



Christian Life Communities

NEWSLETTER

Second Class Registration 8294

Summer, 1990

THE CALL OF CHRIST

"I chose you and I commissioned you to go and to bear fruit, fruit that will last." John 15:16

Christ's call is: - being with Jesus
- a covenant
- giving myself to another as Christ did
- imitating Him
- being like Him in his love and trust of the Father
- being like Him in his service to others
- taking on His perspective.

Just as the "Call of Christ" is a grace, our response can only be a grace. Grace is always free as is the call of Christ. Grace is a subtle thing. It does not overpower man's freedom. Every Christian is freely invited in this way. No man can deserve this call it is a privilege that Christ is giving him. Christ has lifted me out of the mire, out of my helplessness. Now he asks me to serve with him and work with him.

One of the few places where Ignatius uses the word "love" before the "Contemplation to Attain the Love of God" is found in the third point on the "Eternal King". He speaks of "those who wish to give greater proof of their love, and to distinguish themselves in whatever concerns the service of the eternal King and the Lord of all".[97] Clearly, "those who wish to give greater proof of their love, and to distinguish themselves" are those who are willing to be inconvenienced.

It involves not merely accepting the crosses that are imposed, but reaching for the cross with Christ. It embodies a positive desire to be with Christ as he reaches for his cross. Christ does so out of love for mankind. He does not reach for the cross in order to suffer, but in order to express his love.

As the Christian goes to labor with Christ then, he prays to God as though the whole work was his own to accomplish. He prays for enlightenment, for discernment, for strength, for all the human qualities that are needed in order to achieve the thing humanly. He is responsible for the effort. But he trusts in God so highly that he is at peace in his work, knowing that the success of the venture is God's not man's. This may help me to appreciate what must be my response to the "Call of Christ".

excerpts from "Spiritual Freedom" by John English, S.J.

JESUS CALLS US IN OUR LIMITATIONS:

Every so often it can be a profitable exercise to go back to Ignatius' contemplation on the Incarnation, to help us get our "spiritual bearings" and situate our faith -what it means to believe- in the world today.

The contemplation begins with the Trinity looking down on the world they have created out of love, and it is in a horrible mess. What is the reaction of the Three Divine Persons? - Disgust? Rejection? Condemnation? None of those -their reaction is one of infinite compassion; they decide that one of them should enter into the very depths of this horrible mess, take it all unconditionally to His heart, and so heal and save it from within. That is what the Incarnation is all about: Emmanuel, "God with us", in the heart of our lives and in the very midst of all the messiness of what it means to be human.

Redemption, basically, is a work of love; a work of healing, liberation and deliverance, from within. It is a call to the fullness of life, but a call that touches us and delivers us, not from our limitations, but through our limitations. The deliverance and freedom of Jesus do not necessarily mean that we overcome our limitations, but rather that we can find and experience the fullness of life through them and within them.

The ultimate human limitation is death. Jesus -God with us- did not escape death; He was not delivered from death, but through death, and there lies the power of His Resurrection. So, the Lord's promise of redemption and fullness of life is not an escape route to avoid the risks, the messiness and the limitations of our own particular human situation. Rather, the Lord's promise is to meet us and to free us at the very heart of our lives -from within- because He is already there.

And how do we meet the Lord within our limitations and the messiness of our life? Basically, it is a question of our attitudes:

Negatively, the most destructive attitude we can have is and attitude of: "If only..." "If only this had not happened. If only I were young.. If only I were well..." Such an attitude is a flight from reality; and if we flee reality, where else is there to go?

Positively, it is a question of trust and gratitude -Goodness really is God's last word, together with the realization that the only person who can kill my Christian hope and dream is myself.

