



# Christian Life Communities

## NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1994

ENGLISH CANADA

Greetings from the Miramichi! I trust everyone had a blessed Easter. As we continue to pray for the success of our World CLC Assembly '94, let us ask ourselves -- What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I do for Christ? Then in bringing our individual prayer experience to our CLC groups; focus our group prayer on the following: What has our CLC group done for Christ? What is our CLC group doing for Christ? What ought our CLC group do for Christ? Would you share your reflections with us in the newsletter? The next deadline is May 31\94. Send your response or any news to your Editor.

Linda Blackmore  
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GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

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### SAFELY INTO THE UNKNOWN by ANNE RENNIE

We are often asked in the library I work in to find the source of the exact words of a half-remembered poem or quotation. Every so often we get a request for "the man at the gate of the year." It comes from the introduction to *The Desert* by Minnie Louise Haskins and is remembered because it was used by George VI in his 1939 Christmas broadcast. These are the lines he quoted:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:  
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."  
And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand  
into the hand of God. That shall be better than light and  
safer than a known way."

The words resonate in me. How often I stand, immobilised by anxiety and turmoil, wondering what is happening, what is going to happen. My fear is a distraction, my desire to know a bargaining position. I see only darkness and hear only my own noise.

I begin to wonder how I came to be here in this place, so I look back and then I remember. I remember love and friendship, difficulties and disappointments, new ideas, challenges, joys, sorrows. I remember times when I was unsettled, dissatisfied, frustrated, then was able to see a change. There is a disturbance in and around me now but it is holding me back. I become aware of the effect it is having on me, undermining my self-confidence, confusing me, filling me with doubts, and I glimpse its destructive power. I recognize it for what it is and slowly it subsides, leaving me in peace.

As I grow quieter and more attentive the darkness is becoming less threatening. Something in the darkness attracts me. I feel that is where I want to be, even though I am still afraid. The very darkness I am afraid of is where I long to be because I now know who it is who calls me from its depths and reaches out to me. I hear the word Jesus spoke to Peter across the water:

"COME"

CLC GUIDES WORKSHOP - REGINA  
Sask., 1993

We were very fortunate to be able to attend this workshop. Seven CLCers from Lethbridge & Coaldale area attended and we all came back with new insights and a deeper commitment to CLC. In spite of cold wind and many mosquitoes the workshop was truly worthwhile. Following registration, Fr. John English got us going right away on a review of the diagnostic tools to assist a Group Guide:

1. The Exercises
2. Life Cycle
3. Power Cycle

Small group sharing followed each teaching.

Throughout the workshop, the question "Do I have a vocation?" was continually being raised which entailed deep discernment in one's life. Father John led us through an overview of the new Phase I and Phase II manuals. It was interesting to see how goals are met in each phase. The importance of following the format for a CLC meeting was really stressed and evaluation at the end of each meeting was also stressed. Two-part sharing was another tool taught to us.

We had the opportunity to attend the funeral of a parent of a Regina CLCer. The funeral was beautiful and we felt a part of the Overend family even though we had never met.

Sunday morning we did a four column discernment on a situation presented to us by one of the group. It is amazing to see how the Spirit of God can work in a group that is committed to prayer and shares the same vision. We finished our weekend with the celebration of the Eucharist.

It was a very intense and exciting three days. The opportunity to once again experience sharing with other CLCers in Canada who also are committed to unity in prayer was most rewarding. Our personal commitment to the CLC way of life was greatly reinforced and made us all realize how much we would lose should we not continue on.

We would like to thank Martha Ottenbreit and those who worked with her to organize this workshop. Also for seeing to all our needs while staying at the John Paul Centre in Regina, a special thank you to Sr. Bernadette Gates.

Yours in Christ,  
Bob & Marilyn Heaton  
Roberta Woodard  
Sr. Teresa LeBlanc  
Joan Pietman  
Ellen Wagner  
Patricia Hartman

YOU CAN DO JUST WHAT YOU WANT  
I WILL NOT TELL YOU WHAT TO DO  
AND IF YOU CHOOSE TO GIVE ME LOVE  
I'LL TREASURE IT AS I DO YOU



I HAVE NO DESIRE  
TO PLACE RESTRICTIONS  
ON YOU

### COALDALIANS, COALDALE, ALBERTA

After a year and a half of struggles, our group is now beginning to gel again and get back on track. The solution to our struggles has resulted in our group becoming smaller by one couple unfortunately. We spent the fall and early part of winter building up the trust and confidence again and now we are ready to begin with the Vision 2000 program written by Mark Link S.J. These follow the Ignatian form of prayer.

