

Summer 92



Christian Life Communities

NEWSLETTER

PEACE OF CHRIST from the
MIRAMICHI to ALL CLCers!

On October 22, 1991, a new formation group was started in the community of Newcastle, N.B., under the leadership of Linda Blackmore.

This group consists of a Priest, three couples, and a married woman. This particular night was a get acquainted night at the home of Ray and Linda, and as it turned out, we became a community of people, committed to each other. As we journeyed, developing trust and love, we became at ease with one another. We see ourselves engaged in the work of CHRIST through our words and actions.

We meet every second Tuesday at the home of one of the group, using the format of PHASE 1. We all agree that the leadership; the prayer, the reflection, and the sharing have touched all of us in some way. We look forward to journeying further in the CLC way of life. The Spiritual experience, and response to God's call has been much rewarding and to know that Christ is central to the life of the CLC, is in answer to HIS Call.

ALLELUIA!

By PEGGY WADE

**NEW BRUNSWICK CLC'S MEET FOR
DAY OF PRAYER**

June 5, 1992 marked a milestone in the history of New Brunswick CLC's as the five communities in the province gathered together for the first time. 24 members representing the Chatham, Fredericton, Nackawic, Newcastle, and Saint John communities met at the Holy Cross House in Fredericton.

The day began at about 9:30 a.m. as arriving members got acquainted over a light snack. Morning prayer followed, initiated by Graydon Nicholas, and it was simply titled A Prayer of Seven Directions. Its, distinctively, native flavour introduced a welcome newness to the focusing prayer.

Beth Nicholas, introduced Pam Daigle, facilitator for the day. Pam, noted linguist and educational consultant, and greatly sought after speaker on the spiritual life, is also well-known for her ministry as spiritual director.

"Thy Kingdom Come", the third line in the Our Father, was the theme chosen for the day. Activities woven around the theme included: interaction among the members who were challenged to be as little children; input by Pam on foundational material and their implications in life lived; and challenges through the day to reflect and ponder personal spiritual experiences.

The 'warming-up' activity challenged the group's imagination and creative artistry. Members, grouped according to community, were directed to choose an animal or animals which for them best represented their community. They were then asked to portray their home communities as a composite of all the animals they had chosen, a project which gave a spirit of camaraderie to the day.

Needless to say, this activity served a two-fold purpose. In addition to the obvious benefit of allowing communities to get acquainted with one another, it brought out the significance of using symbols to access deeper spiritual realities not as easily accessed by simply verbalizing.

Pam stressed the necessity of laying down a common language in order for everyone to understand each other. This was accomplished by exploring and experiencing the meaning of certain terms throughout the day.

The morning concentrated on material that offered insight into Christian spirituality. Spirituality was defined as a way of perceiving reality which, if acted upon, becomes a way of life. Christian spirituality (as opposed to non-Christian spiritualities such as New Age, the different Eastern spiritualities, etc.) is perceiving reality through the mind and heart of Christ and choosing to live life in this way.

The goals of Christian

spirituality and the different spiritualities within the church (ie. monastic, psychological/contemplative, apostolic) were also looked into.

The morning ended with a brief reflection and sharing on where one's shadow falls in the course of a typical day, week, month (Acts 5:12-16). The group was left with the quote, "Your ministry (MISSION) lies where your shadow falls."

The afternoon session concentrated on a more thorough examination of apostolic spirituality. The CLC was seen as being only one form of apostolic spirituality among many. Ignatian based, the "discernment of spirits" the gift or charism practised that is particularly Ignatian, was also explained.

Apostolic spirituality was defined as the spirituality of choice as the level of faith, and, the quality of affective presence we bring wherever we go. That is, the quality of one's heart is in intimate relationship with Jesus -- possible only through growth in prayer. Likewise, the healing energy of one's "shadow" is determined by the amount of LIGHT one absorbs, ie. how much we are one with Jesus, how much Jesus lives in us.

Pam ably guided the group to a deeper understanding of the movement of spirits (ie. consolation and desolation). A twenty-minute silent reflection on the lived experience of consolation and desolation followed and a brief sharing of this experience ended the afternoon session.

A comment made after the sessions probably best captures the impact of the day. Struck by some insight one person said, "I wish I had known about this before. It would have made life easier [to understand]".

