A Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

“Grace to you, and peace from Him Who is, Who was, and Who is to come” (Rev. 1:4).

Wisdom is glorious, and never fadeth away, and is easily seen by them that love her, and is found by them that seek her….For the beginning of her is the most true desire of discipline. And the care of discipline is love: and love is the keeping of her laws: and the keeping of her laws is the firm foundation of incorruption: and incorruption bringeth near to God. Therefore the desire of Wisdom bringeth to the everlasting kingdom (Wis. 6:13, 18-21, DRV).

Over the past few months, I have been reading and re-reading the Book of Wisdom. Certain selections from this Old Testament treasure are taken for Mass readings and antiphons. While these readings and antiphon selections are beautiful in and of themselves, they do not capture the fullness of this wonderful book or the nuances in its pages. This text is replete with insights into other passages from the Song of Songs, 1 Corinthians, the Gospel of Matthew, and the Book of Sirach. God is waiting to enrich our spiritual lives through a careful reading of this text, especially our understanding of His work in the world within Time.

Just one insight I would like to share from this sacred text is taken from the passage cited above. That discipline is the beginning of Wisdom is a truth that has stayed with me since my first reading the Book of Wisdom as a teenager. My recent revisiting of the text as an adult has brought so much more to light, namely, the full progression of how acts of discipline are acts of Love. Also since my teenage years, I have known that the Virtue of Justice cannot be separated from Love. I’ve given talks on this subject, but re-reading the passage above gave a new meaning and understanding to the relationship between these two great virtues. In a nutshell, this passage lays out the proper progression of the spiritual life as intended by God, no matter what your spirituality is and no matter who you are.

We have entered into Lent. As good Catholics, we should be using Lent as an opportunity to re-visit the discipline of our lives and ask penetrating questions about the state of our spiritual lives. Do I maintain a disciplined spiritual life? Specifically, do I read the Bible each day? Do I set aside time each day to be shaped by the words of the Gospel and allow them to guide the words of my lips when I speak? Do I take care of myself properly? Do I fulfill my obligations to family? To neighbors?

The Church gives us guidance about how to continued on page 2
make our Lenten discipline truly fruitful. She calls us to prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Prayer is the absolute lifeblood of our spiritual lives. It is how we commune with God. Fasting strengthens our will and hones our discipline. It allows us to cut away superficial pleasures that can distract us from the voice of God. Together, they provide a sound foundation for the spiritual life. However, without almsgiving—acts of charity made with willing purpose—fasting and prayer are only a foundation without a house. The result of Lent should be an increased “care of discipline”. When this happens, we act with heightened purpose and self-gift. We act more like God has created us to act; that is, we act more like Him.

This intended union has two aspects: it is both a collective union (i.e. Man’s union with God) and a personal union (i.e. each individual’s union with God). The bringing about of this union with God in eternity does depend on each one of us. That is where the “purposeful” comes in. As creatures made in the Image and Likeness of God, He gave each of us an intellect and a will. These extraordinary elements of our humanity allow us to reason, understand, and act with decisive purpose—they allow us to love. As a virtue, love requires us to use our intellect and will to carry out acts of love. If we do not act with purpose, we do not love. Without purpose, I may perform an act that has a good consequence, but in doing so I act more like an animal acting without reason than a person acting with purpose. When we act with purpose to know, love and serve God, or to help another person in need, our acts of love advance the Kingdom of God on Earth as it is in Heaven. By our purposeful acts we advance the will of God for us to be united to Him.

This is how God has created all things. This is how God has created each one of us: with a firm purpose for each life. When we develop a greater discipline of purpose in our actions, we begin to understand God and His creative power. We begin to enter into His will for our lives. We express the image and likeness of God more perfectly.

My prayer for you this Lent is that you will learn to do all things with firm purpose for love of God: that all who see you will see you joined to Him in His image and likeness.

God bless you; St. Joseph keep you.

Peace,
Philip C. L. Gray

President’s Annual Report to Members

In this first issue of Lay Witness for 2022, I will provide a status report on the apostolate, and a call to action. Events of our time may be troubling, but for those of us who live in the Faith of Jesus Christ, we possess a Hope that demands expression in our lives. The apostolic work of Catholic United for the Faith (CUF) is intended to express that Hope in a unity of Faith that transcends the events of our troubled time.

