



LAY WITNESS

February 2, 2020

The Presentation of the Lord

Vol. 38, No. 1

to unite the faithful from all walks of life in order to support, defend and advance the efforts of the teaching Church

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).

I write this letter on the Feast of Candlemas, the Presentation of the Lord. In the old calendar, this Feast brings an end to Christmastide and begins Ordinary Time. Traditionally, candles for use throughout the year would be blessed. When using the candles, one would be reminded of Christmas, and that the Light of Christ had come into the world. As I listened to the readings during Mass, my heart and mind rested on the first reading, Malachi 3:1-4.

Thus says the Lord God: Lo, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me; And suddenly there will come to the temple the LORD whom you seek, And the messenger of the covenant whom you desire. Yes, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who will endure the day of his coming? And who can stand when he appears? For he is like the refiner's fire, or like the fuller's lye. He will sit refining and purifying silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi, refining them like gold or like silver that they may offer due sacrifice to the LORD. Then the sacrifice of Judah and Jerusalem will please the LORD, as in the days of old, as in years gone by.

So, who are the “sons of Levi” mentioned in verse 3? They are not the priests of the New Testament; they are ordained in the order of Melchizedek. The sons of Levi are you and me and all the baptized. By our baptism, we are consecrated (Chrism is used at our baptisms) in Christ and given the task of converting the world from within. If we take our rightful place as stewards of the earth, we offer back to God all that He has given into our care—including each other. We can accomplish this task only if we are purified by Christ and His Holy Spirit.

Read the passage again carefully. Notice how the refining and purifying is not something done all at once. The sense of the passage is that this is a continual process; “*He will sit refining and purifying....*” Each of us understands that the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is a continual process. As that process unfolds, we must make constant effort to cooperate with His work. Our conversion **to** Faith may be quick and sometimes eventful, but our conversion **in** Faith takes a lifetime.

This continual conversion in Faith requires personal commitment, but

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Prayer of Catholics United for the Faith

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 the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **AMEN.**

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,
have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Mother of the Church,

intercede for us.

St. Joseph, Head of the Holy Family
and Patron of the Universal Church,
pray for us.

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also a connection to the Body of Christ. This connection should not just be a spiritual or moral connection, but one that develops lasting relationships with people who will help us be saints. When we separate ourselves from the Body of Christ, when we do not develop these relationships, we are not true to the social nature of our Faith. God Himself is a community of Divine Persons united in the eternal bond of Love. When we develop and foster these relationships in Faith, we express the image and likeness of God given at conception and strengthened in baptism.

The Mission of Catholics United for the Faith (CUF) is nothing less than to unite the faithful from all walks of life in a life of Faith; a life of Faith that supports, defends, and advances the Teaching Office of the Catholic Church. We take this Mission seriously in the International Office. We know that you, CUF's members and associates, also take this Mission seriously. It's why you are reading this letter. And, because we take this seriously, we pursued our membership drive to help people decide if a member of CUF is really what each of you wants to be. As you may remember from recent issues of *Lay Witness*, we concluded our membership drive late last year. I want to share those figures with you. Let me give you some context.

In February 2017, when CUF affiliated to The Saint Joseph Foundation (SJF), we had just over 3,100 addresses on our mailing list. About 1,500 identified as a life-time member. Up to that time, anyone on CUF's regular mailing list was considered a member. During that same calendar year, only 335 people donated to CUF; many of them were from the life-time members list. In 2018, we removed about 830 bad addresses that proved inaccurate with no forwarding address provided. There had been almost no activity with the members between 2015 and 2017, so this result was not a surprise. This brought our membership/mailing list down to just over 2,300 addresses by the end of 2018.

CUF is a membership organization. Membership organizations generally have expectations for those who wish to be members and offer benefits for those who are. Over the past year, CUF identified membership criteria with benefits and published it to our mailing list. We invited the members of the 2,300 households to consider being a member or an associate. We understood that the changes in CUF may also lead to changed intentions by those on the mailing list. We made it clear that those who did not reply would be removed from our mailing list. At the end of the year, the results were stronger than I anticipated: 719 members in 510 households, and 586

associates in 440 households, for a total of 1,229 members and associates on our mailing list of 1,026.

