



# C.L.C. FIRE

The Newsletter of the Christian Life Communities of Canada

VOL.2, NO.1

*"Go and set the world on fire!" St. Ignatius Loyola*

WINTER, 1996-97

## A LOOK INSIDE:

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## **WORLD CLC DAY - 25 March 1997 TO PROCLAIM THE YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOUR**

The spirit of the Lord is upon me  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor,  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the  
captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.  
Luke 4, 18-19

### **Newsletter Issue Theme:**

#### \* ***Our CLC Mission:***

- \* Three articles and reflection questions for meetings (p.8-14)
- \* A request for Social Action (p.15)
- \* World CLC Day; a call to Mission by living out GP 8. (p.15-19)

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# AN APOLOGY!...

## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

I begin this issue in the same place as I began the last, with an appeal for mercy and patience. It has taken a year to get another issue of *Fire* off the presses. I have many commitments in my life which sometimes get in the way of even the best of intentions! With family commitments, teaching, coaching (soccer and volleyball), local CLC involvements, Annotation 19, and generally, living life in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, I wasn't able to put the time into the newsletter it requires. This was compounded by the learning required to operate a new computer system and its attendant software. I think I finally have mastered the intricacies of Word Perfect 7.0, E-mail, fax conversion and the Internet. The important thing is that this issue is finally completed and will hopefully in some small way help us accomplish our mission as CLC in Canada.

As you have already seen on the cover, the theme I chose for this issue is **MISSION**- one of the foundational characteristics of CLC (General Principle Number 8). This dovetails nicely with the theme for the 1997 **World CLC Day** which as Roswitha Cooper, World ExCo Executive Secretary writes "expresses concisely what our MISSION as an apostolic community is all about." Furthermore, it is an issue which we all are facing across the country as we try to respond to the grace of our 1995 National Assembly which was the theme for the last issue of *Fire* and which Shirley Gatchene (National Co-President) quotes in her report on the October General Council meeting.

There are two other issues that are **very important** right now for us in Canada. Fr. John English's article (p.3) and the General Council Minutes both refer to the issue of **Regional Structures** in Canada. Also, the call for answers to the question posed by the Co-Presidents in their November letter (p.6) "**What are our formation needs?**" **It is vital that each member and small community consider these issues and report to their regional rep or directly to the National Office as soon as possible.** Please note that the snail mail and E-mail address along with the phone and fax numbers for all members of the General Council are included in this issue (p.7).

It is my goal to publish another edition of *Fire* by Summer 1997, God willing, consequently I have set a copy deadline for the next issue to be **May 30, 1997**. While I will stay open to the urging of the Spirit, I will do whatever is humanly possible stay committed to that date. Now that I am technologically capable, **it would be extremely helpful if articles were sent via E-mail as attachments or as E-mail text files.** Fax is also acceptable but a little more work to convert to Word Perfect. Failing that, snail mail the most work but is still acceptable for articles or other submissions. **What is most important is that you do send information or articles you think would be useful or helpful or interesting to the National Community.** At the very least, it would be good to receive a report from each region, especially as we move to consideration of Regional Structures it is important that we try to maintain connections with each other. (What is happening in the Atlantic Region? The Prairies?... for example).

In closing, I offer the following reflection, written by **Fr. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ**, which expresses eloquently a spiritual perspective I hope for in myself, as I journey through this life, in our National Community, as we discern our way of proceeding, and in you, as I seek forbearance on my tardiness in producing this issue...

### Trust in God

Above all, trust in the slow work of God.

We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay.

We should like to skip the intermediate stages.

We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new.

And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability- and that it may take a very long time.

And so I think it is with you. Your ideas mature gradually- let them grow, let them shape themselves without undue haste. Don't try to force them on, as though you could be today what time (that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will) will make of tomorrow.

Only God could say what this new spirit, gradually forming within you, will be. Give our Lord the benefit of the believing that his hand is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete.

**Prayers Needed:** Please pray for the following community members...

**Horace Taylor** (Fruitful Garden CLC, Kitchener)

**Phyllis Porter** (Fidelis CLC, Waterloo)

**Bill Dirks** (Ubi Caritas CLC, Brantford)

# REGIONAL STRUCTURE FOR THE NATIONAL CLC OF CANADA

## *Basic Vision of CLC*

The basic vision of Christianity is to bring to all humanity the "Good News" that God is Love and that this love is expressed in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ especially in his sacrificial death on the Cross.

The CLC is an apostolic group called to continue the vocation of Jesus. It picks up the activity of small Faith sharing groups or study groups in the Church and encourages such groups to go beyond themselves in various activities that build up the human community. It does this through the basic premise that God is present in all the events of life and through the spiritual activity of heightening one's awareness of the presence of God in all things. Through this "Finding God in All Things" we hope to better love and serve God in building up the human community.

The manner by which this is done is communal. Thus CLCs can be described as "Small Discerning Communities of Apostolic Service," whether that service is evangelizing, spiritual direction, civic actions for the cause of justice, assisting the poor and forgotten in many ways.

These discerning communities are linked by bonds of love to each other and discipleship with Jesus with the National CLCs and the National CLCs with the World CLC.

The National CLC looks to the larger cultural, economic, civic, and spiritual experiences and concerns of the country and the World CLC does the same with the multi-cultural, multi-religious matrix of humanity. We know that our world is a global village with every nation, culture, large and small communities and families influencing each other for good or evil, for example, the influence of the media and consumerism on everyone on the planet. This is one reason that we are linked with National and World CLCs. The other is our call to serve Canada and the world beyond our local CLC.

Individuals in CLC feel the need for Christian faith communities to grow spiritually and to discern God's call for them and to receive strength in the faith from each other for apostolic service in their locality. Local CLCs recognize the initiative of the National CLC bringing the CLC ways of life to them. The National CLC also recognizes that the World CLC has taken initiative with it and created

**IMPORTANT ISSUE :  
REGIONAL STRUCTURES**

formation programs of personal prayer, discernment and spiritual growth, as well as communal discernment for mission and service. Thus the local CLC has received the benefit of other CLCs of Canada and the World.

As local CLCs grow into community they experience a desire for support in our secular society and they look for encouragement and further formation from the National CLC. National CLC's experience the same desires and needs from the World CLC. This applies in a particular way in discerned service to our neighbour, our city and our region that the local CLC looks to the National and World CLC for guidance.

These personal formation, and the formation of leaders as well as the communal and service components of the CLC way of life cannot be done at a distance. Spiritual leadership calls for formation programs to a number of individuals in a region. Local CLCs need a forum to interchange with each other through days of enrichment, larger expressions of service and celebration. If our vision and desires go out to the rest of Canada and the world it is necessary that we find ways to interchange, communicate and grow into the full stature of the Body of Christ.

Throughout Canada local CLCs are feeling isolated and are calling for more communication, interchange and support from other local CLCs and from the National CLC. To achieve this the CLCs of Canada need structures to strengthen the local CLCs and assist them to call forth the gifts in the CLCs in their regions for themselves and for the broader apostolic service of Canada and the world. It is for this reason that the General Council of the National CLC suggests the establishment of regional structures in Canada.

The purpose of these Regional CLCs is to make possible more and better personal formation, leadership and interchange among the local CLCs. The achievements of the Regional CLCs will then enrich the National CLC for better formation and for more concerted apostolic service in Canada.

The Regional Structure will include a Regional Leader, a Regional Executive Council, and Committees (Formation and others).

Fr. John English, S.J.

Christian Life Community. This idea was presented to me four years ago when I first entered St. Paul's High School. It was a program that was very new to our school community. Alan Fogarty, S.J. was my English teacher at the time, and I can recall him ranting and raving about joining it. So with great curiosity and a bit of nervousness, I took the risk! I joined a group!

Our group met weekly after school. There was about eight of us. We became really close and began to share very significant events in our lives. This for me was the highlight of joining the group. It gave me a place to share how I was really feeling, and through the sharing a growing process had begun.

