I Introduction

A. The Call

In CFC Singles for Christ, men and women are called to live as a community where they share a common life and culture and establish a committed relationship with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. This is the first level of relationship. From this stem other relationships within the community.

- friends
- co-workers in the mission of SFC
- leaders and subordinates in their service
- special relationships

B. Not Easy.

Growing in these different levels of relationships is not easy. It is a process, which begins with a personal appreciation of God’s plan for all men to be united in His love and a personal decision to make this the foundation of all human relationships.

This is easier said than done. One must deal with the following realities which makes the process difficult, especially in women:

1. Upbringing and conditioning before the renewal
   a) Traditional attitudes and values
   b) Patterns of behavior
2. Human weakness
3. Outside pressure

II. How to Love and Care for the Brothers

A. Cultivating the right attitude toward men

1. Traditional, worldly attitude towards men:
2. The proper attitude to hold about men.
   a) Men are inherently good – they are precious stones with a rough exterior. The love of a good woman polishes the roughness and allows its brilliance to shine forth.
   b) Men are equal in worth and dignity as women, with different roles.
   c) Men are created to be in partnership with women. Most women, except those called to live single for life, are not complete without men. The complement one another.

   Women must appreciate the reality that men in SFC are undergoing a process of renewal. The sisters support, love and care, therefore, are essential to this on-going process of transformation.

3. Men in SFC are:
   a) reformed pablings or lover boys
   b) reformed drug users and/or alcoholics
   c) reformed war freaks and bullies
   d) reformed liars and cheaters
   e) transformed homosexuals
   f) If they are none of the above, they probably are good men with their own share of weaknesses.
These men are themselves products and victims of their own upbringing. But because they are in SFC, God is making them precious: “ang tanso, ginagawang ginto”.

**B. Loving the Men in SFC**

Given this new understanding and appreciation, how do women love men in SFC.

1. **By treating them with honor and respect**
   a) Greeting. Initiate in greeting our brothers with a handshake, a hello with an accompanying smile, a tap on the arm or shoulder. Hugs and kisses on the checks are normally reserved for men you are really close to as a brother and with whom you have no romantic intentions,
   b) Show interest and respect for their ideas
   c) Do not be sarcastic, patronizing or abusive in dealing with them.

2. **By building them up as your brethren.**
   a) Most of them are new in the Christian life, they need encouragement to grow
   b) Encourage them to be leaders. Help build their confidence as speakers, team leaders and prayer leaders.

3. **When they make a mistakes:**
   a) Given them brotherly correction by taking to them directly or through their leader in SFC
   b) Do not make them the subject of gossip among your friends

**III. Loving Men in a Special Way**

**C. During Courtship**

1. Pray for the men who show special interest in you. Invite them to the CLP if they are not with SFC.
2. Make it clear to them that you want them to remain your friend whether your responses is favorable or not. Do this only when he has actually proposed.
3. If you are not interested in him romantically, tell him so without making him feel that he is not good enough for you. Assure him also of your friendship and commitment as a sister.

**D. When He is Your Boyfriend**

1. Help him to grow as a man of God.
2. Do not make him your exclusive property.
   a) Encourage him to grow in his relationship with the brothers
   b) Help him to grow in his service
   c) Avoid excessive PDA (Public Display of Affection)
3. Put God at the center of your relationship, SFC as the environment where this relationship will be nourished until you move on to the next stage.
4. Discuss and prepare a pastoral plan for your relationship, allowing the man to make the initiative.
5. When after prayer, discernment and consultation, you decide to end the relationship, do this with utmost care for him as a brother. Do this with the input of your SFC leaders.

E. When You Get Married

1. Seek to grow as a couple. Join Couples for Christ
2. Encourage your spouse to continue growing in his Christian service. Even as a married man, he needs on-going Christian support that he can get from CFC and his service.
   If not, he might be preoccupied with mundane concerns and lose his focus on God. “Baka ang ginto maging tanso.”
LOVING THE WOMEN IN SFC

I. Introduction

Our call to Singles for Christ is a call to a Christian community with a mission. Essential to our life as a community and our mission is the foundation of our relationship, which is love. Just like in the time of the early Christians, we would like people to see us and marvel at how we love one another, and eventually desire to be part of our community.

