

February 95



# Christian Life Communities

## NEWSLETTER

CLC NEWSLETTER  
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Site 28, Box 10, RR1  
Newcastle, NB E1V 3L8

Dear brothers & sisters in Christ,

Spring is just around the corner, the days are getting longer and the snow is gradually beginning to melt in the warmth of the sun with the promise of Easter in the air. During this Lenten season of prayer and sacrifice, let us pray for God to purify our hearts and give us great joy as we proceed toward the triumph of Easter.

Ray and I wish you all a Holy and Happy Easter and hope with God's grace and His will to see you in Halifax in August. God bless you all!

The next deadline for our newsletter is May 15/95. Please try to make the deadline so the newsletter will be out before Summer Holidays. Thank you.

Here are a couple of poems to reflect on when we think of our CLC mission during Lent.

POETIC VERSE: And God said No!

I asked God to take away my pride, and God said, "No." God said it was not for Him to take away, but for me to give up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole, and God said, "No." God said her spirit is whole; her body is only temporary.

I asked God to give me patience, and God said, "No".

God said patience is a by-product of tribulation: It's not granted; It's earned.

I asked God to give me happiness, and God said, "No". God said He gives blessings; happiness is up to me.

I asked God to spare me pain, and God said, "No". God said, "Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to Me."

I asked God to make my spirit grow, and God said, "No". God said I must grow on my own, but He will prune me and make me fruitful.

I asked God if He loved me, and God said, "Yes". God said He gave His only Son who died for me and I will be in heaven some day because He died for me.

So I asked God to help me love others, as much as He loves me, and God said, "Ah, finally you have the idea!"

### SEND ME SOMEONE TO LOVE

Lord, when I am hungry, give me someone who needs food;

When I am thirsty, someone who needs a drink;

When I am cold, send me someone to warm;

When I have a disappointment, offer me someone to console;

When my cross becomes heavy, make me share another's cross;

When I am poor; direct me to someone in need;

When I am humiliated, provide me with someone to praise;



When I am downhearted, send me someone to encourage;

When I need the understanding of others, give me someone who needs mine;

When I need someone to look out for me, send me someone to look out for;

When I think of only myself, draw my attention to another person,

Make us worthy, Lord to serve our brothers and sisters who live and die every where in the world, poor and hungry.

Give them today, by using our hands, their daily bread and give them, through your understanding love, peace and joy.

MOTHER TERESA

JOHN GILLIES  
DISCIPLES OF LIGHT CLC  
Mabou, Nova Scotia

We enjoy receiving our CLC newsletter and compliment editor Linda Blackmore on her fine service. At a recent meeting we acknowledged our unfaithfulness in writing regular reports and promised to correct this situation. [We are contemplating SIN in the Phase III manual. There may be a connection.]

We truly have many reasons to be thankful to God. Two members of our community have been plagued with chronic unemployment over the last year, and one member has been out of work for the past six months due to sickness. We are thankful for their continuing faithfulness.

On February 11/94, John and

Cathy Gillies welcomed their fourth child-- a son, Iain Nathaniel. John and Theresa MacInnis became grandparents - twice - two beautiful girls in March and September. Ray and Joan Rankin returned to Cape Breton in June following five years of missionary work in the diocese of Antigua, West Indies as administrators of Holy Family parish on the island of St. Kitts. Duncan MacIsaac was ordained to the Antigonish Diocesan priesthood in his home parish of Judique, Cape Breton. He now serves as associate pastor of Holy Redeemer parish in Sydney. It is a treat to have our three former "in diaspora" members meeting regularly with us each Tuesday this year.

On May 8/94, some members of our community were honoured to be present at the St. Francis Xavier University convocation in Antigonish when Rivers of Life CLC member Graydon Nicholas delivered the convocation address and was granted an honorary doctorate. Congratulations Dr. Nicholas on exposing all present to some of the riches of Ignatian Spirituality and CLC.

During the long weekend in May/94 our community spent a weekend of reflection and evaluation on the theme, "Mission and the Family". Our director was Eileen Tobin CND.

