterwards he officiated at the wedding of his brother, also a priest in California, and was disciplined for that action. Bill hit hard times, and sank low as an alcoholic, to the point of being found curled before a bank door by the bank manager, a former seminary classmate who called Cardinal Krol for help. The cardinal sent him to the Paracletes for rehabilitation for a year. Bill successfully rehabilitated, and would lecture that only a year long program could help alcoholics. He worked as a computer technologist in a hospital that has a detoxification program of only five weeks, that coincidentally was managed by a former pastor who also had studied at St. Charles Seminary in Philadelphia. Joe Ruane had served the same center as a priest. Bill worked there several years before moving to a suburban hospital doing similar work, but left after a short time to work with the homeless. Bill started a base community, The Church of Reconciliation, in Delaware County, PA, and served there when elected President of FCM. He was president until 1996. He died in 1999.

Taken from minutes of The National Board Meeting, July 30-31, 1993, El Segundo, CA.

Board Members Present:

Joe Ruane, Chairperson, Bill Leahy, President, D. Voelinger, V.P. Northeast, Joe McOscar, Secretary, Fred Ruof, Development, Linda Gonzales, V.P. West, Bill/Roddy O'Neil Cleary, Diaspora Editors, Bob Schutzius, Diaspora Publisher. Following members were present for a portion of the meetings. Linda Gonzalez, Mike and Joyce McFadden, Gerry Grudzen, Anthony Soto. Peggy Ripp and Pascal Baute were not present.

**The following pages are Bill's President report 1992**

Annual Report of the President - July 1992

The past year has been productive for the Federation of Christian Ministries. There is a wider recognition of the potential for free ministry through FCM. Many have sought certification from us to be recognized in their ministry. The ecumenical spirit of FCM has attracted members of different denominations to join us as members. A member in New England may bring a non-Catholic group of Brothers under FCM, while a Messianic Jewish community is seeking community membership from us at this meeting.

FCM has been an active member of the Council for Renewal of the Church (CORC). Bill Leahy, Paul Schlesinger and Joe Ruane have represented us at three different meetings of that coalition of Catholic Renewal groups. The fact that it is a coalition of Catholic groups causes a little difficulty insofar as issues of importance to CORC are not always burning issues with us. We have already dealt with some of the issues by going ahead on our own. We have always worked under the premise that we will experiment at the margin, and the theology will catch up to us. Because of this attitude, some members of CORC initially questioned our Catholicity but that has been resolved.

We made donations toward the Gallop Poll study of Catholics Speak Out, and toward Terry Dosh's trip to study the married and women priests and bishops in Czechoslovakia. It is interesting that some organizations such as Catholics for Choice are as old as we are and have assets of \$1 million. It must be influence of the Franciscans in our midst that we stay under \$10,000 a year. At any rate some groups were able to donate \$5,000 or \$1,000. We donated \$500, a combined total, to the two meetings. We did pay the way for Bill Leahy to go to Chicago for the Call to Action meeting, and the first meeting of CORC, but we had Paul Schlesinger represent us at the second meeting in Chicago, and I attended the third in Chicago since I went to the CORPUS meeting at the same time.

CORC will meet again in September in Washington, DC at the Future of the American Church meeting. Also Tim Reagan who organizes that massive meeting of about 3,000 Catholics, mostly religious women involved in education, is also preceding the meeting with a call of Catholic groups interested in renewal which will include bishops and more orthodox renewal groups. We have been extended an invitation to attend. Further at the larger three day meeting, we have arranged to share two booths in the exhibit hall with seven organizations from CORC. Each will have a small space to exhibit brochures. There will also be meetings of CORC in Chicago at the November Call To Action meeting, and in January.

I think we should remain involved with these renewal meetings since they give us exposure to groups who don't know what we are about. They can learn from our experience in the past, and by an exchange of ideas in their publications we may be able to broaden our own base through their interested members. While I don't see this as bringing in great numbers, I think it is good public relations.

Gerry Grudzen, Hank Clarence and myself among others reviewed the galleys of Bill Power's book, Free Priests. Bill had his own perspective on FCM. The book seems to have moved from being a book on FCM to a book on free priests with a CORPUS emphasis. I have not seen the final version, but the galleys did not flatter us. Bill saw the glass half empty, we see it half full. In recent conversations with Bill, he said he took all of our comments to heart, and softened some of the things we criticized. My impression, though, is that not much was going to be changed to satisfy the FCM criticism. However, in the interest of maintaining peace in the family, I directed the Treasurer to pay Bill the \$1,000 we had promised up front. The final bill to us may have come in just short of that figure.

This annual meeting brings to a close my own presidency. Some place it is written that a president may hold the office for two consecutive terms. I think that is enough also. I feel at this point that it is important to share the leadership. Someone asked if I would run for a third term, if allowed. I could not do it. The organization would be hurt as I would burn out. I would gladly take the senior states-role of Chair since that involves less month to month decision-making. A new president at this time allows a new person to put his or her stamp on FCM, and I think we are ready for that.

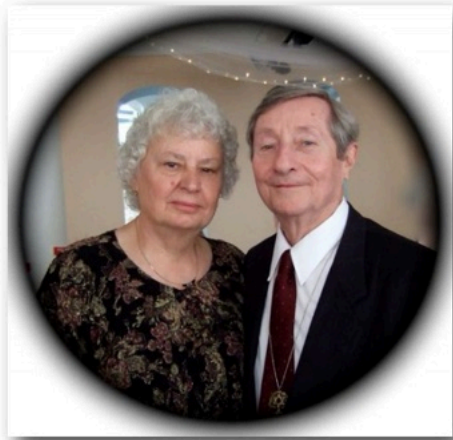
I think that the check we put on the treasurer at the end of Marylou's term and continued by Peggy seems worth continuing. The treasurer makes a monthly report to the president, which in turn allows a comparison with the semi-annual reports. It's not perfect, but even though we are spread across the country, there is an on-going accounting within a realm of trust.

There is a need to tighten up -as usual- our overseeing of the certified members. We ran into some difficulty with a marriage in Buffalo that could have been a major problem, but it was resolved. It did raise the question, however, as to the status of individual certified ministers meeting the qualifications of particular states. There is also the allegation that we are a "diploma mill" for certification of people out to make a buck. This may actually be an inference from Bill Power's book. If so, we had better clarify our position should some reader come asking questions. It seems that recognition of our denominational status is important, as well as recognition of the minister to be a leader with a following. We must look at this more thoroughly as an agenda item.

I thank the Board for your faith in me and your great assistance in the past four years. FCM survived, and that is the important part. We still have a raison d'etre. We still serve a purpose. So let's be at it.

Thank you also to Tom Leonhardt who sent additional information on Bill Leahy's presidency that is added to this history.





## NINTH PRESIDENTS

Carolyn Horvath and  
Thomas Leonhardt  
1996-1998

Past President's Project:  
Carolyn Horvath and Tom Leonhardt.  
Elected June 1996. Served through August 1998

The main thrust of our term was to move FCM forward organizationally. We also suggested changing the name from Federation of Christian Ministries to Federation of Community Ministries. The reason was to be more inviting to people who were not Christian. We suggested this change via address to the Assembly at Hartford, Connecticut. This suggestion did not fly.

A huge move forward happened as Judy and Ed Kalmanek accepted several positions serving FCM. They became Secretary, Membership, Central Office, Diaspora Editor, Publisher, and Distributor. Judy and Ed also instituted a communication instrument called "Chatter-in-the-Round. They were instrumental in bringing records up to speed and making them available to everyone. The following pieces speak to these items more fully.

1. Letter to the Circle dated February 26, 1997
2. Letter from Jerry Grudzen dated January 19, 1998
3. Presidents' Report: Circle Meeting, February 20, 1998
4. Minutes of Circle Meeting, February, 1998

Circle members are included on the FCM Stationery and the Circle minutes.

Love and Blessings! Carolyn and Tom 5/12/13



## FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

February 26, 1997

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Dear Circle of Directors,

Peace!