As the group developed, we participated in several retreats. Besides the excellent food that the nuns fed us, we studied topics like the Enneagram, and Ignatian spirituality. We explored the process of discernment, and we worked on using some of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. I think the most challenging retreat was the silent one. In the second day of the "silent" retreat, most of the group (except perhaps the most introverted members) broke the silence (eating silent meals was impossible). On the whole, the group had many great experiences on retreat.

In the summer of 1995 I was given the opportunity to represent CLC groups from St. Paul's at the National Assembly in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This changed my perspective completely! Prior to the conference, I was unaware of the wide range of

people involved in CLC. I began to see that CLC was a larger community than just my high school. As a matter of fact, I was shocked to find out that my school was one of two schools in Canada to have CLC. The vast majority of people in Canada were adults! When I went back to Winnipeg, I was determined to change this. I wanted to increase the youth involvement in CLC. Unfortunately, I found this hard to do by myself. I am presently trying to organize a youth CLC out of my parish (St. Ignatius in Winnipeg). It is a very big challenge because very few of my friends from the parish have heard of such a thing.

I encourage experienced CLC members from across Canada to help form and guide youth CLC wherever possible. I encourage this strongly because I have gained much through the CLC "way of life." I have come to know myself better and have discovered an incredible relationship with God. I have also gained friendships that would not have been possible otherwise and learned the value of service. I am very grateful for my CLC experience and it is my hope that soon other youth will find what I have found in CLC.

Keith Macpherson,  
Graduate '96, St. Paul's High School  
Winnipeg

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## ***Highlights of the General Council and Executive Council Meetings...***

### **NCLC GENERAL COUNCIL NEWS**

### **Highlights of the General Council Meeting of March 1 -3, 1996**

- 1. Update of National Office Computer Equipment:** Approval was given to purchase a new computer with fax and E-mail capabilities along with a Bubble-jet printer.
- 2. Co-President(s)-Elect:** Standard Operating Procedure will be altered to reflect new guidelines allowing for the position of National Leader to be (a) an individual; (b) a married couple; (c) two members acting as a team. This would still be according to Article 8 of the Constitution.
- 3. Regional Reps:** A clearer structure is needed indicating responsibility and accountability. The present SOP will be used as a guideline and modified accordingly.
- 4. World Formation Course:** Gilles Michaud attended a meeting in Rome regarding this 5-year formation program for leaders.
- 5. World ExCo Meeting:** Shirley Gatchene, Elaine Regan and Fran Morrison attended a week-end session with the World ExCo in Chicago in February. (See Report below on p. )

**6. Youth Manual:** The Spanish Youth manual has now been translated.

**7. CLC Directory:** Dale has developed the format. This will be sent to all communities to be completed.

**8. Fund Raiser:** Several names were put forward to approach regarding this service for CLC. We must move on this.

**9. New Regional Structure:** Approval was given for a new regional structure consisting of a Regional Leader, Regional Executive and Regional Coordinator with Officers for Ongoing Life and Formation. The National ExCo would guide and coordinate the Regional Structure. The new image is likened to small ExCos operating in each region. ExCo mandated to develop. (See Article written by Fr. English above on p. )

**10. National Assembly:** Approval given for Winnipeg to host the 1999 National Assembly with the help of Thunder Bay and Regina. GC should prepare themes and guidelines early in planning.

Report submitted by Jean Floyd



## *A report from the Co-Presidents...*

### **GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING OCTOBER 4-6/96. GUELPH, ONTARIO**

On the weekend of October 4th we had our General Council meeting, and certainly felt the support of all your prayers. At our General Council meetings, there is always much work to be done in a short time, and this meeting was no different. There are local, regional, national and world issues which we address, and all this calls for co-operation and participation of the entire General Council.

Our General Council consists of one representative from each region - Central, Western and Atlantic, National Community Co-ordinator, Ecclesial Assistant, National President(s), (President Elect and Past President - when it applies), Treasurer, Youth Rep, Youth Ecclesial Assistant, and an Ex-Officio Rep.

At this particular meeting, we had the pleasure of having Fr. Dave Nazar, SJ, who is the new Jesuit Provincial for Canada. Fr. Dave was with us for most of Saturday. His presence and contribution at our meeting was greatly appreciated. It is our desire as a lay organization, to be able to better collaborate with the Jesuits in Canada, and what a better way to start than to have the Jesuit Provincial with us. Fr. Dave has a real interest in Christian Life Communities, and I'm sure if his schedule allows, we will be seeing more of him. We thank Fr. Dave again for his generosity.

We welcomed Susan Tomenson, who is our new Central Regional Rep. It is always great to receive new members on our Council, it always makes working together to serve our National Community exciting. On the same note, when our term comes to an end, good-byes are not as easy, but when one door closes, another always opens when working for the Lord. Phyllis Porter,

who has served us in the capacity of Regional Rep was one of those we said our good byes to. Phyllis has served our National Community as Regional Rep on the General Council for 4 years, and we thank Phyllis for her faithful and generous contribution. Please remember Phyllis in your prayers as so goes through a difficult jaw operation. Another member who has completed his term of office was Gilles Michaud. Gilles has served us for many years on the General Council in various capacities -Regional Rep., President Elect, President, and Past President. We are so grateful to Gilles for his continued faithfulness and generosity in serving the National Community. Although both of these people's terms on General Council have come to an end, we know that both Gilles and Phyllis will continue to serve CLC Canada in other ways. Thanks again to both of you!

**We attended to two very significant and important areas at this meeting - New Regional Structures and Guide/Leadership Training Course.** You will be hearing much more about both these areas in the very near future.

A Steering Committee consisting of a representative from each region has been formed. Martha Ottenbreit - West, Julia Donahoe - Atlantic, Pam Meier - Central and along with the Regional Reps will work together in collaboration with the National Executive to put in place the regional structures. The implementation of this new regional structure will require the help and involvement of many in our local communities. We once again pray that the Lord of the Harvest will send workers into our fields.

A letter will be sent shortly (**sent in November 96; see text of letter below**) from your National Executive explaining and offering Guide Course and Leadership training. This is our way of trying to meet the immediate needs that are being expressed

by our membership.

These are exciting times for CLC Canada. Let us recall the Grace of our 1995 National Assembly in Halifax.

"A new desire, openness and willingness to respond to the Spirit challenging us to move beyond our present reality. A renewed and deepened sense of Call, Commitment, Hope and Respect for one another. We are energized and empowered to embrace our prophetic responsibility!"

Continue to bring your questions and concerns to your regional reps, and to challenge one another in being true to our CLC Vision and Charism.

May the good Lord continue to love and bless you.

In Christ,

Bob & Shirley Gatchene,  
Co- Presidents CLC Canada.

Now is the time to get ready, move out of our comfort zones, shake off our complacency and join with each other as we gather and sow with the Lord of the Harvest.



### **REPRINT OF LETTER SENT IN NOVEMBER '96:**

Dear CLC Friends,

It has come to the attention of the General Council of CLC via the Regional Reps **that there is a need of formation at various levels** of or National Community. The General Council and Executive Council wish to meet these needs as soon as possible.

In order to do this we would ask you to assemble answers to this question: "What are our formation needs?". We would like you to attend to this question right away so that we can attend to your request locally, regionally, or nationally.

Please consider the following topics and indicate your needs:

- explaining and practicing CLC formation using the dynamics of the Manuals
- CLC Charism/Vision/General Principles
- Ignatian Spirituality
- development of group guides
- facilitation/leadership training
- specialized topics
- retreats days of reflection

We offer this service to you because we believe authentic CLC formation is necessary and should be assured to all involved in Christian Life Community.

Once again, please consider this invitation and respond to us as soon as possible.

**NOTE:** It is the responsibility of each community Contact Person to see that every person in the community receives this message. The Regional Reps are also aware that this letter has been sent out.

In Christ,

Bob & Shirley Gatchene.  
Co-Presidents,  
Christian Life Communities Canada.



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## Report on EXCO Meeting of Nov. 1/96.