Harry and Jeannie Beks have been involved with the preparation for the August /95 National CLC Assembly in Halifax, with assistance from John MacInnis, Ray Rankin and Cathy Gillies. Our community has accepted responsibility for budgeting and registration for

the Assembly.

In July/94 all members of our CLC along with children, spent a relaxing and fun weekend with Fr. Howard Shea at his home on the Mill River in western PEI. It is an annual occasion for us to live community on a different level.

In November/94 a new CLC community in formation was begun. The initial six weeks have been completed and seven new members continue their CLC journey with Cathy Gillies of the Disciples of Light, meeting as their group guide.

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FRAN MORRISON  
Waterloo, ON  
January 12/95

In October, Fr. John English wrote to all CLC communities about the need for a Solidarity Fund to help delegates travel to our National Assembly to be held in August 1995 in Halifax, NS. The following is an account of a fund raiser for the above organized by the Kitchener-Waterloo, ON communities.

On Sunday, December 18th, the communities of Kitchener and Waterloo area held a Christmas Cookie Bake Sale following the morning masses at the University Catholic Community, St. Jerome's College, Univ. of Waterloo. This is the second year that we have organized this fundraiser. We sell very fancy Christmas cookies, "Gingerbread Men" and individual specially decorated cookies for children. Our cookies are gift-wrapped and make ideal gifts. Since the K.W. area boasts superb cooks,

this is a popular event and the end results are simply scrumptious. Following our sale, we did the "Ignatian thing" and evaluated this activity.....

Negative: For some, the monies raised - \$395.00 (up from the \$265 of last year) did not justify all the hard work that was entailed. Some noted, quite correctly, that if everyone had contributed what they had spent to cover the cost of supplies, we would probably have raised the same amount! Then too, the timing of the sale meant extra work during the very busy pre-Christmas season. However, looking "through the eyes of faith..."

Positive: The response from the members of the area communities is overwhelming. The event, with all the advertising that precedes it, provides a means to make CLC more visible in the community. We also distributed our CLC brochures and explained who we are to those who dropped by our stall. (Interest about CLC generated at last year's sale had produced new members and led to the formation of another community in our area.)

We were able to involve our children in this event, in doing the pre-sale advertising, putting up posters, by getting them to "fetch and carry", help set up or do the actual selling.

The Bake Sale highlighted the gifts of the more creative of our CLCers: baking and decorating the cookies and squares, gift-packaging the containers, setting up the tables or striking a hard

bargain during the merchandising, all proved we have a wealth of previously untapped talent in our area!

We had a grand "cookie wrapping morning" at one home - where we drank coffee, listened to carols, laughed, argued over prices and sampled (the broken ones). This was a really happy time and gave people from different communities a chance to catch up on family news.

And for those who worked on the stall, the most memorable customers were the youngest members of the congregation who came to purchase the items just for them.

Summary: Would we do it again? Yes, on reflection we think we will. We think, and we are sure you will agree that the advantages are too many to let such an event drop.

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#### WORLD CLC DAY EVENTS March 25

Place: Holy Cross Center  
Fredericton, NB  
Date: March 25/95  
Time: 10:00 AM  
(Bring a boxed lunch,  
refreshments will be provided)

Come and let us celebrate World CLC Day together. Hope to see you there.

#### CLC SPRING WORKSHOP in SEATTLE March 24-25, 1995

Topic:  
Christian Life Community & The  
Spiritual Exercises of St.  
Ignatius on How to Live the  
Tensions of Contemporary Life  
and Find God in All Things

Speaker:  
Eileen Burke-Sullivan

Cost: \$40.00 per person  
Times: Friday: 7:00-9:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00-5:00 p.m.  
Location: St. Joseph's Parish  
Seattle, Washington  
Housing: Available on a  
limited basis with CLC members

CLC NW, 330 E. Boone Ave.,  
Spokane, WA 99202 \*509-325-  
0967

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#### DO WE EMPOWER THE LAITY?

Recently one of our members gave a workshop with a famous and dedicated veteran priest on the formation of guides for small communities. In a subsequent newsletter of this event a glowing report of this five day experience was written. Particular mention was made of the contribution of the lay person! The lay person in question simply shrugged this off, but felt discouraged that the sacrifice made (taking time off work with no salary and leaving the family behind) was taken so for granted.