During a conversation at evening dinner yesterday, it occurred to us that as the agenda for our semi-annual meetings is sent out early so that each of us has a chance to look it over and do some preparation, so it seemed appropriate that we put in writing some things that are on our minds so that you can reflect on them and give us some feedback.

We think we need some help from all of you around our expectations and concerns for the continued growth and health of FCN.

We saw recurring business and moving things along as an area in which we felt we might make a contribution for the wellbeing of the organization. Including everyone in the information loop is another thing we promised to address by communicating with everyone on the Circle. We believe that everyone on the Circle genuinely desires that we function as a circle. We have had interchanges with various individuals on a variety of topics. These interchanges have been good. When we have asked everyone for specific feedback on some topic there has been minimal response. Are people too busy to respond? Are our inquiries too trivial? Are our expectations unrealistic? Help us out on this.

We have two major projects to which we as a Circle committed ourselves last August: the budget and the re-writing of the Constitution, By-Laws, and Mission Statement. Though we called and inquired about these projects, as far as we know neither committee has yet met 6 months later. We do have a proposal from the Moschels, and we know that Jerry Grudzen has gotten material to Joe Ruane and that Joe is mailing something out at the end of this week.

For us a Circle means the way we interact at our semi-annual meetings, listening, discussing, honoring each other. We believe that we all do this very well, even when we disagree. Additionally for us a Circle implies our interaction and attention to tasks which each of us agrees to undertake so that these tasks can be brought to completion. As our two major tasks attest, we easily go into "stall." Is this merely our problem or is it a problem of the whole Circle? Do we want to do anything to address it if it is a real problem for the Circle?

(2)

Last August we perceived an urgency on the part of the Circle regarding both of these tasks. Did we perceive wrongly? Are we simply impatient? We have found in other groups to which we belong that when we move on a project we seem to threaten people. Do we seem to you to be "gangbusters?" We do not want to be "police." What do you want us to do--back off and let things take their course, or to light a fire when that is necessary?

None of our questions is meant in any way to suggest that anyone is lazy, that anyone is not very busy, that no one really cares. We know none of that is the case.

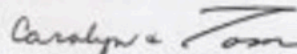
We are asking organizational questions. Why can we not as a Circle accomplish the tasks we agree to be responsible for? We believed that "organization" was one of the reasons we were encouraged to serve as Co-Presidents for FCM.

We would like to bring clarity to our documents, and practice of what is written. As an example: We say that Vice-Presidents communicate with members of their Regions 4 times a year and hold a Regional Meeting once a year. Organizationally the questions are: Do Vice-Presidents communicate with their Region's members 4 times a year? Is there an annual Regional meeting in each Region? The point is not to hound Vice-Presidents. The point is: Do we want to say these things in our job descriptions if they are not realistic goals? Example: There was progress in "Attempts at Job Description for Regional Vice-Presidents" from 8/94 to 8/95. One specific instance was that "holding meetings several times a year" [8/94], changed to "hold a regional meeting of FCM at least once a year (the annual National Assembly will qualify as meeting this requirement when it is held in the region." [8/95]. Actually, we never finalized the job descriptions. Do we want to?

We think we all agree that we do not want to function as an "old boys club" either as a total organization or as a Circle of Directors. We avoid the "club" well in our acceptance, support, and affirmation of women in ministry. We believe that good communication amongst ourselves and with members of FCM at large is a cutting edge toward our dream of a new way of being Church.

As implied above, we are not sure whether our expectations and hopes are the same as yours. We would graciously and gladly step aside if your desires are different from ours.

Love and Blessings!

  
Carolyn and Tom

Carolyn Horvath  
Tom Leonhardt  
Co-Presidents  
Federation of Christian Ministries  
1709 W. 69<sup>th</sup> St.  
Cleveland, Ohio 44102

January 19, 1998

Dear Tom and Carolyn,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed revision to the FCM constitution. As you are aware our FCM chapter here in the San Francisco Bay Area has adopted the name of Federation of Community Ministries of California or FCMC. The name reflected an evolution in our understanding of the spiritual mission which confronted us in this particular place and time. We found that many of our members were from a variety of spiritual backgrounds which included traditional western religions such as Judaism and Christianity and non-Christian religions such as Buddhism and, for want of a better term, various offshoots of humanistic or New Age religions which are quite popular here in the Bay Area. We felt that our particular role was to welcome all types of people to share in an open and inclusive spiritual experience.

I feel that the purpose of the national Federation of Christian Ministries should be inclusive enough to welcome all types of people who are searching spiritually and not just those who are Christian or Catholic. In fact, I feel that FCM's particular focus should be on those who are not part of traditional religious groupings and that we would have a unique mission in so claiming this as our mission. We cannot change the structure of the Roman Catholic Church very easily in our lifetime. It seems clear also that other groups are fulfilling that mission such as CORPUS and Call to Action. I believe that our particular gift should focus on the unchurched masses and those who are searching for spirituality. The popularity of Thomas More's works indicate that there is a vast population in society who are searching for a spiritual foundation for their lives but who are not necessarily tightly bound to any particular traditional religious grouping. This trend is actually accelerating in our time and shows no signs of abatement.

The language of the Constitution which states the Purpose of FCM needs to be much more inclusive if we are to have a purpose larger than that of another Catholic renewal group. Many of us do not feel that this is a broad enough mission and it is one that is well served by other groups. Even though certification has been an important dimension to FCM's mission, it does not provide a living context for most people who are certified since there is no real formation that FCM requires. If FCM

Circle Meeting – Indianapolis, Indiana – February 20, 1998

President(s) Report:

1. One of our goals has been to increase communication among Circle Members. We have made great strides in this area and wish to encourage everyone to put ongoing intention into communication. There is no reason that any circle member should be out of the information loop.
2. We are all beneficiaries of the superb work of Judy and Ed Kalmanek, not only in chatter-in-the-round, but in bringing FCM records up to peed, communicating with the membership and applying their technical expertise and making pertinent items available to all of us.
3. We were present at a portion of meetings of COR in Detroit in Fall of '96 and '97. It became clear at last November's meeting that membership in COR requires of its member organizations that they be committed to the renewal of the Roman Catholic Church. (We asked Bill Cleary to say more on this point.)
4. We, as co-Presidents, have intended the encouragement of women in ministry and couples in ministry. We have done this for the purpose of balance since FCM was begun by former canonical priests. This population (of FCM) still comprises the majority of certified members. We do not mean by our intended emphasis on couple ministry to discourage either women or men who are either single or whose spouses or partners, while supporting their ministry, are not themselves called to ministry. What we do want to discourage is the "Old Boys Club."
5. We wish to support wholeheartedly, the process of de-stratification in FCM, finding ways to make real our intentions of equality vis-a-vis certified and non-certified members.

J. Carroll

## Minutes from the February, 1998 FCM Circle of Directors Meeting

Members Present: Michael McFadden, chair, Carolyn Horvath and Tom Leenhardt, co-presidents; Marge and Tom Wilt, Northeast vice-presidents; Elizabeth and Phillip Cerrato, Southeast vice-presidents; Leanne and Michael Emery, Midwest vice-presidents; Jean and Michael Conley, West vice-presidents; William Cleary, past editor of *Diaspora*; James Belzer, *Diaspora* editor; Edward and Judy Kalmanek, secretaries

The Circle met on Friday evening at the home of Leanne and Michael Emery in Indianapolis. The meeting was opened by the chair at 9:18 p.m. with a meditation by Leanne and Michael.

There were no amendments to the minutes from the August, 1997 meeting.  
Motion: that the minutes as written be approved. So moved, supported and passed.

### Chair's report:

Chair noted that in lieu of a report he made notes while working on the agenda and will comment as the agenda moves forward.

### Presidents' report:

Carolyn suggested that everyone doesn't need a copy of each of the reports. Rather a copy needs to go to secretary who will summarize them in the minutes.

Motion: that the typed copies of the officers' reports, usually supplied to each member, be eliminated. Instead a single copy will be filed by the secretary with the minutes in central office and will be available to any member upon request. Each member will get copy of the minutes, containing a summary of the reports, however. So moved, supported and passed.