It is important for Singles for Christ, especially its leaders, to continue to teach and learn and grow in knowing how to love and care for one another.

II. How to Love and Care for the Sisters

A. Cultivating the right attitude toward women

1. Traditional, worldly attitude towards women:
   a) Women are weak – to be subjected, manipulated, exploited.
   b) Women are sex objects/commodities – they can be bought at a price; considered as a possession
   c) Women are trophies – an object of conquest; a feather on one's cap; status symbol
   d) Women are to be feared – they are scheming, manipulative, materialistic; they use their sex appeal to lure and destroy men.

   Men will have difficulty in entering into a healthy, stable and life-giving relationship with women because of the wrong attitude towards them and the wrong expectations they have of them.

2. How should men view women?
   a) Women are God’s gift to men. As such, they are precious and need to be reassured by men.
   b) Women are equal in worth and dignity to men. This requires honor and respect for one another.
c) Women are created to be the partners of men in the plan of God. They have complementary roles with men. One is incomplete without the other, especially in a marriage relationship. Headship of a husband in a family situation speaks of his role as husband and father, and not about his superiority over his wife in terms of skills, intelligence, worth and dignity.

When a man is called to open doors for women or give up his seat in the bus for them, it does not mean that he is superior to women. This is one way he is called to show honor and respect to them. In the same way, when a man wakes up in the middle of the night to see if his wife and children are all right after hearing an unusual sound, he is simply living up to his role as head of the family called to look after the safety and protection of his wife and children.

B. The Different Kinds of Relationship with Women in SFC

1. Relating to women as SISTERS – love, honor and respect can be depended on by the sisters.
2. Relation to women as FRIENDS – sisters can count on strong personal relationship from the men
3. Relating to women as COWORKERS in the building of the Kingdom – we share the zeal of the mission of loving and serving God.
4. Relation to sisters in a SPECIAL ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP;

a) Before moving into a full-blown romantic assault, realize the importance of the above 3 levels of relationship and desire to grow in them.
b) Before making your intentions known, start praying for the sister and ask God if she is the one for you.
c) Consult your leaders in SFC (Household Head, Unit Head, Chapter Head)
d) Be prudent for your sake and the sister. Don’t announce your intentions to everyone. Be sensitive not only to your feelings, but also to the feelings of the sister.
e) If you are not sure, be careful not to lead them on and create undue expectation.

Caution for the Men: If the man is not careful, he will gain a reputation of being a playboy or a teaser, and the sisters will not take him seriously when he is serious.

Caution for the Women: Sometimes the man can also be the victim of unmet expectations on the part of the sister when he is simply being a brother and a friend to her.
The woman must not judge a brother or talk about him with others. If there is a problem, the matter should be taken up with the brother or his leader through the leader of the woman.

f) Falling in love for a man in SFC should be seen as a normal exciting stage in his life. This is something that the community does not want to regulate or put any heavy burdens on with rules and stages in courtship. Romance is important in a person’s life and a member of SFC should not be deprived of this experience.

g) Falling in love, however, does not mean that everything else stops or is unimportant. Loving must always be seen in the context of God’s plan. One falls in love for the long haul, and not the short term.

- Do not neglect your commitment and service because you are in love.
- Do not be overly focused on the object of your love that you stop relating with other brothers and sisters.
- A Christian man in love does not lose sight of the fact that his love relationship is a gift from God. He takes an active role in this relationship.
- He prays for and discusses with his girlfriend the vision for their relationships; growing together as BF-GF and planning life together as husband and wife and parents to their children.
- He helps his girlfriend grow as a woman of God: leads her to a life of righteousness and holiness.
- He supports her in her Christian service.
I. Introduction.

Tell a story that emphasizes the power of love. Love can make or break a person. It could destroy the harmony in personal relationships as well as in groups.

