

FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Topsail beach

Dear CFL Families, Friends and Supporters,

It is with deep sadness that we announce that due to financial realities, MFM, Inc. will be selling the building and property of the Christian Family Living (CFL) Center on North Topsail Island. Despite this decision about the facility, we are excited about continuing the retreat ministry in a new way, sharing the Marianist charism through spirituality, hospitality and community.

The Christian Family Living Retreat Center in North Topsail Beach, North Carolina, has been blessed with ministering to families, in the Marianist tradition, since 1978. The Marianist Province supported the location and creation of this ministry, patterned after the Marianist Cape May Retreat House. Thousands of people have been blessed by the numerous volunteers who served then, and continue to serve now, and believe family is a sacred entity to be nurtured and grown.

Over the past five years, an unfortunate trend has emerged including a decline of family attendance and involvement in the CFL program. In 2008, revenues from the CFL programs and rental programs have declined. The volunteer base has also eroded. That, combined with aging buildings, long-term structural damage due to the environment, and an ambitious reconstruction and expansion after a major fire, has placed a financial drain on the Marianist Family Ministry's

(MFM, Inc.) ability to remain self-sufficient. We ran a determined capital campaign in 2007-08 which reached less than half its goal. We looked at all of the issues and felt it was time to re-structure as any responsible ministry would do. It was felt to be a just and morally responsible decision to all stakeholders involved.

On June 7, 2008, the MFM, Inc. Board of Directors prayed, discerned and agreed that the data provided by the financial committee and supported by the external accountant, was clear, albeit heartbreaking. MFM, Inc. would benefit by selling the CFL facility. We, as a Board of Directors, came to consensus and decided to close the CFL Retreat Center as of September 15, 2008. We are developing transition plans to do that and to keep the Marianist Family Ministry alive. It is our intention that this lay Marianist Ministry will continue in a new location and / or manner. Based on what we have learned from 30 years of ministering to families, a business plan and a ministry plan will be developed to outline the “new beginnings” of the MFM, Inc. journey. We ask your prayers, support and input in this process.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, I would like to thank you for your continued support of time, talent and treasure. The ministry is not a location or a building, but a viable ministry to families who cherish an opportunity to re-connect through prayer and play. It is within the family fold that religious vocations are nurtured and society as a whole is made stronger. We are energized by the thoughts of what the future may hold. We are lay Marianists fashioned by the Marianist charism to “do whatever He tells you,” as Mary did. We are blessed by the guidance and direction the Holy Spirit has provided as we continue the journey.

Appreciatively,

Tina Bauman

Chair, Board of Directors, MFM, Inc.

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