Let me give two examples, one quite dramatic, one quite "ordinary". There is the story of a Christian, in China, at the time of the Boxer Rebellion, who was a drug addict, and eventually his confessor refused him absolution. When the violence started against the Christians, this man was confronted with the choice of either denying Jesus or of proclaiming Him. He chose Jesus and is now honoured as a Christian martyr. He never overcame his addiction, but in all his frailty and agony, he came to meet Jesus at the very heart of his own weakness, for he came to realize his own deep need of and desire for Jesus; and so the Lord could deliver him, not from his limitations but precisely through them.

When Ignatius first came to Rome, his zeal was not exactly tempered by diplomacy, and on one occasion, he wrote to a certain Bishop Caraffa, pointing out how he might improve the writing of the Constitutions for his new congregation. The Bishop, later a cardinal, never forgot, and neither did Ignatius, for when Ignatius heard that the former Bishop was the newly elected Pope, Ignatius, so the account runs, "shook in every bone in his body". He immediately went into the chapel and after a short time, he came out, completely at peace, as though the new Pope were exactly the man he wanted.

Fundamentally our life depends on what we really want. If our deepest desire is for Jesus, then He will enable us to embrace fully our own limited reality, just as He has taken the whole world to His own Heart; and He will always meet us there.

Patrick O'Sullivan s.j.
reprinted from Progressio

JESUS CALLS US TO "LET GO" - "LET BE" - "LET GROW"

"Letting Go" of self is an 'emptying'. Christ emptied Himself to be a Servant. We are called to serve our community, our country and the world.
'Let go' of what is ours alone so that others may benefit.

"Letting Be" There are moments when with Christ we say "Not my will, but thine be done". This means suffering and death with always 'resurrection' as our hope. This is an inevitable process for a Christian and more so for a CLC'er who lives in the spirit of the 'more' (magis). Letting be calls for our ability to suffer, die and rise with Jesus in all that is painful and negative, but in our suffering with Jesus, comes 'new' life and change.

"Letting Grow" The process of letting go and letting be must lead to 'letting grow' i.e. bringing birth and new life. Christ by letting go and letting be enabled a letting grow in all of us through His Holy Spirit. So also each one of us is called to enable a 'letting grow' in each other by being a loving, caring, sharing community, not only among ourselves, but to others in the Church and in the world and in the marketplace.

As we ponder on this process, let us remember Mary, Our Mother and Model. She too 'let go' to God's will and 'let be' to the sword that pierced her heart, but in doing this she 'let grow' Christ within her, yes, and with the Church and the world.

adapted from a message to the National
CLC of India by Daphne Stockman

FROM OUR NATIONAL COMMUNITY

Executive Council Report - The last newsletter Cris spoke of our death-resurrection cycle. The last few months I feel very much that we have been living Pentecost.

The Spirit has been moving in many directions. Our new General Council will meet for the first time on Sept. 29th and 30th in Guelph. The members are: John English (Eccl. Asst.), Cris Kotow Sullivan (Ont.), Connie Shaw (Ont.), Jean Floyd (last meeting), Fran Morrison (Ont.), Elaine Regan (Ont.), Duncan McIssac (Nova Scotia), Gilles Michaud (P.E.I.), Joanne Mahwinney (B.C.), Mary MacIntosh (West), Francis MacDougall (West), and the Presidents Elect. You can see that we are well on the way and still visioning a fully elected, truly national Council by Fall of '91. Let us support these people by our prayer.

Nominations for President elect have been a Spirit filled endeavor with many levels of individual and communal discernment. You have no doubt received the letter nominating Beth and Graydon Nicholas (New Brunswick). We thank all of you for your prayer and support of the process.

Your exco met for an evening in June and a full day in July. The June meeting was really uplifting to hear of the various Regional Assemblies and Community gatherings across the country. Much is happening, growth is evident.

We discussed priorities for the year, set a time line and the beginnings of a calendar. Priorities include: a) Exco - functioning committees: newsletter, business office, group guides, local leadership strategy, and Ambassadors' program. b) General Council - operational, 2 meetings, 16 members, finances and policy for travel to meetings. c) Assemblies - West, East, Ont., National in '91?.