Without a doubt, everyone left with nuggets of spiritual wisdom to take back to their communities, their special places of ministry. Bearing in their hearts a little of God's kingdom, "THY KINGDOM COME", the universal MISSION of Christians, was brought another step closer to fulfillment.

Respectfully Submitted,
JOCELYN WEIRATHMUELLER

The Bridgewater, NS, CLC community decided to have a garage sale to raise funds for travelling to the National Assembly in September. It was a success and they had great fun. One of their people decided to compose an article, about their sale, for the newsletter. Here it is.

WHO'S IN CHARGE?

On a beautiful Saturday morning in June, a former U.S. Marine and his wife stood in the middle of an empty driveway, where, hopefully, at 10AM, would be a bustling garage sale. His long experience with regimented efficiency and chain of command brought questions to his mind; most especially, how did he get hooked into this? His wife belonged to the Christian Life Community, not him! For weeks, he had heard progress reports on who was bringing what from their attics, he'd read the notice in

the Parish bulletin, and even seen information strips torn from posters in town, but not once did he ever catch a word about who was giving orders or how things got decided. So, why was he standing here at 7:45AM waiting for four other women to arrive when it wasn't in writing? No one was going to support this iffy venture and definitely, no other sane husband would show up. So, where did all these cars come from, with all these husbands in them, carrying all these boxes? And why are members of the parish staff arriving with armloads full? This sale had nothing to do with Church! Three tables would never hold all this stuff, but they might be adequate if they stayed in one place long enough! Tablecloths at a garage sale? Who thought of that? Next there will be flowers! Of course, why not! And here come the customers and it's only 8:30AM, but why are they unpacking those boxes? I didn't see those two extra tables arrive. Who decided that? These low prices are ridiculous! Does anyone know what they are doing? Who's in charge here? Why am I here? I don't believe my eyes! A birthday cake? NOW, I've seen everything!

Send in your stories, poems, or any news of your group to:

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CLC IXTHUS

As we began discussing what we could and should report, it became apparent to us that through our various careers and involvements our members found themselves in a wide range of activities in our society and in our church.

Therefore, as an inter-disciplinary group, we found ourselves involved, through these many daily activities, in a constant struggle, attempting to "FIND GOD IN ALL THINGS". Some of these activities are; CHRISTIAN ADULT EDUCATION, ADDICTION EDUCATION, SUPPORT FOR THE MARGINALIZED, RENEWAL AND RETREAT WORK WITH THE ISLAND DIRECTORS OF THE EXERCISES, AND NATIVE SPIRITUALITY. As a result of our activities and in bringing these experiences to our Bi-monthly CLC meetings, we find them challenging and at the same time very enriching in our ongoing journey, always struggling to discern the call of GOD.

Here in the Maritimes, we have an Atlantic Association of the Spiritual Exercise Apostolate (AASEA). This organization of Spiritual Directors has been sponsored by the Jesuits of Halifax. It has, through these past 20 years been instrumental in our formation through workshops, retreats, and PRACTICUMS. Three persons from our group will be attending a 10 DAY PRACTICUM this summer. Naturally, we are excited by this, since now all of us in our group have experienced the PRACTICUM to the exercises. After 9 years of meeting with the same people in our CLC

IXTHUS, we are now challenged with a change in members and consequently, new faces. Some time ago, three persons had indicated an interest in our way of life. It had been suggested to them to try finding others in their neighbourhood to meet with them, but to no avail. Through a group discernment process, we decided to allow them to join us. This new development will be evaluated after a period of time.

It is important to mention that we are the only CLC group in P.E.I. at this time. There are two other Christian Groups that are meeting and that we are working with. They have shown an interest in the CLC way of life. One come's from another denomination and the other is on an INDIAN RESERVATION.

Our IXTHUS GROUP has been accustomed to taking our individual decisions to the group for purposes of DECISION MAKING AND DISCERNMENT. This particular experience or collective-decision making has brought about what seems to be a greater sense of communal sensitivity and unity.

As for our spiritual growth and development, we have been using the resource book, "COMMON FAITH" by John Wickham SJ. It is our hope that as we progress through this program, we will continue into the Communal Exercises, although, we have had the experience of the Communal Exercises by using another program.

Regards to all our BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST, IXTHUS

Report from the B.C. Region to
the National Assembly in
Guelph-Mar/92
GREETINGS FROM BEAUTIFUL
BRITISH COLUMBIA!

