CHRISTIAN FAMILY MOVEMENT
INDIA
NEWSLETTER

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CAMPING IN VYARA

It was Wednesday in Holy Week when eleven of us - youth from Orlem - took a train to Surat for a rural Mission Camp in Vyara, Gujarat, 60 kms.from Surat. While parishioners were preparing for the Holy Week Services, as we know them in Mumbai, we were anticipating a new experience in faith.

The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart met us at the station with their jeep and we piled into it, looking forward to the next few days. We were taken to the Anand Sagar Convent at Vyara which was our headquarters for the duration of our stay.

We would like to share with you our collective views.

We noticed at once that the Christians here had a different kind of faith. We found that their faith was simple and yet better and stronger than our own.
We take our faith for granted maybe because we are Christians by default.
We were really touched by the hospitality of the people and the nuns there.
They made us feel like film stars or celebrities.

The Holy Week Services were so unlike ours. People from all the surrounding villages came to take part in the solemn services. Each village was assigned a job and they did it with great fervour and respect. We loved the way the services were conducted, so unlike ours in the city. The villagers are adivasis who are known for their love of music and dance. They used dance and music to make the services meaningful for themselves. We were also impressed by the way they honor the Word of God during the services.

On Good Friday, the Way of the Cross was conducted live. We were very touched. We walked along with the people in a long procession. Each village along the way was a Station and every man took his turn to carry the heavy wooden cross. It was a four-hour walk, with the last station atop a mountain followed by the Good Friday service there.

We also visited a leprosy hospital in Surat, which was managed by the sisters. We were touched by the joy & contentment of the people living there. Many of them, even though healed, were rejected by their own relatives, yet lived more happily than most of us who have limbs. This was something we do not see anywhere. The way they prepared their food, though they had no limbs, was touching too.

It is very surprising to see the people happy and satisfied in spite of living without any modern luxuries which most of us take for granted. We complain about the little things which we don't have, or have & are never satisfied. This can be understood only when one actually visits the villages.

We, who have been through this beautiful experience, ask the parents of our friends to encourage their children to go on rural mission camps. We feel we are better people for having experienced Christian life in a rural area. We are sure Fr.Salu, our parish priest would help us organize many more such camps in the future.

We specially thank Fr.Mario Mendes, Sr.Catherine Fernandes, the Jesuit Fathers and CFMer Gwen DePenha for this enriching experience of a world so different from ours.

- *Leslie A., Milburn F. and the rest.*

LAUNCHING ANNAPURNA (contd.)

(This is in continuation of the article "Launching Annapurna" which appeared in our last Newsletter)

A recap……
Annapurna, a 35 year old visually impaired woman, victim of Meningitis fever. She lived with her husband and children, in her own home. However, her husband sold the house without her knowledge to pay off debts. Left on the streets, she and her children were forced to stay with her in-laws, who found the family a burden and threatened to throw them out. Her husband did not support the family. In fact he seldom came home in order to escape responsibility. Without any employment and no source of income, they lived on monetary aid and rations given generously by the CFM.

However ,CFMers realized that this was not enough and they needed to make Annapurna self-sufficient, and more importantly restore her dignity and self-worth, which had taken a tremendous beating in the last few years. As she was blind, the task of rehabilitating her became even more difficult. However, the CFM along with Prayatna persevered in their efforts and she was admitted to the National Association of the Blind (NAB), Worli, for a four month intensive in-house training program in making phenyl, liquid soap, candles, agarbattis, etc. During this time, the CFM continued their support to her family and her children were cared for. Annapurna completed her training on 30th of December 2003.

While Annapurna was at the NAB doing her training, her husband underwent regular counseling. He has made some attempts to change, but it will take time before he completely gives up his bad habits and takes on responsibility for his family.

On her return home, Annapurna wasted no time in starting the business of making phenyl (a disinfectant) and liquid soap. Her first customers were the CFMers. She was happy to be able to earn her own money at long last.

With the help of the CFM, Annapurna put her products – with labels especially made by a CFMer - on sale at the Sunday Bazaar on March 14, 2004, in the Church compound. She was proud of herself and so were all of us. A stall was put up with a banner especially made for this occasion. This gave her an opportunity to sell her products as well as gain some publicity by making our parishioners aware of her tremendous spirit. Despite her blindness and other misfortunes, she is trying her best to be self-sufficient and independent. All her savings are

deposited in the account which has been opened with the Prayatna Credit Society. The CFM is also involved in helping her obtain a PCO (public telephone booth), which will be sponsored by the NAB. Members are actively involved in pursuing this matter with the Municipality and the Transport Authorities.

