

To all committed to the Renewal of the Catholic Church -

Need your help to organize Regional Gatherings

All eyes in the Church Reform movement are on the Extraordinary Synod scheduled to meet this coming October. To this end, we are launching Regional Gatherings inviting everyone from all over the world to come together either locally or online to share their personal experiences regarding the challenges of living a Christian family life in the context of Church teachings. Pope Francis has made it known that he is open to receiving the discernment of the faithful. Since bishops do not live in families, they must rely on learning about the challenges faced by families from the families themselves in order to communicate the message of Jesus in a way that is relevant, meaningful, and understood by today's families. This is where you come in. We cannot accomplish this without your help.

These Gatherings can range from a few people gathered in your living room to a larger number gathered in a parish hall or conference room. They can be held in four separate meetings or in one all-day session anytime between May and August of this year and will be the means by which we will collect grassroots input on the Family Synod and offer solutions on the various issues related to family life to deliver to the Vatican this fall. Be sure to let others know that they are not just venting their feelings or frustrations but that their voices will be carried all the way to the Vatican. This is all a part of our [2014 action plan](#) and is the means to how we are nudging the Church to include the faithful in decision-making.

Our Position Paper committee has reduced the Family Synod issues to four general topics and is in process of writing a paper on each: Fulfilling Relationships, Openness to Life, Gender and Sexuality, and How the Church Teaches and Listens. For details, [click here](#). As you can see, once these four papers are completed, **the topics of the meetings will all be done for you and ready for download to share with the attendees prior to your meeting.**

Our Regional Gatherings committee has created outlines for two types of Gatherings: one for those who wish to hold a series of four shorter meetings with one topic per meeting and a second for those who choose to have one all day session, where all four topics could be covered. Check out these [templates](#) for yourself. You will note that the committee has even composed a prayer service for your Gathering! Once again, **the format of each meeting is laid out for you. All you need to do is invite members of your organization to join with you.**

So if you would consider helping, here's what to do:

- Download the materials, look them over, and think about your situation.
- Call on a friend or another member of your group, have coffee, and get him or her on board to help you organize.
- Email all the members of an organization of which you are a part and share with them our plan. Ask them if they support making the family issues the topic of your next regular meeting.
- Email friends whom you sense have been affected by church teachings in the past and ask if they would be interested in coming to a meeting to share their stories.
- Brainstorm other existing groups that might welcome some great discussions - perhaps another local affiliate of a reform organization.....whatever would work best in your locale.
- Schedule the Gathering! (Don't forget it can be one longer all-day session or a series of four shorter ones.)
- Be sure to publicize your event widely and let your local bishop know about it, too. If he would work with you or at least give the project his blessing, all the better.
- [Email CCR Int'l](#) the details of your Gathering so we can add it to the calendar: date(s), time, physical location, city and country, and contact info.

- The final step will be to fill out the Report on your Gathering, so that the Report Tallying committee can collate the data you collect and add it to the information going to the Vatican. This form is in process of being developed and will be posted once it is completed and approved.

Feel free to contact us for help in exploring ways that you might invite others to join with you. We need your active involvement and are counting on you to help us begin this process now! Equally important, we need you to network this idea out to those in your circle who might also be willing to organize a Gathering either in their community or online. The Extraordinary Synod on the Family is in early October - only 176 days from now - so we need to act promptly. Thank you in advance for your help as we take tangible steps to bring about the reform of our Church.

New Journal just launched

With definite plans now to meet in Rome at the Synod on the Family in early October, Catholic Church Reform Int'l is gathering steam. (We even have a newly restructured website: www.CatholicChurchReformIntl.org.) And Catholic Church Reform in its many other forms is getting more active and more ubiquitous.

A U.S.-based reform organization, for instance, has just launched a cyberspace journal called OMG! dedicated to the proposition that "church-stuff" need not be boring. In its premier issue, OMG! features a sassy 6,000-word profile on Phoenix Bishop Thomas Olmsted that tells in intimate detail how he excommunicated Mercy Sister Margaret McBride for authorizing what he called an abortion at St. Joseph's Hospital in Arizona and then, when the hospital refused to kowtow to his iffy authority, excommunicated the hospital as well. [Download OMG! here.](#)

Reminder to Book your Hotel Reservation Now

Consider joining us in Rome! The first step in getting ready for Rome is to make your hotel reservations. You will want to do this now before rooms are taken. We have discovered that accommodations in Rome for this October are filling up fast! Even if you are only thinking about joining us for *our Forum on the Family in Rome this October 2 and 3*, we strongly encourage you to [make your hotel reservations now](#). Most hotels allow a cancellation up to 48 hours before check in.

Check out our newly restructured website: www.CatholicChurchReformIntl.org.