

TOWARDS FINANCIAL CO-RESPONSIBILITY IN CLC

PRAYER ASSIGNMENT (Part I)

Theme: Called to live as Community

Grace: Fill us with a deep desire to claim responsibility for our growth as members of Christian Life Community.

Scriptural Context:

The Early Christian Community in Acts 2:43-47

Many miracles and wonders were being done through the apostles, and everyone was filled with awe. All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another. They would sell their property and possessions and distribute the money among all, according to what each one needed. Day after day, they met as a group in the temple and they had their meals together in their homes, eating with glad and humble hearts, praising God, and enjoying the good will of all the people. And every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.

CLC Community in our Charism (General Principles) GP # 7

Our gift of self finds its expression in a personal commitment to the World Community through a freely chosen local community. Such a local community, centered in the Eucharist, is a concrete expression of unity in love and action ... Our responsibility to develop the bonds of community does not stop with our local community but extends to the National and World Christian Life Community, to the ecclesial communities of which we are a part (parish, diocese), to the whole Church and to people of good will.

Prayer Structure:

1. Acts 2:43-47 and G.P # 7
2. Repetition of **where** in the above I experienced interior movements
3. Excerpts from "**Spiritual Intimacy and Community: The Ignatian view of the Small Faith Community**" John English SJ (**FINANCIAL CO-RESPONSIBILITY B**)
4. Repetition (as in 2)
5. Repetition (as in 2)
6. In light of above prayer periods, what do I feel drawn to share with my community in Part II of our next meeting?

TOWARDS FINANCIAL CO-RESPONSIBILITY IN CLC

PRAYER ASSIGNMENT (Part 2)

Preamble : In Fatima 2008, our CLC World Assembly called us to grow in our understanding of and commitment to financial co-responsibility as integral to our way of life and our call to mission.

Grace: Fill us with a deep desire and growing freedom to live financial co-responsibility as part of our CLC way of life.

Scriptural Context:

Organization of the collection in the Corinthian Community (2 Cor. 8:1-15)

"... it was of their own accord that they made their gift, which was not merely as far as their resources would allow, but well beyond their resources..."

Blessings to be expected from the collection (2 Cor. 9:6-15)

"... each one should give as much as he has decided on his own initiative, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver..."

Prayer Structure:

1. 2 Cor. 8:1- 9:5
2. Projects 147
3. Repetition of **where** in the above I experienced interior movements
4. **Handout: CLC Canada's Financial Situation and Request (FINANCIAL CO-RESPONSIBILITY C)**
Where was I drawn in prayer period 4 ? How do I understand this interior movement of mind or heart?
5. **GN # 9:** *As a primary means to continue our growth as persons and as Christian Life community, our ordinary way of decision-making at all levels is a discerning approach, and even a formal community discernment for the more important shared decisions.*
Handout: Progressio 2010 Article (Luxemburg CLC and the World Solidarity Fund) **(FINANCIAL CO-RESPONSIBILITY PROGRESSIO D)** *Where was I drawn in prayer period 4 ? How do I understand this interior movement of mind or heart?*
6. 2 Cor. 9:6-15
7. In light of all the above prayer periods in BOTH Part 1 and Part 2, what do I think I should do regarding National's invitation to financial co-responsibility through an increase in annual donations? What else do I think we should do as a community around the call of the Fatima to grow as an Apostolic Community through financial co-responsibility?

Excerpts from
**“ Spiritual Intimacy and Community:
The Ignatian view of the Small Faith Community”** (pp18-20)
John English SJ

Christian community is an experience of *koinonia*, Christian fellowship... companionship in the Lord. From a Christian point of view, the description of the early church in the Acts of the Apostles gives us the clearest expression of this companionship. The sharing of everything (property, food, prayer, miraculous powers and the good news of Jesus Christ) was the sign of their communion with each other in the Lord. **Such Christian fellowship involves a covenant relationship of Christ with the church and the human race.**

A major distinction between a group and a community is that a group does not have the same type of commitment to itself that a community has.

Commitments are expressed by contracts or covenants:

- **Contracts** involve a give-and-take arrangement. **The parties pay in one form or another for goods or services rendered.**
- **In a covenant arrangement, the parties share their goods, talents and lives.**

Covenant is a dominant theme in the Hebrew Testament. ... It is on the basis of his appreciation of God's covenant with Abraham, Issac, Jacob, Moses and David that Jesus gives himself to God and to the human race. Recognizing an identity between his person and his life-blood, Jesus proclaims his personal faithfulness and presence to the believing community which celebrates his death and resurrection. At the Last Supper, he gives the memorial rite of his covenant (Lk 22:19-20).