CLC ExCo met on Nov 2/96 in Guelph, Ontario. This meeting had a two fold purpose. The first was to meet with the Steering Committee for Regional Structure - Julia Donahoe from the Atlantic, Martha Ottenbreit from the West and Pam Meier from Central to communicate the vision, goal and purpose of Regional Structure, so that they would be better able to communicate this to the communities within their own regions. These three people will work in harmony with the Regional Reps - Ann Benson -Atlantic, Pat Hartman - West and Susan Tomenson - Central to investigate and perceive the various needs within each region, so that regional structures can be established in the most beneficial way within each region.

The Steering Committee has a mandate time-line of one year. It is our hope that these representatives be given your generous cooperation.

The second purpose of our meeting was to deal with the Formation issue that faces CLC Canada. It is an issue that needs attention, and it is the desire of the General Council, that over the next few years more time and energy will be given to Formation along with Regional Structure.

By now you will have received a copy of the letter (**reprinted above**) inviting communities to search out their formation needs. It is the desire of the Executive Council in trying to meet some of these requests to work in collaboration with the established leadership already present in the area. In this way it will guarantee on-going, continual formation within the region, plus recognize and foster local and regional leadership.

We realize that these two major issues will demand much time and energy from all involved; and ask your prayers for those who are so generously offering their service at this time.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shirley Gatchene.

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*The following is an article originally published in the September '96 issue of FOCUS, the Newsletter of England and Wales CLC and was also published in the latest edition of PROGRESSIO from the World CLC.*

**ISSUE THEME:**  
**SOCIAL ACTION /MISSION**

## **Article 1: MISSION... IS TO DISCERN AND FULFIL THE LORD'S WILL**

*Those who wait on the Lord  
will renew their strength  
and rise up on wings,  
like eagles.*

Few subjects are so successful in generating passion at a CLC gathering as mission. Mention it and immediately one is aware of a mixture of enthusiasm, threat guilt and weariness in the assembly. It has something to do with balancing our hallmarks, our charism of Community, Spirituality and Mission.

Community seems fairly straightforward but there appears to be a tension about how much weight to give the other two.

Is it, I wonder, about an image of God who is constantly making demands we can not meet? Is it that, in spite of all assurances to the contrary, we still feel that we need to earn God's love? Do we believe that, in order to justify our existence, we should be rushing around doing great deeds for God? Maybe there is a sense that, if we actually enjoy those ministries in which we are engaged, we ought to be looking for something we find less palatable!

What can we learn from looking at Jesus? He, more than any other human being, must have known that God was calling him to mission. On earth for about 33 years, he was content to spend 30 years of these developing his relationship with His Father. Had I been Jesus I would probably have said that I was doing nothing. Yet we know that even in those years He was saving the world. I, too, when John the Baptist began his work, would have become restless and even jealous. Jesus knew about waiting for God's time. Even when His time did come and He left home to be baptised, he did not rush into His public ministry

but spent a further 40 days in intensive prayer in order to discern His Father's will. The mission of Jesus was effective because He took time to listen to God instead of trying to control His own life.

The pattern continues when Jesus chooses His disciples. He says "Follow me"; "Come with me". He invites them to be His companions. No lengthy job description is given. Even his cryptic "I will make you fishers of people" is suitably vague, and the emphasis on what He will do for them rather than what He is asking them to do.

Our spirituality is Ignatian and is therefore, apostolic. We are called to work to establish the reign of God in our world, to follow Jesus in striving to relieve suffering, to bring freedom to those who are downtrodden and to lighten the burden of those who are oppressed.

The 1967 World Assembly committed us to work for the most disadvantaged people in society. We can not follow the Ignatian way without being moved to compassion, as Jesus was, for those who are weak and needy.

So we ask again, why the tension between spirituality and mission? Are not the two indistinguishably intertwined? Our mission, as stated above, is given to us in broad brush strokes. It is for each of us to supply the details, to flesh out our



commissioning.

We need to take time to reflect upon and to recognize where mission is in our lives. It is there at the heart of every one of us if we but name it.

We need to be patient with ourselves and with our Community, first in the seeming insignificance of what we are doing, and second, in waiting in trust that if God has plans for us, they will be revealed in God's good time.

It was not only Jesus who had to wait for the time to be right. Read the lives of those who founded religious congregations. It

**ISSUE THEME:  
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is amazing how many of them did not discover until quite late in life what God wanted them to do and for many the period of intense ministry was short. May we in CLC take to heart the words of Isaiah 40:

*Those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength and rise up on wings, like eagles.*



**The following two articles on mission are from PROGRESSIO (Vol. 3, 1996), the periodical of the World CLC Community. They are reprinted here to serve as a source for reflection in your own group. Perhaps share about them in a series of meetings with your local CLC. You could perhaps designate someone to write down some reflections on how your community responds to the articles or the call to mission for the next newsletter!**

## **Article 2: The Vital Circle of Mission...OUR LIFE JOURNEY**

*By Jose Maria Riera  
President World CLC*

There are many ways of approaching the reality of mission in our Ignatian spirituality, mission understood as the call to be an instrument of God in building the Kingdom here on earth.

But how do we experience this force for wholeness, this mission which motivates our life and places it at the feet of the Lord?

1. We experience mission as a profound, constant desire which springs from the heart.

This desire is born after we have felt the unconditional love of God through Jesus Christ who sacrificed Himself for us. This love transforms, harmonizes and integrates our desires and our fears, so that we become people for others.

The experience of saving love which we find in the *First Week* of the *Exercises* gives us a new vision of our milieu, and of our own feelings, our characteristics and our talents.

It is an experience that, during the first years of our journey in CLC, leads us to discover the presence of God in all things, and His call to be, through Christ, the way of love for others.

During this journey, we discover gradually our weaknesses and our fears, but also our possibilities, as we come to understand fully the personal love that God has for each one of us. The step of accepting ourselves as we are makes it possible to fix our profound gaze, from the depths of our being, on the Lord (*Principle and Foundation*), who will strengthen our desire to follow Him, by transforming our desires.

It is a journey of prayer and petition, asking the Lord to show us His working, His "footprint" in our life. The extent that we acknowledge the love of God in every moment of our life, so will it be made whole in each of its facets (family, work, activities, etc); we can then speak of a way of life which experiences mission as being the instrument of the love of God and His Kingdom, in each and every dimension and sphere of human life.

The journey undertaken is one of discernment, a journey through which we learn to transform our desires, so that, (freed from the ties that bind us), we freely choose the risk of following Christ.

This risk of following Christ governs our way of living and being in the world.

The *General Principles* are an authentic decalogue for those who have been touched by the Lord.

Following Christ is a vocation in which, humbly acknowledging the creative power of God in us, we do everything we are capable of. Our charism is:... *to work for progress and peace, justice and charity, liberty and the dignity of all people.*(GP 4)

...*bearing witness to those human and Gospel values within the Church and society which affect the dignity of the person, the welfare of the family and the integrity of creation.* (GP 4)

...*to work for the reform of structures of society, participating in*

efforts to liberate the victims from all sorts of discrimination and especially to abolish differences between the rich and poor. (GC 8d)

...to participate in social and political life...(GP 12b)

The *General Principles* are a guide for fixing the reference point in our life. Following Jesus contains a radical call to work for justice, in every area of our life.

In accordance with the guidelines of the last General Assembly in Hong Kong, we could say: it is no longer sufficient to be a “good” parent, a “good” worker, a “good” student. Our spirituality springs from the profound sense of being loved by God; through imitating Christ we live our life so as to be more effective in promoting justice at work, in our families, our studies etc. Through the dynamics of the “*magis*”, one day we will be able to say, with full understanding and will, the prayer of contemplation to attain love (Sp.Ex.234)

## 2. How this journey in CLC is to be put into practice.

The discernment of a personal charism and the call to work for the Kingdom is confirmed in the small group, which in turn is part of the community at the regional, national and world level through the guidelines and recommendations of the General Assemblies.

CLC lives its mission in the mission of the Church, the people of God, called and sent out by the Lord.

