The Household Head’s Manual

I. THE HOUSEHOLD

A. Definition

A household is a grouping of singles who meet regularly during the week for personal sharing and for mutual support and encouragement in the Christian life. As such, the household is the basic unit in the pastoral structure of CFC Singles for Christ (SFC).

B. Purpose

The purpose of the household group is to build an environment for the support of the Christian life of singles and to provide a means of encouraging and hastening growth in the Christian life. As such, the household:

1. Builds faith and provides for mutual encouragement through the sharing of life experiences and God’s practical wisdom.
2. Provides friendship and brotherhood/sisterhood, without which our Christian life lacks joyful expression.
3. Provides support for each other’s needs.
4. Helps people overcome obstacles to growth in the Christian life.

C. Composition

A household is composed of from six to ten singles excluding the household head. The household is comprised of singles who finished the Christian Life Program (CLP) and who have made their commitment to the covenant of the CFC Singles for Christ. The household is set up immediately after the end of the CLP.

In succeeding years (at least, after one year), there would be occasions when households would be reorganized. During these occasions membership will be changed and redistributed to other households, units and chapters.

D. Necessity of household membership

Every SFC member is to belong to one household as one of its members. SFC leaders (Household Heads, Unit Heads, and Chapter Heads) all belong to households for their own personal support in the Christian life. Thus, every
SFC leader participates in two households, one which he leads and the other where he in turn is led.

II. THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD

A. Definition

The household head is the SFC brother or sister appointed to take care of a household.

B. The Role of the Household Head

1. The Household Head is the designated leader over a group of singles and is responsible for all the activities of the household and for the good order of the household meeting.
   a. meeting
   b. sharing/discussion
   c. honor and respect

2. The Household Head acts as an older brother/sister to the group.
   a. Establishes strong personal relationships with his members.
   b. Gets help for them whenever it is available.
   c. Gives direction and listens completely to his members ideally, at least, once a month through one-to-one sessions.

3. He gives pastoral support through household meetings done thrice a month, two of which are prayer meetings while the other is a service meeting.

4. He helps each member to be fully integrated into the household and into CFC Singles for Christ.

5. He has no authority over members’ lives but exercises concern for their lives, especially in the areas of righteousness and good order.

6. He supports the life in SFC and the decisions of its elders.
   a. Does not use the household meeting to ventilate disagreements with SFC, CFC or its elders. In case of such disagreement, he takes this up with his Unit Head.
b. Supports fully any decision on movements of singles from one household to another, and helps these members make their movements with ease and a minimum of difficulty.

C. Qualifications of a Household Head

The household head is selected based on the following criteria:

1. Availability

2. Formation
   a. growing spiritually
   b. good order in personal life
   c. a good appreciation of the vision, mission and culture of SFC
   d. faithful to SFC commitments
   e. has taken the CO and SWR I

3. Personal Characteristics
   a. emotionally stable
   b. able to accept correction and direction
   c. has a good reputation

4. Skills
   a. ability to handle a group discussion
   b. good listening and communication skills
   c. ability to provide adequate directions to members regarding SFC commitments

5. A member of SFC for at least one year.

D. Attitudes of a Household Head

In order to properly function in a way that would truly be helpful to the members of the household, the household head needs to have some basic attitudes, to wit:

C. He must have the mind and heart of a servant. Just like the Lord Jesus, he must come to serve rather than be served. His service should be an expression of love for the Lord. He should be humble in service and put
the interest of his members first. He should be obedient to the Lord and to those whom the Lord has put in charge of his service.

D. He must look upon the singles under him as being given by the Lord, to be cared for adequately. He has the responsibility to look after their spiritual welfare, a charge coming directly from the Lord.

E. The household head must love them as brothers or sisters. They are not just good friends, but family.

F. He must serve with gladness and joy. No matter what one’s difficulties are, how badly the day went, how strained one’s relationships with his family and friends are at the moment, the household head needs to have the joy of the Lord, the joy of serving Him, the joy that transcends all earthly difficulties. How he conducts himself will provide a living example to those who have been put in his care.