It is really spring here and the gardens are awash with early spring flowers, the sun is shining, the temperature is rising, and the trees are clothed in blossom ranging from pure white to a deep pink. We all celebrated the World CLC Day on Wednesday, March 25th with prayer and reflection on our continued commitment to the mission of evangelization through action in our lives. This involves our work at the Parish level and expands outwards into other areas involving the community, province, country and our world. Numerous areas of action are entered and in our Emmaus CLC it encompasses a wide and varied field of action. The Emmaus CLC remains the deep well which is filled with the Holy Spirit and when we are empty, the community fills us up again.

I have been in contact with Karen and David Saks who now live at Wellspring in Ladysmith. They have been in contact with a large prayer group in Duncan. The Saks have tried to interest this group in CLC and they will be going through a discernment process re. committing to becoming a CLC group when I return from this assembly. Their main concern is that they will need to split this very large group into more workable, smaller groups. This very large group of people have been journeying together for a long time now.

The Saks are also in a small prayer group at Ladysmith which is uncertain if they wish to become a CLC group.

Anne Goodsell and the Naniamo group continue to meet monthly instead of weekly.

I have no information of any CLC activity in Vancouver but hopefully, things will begin to move there with the appointment of a new Bishop.

PegLee Aranas, who is the Youth Co-ordinator in Kelowna for that Diocese, is one of our Emmaus CLC children. She has recently contacted me and asked for a Phase 1 manual. Her prayer group is called, "The Mustard Seed" and they are looking for a deeper journey with Christ. I have a copy of the Phase 1 manual so I will be sending this to PegLee and I hope her group will decide to pursue the program.

The Christian Life Communities for B.C. met with Fr. John English last Dec. 5th in Naniamo, at the Bethlehem Retreat Centre. The gathering was small but represented members from the Naniamo & Emmaus CLC groups. The Saks invited some members of the Duncan Prayer Group and from Victoria, who expressed some interest in learning more about Christian Life Communities.

Graham Gusway, who is presently working on issues of our Synod implementation for the Diocese on Vancouver Island, was one of the people from Victoria.

We began the day with prayer and individual sharing of our own personal CLC experiences.

Following this, was discussion on emergent groups of CLC all across Canada and information from the National and International CLC assemblies.

As a Region, our next Assembly is planned for April 11th at Wellspring in Ladysmith. The Saks and their family of three girls came for a visit in Feb. to Emmaus CLC, for the day. We organized the details for the assembly on this day, with an agenda and pot-luck dinner. Those attending will be the Naniamo CLC, the prayer group in Ladysmith, Emmaus CLC, the Duncan prayer group and a group of people in Victoria who have expressed an interest in CLC to Graham Gusway, after reading an article in the Island Catholic News about our Dec.5th meeting in Naniamo.

With sadness we have learned that 3 members of our Emmaus CLC will be leaving Courtenay but not CLC. The Ogdens will be going to Vancouver next month so perhaps they will be instrumental in starting a new group there. Sr. Bernice is being transferred to Toronto as the Sister's of St. Joseph are closing the house in Comox this June. We will miss them very much but CLC will keep us together spiritually.

As you can see, the Spirit is among us and Evangelization continues to take place.

Yours in Christ,
Sharon Adams
Co-ordinator of B.C. Region
EMMAUS CLC

TORONTO AREA CLC REPORT by
Claire Weigel (of the new
group)

This year's World CLC Day of Prayer, held on March 25, revolved around the theme of "evangelization". Our newest CLC community based in Toronto hosted this evening and sampled what was for most of its members the first exposure to Christian Life Community in its broader sense. Susan Tomenson, the Toronto Area Representative, facilitated the event which was held at Dom Montserrat Apts. on Parkside Drive in Toronto. John Perry, SJ, was the Presider of the Mass giving the homily which was a reflection on Mary's role as evangelist in the life of Jesus, with implications as to the importance of the role of the laity in the church of today.

Eric MacLean, the Jesuit Provincial, was also present and addressed the issue of future Jesuit involvement within the CLC. Again the role of the Laity in and through the CLC as partners with the Jesuits was emphasized as crucial in our day.