We are fortunate to have Ray and Ellen Wagner in our group and so we are kept abreast of everything that is happening at National right away.

Ellen Wagner and I (Pat Hartman) were fortunate to attend the Prayer Guide workshop in Regina in Sept. 93. We were all able to attend an Area Assembly in Lethbridge held Nov. 12\93. The theme was "Do I have a vocation to the Ignatian Way of Life"? All discerned that we each did and so renewed our commitment to CLC. We hope to increase our group in the near future. God Bless. Your brothers and sisters in Christ,  
THE COALDALIANS

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### ATTENTION: 1995 NATIONAL CLC CONFERENCE

Date: August 17-20, 1995  
Place: Mount St. Vincent Univ.  
Theme: Justice- "To Act Justly  
To Love Tenderly  
To Walk Humbly with our God"  
Micah 6:8

### TORONTO AREA CLC, COMPANIONS by Susan Rodgers

On the evening of Thursday, November 18, 1993, the COMPANIONS of Toronto hosted a meeting in Lynch Hall at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish for the Toronto area CLC. Sr. Anne Delaney CSJ spoke to us on the Examen. It was a stimulating presentation with lots for all of us to consider, newer members and more experienced ones alike. She left us with two tools to help us get more out of the Examen: Fr. John Govan's booklet "The Examen- a Tool for Holistic Growth" and guidelines on determining the states of consolation and desolation. We ended the evening with lots of discussion, a social and plans for a follow-up on consolation and desolation in a session sometime in the spring.

submitted by Susan Rodgers

### Report on February Toronto and Area CLC Meeting

On Thursday evening, February 3, representatives from the six Toronto and area CLC communities as well as several independent members, gathered together at Our Lady of Lourdes as we had earlier in the Fall.

Sr. Ann Delaney had very kindly and enthusiastically agreed to "Part Two", this time leading us deeper into Ignatian spirituality through focusing on the concepts of consolation and relatively new to the CLC journey, but in depth enough to deepen the understanding of those better experienced. There was opportunity for intimate reflection as

individuals and in groups of three, as well as in the larger group setting.

The Mandorla group hosted the evening and provided refreshments during an informal intermission.

We are grateful to Sr. Ann for her expertise and for her willingness to share it with us so creatively.

-Claire Weigel

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#### CANADIAN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE of LAY ORGANIZATIONS

On Oct. 22, 1993 I attended the 10th annual Canadian Catholic Conference of Lay Organizations in Ottawa (CCCLA), an umbrella group for all lay organizations in the country. There were approximately 25 persons from across Canada who attended. This number is considerably down from the 200 who attended the largest meeting in 1988. The languages used were French and English. There was no translator due to finances but generally we were able to make ourselves understood.

I was filled with a sense of consolation as I attended the sessions. Leadership comes from a mature and experienced board who have been working generously with (as usual) inadequate funding. I was able to share with them our CLC way of life and two participants asked for our introductory material.

The CCCLA gives a national voice to all of our lay organizations which is important for dealing with the Canadian Catholic Conference of

Bishops and the Canadian bishops. It advances recognition of the lay vocation in the church and it makes it easier to approach individual bishops when he has already dealt with our issues at the national level. Also it helps us to become known to the 53 other lay organizations in Canada.

I think that it is advisable for us to pursue our membership in this body and suggest that more of our members participate next year. If we approach individual bishops we need to tell them of our membership and recognition and CCCLA.

Unfortunately our treasury has not been able to fund our delegates but the costs can be kept to less than \$200.00 if we were prepared to drive and stay at a bed and breakfast (Hitch hiking is not recommended).

In the past the CCCLA received \$30,000.00 per year from the Knights of Columbus but this source of funds no longer exists. Recently the Canadian Bishops granted the CCCLA \$5,000.00.