In 2019, we chartered our first new chapter in over a decade; the St. John Henry Newman Chapter in Morgantown, WV. We are very grateful for our chapters, and we have 117 members active in the eight chapters in the United States. I am sad to say that, due to illness of leaders and a lack of willing replacements, the three chapters in New Zealand chose to close. We retain individual members, and we hope someday that the chapters will revive.

I am sincerely grateful to all of you who have chosen to be part of this great, lay apostolate dedicated to the unity of the Church through her Teaching Office. I am continually encouraged by your notes and letters of encouragement. More importantly, I am encouraged by your dedication to Christ and His Church. Without you, there would be no CUF.

I have travelled a lot over the past year. Everywhere I go, I talk about CUF. In many places, I also hear about CUF. While planning a recent trip, I told my contact that I wanted to bring CUF materials to distribute. She had never heard of CUF. Some days later, she called and told me that during a recent gathering of friends, with several couples from out of state, at least one person from each couple had known of CUF. In fact, each of them spoke of being "raised" with CUF, being children of parents who were very involved. They told her about local events they attended. They were children of members, and they were formed by CUF materials and events, but they never became members.

As members of CUF, we should not be shy to invite others—even family members—to join us in our efforts. It's the first part of our mission; "To unite the faithful from all walks of life...." Let me offer some examples of how that can happen.

1. Family Chapter: Many of you do not have a chapter in your area. And, you may not think you can start one on your own. I understand. Though you may not be able to start a chapter in your area, start a "Family Chapter." Make your family a chapter of CUF. Take time each week to pray, discuss apostolic activities you can do, and then do them. It's a great way to form children in the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy—to do it with them! Let your children research the saints and choose a patron for your Family Chapter. The more involved they are in daily Faith formation, the better chance they

will choose that path in life when they leave your home. If you need materials to help with your family formation, call Information Services (1-800 MY FAITH). We are not the only ones with great materials, and we can point you to others that specialize in family faith formation materials. If you start something at home, send us the name of your Family Chapter and share your works. We would love to use your example to encourage others.

2. Be Friend-ly: While talking to family or friends, share something from CUF, like a FAITH FACT or Lay Witness article. Invite a discussion. If the timing is right, invite them to contact us for information, or invite them to join. Even two or three members can meet regularly for prayer and encouragement. The local support for our efforts—even gathering for prayer—is essential.
3. Advertise: In the past, many CUF members advertised the 1-800 MY FAITH number in their parish bulletins or diocesan newspapers. Some even advertised a call for membership. If you have the means, it's a great way to promote CUF.
4. 1-800 MY FAITH: Use our materials. If you use CUF materials to answer questions others may have, or to share the Catholic Faith, even just to pass out holy cards, it exposes others to our apostolic works.
5. Pray: Of course, always pray. We know that CUF will not accomplish its mission if we do not have the power of Grace to help us. Pray for us; pray for all members.

The month of January has traditionally been the time of year CUF holds its membership drive. Because we just finished ours after two years of transition, we decided not to hold one this January. Instead, we encourage each of you to invite someone to become an associate or member. I ask you to consider using one of the ideas above or come up with an idea of your own. If each household with a CUF member successfully invited one person to join, our mailing list could double in one year and none of you would be alone on this journey in our difficult world.

As I write these words, I am reminded of how St. Philip witnessed to the Ethiopian eunuch. In Acts 8:26-38, we read of how the Holy Spirit led St. Philip to boldness. St. Philip invited himself to explain the Word of God to the eunuch, and the story ends with the eunuch's baptism. The mission of CUF encourages us to be bold in the Holy Spirit we received at our baptisms, and to share the Faith.