Elaine Regan, General Council Member CLC English Canada, member of EX CO, addressed the group of about 40 members and friends on the upcoming National Assembly to be held in Guelph in September of this year. A report on the decision to finance the delegates attending the conference through the Solidarity Travel Fund as well as other items of business relating to our national needs were briefly outlined.

Following this Susan Tomenson gave a short presentation with the graphic aid of a map on the locations of the CLC communities spanning the globe. This along with a brief historical outline helped those who attended have a better sense of solidarity and oneness of heart with our counterparts throughout Canada and beyond.

Refreshments and casual conversation followed as new acquaintances were made and older ones renewed. The evening drew to a close as we looked forward to meeting again at the summer picnic hosted by the PICKERING OUR LADY OF THE WAY CLC

GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING,
Guelph, Ontario, March 27-29,
1992

The theme I wish to convey during my time on the Council is "Better Communication". Since returning from our fall meeting, I have endeavoured to strengthen communication both between communities and myself as well as between communities. Several telephone calls have been made to each community. Literature from our Presidents and the Business Office photocopied and forwarded when necessary, special attention given to World CLC Day. In January, a letter was composed and mailed out encouraging a review, careful consideration and response to such important items as nominations, National Assembly, contributions to newsletter, finances, communication with Business Office, etc.

Always, I have been well received when making contact,

however, encouragement continues to be required in order to receive response. Revisions for Membership List have been brought this weekend for discussion with the Business Office.

Lower Sackville - continue interest in CLC; in discernment. Have not registered. In 6th week of Phase I. They will not be sending a rep. to National Assembly.

Beaverbank - group in 4th week of the manual. They feel a tremendous support.

Only two people in Halifax community. Both have completed Annotation 19. They meet regularly. One member feels in discernment, other feels they are at a standstill. They have not made a decision to join National.

After much discernment, the Dartmouth and Glace Bay, N.S. groups informed us of their desire to have their names removed from membership.

Lunenburg and Bridgewater groups meet regularly and intend on following CLC Way. Both growing stronger as time goes on. They are attempting to make CLC known on a positive level in their parishes. Mass was celebrated by the Pastor for World CLC Day and local Lunenburg members met for prayer and celebration. Bridgewater community met March 25th to pray with the two suggested themes, as well as view a video "You Are Peter" which they thought was in keeping with the theme of "EVANGELIZATION".

Wolfville, N.S., contacted

several times. A decision has been made to follow CLC way and intent has been forwarded to the Business Office. We are pleased to welcome them and look forward to a spring meeting.

More Phase I manuals are needed.

Thank heavens for our Mabou community - they are our stronghold. They meet regularly, have dealt with their commitment as a community regarding finances, building a community fund and handling funds on their own. They intend on sending two members to National Assembly. Community in celebration..Two members (husband and wife) have just given birth to their sixth child.

CLC in Nova Scotia continues with struggle but goes forward.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Marleau
Blockhouse, NS

History of CLC, Lethbridge & Coaldale, Alberta

In the fall of 1987, Sr. Mary MacIntosh CSM, director of Martha Retreat Centre in Lethbridge, Alberta, and Sr. Helene Wadden CSM, also of Martha Retreat Centre, attended a workshop on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius given by Fr. John English SJ, at Seton House of Prayer in Kelowna, BC.

At the end of the workshop Fr. English invited anyone who was interested to attend a talk he

was giving at a local parish in Kelowna. The topic was Christian Life Communities. Several of the workshop participants, including Sisters Mary and Helene, went to this meeting.

Father John's description of CLC and his enthusiasm were contagious and seemed to be an answer to a need at Martha Retreat Centre. It would provide an on-going formation in spirituality that would complement the short programs / retreats offered at the Centre.

In January, 1988, Father English came west to present indepth information on CLC to those who were interested. About 40 persons came to these sessions. Father John also spent considerable time with potential prayer guides, namely, Teresa Spence, SCSL, Theresa Kurtz & Mary MacIntosh as guides. At the end of the six weeks, a simple discernment process was carried out in a general meeting. At this time there were only two couples who decided not to continue.

In the summer of 1988, Sister Mary attended a workshop for guides given by Father English and Jack Milan in Prince Edward Island.

In September, 1988, CLC began in earnest in Lethbridge and Coaldale.