I have additional explanatory literature on CCCLA for anyone who wishes.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Peter G. Peloso

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WORLD CLC DAY CELEBRATION -  
MARCH 24/94

BREAD BROKEN CLC and THE WAY CLC joined together for an evening of praise, thanksgiving and Eucharist to celebrate World CLC Day, at the home of Ray and Linda Blackmore.

Fr. David journeyed from St. John to be with us.

Following the welcome we shared a word of thanksgiving for what CLC has brought to our lives. Then we listened to a song and Fr. David continued with Mass.

Following the Gospel, we shared on some very meaningful questions that spoke about our mission as CLC to local, national and the World. As we shared, there was a common thread of how Jesus had given us all a great desire to be open vessels to His will in our lives. What joy He brings when we listen and act on His call for us in our families, our community and Our World because we love.

After our Eucharistic celebration, we continued by breaking bread together in a social time that we all thoroughly enjoyed. We left feeling refreshed and with plans for a joined effort to have an information night for CLC in mid April.

Yours in Christ,  
Linda Blackmore

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WORLD CLC DAY - MARCH 25th  
HOLY CROSS CENTER  
FREDERICTON, NB

On March 26th, 30 CLCers from NB area joined together for a day of prayer and reflection to recognize our mission to Apostolic Spirituality. Our theme was on "Faith That Does Justice" and our scripture theme was Luke 12:49, "I have come to bring fire to the earth and how I wish it were blazing already".

Pam Daigle facilitated the morning with a personal sharing on her prayer and how that spoke to her of what God wanted to say to all of us on the chosen theme for the day, Faith That Does Justice, justice is God's way of righting the wrong. God calls each of us to be His disciples, chosen ones just as Jesus called His Apostles. How is He calling you? We then broke into communal sharing with the members of our own communities.

Following lunch, Anne Hodd and Charlena Fife gave a small sharing on an issue of justice, Inclusive Language. Questions from the floor and open discussion on handouts were very enlightening and helpful to all of us. Fr. John Baxter gave a brief outline on this issue on the Church's perspective and closed with a reading for reflection. Sister Margaret O'Rourke spoke to us from the book of Wisdom 9:5-12.

Fr. John then celebrated Eucharist with us sending us out to be His chosen ones, to bring healing, to love, to reconcile, to pray, to free, to bring fire to the earth, so that the world will believe.

Some questions used for dialogue that we found insightful are:

1. What is your attitude toward the issue of gender-inclusive language?
2. How does your faith community respond to this issue?
3. Explain to yourself some of the causes (personal, social, cultural, religious etc.) for

your attitudes and practices.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

For those of you who haven't heard, GRAYDON Nicholas of the River of Life CLC, recently went into hospital for an angioplast as he was suffering from 90% blockage of an artery. He is on the mend and doing very well. Thank you Graydon for arranging our World CLC Day. Sorry you and Beth weren't there to enjoy it with us in body but you certainly were in Spirit and in our prayers.

God bless you all,  
Linda Blackmore  
River of Life CLC

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CONGRATULATIONS!

DUNCAN MacISAAC will be ordained June 11/94 in Judic, Cape Breton Island. We wish you all the blessings you so richly deserve in your vocation, Duncan. May your ordination be a day of great joy for you and your loved ones. We are proud of you. God Bless you.

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THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY - 1994

The family is considered as the basic cell of society. It deserves special attention. The family is the chief area of suffering or hope of our times. The shape and functions within families differ from country to country and even within the

same society. Government programs must help families to assume their functions without being substitutes for them. As Catholics we add another conviction to this list. In our view the family bears good news for its members as well as for the people they see frequently. The family and the Church are two distinct realities but nothing prevents the family from being a focus of Christian experience. Family life is a daily reality that directly concerns the Catholic Church. If we neglect the family we are risking the future of our Church.

Like our church, every family is defined as a community of persons. In addition to blood ties the members of a family are united in a triple pursuit: in the family each member seeks stability in time, privacy and affection. These three elements are variable.

In North America the family is being reinvented. It is leaving the parental type, in which parents have all authority, for a democratic type in which each member has a say, each trying to be himself while learning to respect the others. Parents have to invent a new type of authority more akin to leadership. Parents are coming together to share their experience, difficulties, and solutions.