You have chosen to be a member or an associate of CUF. Will you hide the Light of Christ in your heart under a bushel basket? Or, will you share it so your life in Faith will become a guide for others? I know what you want to do. I encourage you; pick a person you would like to share the Faith with and begin praying for that person. Ask the Holy Spirit to make an opportunity to share your Faith. When the opportunity comes, be prepared to be amazed. As Temples of the Holy Spirit, we become vessels of His power, and amazing things happen when we let that grace work.

God bless you; St. Joseph keep you; and have a Happy Lent!

Peace,

Philip C. L. Gray,
President

Unity in The Faith

E. William Sockey III

Six years after the founding of CUF, H. Lyman Stebbins spoke to St. Michael the Archangel Chapter in Memphis, Tennessee about "The Essential Meaning and Purpose of Catholics United for the Faith. "Why for the Faith?" he asked. He answered with a quotation from now St. John Henry Newman:

The Christian life may be comprised in two words, faith and charity, as we all very well know. Faith is the foundation; charity is the building. Faith is the first and chief essential –charity the higher and more perfect. Faith is the essential because no building can stand without something to stand upon.

CUF was founded in direct response to attacks on the Faith that followed immediately after Pope Paul VI promulgated his encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*. In it, the Holy Father set forth the teaching of the Church on the truth about human sexuality. These attacks came from within the Church, by men and women, many of whom claimed to be Catholic theologians. These "theologians" called into question the authority of the Pope to teach infallibly on questions of faith and morals. They raised in the minds of many Catholics, including Catholic teachers, the insidious notion that if the Pope could be wrong on one question

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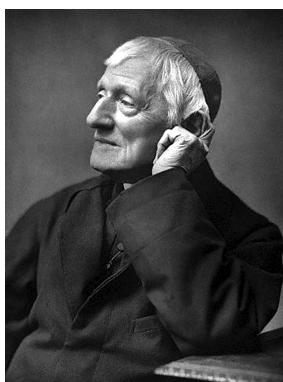
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of faith and morals then he could be wrong on others. They also shifted the foundation of the Catholic Faith in the minds of many with “itching ears” from the Pope to the theologians. These “theologians” offered to revise the moral teaching of the Church to permit Catholics to make decisions contrary to authentic Catholic teaching without burdening their consciences.

Today we are experiencing uncertainty about the faith in the minds of many good Catholics. CUF’s mission is to restore the knowledge of what the Church teaches and restore confidence that following the Church is following Christ. That is why we express our mission as “to support, defend and advance the efforts of the teaching Church!”

Knowing the Faith requires more than memorized bullet point answers to trivia questions. The Second Vatican Council called Catholics to aspire to a mature faith, not just knowing the answers to catechism questions, but understanding *the reasons for* the catechism answers. We are invited to know the history and traditions of the Church and the principles of Catholic spiritual life. Every Catholic should know fundamental theology and be able to give competent answers to the questions and challenges from others.

Cardinal Newman said, “I want a laity not arrogant, nor rash in speech, not disputatious. But men who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold, and what they do not, who know their creed so well, that they can give an account of it, who know so much of history that they can defend it.” This vision of an informed and emboldened laity is the driving spirit behind Catholics United for the Faith, because we can accomplish this far better as members of a community working together than by ourselves.



The Spiritual Warfare

The sin of Adam and Eve plunged the world into a state of spiritual warfare. This is the fundamental reality of the world today. It is a constant battle for the salvation of souls and the restoration of the social order ordained by God in the beginning. The turning point in the battle was the birth of Jesus Christ of the Virgin Mary. By His suffering and death, Jesus satisfied God’s justice so that His mercy could flow abundantly into the souls of sinners. But He didn’t stop there. He instituted the seven Sacraments to transform us into His image and enable us to share in His own power; He sent us the Holy Spirit to open our minds and hearts to

all truth; He established the Church, under the authority of the pope, to be the visible source of unity, the protector of the deposit of faith, the dispenser of the sacraments and the supreme authority to guide and direct the activities of the faithful engaged in the spiritual warfare. He then went forth in His Mystical Body, the body of the faithful, to take the world back from the power of Satan.