II. Love and sex in the worldly context.

A. The Misconceptions of Love in the World’s Context

Yet, the world interprets love as FEELINGS, as SEXUAL DESIRE. Feelings, whether positive or negative, cannot be the only basis of LOVE because they change.

Furthermore and importantly, this kind of love is inward looking and self-seeking. Love, courtship and sex, following this definition, are understood in very SELFISH ways; they are seen exclusively as a means to self-gratification and self-fulfillment.

B. Some Effects of Love and Sex in the Worldly Context

1. Physical: disease, unwanted pregnancies, abortion, etc.
2. Emotional: frustration, anger, guilt and shame
3. Social: break-up of relationships between friends and families, psychologically scarred children, etc,

4. Spiritual:
   a. The loss of the Kingdom of God. (Eph 5:5-7 & Gal. 5:16-21)
      “Make no mistake about this: no fornicator, nor unclean or lustful person – in effect an idolater – has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.
   b. The loss of the meaning of love.

III. Love in the Christian context.

*The very center and basis of Christian morality are faithful and committed love God and to our brethren. In all four gospels of the New Testament Jesus teaches His disciples to “love God with all their hearts, with all their mind and with all*
their strength” and to “love their neighbor as they love themselves.” (The Greatest Commandment: Mt. 22:37-40; Mk 12:29-31; Lk 10:27; John 15:4-17)

A. Christ’s disciples must, first and foremost, be concerned in developing a deep and personal relationship with God.

Christians should see all love and human relationships as secondary to this basic and all important relationship with God.

B. Christians must love their neighbors as they love and care for themselves and in the manner they desire others to love them.

1. John 15:12-13. “This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” This is a self-sacrificial kind of love which Jesus asks all Christians to follow (1 John 3:16). St Paul writes that this is committing one’s self to the service of others (Gal 5:14).

2. Who are our “neighbors”? As far as courtship is concerned, for males it is woman and for females it is man.

C. Understanding the differences and similarities between men and women.

1. There is a fundamental equality and oneness of male and female in Christ.
   a. Gen. 1:26-28: The human race was created male and female—one human being created in the image and likeness of God, two sexes.
   b. Acts 2:17-18: The Spirit and His gifts are given to both men and women – both can speak the Lord’s word and serve in the Spirit’s power.
   c. Gal 3:27-28: Men and women have equal access to God in Christ and are one in Him (an advance from the old covenant)

2. Scripture, however, also recognizes differences between men and women. (They are EQUAL but DISTINCT.)
   a. Titus 2:1-6: The different roles and character traits appropriate to men and women.
   b. Much scientific study show that these differences correspond to psychological patterns (e.g., the mentality, attitudes, ways of thinking) that are rooted in our sexual makeup.
      1) Physical strength: Men tend to be more effective when bursts of energy are required in work, e.g., lifting heavy furniture and appliances.
Women, on the otherhand, have better endurance in doing work that requires sustained strength and attention, e.g., lifting the baby all night.

2) Women tend to be more attentive to details and to relationships. They also tend to be more immediately responsive, more nurturant and compassionate.

Men tend to be more capable of distancing themselves from situations and maintaining a broad overview. They are more aggressive and more achievement oriented, and more able to establish order.

3) Men and women relate differently to social groups: men are more inclined toward larger hierarchical ordered groups, while women are more inclined to smaller more intimate friendships groups. (Note: These are not absolutes, but tendencies.)

3. Complementarity is expressed in these differences. God designed the differences in the sexes to complement each other in life, to complete one another, so that they may serve each other and live together well.

IV. True Brotherly and Sisterly Love

True and selfless love is manifested in three important attitudes, service, humility, and faithfulness. These are attitudes of love Jesus, our God showed He possessed; and these are the attitudes He desires us to have.

A. Attitude of Service.

1. Mk 10:45 “The Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve – to give his life in ransom for many.’

2. It was Jesus who called to us to serve. He is Chief Servant, the Mayor Domo. The right way to serve is to serve according to his example.