This way of discernment is thus a way of communal listening, so that the options, projects and activities, which embody our being on mission, correspond to the real needs of others and the world, and to an apostolic motivation and fidelity to our personal charism.

The community confirms the call, and, as part of the Church on mission, the person sent is supported by prayer and regular evaluation to confirm or change the mission.

## 3. For CLC, who lives Ignatian spirituality, Ignatius offers us Mary as model.

She is the woman who listens to the Lord’s call, welcomes it in her breast, within her heart, so that this act of welcome is the source that impels her towards the outside world, and makes of her a model of generosity and solidarity. Instead of contemplating her own spiritual insights, she went off to help her cousin, Elizabeth, and later on, took a quiet but active part in the public life of Jesus. She shows us the way, so that we are not satisfied with keeping God’s call to ourselves, but are

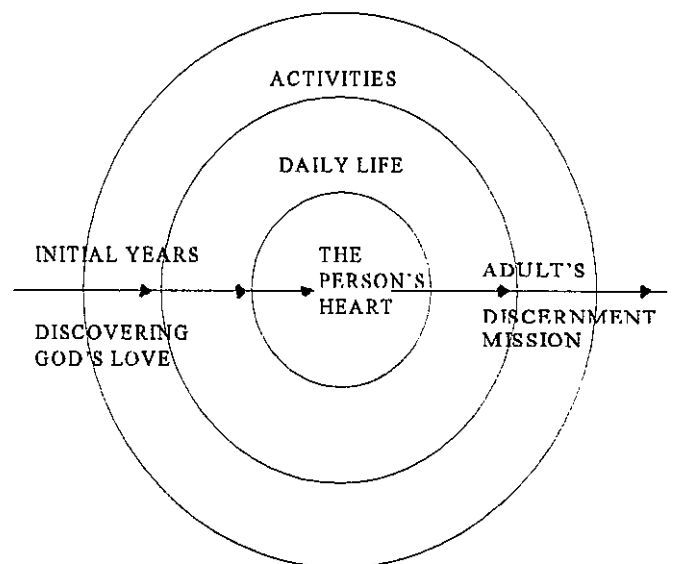
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inspired

to imitate Mary by participating in organizations and political parties and other institutions, whether church or secular, for whom the risk of following Christ becomes a call to fullness and peace in the Lord.

4. The following working diagram may be of use in understanding the apostolic charism of CLC.

In the initial period, especially among young people, the gradual discovery of the love of Christ impels us to engage in all sorts of “outside” activities without our life being deeply changed.



As we grow by discovering God’s love and by means of discernment, we find God work in our daily life, in our “vital circle”, until at last, we acknowledge in our heart that God has entered into our being and has transformed (integrated) us into Himself. From this moment on (the stage of maturity), the movement is inward, focused.

The acknowledgment, through discernment, of God’s working in my life transforms our way of life, and “colours” or modifies our “vital circle”, our daily life (work, family, leisure), and by the same means, influences and orients all our public life, in CLC, in the Church, in each and every kind of secular association as well.



## **ARTICLE 3: BECOMING COMMUNITY ON MISSION**

By Terry Charlton, SJ

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This is truly a most exciting time for us CLCers. Our 1994 World Assembly in Hong Kong was a privileged moment; and, through its theme, *Community on Mission*, it focused our energies on a fulcrum which, inspired by the Spirit, will be a source of our ongoing renewal and development in CLC. Leading up to Hong Kong were our whole history of World Assemblies and all the apostolic service which we have undertaken in these last decades, but especially important was the 1990 World Assembly at Guadalajara, where we revised the CLC *General Principles* and renewed our focus on mission.

The International Formation Encounters held in 1993 and 1994 in five regions throughout the world helped us to develop skills of social analysis, enabling us to recognize the signs of the times more clearly, and to discern what our particular commitments should entail. As we continue to educate our members in the tools of these Encounters, we will be able to engage in an ongoing process of sensitive discernment in all our mission activities.

Since Hong Kong we have held a series of "Jesuits and CLC" Encounters. These have been important for mission because we have begun to share the results of reflection and ongoing revision concerning what is proper formation for the members of CLC, so that we can effectively become *Community on Mission*.

As one privileged to participate in several of these recent meetings, and be given the conclusions from others, I would like to share some insights which may help us deepen our vision of being *Community on Mission*.

### ONE MISSION, MANY MINISTRIES

Whenever I am with a group of CLCers, and the issue of common mission arises, or more so when there is talk of discerning our common mission, there is immediate discomfort in the group. Notably, I have experienced this at two International Formation Encounters and at Hong Kong.

There is a good reason for this uneasiness because what we initially hear in the idea of common mission is an implication of uniformity, that we would all do more or less of the same thing for the same group of people; this is clearly contrary to our Ignatian charism which calls us always to read the signs of the times and to make ourselves available to serve the greatest need, with due regard to our talents and our other resources. CLC, I suppose, should never have a single common mission, in the way other groups have; such as serving street children or promoting devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

Rodrigo Mejia, SJ, solved our anxiety at the Bombay IFE and at Hong Kong with the maxim, *One mission, many ministries*. It is

important for us CLCers to recognize that we do not, at this moment, need to discern our mission in any fundamental sense. We are all called to share the same mission which is affirmed in the *General Principles*, especially no.8. This statement is a formulation of our charism as it applies to mission based on the way the Guadalajara World Assembly, in a spirit of discernment, read the signs of the times. The statement serves as a touchstone as we discern more specifically how we are to implement this common mission. In fact, we use the word, "mission", in two different senses. The first is at the global level, as found in GP. 8. The second is at the level of specific implementation, whether at the world, national, regional, small community, or personal level. This second is what Father Mejia in his maxim means by "many ministries".

For example, in 1992, CLC Nairobi undertook a discernment of a common mission thrust. We considered the needs and our abilities to respond to them. We concluded that ministries toward youth was the call to mission which we were receiving at that time. Our discernment specified some particular kinds of projects in which we might become involved. Over time, some specific projects were suggested. Although CLC in Nairobi committed itself to this common mission toward youth, another level of discernment was still necessary. Members must discern, and decide with the support of their small community, whether and how they were to become involved in this common mission.

Except on rare occasions, such as a World Assembly, where a new formulation or statement of CLC's one mission is made, our discernment about mission is at the second level of definition where we are discerning a mission thrust and specific ministries. We should consistently use terms like "mission thrust" or "mission project" for this second sense; but in any case, it is important for us to avoid confusion by keeping in mind the two senses in which we use the term mission.

### FROM ACTIVITY TO SERVICE TO MISSION

At present, a document is being prepared: *Our CLC Charism-Criteria for CLC Formation*, which will be published as a Supplement to *Progressio* by the end of this year. This document was used as a working document at "Jesuits and CLC" Encounters, and revised afterwards. It speaks of three major stages of development for both members and groups, after they have had a brief period of introduction to CLC. It would be beyond the scope of this presentation (and perhaps premature) to speak of the three stages in any detail, but this division can help us understand the typical development that a CLC'er (or small community) undergoes as progress is made in growth in mission in CLC.

What will be important for our purpose is to see how in each stage there is vital growth as each person makes progress in becoming a member capable of contributing to the mission of CLC. Of course the term "stages" involves speaking in general. The three stages discussed below can most easily be applied to those who join CLC as young people; those who join when older will already have achieved much of what is suggested for each stage, yet this will still need to be integrated into their CLC way of life.

### THE FIRST YEARS

The first stage is the first years in CLC after the initial introduction. It corresponds roughly with the stage of the *Principle and Foundation*, and the *First Week of the Spiritual Exercises*. In this stage, as a CLCer, I grow in a sense of self as an individual uniquely loved by God the Father. I get to know myself in relation to others. I discover my gifts and limitations. I uncover the disorder in my life and experience God's healing power, especially in these areas of disorder. I begin to recognize my relationship to the world in all its beauty and potential, yet so seriously marred.