G. He must serve in trust and confidence. He needs to realize that since the Lord has called him to do His work, then the Lord will equip him with the wisdom and guidance necessary to be an effective instrument of His will.

E. Some Areas of Challenge

The household head is not expected to exercise pastoral headship over his group, but he would normally encounter certain pastoral challenges which he cannot avoid or should not avoid, but for which he should prudently seek help from the elders.

The household head should refer all serious pastoral concerns to his Unit Head, who is the pastor of the members of the unit, which includes the household. Of course, the Unit Head can direct the household head to handle the situation himself, with some input from him. But ultimately it is the responsibility and concern of the Unit Head. Putting it within the context of a family (which a household is), the household head is the big brother while the Unit Head is the father.

Some examples of issues that need to be referred to the Unit Head are:

H. Serious relationship problems within the single’s family.
I. Issues which pastorally affect the unit or across units, e.g., financial borrowing without proper consultation and clearance.
J. Unfaithfulness of members to meetings, requiring a decision to retain or drop a member from SFC.
K. Slander or gossip which erodes relationships within the household/unit or across units.
L. Serious wrongdoing.
M. Moral and theological questions, such as taxes, bribery vs. extortion, penance, the sacraments, etc.
N. Proselytizing and ecumenical relationships.
F. Practical Considerations

Some of the concrete things the household head can and should do are:

O. Handle the practical concerns for household meetings.
   
   P. places of meetings
   Q. topics for discussion/sharing
   R. drawing out a withdrawn member
   S. regulating an over-sharing member
   T. how to stop gossip in the meeting
   U. bringing the discussion to the agenda and keeping it on course

V. Know each member well.
   
   B. Keep notes on each one.

W. Be prayerful.
   
   X. Pray for each member regularly during his own personal prayer time.
   Y. Spend time praying before the household meeting and entrusting it to the Lord.
   Z. Pray over members when appropriate (birthdays, anniversaries, when sick, for inner healing, etc.)

AA. Be prepared and have an agenda. In other words, rely on the Lord, but also do your part.

BB. Focus on spiritual growth and God’s power rather than on problems. However, be sensitive to personal problems.

CC. Get the group to make agreements and account to one another regarding:

   DD. time of meeting, punctuality
   EE. right way of speaking about others
   FF. negative humor
   GG. others

HH. Always work on the faithfulness of members. Attendance at the household meetings is part of a member’s commitment and is a must.

II. Refer all frequent absentees to your Unit Head. Together you can discuss the particular situation and decide on a course of action. Remember: the
strength of the body will depend on its members' faithfulness and commitment.

JJ. Always be on the lookout for potential leaders (CLP discussion leaders, speakers, and household heads) and inform your Unit/Chapter Head about them. We want to identify them early, chart their development and at the opportune time let them serve. Remember that SFC can only grow in number to the extent that our leadership resources allow.

KK. Look upon our newsletter, “Ugnayan”, as a pastoral tool. It can help members grow through teachings. It can help members experience unity in the body, especially in view of our growing numbers. The Ugnayan is normally given out through the Unit Heads and the household head should ensure that each and every member gets it every time.

LL. Study and read, especially the books we publish. Keep ahead of your members.

MM. Don't use the household meeting to ventilate your own personal problems, nor seek help for such problems from the household members under you. Rather, bring these to your Unit Head and to the unit household of which you are a member.

NN. If for any reason you feel you cannot do the job as household head adequately, discuss this with your Unit Head so that appropriate action can be taken. Don't just let it go, with the result that your household members suffer.

III. THE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

OO. Attitudes of Household Members

In order to reap the full benefits to be offered by participation in a household group, its members have to foster some basic attitudes, such as:

PP. Openness – One has to be open to what the Lord wants to give through the household group. One should realize that this is part of God's work and in conformity with His plan for each person, and should therefore be expectant and desirous of what is in store for him. Concretely, one should share about his personal life and relationship with the Lord in a spirit of openness.