With a loan from the Credit Society, Annapurna and her family hope to have a home of their own and, with God's help, a good livelihood. We are all looking forward to this.

Surely, the story of Annapurna would move the hardest heart - a true story of a blind woman, illiterate and downtrodden, determined to make a success of her life for the sake of her children.

May her tribe increase!

- Osie & Catherine Pereira,
Group III, CFM-Orlem

OBITUARY

Elma Muangkroot, lost her father in the Philippines in May,2004. Elma and Nop Muangkroot are the ICCFM President Couple. Elma writes:

"We buried him on May 22 and had the usual nine days of prayer, and it was a great comfort to see so many people pay their last respects to him and attend the prayers. Since we come from a small city and he was one of the framers of the present Philippine Constitution revised in 1971, he is considered one of Cebu City's great men. We miss him very much."

On behalf of all the CFMers in our country, we offer Elma, Nop and their bereaved family our sincere condolences and prayers for the departed soul.

May he rest in the peace of Christ.

- Agnel & Anette D'Cruz

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE IN THE CULTURE OF THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT

(CFMers from India put their heads together to answer the questionnaire on "Marriage and Family Life in the Culture of Our Country" for the ICCFM World Assembly in the USA in July 2004. The answers given below will be of interest to all our readers.)

Background:

India is a multi-cultural and multi-religious country with a host of customs, varying from region to region. Hinduism, being the dominant way of life, has influenced all other cultures and religions in the country, including Christianity.

I) In your country what are the cultural specific reasons that people marry?

In India, we have a closed society where generally, young people are not allowed to freely mingle with the opposite sex, resulting in most marriages being arranged by parents who consider it their sacred duty to marry off their children within their community/caste/religion, at times irrespective of whether the girl or boy is in a love relationship.

Monetary gain of the betrothed is given priority over love. Dowry plays an important part in the selection of a wife. Payment in cash and kind are given by way of dowry, depending on the profession of the groom. Demanding dowry is illegal and this practice is slowly changing particularly among Christians. The unmarried state is not generally accepted, unless it is chosen for religious purposes or to care for aged parents.

The birth of a son is welcomed and considered a great event. Daughters are considered a liability, mainly because of the dowry that has to be provided for her. A woman is expected to marry and produce a son for her husband. Sons are expected to provide a male heir to carry on the father's name/business and to keep wealth within the family.

Since marriage is considered sacred, couples living together outside marriage are frowned upon. Couples are married at an early age. Parents and older male members of the family consider it their responsibility to see that their children or siblings are 'settled' so that arranged marriages are not uncommon.

(II) What is the role of marriage and family within the culture of your country?

1. Marriage and family play a very important role in the culture of our country. Marriage is a highly respected institution which contributes to the stability of family life and society.
2. Even though the socio-structural pattern of India is in constant change, as elsewhere in the world, there is a relatively solid family life in India as compared to other parts of the world. Besides, community support, several customs and rituals performed by Hindus help to foster these bonds:

   * Raksha Bandan (promise of protection), is a festival day when sisters affectionately tie colourful bracelets woven from thread called 'rakhi'on the wrists of their brothers who, in turn, assure their sisters of their protection.

   * Karva Chauth is a day set apart when wives in the neighbourhood fast and collectively perform 'Puja' (religious ceremony) for the well being of their husbands.

   * During Diwali (the Festival of Lights), a day is set aside known as Bhau-Bhij. On this day brothers visit their sisters and exchange gifts and good wishes.

The joint family system, though disappearing in urban Indian society has a strong presence in rural India where the married sons along with their wives and children all live under one roof. The parents of the married sons play a dominant role in running the household and in decision-making. In urban areas, the nuclear family has emerged as a preferred system because of educated, working women and housing problems. Urban women have begun taking up professions like medicine, law, engineering and have come to hold equal status with men.
Cultural heritage and marriage, wedding ceremonies, etc. are held sacred both in the city and villages. Not only religion, but also the caste system has strong influence, so that boys and girls are often compelled to marry within those boundaries.

Traditionally, the institution of marriage is respected by all religions and supported by elders. However, modern day influences and the media have tended to undermine its sanctity. Other negative influences include globalisation - call centers and outsourcing – which necessitate odd hours of work for young adults and parents.

(III) What is the impact of Christian marriage on your culture?