In its Eucharist, the church celebrates this covenant between itself and Christ and urges this kind of bonding between its members.

Today covenant is known by the bonding that exists among persons in a community.

I am aware of one community in which the members see each other as caring for each other's children, sharing goods and visiting each other when they are sick, much as a loving parent, brother or sister might do. In this community, the persons commit themselves to carry each other's burdens, their joys and fears, their successes and failures, their sufferings and disappointments. We recognize the difference in level of commitment in a group such as this, from that of many voluntary groups of people who come together for sociability or ministerial action.

In the small faith communities welling up in the church, there are ... aspects of contract and covenant.

Contract usually surfaces in terms of time commitment to meetings and dues.

Covenant is present with the sharing of goods and actions.

Covenant is most present at the time of deeper sharing of one's inner life with others. At this time, members are conscious that they can risk themselves and be fully accepted. Covenant is also at play when members support other members of the group who may be suffering. The sense of covenant disappears when confidentiality is broken....

Initially, the idea of covenant is quite frightening to us. Intimate relationship among members of a community takes time. We need to call upon our faith: covenant is achieved by the action of the Holy Spirit freeing people, giving them a sense of trust with each other... 'Love one another', says Jesus in John 15:12, 'as I have loved you.'

Questions for reflection:

- What new insights, awarenesses or understandings do you have regarding the terms 'covenant' and 'contract' as expressions of commitment?
- In light of the above article, would you describe our CLC commitment as a covenant or contract commitment? What characteristics of CLC life would lead you to this conclusion?
- Given the nature of our CLC way of life, what do you see as our ongoing commitments in our relationship (each of us and our local CLC community) with our larger CLC family i.e. Regional, National and World?

CLC Canada's Financial Situation and Request

National CLC Discernment Issue 2010: Increasing our CLC donations

PART A. OUR WORLD DOCUMENTS

CLC General Norms: (Way of Life)

10. In the spirit of its best tradition, and for the sake of greater apostolic efficacy, the Christian Life Community® at all levels promotes the participation of its members in joint projects to respond to various and changing needs. National or international networks, specialized apostolic teams or other such initiatives may be set up by the Community, where appropriate.

#11 Likewise, in the same tradition and in view of the formation of its members and of other people, the Christian Life Community® at all levels initiates workshops, seminars, courses, publications and other such initiatives.

13 Special attention must be given at the world and national levels to ensure that all local communities be helped to live a genuine CLC process with a well-formed guide and an efficient coordinator.

PART B: OUR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DOCUMENTS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY 2009 SUMMARY EXCERPT: (*Writing Team, National Assembly, Guelph 2009*)

"Formation/Leadership and Spiritual Exercises *The house of CLC must be built on a foundation of desire and the Spiritual Exercises. That foundation must be available, affordable, simple and strengthened by diversity and adaptation. From this foundation CLC leaders are discerned and called forth. These need to continue to be formed and supported with leadership gatherings to deepen their understanding of CLC documents, CLC fundamental stages of growth in the context of the Manuals, communal apostolic discernment, and DSSE as a way of proceeding. This process requires human and financial resources earmarked for formation by the General Council."*

Membership/Commitment/Financial co-responsibility:

The Assembly [CLC] aspires to be more like the early Christian communities and how they shared resources and how they lived. This means paying attention to our unique charism and countercultural community called to mission, so that membership, commitment/financial resources are seen and strategized around this larger vision. They are integrated so as to support the need to focus on and contribute to our common mission. ...they must be seen as part of our formation, i.e. to understand what we mean by membership, commitment and how apostolic projects are supported in CLC.

PART C. OUR NATIONAL COMMUNICATION REGARDING FINANCES/BUDGET:

Guelph National Assembly Recommendations (2009) applied in April 2010

The 2010 basic budget ... estimates our expenses will be around \$19,000 and, based on donation past history, we estimate donation income will be about \$10,000. The revenue shortfall will severely affect CLC's capacity to support member formation and development of apostolic initiatives.

- an increase to the suggested annual donation from \$30 to \$70 as a starting point and encouraged members to discern in communities what resources can be spared

A sliding scale representative of our financial diversity is useful in supporting individual and community discernment e.g.