Jesus’ Ascension into heaven and sending down the Holy Spirit on His apostles and disciples at Pentecost was not the culmination of His work on earth; it was the beginning! Through the Sacraments and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Our Lord transformed and continues to transform His followers into images of Himself, forming them into His Mystical Body. The Mystical Body of Christ is mystical, but it is real! It is Jesus Himself, ever present in the world carrying out His work of restoring the spiritual and temporal order intended by God in the beginning. His birth was just the beginning of the restoration that will go on through the spiritual and temporal works of the His faithful until the Last Judgment. We were not only redeemed by His suffering, death and resurrection; we were called, empowered and sent forth into the world to save souls and restore the temporal order. Our mission is to “restore all things in Christ.”

As the Second Vatican Council taught, it is the mission of the Church, to which the laity are also called, “... to spread the kingdom of Christ over all the earth for the glory of God the Father, to make all men partakers in redemption and salvation, and through them to establish the right relationship of the entire world to Christ. Every activity of the Mystical Body with this in view goes by the name of ‘apostolate...’” (AA 1:2). This is the fundamental purpose of everything we do as members of CUF.

United with Our Bishop

It is critical to our work to remain always united to the Church, through our pastors, our bishop and the Pope. St. Augustine teaches us to always remain united to our bishop as long as he remains united to the Pope, even if he seems to be failing in his responsibilities as our shepherd. Unfortunately, not only today but throughout the history of the Church there have been bishops who were not faithful to their responsibilities. The Fourth Commandment requires that we continue to give our bishop love and respect as our spiritual father, even if he seems to be failing in his duties as our shepherd. This is one reason we need to develop and maintain a mature faith; we need to be able to recognize errors in order to support, defend and advance the faith even when errors come from people within the Church. We have our own work to do for the faith regardless of what others do.

Edouard Cardinal Gagnon, a close friend of CUF, was once accosted by several women anxiously trying to persuade him that there were Freemasons in the Vatican. After calming them down, he turned aside to CUF members who were present and said, in effect, "There have always been agents of foreign governments and associations in the Vatican, from the beginning. That is Jesus' concern, not ours. If Jesus chooses to let enemies of the Church operate in the Vatican, He has good reasons. We have our own work to do and need to keep to it without letting matters we can't change distract us."

In the early history of CUF several chapters and CUF leaders actually brought their bishops to a closer union with the pope! Their expressions of love and respect for their bishop as their spiritual father led their bishop to pay attention to concerns they expressed. The bishop came to regard them as friends, and to respect their unwavering fidelity to Catholic doctrine, which they were very capable of defending. Another bishop who was known for disagreeing with the pope, nonetheless maintained a warm friendship with the local CUF chapter and expressed respect for their upholding the pope's authority even when he admitted he disagreed. More than one confused bishop was "converted" to complete support for the pope by his CUF friends. This healthy attitude of CUF towards our bishops, even those in conflict with the pope, was approved by cardinals in Rome and by the pope himself, who had Cardinal Gagnon send us a note affirming CUF's approach. By faith we believe and accept that Jesus rules His Church through the pope and bishops and if we respect and pray for them and keep about our own work, our work for the faith will prosper.

A good bishop once told CUF Vice President Col. Bill Lawton and me that he was convinced the Church in America was much better off because of the leaven of the faithful witness of CUF members all over our country. St. Paul instructed the faithful to uphold the truth "in season and out of season" and that's what we do. In doing this we should be attentive to what support and encouragement our pastors and bishops need from us.

So How Should We Proceed?

The Church is in a lot of trouble; but the Church has always been in trouble, in different ways throughout her history. Lyman Stebbins used to say the question is not "What can we do?" but "What can we *usefully* and *fittingly* do?" The mission of CUF is to support, defend and advance the efforts of the teaching Church in present circumstances. As the Second Vatican Council taught, we need to discern the 'signs of the times.' One of the most evident signs of our times is the undermining of the faith by Catholic theologians, teachers and some members of

the clergy and hierarchy. This internal rebellion seems to do more to hamper the work of the Church than any external obstacles.

