

Grand President's Speech
Jim Jones
Sept. 6, 2010
(Closing Ceremonies of 2010 Convention)

Msgr. Cardelli, Officers and Members of the Central Council, brothers and sisters of the Italian Catholic Federation, my family and friends.

I am honored to be elected your grand president for this coming year. I appreciate your confidence in me to lead the Federation for one more year.

It is written that once you know what your life purpose is, you can organize all of your activities around it. That pretty well describes my life. My life purpose is the Italian Catholic Federation. But you know, I sincerely believe this organization is the very best organization of its kind anywhere!!

I want to thank some people here this morning that I appreciate more than I can say.

First, I want to thank my wife Janice. Janice has been my greatest support for the 52 years we have been married. Honey, I shall love you for all my life.

I want to thank my children, their spouses and my grandchildren for understanding what the Italian Catholic Federation means to me.

Thank you Jane Dianda and Bob Basuino, for your support this last year, especially at the many meetings we attended together and your participation on the Field Operations Committee.

Nina Malone, I can't begin to tell you what you mean to the Federation and to me personally. I admire your positive attitude even during what had to be a difficult time this past year. Thank you to my officers, Grand Treasurer George Bacigalupi, Parliamentarian Leonard Rossi, Grand Trustees Jim Friebe, Deborah Rodondi, and Leonard Zasoski, and Sgt. at Arms, Roselyne Jarrett. I want to also thank Executive Committee member Richard Valli.

Mike Rossi, I want to thank you for your support and your counsel this year. Your being there as mentor was greatly appreciated. Msgr. Cardelli, I would like to express my appreciation for your advice and support this year. All of us on the Central Council enjoyed your participation at our meetings and here at Convention. Thank you for your dedication to the ICF.

And to all the members of the Central Council, my committee chairs, the members of the Federation, the office staff Charlene Kramer, Patty Smith, Dave Rose, Michelle Feldman and Lou Mages, thank you for all the wonderful work you do for the Federation.

Lastly, I want to thank Steve Fuentes, and his Committee for the excellent job orchestrating this wonderful Convention this year. You handled the difficult moments beautifully.

Business Consultant Peter Drucker once said, "We greatly overestimate what we can do in one year." (I certainly agree with that statement!!) But he went on to say, "we greatly underestimate what is possible for us to achieve in five years."

He also said, "The best way to predict the future is to create it." I believe we have started to create the future.

The only thing we know about the future is that it will be different. Our job is to figure out what will be different and adjust to the change.

I am extremely optimistic about the future. I am pleased that we hired Lou Mages as our Field Operations Director. I am confident in his ability to start new branches, help branches that are struggling and work with our Central Council Committees to develop a stronger ICF for the future.

I have asked Mike Rossi to continue as chair of the Task Force Committee. I have asked Mike to develop a five year plan on what we want the Federation to look like in five years. Once we have a clear vision of what we want, I want Mike's committee to work on a plan to answer the question, "How do we achieve it?"

This year I will ask the Workshop Committee, the Membership Committee and the head of the Deputy Program to work very closely with the Field Operation's director. I believe that by working together, they can be more creative. They can share ideas, thoughts, information, feedback and resources. This is an excellent way to solve problems and create results.

Although I will be making a few changes in the Committees, basically they will be chaired by the same members as last year. I have asked Steve Fuentes to continue as Convention director. Thank you Steve for accepting this position.

Jane Dianda will chair the Deputy Program and Andy Pappani will Chair the Gifts of Love Committee, taking Ario Gregori's place. Roselyne Jarrett will chair the Membership Committee.

Leonard Zasoski will chair the Public Relations Committee and Dante Galeazzi will continue to chair the Scholarship Committee.

James Friebel will chair the Ways and Means Committee and Bob Basuino will chair the Workshop Committee.

Brian Tracy, a top professional speaker said, “Each of us needs to be dedicated to something that benefits other people in some way. We need to rise above ourselves, and to put our hearts into something that makes a difference in the world and in the lives of others.” What a beautiful way to describe the Italian Catholic Federation.

It might interest you to know that when you give to make a difference in the lives of others, it can be very beneficial to you as well. In a British research study, it was found that being a volunteer improved your health. In fact, 20 percent of those surveyed claimed they lost weight!! Who needs Weight Watchers or Jenny Craig? Just volunteer!!

But being a member of this organization is much more than what I just described. Helping others is our primary purpose, but a big part of a branch's value is the fellowship among its members and the development of our relationships.

Happiness in life, in large measure comes from good relationships with other people, in your family and your personal life.

I want to leave you with this one last thought. **We are making a difference.** Things are changing dramatically all around us; changes on the technological, sociological, generational and spiritual front and many of these changes are good and some not so good. We all have a responsibility to expose our members and especially our youth to the goodness in our life. I feel that we can achieve this through the ICF by our example, our encouragement, good leadership, teaching family values and our spirituality.

These are the core values established by Sir Luigi Providenza and Rev. Albert Bandini 86 years ago. Work with me to teach and promote these values.

God Bless you and the Italian Catholic Federation.