Category	Average Daily Wage
Professional salaries	\$200
Minimum wage	\$ 70
Single Seniors	\$ 58
Students(min wage; 20hr/wk)	\$ 25

The 2010 General Council recommends financial support around the following national priorities: (modest goals)

Leadership

- Increasing support for the President's and National Ecclesial Assistant's travel
- Expanding participation at the October 2010 face to face General Council meeting to include an elder and a young adult representative. The President elect(s) will also attend the Fall General Council.

Formation/Spiritual Exercises

- Finalizing expenses around revision of Manuals II & III

Apostolic Initiatives/Networking

- Supporting relationships with CVS and CLC USA - goal of participating in a regional gathering in 2011

Governance/Administration

- Maintaining a National Executive Assistant to support sound governance of CLC Canada's charitable status
- Setting funds aside annually towards delegate expenses for the 2013 World Assembly
- Setting aside funds annually towards the 2014 National Assembly

Resulting Forecasted Deficit:

These modest goals along with our yearly commitment to the World body translate into a 2010 expense forecast of close to \$21,000. Based on donation history, our CLC 2010 income forecast from member donations is \$10,000. In 2010 CLC may also realize some income from manual sales. There is work to be done around applying for funding outside of membership. Grant applications require financial statements covering 5 year periods. Funding organizations would certainly be challenged by CLC's membership supp a day's wages.

CLARIFICATION OF TERMS...

What is meant by Solidarity Funds ?

In CLC Canada we have three Solidarity Funds:

World Solidarity Fund:

A fund administered by the World Secretariat. The fund is created by donations from countries around the world to help delegates who need financial assistance to attend the World Assembly.

Canadian World Delegate Solidarity Fund:

This fund is set up to cover the travel costs of Canadian delegates to the World Assembly.

National Solidarity Fund:

This fund is set up to support communities in CLC Canada who otherwise would not be able to send a delegate to the National Assembly.

PART D REGIONAL FINANCES/BUDGET

(to be added from each Region)

Experience of CLC Luxemburg Regarding the World CLC Solidarity Funds (Progressio Article No 2 2010... slightly adapted for clarity in language structure)

CLC in Luxembourg is a small community (60 members distributed in 10 groups), which, like all CLC communities in the world, is called to live concretely its membership and its close link with the World Community. Financial solidarity, also forms part of community life on a world level, and our members respond generously to the call for participation and support addressed to them by our National Team (executive council) every year.

But will this be sufficient for the years in which a World Assembly will be held? What is the 'magis' to which we are being invited when we are very conscious that our (national) community is very small, but that it lives in a country where the standard of living is *very high*?

For a decade, while the World Assemblies were being prepared for, our successive leadership teams have taken to heart this call - and has led them to risk opening their request for financial responsibility beyond our own National CLC. Thus, in addition to the call to financial co-responsible/solidarity addressed to our members for our own national needs, we developed a project (with different stages) to be better able to support the World CLC solidarity fund which supports the World Assemblies. Even though each member made a financial gift of solidarity personally (to the World Solidarity Fund), we sought to widen our network of contributors:

1. We sent a letter to all CLC members, asking each one of them to kindly send us the names and contact details of ten people around them (family and friends) who might be receptive to a call for donations. A good number of our CLC members received this request with openness and felt interiorly free to give a personal list of potential donors. Others remain unresponsive.
2. The lists of potential donors were then collated because in our country, many CLC members have circles of friend and establishments of social and ecclesiastical involvement that often largely connected. With this collated list we avoided having certain persons solicited many times for the same cause. It must also be noted that we also had access to the diocesan directory which gave us contacts for all the priests, religious and lay people living and working in the Archdiocese of Luxembourg (In our country, the clergy and all the workers of the Catholic Church are paid by the State of Luxembourg.)
3. Then we sent a letter to all potential contributors with the aim of presenting them with the financial needs of this World Solidarity Fund. In 2008, for example, we sent 314 calls for donations to people who are not members of CLC and 110 people replied favorably. The donations were of a very varied amounts significance, but we noted that "many small drops of water can join to form a river".

We felt encouraged to continue in this way of proceeding because the financial assistance given by those not part of CLC but who support our vision made it possible to triple the gift of financial solidarity of the National CLC to pass on to the World Community

4. Finally, we sent a 'Thank you' card to all contributors in the name of CLC Luxembourg and also in the name of CLC World.

The experience around the collection of funds was fruitful but it is also a sign: a sign of gratitude for the numerous beginnings of life that grow thanks to the CLC, and as an encouragement for the CLC to continue its mission on the footsteps of Christ in our country and the world.