There are several aspects of this experience which would be profitable for us to discuss.

As Catholics we value our nuns and priests, their formation and dedication and lament that

there seems to be fewer of them around as time goes by. All of us have benefitted by their ministry over the years. However, sometimes we put them too far above us, forming a caste system in the church, which undervalues the experience and formation of lay people. As a result we view lay people as inferior leaders. A friend of mine tells a humorous story about a meeting of his parish council which he attended. He tells about an insight he received of an action to be taken; but it wasn't until later in the meeting that the same statement was made by the pastor that every one in attendance wrote it down in their notes.

As laity we need to empower our lay sisters and brothers. We need to call each other forward as leaders and commit ourselves saying, "we will stand with you even through a learning period".

Power is productive when it serves and when it is given to our leaders. This includes lay people. Can we trust each other even though we don't seem to have the experience our traditional leaders have. Remember, "My father is still at work, and I am at work (Jn.5/17).

It seems that CLC does better in our country when there is a priest or a sister in overall leadership. This no doubt is due to their freedom from family and domestic chores and their more "concentrated" spiritual formation etc. But should this priest or sister vacate their position would CLC go into decline or would we empower a lay leader? Would we

follow this lay person past her/his hesitant first steps of leadership learning?

#### HOW DO WE CALL FORTH AND EMPOWER NEW LEADERS?

The following is a summary of leader group relations taken from Ignatian Spiritual Exercises for the Corporate Person. These steps may bring clarification to our aspiring leaders and also involve the community in this question. As well they may bring a sense of security to those struggling with the concept of leadership.

1. The community tells the leader what it wants from him or her "these are our goals and this is the role we wish you to take."
2. The leader accepts the "call" and assumes responsibility to meet these expectations.
3. The leader demonstrates acceptance by doing what the community asked him or her to do.
4. The community sees this and concludes that the leader respects the group and its norms.
5. The community confers status on the leader (you're an OK leader). The leader accepts this affirmation, has a new commitment depending on the communities willingness to continue giving this status.
6. According to the norms of the community the leader calls upon the community to work along with him/her.

7. The community does what has been requested, discovering its power to move on toward achievement of its goals.

8. The leader says "well done!" and now since the leader has been empowered she/he says I'd like to try something new, something not in our norms. This is something innovative, a risking, a new identity.

9. Having been asked, the community values the fact that they have a great leader who is "on the move". The community is secure and can risk these innovations.

There is a growing use of lay ministers in the church as we get to know scripture, spiritual direction and pastoral skills. These changes will affect the relationship between ourselves and the clergy. How do we define who will carry out roles and how power will be shared? Also there will be tension between two views of the church. One is the church as hierarchical and one is the church as a "people of God".

In CLC we have a chance to exercise ministries and share leadership which could be an example for the church at large.

PETER PELOSO

Dear members of CLC,  
August 17, 1995 would seem to be far in the future but to those planning the '95 National CLC Assembly in Halifax, this date is fast approaching.

We in the planning group would like to extend a warm

invitation to the delegates who will gather for the business meetings on Thursday evening, August 17/95. We welcome also the members at large who will attend the Assembly from Friday evening, August 18 to Sunday noon August 20.

Theme for Assembly '95 is from Micah 6:6-8

"TO DO JUSTICE, TO LOVE KINDNESS, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD"

Our keynote speaker MARY BOYD Mary lives in PEI and has worked in social justice for many years.

Please pray for our planning group, that we may discern the will of the Trinity in preparation of National Assembly '95.

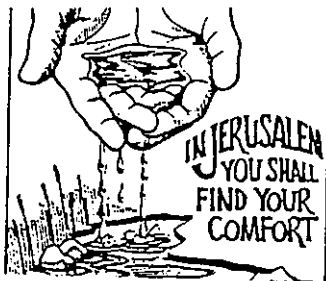
Mail those registration forms in early or by May 1st or fax to:

Harry and Jeannie Beks  
R.R.#2 Mabou, Nova Scotia  
BOE 1X0 Tel.#902-945-2216  
Fax #902-945-2278

Make cheques payable to:  
Jean Floyd CLC, NCC

Mail to:  
Jean Floyd  
207 Lourdes St.  
Waterloo, On  
N2L 1N8





The following is taken from the Convocation Address at St. Francis Xavier University by our own River of Life CLC member Graydon Nicholas and he has given me permission to share with you.