QQ. Confidentiality – Household members are encouraged to share of their personal lives, including their concerns and difficulties, in the meetings. And this can be done only in an atmosphere of confidentiality. Whatever is shared in the meetings should not be shared outside with anyone else.
RR. Note: The household leaders may share concerns to their service head/Unit Head, who are extensions of their service and care for household members. This is not a breach of confidentiality.

SS. The prohibition on sharing with outsiders excludes the positive factors in one’s life. These in effect can be shared by the members outside the household meeting whenever there is an appropriate opportunity so that others can also be built up and encouraged.

TT. Faithfulness – One has to make the weekly household meeting a priority in his life and be regular in attendance. Only with continuity and one’s personal commitment can the purpose of household groups be achieved.

UU. Participation – Each member has to come to the meetings prepared both spiritually and practically, and have the attitude of wanting to make a contribution to the life of the meeting. Think not only of what you can get out of the meeting but of what you can impart to the brothers and sisters. This is done by active participation in worship, in sharing and discussion, and in fellowship. It is important that each member supports the good order of the weekly meeting and relates to everyone in the group with honor and respect, especially to the household head.

VV. Love – The idea, after all, is to foster active concern and commitment to one another. One has to look on the other members of the group as not just so many new friends, but as brothers and sisters in the Lord, among whom mutual love is the common denominator.

WW. Attendance

XX. Each member is expected to attend the weekly meetings faithfully, and indeed this is part of one’s commitment to the covenant of SFC. Of course, certain obstacles will come up, such as sickness. What is important is that one should accord top priority to these meetings and really desire not to be absent from them.

YY. Since attendance is part of one’s commitment and since the very purpose of household groups would be defeated by frequent absences (indicating a lack of interest), such absences form sufficient ground for one’s separation from SFC. Household heads should follow up on absent members and try to renew their interest and commitment. If unsuccessful, the matter should be referred to the Unit Head for appropriate action.

ZZ. The household head has no authority to grant leaves of absence to his household members. Any such requests should be referred to the Unit Head.

IV. THE HOUSEHOLD MEETINGS

AAA. Frequency
BBB. Households meet once a week, on the same day of the week as mutually agreed on by the members. Less than once a week would not provide enough contact to have adequate support and encouragement in the Christian life. More than once a week may take time that is more properly allocated to work, family, personal needs or Christian service.

CCC. The household head cannot skip or cancel any meeting, except as provided for below, or as approved by the Unit Head due to a serious reason.

DDD. If the household head cannot be present at a scheduled household meeting (of course for a valid reason), he should not cancel the meeting. Rather, he must refer the matter to the Unit Head. Together, they will agree on a replacement, either one of the men from the household or another brother from the unit.

EEE. Exceptions to the weekly household meetings are the following:

FFF. During the week when the monthly prayer meeting is held.

GGG. When a whole household serves in a CLP. In this case, the household will need to meet only two weeks out of four in a month, in addition to its weekly service in the CLP.

C. If the CLP is on the same day as the monthly chapter prayer meeting, the household meets twice in a regular household meeting.

D. If the CLP is not on the same day as the monthly chapter prayer meeting, the household meets once in a regular household meeting and attends the prayer meeting.

Continuing to meet is essential so that the members continue receiving personal life support, and not just meet for service, which is the CLP.

HHH. During special times such as Holy Week and Christmas break.

III. Venue

The household meeting is to be held in the home of one of the members of the group. The meeting place is rotated among the homes of each member.

Having the household meeting in the homes of the household members has the following values:

JJJ. Worshipping the Lord in our homes makes the truth that the home is a small church a concrete reality. And God's blessings will surely descend upon the home where God's people can be found, worshipping Him together and growing in their faith together.

KKK. The people in our home – our brothers and sisters, maybe our parents, our household help, the people who are closest to us and whom
we love – will be aware of what we are involved in and what we do every week. To them we will become people who are living their Christian faith openly and powerfully.

LLL. What we do in our homes can be an effective tool for evangelism, especially to our residential household, to our neighbors and to other relatives and friends.