The co-presidents' report contained four items:

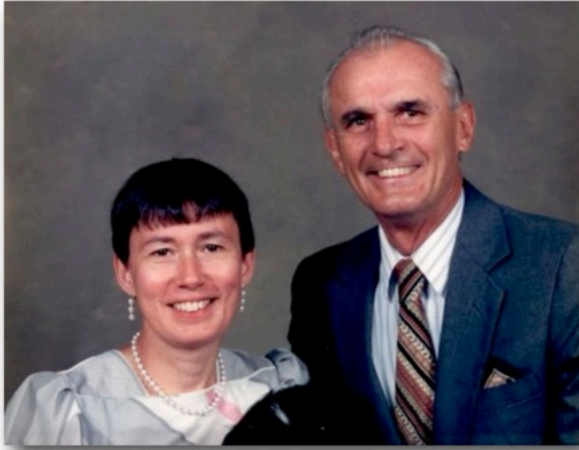
1. One of the goals, to increase communication among the members of the circle, has made great strides. Each circle member is encouraged to use *Chatter in the Rownd*. A suggestion was made that communication in *Chatter* could be initiated by anyone by using the title with their last name appended to it. For example: *Chatter Wilt-2*. There is no reason for anyone to be out of the communication loop.
2. Thanks to Judy and Ed for bringing records up to speed through application of technical skills.
3. Should our COR membership continue or should we reduce ourselves to observer status? A question was posed to the COR members attending the past November meeting: do you see the renewal movement as one to renew the Roman Catholic Church or catholic church. The reply was unanimously that the renewal was for the Roman Church. However, two key leaders in COR Fiedler/Padavano are apparently beyond the Roman renewal since they are meeting in Europe with the head of the World Council of Churches. IC churches are on observer status primarily because they have no focused interest in renewing the Roman church. On the other hand, our roots are RC and COR thinks of us part of the renewal movement.
4. As co-presidents we have encouraged both women and couple ministry. This needs to be emphasized constantly since FCM was begun by former RC priests and the majority of certified members are RC ordained men. Our emphasis on couples is to discourage the old boys club not to exclude either single women or men.
5. We support the effort to de-stratify FCM by finding ways to create real equality between certified and non certified. FCM is stratified by the difference between certified and non-certified member dues and annual reporting requirements. Perhaps one way is to level out dues and have everyone make an annual report. Certified would be those who need it for their work. (See discussion under Certification Committee)

### Midwest Report:

The St. Louis community continues. Chicago has active but small group which meets regularly for sharing and has advertised as a group to do weddings, rotating the weddings among the group. The Heitzmans have developed a network system with FCM members in the Louisville area. Paschal Baute is doing similarly in Lexington. There are three groups/hubs in Ohio: Cleveland, Columbus, and Dayton/Cinci area which gather occasionally or have informal contacts. Many FCMers in the Midwest are still loners with no real connections to other FCM members.

The CFTI list is bringing in some additional inquiries as is *The Ministry Journal*.

The 1998 assembly committee of Judy/Ed Kalmanek, Norma/Mike Tynan, and the Emerys met in September. We'll meet again in Spring to make final arrangements. Margaret Starbird is excited to be the keynote speaker. Her new book entitled *Golden of the Gospels: Mary Magdalene* will probably be a large part of her discussion with the conference members. A local nun, Sr Selena, has created an original design as the theme logo exemplifying partnership ministry. Plans call for the brochure to be mailed in the next *Ministry Journal*.



Secretary, Membership,  
Central Office,  
Diaspora Editor, Publisher,  
and Distributer

Judy and Ed Kalmanek  
1997-2005

1997 for FCM could be aptly described as “the best of times and the worst of times”. The religious organization had reached a critical period in its life. Carolyn Horvath and Tom Leonhardt had been elected presidents a year or two previously and were determined to move FCM ahead into a more inclusive community. That move was never more apparent than at FCM’s annual assembly in Hartford, CT. Heated debates led to the resignation of the chairman and several other leaders of the organization.

Shortly after the assembly, Tom called my husband Ed to see if we would be willing to serve FCM in the role of secretary. Ed agreed to think it over. He asked me if I’d be willing to help and we talked about the lack of organization. As an outsider, it had appeared to me from my contact with FCM over a couple of years that there was no business structure in FCM. I believed, and Ed agreed, that this would be our initial focus if we took on the work.

We called Carolyn and Tom and together told them our views. I recall asking Tom at that point if I needed to be a member of FCM to hold the position. He thought a minute and said, “I think so; we’ve never had an officer who was not a member.” Joining FCM was a bit of dilemma for me since I am not a believer. However, I agreed to join as a \$5.00 per year member. What? Yes, in 1997 wives of the *real* members were allowed to join for \$5.00 per year. You see, up until that time and through some additional years of struggle, FCM’s membership was mostly Roman Catholic priests who had resigned their ministry in the church in order to marry. Their wives were add-on members in FCM. It’s true that there was a small number of independent women members who were *real* members and an even smaller number of them were *certified members* which enabled them to minister under FCM’s banner. These women, like the ordained catholic men conducted services like weddings, funerals, baptisms and other church-like functions. There is no amount of *thank you* that can be said to that early group of women who in the early 80’s demanded recognition, along with their husbands in many cases, of their own ministry. I have always admired them and they were my impetus to eliminate the \$5.00 members. After a couple of years, it was agreed that all members

would pay the standard annual dues: \$30 for non-certified members and \$35 for certified members. There were some complaints that a certified couple had to pay \$70 per year, but that, too, passed in time. Membership dropped significantly that year since many of the women no longer wished to be members at \$30 per year.

1905 Bugbee Road became the Central Office of FCM in mid 1997. I recall receiving the files, several boxes of them, from Dean Mattson, who had served as secretary for a while. Dean assured me that the files were all computerized and up-to-date. He sent a check along as well for \$1500.00. After we received the boxes and the check, I contacted Dean (who remains a friend to this day) and asked him when he planned to send the rest of the money. He informed me that the \$1500.00 was it! Imagine my surprise that an organization like FCM had a total of \$1500.00 for operating expenses. Nonetheless, an account for FCM was established at the local credit union. The solution to the lack of money over the next couple of years was to use *Ed's Checkbook* when I needed functioning funds and monetary resources were low. Note: I said Ed's checkbook, not mine!

At Circle meetings I took copious notes on my laptop which I later edited at home and sent out, via e-mail, within the week to the Circle. It kept everyone in tune with what we had discussed and decided at the meeting. Once in a while, someone would question a part of the minutes, but usually they were acceptable. At one point when Mike and Joyce McFadden were serving on the Circle, I recall Mike asking me if I was actually taking down every word that was said. Of course, that remark generated a huge laugh. Those minutes probably say a lot about the current events of FCM during those years.

Ed's role in this endeavor was to serve as a counselor to the many people who called seeking advice on various aspects of their ministry. He continued to do this up until the time of his death. In fact, I was still receiving calls from folks around the country asking to speak to Ed for at least a year after he died. He gave superb advice to both individuals and to the Circle of Directors at the twice a year meetings of the Circle over those years. Ed reviewed everything that came out of Central Office and added his suggestions and corrections. We made a good team.

My role, as I saw it, was to put FCM on a doing-business-as-a-business footing. I was quite conversant with computers, having built them for us and friends over a number of years, and set out to computerize FCM. There was some precedence for this. For several years prior to 1997, Ed and I had assisted Louise Haggett with a series of ministry workshops she conducted for "married priests". Louise was encouraging these men to return to ministry and serve catholic people. Unfortunately, we terminated our working relationship with Louise after she and her board refused to include women ministers. That said, Louise is still a treasured friend to this day. My role in the ministry workshops was to show these men how to use a computer to develop business tools: business cards, brochures, letterhead, form letters, spread sheets to keep track of the their ministry activities and other business tools. I was very aware of how computer



illiterate many of these folks were and encouraged them to contact me if they had a problem. Little did I realize how many phone calls I would receive over the ensuing years!