Please feel free to share this message of hope with our youth today who struggle with career choices, work options or lack of them, and most especially a calling to priesthood or sisters of our faith.

"Quaecumque Sunt Vera - Whatsoever Things Are True" is the motto of our University. These were the most memorable words that I can still recall when I first set foot on this Campus in September 1964.

You are the most recent graduates of our Alma Mater. The degrees that have been conferred on you are the result of a lot of dedicated study and determination. Your years at this Institution have provided you with cherished memories that will withstand the passage of time.

Many of you will advance to further study. Some of you will be immediately employed. Others will be searching for work. Some may be able to relax and take some leisure time before a decision is made about your future.

Our society needs your energy, your knowledge, your skills and dedication because there are great disparities among the peoples of the world. There will be many demands made upon your time and you will have to make many decisions.

I urge you to take the time to reflect and think about all that has happened in your life from the time you were young to this stage in your life. Many others have spent time nurturing your needs and encouraging you so that you could be where you are today. Even though a degree is no longer a guarantee of employment, you have experienced learning in a free society.

It is not easy to venture out into our world where there is violence, crime, disorder and confusion. It is not easy to take risks and chances when so much of our future is uncertain. However, you have to be able to welcome opportunities to use the skills, talents and knowledge that you possess. Your parents, your families, and your friends will help you to accept the challenges that are in front of you so that you can begin to fulfil your dreams and ambitions.

Changing fields of study or occupations is not easy. You can be guided by learning to list and examine your choices. You can analyze each choice in two ways. One is to consider the statement positively. For example, "I will accept a job as ...". You can then list the pros and cons of this positive statement. It is also helpful if you consider the negative statement, for example, "I will not accept a job as ...". Again you would list the pros and the cons. You are then prepared to discern the full statement and to determine if you are making the right choice.

You will need to spend some time to understand this process of discernment. You may have to meditate or reflect on the reasons you listed. When you are comfortable with one choice, you can discuss this with others who can help you.

This process of discernment can be used for many situations which will affect you in your future.

My wife and I and six other people belong to the River of Life Christian Life Community. We have been on a spiritual journey since 1982. We usually meet every two weeks and share our prayer life together. In the mid 1980's, we were introduced to Ignatian Spirituality. St. Ignatius was the founder of the Jesuits and one of his first companions was St. Francis Xavier. Ignatian Spirituality has its own discipline and it requires people to reflect daily on the scriptures.

It is also very important that in your lives you make some room and space for our Creator and our God whose love made it possible for us to be alive. It is so tempting to take for granted all that our Creator has provided to us freely and with an unconditional love. Many times in your future you will feel disillusioned, disappointed, fearful, worried or sad. It is at those times that moments of silence in prayer can help you to not lose hope and give up on yourselves. Prayer is a very powerful, inspiring and awesome experience. In humility, we acknowledge our need and dependence for help from the Source of Life. Your spirituality will begin to develop and blossom and become a very important part of your life.

There is no magic formula for prayer. Each of you will relate to the Creator in your own way because of your gender, your culture, your language and your beliefs.

You can also set aside a few days of reflection each year. This special time of retreat, especially in silence and under the direction of a qualified director, will return tremendous dividends to you. You will never regret a decision to relax and rest in the presence of our Creator.

This is a small taste of Graydon's inspiring talk to our youth.

He closed with an Indian Prayer "OH GREAT SPIRIT"

"Oh Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds, Hear me, for I am young, small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom. I seek strength Oh Great One; Not to be superior to my brothers and sisters, But to conquer my greatest enemy, myself. I seek wisdom. The lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock, So that I may learn and carry this message of life and hope to my people. May my hands respect the many beautiful things you have made. My ears be sharp to hear your voice. May I always walk in your beauty and let my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunsets. So when life fades like the setting sun, My spirit will come to you without shame. I have spoken."