

# National Report Malta

NATIONAL PRESIDENTS; ANTHONY AND MIRIAM SAMMUT  
NATIONAL CHAPLAIN; FR JOSEPH MIZZI

## 1. Membership

Based on the Constitution of ICCFM, membership is defined as follows

They are members of the Confederation of Christian Family Movements (CFM) even when they have other names if they satisfy the following basic requirements.

a they are organized in small groups of married couples, widows/widowers who search for genuine family communities and cooperate/work jointly with their chaplains to promote mutual growth/ development.

b. they meet regularly, participating in a formative process of seeing, judging (discerning) and actualizing the light of the Word of the Lord

c. they are witnesses and ministers of all families specially of those in difficult situations like the suffering and the poor.

Christian Family Movement (Gruppi Familji Nsara)

Number of active families. 600

Frequency of meetings once a month although some groups prefer to meet every two weeks

The national committee meets once a month or as often as needed. This committee is made up of a chaplain, a president couple and 5 couple members. The couple members are in charge of different sub-committees which cater for different aspects of the members' spiritual formation and social activities. At least once a year, besides an Annual General Meeting, the national committee holds separate regional meetings. This year special meetings were also held for leader couples of the groups in our search to increase the spirituality of our members. These meetings were lead by Fr Nicholas Cachia, the spiritual director of the Maltese seminary. To further deepen this search the national committee also held a day retreat with the aforementioned Fr Cachia. As part of the yearly calendar we also organize two meetings for all couple members, one in Advent and the other in Lent which were very well attended. These last two meetings were concentrated on the Priest and the Family, as part of the activities dedicated to the year of the Priest this year.

We have adopted some years ago, the Holy Family as the model for our families. So all the activities and work of CFM (Malta) – Gruppi Familji Nsara- is always centred round this aim, how our families can emulate the Holy Family of Nazareth.

One of the activities which CFM (Malta) organizes every year is the Annual General Meeting. As guest speakers at these events, we are very honoured to have the Archbishop of Gozo (last year) and the Bishop of Malta (this year). The fact that both bishops attended these meetings made our AGM meetings extra special ones and led to a marked increase in attendance. This year, before the AGM meeting, the national committee held a private meeting with the Archbishop in which we exchanged views and explained to the Archbishop our aims and how we were trying to reach these aims.

The deepening of the spirituality of married couples and the families as a whole, is the main focus of our agenda.

With the aim of encouraging each and every one of the CFM members to serve as witnesses that God is at work through our community of love and life, we as Christian couples, but more so as members of CFM, feel the need to radiate the joy of experiencing God's presence among us.

A core group has been formed which is further studying how to help the CFM members follow this model. This group, has been meeting regularly with Prof. Abela and our national chaplain Fr Joseph Mizzi, in order to further discover ways and means which can enlighten, increase and deepen the spirituality of our members. This group is aptly called "Come and see" (John 1,39 ) and has been meeting every month.

Each session starts off with the Lectio Divina. During the meeting we humbly ask the Lord to illuminate our minds to further enhance our own spiritual journey as well as that of all CFM members.

In line with the CFM method of See Judge and Act we are concentrating our programme on three basic principles which help us deepen our spirituality

- a) the call for discipleship
- b) the call for living of the sacrament of matrimony
- c) the call for our active presence in the community

In order to share this experience, our first initiative in this direction is the holding of information/prayer meetings for all leader couples. This consists in a series of talks and discussions with the leader couples who will then be encouraged to pass on this spiritual experience in their respective groups. We believe that deepening the spirituality of our members leads to families as a whole, increasing their spirituality. This will of course mean better families which will in the long run pass on by extension, this spiritual experience to all other families with whom they come into contact.

Furthermore, CFM (Malta) feels the need to tackle the tension between keeping the relationship between husband and wife strong, and being open to serve others in community. One of the actions which members of CFM (Malta) are committed to, is the

organization and running of marriage preparation courses throughout the year. This is for most of us a year long commitment as these pre-marriage sessions include the continuous training of the leader couples, who facilitate the groups of engaged couples. Regular courses for going steady couples are also being organized in some localities. Other members are committed to holding baptism preparation sessions for parents and godparents. A new project, which is still in the infant stage, is that member couples of CFM (Malta) are helping out their parish priest during regular family visits being held throughout the year.

Moreover, a good number of member couples give service in their own parishes by serving as ministers of the Eucharist, lectors, as catechists, and organizing spiritual gatherings

On the social side the national committee organizes a yearly day outing for all the family, to Gozo. This consists of a mass in one of Gozo's lovely churches, a visit to one or two interesting places, lunch in one of Gozo's good restaurants, a short time for rest and finally a visit to the Ta' Pinu shrine which this year was presented with a golden rose on the occasion of the Pope's visit to Malta. We were invited and attended the solemn mass celebrated by His Holiness, as representatives of CFM in Malta. In October another similar outing is organized to a different village or town in Malta. In summer a barbecue for the family is also organized in one of the seaside hotels in Malta which is usually also very well attended.

Great importance is given to the preparation, setting and printing of the booklet used during the monthly meetings as we believe this is the basis on which all our couple members conduct these meetings. A sub-committee lead by the president couple works very hard to produce this booklet each year. By means of this booklet we try to pass on what we are working on – instilling in our couple members this deepening of spirituality.

Thank you

Anthony and Miriam Sammut