By early 1998, I had computerized FCM. The initial database of names and addresses was expanded to include another 30 or so fields to keep track of each member's pertinent information. The last time I saw the database while helping Tom, it looked pretty much the same. New letterhead was designed along with an updated brochure. Eventually, Jean Conley took over the brochures and created the best one FCM had ever had up to that time. I recall one time when Jean contacted me about purchasing a printer. She wanted an ink jet but was worried about its permanency (color laser was prohibitive in those days. Ed purchased a color laser for us for about \$2,000 which was a real deal back then). I told her that there were ink jets that used waterproof ink. When she went to purchase one and told the salesman that she wanted an ink jet that used waterproof ink, he informed Jean that there was no such thing. Jean persisted based on the information I had given her and reported back that, yes, she was able to purchase such a printer.

After the 1997 assembly, Joe Ruane, dear man, had agreed to take on the role of chairman until elections were held in 1998. Joe, together with Carolyn and Tom, aimed to heal the wounds of 1997 and move ahead with the aim of a more inclusive organization. To that end, the Circle meeting in February, 1998 was held in Cleveland and the Circle came together with such an agenda. Patrick Young (Packy) was the treasurer and was a great conciliator. It was agreed that Packy and Mike McFadden would reach out to those members who had become estranged after the assembly and help heal their pain. As expected, they were quite successful.

One of events that moved FCM into the 21<sup>st</sup> century was the election of Bridget Mary Meehan in 1998 to be president of FCM. She was not the first woman to hold the position. That honor belonged to Mary Jane Schutzius a part of that group of vibrant women of the 80's. Bridget Mary's vision and agenda coincided with that of Carolyn and Tom and during her first term FCM moved beyond the struggles that burst out at the 1997 assembly.

Another project suggested by Tom was to add a fifth region to FCM. The new region, Mountains and Plains, covered a huge amount of territory, but a rather small number of members. Jan and Paul Reithmaier took on the task of vice-presidents of the newly formed region with great enthusiasm and dedication. They eventually became presidents and chairpersons of FCM. Both Jan and Paul were quiet but energetic leaders and soon had the new region functioning quite well.

FCM continued to experience troubles to be sure. One of them occurred shortly after Bill Cleary resigned as editor of the newsletter. Bill had held the position for a long time with distinction. By that time most communication between Circle meetings was done via email. It was not always a smooth process and a number of Circle members found

the learning curve to be steep and filled with ruts; but, we were doing it. Unfortunately, Bill's successor was able to read and write emails, but was unable to open attachments. When the due date for publishing the newsletter came and went, he accused the Circle of not contributing anything for his first issue. We pointed out to him that all the articles were written and emailed to him. That led to a lengthy email dispute between the new editor and some of the Circle members. The new editor resigned immediately.

Editing, publishing and mailing The newsletter, *Diaspora*, became another Central Office task and remained so over about 4-5 years. This part of the work was one of my joys since I managed to learn, not only the names which I knew, but the addresses of all 500+ members of FCM. Each of the regional vice presidents accepted the charge to prepare a report of their region's activities during the past quarter. This contact seemed to bring a cohesiveness to the entire membership. Preparing the newsletters for mailing and packaging them by zip code allowed me to learn who belonged to what region so that I could recognize a member's regional affiliation when I met them in person.

As the new millennium approached, the Circle was looking forward to a growth in the ministry opportunities for its members. One of the tasks was to design a new logo. I presented one at the Circle meeting and, after a couple of minor changes, the new logo was adopted together with Bridget Mary's phrase, *Celebrating New Ministries for a New Millennium*. I believe that the logo continues to be in use to this day. There were some complaints about discontinuing the use of the Jerusalem Cross which had been used since FCM's birth. However, the new logo seemed to speak more effectively to the identity of the organization and its inclusiveness.

More and more members were seeking full time work as ministers. Namely, these people were applying for positions as chaplains. It was time for FCM to help members earn CPE units to enhance their opportunities for employment as chaplains. I contacted the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) in Georgia and after some conversation and completing their application, FCM became an official member. This was a breakthrough, from my perspective, for members who wished to engage in chaplaincy. It also led eventually to the system of endorsement of which FCM can be justifiably proud. Much of the credit for the endorsement process goes to Bill Manseau who worked many hours (days, weeks, months!) on the project. With each new process, though, came new forms to be designed and these were done with care and reviewed with input from the Circle.

Speaking of forms, one of the huge tasks was designing the annual report form. Prior to this new form, members might send a detailed written account of the year's ministry or write a couple of words on a piece of scrap paper. FCM needed a way to provide its members with a form of accountability. There was some conversation about who had to complete the form. It was decided that every member needed to report on their activity for the past year. This included all members, *certified* and *non-certified*. By the time all the input from the Circle was included the one page form barely fit the page! I had the forms printed on NCR paper with a copy identified for Central Office, the regional vice

president and the member. It was a huge step forward in showing accountability. It enabled Central Office to keep statistics on FCM's various ministries. Annual data gleaned from the report forms was helpful at the time we applied for membership in ACPE and the National Council of Churches. That's another story!

One of the big concerns the Circle discussed frequently was how to have FCM recognized as a church. FCM had for a number of years been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 religious organization. It had received this recognition on the basis of being a religious organization of Christian persuasion. We set out to change the status and it became a rather long drawn out conversation with the IRS. Our initial appeal to have the status changed from 501(c)3 to 501(c)2 (I think that's the tiny number difference!) was denied. FCM simply could not receive the recognition at that point based on its structure. Over several months of conversation with the IRS reviewer in Texas I learned that if we were listed in the National Council of Churches directory as a church, the IRS would re-allocate us. Consequently, we applied for inclusion in the National Council of Churches only to be relegated to the section on religious organizations. True, this was a step in the right directions, but the process of being recognized as a church was quite circular. The National Council would list FCM as a church if it were recognized as a church by the IRS. The IRS would recognize FCM as a church if it were listed in the National Council's directory under churches!

The IRS contact in Texas suggested that FCM found its own church, include the present FCM organization under it and reapply. There was simply no way that was ever going to happen. About this time we learned about the International Council of Community Churches (ICCC). This group, too, had originally not been large enough to qualify for membership in the National Council of Churches. They were primarily small, independent, fundamentalist churches loosely connected by the term community. I contacted this organization and found out that we could indeed become a member. In this way we entered the National Council of Churches through the back door, so to speak, since ICCC was now listed as a church in the National Council's directory. Bill Manseau and I began to study this directory pretty carefully at this point trying to see how FCM could qualify as a non-creedal church. There were several listed, but one of our big problems again was number of members. However, we did set about the task of defining FCM in such a way, through affiliated communities and chapters to increase the numbers served by FCM members. Shortly after we began this task, Ed became more incapacitated and we resigned our position as FCM secretaries. I was delighted to learn, this many years later, that the effort to be recognized as a church has finally been achieved.

Packy Young became unable because of illness to continue as treasurer. We advertised in *Diaspora* for a treasurer and Roger Fecher stepped forward to take the position. What a gift that was since Central Office had in fact been serving as treasurer for FCM, too. Roger brought with him many years as CFO of various colleges. He took over the books and soon developed a first class system of accounting for FCM. The membership dues, deposits still remained with Central Office, but we had separated the

two positions once and for all. Roger's work put FCM on sound financial grounds for the first time ever. Ed even got his checkbook back!

The annual dues gathering was one of the banes of my existence! Even today I can recall the names of folks I had to keep tracking down for, in some cases, the whole year. One gentleman called annually to obtain *faculties*. For those not in the know, *faculties*, I learned from Ed, is the permission of a local bishop to function as a minister in his diocese. For weeks after that first phone call, Ed would refer to me as bishop Judy. Nothing could ever be further from the truth.

Finally, the Circle with strong emphasis from Tom Leonhardt said, enough of this. We agreed that we would send out the annual dues letter in September (or, maybe early October) together with the Annual Report form. The letter clearly stated that dues were due and payable by December 31<sup>st</sup>. After that there was a late fee attached to delinquencies. The first year was a bit of a joke since folks who paid late just paid their regular dues amount. Any number of certified men informed us via a note that they never had to complete an annual report in their previous ministry (aka catholic priest). However, the vice presidents were wonderful during this period. They worked at length to track down the delinquents and explain the need for completing the Annual Report with varying degrees of success.