During the first years, I engage in many activities in school, at my workplace, and with my family. The CLC small community might organize one-off projects, such as a Christmas party for orphans or harvesting the crops of an elderly couple. There could also be ongoing projects, such as visiting the home for the elderly once a month. I might decide to give religious instruction to children at my parish. Characteristically, I am engaged in many diverse activities in different areas of my life for many different reasons.

Even a particular activity, which is ostensibly to fulfil a need which others have, will also typically have other motivations. My small community is going to harvest the crop of an elderly couple. In addition to wanting to help, I might also be concerned about what the group members will think if I did not come; I want to be with my friends; I know good techniques for harvesting this crop, and I want to impress my companions. After I have finished the activity I feel contentment. But why? Is it because I have been of Christian service, because my egotistical needs have been taken care of, of a combination of the two?

At this stage of the first years, it is important to recognize that people are helped by such activities; thus, these are clearly good in terms of the help provided. At the same time, the CLC community can do much to help the CLCer grow in consciously recognizing all the motivations behind the choices made and in understanding the causes behind the different feelings I have. In this way, I, as a CLCer, become more conscious of who I am. What motivates me? How can I be more sensitive to what my feelings are saying to me? How is God present and calling me in the events of my life?

Through living my many activities in this stage of CLC, I

become aware of areas of selfishness and of generosity, and I grow in the latter as I learn to discern spirits. I begin to become more focused and to integrate my many activities into my growing sense of identity.

### THE STAGE OF DISCERNMENT OF OUR VOCATION

The stage of discernment of our vocation corresponds to the *Second Week of the Exercises* because it is time of deep conversion to Christ, the Christ of the Kingdom who calls us to serve with Him in His way. It is the stage when young persons entering CLC will make the election of their fundamental choice of state of life through the means provided by the CLC way. Those who choose the lay life will make the further decision about CLC as their way of living as Christians in the following of Christ. Those who join when older will continue to grow in the CLC way until coming to the decision about whether CLC is the way each one is called to live out his or her life as a Christian.

On the level of mission, this is the stage at which a CLCer is converted from engaging in many activities to living a life of service (or ministry, which is a word with the same meaning). This movement is founded on falling in love with Christ, the conversion to Christ, which enables us to find the depth of our identity in a relationship with Jesus Christ, and this transforms our lives through the committed desire to live in conformity with Him.

According to the insight of Jose Maria Riera, World CLC President, expressed at the "Jesuits and CLC" Encounter in Rome, activities are transformed into service when they are integrated in a heart that is in love with Christ (see **article printed above**). At this stage the desire grows to live and to do everything out of selfless love, a service that is like the self-forgetful service of Christ who even laid down His life for His friends.

Gradually, as a CLCer, I recognize the need to let my whole life be united in the loving following of Christ; and the many activities of the arenas of my life, such as work, home, and outreach to others, become integrated as service. During the first stage I had recognized my diverse motivations, and began to be healed of those not oriented toward God, so now at this stage I am further empowered to make my life a unity in the service of Christ.

CLC and my small community sustain me at this stage by providing the environment which supports conversion to Christ. This conversion might happen at the core of my being in a moment, but learning what it means to live it out in the various

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areas of my life. as an integrated life of service, will take time. There will be times of discouragement, failure, and simply dogged hard work; and my perseverance will require the support of a like-minded community that understands my struggles. There will be times when the community can guide me by means of insight or suggestions because it has come to know something of my pitfalls where I can become stuck. The community provides perspective; when I feel lost in my struggle, it can remind me of the growth that has already occurred. It is with my companions that I can celebrate successes and rejoice in the growth I have attained.

#### THE STAGE OF APOSTOLIC MISSION

The stage of apostolic mission is the stage of maturity in CLC; one is focused now on living now as a member of a community on mission. It is the stage of the ongoing living of generous commitment arising from the election during the *Second Week* of the *Exercises*, in all the actual situations of one's life and in new situations with their possibilities for service.

There will also be periods of living the *Third Week*, as one struggles to embrace the suffering that commitment to Jesus' way of selfless service entails. Here one experiences the deep desire to live Jesus' way, the way involving insults and humiliations, for love of Jesus as He is found in the outcast and the oppressed.

There will even be periods of the *Fourth Week*, when one experiences the consolation of recognizing that one's own efforts contribute to the victory of Jesus as it is being realized in the world, indeed, as the Kingdom is being built.

At this stage service becomes fully mission because each CLC member is sent to serve by the CLC community. To be on mission means to be sent. As Christ was sent on mission by the Father, so we must be sent through the Church to continue His mission; so it is through the sending by CLC that our service becomes mission.

The fullness of our life as CLCers is being sent on mission by CLC; but it is essential that we do not understand this in a juridical way, but in a relational way, just as the Father sent the Son in terms of their relationship.

As a CLCer, I have gradually grown in my Christian life to choose CLC as my way of life on the basis of a call discerned to be from the Lord. Through this whole process of growth, I have been becoming a member of the Christian Life Community, especially focused in my small community. I have been learning about myself as I relate in community, and I have gradually shared the self I am becoming within community. The community comes to know me better and helps me to know myself.

Now, I have reached the stage of personal and Christian integration when the focus in all areas of my life is more on

mission. I need to discern constantly that this becomes progressively more appropriate to its aims, and it is only natural that I will want my community to help me with this discernment. I will discover that community will be of help in pointing out an area where I am blind. I will recognize that the community has resources of information and analysis which are beyond my own and which will support my discernment.

The discernment of mission is communal. The community discerns with me. When agreement is reached between my community and me about my service, then the community sends me on mission. Because the community sends me, the service is both my mission and the mission of Christian Life community.

This sending, however, is not the end of the process; it is a gesture of the community's ongoing commitment to my living out my mission as CLC lives out its mission. CLC, at its various levels of being community, but especially through my small community, will help me continue to discern how best to implement my mission; and help me adjust or even change my mission radically as subsequent information and discernment indicate.

It is important that we do not understand mission as the extra things I do. In mission, life and service are integrated. I may have little time to do "extra things" after I attend to fulfilling sensitively both my responsibilities as spouse and parent and my duties at my workplace. This is the case for most CLCers; and in this case, these are principally the areas in which CLC helps me discern how I am best to serve, and these are areas which CLC sends me on mission.

#### A SMALL COMMUNITY MISSION PLAN

The foregoing discussion of how CLC sends its members on mission might sound rather theoretical. What does it mean in practice? Since most of our countries have relatively few members living at this stage of apostolic mission, we are all in the midst of learning what this means. Here I would like to offer the example of my own CLC small community, although we are only at the beginning of this stage of apostolic mission ourselves. A few months ago, we drew up a small community mission plan.

First, each of us spent time discerning what he or she felt is the focus of his or her CLC mission at this time. Each shared with the community at one of our meetings; some spoke about the mission of CLC in Nairobi toward youth, others about a focus within his or her family or at the workplace, some again about another service that he or she gives. After each one shared, the others were invited to make comments about how they saw this

person's mission.

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Each of us took the results away for further consideration and shared again at the next meeting. Spontaneously, in the midst of our discussion, we found ourselves speaking of a common area of concern of many of our members, and we expressed what we might do together to meet this need. Finally, we formulated our small group mission plan, with the particular commitment of each member. Through this formulation we were sending one another on mission. We were committing ourselves both to ongoing support of one another and to ongoing discernment with one another.

Periodically, our written statement of mission will need to be revised as mission must evolve continually. I think that this example could serve as a model of how to send members on mission for CLC small communities which are at the beginning of this stage. The obvious limitation is that it concerns only one or two areas of each member's life of service as mission. Still, it is a beginning which can be expanded.

**PROGRESS AS COMMUNITY ON MISSION**

*Community on Mission* was the theme of Hong Kong '94. I

think it remains a statement of CLC identity. It would be difficult to discover a more concise definition of our fundamental identity as Christians who are invited to live more fully the life of the Trinity, itself the most intimate Community from which the Father sends the Son and the Holy Spirit.

As CLC we are committed to growing as *Community on Mission*. We commit ourselves to living as community which supports its members in living our Christian life by following the vision of Ignatian spirituality.