Gal. 5:13b-14 “…rather serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

B. Attitude of Humility.

1. Phil.2. Christ Jesus came in the form of man to serve.

2. Mk. 10: 35-44. Expound on the difference between service in the world and service in the Kingdom.

True friendship and camaraderie are shown in the humble service one renders to the other. It is completely caring for the Other’s interest. It is possessing the heart and mind of a servant.

C. Attitude of Faithfulness.
1. Heb.13:5-6, NAB. For God has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I forsake you.”
   This statement sums up the way that God has revealed Himself to men and women throughout history, from Abraham and Moses until today: He is faithful.
2. Jesus said to a group of people, “Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away” (Mt. 24:35)
3. The love of the Holy God is immovable, permanent.
   Is 54:10.”For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you.”
   This statement sums up the way that God has revealed Himself to men and women throughout history, from Abraham and Moses until today: He is faithful.

V. Practicing True Love

A. Through SERVICE. (Going the EXTRA mile.)

1. Caring for the other’s practical needs
   a. For men this means: offering to do heavy or difficult work for the sisters, e.g., auto maintenance and trouble-shooting, carpentry etc., opening doors, offering seats, carrying heavy things, etc.,
   b. For women: allowing men to serve; beautifying, arranging making there is food and utensils enough for all (looking after details in activities)

2. Honoring n thought, word and deed.
   a. For men: Speaking positively about our sisters and to them; treating them with courtesy, giving value to their words and ideas; and, LEADING them…
   b. For women: Speaking positively about our brothers and to them’ treating them with courtesy; giving value to their words and ideas) especially with regards to morality and the spiritual life); allowing and encouraging brothers to lead.

3. Showing concern for the other well being (also providing protection).
   a. For men: Walking a sister home at night (or making sure she gets home safely before yourself); taking sisters away from embarrassing situations (such as watching “R” of “X” rated films; being with company who ridicule her or make her feel uncomfortable)
b. For women: Asking brothers how they are when they appear different to you; seeing if they have eaten and serving them if they haven’t being concerned with details which you can easily spot.

4. Being available to a brother or sister.
Loving implies allotting time for your loves one and the time we spend with them should be quality time.

5. Expressing affection to our loved ones.
Remembering all sex outside marriage is illicit. The church values sex because it is one of the highest expression of love. If sex become meaningless then true committed Christian love will also lose its meaning. Behavioral psychology has confirmed this; any sexual behavior from kissing, necking, petting and sexual intercourse, consciously or unconsciously, communicates “I will love you and care for you always.”

a. For men: Keep expressions simple and discreet. Too much PDA is embarrassing to all, your girlfriend and those around you. There is a right time and place for everything; There are other ways of expressing love and affection.
When greeting a sister, allow them to lead or initiate the greeting.

b. For woman: Do not allow your boyfriend too much PDA; understand what this means
When greeting brothers, lead or initiate the greeting.

B. Through the attitude of humility

Humility is having the heart and mind of a servant to look after the interest of those they serve, their loved ones and brothers and sisters in Christ.

1. Honoring the words and ideas of the other.

a. For men: giving value to the words and ideas, the different perspective and ways of doing things of sisters; serving the sister’ leading them.

b. For woman: giving value to the words and ideas, the different perspective and ways of doing things of brothers; serving the bros; allowing them to lead; assisting them by pointing out details missed.

2. Providing encouragement.

a. For men: noticing changes made for the better by the sisters and supporting them this effort; correcting positively being upbuilding in our remarks; pray for each other.

b. For woman: (same as above); encourage leadership in men and support them when weak; pray for each other.

3. Developing the attitudes of patience and forbearance (forgive and forget)
a. For men: being patient especially with female differences, e.g., the sisters’ long shopping sprees or the endless time they need to dress and prepare themselves.

b. For woman: understanding male differences, e.g., the brothers’ lack of attention to details, affection and compassion; and, their tendency not to talk about their concerns, etc.

C. Through the attitude of faithfulness

We must be faithful in our intentions to court a sister, or any woman for that matter, or to accept a suitor.

1. Developing and deepening our relationship with God is our highest priority. Our focus is being a people of God, living righteous and holy lives.