It is important for CUF members to keep in mind that Our Lord didn't put us here to have a good time. This is spiritual warfare and we have been sent into battle by the Holy Spirit. We should enjoy the good things God has provided in this world, and we give God glory by doing so, but all the baptized are called to participate in the work of converting sinners and rescuing souls from Satan's grasp.

So many of the problems of this world would be solved if more people loved God above all things and their neighbors as themselves. That is the ultimate goal. It's a spiritual goal and requires above all a spiritual response: prayer and penance for the conversion of those who are not in the state of grace. At Fatima, Our Lady told us that we can bring down the blessing of peace on the world by getting Catholics to offer daily prayer and penance for the conversion of sinners. Sister Lucia said this was the *most important request* of Our Lady of Fatima. All Catholics, including children, should pray the Angel Prayer from Fatima at the start of each day: "O my God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love you; I beg pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love you."

The Message of Fatima also asks us to accept with submission any and all suffering we encounter each day and unite it to the Cross "for love of Jesus, for the conversion of sinners and as reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We should make this offering first thing every morning and develop the habit of recognizing all our frustrations, irritations, worries, disappointments, etc. – just the suffering we can't avoid -- as our *willing* acceptance of our daily crosses in partnership with Jesus. This is what St. Paul meant in his Letter to the Philippians (3:10) when he said "I wish to know Christ and the power flowing from his resurrection; likewise to know how to share in his sufferings by being formed into the pattern of his death." (That is, to patiently accept all our trials and tribulations, our daily crosses, and offer them through Jesus as reparation for sin and the conversion of sinners.

We can make this offering for our own loved ones who need conversion (Pope St. John Paul II recommended this) and as CUF members we should make it for those in our parish, diocese and the Holy See who are in need of conversion. It's encouraging to be aware that over 100,000 members of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima have pledged to say this prayer and make this offering every day for our country and the Church! We would do well to join them in this effort to increase God's grace and mercy for our country, the Church and the world.

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We need to strengthen our knowledge of the faith and our competence to answer questions and challenges about the faith; as St. Peter advised: "Always be prepared to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence..." (1 Peter 3:15). Our apostolate provides guidance about the most effective resources for growing our faith and becoming competent in defending the faith. We need to recognize local challenges to spreading and strengthening the faith, especially in our own parish, and work together to find realistic ways to address these challenges. This is an advantage of having an organized apostolate. Finally, we need to put aside a reasonable portion of the goods God has given us for the financial support of our apostolate; monthly, quarterly or annually, according to our means.

We have all been called by God to participate in the work of saving souls and restoring the social order based on love of God and neighbor that was originally intended. CUF was founded to bring together and form lay people from all walks of life, in answer to the call of the Second Vatican Council in the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, to participate effectively in this work according to our time and talents. If we can do nothing more than pray for the conversion of sinners and offer our daily crosses as reparation for sins, we will be doing a great, important and powerful work. If we can do more, our apostolate will provide us with the training and opportunities to do this effectively.



Morsels of Mirth

Q. Why couldn't Jonah trust the ocean?

A. Because he knew there was something fishy about it.

Q. Who was the greatest financier in the Bible?

A. Noah; he was floating his stock while everyone was in liquidation.

Q. Where was Solomon's temple located?

A. On the side of his head.

Q. Where is the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible?

A. When Joseph served in Pharaoh's court.

Q. What did Adam say on the day before Christmas?

A. It's Christmas, Eve!

Family Chapters of CUF!

CUF members are so widely scattered in many areas of the country that the possibility of their forming a local chapter is quite remote. A few months ago, we received a letter from a husband and wife which has given all of us a wonderful idea on how our members may serve the Church and CUF by forming "mini-chapters", or Family Chapters of CUF. We would like to share a portion of that letter with you.