After a year or two, the Circle agreed that anyone who had not renewed by the due date, would be dropped from membership and told to reapply. To keep from reinventing the wheel, I maintained a database of dropped members so that I could quickly reinstate them when the regional vice president advised me to do so.

During those years, there were a number of fringe members. They were not active members in the sense of being connected with local groups or even the national group. Many were resigned priests who heard they could perform weddings if they received certification from FCM. These men would join for a year in order to receive those *faculties* to perform weddings and then move on. In 1997 it was worse since there were frequent requests for temporary certification to do an upcoming wedding.

Eventually the Circle set up a certification process that was professional, took place twice a year during the Circle meetings and only at that time. Temporary certification became a thing of the past which furthered the process of professionalism. The certification process itself included a letter or essay from the candidate describing the member's ministry and how certification would enhance the ministry. Each vice president presented the region's candidates for certification with a recommendation for or against certification, usually as an email ahead of the Circle meeting. At the Circle meeting Circle members read the reviews, ministry understanding and letters of recommendation from three ministry colleagues, one of whom needed to be a member of FCM. The professional FCM minister was evolving. The later process of endorsement further defined a member as a professional minister who completed a more deeply defined notion of ministry.

One of my treasured memories of FCM is the members themselves. I sat in awe each year as I read and filed the annual reports, often accompanied by personal letters. The membership is composed of selfless, empathetic people dedicated to the service of others. These members serve not only the spiritual needs of others, but quite frequently are involved in movements dedicated to food, clothing, shelter. Peace and justice has always been a strong movement within FCM and some members were imprisoned because of these activities. I recall sending the newsletter for several years to a member housed in federal prison in Dakota.

During the nearly eight years that Ed and I served as Central Office, we spoke in person, on the phone, or via email with literally hundreds of members. We shared in their joys, successes and, at times, their failures. Over the years, a number of FCM members found their way to our home and into our hearts. And, finding 1905 Bugbee Road was not an adventure for the faint of heart! There were so many people that could and probably should have been mentioned in this little reflection. I simply recounted names that went with the particular memory.

In 2005, Ed and I were unable, due to his progressing illness, to attend the February Circle meeting. Shortly after we resigned. It was time; our work for FCM was finished. FCM had strong professional leaders on the Circle who could move FCM forward. So, how to turn over Central Office? We were still secretaries of the Circle; Central Office where member services was housed. A couple of years prior to this, we had relinquished the newsletter into the capable hands of Becky David and her partner, Jennell, a graphic artist. The resulting newsletter was wonderful. That removed a large portion of work: editing, layout, folding, preparing labels, mailing the newsletter. Roger Fecher had taken on the work of working treasurer a couple of years earlier.

I began the transition by putting together a booklet with instructions for completing each task. We broke the job into secretary and member services. Deborah Burke agreed to serve as secretary and Carolyn Horvath and Tom Leonhardt took on the huge task of member services. All three came to Ionia for several days while I trained them in the various tasks which were all computerized.

After our resignation, FCM awarded Ed and me a lifetime membership. Ed had died in December, 2006 and I declined to accept the lifetime membership. It was not that I didn't love the people, the wonderful folks across the country who had been a part of my life for those years, it was simply that there was no reason for me to continue being a member. As I said at the outset, I am not a believer, not Christian, nor Jewish, nor Buddhist, nor anything. I saw my role as helping to establish FCM as a credible business. I believe I helped with this process.



## TENTH PRESIDENT

Bridget Mary Meehan  
1998 - 2004

5856 Glen Forest Drive

Falls Church, VA. 22041

May 8, 2013

To: Antoinette M. Marold, Chairperson

Chairperson of FCM

From: Bridget Mary Meehan, Past President, FCM

Dear Antoinette,

I am delighted to hear that FCM has been granted the status of Community of Churches. That is indeed a bold, brilliant and visionary move for the future of the Federation of Christian Ministries.

In 1996, I became a certified member of FCM. Shortly afterwards, I think it was in 1998 that I was elected President. Carolyn Horvath and Thomas Leonhardt were chairs. Bill Manseau, Judy and Ed Kalmanek were on the Circle with me. I was the second woman elected to this position in FCM's history.

I view the co-founding of Global Ministries University with Dr. Gerry Grudzen and Dr. Bill Manseau as one of our greatest accomplishments. I can still see Gerry, Bill and myself gathered in a small kitchen in the motel where we met that winter for our Circle meeting discussing the need for professional ministerial degrees that could provide a framework and solid foundation for contemporary ministers. We believed that FCM would support such an important professional, visionary institution. We wanted it to be affordable, visionary, credible, practical, and adaptable to busy lifestyles.

Our dream has not only come true, but flowered since then in so many ways. I am Dean of the Doctor of Ministry Program. Many of our Roman Catholic Women Priests have found GMU to be an excellent preparation for their ministry in a renewed model of priestly

ministry in an inclusive, egalitarian Catholic community. Online courses in theology, spirituality and ministerial practice as well as membership in FCM are an ideal preparation for priesthood today.

The other major accomplishment during my tenure as President was the adoption of the Ethics Code in the annual report to ensure accountability of our ministers to the public.

It has been a joy and privilege to serve FCM as president. I continue to be an enthusiastic supporter and proud member of this wonderful, professional network of diverse ministers who are companions and co-equals in a new paradigm of ministry that serves spiritual seekers today.

*Budget Mary Meehan*

Dr. Bridget Mary Meehan, ARCWP

[www.arcwp.org](http://www.arcwp.org)

703-505-0004

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Web Site:

[www.FederationofChristianMinistries.org](http://www.FederationofChristianMinistries.org)

FCM Discussion List:

[www.topica.com/lists/FCMList](http://www.topica.com/lists/FCMList)

To subscribe: send blank e-mail to

[FCMList-subscribe@topica.com](mailto:FCMList-subscribe@topica.com)

FCM List Manager:

[revsam@zianet.net](mailto:revsam@zianet.net)

Global Ministries University:

[www.globalministriesuniversity.org](http://www.globalministriesuniversity.org)

The next certification dates are February 7-9, 2003 during meeting of the Circle of Directors. If you plan to request FCM cer-



## **ELEVENTH PRESIDENTS**

**Clem DeWall and Eileen  
Mackin  
2004 - 2008**

### **Personal History in FCM**

*Clem De Wall*

This is my personal response to a request for my own recollections of the story of FCM during the time when Eileen and I were co-presidents, and for how I recall times of trial as well as triumph, along with what I considered to be my vision for FCM and its mission. I will concentrate on the various aspects of my vision for FCM and reflect on what influenced me.

Eileen and I joined FCM shortly after it was first organized, when it had the title of Society of Priests for a Free Ministry. We attended the national assembly in Phoenix, where married priests brought their wives and children. One of the purposes of the organization as we perceived it, was to help Roman Catholic priests in their transition out of their clerical careers into new ways to support themselves. As the name suggests, it was also a stepping stone to continue their ministry without the approval and permission of the Catholic Church. A “free ministry,” then, meant the freedom to celebrate mass and perform other sacramental functions, such as baptisms and weddings, independently of the Catholic Church.

The primary obstacle to practicing a free, independent ministry came from obtaining civil authority to officiate at weddings. In some states, such as New York, civil law had strict requirements. In my own state of Colorado there were no similar legal requirements. Consequently, the organization devised a process of certification, designed to give former Roman Catholic priests the legal authorization they needed to officiate at marriages. Along with many members, I became certified.

Since one of the aspects of my vision for FCM was for its theology, which I will go into later, I saw in certification a significant break with traditional Catholic theology. Catholic priests, while still functioning under the authority of Rome, could perform weddings only with faculties (i.e., specific ecclesiastic authorization) from their bishop; and in most cases weddings they might perform outside the boundaries of their assigned parish would be considered invalid without permission of the local pastor. Certification meant the rejection of ecclesiastical authority. My vision for FCM became one in which it would be willing to rethink if not reject Catholic dogma.