While preparing and reviewing the year-end information on the apostolate, I was encouraged by the areas of growth and motivated by the challenges that we still face. I will address these elements of growth and challenges under four general categories: 1. Finances, 2. Staff/Infrastructure, 3. Projects, and 4. Membership. Because CUF is an association of the faithful, its members constitute the apostolate. You are our greatest resource and your unity in Christ is the purpose of our work. Because of the importance of membership, I will address my call to action under the Membership update. First, allow me to make two preliminary remarks.

CUF suffered the loss of two, great influencers and founders in 2021, and a third in January 2022. Chuck Wilson, an early member of CUF, officer of the Houston Chapter in the 1970’s, the Founder of The Saint Joseph Foundation (SJF), and the Chairman of the Board of Directors in 2017 when CUF affiliated to SJF, died 10 June 2021. He was instrumental in the pursuit of the affiliation in order to preserve the Mission of CUF. Madeleine Stebbins’ death followed on 17 September 2021. Madeleine was the wife of CUF’s first president, H. Lyman Stebbins, served as the second president after his retirement, and continued to serve actively on the Board of Directors until about ten years ago. At the time of her death, she was honored with the title: Chairman of the Board, Emeritus. Madeleine’s very close and dear friend, Alice von Hildebrand, died on 14 January 2022. The Hildebrand’s and Stebbins’ were close friends, and Alice had a deep impact on the development of CUF. The passings of these three are reminders that a new generation must take up the Mission of CUF and give Hope to our troubled world. We rejoice in their Life, and offer thanks to God for the witness of their lives given with great devotion and a clear purpose to serve God and His Church.

Requiescat in pace!

Second, I offer a thank you to each and every one of you who supported CUF as a member or associate during
2021. We are a remnant, but a faithful remnant; and I am very grateful for your fidelity to CUF's Mission. During the COVID lockdown in 2020, some of our chapters and many individual members continued apostolic activities. When the lockdown ended, many apostolates and non-profits did not rebound well. CUF did. The commitment shown to resume apostolic activities and support the work of the International Office was very encouraging. I am so grateful for the expression of forbearance and fidelity you have shown to the Mission of CUF. THANK YOU!

**Finances**

CUF ended 2021 in a strong financial position. In summary, CUF suffered a 27.7% decrease in income and an 11.3% increase in expenses as compared to the 2020 figures. We still ended the year in the black. Before providing the details, I remind you of two things.

Each year, CUF files a non-profit tax return known as a 990. That extensive filing provides a bit more information than provided below; it’s also more than 10 pages long. You can obtain a copy of our tax filings either by calling our office and asking for one, or by visiting www.GuideStar.org. Except for churches, all non-profit corporations with an income over $50,000.00 must file these tax returns. Because the organization benefits from a tax-free status and your donations are tax-deductible, the financial information on a 990 is public domain. Please feel free to examine past and present tax returns to compare how we are doing.

Second, our 2021 taxes won't be filed until later this Spring. The figures used below are taken from our accounting records. I’ve also rounded the figures to the closes $100.00 for ease of reference. The figures found on our 990 forms are rounded to the nearest dollar.

In 2021, we brought in $70,500.00 in donations from members and associates and just over $140,000.00 in F&L royalties. Additional income from the sale of Emmaus Road Publishing (ERP), royalties on select ERP books, income from trusts and bequests, and other miscellaneous income gave us a total income of $288,800.00. This is 28% lower than the $399,800.00 we received in 2020.

The lower income is due to a 55% drop in *Faith and Life* royalties. 2020 was a strong year for *Faith and Life* sales. 2021 was a correction year. That substantial drop in royalty payments is the cause of our decreased income. It demonstrates two things that all members should keep in mind. Royalty payments are very helpful and provide a strong support to our financial position, but they should not be relied on as a primary source of income. They should be supplemental. Right now, those royalty payments are the primary source of income for CUF. Member support does need to increase for CUF to remain financially viable over a longer period of time. Second, though CUF ended the year in the black ($72,000.00 surplus), that amount of surplus would have evaporated if we had had a full-time Director of Information Services. We have been looking to fill the position (see below) for some time. Had we had the position filled throughout 2021, the expenses related to that position would have substantially decreased this end of year surplus.

