

Promise Keepers Founder Bill McCartney Resigns

Bill McCartney says he's finished, but the organization he founded 13 years ago will go on. The head of the international men's ministry Promise Keepers (PK) announced his resignation in September during a quarterly board of directors meeting. He said he wanted to care for his ill wife and spend more time with his family.

"God has assigned me to be a husband and a grandfather," McCartney, 63, explained. "Promise Keepers is not finished; it is needed now more than ever," he added. "I am confident that the Lord will direct and empower the ministry to move forward in strength and support—the opportunities for PK are limitless."

The resignation, which became effective Oct. 1, came just months after McCartney announced he was stepping down temporarily to care for his ailing wife, Lyndi, who has been suffering from "a severe respiratory condition" for some time.

Retired Army Gen. Alonzo Short, chairman of the Promise Keepers board, will serve as interim president until a successor is named. Short praised McCartney for his vision to reach men and for his leadership of the organization.

"Coach Mac has enabled millions of men to find their identity in Christ and embrace true manhood, which has equipped them to be better husbands, fathers and ... leaders," Short said. "[McCartney] will always be the founder, and we expect to

solicit his advice, counsel and expressions of love.”

More than 5 million men have attended Promise Keepers conferences since the Denver-based organization started in 1990, PK reported. The ministry’s rise was capped in 1997 with Stand in the Gap, which drew 1 million men to Washington, D.C. At the beginning of 2003, PK cut its staff from 100 to 75, down from a one-time high of 450 employees.

Short said PK must continue because “men of integrity will make the difference in our society. Promise Keepers intends to continue to be there to help encourage empower and equip them in that challenge.”

Harold Velasquez, PK vice president of creative services, pointed to a successful conference season in 2003 and said McCartney leaves the organization in solid shape. The ministry is planning 17 conferences in 2004, built around the theme “Uprising: the Revolution of a Man’s Soul.”

Velasquez said McCartney’s decision to put family first is an example for all men. He concluded: “Coach Mac is, in my opinion, the epitome of a true Promise Keeper. He made a promise to his wife.”

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