



### Setting up Tents of Communal Discernment on Ecology

For over 25 years our CLC group discerned an on-going communal mission in the field now identified as the ecology frontier (Lebanon 2013). We live on Prince Edward Island a small island on Eastern coast of Canada surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean. Consequently we are very much aware of the significance and fragility of the relationship between the land and the ocean. We believe, as many do on this small island, that our surrounding environment makes us conscious of the urgency of having a healthy ecology. Our Ignatian spirituality offers us a holistic vision that demands from us on-going vigilance regarding “ecological justice”.

This suggests’ that the world needs a new model built on ecological justice and sustainability that envisions and understands the complexities that are challenging us today. CLC spirituality gives us the freedom and the availability to contemplate, discern, and put into action a more sustainable model.

The indigenous people on Prince Edward Island are called the Mi’kmaq. Their spirituality has taught us that everything is joined in a sacred circle (Medicine Wheel). In that circle there are the 4 seasons symbolizing that everything is united as one to give energy, strength, healing and

rebirth. To attain balance and healing all must try to live within the 4 seasons of the Medicine Wheel.

During this “Ecozoic” era humankind is being asked to return to the Medicine Wheel spirituality and undergo a “Great Turning” (see Thomas Berry, *The Great Work*). If we, as a species on planet Earth are to survive (see *Laudato Si*) we see that there are three kinds of “spiritual turnings” that need to take place (from: publication *Cry of the poor cry of the Earth*, Jesuits Social Forum for Faith and Justice)

- **Cultural Turning:** a fundamental transformation of values and priorities, starting with overcoming our anthropocentrism.
- **Political Turning:** a transformation in the purpose and the processes of a political ideology founded on the common good for all and that is more sustainable.
- **Economic Turning:** a transformation from an industrial to an eco-economy that ensures the sustainability of resources, the production and transporting goods with a priority on equity for all.

Pope Francis' encyclical is a sign of hope for our home. The following poem by Frederick Kirschenmann seems to capture the sentiment found in *Laudato Si* and CLC spirituality Community.

“While it is increasingly difficult to remain optimistic about our fate it is important to remember that hopefulness is different from optimism.

Optimism assumes that things will turn out alright, which, ironically often leads to inaction.  
Hopefulness is about doing the right thing even when we are uncertain about the outcome.

And when we act together in hope, often an unanticipated convergence of events take place which bring about unimaginable change.

Joining together as a global community and doing the right thing even though we cannot be sure of the outcome is our only hope, and our children and grandchildren are depending on us to do it.”

Submitted by Gilles Michaud for CLC Ixthus