The good news is that member and associate donations increased by 34% in 2021. We are back up to pre-COVID levels of member donations. Thank you! We still have work to do, but it is encouraging to receive support from members and associates. I am confident that when the Director of Information Services position is filled, both our membership and our donations will increase more quickly than we saw this year. More on this below.

CUF’s greatest expense is employee salaries. As an apostolic association of the faithful, our primary mission is not related to delivery of goods but a delivery of services; continued on page 4

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**Prayer to Jesus by Saint Pio of Pietrelcina, known as Padre Pio**

*Oh my Jesus, give me Your strength when my weak nature rebels against the distress and suffering of this life of exile, and enable me to accept everything with serenity and peace. With my whole strength I cling to Your merits, Your sufferings, Your expiation, and Your tears, so that I may be able to cooperate with You in the work of salvation. Give me strength to fly from sin, the only cause of Your agony, Your sweat of blood, and Your death. Destroy in me all that displeases You and fill my heart with the fire of Your holy love and all Your sufferings. Clasp me tenderly, firmly, close to You that I may never leave You alone in Your cruel Passion. I ask only for a place of rest in Your Heart. Amen.*

*Shared by the Padre Pio Prayer Group of Richardson, Texas*
services “to unite the Faithful from all walks of life in order that they might support, defend and advance the Teaching Office of the Church.” Because of the affiliation to The Saint Joseph Foundation (SJF), CUF International maintains a very low infrastructure cost. Our expenses for the year amounted to $216,800.00, an increase of 11% over last year. The increase in expenses was due to several factors. I travelled more for CUF in 2021 with new speaking engagements. Salary expenses were slightly higher. I had a full-time temporary position in Information Services for more months in 2021 than we did in 2020. Finally, incidental expenses are just higher, as we all know. CUF suffers from the inflation too.

Despite the decrease in income and the increase in expenses, CUF still finished the year with a surplus. We will continue to be good stewards of your donations and the royalties received to ensure financial stability for CUF in the years ahead. Thank you for supporting CUF’s Mission, and thanks be to God for providing us with such strong financial stability.

**Staff/Infrastructure**

As you may remember from last year’s report, we began a search in early 2020 to fill an open Information Specialist position in our Information Services department. In mid 2020, right after the lockdowns ended in Ohio, one of our seasoned interns, Brandon O’Nan, took the position as a temporary full-time Information Specialist. He intended to stay until about May 2021, and remained with us until the end of August 2021.

Through 2020 and early 2021, we had almost no applicants for the position. In early 2021, the decision was made to upgrade the search for a Director of Information Services. This would allow us to increase our expectations and offer a higher salary, in turn hoping to attract stronger candidates. We also expanded our search by posting the job in both Catholic and secular posting sites. By mid-summer, we began to receive a small but steady stream of applicants for the Director position. I have a fairly rigorous vetting process that’s intended to give applicants as much information about CUF as I ask of them. Most applicants choose to drop out after the first interview in the process. There are still viable candidates that are involved in the later stages of the hiring process. God willing, I hope to fill the position by the end of March 2022.

Please let me take some time to explain what will change when a Director is hired for Information Services. Currently, we continue to respond quickly to requests for Faith Facts and questions for which we have answers researched and prepared. We are much slower right now responding to requests for new research. When the Director is hired, we expect those requests will be filled in a timely fashion. Additionally, the Director will be available for speaking engagements and to assist members and chapters in the development of apostolic activities. Finally, the Director will be responsible for website development and updates.

Since June 2021, another temporary, full-time staff has been working to complete CUF’s “Tickler File”. She will be leaving in March to move out of state, and we will be

The following quote by Cardinal Newman was shared with us by longstanding CUF member Marcella in Pennsylvania:

> “God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission…

> I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work; I shall be a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it, if I do but keep His commandments and serve Him in my calling.