General Council was formed and roles and strategies discussed. We realize with a truly national council we must look at the costs of meeting, (Maybe \$2500.00 a meeting) and seek more stable finances.

Committees were disbanded and new work groups mandated. Newsletter, Finance, Ambassadors, Formation Writers-Phase II. A meeting is scheduled October 20th for people involved in work groups and committees.

Financial concerns were raised as donations have not met expectations or needs. Finance Committee will send out letters of request.

Ambassadors program is proving of great worth. Both the Visitors and the Visited are reporting wonderful gifts of the Spirit.

Our Newsletter was reviewed. It's main purpose is to get to

know people, communicate the vision, and communicate the experience. So keep those articles coming. Send us news of your experiences and your visions.

Exco meets next on Sept. 14th. We thank you for your prayer support of us. Times of growth and change bring many challenges. We wish to serve you well, we welcome your input and your questions. We thank all for your time and expertise on the various committees and groups.

Holy Spirit, Lord of Light, guide and strengthen us.

Connie Shaw for the ExCo

ONTARIO REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Hopefully, by now everyone has heard about the Regional Ontario Assembly.

Place: Loyola House, Guelph, Ont.
Date: Sept. 28th - Sept. 30th.
Time: Registration - 7:30 Sept. 28th
Departure - 1:00 Sept. 30th
Theme: "Strengthen Bonds of
Community"

The hope of the Assembly is that CLC members from Ontario will get to know one another both in our local area and in the Region of Ontario as a whole. The group working on the assembly arrangements senses a degree of isolation between individual communities. This results, no doubt, from our geography and lack of connection with each other.

So come out and share the responsibility for the growth of our local and regional community. Bring your reality- joys, problems, tensions, challenges and desires. We plan to have fun with socials, skits, games and song.

Peter Peloso
for the Assembly Working Committee

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: November 25th for next Newsletter

Send to: Jean Floyd
207 Lourdes St.
Waterloo, Ontario
N2L 1N8

FROM ONTARIO - Toronto Region

Pilgrimage to the Martyrs' Shrine
July 7, 1990

The finale of our pilgrimage at the Martyrs' Shrine in Midland was so memorable that it deserves to be mentioned first in this report. Our finale was the Holy Eucharist which was concelebrated by five Jesuits at the Papal altar. We were provided with perfect conditions, a soft blue sky streaked with harmless fluffy clouds, a light breeze to offset the mild heat of the glorious sun and areas of green landscape to complete our conditions for a special hour of prayer and thanksgiving. The participating priests were Fr. Peter Monty, the main celebrant, assisted by Fr. John O'Brien, Fr. Roy Devlin, Fr. Peter Nash and Fr. J.P. Horgan. It was a blessed closing to our day at Midland where we had new opportunities to become more aware of the courage and love the first Jesuits demonstrated towards the people amongst whom they were sent to live and work.

Our day started with a visit to the gravesite of St. Jean de Brebeuf and St. Daniel Lalemant where Fr. James Farrell, S.J., director of the Martyrs' Shrine, said a few words and led the pilgrims through the Litany of the Martyrs.

Afterwards we returned to the Shrine where we had our lunch in a shady area on the picnic grounds. After lunch, Fr. Farrell directed us to Ossossane - the site of Joseph Chiwatenhwa's death. This year it is the 350th anniversary of his death. He is remembered specially in the history of the foundation Ste. Marie, being the first Huron to be directed through the Spiritual Exercises.

Some free time was available for us until 3:30 when we met at the Shrine church for a short talk given by Brother James Mara, S.J. about the martyrs and afterward we said the Rosary.

We then walked over to the Papal altar where the Holy Eucharist was celebrated. At the end of the mass Elaine Regan spoke on the forthcoming Regional Assembly in September and introduced a new group who are presently in formation in the Toronto area.