"We consider ourselves a CUF Chapter (Our Lady of Perpetual Help), just the two of us...A general report would include the distribution of over a dozen 'Trojan Horse in the City of God,' by you know who, also his booklets on sex,

sensitivity training and his essay on *Humanae Vitae*...Fr. O'Connell's 'Science Today'...and dozens of his booklets on 'Original Sin', several subscriptions to *The Wanderer*, Dr. von Hildebrand's 'expose' of Chardin and about 36 of Fr. Schumacher's 'The Truth About Teilhard'. We've written quite a few letters and served on the anti-abortion speakers bureau. That's about it except for the most important act - prayer."

It would be a wonderful development of their spirit and concept if the Family Chapter would grow and flourish among all our members!

- Taken from a 1972 Newsletter



The Church Militant and the Church Triumphant, fresco by Andrea da Firenze in Santa Maria Novella, c. 1365

CUF LINKS

Chapter News

All are invited for a Day of Recollection and Conference, *You are Called to Holiness*, sponsored by St. John Neumann Chapter of Philadelphia. Please join us on April 4th as we pray together and learn from outstanding speakers, Cardinal Raymond Burke, Bishop Joseph Strickland, and Father Dennis Gill. There will be opportunities for confession, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Procession and Crowning of the National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, recitation of the rosary and the beautiful Vigil Mass for Palm Sunday. For

more information and to register, visit stjohnneumann-chapter.org.

Wish there was a vibrant Catholic community in your area? That desire is a call to action! Contact our office to learn more about how you can charter a CUF chapter or visit cuf.org to find the chapter nearest you!

We want to feature your chapter's activities and pictures! Keep us up to date by emailing administrativeassistant@cuf.org

Information Services

The numbers are in and I am pleased to report that in 2019 CUF's Information Services prepared and distributed 3,330 information resources to individuals all around the world. Roughly 1,800 of those materials were mailed directly to individuals who requested them. Close to 1,600 additional resources were distributed at conferences, speaking engagements, chapter meetings, RCIA programs, and religious education classrooms across the country.

We have no plans to slow down in 2020. The most requested FAITH FACT this January is in response to the question, *Can Catholics be Freemasons?* Since the

beginning of the year we have had multiple requests for this FAITH FACT as well as additional questions regarding what the Masons teach and whether the prohibition on joining the Freemasons is still in effect (*yes, it is*). I am not sure if some recent event has prompted renewed interest in these questions, but I am glad that people are reaching out to brush up on the Church's teaching on this matter.

If you would like to know more about this topic or have your own questions about the Catholic Faith, please don't hesitate to contact us at 1-800 MY FAITH (693-2484). – Brian

St. Joseph Foundation

For the first issue of 2020, I will provide a summary of the Foundation's activity. At the start of 2019, we inherited 45 active cases; and throughout the year, we received roughly 125 inquiries, 30 of which became active cases. This does not include the response from Philip's EWTN appearance. All in all, the Foundation worked through 75 active cases; closed 27 cases by resolution, a miracle, or loss; and are starting this year with

46 active cases—of which 26 are pending at the Roman Curia (Apostolic Signatura - 14; Congregations - 9; and Rota - 3). These numbers translate into a healthy amount of writing activity with 51 drafted acts for clients at the local level and 66 drafted acts at the Roman Curial level. This does not include the drafts for the two major cases I have referred to in previous updates. Happy New Year!

Yakin' About

Have you invited a family member or friend to become a CUF member? Let's grow the ranks!

To learn more about The World Apostolate of Fatima and to join Our Lady's Blue Army that Mr. Sockey wrote about in his article, please visit bluearmy.com

We want to showcase the spiritual life of our members in *Lay Witness!* Submit your original prayers,

meditations, and articles with your reply card or email administrativeassistant@cuf.org. Thank you for sharing!

If you haven't already, be sure to visit cuf.org for interviews, articles, upcoming chapter events and more.

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