A later assembly we attended was in San Diego. What stands out in my memory is the tone of the assembly. The language of the business meeting was predominantly male, ecclesiastical and patriarchal. Leadership was still in the hands of former priests. We heard others voice the same perception. We also heard some express the concern that they did not want the organization to be one more of those dedicated to reforming the Catholic Church, but to have its own independent goals. I wanted to see an organization free of Roman Catholic theology and terminology, along with the recognition of women as equal to men.

In later assemblies we noted significant changes. Women became more prominent as officers and FCM began to attract a few Protestant ministers. Many local FCM groups were celebrating their own Eucharist, and these local liturgies, as well as those at the national assemblies, evolved from celebrations in which the whole community said the words of consecration, but with ordained priests present, to allowing women, whether ordained or not, to leading the Eucharist by themselves.

FCM was also attracting more and more members undertaking ministries that were not formal ecclesiastical or sacramental, such as operating homeless shelters, healing (such as Reiki), and running soup kitchens.

In 1993 I met Roméo di Benedetto in Montreal, where we each made presentations to a conference dedicated to ministry, spirituality and the paranormal. Roméo had been editor of *Diaspora*, but in his spiritual life he experienced visions and talk with angels and the deceased. He told me that because FCM has not been open to his experiences, he had left the organization. I told him that FCM appeared to be changing, but he did not believe it would ever happen. My conversations with Roméo helped form my vision of FCM as an organization that would be open and welcoming to all forms of spirituality, including those who had an experiential spirituality such as Roméo's.

Eileen and I put on the national assembly in Denver in 2001. Our vision was equality of all ministries and members, and we emphasized the healing ministries, with Saturday afternoon dedicated to experiencing the services of various kinds of healers in the Denver area.

The vision of equality of members and ministries was a fundamental principle when we became co-presidents. Shortly after taking office I revised the leaflets designed to inform prospective new members about FCM and certification. It was clearly stated that all members and their ministries were recognized as equal. If my memory is correct, I spelled out that membership was offered regardless of one's gender, creed, or sexual preference (orientation). It was already the policy that certification did not give an FCM member a distinct status of membership. From the word "certification" and from the report which I had to make as a certified member, it was clear to me that certification was not the conferring of a special status or different form of membership, but simply the recognition that one had met the requirements to perform one's professed ministry. And certification was not a requirement to be an FCM officer.

One of the topics discussed by some was whether or not one had to be a Christian to be a member of FCM. Some suggested that FCM should change its name to “Federation of Community Ministries.” I know of no objections to a non-Christian joining FCM in spite of its name, but Eileen and I had the opportunity to ask a non-Christian for an opinion. We were introduced to a Buddhist woman heavily involved in social work in the Denver-Boulder area. Her work could be called a ministry, and we were acquainted with a number of Christians who were attracted to the practice and teachings of Buddhism. I began to question what Christianity had to offer to Buddhism.

From our conversation we realized that there could be any number of reasons why a Buddhist would have no attraction to Christianity, even though Christians were often strongly attracted to Buddhism. One, it seemed, was that the Christian churches most often present themselves as superior to any other religion. Consequently, part of my vision for FCM was that its underlying theology would eliminate all vestiges of hierarchy, in which the ordained receive special powers and pass them on, and even the implicit idea that a baptized Christian is somehow superior to others who are not baptized.

I wanted to see a theology that explored the spirituality found not only in Christianity but in other religions as well.

Our hope for FCM to make some kind of ecumenical outreach to non-Christian religions was revived when FCM gave an award to one of its members for establishing an organization for exactly this purpose. I believe he was a married Jesuit priest from India living in one of the Midwest northern states. However, from what I remember, financial problems forced the end of this project. Ecumenical outreach never again became a part of FCM’s national agenda, although it may have become a practice somewhere on the local level.

At one of the assemblies I attended before becoming president, I attended a workshop in which we were asked for suggestions for FCM. I offered the thought that a basic need of FCM was its own theology. To my surprise, this was embraced by nearly everyone in the group.

As my thoughts evolved on this idea, I saw the need for a theology that would be truly ecumenical and hold as a basic tenet not only the equality of religions but the equality of all persons as God’s children. This would mean a theology removing the last vestiges of Catholic doctrine and terminology, which were still present long after the assembly at San Diego. I never wanted to reject those who still embraced Roman Catholicism or its dogmas, but I wanted those who took an alternative path to be equally accepted. I wanted all theological viewpoints to be equally respected and accepted, both on paper and in practice.

As president I advanced the idea of developing a theology for FCM. The proposal did gain support, and to avoid imposing my opinions, an FCM member volunteered to work with me and come up with an acceptable outline or structure that FCM could adopt.

My vision of theology for FCM was not to create a new creed. Instead, I wanted to lay out principles behind the formation of theology, giving the sources on which a theology could legitimately be based: namely, scripture, history, biblical language and interpretation, archeology, psychology, science and personal experience, including near-death experiences, out-of-body experiences, past-life regressions, dream and the paranormal. I wanted to give FCM members alternative ways to build their own theology to support their own individual ministries, while accepting diverse outlooks on equal terms.

Part of my vision was to get FCM members to recognize what their theology already was. FCM had always had some kind of operating theology or theology in practice, even when it was determined by its practice rather than by its research.

I believe the Circle did receive a couple reports from the volunteer for this project, but there were never any substantial results.

In the meantime, in order to foster religious and theological study among members, I distributed DVDs on various subjects to the vice presidents who wanted them. The idea was to offer them to their members to use as topics of discussion in local meetings. Only a few vice presidents experimented with DVDs, and within a short time they were returned and no longer used.

I also used the regular president's articles in *Diaspora* to propose theological ideas. The feedback I received was minimal, with no indication that my articles had any widespread effect.

While in office there seemed to be two movements that were being advanced. One was to extend the authority of FCM to recognize the ministry of those in various kinds of chaplaincies, including hospital and especially military. I was not opposed to this policy, and on one occasion the Circle voted down the requested budget for this purpose; and I was able to have the request for funds brought up again for a vote and be passed.

The other movement was directed to redefining FCM as a church. The purpose of this was, as I perceived it, to make it possible for FCM to have the authority to sponsor military chaplains. I was opposed to this, since FCM had never considered itself to be a church, and rewriting the constitution would not make it so. Further, we had a couple in our region that wanted certification as recognition of their ministries in a nursing home and as a fire department chaplain. But they were already dedicated members of their own Protestant church, and would not have wanted membership in FCM to be taken as membership in another church. While in office the movement toward presenting FCM as a church seemed to fade, and it was being replaced with a greater emphasis on churches as being members of FCM.


In my vision of equality of members and ministries, I wanted all ministries to be given assistance and attention. While in office I introduced a proposal to create two new offices on the Circle. One would coordinate or oversee certified ministries; the other would coordinate and try to

provide resources for those in other ministries. I felt that much attention was being given to the ministries of those certified and in traditional or sacramental ministries, while not much attention was being given to ministries such as healing. My vision for FCM was one of equality of all members and ministries. I wanted this recognition to be not just lip service, but also in the way FCM used its financial and personnel resources. This resolution passed, but within a short time it was reversed, because I could not come up with job descriptions exact enough for the Circle, and the Circle was not willing to experiment. Later on the Circle did establish a new office to take care of the business of certification.

There was one success in my presidency that in some ways I consider noteworthy. After some persistence, Eileen and I did succeed in promoting ongoing communication among the vice presidents. We encouraged them to schedule a regular meeting with each other at the Circle meetings, and to keep in touch with each other between Circle meetings to share what was successful and what was not.

30 April 2013

### Circle of Directors - May 2004

D I A S P O R A			
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## Circle of Directors - September 2005

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**DIASPORA**

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**CERTIFICATION**

The next certification date will be posted in future Diaspora's. Please check back for more information.



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## TWELFTH PRESIDENTS

Thomas and Michaelita Quinn  
2008 - 2014

Our appointment began at the close of the 2008 Joint Conference in Boston. We had just co-chaired this conference of four organizations which replaced the annual FCM Assembly that year and which registered nearly 300 participants, a big number for any one of the four organizations alone.

What began next was a busy six years as FCM Co-Presidents from 2008 to 2014. We will attempt to summarize the major highlights during this period for FCM, for the Circle of Directors, and for us.