MMM. Ingredients of a Household Meeting

A typical household meeting would involve three indispensable ingredients: (1) worship and prayer, (2) a time of sharing or teaching or discussion, and (3) some time for fellowship. All three are very important and none should be skipped or simply glossed over.

NNN. Worship.

OOO. The worship portion should include all the necessary ingredients: singing, praising, thanksgiving, prayers of petition and intercession. Every member should become familiar and comfortable with our way of worship and praise, and the household head shows the way.

PPP. A typical format for the time of worship could be as follows:

E. come before the Lord (may be a short period of silence and/or a short exhortation from the leader)
F. sing a lively song of praise
G. simultaneous vocal praising
H. sing another song, then more praising
I. sing a worship song
J. singing in tongues, followed by a short period of silence
K. bring forward words from the Lord (prophecy, inspired Scripture verses, exhortations) -individual prayers of thanksgiving
L. individual prayers of petition and intercession
M. closing prayer by the leader

QQQ. Members should be exhorted by the head to participate actively in the singing, praising and prayers of thanksgiving and petition. They should also be encouraged to exercise the spiritual gifts of prophecy, inspired Scripture reading and exhortation.

RRR. The household head leads in the worship. As a general rule, he should not delegate his responsibility to the other men. However, every once in a while (not too often), he may ask another brother to lead, for the purpose of training. But most if not all the time, he leads.

SSS. Ideally, someone in the group should play the guitar. A piano or other musical instrument would be alternatives, if available and practicable. If no one can play, then it would be advisable to make
use of our song tapes, where songs have been arranged in groups of
three precisely for use in household worship.

TTT. The worship is done standing up for the whole duration.
Exceptions would be pregnant women and sick or weak members.

UUU. For the time of sharing, teaching or discussion in a joint household
meeting, single men and women may meet together. This arrangement
depends, of course, on what is to be taken up at the discretion of the
household heads, and with the permission of the Unit Head and Chapter
Head.

However, most of the time, SFC households should have separate
meetings for the male households and the women households. Some
advantages of this arrangement are as follows:

VVV. Members are more free to share, especially of their difficulties,
when members of the opposite gender are not around.

WWW. Practically speaking, there would not be enough time (at least
quality time) for everyone to share in a joint meeting.

XXX. It's an opportunity for the men to be supported by the brothers as
Christian men and the women by the sisters as Christian women.

YYY. The last part, fellowship, is the time for socializing.

ZZZ. The host of household meeting usually prepares a very simple
snack. Here it must be kept in mind that the food is incidental to the
fellowship, rather than the fellowship being centered on the food.
Furthermore, no member should be burdened by the snack's cost or
needed time for preparation, nor should any host ever be pressured in
"keeping up" with a fellow member's extravagance.

a. The host says the grace before the meal.

AAAA. Absolutely no alcoholic beverages are to be served for this
part of the household meeting.

BBBB. The evening ends with a short closing prayer by the head.

CCCC. Duration

DDDD. Ordinarily, the household meeting is held after dinner on a
weekday. However, other mutually acceptable times are possible. The
whole meeting would typically run for about 2 1/2 hours, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing/teaching/discussion</td>
<td>60-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship</td>
<td>30-60 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
N. Of course, there is some flexibility and there could be variations on the above time frames.

EEEE. As much as possible, household meetings should start at the agreed time, even if not everyone has arrived. The household head should not wait for everyone. He should not make the meeting and everyone else a captive of someone else's lack of commitment to punctuality. Besides, this may be the only way to get chronic latecomers to mend their ways. So if necessary, the household head should start the worship even if only he and the host are around.

FFFF. The meeting should not end too late, say, not later than 11 p.m. If the meeting can start earlier, so much the better. If the meeting goes beyond 11 p.m., this should be the exception rather than the rule.

GGGG. Social Night

HHHH. The household may decide to have a social night on occasion. A social night is a time devoted to fellowship, with no formal worship, discussion or sharing.

III. It is recommended that a social night be held once a quarter, on the month where there is a 5th week. If the members want to have a social night more often, then it should be done outside the time allocated for regular household meetings. Some possibilities: meet during the prayer meeting week; or have a Lord's Day celebration together.