We are community, never for its own sake, but for the sake of our mission. Through our experience of living as CLC and through our reflection on this, we are growing in discovering the process which will enable all of us to be formed so that we may accomplish our fundamental goal of becoming *Community on Mission*.

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:** *Consider using these questions for reflection and sharing at a series of small community meetings...* (Please remember to consider delegating someone to write a reflection on your groups reaction to the articles for the next newsletter!)

**For Article One: Mission ... to discern and fulfil the Lord's will...**

1. What has been your (or your community's) experience of the tension between spirituality and mission?
2. Have you been patient and taken the time to recognize where "mission is in your life?" How and when?
3. What are the implications of this article for you or your community?

**For Article Two: The Vital Circle of Mission...Our Life Journey...**

1. How have you experienced or become aware of the sense of mission as "a profound, constant desire which springs from the heart"?
2. How have the *General Principles* influenced your "journey of discernment" and our CLC Spirituality helped you to move beyond just being a "good" parent, worker or student?
3. When or how have you experienced through your CLC community a sense of call and being sent into mission?
4. Where are you on the journey into the "Vital Circle of Mission"? How has discernment of God working in your life "coloured" your way?

**For Article Three: Becoming Community on Mission...**

1. Does the phrase "One mission, many ministries" which suggests we make a clear distinction between the term mission and specific ministries (or "mission thrusts"), seem helpful to you? Why?
2. Think back over your own life (graced) history; where are you on the three "stages of development"? Where is your small community?
3. Share about experiences of communal discernment and being "sent"... Do you agree that "it is important that we do not understand mission as the extra things we do"?
4. Have you developed a "mission plan" for your small community? Why? Why not? If you have is it time to revise it according to the "signs of the time"?



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**SOCIAL ACTION:** *The following request was submitted by Barbara Peloso (Hidden Life CLC); please consider acting on it individually and communally:*

We are requesting that CLCers boycott Shell gasoline (gas stations) for the following reasons:

1. Shell has extracted an estimated 30 billion U.S. dollars of oil, since 1958, from Ogoni Land, Nigeria. In this time the environmental devastation and destruction of valuable farm land, has shattered the Ogoni community, which depends on this land for survival.
2. An estimated 300 major oil spills occur every year in the rivers and delta states of Nigeria. Shell has made little or no effort to halt & compensate for the damage it has caused.
3. Despite the immense profit gained by both Shell & the Nigerian military dictatorship, the Ogoni people have not only been robbed of financial gain, but have been robbed of the land that sustains them. Most farming has been made impossible for these people.
4. When the Ogoni people lead by the Nobel prize nominee Ken Saro-Wiwa protested the injustices of Shell, Shell & the Nigerian government worked together to intimidate the people into silence by murdering Ken Saro-Wiwa at a false trial and slaughtering an estimated 3,000 Ogoni people while arresting many more.

There are many more reasons to boycott Shell, but we feel the above are already enough. If you require more information contact:  
MOSOP Canada, 154 Vaughan Road, Apt #207, Toronto, Ontario, M6C 4A2,  
or email the Ogoni solidarity network at: <http://www.oneworld.org/mosop/>

Please also contact Shell and let them know that you are boycotting their product.

You can send those letters to Andrea Peloso, 84 Keating Dr., Elora, Ontario N0B 1S0 and she will send them on to Shell and Mosop Canada.

Thanks so much for your concern in this matter, we can make a difference for the Ogoni people!

"I repeat that we all stand before history. I & my colleagues are not the only ones on trial" Ken Saro-Wiwa

Peter & Barbara, 84 Keating Dr., Elora, Ontario, 519-846-9631, E-mail [peloso@sentex.net](mailto:peloso@sentex.net)

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## **NATIONAL ExCo GOES TO WORLD ExCo** **CHICAGO, USA, FEBRUARY, 1996**

**WORLD COMMUNITY NEWS AND VIEWS**

At the World Assembly in 1994, the United States offered to host a meeting of the World ExCo. This meeting took place at the St. Charles Borromeo Pastoral Centre in Romeoville, Illinois (just outside of Chicago) from February 2 -10, 1996. Members of the US and Canadian ExCo's were invited to attend for a brief sharing session on Saturday February 3 - Sunday February 4, 1996.

Attending from Canada were Shirley Gatchene (National President), Elaine Reagan (ExCo), Alan Fogarty, SJ (Ecclesial Assistant for Youth), and Fran Morrison (CLC rep to the World Assembly '94).

Representing the World ExCo were the Vice President, Maria Clara Bingemer of Brazil, the Secretary, Ingeborg von Grafenstein of Germany, the Treasurer, Vitalano Managas of the Phillipines, and delegates from Zaire, Australia and Uruguay along with members of the CLC central office in

Rome:

Fr. Julean Elizalde, SJ, Vice-Ecclesial Assistant, and Roswitha Cooper, World Community Executive Secretary.

The meeting took place in intense cold temperatures of -30 degrees and so the Canadian delegates were delighted to be met at the airport by Sr, Jean Keilty, a US CLC'er who kindly drove us to the Retreat Centre where they were able to hand over the large bag of warm clothes, sent by the Ichthus CLC of PEI, to Victor Kachaka from Zambia, about to experience his first North American winter.

Bishop Kaffer, who is the Episcopal Advisor of the US National community, was on hand at lunch to welcome us to his house, as were various members of the ExCo of the US who had chosen

to hold their ExCo meeting in the same venue. During the afternoon, the US Youth Team, led by Frs. Shane Martin, SJ, and Drew Sotelo, SJ, with a number of US youth representatives arrived from all over the States, with the Californians in particular, being taken aback by the temperature!

Saturday afternoon, the Canadian group met with the World ExCo to give them an overview of the Canadian reality- our strengths and weaknesses, and hopes for the future. In discussions afterward, it was stressed how many perceived needs, in particular, **ongoing formation for established groups**, were echoed worldwide.

Following a concelebrated mass with Bishop Kaffer and five US Jesuits, the US ExCo and their National Coordinating Council, which represents the ten US regions, shared with the larger group and we were given an overview of the process of founding Youth groups in the US. This was a long session, held in a large gathering room with an erratic heating system, but despite the fact that for much of the evening, participants were huddled in blankets and winter coats, interest was keen and we were most impressed by the presentations of the US youth and young CLCers as they shared their CLC journey. We ended this day with some typical Canadian hospitality- a party personally hosted by your delegates.

Prior to leaving on Sunday, the Canadian group organized the Opening Prayer of the day. For this we used the contemplation written by Fr. Doug McCarthy, SJ. We focused on the gospel of Mark: Salt of the Earth and Light of the World.

One of the highlights of this meeting was a demonstration of current and proposed communications technology given by a member of the US Youth Team who is also a Stanford Computer Science graduate. In the future CLC will have a

place on the World Wide Web (the Internet) and members were encouraged to share E-mail addresses in an effort to speed up communication world wide. At this gathering there was much use of fax machines and at least five lap-top computers were in use, which reinforces the need for a Canadian directory containing such information.

As usual at such gatherings, some of the most significant times were spent in informal meetings, in small cluster-groups where information was shared about how each LIVED the CLC reality. Your Canadian delegates were also able to suggest Canada as a future site for such a meeting and to make arrangements for Mary Nolan, the Australian CLC National President, to pay a short visit to Ontario following this meeting. She was hosted by communities in Toronto, Guelph, and Kitchener-Waterloo.

This meeting was short, but it was extremely important for CLC Canada as we were able to renew old links both with US CLC members and also with the World ExCo, which are important connections making our world a much smaller place. We were also able to share our Canadian story and our newsletter and also gain more information about CLC world wide. Modern technology has made our world a smaller place, but let's face it, you cant hug a computer!