Meeting together each week has deepened our understanding and appreciation of the Spiritual Exercises and how they can help all of us live our Christian lives more faithfully.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Each year one or two twilight retreats for CLC members were held at Martha Retreat Centre.

In June, 1990, a western regional assembly was held in Lethbridge. CLC members from Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and Washington State attended. Father John English, Sister Frances MacDougall, CDN, and Cris Kotow-Sullivan were the primary resource persons.

In September, 1990, two of our members, Sonia Spohn and Marilyn Heaton, attended the General Council meeting in Guelph. On their return, they gave a report to all the members. In the spring of 1991, since there was to be only one representative. Sonia continued as the Prairie rep. at the National level.

In November, 1991, a personally directed, at-home retreat was held at Martha Retreat Centre. Father John English, Sister Frances MacDougall, the three guides and Sister Theresa LeBlanc were the retreat directors. Scriptural passages were given for each day of the week; each person was encouraged to come for direction daily, or as often as possible. This was a positive experience for all as is indicated by the following comments:

"The Bible came alive for me."
"It was a growth in faith."
"It deepened my sense of how important it is to share my prayer with others."
"I felt a closer bonding with my own group."
"I recognize the need of having a spiritual director."

"We should have a retreat like this at least once a year."

REPORT of CLC AMBASSADORS WORKING GROUP (A.W.G.)

Activity to Date:

No requests for visits have been received since our report to ExCo on April 26, 1991. All visits scheduled have been completed.

A.W.G. mandate expired December 1991.

Concern regarding lack of response from communities was discussed with Working Group and our ExCo decision to disband A.W.G. and the program at this time.

We regret that the Ambassador program, despite the best efforts of the A.W.G., has not been more successful. I personally regret that, because of my husband's serious illness and surgery late summer and fall of 1991, I was unable to devote time to recontacting groups and stimulating a desire for visits from Ambassadors. However, the A.W.G. felt this action was unnecessary and that groups knew of the availability of the service.

We are happy to know of the area meetings that have taken place and that future meetings are being arranged. These, plus Ontario, Regional and National Assemblies may be filling many of the needs of communities and possibly negating the need for Ambassador visits.

A sincere thanks to ExCo., our

representative Fran Morrison, Connie Shaw, the A.W.G. members, Rita Schnarr, Phyllis Porter, Jean Floyd and Shirley Gatchene. Thanks, too, for Father John English S.J. and Jack Milan's input and excellent Ambassador training program.

A.W.G. has appended to this report some of the material used in Ontario in creating and implementing the Ambassadors Program. We hope that it will be helpful to other areas of Canada who may wish to start their own program.

I will be sending to Beth and Graydon a summary of the organizational procedure we used to get the Ambassadors "on the road".

Recommendations:

As suggested in the A.W.G. report to ExCo of April 26, 1991:

Investigate the creation of a "resource team" to handle what were in the past called "formation problems". As noted in our report, Ambassadors were strictly "visitors" and not "problem solvers". We have some concern that with the demise of the Formation team, and now the Ambassador Program, there may be no contact people (or person) for CLC leaders to go to for assistance when problems arise.

We feel that if a community wants a visit some the Ambassadors would still be willing to accommodate. I would be able now to let my name stand as a contact person for the Ambassadors and, although I haven't consulted with all the

A.W.G. members, I feel certain they will want to cooperate to keep our communities together and growing.

My personal thanks to everyone at ExCo for the many prayers and good wishes for Lou during his illness. I am pleased to report that the good LORD has granted him a full recovery. We have been tremendously blessed and praise God always.

Sincere good wishes and prayers for your work for CLC in Canada.

HELEN DRAGO
for the AMBASSADOR WORKING
GROUP

A Tasty Idea from IXTHUS

We have a plan to raise money for the National CLC Assembly Travel Fund.

This is the beginning of the lobster season in PEI and they are as succulent as last year. We think others across Canada should have the chance to feast on this humble creature from the Atlantic waters.

We are selling tickets on 30 pounds of lobster at \$1.00 per ticket or 6 for \$5.00, with ALL the profits from this raffle going to the travel fund. The draw will be held during the weekend of the National Assembly.

If you would like to buy these tickets or sell them, you can contact Leah and Gilles Michaud 66 MacDougall Dr., Summerside, PEI, C1N 5P5
GOOD LUCK and GOD BLESS!!