Christians are less than 2.5 per cent of the total population of India which has crossed the 1 billion mark. As a tiny minority, Christians have not made a visible impact on the dominant culture. On the other hand, Christian families in India have been influenced by the age-old traditions and culture of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. These influences are more perceptible in states like Kerala which have a comparatively high Christian population of 20.56 per cent. Here the interaction between religious groups is greater.
Non Christians are edified by Christian marriage vows and prayers which they believe are truly meaningful.
Under the Indian Christian Marriage Act, the State recognizes and accepts the Church ceremony as a valid Civil marriage.
There is respect for Christian family life when others understand and experience how it is lived, especially since many associate the commitment and contribution by Catholics - in the field of education and healthcare - to their personal lives.
We may mention that the Christian educational institutions and the value systems they impart have made an enormous impact on peoples of all religions in our country.

(*IV) What impact do Government, Church and Culture have on marriage and family life in your country?*

The **Government** has tried to curb the growing population by popularizing family planning and encouraging the 2-child family norm. Attempts were even made at one time to compulsorily limit children to 2 per family. So far, except for civil servants and the armed forces, the State has not made many family friendly laws.

Earlier, the Divorce laws for Christians were considered to be one-sided, favouring the man. The Indian Christian Divorce Act has since been amended.

The Declaration of the Rights of the Child is still to be made effective.

The **Church's** influence on family life can be seen in the marriage preparation and other courses given prior to receiving the sacraments. Christian schools, through Christian education seek to consolidate family life. The Church is the foremost upholder of the sacramentality and permanence of marriage discouraging separations or divorce. However, very little help is available to individuals and families in distress. Neither do family movements and associations receive whole-hearted support and encouragement from the hierarchy.

The Church has liberalized annulment procedures with a view to express its concern and caring of the flock. In many cases, husbands and wives have made use of this fact to conspire with each other and build up their case for annulment before the Marriage Tribunal.

Culturally, we are in a period of rapid transition. Traditional values and customs are being challenged by the widespread influx of new and counter values. The sacredness of the family structure is deeply rooted in religion and is an adequate social response to the needs of a rural community. However, the slow but definite process of urbanization has brought into existence pressures leading to a variety of family patterns. Joint and extended families, mainly in rural and tribal areas (where children, handicapped members, widows and the aged found security and care) now co-exist with extended and nuclear western life-patterns.
Despite laws against these customs, child marriage and female infanticide are also prevalent among non-Christians in certain sections of the country.

Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code bans unnatural sex. The Gay movement is lobbying to reform this Section to legitimize the same sex partnerships. A small section of the Church is actively engaged in condemning homosexuality.

(V) What do you think marriage and family life would be like in the future?

In India as elsewhere, the Christian family cannot live its life apart from the influences of modern society. Since scientific and technological progress is bringing profound change to the world with increasing rapidity, all institutions including the family are facing an identity crisis. The pressures of the modern world tend to undermine the significance of family as the primary and fundamental cell of society. Light must, therefore, be thrown both on the family's importance in society and society's duty to enable the family to fulfil its proper role.

In earlier times the Indian family regarded as its responsibility the religious, moral and social education of its children. The family was sole caretaker of its aged members. Slowly these duties are being delegated to institutions outside the family unit (school, church, old age homes, etc.). Economic stress and strain forces both parents of many families to work. Therefore, parents are faced with time constraints which interfere with the building up of healthy relationships within the family. As a result, peace and harmony are missing in family life. The media brings foreign culture into our homes and new values, attractive, but unhealthy are replacing age-old, time-tested norms and attitudes.

Child abuse within the home has become common and so has suicide. Home is no longer the bulwark of security, love, sacrifice and good sense. There continues to be an increase in the number of failed marriages (about 10% in the Archdiocese of Mumbai) and many families are in deep distress with no help forthcoming. Single parenting and its adverse effects are aspects that need special attention and pastoral care.

Women today enjoy greater independence than before. Many mothers, even those with infant children work outside the home. This provides both economic and professional freedom as well as possibilities for contributing in a positive way to the progress of society. However, this implies that the care and education of children must be shared between the spouses or entrusted to teachers or outside institutions.

There are also several positive factors while looking to the future. Lay movements are actively working to strengthen the family as an institution and promote its responsibility to society. They encourage collaboration between family and school authorities. Others seek protection and advancement of legislation for the family; some support families in distress and promote certain standards and moral values. There are also those that foster family spirituality.

(VI) What is the true meaning of Christian marriage?