- Guy Schuller, CLC Luxemburg (Original in French)



Link between the Executive Council and the World Christian Life Community

Financial Co-responsibility for the Mission

World CLC Day is a great opportunity to be aware again of the grace of being part of a world community. Every year we reflect together on a topic so that we can continue to grow in our identity as CLC. For the 2011 celebration, we propose all communities reflect on the style of community to which we are called-- taking as a reference point our co-responsibility in CLC and especially financial co-responsibility.

Love for One Another – Concrete Solidarity

In simple words, Christians are the followers of Jesus Christ. The Love of God (With Him, Through Him, in Him) was proclaimed by the early Christian communities that, filled with the Holy Spirit, expressed it in concrete actions and behaviors in a new way of being human.

Several letters and documents of the first century say with emphasis that love for one another characterized the early Christians: "See how they love each other", "they love each other almost before they met". Such behavior was the result of Jesus' words: "By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples." (**John 13:35**). The early Christians were known for their actions of mercy, charity, caring for others; they were not just seen as a spiritual community of pious people waiting for their salvation but as a counter witness of Christ to the world around them. They were constituted as an alternative lifestyle for their time.

This way of relating in the early Christian community was specifically expressed through their solidarity with the poor and needy. In **Acts 2:44-45** and **Acts 4:34-35** it becomes clear that the very structure of the community assured that the needs of all members of the community were met. The call of brotherly and sisterly love encourages mutual responsibility of everyone in the community. The dynamic of reciprocity "toward one another" is essentially communitarian because it exceeds the boundaries of individuality and selfishness. In the New Testament the expressions on this issue are plentiful. Moreover, these dynamics among the early followers of

Jesus were not limited only to their own group, but they struggled to breakdown boundaries so they came to serve the needy of their time.

Belonging to a World Community

Being part of a world community is a special grace that enables us to find commonality within CLC with people in over 80 countries across different cultures and languages. We do not know everyone in the Community, but we know that we share bonds of sisterhood and brotherhood. Those who have participated in a World Assembly or any CLC international meeting can attest to this. To protect and strengthen this unity we need to guarantee a minimum common understanding among our different national communities. For example the experience of the Spiritual Exercises must be available to all. They cannot be just a privilege of "solvent" communities that can bear the cost of an eight-day retreat, while others cannot even cover the most basic aspects: transportation, food, etc.

Belonging to a world community also implies becoming aware of the different economic situations, social and, political, faced by our members in different parts of the world. This can help us to better stand in solidarity with the difficult conditions of others. For example, according to the statistics offered by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO),¹ in 2008 some countries affiliated to the CLC and others in the process of membership are among the countries with critical levels of malnutrition.

Moderately high hunger (20-34% of population)	Very high hunger (more than 35% of population)
<p>WCLC Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bolivia - Cameroon - India - Kenya <p>in process of affiliation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Botswana - Congo Brazzaville 	<p>WCLC Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Madagascar - D.R. Congo - Rwanda <p>in process of affiliation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chad - Ethiopia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nicaragua - Dominican Republic - Sri Lanka <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sudan - Cambodia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zambia - Zimbabwe - Togo

We can see that growth in community and having an adult faith are positively correlated with having sufficient resources. Financial co-responsibility in a world community becomes essential to growth. Some people may wonder why money is needed in a spiritual group that does not appear to have any cost (eg, the community meeting). When a group meets "gratis" in a parish or a

¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2008"

school that does not charge for it, someone still pays for electricity, water or maintenance of the venue. The fact that no one charged the community for using a place does not mean that it does not cost anything, but someone is financing what we are not paying. Who pays for the place where we meet? Or How are the costs of the National CLC Centre/Secretariat or ExCo activities at national and regional level paid?

It is important to review some habits that impede our growth as an apostolic body. Eg. Do some members not support CLC because of mistrust of people or the structure; do some simply not see the sense of payment or perhaps not feel involved with the community and its mission, or simply neglect to contribute. *Which of these habits or other ones are present in my community?* In our communities, it is clear not all members have the same opportunities and economic needs. The economic contribution capacity can vary widely among my community partners. Therefore, national communities, regional and local ones must find the best system of shared responsibility. Taking into account the diversity of situations, the entire community needs to help CLC to review whether or not we are actually acting according to our possibilities.

