

The Way Forward #5

November 1, 2007

Dear brethren in Christ,

The peace and joy of the Lord be with you!

Given the reality of a split within CFC, the choice to our brethren has become clearer. There is the CFC-GK under the IC (Int'l Council) and there is the CFC-FFL. While there are those who say they will not choose because they are for unity and thus will stay put for the moment, staying put means staying with the IC. Thus, not to choose is already to choose. But then there are those who actually have chosen a third option, which is to be "independent," at least for the moment, by not recognizing or affiliating with either CFC-GK or CFC-FFL. This is a bold move which we respect, though we hope that this is a momentary choice, while waiting for further developments.

What is the difference between CFC-GK and CFC-FFL?

The IC has consistently and emphatically said that GK remains as its pillar, and thus an integral part of its life and mission. Thus CFC-GK is still committed to building 700,000 houses by 2010 (GK777), to nation building (the Philippines), and to raising one million heroes (GK1MB). According to GK News, as of August 2007, GK has built more than 24,000 houses in over 1,000 communities. This is after almost 4 years. Thus for the next 3 years GK will need to build almost 676,000 homes. That means that this work will only get much more intense.

For its part, CFC-FFL will emphasize its original charism of family life renewal and evangelization. This is its first priority. But it will not neglect the social dimension. Aside from prison ministry, CFC-FFL will also build communities among the poor. It will set up "restoration villages." This work however will be different from GK in the following ways:

- It will not be as intense in numbers. It will certainly not sidetrack our authentic charism of family life renewal.
- We will openly proclaim Christ and our identity as CFC. We will have prayer and Christian symbols (e.g., crucifixes) at our villages and our activities.
- We will not enter into partnerships that violate our Catholic values and principles.
- CFC-FFL members will not be burdened by excessive fundraising.
- We will work closely with the Church (dioceses and parishes).

The priorities of the two CFCs are thus very clear. To sum up:

<u>CFC-GK</u>	<u>CFC-FFL</u>
Emphasis on social (GK).	Emphasis on spiritual (family & life).
Build a nation.	Build God's kingdom.
Focus on heroism.	Focus on holiness.
Inward look to the Philippines	Mission outlook to other countries.
GK as non-sectarian.	Total work overtly Catholic.

If GK, as a pillar of CFC, had not veered away from God's intent, then we would still be united today. However, given the importance of work with the poor, we can understand CFC-GK's continuing with GK777. We admire its passion to help the materially poor. With the clear difference in emphasis between CFC-GK and CFC-FFL, then our brethren can follow their heart and decide what is God's call to them. We go our separate ways, free from the conflict generated by the tension between CFC and GK.

But even as we go separate ways, might we not still be united in some way? As I had previously proposed, which I again reiterate, why not have one CFC but with two branches? This way we remain as brethren, but with our respective emphasis and priority. This way we adequately cover the two important dimensions of the gospel—the spiritual and the social, without generating internal conflict. This way we are able to follow our heart without reservation, and even be able to bless each other.

It remains for the IC to reconsider its outright rejection of my proposal. But in the meantime, there is much work to be done. We in CFC-FFL are moving forward, and I invite all like-minded brethren to join us. We have an exciting time ahead of us.

God bless you.

In the service of Christ,

Frank Padilla