In the Bible, the marriage covenant is compared both with God's covenant with his people and with Christ's relationship with his Church. This is what gives Christian marriage its meaning and its pattern.
The indissoluble bond of the Sacrament of Matrimony confers graces on the couple to form a true relationship founded on self-giving love, complementariness, mutual respect, acceptance and growth. Prayer and worship should occupy an important place in marriage and family life.
The modern family needs to hear the good news about itself. There is holiness in the Christian family – a "Little Church" where the real presence of God is felt. Let us try to be visionaries and reflect on how we, as a Christian family, can consciously become domestic models for our Church.

- Compiled by Mel & Jean Rego
CFM-Bangalore.

AN EXERCISE IN TEAMBUILDING

Why are we not as closely knit as a group as we would like to be? How is that hindering our individual and collective growth? These were questions that the Group III of the Orlem, Malad unit of the CFM sought to address and answer through an exercise in Team building on May 1st 04. The session lasted just over 2 ½ hours and was conducted by M. Surendra an XLRI, Jamshedpur, graduate in Personnel & Human Relations and former VP Personnel & Training, UTI.

While we did achieve satisfactory results from the exercise, we realized that this was not an issue that could be addressed and resolved in a single session. One highly heartening realization was that everyone in the group was, without exception, strongly motivated by a common need - to build much closer relationships with each other based on increased levels of trust, caring and sharing. It was the first time in many months that we got a 100 % attendance and active participation from everyone.

Our group consists of 7 couples in their early thirties and early forties, who have been together for over 2 years. Our objectives as a group include building on Christian and Biblical values by

sharing our experiences at our monthly meetings. We also reach out to an underprivileged family, which involves monetary assistance coupled with an attempt to make the concerned family self-reliant at the earliest through some vocational/ skill based training. Though there was much camaraderie in the group, there was a feeling that it was not quite enough. We also felt that the trust levels in the group were not very high. This exercise in Teambuilding was undertaken to address these issues.

Objectives of the session

The session was organized with an objective:

- To make our group more closely knit
- And as one of the means to that end - to achieve agreement as a group on the following points
    1. Intent & Vision -Focus on what our goals and objectives as a group would be. To define the terms in as specific, measurable and time bound manner as possible. We believed that a team whose members are aligned with its purpose, feel a challenge in their task, have a strong sense of camaraderie, feel responsible for the outcome, and experience growth as a team and in their personal lives, and will tend to sustain motivation over the long haul.
    2. Rules - What are some of the rules we would like to draw for ourselves about group conduct, which should be acceptable to all members.
    3. Conflict resolution- We believed it is important to embrace conflict as an expected repeated occurrence and to hold it as an opportunity for creativity in how we deal with unanticipated specifics.
    4. Roles - Making sure someone has responsibility for all critical tasks. Assigning roles to different persons depending on their strengths /interests in a particular area.

The Process

Surendra started out the morning by discussing the Johari window, with its emphasis on self-awareness and tapping human potential. Different aspects of this subject were discussed and its relevance to group dynamics and behavior. How we could channelise the learning from this increased self and other awareness to bring the group closer together. Surendra's statement that we needed to treat each other as persons of unlimited potential (with lot of respect) and not be limited by the behavior of that person impressed all of us. This nurturing attitude, he said would help encourage each other's personal growth, which in turn would lead to the overall group growth.

We next went to a group dynamics game, which helped illustrate the positive effects of cohesive working in the group and negative effects of disconnected work. The session was very animated and the discussion quite heated. At the conclusion, we all agreed working synergistically like in the game would bring us close, help us achieve superior results and build a better team in the long term.

Surendra had to leave a bit early due to some sudden urgent commitments, but we continued our discussions for some time. We gave each other feedback, some positive, some negative, which helped us understand each other better.

Conclusion

Overall the expectations of the group were quite high from the session and these were met to a limited extent. However we did also realize the goals we had set were long term and could not be achieved in a single session. We realized that the journey was long and the destination far but the important take home from the session for us was that

1. There was clarity in understanding what we were trying to achieve
2. We had begun well (on our journey of teambuilding and unity) and 'well begun is half done' as the saying goes.
3. Everyone in the team was aligned to the group objectives
4. With time and consistency in purpose, we were confident of reaching our goals.
5. As we tasted success, we could share our story and our success with CFM groups here and elsewhere in the world as well.