After the mass, we sat at some picnic tables nearby and finished the rest of our picnic lunch. We left the Martyrs' Shrine richer in two ways; we experienced a new unity at the Holy Eucharist and we were made more aware of the faith of the martyrs whose primary motive was to give everything and not count the cost.

Thanks to Fr. Farrell and all the Shrine for their assistance.

Sam Abela
Our Lady of the Way CLC, Pickering

FROM THE EAST - 2nd Annual Atlantic Assembly

On June 8th, 9th and 10 Icthus CLC, P.E.I. hosted the Second Atlantic Assembly at Rustico, P.E.I. 38 CLC'ers registered. Theme for the weekend was "The Principles of CLC".

Gilles Michaud, P.E.I. welcomed all and Kay Porter, Dartmouth, N.S., led the group in a gathering hymn. Fr. Howard Shea, Antigonish, N.S. opened the liturgy which continued as the weekend unfolded.

Guest facilitator, Jack Milan, began Friday's session by asking the question: "what makes CLC different from any other group that regularly meets?"

On Saturday morning Liturgy continued with an opening hymn and the penitential rite following which Jack introduced General Principles 1 and 2 as well as the Contemplatio from the Exercises of St. Ignatius. We broke into small groups for prayer and reflection on prepared questions and then for sharing on our reflection.

On Saturday afternoon the liturgy continued outdoors where Sunday's readings were proclaimed followed by a shared homily. After the petitions we returned inside where Jack gave a teaching on General Principles 3 and 8. Again we broke into our small groups for prayer, reflection and sharing, but this time short skits were prepared to describe one of the principles.

On Saturday evening a business meeting was held with John Gillies, Mabou, N.S. in the chair. 1989 minutes were read by Duncan McIssac, Mabou, N.S. John English addressed the Assembly re operation of National Council. Gilles Michaud, Eastern Canada Representative to the World Assembly spoke briefly of his upcoming trip to Guadelajara, Mexico for the World Assembly on Aug. 28th. Atlantic Region Representative to the National Assembly, Duncan McIssac gave a brief report and Eric Duggan, Dartmouth, N.S. spoke of the importance of expanding the opportunity for others to form new or join existing CLCs. Halifax-Dartmouth invited all to their area for the 1991 Assembly. A social evening, followed with songs, skits, etc.

Sunday began with an offering service and Eucharist was celebrated. Jack concluded the workshop with a wrap up of the General Principles and left us with the thought that CLC is a way of living from the inside out in relationship with the world.

An Atlantic Coordinator was elected. Doreen Reid generously accepted the call to serve CLC in this capacity. A short evaluation of the weekend was made and the assembly concluded with the River of Life CLC from N.B. conducting a dismissal service in Malaseet language and burning ceremonial sweet grass as an offering.

The Icthus community thanked all for their efforts emphasizing that the participation of everyone led to the success of the weekend. A fond farewell was extended as people left to catch the ferries.

submitted by Beulah Costain
Icthus CLC, PEI

My Lord,

all thanks and praise to you
for Your countless gifts to me!
How seldom did I stop to appreciate them,
in me, in others -
or even believe that I have them...

Yet something within me longs to have
that "mutual sharing of goods" :
with my relatives, friends,
even "strangers".

I know You've planted that longing there
my Lord.

Am I letting it happen?

With whom do I truly share my talents?
time?
energy?

From whom do I receive help from day to day
and in times of need?

Is community a real and vital experience for me -
of your life and love?
What I can answer today is already better
than where I was one year ago -
Right, Lord?
And who's to say what you will have done in me
by next year?
That's pretty exciting, come to think about it...

My Lord, Our Lord,

All thanks and praise to You for community.
For all communities in your name.
And special thanks for our own community.
Please unfold to us more and more
how we can show your love in deeds,
more than in words,
and how we can give and receive each
others' good somehow -
with all men and women, near and far...
Teach us to need You in each other, Lord.
Amen.