Submitted by,  
 Fran Morrison  
 123 Renaud Drive, Waterloo, On., N2J 3T2, 519-884-4747



## **WORLD CLC DAY '97: TO PROCLAIM THE YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOUR**

*The following letter is a reprint of an information bulletin called Projects sent out by the CLC World ExCo, written by Roswetha Cooper, Executive Secretary of the World ExCo. It is meant to help us get ready for the upcoming World CLC Day- March 25, 1997 and challenges us to live out our MISSION.*

Dear Friends,

The World ExCo has chosen Luke 4,18-19 (See Cover Page of Fire) for our World Day 1997, first because it expresses concisely what our Mission as an apostolic community is all about and, second, it links us with the whole Church in preparation for the celebration of the jubilee of Christ's birth and the third millennium.

With his apostolic letter, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, Pope John Paul II offers precious material for reflection. He begins and ends his discourse with a quotation from the letter to the Hebrews: **JESUS CHRIST IS THE SAME YESTERDAY AND TODAY AND FOREVER** (Heb. 13,8). The second phase of the preparation starts with the year 1997 which has been dedicated to *reflection on Christ, the Word of God, made man by the power of the Holy Spirit. The distinctly Christological character of the Jubilee needs to be emphasized, for it will celebrate the Incarnation and coming into the world of the Son of God, the mystery of salvation for all humankind.* (Tertio Millenio Adveniente, cf. 40).



For this reflection the document suggests the fourth chapter of Luke's Gospel for a deeper understanding of the mystery of the Incarnation and Salvation. In Luke 4,16-30 we read how, in his encounter in the synagogue with the people of Nazareth, who had known him as a child as Joseph the carpenter's son, Jesus uses the messianic prophecies of Isaiah to reveal his identity. His audience, who at first hung on his words and could not turn their eyes from him, were "filled with rage" when Jesus said: *Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.*

Jesus referred to this prophecy again to console John the Baptist in prison when answering his last question: *Are you the one who is to come...?* (Lk. 7, 22-23) Could there have been a more considerate and loving answer to the man, whose mission it was to prepare the way and who himself had borrowed the prophecies of Isaiah to call out in the desert: "... *and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.*" It is just like a code between close friends, for John knew the whole of the prophecies well: *...the ransomed of the Lord shall return.... everlasting joy shall be upon their heads... and the dead shall live... the earth will give birth to those long dead.* (Is. 35, 10; 26, 19).

How is all this touching us? Are we not somehow pilgrims vacillating between two extremes, listening at first with good will and even enthusiasm, but drawing back when the message gets too demanding? But there exists in us a deep longing to submit our life completely to the will of God, as John the Baptist's shining example teaches us. Somehow deep in our hearts, we know that it is the only way to achieve true happiness. Christ's saving power is working in us and through us. We know that in the Old Testament times a Jubilee year meant the time of returning home, of freeing slaves, of pardon and the release of debts (cf. Lev. 25, 8-31). Then, as at all times, as we all know only too well from our own experience, we, the ingenious people of God, have found ways of interpreting God's law that suits our comfort, half-heartedness and egoism. We also know the Lord's new interpretation of the law in the light of the new commandment he gave us: *to love one another as he has loved us.* In his apostolic letter, Pope John Paul II speaks of *the duty to sanctify time*, and emphasizes that *Christ is the Lord of time.* Today is the day of grace, and today we, too, have to proclaim the *Year of the Lord's Favour.* Now as well as 2000 years ago, the Lord's voice can be heard. He wants to speak through us: *"Today this scripture has been fulfilled..."* We must understand that **our mission is to fulfil Christ's mission.** Of course, this would be too great a demand on our weak human nature if we were to count solely on our own strength, and it is important for us to remember that even the first heralds of Christ's mission were very ordinary and weak people, sinners like us. Peter, the Rock, was a coward at first, but we know what an agent of the Lord's message he became after being filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

We in CLC have certainly given much thought to **mission.** Looking back at the themes of past CLC World Days, we can see that all have been directly or indirectly connected with **mission:**

- 1990 **CLC at the Service of the Kingdom:** *"I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit."* (John 15,16);
- 1991 **In all things love and serve:** (The service of CLC in the context of the Ignatian Year);
- 1992 **Bringing the Gospel to today's world:** (reflection on the encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* and evangelisation);
- 1993 **Bonding, union in mind and heart:** To be united in conviction and in love, with a common mind and purpose;
- 1994 **CLC: community in mission:** in preparation for the World Assembly: *"I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already."*
- 1995 **Community in mission:** after the World Assembly
- 1996 **United by our vocation:** *:That they may be one"*(John 17)

It is all there, a rich and promising path. Whether it make better disciples of us will, however depend on the depth of our personal relationship with Christ. **Only when we are filled with Christ and his healing, saving and liberating power** can we begin to understand that our **mission is our life and our life is our mission.** If we use the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius as *"the specific source and the characteristic instrument of our spirituality"* we will begin to understand what it means that our spirituality is *"centred on Christ and on participation in the Paschal Mystery."* (GP5) The CLC way of live offers the instruments needed for growth of the individual and the community. The General Principles are rich, beautiful and demanding in content: they are guiding us as individuals and as a community to become more and more willing advocates of the Lord's mission. In GP 8 we read:

**As members of the pilgrim people of God, we have received from Christ the mission of being his witnesses before all people by our attitudes, words, and actions, becoming identified with his mission of bring the Good News to the poor, proclaiming liberty to captives and to the blind, new sight, setting the downtrodden free and PROCLAIMING THE LORD'S YEAR OF FAVOUR.**

**Our life is essentially apostolic, the field of CLC knows no limits: It extends both to the Church and the world,**

in order to bring the Gospel of salvation to all people and to serve individual persons and society by opening hearts to conversion and struggling to change oppressive structures.

Are we struggling to change oppressive structures and are we attentive to those who need us? Do we hear the voices of many who ask: "*Are you the one who is to come...*"? Are we ready to help them find Christ? It is a phenomenon of our time that there is evidence of a growing longing for the transcendental in the world, despite the endeavours of some that the human being should be considered as merely a more highly developed animal. This longing for meaning in life must be answered by us who have experienced the healing, saving and liberating power of Christ and are sent to share the Good News with others. If we fail to respond to this cry, the longing will manifest itself in all sorts of superstition, and fears of the future that give rise to strange cults. Sects old and new are taking advantage of this situation.

In some cultures there is an attitude of "religion is my private business." We must be careful that this does not influence our behaviour. We have to give ourselves anew and with new vigour, witnessing to Christ in our words and deeds -- through our whole life. Why should we be afraid to proclaim aloud that *...Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.* (Phil.2,11) Our Lord says... *who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven.* (Mt. 10,32). We can only be credible witnesses of Christ if we are deeply rooted in the Church. We are called and sent in and through the Church. Any privatization of faith and individualistic ideas of service are signs that the Lord's Spirit is not present.

Our love for the Lord and our love for creation make us want to bring Christ into the market places of this world, and through Him bring justice and peace to the poor. If my heart is full of the joy of the Lord's saving deeds and the great things he has done for me, it will show in my life and in my whole personality. Above all, it will show in my relationships with others, and I will become a convincing witness for all those I encounter in daily life. The same love of Christ that makes us whole also motivates us to share this love with others. Together with all men and women of good will, we want to proclaim with words and deeds

### the Year of the Lord's Favour.

A few suggestions for your personal prayer and reflection and also for sharing in the community:

1. What does the Jubilee of Christ's birth mean for me personally?
2. What has touched me most in the Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millenio*?
3. How can I proclaim the year of the Lord's favour in... my family? my community? my workplace? my parish?
4. How can my community support me in this?



No articles were submitted for the "Spirituality" Section... hopefully next time!

*The following Regional reports could perhaps be considered "old news." (Editors apologies! Sorry folks!) Nevertheless, they are still news to people from other regions. Hopefully regional coordinators will collect and send, or delegate someone to send in a report from your region for the next edition of Fire. It would be beneficial to all in the National Community if EVERY REGION could be represented in this section of Fire!*

## NATIONAL POTPOURRI

### Regional Reports:

#### 1. Report from Kitchener, Waterloo and Guelph Area: (Submitted by Barbara Peloso)

On March 25, 1996, World CLC Day, approximately 20 people gathered together in the home of Bill and Pat Ellis in Elora, Ontario. The focus of our meeting was two questions that the World CLC office mailed to us several months ago. The two questions were:

1. How do I/we deal with conflicts, tensions in my family/group/

work place? Can I oppose others? Can I accept criticism? Can I freely express anger, sadness, joy? Can I admit failure and ask forgiveness? How difficult is it for me to forgive myself and others? Can I work in a team?

