

- Preparing tracts on doctrine and issues in the Church, as well as study guides on the Bible and other Faith-related matters. All this so that you can learn and share the Faith more fruitfully and effectively.

- Our local chapters, in which our members meet to pray, study, and support each other in living out the Gospel.

- Meeting with high-ranking Vatican officials. Each year we travel to Rome and communicate the joys and struggles of Catholic lay people throughout the world.

- CUF Books & Tapes By Mail. We provide excellent books and tapes on the Faith as well as an extensive selection of papal encyclicals and other Church documents.

- Speaking at conferences and parish missions across the country. We communicate the Faith person-to-person on such topics as Scripture, the Catechism, apologetics, Scripture, marriage and family life, and morality.

- Providing college students with internships. We give them opportunities to put their knowledge and skills into practice. Internships help prepare students meet the challenges they will face when they graduate and become the lay leaders of tomorrow.

Despite the wide range of CUF's apostolic activities, the focus of CUF's work is spiritual: the interior conversion of ourselves, our members, and all people. This focus is captured in the prayer of Catholics United for the Faith, written by founder H. Lyman Stebbins:

O God our Father, who sent your only-begotten Son to suffer and to give His life for the life of His Church, rule, protect, and nourish her continually, we beseech you. Teach us of Catholics United for the Faith to direct our zeal first of all to the renewal of our own hearts. Then, if it be your holy will to allow us to be in any way your instruments in the wider renewal of your Church, give us the grace to know what

services, small or great, you ask of us, and let the Holy Spirit teach us to perform them in obedience, patience, and charity, leaving entirely to you what fruits they may bear. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of that Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

If you would like to join us in our mission, please call us at 1-800-693-2484. For a tax-deductible donation of \$30 or more, you may become a member of Catholics United for the Faith. Benefits include a one-year subscription to Lay Witness; complimentary FAITH FACTS; a classical religious art calendar; discounts on books and tapes; and access to our toll-free number for answers to your questions.

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Pamphlet 394

Catholics United for the Faith

Catholics United for the Faith is an international lay apostolate dedicated to proclaiming and teaching the Catholic Faith. CUF was founded in 1968 to support, defend, and advance the efforts of the teaching Church, and is entirely faithful to Vatican II.

Catholics United for the Faith (CUF) was formed in 1968 as a faithful response to Vatican II's call for an active lay apostolate. CUF's mission is nothing other than the Church's mission to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation" (Mk. 16:15). From the beginning, CUF's motto has been "to support, defend, and advance the efforts of the teaching Church."

Today there is an ever increasing need for an active laity to re-evangelize our society. In keeping with the Holy Father's call for a "new evangelization," particularly as we enter into the third Millennium, CUF's mission is to proclaim Christ and His Church to a new generation of people seeking truth. The heart of this mission is to impart not only the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but also our very lives (1 Thess. 2:8)

CUF members — and indeed all Catholics — are called to lives of heroic faith, hope, and charity. We manifest this faith by our uncompromising acceptance of Church teaching. We manifest this hope by focusing on our heavenly goal so that any present difficulties may be accepted as opportunities for grace, not frustration (cf. Rom. 8:18). And we manifest this love by maintaining and building upon our bonds of communion and solidarity with our Holy Father, bishops, priests, all Catholics, all Christians, and all people of good will, for all have been created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Yet this love, to be

authentic, must always be firmly grounded in the truth, so that our faith can work through love (Gal. 5:6).

Church Teaching on the Lay Apostolate

What precisely does the Church say about the role of the laity? In Vatican II's "**Dogmatic Constitution of the Church**" (*Lumen Gentium*, nos. 30-38), we find a blueprint for the role of the laity. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (nos. 898, 900) aptly summarizes this teaching:

By reason of the special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will.... It pertains to them in a special way so to illuminate and order all temporal things with which they are closely associated that these may always be effected and grow according to Christ and may be to the glory of the Creator and Redeemer.

Since , like all the faithful, lay Christians are entrusted by God with the apostolate by virtue of their Baptism and Confirmation, **they have the right and duty, individually or grouped in associations, to work so that the divine message of salvation may be known and accepted by all men throughout the earth.** This duty is the more pressing when it is only through them that men can hear the Gospel and know Christ. Their activity in ecclesial communities is so necessary that, for the most part, the apostolate of the pastors cannot be fully effective without it (emphasis added).

Subsequent documents specifically highlight the importance of the "group apostolate", such as Vatican II's "**Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People**" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, no. 18), which provides:

The faithful are called as individuals to exercise an apostolate in the various conditions of their life. They must, however, remember that man is social by nature and that it has been

God's pleasure to assemble those who believe in Christ and make of them the People of God (cf. 1 Pet. 2:5-10), a single body (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12). The group apostolate is in happy harmony therefore with a fundamental need in the faithful, a need that is both human and Christian. At the same time it offers a sign of the communion and unity of the Church in Christ, who said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them" (Mt. 18:20).

Pope John Paul II, in his 1988 apostolic exhortation, "**The Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People**" (*Christifideles Laici*), emphasizes the importance of group apostolates:

In recent days the phenomenon of lay people associating among themselves has taken on a character of particular variety and vitality.... [I]n modern times such lay groups have received a special stimulus, resulting in the birth and spread of a multiplicity of group forms: associations, groups, communities, movements. We can speak of a *new era of group endeavors of the lay faithful* (no. 29; original emphasis).

Turning Hearts to Christ

In the eyes of the Church, CUF is a private association of lay faithful exercising our baptismal obligation to be laborers in Christ's vineyard. Our work takes the form of promoting the authentic teachings of the Church in an era of religious and moral confusion. CUF follows the lead of our Holy Father as pastor of the universal Church. We strive to work closely under the guidance and authority of local bishops and their representatives. CUF has received blessings from both Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II. H. Lyman Stebbins, CUF founder, was awarded the Knighthood of St. Gregory by Pope John Paul II for his service in the lay apostolate.

CUF is listed in the "*Official Catholic Directory*" under the Diocese of Steubenville, Ohio, which is the home of CUF's international headquarters. "*Lay Witness*", the critically acclaimed magazine of CUF, is a member publication in the Catholic Press Association (CPA).

Specifically, CUF seeks to contribute to the building of the Kingdom of God in the following ways:

- "*Lay Witness*", published 10 times per year, provides articles on the timeless truths of the Catholic Faith in a timely and captivating manner designed specifically for lay Catholics. At the 1998 CPA conference, "*Lay Witness*" received the Award for General Excellence.

- "*Faith and Life*" (grades 1-8) catechism series, published in 1984 before the "*Catechism of the Catholic Church*" (CCC), received recognition by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops as being in conformity with the CCC.

- Our Information Services department responds to any question about the Catholic faith. We receive questions daily via a toll-free number (1-800-MY FAITH), fax, mail, and e-mail. We have over 100 FAITH FACTS addressing matters of the faith. In addition, we have researched over 300 other topics. If we do not have a prepared answer, we will research and prepare one.

- FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, our exciting new campus outreach to reclaim society for Christ and His Church, with a special emphasis on forming effective Catholic leaders.

- "*Emmaus Road*", our publishing arm and newest apostolate, has already published a Catholic best-seller titled "*Catholic for a Reason*". Call toll-free for information on this and other titles available (1-800-398- 5470).