



ICF

“We are Many Parts;
We are all one Body”
We are many peoples;
we are all part of the Universal Catholic Church!

The International Catholic Foundation for the Service of Deaf Persons is a movement of communion among people from numerous countries from all over the globe. The Holy Spirit brings us together out of a common conviction that Deaf persons are called to the fullness of life in Christ's body which is the Church.

The mission of the **International Catholic Foundation** is to support and promote the religious formation and pastoral care of, with and by Deaf people within the Catholic Community. **The International Catholic Foundation** offers support to Chaplains, Pastoral Workers and Catechists and seeks ways to bring the riches of their vocation with others in the Church and society so as to achieve a fuller expression of Eucharistic communion.

To promote this Mission the International Catholic Foundation will:

Raise awareness of Deaf peoples presence in the Church and the gifts and charisms they have to offer;

Serve as a resource for the development of religious formation and pastoral care and the formation of Chaplains, Pastoral Workers and Catechists, both Deaf and Hearing;

Promote appropriate International gatherings;

Collaborate with other organizations having the same Mission;

Collaborate with Universities and other Institutions involved with Deaf People specifically the **Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium and St Thomas University in Miami, Florida, USA.**

Our last Conference found us in Mexico in 2003. After the ICF Conference in Miami in 1998, came an outreach to Central America. This outreach consists of the Youth Conferences (Ecuentro) of 2002 (Miami) and 2006 (Mexico), and the ICF Conference In Mexico City in 2003. An additional Youth Conference is now being planned for 2009. A complete listing of our Conferences and publications can be found on our web site: www.icfdeafservices.org.

From these experiences in Central America, the ICF understood a clear call to come together as a Universal Catholic Deaf Community in Rome. This desire will become actualized this coming June 2008! We will travel to Rome with Pilgrims from the States and 19 other countries, coming

in groups of up to 75 and as small as 1. We will travel from Developed and Developing Countries. We will represent those who have much, and those who have nothing at all. We will come from areas with long established, very active Deaf Ministries, and those who come alone, with little or no Deaf Ministry in their home Country.

We will all come together as a united Catholic Deaf Community to Rome this June 2008! Join us as we have the opportunity to share with Rome the beauty and diversity of the Catholic Deaf Community! To share our vitality and unity, our desire to be active giving members of a Church far bigger than our own small Deaf Communities, connected together by our one faith, our one baptism.

It is through this experience of “Communio”- a gathering together as a people of God- that we recognize our place at the Table of the Lord. In seeing this global view of who we are as a Catholic Deaf Community, we shall rediscover our gifts and accomplishments, and redefine our prayers and hopes for the future of Deaf Ministry. We are all “Workers in the Vineyard”. Each of us is called and chosen to be Christ for one another. By our experience of “Communio” in Rome this June, being able to see that brother or sister in the Lord, face to face, we have the chance to enliven our own “Call to Holiness”, by allowing ourselves to serve one another as servants of the Lord, as well as find the strength to allow others to serve us as servant as well.

The ICF was able to bring these Pilgrims together from all over the globe by contacts and friends the ICF has made over the last thirty years. Just as any organization, the ICF has and continues to evolve and change a great deal. Through both our history and current efforts however, we have kept a global view of how we may serve to network Deaf Ministry efforts which have little to no resources available to them. Unlike ICDA or NCOD, the ICF is not a membership organization. Our Board is not made up of people who represent any given population of region. ICF is a Foundation with an International Board made up of both Deaf and hearing members. The Foundation works to provide experiences of “Communio”. We support and empower Catholic Deaf Ministry efforts throughout the world. ICF helps to network resources, as well as pursue research and development through a Chair (Dr. Marcel Broesterhuizen) at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. We are also an active partner with St. Thomas University’s graduate program in Deaf Ministry located in Miami, Florida. Finally ICF organizes Conferences throughout the world to encourage growing Deaf Ministry efforts and or networking those all ready established for further support and encouragement.

This April the ICF will be having the official launch for the new Washington DC office. Mr. Terry O’Meara will take on the role of Executive Director (Secretary) for ICF. This will be the first time the ICF will have such a position. The ICF Office in Manchester will stay open as well. Neither office is meant to serve the Population of Washington or Manchester; rather they are bases from which the work is done. The Board of the ICF will be gathered in Washington this April 11-13, 2008. On April 13, 2008, the ICF will be celebrating the launch of the Washington Office with Mass and a dinner together with the local Catholic Deaf Community. It is very exciting to begin this new chapter for ICF. The ICF looks forward to collaborating with ministries not only in the States, but globally as we all seek to serve Deaf Catholics as full members of Christ’s Body- the Church.