Of course, the financial generosity of our members goes far beyond a quota system. In many places, we consider with admiration the sacrificed ministry of many members financed by themselves, self-funded transportation, materials and others. In undeveloped countries, for catechesis or social works, some of our members walk long distances. We are doing a lot and sometimes heroically! Several national communities, sometimes in collaboration with other institutions, develop their own works such as schools, children's homes, NGOs, among others².

How do I contribute - be it through my time and support, be it with money – in the apostolate of my community? How could stronger Financial Co-responsibility improve the mission in my community? How could my community contribute to improving the mission ability of the larger CLC.

In the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius the contemplation to attain love begins with a note: "Love should be put more in deeds than in words". When CLC is fully lived by its members, this will be reflected in many attitudes and behaviors including financial co-responsibility. If instead, co-responsibility it is not evident in the community life then this may be because we still need to deepen in the infinite mystery of God's love. Let us remember: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt 6:21).

Financial Co-responsibility in CLC

As in any institution, CLC requires financial means to carry out its mission efficiently. For us the means must be provided to serve the mission because our purpose is not simply within the community, but also outside: "We are particularly aware of the pressing need to work for justice

² Just to mention some works of national CLCs: Italy, Uruguay and South Korea have children's homes, France, retreat houses, Philippines, Ecuador and Paraguay, NGOs, Kenya and Hong Kong schools.

through a preferential option for the poor” (GP 4). When we organize structures (global, national, regional or local) and budgets, our goal should be a more humane and divine world especially for the poorest.

Deepening in our financial co-responsibility is important and necessary for the future of world CLC. World Assembly of Fatima 2008 considers (3.14): *“financial co-responsibility to be an essential expression of our belonging to one World Community, and a necessary means for becoming an Apostolic Body. Being responsible for one another is an essential aspect of community life. We recognize the need to develop existing and new ways of financing operating expenses as well as special apostolic initiatives”*.

World CLC manages two kinds of funds:

1. Operating Funds: This allows the operation of the system or the institution of the world community from the Executive Council action. This fund is covered mainly with the dues system of national communities. Given the size of the World Community, the budget is quite modest; however, WCLC struggles to cover it every year and there is an accumulated deficit from several years. This becomes further complicated when affiliated communities do not meet their dues obligations. For example at the close of 2009, 38% of affiliated communities had not yet paid their dues.

The World Community attempts to reflect co-responsibility in the formula that has been designed to establish the dues of each national community in order to cover the operational budget. This formula considers two variables: the number of members and the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).³ “Responsibility” is distributed according to this formula. A change in any of the variables (eg increase or decrease the number of members in a national community) adjusts the dues of all, reducing or increasing as appropriate.

2. Special Funds: These are mainly used to support the processes of poor communities or ministries that favor the poor. Although these funds are very important for the life of the world community, we have never had a systematic way to sustain and increase them. They depend on a spontaneous gift from a community or a member which happens very occasionally. These funds and their objectives are:

- **Africa Fund:** It supports the international meetings and regional activities in Africa
- **Apostolic Fund:** This was established out of a recommendation of the World Assembly of Fatima (3.14.c) and supports institutional works or ministries of CLC. In 2010 it supported specific projects in our neediest communities
- **Formation Fund:** This funds formation activities. For example, it has helped Magis course in Latin America and two leadership courses in Africa in 2009.

³ PPP is an economic indicator to realistically compare living standards across countries, attending the Gross Domestic Product per capita in terms of cost of living in each country

- **Advocacy Fund**: The fund supports advocacy activities especially in international organizations (such as the United Nations or the World Social Forum).

For World CLC day celebration

Taking into account the points developed in this *Projects 147*, we propose two joint actions to be organized by each community as part of one world apostolic body:

- In a common meeting day all communities or groups are invited to deepen and reflect the meaning of co-responsibility and especially financial co-responsibility in CLC with special emphasis on the questions found in this *Projects 147*.
- For the Eucharist for the celebration of the World CLC Day, we would ask for a collection to support one fund of the World CLC⁴ offered as a sign of Co-responsibility in the mission in the Eucharist for the world day.

Finally, we ask you to share notes and photos of the celebration to e-mail: webmaster@cvx-clc.net
As last year, there will be a special section on this in our website www.cvx-clc.net

United in prayers and service as one world community

Franklin Ibáñez – Sofía Montañez
Executive Secretariat

Daniela Frank
President

⁴ Each national community will determine which one (s) fund (s) wants to support and inform it to the World Secretariat exsec@cvx-clc.net