This small summation is part of that endeavour, to share the small success we have had so far and to encourage other groups to undertake that journey as well

- *Dominic & Jocelyn Lobo*

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

Mumbai: The Orlem CFMers have kept themselves busy with various actions. In December 2003, they celebrated the Feast of the Holy Family along with the other family associations in the parish with an open air Mass for families, followed by a parish celebration.

In January 2004, CFMers organized the Mass for the Sick, Aged and Handicapped on the 15th.. On the 26th they organized and conducted the annual Sports for the children of the Lourdes Tamil School.

22nd February was Study Day for the three Orlem groups. A critical review was made of CFM work in the parish. Suggestions were made for better action and participation in parish activities.

On the 18th March, CFMers organized the Senior Citizens' Picnic which was well attended and brought a lot of joy and excitement to the elders of the parish.

On the 24th and 25th of April, CFMers took charge of the needlework stall for the Prayatna Income Generating Scheme. A good sale was made after each Mass.

The Senior Citizens enjoyed a social evening with the CFMers at the helm on the 5th June.
And on the 27th June a second Study Day was conducted for all the three groups. The CFM Chaplain, Fr.Mario Mendes, informed the CFMers what the parish had in mind in the area of family life programmes. CFMers were asked to help out and agreed to do so. Plans were made for CFM programmes for the next 6 months.

31st July was CFM Family Day. CFMers and their families had an evening of fun with games and dinner. This very enjoyable evening was organized and conducted by Group III.

CFMers of Groups II & III have rehabilitated two underprivileged families.

Group III have had several family meetings in which the children participate, enjoying the interaction with their parents and peers. Group III have also had a Teambuilding Session which they have found very helpful.

Bangalore: Conducted the SADE programme with Fr.Donnon Murray,ofm. An account of this event is elsewhere in this Newsletter.

MY EXPERIENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY MOVEMENT

Orlem CFMers share their experiences and hopes as they journey with the Christian Family Movement:

New friends. Helpful discussions on family life and other concerns, combined with actions that have helped us grow and reach out as a family.
- *John and Connie Sequeira*

Observe-Judge-Act has helped us lead truly Christian lives through actions of love and service to family and neighbours. The Scripture reflection has helped us discover and strengthen the link between the Gospel and daily life. CFM has been an immense help in raising our family and dealing with situations that come up in married life.
- *Xav & Irene Sequeira*

CFM means extended family with whom we can share our problems and difficulties and find solutions, confident that secrecy will be maintained and nothing will go beyond the CFM circle. Along with the other CFMers we have been able to make our contribution to the betterment of family life and the society in which we live.
- *Mark & Nancy Pinto*

CFM advocates that human beings develop best in family and community. Therefore, small groups of families working together for the betterment of family life and for the common good have greater potential to build a better world.
CFMers are advised to be doers of the Word and not merely hearers, i.e. they must build a better world grounded in Gospel values. CFM believes in promoting the dignity of every human being and aims at the development of couples, their families and others through building personal relationships and contacts.
- *Quintan & Odile Pereira*

The CFM consists of small communities of families whose members are open to, honest with and respectful of each other.
The building up of family life in homes and neighbourhood is the mission of the CFM which provides education, formation and support to members who in turn try to create an environment for their children to grow up in love and security. Reaching out to others is an integral part of the CFM.
- *Freddy & Maryanne Coelho*

The CFM has given us, as a family, the opportunity to reach out to underprivileged families and the sick and aged in our parish. It has taught me lessons in good parenting, spousal relationships and in caring for my aged mother-in-law. It has also helped me reflect on the meaning of Christ's love for us his children. (*Tommy*)
It has helped us become confident organizers of events for the parish and ourselves. CFMers are there for each other when the need arises. Both Tommy and I feel good to belong to a Movement that involves the entire family. I must add that the small group meetings conducted in our homes puts everyone at ease in the familiar, homely atmosphere. (*Gwen*)
- *Tommy & Gwen DePenha*

The years spent in the CFM have helped us grow in the understanding of the special mission that the Church entrusts to the laity and to the family in particular. The Observe-Judge-Act is an important part of this "growing up". It enables us to take Christ into every concern and area of life be it in the home, in the family, in the workplace. The CFM is the home base where we can reflect and work together to make the world a better place for all.
- *Agnel & Anette D'Cruz*

ALLOW JESUS TO TRANSFORM OUR HOMES

A house is a solid concrete structure but a home is a place where God, parents and children dwell, a place where every member shares happiness and fears and helps the other to get through those uncertain times. Present statistics show that the breakdown of homes is increasing and one of the main reasons is that we are drifting away from the biblical concepts and commands which ensure that home is a happy and cheerful place.