The family has undergone many changes in the last years. The family is at the heart of society. It is the solid rock which gives society a firm base. Rich or poor, small or great, unknown or famous, we all share a common locus that identifies us, brings us

together, makes us sisters and brothers: the family, the cradle of human love. Today we are facing a wide range of new ways of being a family; some may shock, but all are worthwhile. The christian family is the salt of the earth if it transmits to men, women and children the zest for life and the joy of true love. A happy family can express its joy and be a model without fearing to be classified. It is a light for those who are searching for joy and happiness. John Paul II reminds us that "families should be the first to take steps to see that the laws and institutions of the State support and positively defend the rights and duties of the family".

"The family is the natural society where man and woman are called to give oneself in love and to give life. Authority, stability and life in the family make up the foundation of freedom, security and brotherhood in society. The family is the community in which a child learns moral values, honors God and makes a right use of liberty. The family is an initiation to life in society."

The family pattern may be identified in the interrelationship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Trinity family provides our own human families with the opportunity, to become its reflection, its living sign, as well as a privileged place to experience, within our earthly limitations, some aspects of its mystery.

Drawing a parallel between these two families can prove quite enlightening. By daring to detect a kinship between God and the family, distances can be narrowed and dialogue becomes possible.

The family gives birth, fosters growth, nurtures, educates..... Social life, indeed life as a whole, is found here as in a nutshell. It is the first place where faith is to be experienced. Faith is transmitted inside the small circle of the family. The deep values which shape us and make us live come from our family. Families that live the Gospel are bound to make a deep impression on their milieu. "See how they love one another", was said of the early Christians. The family helps us to live the gospel and to proclaim it.

How can our faith and our Ignatian way of life influence and help both our own families and the families of today's world? The mission of being the primary vital cell of society has been given to the family by God himself...Among the various works of the family apostolate the following may be listed: adopting abandoned children, showing a loving welcome to strangers, helping with the running of schools, supporting adolescents with advice and help, assisting engaged couples to make a better preparation for marriage taking a share in catechism-teaching, supporting married people and families in a material or moral crisis, and in the case of the aged not only providing them with what is indispensable but also procuring for them a fair share

of the fruits of economic progress.

When we think of ideal Christian families, love is the central spiritual quality. But for love to be active, "justice" should also be present. Love is the power of life which brings individuals into meaningful relationships with each other.

The ability to accept others and to deal with life struggles is rooted in the empowering and forgiving love of God. God's love and justice is the source and the pattern for love and justice in families.

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Companions  
on a  
Journey

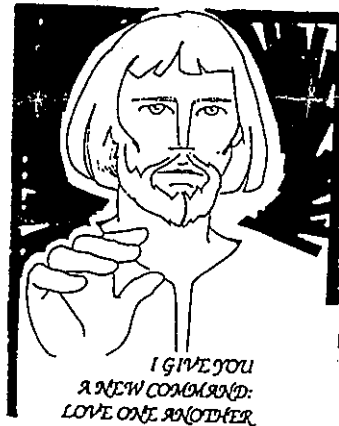


Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it feels the resistance of trying to go it alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of flying with the flock. If we have as much sense as a goose, we will work with others who are going the same way as we are. When the lead goose gets tired, he rotates back in the wing and another goose flies on the point. It pays to take turns doing hard jobs for our group. The geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Finally, (get this!) when a goose weakens or is wounded and falls out of formation, two geese fall out and follow him down to help and protect him. They stay with him until he is either able to fly or until he is dead, and they then set out on their own or with another formation until they catch up with the group. If we had the sense of a goose, we would stand by each other like that.

### THE GOOSE STORY

Next fall, when you see geese heading south for the winter, flying along in "V" formation, think about what science has learned about why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following it. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock can fly at least 71% farther than if each bird flew on its own. Perhaps people who share a common direction can get where they are going quicker and easier if they cooperate.



WE CAN COMPLAIN BECAUSE ROSE BUSHES HAVE THORNS - OR REJOICE BECAUSE THORN BUSHES HAVE ROSES.



LET US REJOICE  
AND BE GLAD