

CONTINENTAL EUROPE REPORT

Continental membership: The following are the current active ICCFM member countries in Europe:

- Hungary
- Italy
- Malta
- Portugal
- Slovak Republic
- Spain

In a number of other countries, there are groups meeting and using the CFM Observe-Judge-Act method, but who are not yet full members of the ICCFM.

These include:

- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Romania

Main events July 2004-June 2007

- The main event during the past three years was without doubt last year's 5th CFM European Congress held in Cheste, near Valencia, in Spain. The theme of the Congress was "25 Years of Familiaris Consortio".

The organization was entrusted to the Spanish National Presidents, Enrique and Teresa Alonso Guardia and their hard-working team. Originally the Congress was planned to be held in Granada but when it was officially announced that the World Meeting of Families, planned by the late Pope John II, would be held in Valencia more or less during the same time as our Congress, it was decided to change the venue of the CFM Congress.

This was not an easy task for the organizers, but the Spanish organizing team managed to draw up a programme that very ably integrated the two events: the CFM Congress and the WMF.

The speakers at the Congress provided us with a very realistic picture of the present situation of the family in Europe, and they stimulated serious discussions on the subject. The participants also had the opportunity to take part in the activities in connection with the WMF: one such activity was the evening Family Rosary on the beach. And of course the highlight was the Sunday morning Mass celebrated by H.H. Pope Benedict XVI. It was a very moving experience that will not be easily forgotten.

We feel we must once more thank and congratulate Enrique and Teresa and their team for the hard work they put into the CFM Congress, ensuring its success. And we must also congratulate them for the excellent publication,

issue number 84 of their Boletin (September 2006), in which they gave a detailed report, accompanied by numerous photos, of the 5th CFM European Congress.

The final resolution of the Congress contained a number of appeals directed to CFM members themselves, and other appeals directed to the civil authorities of European countries.

As CFM members we pledged to pray for all families, to live with faith and hope the model of family as willed by the Creator, to defend and proclaim the true meaning of marriage as an inseparable union between one man and one woman, a union open to life. We also pledged to work closely with those institutions that promote this model of family, and, finally to work for the well-being of all families, especially those in difficulties.

Addressing the civil authorities of the various European nations, we insisted that they should respect and promote this model of the family, a model that has contributed so positively to our continent and to the whole world over the centuries. We also expect the law-makers to avoid the ambiguous use of the word 'marriage', and to legislate in favour of life, from its inception till death.

Communication with CFM member countries:

- In our absence, our friends Tony and Lily Gauci, paid two visits to Romania and made valuable contacts with the Ecclesiastical authorities on the possibility of setting up CFM groups there.
- Close contact is being kept with Lithuania and Latvia for the same purpose.
- Every year the booklet containing the monthly schemes/meeting plans used by CFM Malta are translated into English and sent to these Eastern European countries to be translated into their own native language.

Finally, we would like to officially announce – something that Balazs and Krizstina have already done – that the next European Continental Meeting will be held in 2009 in Hungary.

Report by:

George and M'Louise Sammut

Continental Europe CFM President Couple