Some of the very valuable basic behaviours we take for granted are: respect, compassion, tolerance and responsibility. Very often we pass on the same 'take for granted' attitude to our children.

At the Asian Conference in Bangalore in September 2003, Fr. Donnon Murray had spoken to the participants about the Sons and Daughters Encounter (SADE) which is one of the FIRES programmes promoted by Fr.Gabriel Calvo and Fr.Donnon. These programmes are a unique means of spiritual growth for members of CFM groups and other families as well. The children of a CFM family from Sri Lanka shared their experience of SADE, telling the assembly how it had helped them. The Bangalore CFMers invited Fr.Donnon to come back and give the SADE programme to their youth. Accordingly, 33 Bangalore youth and four priests experienced "SADE" conducted by Fr.Donnon Murray, ofm, who came to Bangalore from Japan especially for this purpose. The programme took place at the Nava Spoorthi Kendra, Bangalore, from June 4 to 6, 2004.

Fr.Murray started the evening with a brief orientation about youth and the family. He said that we live in a society that lays stress on material things. On account of this, young people are exploited in numerous ways – some subtle and others more evident. When faced with the fact that youth are being exploited as objects of the material world and its values, the means of exploitation begin to emerge. Each participant was given an opportunity to look into themselves as:
a) a human person

b) a child of God
c) an active member of one's own family.

Fr.Murray mentioned that each one should exercise his/her own free will to actively participate in this encounter.

Some of the concepts discussed with the group were:

Listening: which is necessary for good inter-personal communication, requires more than physical hearing, it involves one's whole being. Very few people are skillful listeners. A patient listener is the key to solving both little and big problems in the home and in society.

Searching: Each of us is constantly searching for someone or something without realizing what we are seeking. Deep down inside us are questions which require to be answered.

Serving: A life of serving other people is a struggle because our natural inclination is to want to be served, but whether we realize it or not there can be no growth of fulfillment without reaching out and serving others.

Discovering: Most of us do not reveal why we act the way we do. It is in exploring the forces that determine our behaviour that the challenge of adventure is found, which is to get to know one's self and one another. Hidden inside each one of us is a multitude of mysterious forces. Remember the parable of the "Hidden Treasure".

Communicating: We humans are not islands, we have been born to communicate with each other, to live in a family and social community. There can be no community without communication, verbal or non-verbal.

Encountering: In spite of an abundant lifestyle many leave home or run away in search of adventure or an independent life. The remedy lies in discovering, recognizing and admitting our fears, faults, mistakes and sins. This process helps us to move on.

Celebrating: Having experienced the joy of making discoveries, the natural reaction is to celebrate, and share with each other. Furthermore, when we are reconciled with God there is also a need to celebrate and share his presence and peace.

Believing: While we are very much preoccupied with doing and obtaining results we are losing personal and direct relationship with God. Though the Bible has been a best seller for thousands of years, we seldom read it. God reveals himself to us in our day to day chores if we are willing to open up and listen to what he has to say and pay heed to the guidelines he offers us.

Loving: Love is the most universal word. The discussion was based on the different types of love: instinctive love, erotic love, compassionate love, the love for a friend and agape. It is necessary to understand what true love is and to discern whether we are on the right path or living a life of selfishness.

Promising: Within each one of us lies the potential, not just to change ourselves but, to change the world around us. A lot depends on the commitment we make to ourselves and the world around us.

Thanksgiving: to thank God for giving us a chance to experience such a programme as well as for the numerous blessings he has bestowed on us, for the insights, inspiration, strength and graces.

This SADE encounter helped clear away the numerous cobwebs and doubts we presume are present in every home, and encouraged each participant to use his/her potential to improve his/her life as a person. It further tried to initiate the willingness to discover what it means to be personally related to God. A family without the presence of God is merely an ornamental, live-in house, but by having Jesus as the anchor we can live a life of wholeness, cultivate a deeper appreciation for our own family and learn how to face life boldly and yet with caution. If our children can walk towards a civilization of justice and love, it's a fulfillment of our dreams.

The inner healing and the Thanksgiving Mass brought the programme to a close.

The weekend was a time of discovery for each participant and each one experienced something they could take home and pass on to others.

- Marilyn D'Mello
CFM-Bangalore

CFM deepens faith
CFM strengthens marriages
CFM deepens love of the Gospel
CFM raises social consciousness
CFM develops strong moral values in families

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