### FCM Vice Presidents

Having just completed seven years as FCM Co-Vice Presidents for the Northeast Region, we felt we could lend support to newly-elected Vice Presidents. Because all five FCM regions had new Vice Presidents in the first two years of our presidency, we started frequent conference calls with the entire group and scheduled meetings prior to each FCM Annual Assembly. This forced us to formalize procedures and guidelines, send an agenda before each call and meeting, and record discussions and procedures in minutes of each conference call/meeting.

Six years later, these conference calls are scheduled only once between Circle meetings and the earlier in-person meetings prior to Circle meetings are now held by conference call. FCM currently has an unusually strong group of Vice Presidents.

### Strategic Plan

When we were still Vice Presidents in 2007, FCM was ready for a new period of growth. The then-Chair of the Circle Paul Reithmaier asked Michaelita to lead



the Circle in a strategic planning process to develop a focus and give direction. Thus began a formal process that involved the entire FCM membership in creating a foundation for the next several years. Together we wrote a Mission statement that was adopted in 2008. In 2009, FCM had a Vision statement, five Strategic Goals, an Organizational Goal, and a Membership Goal. Several Objectives, or action steps, were developed to reach each Goal. We also agreed on eight Programs and 10 Services.

The first written three-year Strategic Plan was launched in July 2009. Status reports and more detailed planning were on the agenda of each Circle meeting throughout the three years. The FCM membership was continuously updated about the process and progress. By July 2012, the priorities set for the first three years had been met, except for a few Objectives still in process. An interesting result was discovering that all of the Objectives that were not chosen as priorities had also been started, were ongoing, or were completed during the "normal course of doing business". During a period of evaluation by the Circle of the process and the results, a consensus was reached that the Strategic Plan had, indeed, provided a focus and clear goals for FCM.

The Circle decided to proceed with another three-year Plan and a new survey was sent to the entire membership. During 2013, the Circle read and considered all the responses to the membership survey. Clearly, the FCM members had grown and developed even as the FCM organization had moved forward. By 2014, the second Strategic Plan will be completed providing direction for the next three years.

### Marketing Plan

The Membership Goal of the first Strategic Plan included developing a marketing plan to make FCM more visible and to attract new members. In early 2011, the first Marketing Plan laid out written strategies, measures, and leaders focused on the two overall goals in the Plan. Each year, these Plan steps were specific and actionable. A Marketing budget was added to the overall FCM budget to support the Plan. During the Circle's evaluation of the entire Strategic Plan, a decision was reached to continue the Marketing Plan with annual updates.

A major support to marketing FCM was Chairperson Antoinette Marold's creation of two large floor banners.

### Commissioning

The first and perhaps most important Strategic Goal in the Strategic Plan was to “Provide for commissioning and endorsement of members.” In 2010, the long-used term of “certification” was changed to “commissioning” to adopt the language of most other religious groups. Commissioned members of FCM are authorized to minister in the name of FCM in a process that may be renewed annually. The application and renewal processes and requirements were also strengthened. A commissioning ceremony was added and became public at each annual FCM Assembly. An insert describing commissioning process was created to accompany the FCM brochure already developed. The maintenance of official commissioning and endorsement (discussed below) applications was moved to the FCM Central Office.

In 2014, the level of education/training to be required for applicants is still in process and a Commissioning Polity Manual is near completion. Joe Ruane led this effort since 2009 as Commissioning Chair. Joe was followed by Bill Manseau as Interim Chair, and then Tony Ercolano was appointed in 2013 as permanent Commissioning Chair. In 2014, nearly 80% of FCM members were commissioned.

### Endorsement

Still focused on the first Strategic Goal to “Provide for commissioning and endorsement of members,” work began on an Endorsement Polity Manual which was completed in 2011. Endorsement authorizes FCM commissioned members to function as chaplains, pastoral counselors, or clinical pastoral educators. Requirements for applicants for endorsement were strengthened, including a background check. Later, in 2014 background checks were required for those applying for commissioning, a basic requirement for endorsement, eliminating this need in the endorsement process. Relationships with professional endorsing bodies were further developed and a brochure was created for marketing.

In 2011, Bill Manseau, who had led the development of the endorsement process for FCM, recommended a separate position on the Circle for the next leader. That same year, Christy Howard-Steele was appointed Chair of Specialized Ministries and Carl Yusavitz became Vice Chair. Christy and Carl further improved the endorsement process and connection with national endorsing bodies. In 2014, there were more than 50 FCM endorsed members, up from four prior to 2008.

### Women Priests

In addition to chaplains seeking endorsement as an increased source of new FCM members, so also were the women priests. Since the first ordination of women on the Danube in 2002, the Roman Catholic Women Priests renewal movement within the Catholic Church has spread across the U.S. Their mission is to ordain women to be Roman Catholic priests. However, the women bishops, priests, and deacons needed FCM commissioning to officiate at weddings which would be recognized by civil authorities. As their numbers grew, so did their membership in FCM.

In 2014, of the 111 women bishops, priests, and deacons in this country, over half of them were commissioned members of FCM. Vice Presidents attend these ordinations and present the ordinands with the gift of a one-year membership in FCM.

### FCM: A Convention of Churches

Although the Organizational Goal of the Strategic Plan stated, “Strengthen FCM’s internal structure to better serve members,” only one of the 11 Objectives was singled out as most important in 2009. The focus to “Clarify FCM as an entity” centered on FCM becoming an association or convention of churches. Work began to craft changes to the Constitution and By-Laws, most specifically to include groups as members, such as faith communities, churches, and service groups. These amendments were voted on at the Circle meeting and by the membership in 2011. Once the amendments were incorporated into the Constitution and By-Laws, an official application was submitted to the IRS in 2012 for FCM to become a convention of churches.

In 2013, the IRS changed the status of FCM to a “convention of churches”. FCM is now a religious body and its commissioned members are now clergy. Tom Cusack, then-Treasurer of FCM, led this important task of developing the amendments and preparing the submission to the IRS. FCM notified the office which publishes the Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches to change FCM’s listing to the “U.S. Religious Bodies” section.

### Group Members

When FCM was designated as an association or convention of churches, faith communities which included at least one FCM member were invited to join. Within weeks, 12 communities or groups applied and were accepted. A new FCM application for group membership was created as was a certificate of

membership and a group member renewal report form. The FCM membership list uncovered 62 intentional faith communities in 20 states. Some were in existence for 30 years, others only one year. Some communities had 6 members, but a church had 1500 members. The FCM Newsletter began to feature a profile of a faith community in each issue in early 2012. Guidelines for Forming a Local Faith Community were created and a group member brochure was developed.

Tom Quinn, then FCM Co-President, played the leadership role in coordinating the various aspects of implementing the group membership intent of the convention of churches designation. In 2014, there were 19 faith communities who were FCM group members and the first meeting for all faith groups was included as a pre-Assembly session.

### Denominational Concerns

Prior to 2008, the Denominational Concerns program of FCM included two subgroups: the Roman Catholic Faith Community Council and the Interfaith Council. Each group focused on areas of interest to its committee members. Later, the Ministry of Compassion program was added with a mission to provide support to veterans and their families. The most active of these areas was the Roman Catholic Faith Community Council which became an organizational member of Catholic Organizations for Renewal (COR) and the International Federation for a Renewed Catholic Ministry (IFRCM). FCM is also represented at Call to Action (CTA), Voice of the Faithful (VOTF), SOA Watch, and CORPUS annual conferences where FCM materials are displayed.

Recognizing the increased activity among the Denominational Concerns area, the position of Chair of Denominational Concerns was added to the Circle in 2013. Tom Cusack was appointed Chair replacing Bill Manseau who had developed this area. In 2014 Pam Spence became the Chair of the Interfaith Council following Malcolm Nazareth's leadership. Russ Ditzel continued as director of the Ministry of Compassion program. Co-chairing the Roman Catholic Faith Community Council were Tom Cusack, Tom Quinn, and Evelyn Hunt.