2. What can I/we do to bring about this *union through our vocation* (last year's World CLC day theme) on all levels of

our World Community? In other words, what steps can I/we take in our local community to help develop the sense of belonging to a National Community which is part of the World Community?

We spent 15 minutes quietly reflecting on these questions and then assembled into 3 groups to discuss the fruits of our reflection. We then gathered together in the large group and focused our attention on the second question. Much energy and a deep sense of the Spirit were present as we deliberated.

Here are some of the recommendations that were expressed:

1. Networking- using Internet and the Worldwide Web for international communication. Get our own web site.
2. We have lots to learn from the poor and we have many CLCs in developing countries. We should sponsor a couple of people from developing countries to travel Canada to learn and share our stories with one another. (Fundraising can allow us to financially do this).
3. Many CLCs throughout the world have E-mail addresses. We should organize an international E-mail directory. For example, Jean Floyd has asked for the Croatian CLC address and E-mail address.
4. The Newsletter could publish world addresses and news to develop more solidarity.
5. Coordinate people's input on scriptures etc. (For example, the 1995 Advent Prayer booklet). This could be done on a world level leading to a World CLC Daily Prayer Reflection Book. It could be sold for fundraising.
6. World picture and community history booklet could be developed.
7. What about a huge International CLC Convention just to bring the membership together? Maybe on regional levels we could have more get togethers. ExCo is presently trying to develop this. (See **GC Report and article on Regional Structures in this issue of Fire**).
8. How to keep the myth alive? "Myth stays alive when we give it away", therefore start new groups.
9. CLC keeps myth alive through the *Spiritual Exercises*, so we should encourage/renew our yearly weekend retreats that focus on the *Spiritual Exercises* for all our communities.

10. The *Exercises* need to be taken apart, so that small sections (i.e., the Two Standards, the Kingdom exercise, etc.) can be used in everyday contexts. Communities need to develop more creative ways of using the *Spiritual Exercises* in their everyday prayer and growth.

A working group was formed to work with the *Exercises* and develop retreats, and a format to help us implement the recommendation that we need to creatively use the *Exx*. In daily living.

We also discussed other aspects of our life and history. We noted that energy grows in a group when we work together on a common goal or task. We reflected on how much we have grown. Twenty years ago who would have dreamed that there would have been CLCs across this vast country?!

Some World CLC history came to light when the question was asked, "why our World CLC Assembly only accepts a few delegates from each country?". When we were Sodalties the assembly was open to all members. This was changed when we became CLC in the early 60's because it was found there was a disproportionate representation in the Northern Hemisphere since they represented those who could afford to travel. The decision was made to limit attendance and share the financial burden so that there could be worldwide representation.

Encouragement was given to all communities to fill out the forms sent recently from the National Office. So we pass this encouragement on to all the National communities. The General Council can only organize and network if we do our part and send in the information.

We pray for all CLCs throughout Canada.... may God bless you and keep you.

St. Ignatius , pray for us.

## **2. Report from the Toronto Area CLCs: Submitted by Betty Ratcliffe (Area Coordinator)**

On Monday February 12, 1996, the Toronto Area CLCers spent an enjoyable evening with Mary Noland (Australian CLC Pres.). She shared her experience of CLC in Australia and gave us many insights into what it means to belong to a world community.

We met again on Tuesday March 26, 1996 to pray together for World CLC day. Eva Lados opened the meeting with a song,

prayer and scripture reading. Pam Meier led us through a fruitful sharing on *Community in mission united in the same vocation*. We celebrated mass together with Fr. John Perry as the celebrant. The large group that gathered felt God's presence in laughter, sharing and Eucharist.

Thanks to all the people who made these evenings possible.

**3. "Reflections" from British Columbia: submitted by Karen Sax, Ladysmith, BC** (An edited version of a commentary on "recent" [They were recent when sent in to the editor. Sorry again!] gatherings of CLC people in BC)

Tired but glad to have taken the two and one half hour trip up Island with David and our two youngest daughters, I am grateful for all the hospitality, friendship and fellowship given to us by the Emmaus Community with whom we met.

We arrived, at Christ the King parish, happy to see cherry trees blossoming and daffodils waving, to a mass celebrating "Solidarity Sunday" when we recall and pray for all those we stand with - the poor, the suffering, and refugees.

The Rambos warmly opened their home for brunch to those who could come. Much laughter and sharing of the recent week's life unfolded over our meal. Afterwards, hopes were expressed that the new sharing groups begun since the fall, including one of young families, would ripen into CLCs some day. There was also interest in having further information on the World Leadership Formation program and hopes to see news about it in future editions of *Fire*. A great suggestion was voiced by Sue to "twin" up CLCs in Canada - perhaps it's to be done

informally, as we've already extended invitations to our BC brothers and sisters to see us in Regina (we are moving in the summer of '96).

Sue and Ralph took us out for an exhilarating walk to the estuary and bird sanctuary nearby, before we headed out to the Mawhinney's home of many 12 year olds celebrating Darcy's birthday. Loch and Joanne were jet-lagged but relaxed from a week's holiday surrounding a work conference in New Orleans. En route to the States, Joanne was amazed and joyful at seeing Anne and Gary at St. Francis de Salles Parish in Burnaby, where the Goodsells have introduced CLC.

The Emmaus folks were glad to know they'd be praying again in solidarity with CLCs across Canada the following day. The next evening David was seconded in bed, and I for the last hour or our vigil, praying together with you all across Canada.

May we continue to grow in recognizing and living our mission as Christian Life Communities!

**DID YOU KNOW?...**

- ◆ **Congratulations** go out to **Paul Tratnyek** of **Ecclesia CLC** in the Kitchener- Waterloo area who was the recipient of the 1995 Fr. Norm Choate Distinguished Graduate Award by St Jerome's College. At St, Mary's High School in Kitchener where Paul has served as chaplain he developed an OAC Sociology course which culminates in a visit to the Dominican Republic to allow students to witness first hand the plight of the poor in that country.
- ◆ That **Sr. Marilyn Mangan, C.N.D.** of **Toronto CLC**, who is executive director of the Marguerite Bourgeoys Family Service of Toronto was a delegate to the NGO meeting held in conjunction with the UN Conference on Women in Beijing. She wrote in the *Catholic Register*... "I heard the pain of women from all continents,. I was received with love, concern and thoughtfulness by the Chinese people.... My experience in China was a mysterious blend of pain and joy. Is this not the rhythm of women's lives."
- ◆ **That there are still many communities that have not sent in the new directory forms mailed to them last spring. Please send them in soon to Jean Floyd, National Community Coordinator.**
- ◆ That it costs quite a bit to produce and send out *Fire!* Perhaps in addition to regular donations to the National Community you would consider sending an additional contribution to cover the costs the newsletter publication and mailing. **All donations should go to Jean Floyd at the National Office.**
- ◆ That the Hong Kong NCLC have taken over ownership and direction of a Catholic school and the French NCLC have taken over ownership and direction of the spiritual centre at Saint-Hugues in Biviers as part of their discernment of their "mission thrust" and the signs of the times.
- ◆ That **Jose Maria Riera, World CLC President** sent an open letter to the World community in the last issue of *Progressio* calling for prayers and practical support for the people suffering and displaced by the conflicts in the Great Lakes region of Africa (Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi). If there is room it will be re-printed in the next issue of *Fire*.
- ◆ **That there is a CLC Canada Web Site at the following address: <http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/~creamer/clc/>**
- ◆ It is the editor's hope to publish **another edition of *Fire* before summer 1997!** Please support that effort by sending articles or reports by E-mail (preferably), faxes, or letters. Thanks!

**+ CLC IS A WAY OF LIFE +**