

A portrait of Atlantic Region CLC in October 2017

Community

There are 12 CLCs in Nova Scotia, PEI and NB with 59 members in total. We've lost 19 members over the past 18 months, two have passed away and the remaining 17 have decided that CLC is not for them. I think, our requests for a commitment to yearly dues precipitated many of their decisions to leave.

NB has 9 of the 12 communities. The largest communities have 7 members, the smallest 2. The average size is 5 or 6 members. The youngest community officially became CLC 2 years ago; the oldest communities have been together for more than 30 years. Since the communities are in different stages of development, we need to be conscious of this in our formation. We have one member who is paying dues but in diaspora. Two communities have a shared coordinator role.

Communities are required to have a Group Guide [GG] to start and all the 12 Atlantic communities have one. There are at least 8 NB GGs and they meet 3 times a year for peer supervision, consultation and a formation meeting Friday evening and Saturday until 3:30. The third meeting is usually around St. Ignatius Day and the GGs plan a celebration and formation open to all CLCers in NB- except in an Atlantic Assembly year. This information is shared with the Formation Coordinator on our Regional Exco.

In PEI, there are six GGs but only two communities. In NS, there is only 1 GG in the province and although he has been meeting with a number of groups over the years, unfortunately none of them have decided to continue as CLC. Fr. Trevor is the GG for the only CLC in NS. There is no training in place for new GGs in NS. Last year there was a commitment of \$600.00 set aside for formation purposes from the regional budget but it has not been used. Leadership formation is one of the main focuses for this money, as well as starting more Come and See programs for CLC. How to welcome new members to CLC was a topic at our last spring Regional Council Meeting and will be again at this year's fall meeting.

Spirituality

I'm not sure how many communities are doing the Communal Spiritual Exercises this year, but last year did. Many communities are incorporating The First Spiritual Exercises' by Fr. Michael Hanson, SJ. into their meetings. At least 2/3 of our members have made the Spiritual Exercises Anno. 19 and a handful have done the Spiritual Exercises Anno. 18. In 2016, 20 members had made permanent commitments and 36 members had made temporary commitments.

During our spring and fall Regional Council meetings, there is always some time set aside for formation on the Spiritual Exercises or our General Principles. This fall, we will also be delving deeper into the National Evaluation Process.

Mission

In the spring of 2015, we wrote the statement of Our Atlantic Regional Common Mission. It is '***As the Christian Life Community {CLC} Atlantic Region we are called to place our gifts at the service of the poor, assisted by CLC development for this mission.***' Since then, our Atlantic Region has been deepening our understanding of what a Reg. Common Mission means and looks like. At our Regional Council meetings, we have had individual members and communities give witness to how they discerned their mission, supported and evaluated it. As well, individual communities use a number of

'rituals' for sending members on new missions. The Regional Exco often models sending rituals at our Council meetings when a member leaves a role e.g. secretary and someone takes it on.

Other

Some strengths of our region:

- We have spring and fall Council meetings where usually most of our 12 communities are represented. At each spring meeting, communities write and post their community's report. A template is provided and these reports allow us to see what other communities are doing. The Formation Coordinator, along with the other Exco members, use the information from these reports, and the written evaluations after each Council meeting, to plan future formation topics and address challenges in our region.
- From one Council meeting to the next, there is a connection in material and formation. The connection continues to our once every 3 year assembly. Our next Atlantic Regional Assembly will be in 2019.
- Through years of practice, we are using the DSSE model fairly comfortably.

Areas that need attention: formation for GG in NS, introducing CLC and Ignatian Spirituality to others, and our aging and dwindling membership.

Respectfully submitted,

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