> Therefore, I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. My sickness or perplexity or sorrow may be necessary causes of some great end, which is quite beyond us. He does nothing in vain; He may prolong life; He may shorten it; He knows what He is about. He may take my friends; He may throw me among strangers; He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide the future from me – still He knows what He is about.

> – John Henry Cardinal Newman
utilizing other interns to finish the project. When completed, CUF’s archival material will be fully cataloged electronically. We hope to make the catalog available to members as a member benefit to assist our members and chapters in their own research (see below). When the electronic cataloging is complete, we will begin scanning the documents to establish an electronic library of our material. The contents include past research completed by CUF, correspondence from Lyman Stebbins and other early officers of CUF, catechetical reviews, etc. It’s a huge project that was discussed in 1999 when I was Director of Information Services. I’m grateful it is finally coming to fruition. Until the files are readily available to members, we will do everything we can to help with a topic of research.

As reported last year, the affiliation to the SJF allows CUF to enjoy a low-cost infrastructure. The extensive research library of the SJF is available to CUF. Office equipment is up to date. Aside from the hopeful hire of a full-time permanent Director of Information Services and a replacement for our “Tickler File” specialist, I do not anticipate any changes necessary in staff or infrastructure in 2022.

**Projects**

CUF’s members are its greatest asset. Providing assistance and resources to members who are pursuing the CUF mission is a primary role of the International Office. Expanding those resources is a constant project. Because the second part of our mission is focused on defending, supporting and advancing the Teaching Office, ecclesiastical research is the backbone of the International Office. At a practical level, a significant project aimed at assisting in research is the organization of our “Tickler File” as briefly mentioned above.

I reported on this last year, but I repeat myself now for the sake of reminder and update. Presently, there are three historical offices “merged” at the location of the International Office: CUF, SJF, and my own personal private practice office in canon law. Though my private practice closed at the start of 2015, I maintained a large volume of correspondence to and from a variety of bishops and Vatican offices for almost 25 years. I also kept record of articles and opinions that affected the Church. The SJF did something similar for over 35 years, as did CUF for almost 50 years. Most of CUF’s historical material was lost between 2015 and its affiliation to SJF in 2017. Some archival material was kept, particularly the correspondence of Mr. Stebbins and some of the research completed in the earliest years of CUF. Between the three collections, we have a very large archive of material that is beneficial for research on a large variety of topics. In 2020, I hired an intern to organize the material in a searchable electronic format. We call this the Tickler File.

As noted above, we have had a full-time temporary person working on the project since June 2021. She has completed certain segments of the material. A second intern, hired by SJF part-time, has cataloged jurisprudence and some documents associated with the case files of the SJF. The two files will be merged for general research use. Already, we are using the Tickler File in-house and the electronic cataloging has been very helpful in our research.

I mentioned above that I travelled more for CUF in 2021 than previously in 2020. I continue to use contacts made through SJF activities to expose new people to CUF and its beautiful Mission and activities. From my work with SJF, I was invited to multiple speaking events on behalf of CUF. One such event was to give a day of recollection for a Padre Pio Prayer group in Dallas, Texas. I gave talks on the Virtue of Silence, Reparation, Justice, and Living Charity. If you would like a copy of the talks, please call and ask. We can provide the audio files on a CD or flash drive.

A second cause of much of my travel was my work with Texas Right to Life and other pro-life organizations in Texas to support the repeal of the Texas Advanced Directives Act, commonly called the “Ten-Day Rule”. Under this current law, a doctor is allowed to cease providing life-sustaining medical care, against the wishes of the patient or their legal surrogate, after a ten-day waiting period, in which time the patient or their family must try to find alternative care. As pro-life as Texans are, Texas is the only

*continued on page 6*
state in the union that has this draconian law on the books. Supporters of the law claim that it defends the conscience rights of doctors. In reality, it allows doctors to usurp the conscience rights of patients who are seeking critical medical attention for serious conditions.

People of all ages are vulnerable, but it seems to me the most vulnerable are the young patients. I have had discussions with many pro-life activists in Texas to understand why babies and young people seem most targeted by this law. I believe it is because their organs are worth so much money. I have heard many stories of parents whose teenage or young children were targeted by the ten-day rule, only to be swarmed by a contingent of people asking for a release to harvest their children’s organs when they die. These descriptions are heartbreaking and have motivated me to travel to Texas five times during the legislative sessions to testify for the law to be repealed. I am told we missed it by two votes.