JJJJ. Various activities are possible. Members may have dinner together, at a home or outside, or go out somewhere together (at a party or disco, go bowling, etc.), or even decide to have a whole-day outing. There is a lot of flexibility, and the idea is just to enjoy each other's company socially and become intimate friends as well as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

V. TOPICS FOR MEETINGS

KKKK. For the first year (for new members right after the CLP), the household meetings are used to follow up on the topics in the teaching program. Thus the first year would look like this:

- 3 months – CLP
- 3 months – Follow up
- 1 day – Covenant Orientation
- 3 months – Follow up
- 1 weekend – SWR I
- 3 months – Follow up
O. Manuals are provided for each of the two "Follow up" phases.

LLL. In the second year and beyond, the topics for the household meetings would normally follow the following cycle:

1st week -- (Chapter1 Prayer Meeting)
2nd week -- Personal sharing
3rd week -- Bible sharing
4th week -- Discussion of a Christian topic

The above cycle provides enough variety so as to make household meetings always interesting and life giving. This cycle could go on and on, year in and year out. Of course, the household head is free to deviate from this cycle as he sees fit.

MMM. Personal Sharing

Personal sharing is telling our brothers and sisters about what has been happening in our lives for the past month, with a particular focus on what the Lord has been doing in our lives. Personal sharing is an essential element in building up our relationship with our brothers and sisters, as more and more we open up our lives to them and they become an intimate part of our lives.

NNN. If the household head opts for personal sharing, it can either be done by just encouraging the members to share as they are led, or by using a set of questions which can guide the members in their sharing. As a framework to provide shape and direction, questions can be an effective means to lively personal interaction. One can develop and use one's own questions, just so long as they suit the needs of the members and can effectively draw out people.

OOO. Sample questions are as follows:

PPPP. How have you grown in your relationship with the Lord? Have you come before the Lord faithfully in personal prayer?
QQQQ. In what ways were you aware of the Lord's presence or action in your life during the past week/month?
RRRR. What has the Lord been teaching you in your prayer time or Scripture study this week/month? How have you responded?
SSSS. Have you conducted yourself righteously in thought, word or action?
TTTT. In what ways has the Lord used you to serve others this past week/month?
UUUU. What change has the Lord been asking you in order that you might grow in loving your brothers and sisters?
VVVV. Bible sharing

Bible sharing is a way for us to be more familiar with the Word of God, as we share about it every month. Bible sharing is not Bible study as such, but a way of drawing insights from the Bible and allowing God to speak to us personally through His written Word.

Various methods of Bible sharing could be utilized. We however recommend the "7 step" method of Bible sharing.

WWWW. Topical discussion

This is a time for formal discussion of a Christian topic. These topics could be anything that has to do with the Christian life, which would be profitable for our members to gain greater understanding. Especially recommended are those topics that have to do with the life, mission, covenant and culture of SFC.

XXXX. For example, such topics are:

YYYY. personal daily prayer time
ZZZZ. daily reading of the Bible
a. living fully the Christian life
   P. avoidance of wrongdoing
   Q. good order in private life
   R. participation in Church life

AAAAA. living as a good Christian in our family
BBBBB. Christian manly and womanly character
CCCCC. Christian courtship
DDDDD. Christian service
EEEEE. Christian fellowship
FFFFF. priority setting/weekly schedule
GGGGG. TV and media
HHHHH. spiritual gifts

IIII. Furthermore, certain publications, sharings or teachings may provide the impetus for a household meeting topic, to wit:

JJJJJ. Teachings contained in our newsletter, the Ugnayan.
KKKKK. Topics contained in the various books that we publish.
LLLLL. Articles of interest in "God's Word Today" or other similar prayer or Scripture guides.
MMMM. Teachings or exhortations given at the monthly prayer meeting.

NNNN. Taped talks or teachings by renowned personages.

OOOOO. It should be noticed that this cycle of topics for the second year and beyond is such that there is no burden on the household head to be always thinking up of what to take up during the household meetings.