2. Romantic relationships are only begun when we are seriously seeking a partner in life and are ready for such a life.

We mustn’t settle for just anyone who comes our way but for the right person. It will be good to describe this person to ourselves and to pray to God for him/her.

3. Expressing faithfulness in romantic relationships is necessary.

   a. For men: Court only one girl at a time; do not take too long in revealing your intentions; be true to your word, love and serve; if you find the partner in life you are looking for, take the lead in planning your life together.

   b. For woman: Do not lead brothers or other suitors on if you are not interested; be true and sincere to your word. Treat brothers kindly and with respect even if you are not interested in them.

4. Know that sometimes romantic relationships, even with brothers and sisters in SFC, may not work out.

VI. Workshop Problems.

Participants are divided into small groups to discuss one or more of the following situations, depending on the number of groups. A plenary session may be done afterwards to discuss the results of their group discussion.

How will I show my love to a brother or a sister in the following situations:

- What to do when I desire a brother or sister to be my boyfriend or girlfriend? How do I tell this person I like him/her in a romantic way? Whom do I consult? Should I pray? How should I pray? What do I ask?
What do I do if a brother I like courts me when I think I am not ready for a romantic and exclusive relationship? What do I say to him since I do not want our friendship to sour?

What will I say and do to a bro-suitor, if I do not like him to be my BF?

What shall I do if another brother likes the same sister I want to court?

How will I tell one or more brothers courting me I like only one of them as my boyfriend?

How should I break-up with my bro-BF/sis? What should my attitude be towards him/her in SFC activities?

What should a brother/sister do if he/she likes somebody else in the group after breaking-up a romantic relationship to a bro-BF or sis-GF? How should a brother/sister behave after a break-up when he/she finds out that his/her former boy/girlfriend is with another brother or sister?

VII. Conclusion Exhortation.

A. After the Lord washed the feet of His disciples during the last supper he commanded:

“You call me ‘teacher’ and ‘master,’ and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet.” (Jn. 13:13-14)

B. This command of God continues up to this day. He is calling us to love with the same love and concern he has for them. This selfless love is the basis for a lasting relationship.

C. If we allow God, we can be truly men and women after God’s own heart, loving each other selflessly and wisely. The brotherly love required of us is not from the spring of our own hearts but from God’s. Let us tap into His own heart- the true wellspring of endless love.

D. Final Exhortation.

Read: His Plan For Your Mate.
His Plan For Your Mate

Everyone longs to give himself/herself completely to someone to have a deep soul relationship with another - to be loved thoroughly and exclusively. But God to the Christian says:

“No, not yet, not until you are satisfied and fulfilled and content with being loved by Me alone, with giving yourself totally and unreservedly to Me - to have an intensely personal and unique relationship with Me alone. --- I love you, my child, and until you discover that only in Me is your satisfaction to be found, you will not be capable of the perfect human relationship that I have planned for you. You will never be united with another until you are untied with Me, exclusive of anyone or anything else. Exclusive of any desires or longings. I want you to stop wishing, stop planning, and allow Me to give you the most thrilling plan existing - one that you cannot imagine.

I want you to have the best. Please allow Me to bring it to you— you just keep watching Me expecting the greatest things. Keep experiencing that satisfaction knowing that I AM - keep listening, learning the things I tell you, just wait; Don’t be anxious. Don’t worry. Don’t look around at the things you think you want. Just fix your gaze on Me or you’ll miss what I want to show you.

I want you to see in the flesh a picture of your relationship with Me, and to enjoy materially and concretely the everlasting union of beauty and perfection and love that I can offer you with myself. And then, when you are ready, I’ll surprise you with a love far more exciting and wonderful than any of you would ever dream of. --- You see, until you are ready and the one I have for you is ready ---- I am working, even this minute, to have both of you ready at the same time, until you are both satisfied exclusively with Me and the life I prepared for both of you—you won’t be able to experience the love that exemplifies your relationship with Me and is thus perfect love.

And, dear one, I want you to have this most wonderful love---“