CUF members have historically been pro-life activists. I will continue to work with Texas pro-life groups and CUF members in Texas to pursue eradication of this horrible law. It’s been around more than 20 years, and I believe we can sway enough votes in the 2023 legislative sessions to repeal it. More on this below.

We continue our usual activities. They include the continued development of the FAITH FACT program, our research initiative through Information Services and its toll-free hotline (1-800-MY-FAITH [693-2484]), speaking engagements, development of the chapter program, keeping in contact with members through Lay Witness, and generally assisting the members in their personal endeavors. On the topic of Lay Witness, we are planning lead articles that will focus on current trends in our Church today.

We are always open to suggestions on what to address, so please let us know your thoughts. I value engagement from CUF members, and I love hearing from you. Please let me know your ideas about topics to address or projects we can consider. I want to hear from you.

**Membership**

We began 2021 with 759 members and 628 associates from 1021 households in the United States. In addition, we had eight active chapters. Those numbers remained consistent throughout 2021 with only a slight increase in membership and no new chapters chartered. Happily, we have started 2022 out strong with the chartering of a new chapter (see below). As reported in 2020, 16% of our members belong to one of these nine chapters.

Because CUF members are the greatest asset we have, and because CUF members make CUF what it is, I need your help getting new CUF members. As I wrote last year: CUF members are a remnant compared to what our numbers were 20 years ago at the turn of the millennium. This does not concern me. It is not the number of members that makes CUF, it is the active pursuit of its mission by its members that makes CUF alive and well. God only gave Gideon 300 men to defeat the Midianites (Judges 6-8) and Jesus started the Church with only 12 apostles and 120 disciples (Acts 1). If God can raise up children to Abraham from stones (Lk 3:8), He can raise up as many members of CUF as He wants. More importantly, He can use whatever number we have to accomplish His work through us. For our part, we must be courageous with forbearance and fortitude. We must commit our lives to God and trust in Him so He will act (c.f. Psalm 36:5). We must be lights in our dark world.

**I call you to action.**

1. Organize an event and invite me to speak. I will bring CUF materials and talk about pertinent issues—and practical solutions. Together, we can plant seeds to raise up a new generation of CUF members who will continue to unite the Faithful and defend the Church.

2. I am working on forming a chapter in Texas with the main purpose of advancing pro-life activities. If you live in Texas and are open to being part of a chapter dedicated to pro-life activism, please contact our office (1-800 MY FAITH).

The remaining action items I repeat from my 2020 report:

3. Form chapters, even “Family Chapters”. We cannot weather the storms of this world alone and God did not intend us to. Reach out to those who are like minded and begin meeting regularly, in person ideally, but virtually where necessary, to pray and support one another. Our spiritual and intellectual formation in the Faith is vital and we cannot neglect it. I recognize that many of you are in areas where you do not know other CUF members. Contact our office. We can help put you in touch with like-minded members in your area. If you can, form a chapter with your family. It is a naturally organized chapter and can become the backbone of a larger Faith movement. Let us know how we can help. The International Office is here for you.

4. Pursue a necessary good. Find a need and work concretely to fill it. Everywhere we look we find the unborn in need of defense, poorly catechized...
We are immensely grateful for each and every donation we receive. Read below to learn about ways to financially support our mission that you may not have considered:

Check/Cash Donations: By far the most common donation type, and the least expensive for us to process. We are grateful for all checks received.

One Time Credit Card Donations: You can provide your credit card information by phone or mail for our staff to process or visit CUF.org to give online. Please keep in mind, when a credit card is processed, CUF is charged 4% of the donation in fees.

Automatic Recurring Donation: This is a convenient way to give that is growing in popularity. We arrange with our secure third-party provider for an automatic donation to be made with your credit card in any amount you choose. While most donors arrange their donations monthly or quarterly, we can schedule your gifts in whatever way is most convenient for you. If you would like to set up an automatic recurring donation, please call and ask for Therese.

Securities: On occasion, someone will donate stocks to CUF. We do have a securities account and can receive these donations readily. If you would like to make a securities donation, please contact our office to obtain the necessary information.