PPPPP. For personal sharing, the household head would simply moderate the sharing and keep the interaction active and life giving.

QQQQQ. For the Bible sharing, the household head merely chooses the particular verses to be taken up.

RRRRR. For the topical discussion, the household head chooses the topic, taking from the vast array of materials available to him. If for example he takes up the "Growing in the Lord" article in the Ugnayan, even the discussion starters are already provided. Thus he simply moderates the discussion.

Thus the household leaders are not burdened by "technical" preparation for the meetings, but can focus more on "spiritual" preparation.

SSSSS. This cycle is something the household head is free to follow or not. The household head has a good amount of flexibility as to how to handle the household meeting and what to take up. The important thing is that the conduct of the meeting contributes to the achievement of the stated purpose of our having households and that is to build an environment of support for the Christian life of our members.

VI. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNIT HEAD

TTTTT. The Unit Head is the pastor of the unit to which households belong. As such, he has overall responsibility for the service of household heads in his unit.

UUUUU. The Unit Head has the authority coming from the CFC Council to back him up. As such, the household head needs to look to him with respect and in obedience with regard to his service.

VVVVV. The household head needs to look upon his Unit Head as someone there for him, to help him perform his duties more effectively. The household head should not look upon his household as his own turf that is not to be invaded by his Unit Head. The household head is to be fully open to his Unit Head and be eager to have his input on any matter involving his service.
WWW. The household head focuses on facilitating discussion and developing brotherhood and sisterhood in the household group. He is not expected to exercise pastoral leadership over the group, but he would normally encounter certain pastoral challenges which he should refer to his Unit Head.

XXX. The household head, either singly or together with other household heads of the unit, meets with the Unit Head once a month for a service meeting. The meeting shall dwell on any or all of the following:

YYYY. Reporting in general on how the members of the household are doing.
ZZZZ. Receiving pastoral guidance and direction in handling of the singles.
AAAA. Discussion and resolution of problems or issues brought up.
BBBB. Report on faithfulness in attendance (at household meetings, prayer meetings and other activities) and in financial giving.
CCCC. Identification of and discussion of training exposure for potential leaders.
DDDD. Administrative matters.

EEE. The household head needs to keep the Unit Head informed and updated regarding his members, since the Unit Head does not have regular direct contact with them but is, as pastor, still responsible for everyone. Thus occasional feedback and the regular monthly service meeting are essential.

Following are some areas of pastoral concern for the Unit Head:

FFFF. Household

GGGG. Are the men or women relating to one another well?
HHHH. Are they free to share with one another?
IIII. Do they worship freely together?
JJJJ. Do they ever do anything together outside of the household meeting?
KKKK. How is their general attitude towards SFC?

LLL. Individual members.

MMMM. How are they growing in Christ?
NNNN. Daily prayer?
OOOO. Relationship with parents? With brothers? With boyfriend or girlfriend?
PPP PPP. Relationship with authority? To the household head, to the
Unit Head, overall to SFC?
QQQQQQ. Problems if any.

RRRRRR. Time and service.

SSSSSS. Do they have enough time for themselves, family, job and
service?
TTTTTT. How are they experiencing their service?
UUUUUU. Are they growing in confidence? Do they need more help?

VII. GROUP ACTIVITIES

VVVVVV. Aside from what has been taken up as proper to the activities of a
household group, there are many other things that can be done as well. It is
up to the household head to discern the needs of his members individually
and as a group, and to act accordingly. These other activities may be in lieu
of the normal household activity (with approval of the Unit Head) or in
addition to it. Some such activities are:

WWWWWW. Healing sessions/praying over
XXXXXX. Intercessory prayers
YYYYYY. One-to-one
ZZZZZZ. Video sessions
AAAAAAA. Socials (sports, outings, picnics, etc.)
BBBBBBB. Lord's Day celebration

CCCCCCC. Other activities are welcome so long as they make a positive
contribution to the support and strengthening of the Christian life of single
men and women, within the context of SFC.