



# Fall Summit focuses on marriage & family

*Faculty urges Legates to help  
change the culture*

*by Patrick Novacosky*

**T**he survival of civilization itself depends upon how well Legatus members and other Christian leaders engage the culture to defend marriage and the family, attendees of the Legatus Fall Summit heard from a wide array of speakers.

With the theme “Marriage and Family in the Church Today,” faculty members challenged Legates to defend sacramental marriage and family as the fundamental building blocks of society.

“The dissolution of marriage and family is like the introduction of a cancerous virus,” said Cardinal Francis Arinze, head of the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments.

“Collapse will only be a matter of time. Can we afford to stand by and look in helpless silence?” he asked participants during the Sept. 20-22 gathering in Colorado Springs.

## **Cultural assault**

A variety of cultural influences are assailing marriage and family, Cardinal Arinze said, including fornication, pornography, prostitution, homosexual acts and divorce. The African cardinal denounced sterilization and contraception as attacks on the origin of human life and called abortion and infanticide “unspeakable crimes.”

“It’s tragic that some people see babies as a problem rather than a blessing,” he said. “When a culture views dogs and cats as nice but children as troublesome, we are in trouble.”

Dr. James Dobson, founder and chairman of Focus on the Family, challenged Legatus members to use their resources to defend marriage and the family.

“The country will tip one way or the other [in favor or against the sanctity of marriage] in the next five years,” he said. “Don’t give up in the fight for the sanctity of marriage—use your multiple resources to defend and promote the true biblical meaning of marriage and family.”

The three-day summit drew 300 members from across the country and Canada. The event featured speakers such as Cardinal Francis Stafford, Archbishop Charles Chaput, Matt Daniels, Austin Ruse and others.

### Faith-based solutions

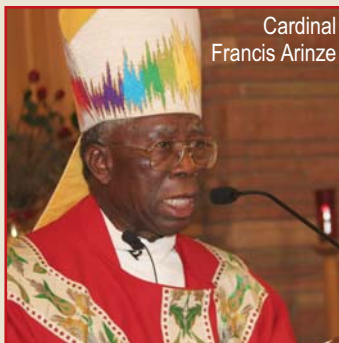
Speakers helped attendees gain a better perspective on the cultural battle, while at the same time teaching the beauty and depth of our Christian understanding of marriage and family, said Dr. Thomas Dillon, a member of the Ventura-LA North Chapter of Legatus.

“We cannot sustain civilization without virtue,” he explained. “The incubator of virtue is the family. If the family goes, virtue goes, and so does our civilization. This conference helps Catholic leaders see that more clearly.”

Rand and Rosemary Sperry, members of the Orange County Chapter, say they’ve taken that message to heart.

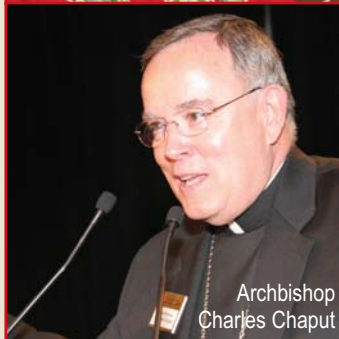
“We have six kids and getting these kids closer to Christ, making sure their faith is strong, is so important,” Rand Sperry said. “It’s our job as parents to keep them close to the faith. That’s what I’m going to take away from this.”

Tom Heule, president of the host Denver Chapter, stressed that attending a summit is a fundamental aspect of Legatus membership.



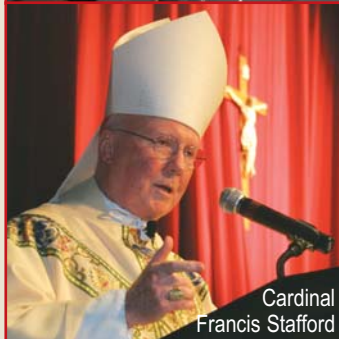
Cardinal Francis Arinze

“It was a blessing for our chapter to have everybody involved because they experienced the summit,” he explained. “I’m convinced that if you go to a summit, you’ll never leave Legatus. There’s a lot more going on than just in your chapter, and if that’s all you see, you only get a small glimpse of what Legatus is about.”



Archbishop Charles Chaput

Summit co-chairs John and Carol Saeman credit the Denver Chapter’s enthusiasm for the summit’s success. Carol Saeman is quick to point out that the summit’s focus on marriage and family helped make the event a hit.



Cardinal Francis Stafford

“There won’t be a country if we don’t keep our families together,” she said. “But our hope is in educating people. If I had any wish, it would be that each person who attended would pick one of these issues and start working to clear up that particular problem.”



Dr. James Dobson

Cardinal Arinze made a similar challenge in his address. “Everyone in the Church,” he said, “has a role toward sustaining the divine gifts of marriage and family.”

Laypeople, in particular, are called “to give good witness to Christ by model lives,” he said.

During the question-and-answer portion of his talk, Archbishop Chaput said that faith-filled families are key. “We have to fight on all the issues,” he said. “But the focus needs to be on the next generation — and we need to be the leaders of the next generation.”

*Patrick Novacosky is the editor of Legatus Magazine.*

# mark your calendars!

## Legatus International Winter Summit



Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 2008  
Ritz-Carlton  
Naples, Florida

Music legend Pat Boone headlines an all-star faculty that includes Laura Ingraham and Baltimore’s Archbishop Edwin O’Brien.

## 49th International Eucharistic Congress



Quebec City,  
Canada  
June 15-22, 2008

Legatus is planning multiple events, including a special reception for the world’s cardinals at this once-in-a-lifetime event in North America.

## Legatus International Fall Summit



Oct. 2-4, 2008  
The Westin Seattle  
Seattle, Washington

The Westin Seattle is the front door to downtown attractions, dining and the vibrant theater district. A first-class faculty will make this summit one to remember.

## Pro-Life Conference

April 16-18, 2008  
Washington D.C.

## Lourdes/Rome Pilgrimage

Sept. 5-15, 2008

Look for details at: [legatus.org](http://legatus.org)  
or call us at (239) 435-3852