### FCM Annual Assemblies

Since its earliest years, an annual Assembly has called FCM members together. This custom has continued to rotate across the five FCM regions with the Vice President of each region responsible for planning and executing the Assembly when in his/her region. Interesting formats and programs have attracted

members from across the country. In 2013 the Annual Assembly held in Philadelphia was also a celebration of FCM's 45 years of existence.

### **FCM Newsletter**

Also from its very early years, FCM produced a newsletter on a regular basis. Called Diaspora, the newsletter featured the current list of the Circle of Directors, photos of FCM members and events, and articles of interest to its members. By mid-2006, the Diaspora appeared in color having been printed black and white since its inception. A contest in 2010 ended with a change in name to FCM Newsletter. By then regular features included reports from each regional Vice President, a "Chair's Column", "From the President's Desk", articles from members, and a list of the Circle of Directors and staff positions. The bi-monthly publication also marketed the upcoming Assembly.

Deborah Burke led the changes in format, color, and content since 2006. During her tenure, the FCM Newsletter ceased to be mailed in hard copy to each member, being replaced by an electronic version in 2011. In 2013, John Polanski became editor of the FCM Newsletter.

### **Use of Technology**

During the years of our presidency, the use of technology took a big leap. The FCM website was upgraded and enhanced to include Paypal for membership renewal, expanded Ministry Listing by state, a separate page for each regional Vice President, a Members Only area and other improvements. Constant Contact was added as a vehicle for communicating frequently with all members. LinkedIn allowed members to network among themselves, and Facebook kept news current.

Then-Chairperson Antoinette Marold gave FCM all these technology advances using her creativity and experience. In 2013, the Circle of Directors decided to create the position of Communications Director to continue these advances.

### **Growth of FCM**

During the six years of our presidency, membership in FCM increased from 364 individual members in 2008 to 450 individual members in 2013, a 24% growth. New members were added each year and former members returned to FCM involvement. Twenty faith communities joined as members. We predict that FCM will continue to grow because it will meet the needs and interests of its members who give of themselves in a wide range of ministries.

### Personal Reflection

When we first became Co-Presidents, we missed the individual contact with FCM members in the Northeast Region whom we had gotten to know during our seven years as Co-Vice Presidents. But we were soon fully immersed in our new job and soon discovered it required a substantial investment of time and energy, something that continued for the six years in that role.

In collaborating with the entire Circle of Directors, we were encouraged by the genuine team effort shown, especially when developing the Strategic Plan. We were working toward a common goal. It became a pleasure to create something with highly professional people committed to a purpose and a goal. Throughout our six years, we always felt that each Circle member was making his or her own special contribution to the work of FCM.

Through meetings we attended, documents we read, leaders of other similar organizations whom we met, we became far more knowledgeable about movements across the larger religious and ministerial world. We enjoyed meeting and working with people with backgrounds similar to ours and different from ours. This helped us to think beyond our own FCM world and relate to the bigger picture of ministry.

We do believe we made a contribution to FCM as we intentionally used our professional backgrounds, experiences, and talents. Over our six years, we helped improve FCM's foundation organizationally through new procedures, systems, and programs. We see this as enabling the next Circle team to move forward on the important mission and vision level.

As we leave this position, we carry with us a very positive feeling. Most importantly, we take with us wonderful and lasting friendships. It has been an honor to serve.

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## Circle of Directors - February 2009



Left Back: Thomas Cusack, Treasurer; William Murnion, Northeast V.P.; Carolyn Horvath and Thomas Leonhardt, FCM Membership Coordinators and Central Office; Michael Keefe, Mountains and Plains V.P.; Virginia Graf and Robert Graf, Southern Co-V.P.s; Tom Stricker, Great Lakes V.P.; Carl Yusavitz, Specialized Ministries.....Middle Row Left: Antoinette Marold, Chairperson; Mary and Nick De Los Reyes, Pacific Co-V.P.s.....Front Row Left: Michaelita and Thomas Quinn, Co-Presidents; William Manseau, Director at Large; Mary Ann Cejka, Secretary



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*The President's Desk, continued from page 1*

**Program** for members entering ministry, seeking further knowledge, or meeting a ministerial requirement. FCM partnerships will be of value here.

Many of you have asked for ways to be in touch with each other, especially those in the same ministries, and to exchange ideas. For example, chaplains would like to share experiences with other chaplains. A **Ministry Network Program** is needed to respond to this need.

For members interested in various spiritual or religious affiliations, the **Denominational Concerns Program** already functions through the Roman Catholic Faith Community Council and the Interfaith Council. This committee wishes to further develop these Councils.

The existing **Peace and Justice Program** is in the initial stage of assisting members by disseminating programmatic ideas. This Program would like to assess how many and what kind of peace and justice initiatives already exist across FCM communities.

Which of these Programs or Services interest you? **Let us know by January 31** so that we can discuss them at the next Circle of Director's meeting in early February. Just email us at [president@FCMmail.org](mailto:president@FCMmail.org) and we'll be in touch. ☺

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## Circle of Directors - February 2010



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## ENDORSEMENT FOR SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES PROGRAM

Qualified FCM members may apply for "Religious Body Endorsement" for the specialized ministries: Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling, and Clinical Pastoral Education. Such endorsement is required by professional certifying organizations and many institutional employers. The FCM Circle of Directors acts on endorsement applications twice yearly. Endorsement application materials are available for downloading on the FCM website at [www.federationofchristianministries.org](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org) Inquiries may be made at [specmin@fcmmail.org](mailto:specmin@fcmmail.org)

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## Circle of Directors - February 2011



Standing Left & Back Row: Tom Leonhardt and Carolyn Horvath, Central Office and Membership Coordinators; Robert Graf, Southern Co -V.P.; Tom Stricker, Great Lakes V.P.; Patricia and Paul Stubenbort, Northeast Co-V.Ps.; William Manseau, Director at Large; Nick De Los Reyes, Pacific Region Co-V.P.;(behind) Michael Keefe, Mountains and Plains V.P.; Joyce McFadden, Secretary; Carl Yusavitz, Vice-Chair Specialized Ministries; Michaelita and Thomas Quinn, Co-Presidents....  
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### FCM Central Registry

The FCM Central Registry for **Baptism, Marriage and Holy Union** is managed by Paul Reithmaier, 7415-K, Triwoods Dr., Shrewsbury, MO 63119. **All Baptisms must be registered.**

Forms are now available on line at [www.federationofchristianministries.org](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org) Register online or download a PDF file, complete it and mail or email it to Paul, [registry@FCMmail.org](mailto:registry@FCMmail.org)

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## Circle of Directors - February 2012



Left Standing: Christy Howard Steele, Chair Specialized Ministries; Mary and Nick De Los Reyes, Pacific Co-V.P.s.; Tom Stricker, Great Lakes, Co-V.P.; Virginia Graf, Southern Co-V.P.; Amy Simpson Bennethum, Great Lakes Co-V.P.; Thomas Quinn, Co-President; William Manseau, Director at Large; Michael Keefe, Mountains and Plains V.P.; Paul Stubenbort, Northeast Co-V.P.; Fernando Serna, Thomas Cusack, Treasurer; Seated from the left: Antoinette Marold, Chairperson; Michaelita Quinn, Co-President; Robert Graf, Southern Co-V.P.; Carolyn Horvath, Tom Leonardt, Central Office and Membership Coordinators; Patricia Stubenbort, Northeast Co-V.P.; Kenneth Knapp, Secretary; Carl Yusavitz, Vice Chair Specialized Ministries

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Thank you to the Presidents, Judy Kalaminek, past Secretary and Central Office, and Deborah Burke, past Secretary of FCM and Editor of the Diaspora and Newsletter for their contribution to this FCM President's History.

Thank you to Patricia Stubenbort and Paul Stubenbort, Co-Vice Presidents of the Northeast Region who put together a great DVD with some highlights of FCM's history for the FCM Assembly in Philadelphia, July of 2013.

We are confident that the years to come will bring exciting news from the FCM presidents.

As we look forward to celebrating the 50th. Anniversary of FCM in 2018.....May we remain a strong, supportive community for each other.

Wishing you Many Blessings,

Antoinette Marold  
FCM Chairperson 2007-2013