

The observe/judge/act technique is the "Jocist Method" (see [history](#)) first pioneered by Canon Joseph Cardijn, founder of the Young Christian Worker Movement in Belgium. Through the application of this method, many CFM families have become involved in helping others in such ministries as foster-parenting, prison ministry, refugee sponsorship, religious education and couple counseling.

Outline of a CFM Meeting

CFM groups usually meet in homes. The group members take turns hosting the meeting. If this is impossible for reason of the size of members' homes or geographical distances involved, groups sometimes meet in a church facility.

Program Books are the "heart" of CFM. Through the use of these books, our members' meetings are guided through the observe, judge and act process.

Sign of the Cross

Mark your time together as sacred by beginning in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Gather and Report on Actions

Take a few minutes to let one another know how your life has been since you last met. Group members report on the progress of CFM actions taken individually, as a family, or by the group.

Scripture Reading and Opening Prayer

God's word and our prayer move group members out of their busy lives and toward the issues of the meeting. Prayer helps them to focus on these issues from a Christian perspective.

SOCIAL INQUIRY (Observe, Judge, Act)

The Social Inquiry is the foundation of the CFM meeting. Background and direction for the discussion is provided, including reference information from authoritative sources. Following this are three sets of discussion questions.

Observe

Members should "Get the facts." At this stage of the meeting, members should refrain from expressing their opinions about facts. They should try to simply report, like any good objective newspaper reporter. The knowledge and experience of group members are valuable, but the group must go beyond its own members to gather facts from the larger world and report them objectively. One can editorialize later.

Judge

For CFMers, to judge is not to find another person sinful or holy; it is rather the comparison of how things are with how things should be, in accord with Gospel values. To make such a comparison requires objective observation of how things are, as well as a sincere effort to determine the teaching of Jesus.

Act

If the group judges - through prayer, reflection, and observation - that things are not as they should be, then ways to bring about a change will come forth from the group. Actions listed in the book are suggestions. The best actions come from the group. They may be directed toward improving family life relationships, or toward the community and beyond.

Closing Prayer

Prayer is supplied for each meeting, but this is also a good time to offer prayers for the intentions of the group.

Social Time

A short social with simple and inexpensive refreshments helps members to know and understand one another better and builds community.

CFM Website, <http://www.cfm.org/home.html>. People interested in starting a CFM group should see the web page, <http://cfm.org/newgroup.html>.

Related Websites

International Confederation of Christian Family Movements,
<http://www.iccfm.org/>

National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers, <http://nacflm.org/>

NACFLM Resource Guide, <http://nacflmresourceguide.com/>