Corporate Donations: As a 501(c)3 organization, CUF is eligible to receive monies from the charitable giving programs of many for-profit companies. For example, Charity Mobile and AmazonSmile will donate a portion of your bill payments to CUF if you direct them to do so. CUF also qualifies to receive matching donations from many corporations that provide this benefit to their employees. A small portion of our income comes from these sources. Please explore these possibilities with your employer or service providers.

Bequests and Memorial Donations: We are so grateful to those supporters of CUF who remember our work in their wills. The generosity and foresight of a small few have provided a boon to our efforts either with bequests or requests that donations be made to CUF in their memory. I pray that the prayers and Masses we offer for these donors provide comfort to their families and spiritual aid to their souls. If you haven’t already, please consider these means of leaving a legacy that will continue to serve the Church.

5. Keep us informed of your activities and the ways we can better assist you. Our resources, research, and experience are at your service. When you form chapters, even family chapters, register with us, so that you can become a resource for others.

6. Encourage your family members and friends to join CUF’s efforts to unite the faithful, from all walks of life, to support, defend, and advance the efforts of the teaching Church.

In closing, I am humbled to say that I have received many letters and cards from laity and priests assuring me of continuous Masses being offered for CUF and its members. In addition to the many individual Mass cards and announcements we receive, at least two priests are offering Mass weekly for us, and another is offering Mass monthly. All of you are remembered. Please remember us in your prayers.

God bless you; St. Joseph keep you!

Peace,
Philip Gray
It is with a great deal of gratitude and joy that we announce CUF’s newest chapter, Holy Innocents Chapter of Indianapolis, Indiana. The founding members of the chapter have taken the Holy Innocents slaughter by King Herod at the time of Our Lord’s birth as their patrons and plan to champion the Culture of Life by their activities. Their primary focus will be the continuing 2411 project, remembering and sharing the story of 2,411 precious children whose aborted remains were stolen and held captive by their abortionist until his death in 2019. Congratulations Holy Innocents Chapter!

In addition to the national March for Life in Washington DC, a wave of pro-life demonstrations swept the country in January to mark the 49th anniversary of the legalization of abortion in the US, and to call for the overturning of Roe v Wade. We are proud that CUF members participated in prayerful protest from Delaware to Louisiana, and many places in between. Thank you to all CUF members who are speaking out on behalf of the unborn, especially Our Lady of Peace Chapter in Newark, Delaware!

CUF members in Delaware are embroiled in a legislative battle in the cause for life. Delaware’s HB140 would legalize assisted suicide in the state. If you or someone who knows is a resident of Delaware, learn more and mobilize against this bill at https://www.derighttolife.org/take-action.

The holy season of Lent is upon us! Please pray for a fruitful Lent for all your fellow CUF members. If your observance of the season has been lax so far, there is no better time to recommit to your Lenten discipline than today. Call CUF’s Information Services at 1 800 MY FAITH to receive a free copy of “Lenten Traditions Within the Home” to learn what the Church expects of her members and for wonderful ideas of fun and edifying traditions to share with your kids and grandkids!

Per the usual practice, I will provide stats on the Foundation for the first issue of 2022. At the start of 2021, the Foundation had 55 active cases; and throughout the year, 26 of the inquiries received became active cases. All in all, the Foundation processed 81 active cases and closed 34. As of January 2022, we have 47 active cases. Of these cases, 34 are in Rome (Signatura 29; Congregations 5; Rota 2). We are off to a busy start. -Natasha

Does your family have a favorite tradition for Lent, Holy Week, or Easter? We’d love to share it with other CUF members here!

Philip would like to thank the Catholic Club of Rob-son Ranch Texas for their hospitality. Philip visited the group last month and gave a presentation on the Divine and Natural Law principals that inform the Church’s pro-life teaching. He then facilitated a discussion on some of the real-world applications of this teaching including the hugely problematic Texas Advanced Directives Act (TADA). TADA, which is current law, legally protects doctors who choose to end life-sustaining medical care for patients against the wishes of the patient and their family.

Got an announcement? If your event is CUF friendly, and we have space to spare, we will gladly post it here!