



No. 123 – May, 2003

A communication link between the Executive Council
and the World Christian Life Community

Dear Friends in Christ,

In a world so needy of peace at this time, we wish you Peace! May the Lord give us His peace in our own hearts, and motivate us to be peacemakers in our families and beyond to our needy world.

The World CLC ExCo met in Rome from 23 February to 1 March. All members of the ExCo were present and our process guide for the Nairobi Assembly, Fr. Paul Vaz S.J. from India, was with us. We write to give you the outcome of our meeting to assist your preparation for Nairobi as we enter this final stage of preparation and discernment before the General Assembly.

We began the meeting with prayer and deep sharing to seek confirmation and clarity of the 'aim' for the Nairobi Assembly. The Lord graced us in this time and a good atmosphere for our meeting prevailed. In *Projects 121*, we had written that the *Aim of the Assembly is to ask the Lord for the grace to mature in to an apostolic community*. At the Rome meeting, we were able to clarify and refine this further.

1. The AIM of the NAIROBI CLC GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2003 is to:

- **Receive and embrace the call to be an apostolic body that shares responsibility in mission**
- **Consider and define the consequences of living that call at all levels.**

This further articulation was confirmed throughout the meeting as we worked on the main agenda – the preparation and the program for the Assembly. We hope it will enable you to fine tune your preparation for the Assembly. We will continue to develop the Program and finalise it at our meeting before the Assembly.

2. ASSEMBLY

During these years after the Itaiçi Assembly, we have made a special effort to remain in contact with all that has been happening in each National Community. In the process, we have listened to the Lord inviting CLC to take a step forward. We have received this from Him as a new manifestation of our vocation, moving us now to consider the CLC mission *as a responsibility shared by all members of the Community*.

In other words, we are called to live in mission, discerning the Lord's will in the smaller groups or the larger community, and then sharing the responsibility of sending and being sent. The mature fruit of discernment and reflection is manifested when trusting a specific mission to members of the community. After sending them the community will be able to support their mission and to evaluate its fruits.

This renewed call of the Lord is an expression of the CLC Charism, which unfolds according to the signs of the times. While receiving it, we have grown in awareness of who is calling us and what the consequences of our acceptance are.

Each one of us is moved by the desire to know the Lord's will and to live according to it. We pray that His Spirit strengthens this desire in us, as we struggle to place our lives in His hands. As members of CLC, we are now being called to share responsibility in mission as a way of life, encompassing all we are and do. It is not a call to just add another task to the list of my personal activities, but an invitation to reform my whole life according to the responsibility (cf. Spiritual Exercise 189, also 135 and 169).

This more radical answer to the Lord's personal call has community repercussions at its national, regional and world levels. The best way to make it evident for everyone and at all levels that CLC is struggling to be an "apostolic community" – and not only a community of apostles – is sharing responsibility for mission.

We consider that accepting this call, as a true priority, will have an effect on the *national community level*. We anticipate that National Executive Council members will be moved to a new understanding of their commitment to leadership. Most probably, they will also see the urgency of reformulating the process of how members are incorporated into the community and the formation offered to all. The desire for consistency between the basic personal options and the community ways of proceeding may be especially demanding when specifying the ways to obtain the human and material resources needed for the common mission. Furthermore, indications point to the need of a common effort in dialogue with the local Jesuit Provincial, in order to move ahead in the apostolic collaboration with the Society of Jesus.

At *the regional level*, we trust that the national community will perceive the importance of a more dynamic relationship with their Regional Coordinating Team, receiving and offering a better support. These teams have already been established in Europe, Latin America, English speaking Africa, Middle East, North America and Asia Pacific. They are meant to address the international collaboration in mission and the formation it requires. We anticipate that much fruit can be expected if each coordinating team has periodic contact with the Moderator of the corresponding Conference of Jesuit Provincials.

To be called to live as an 'apostolic community' also has repercussions for *the World CLC Executive Council*. We are aware of the importance of a new understanding of the commitment of ExCo members, when they accept being elected by the General Assembly. We have already expressed this in the changes made to the criteria for nomination of candidates for World ExCo (Cf Standing Order #3, corrected in August 2002 and sent to national communities in September 2002).

3. ASSEMBLY PREPARATIONS and PROGRAM

The Assembly Program will follow the steps/parts as outlined in *Projects 121*, and *we urge you to refer again to the Preparation Guidelines as outlined in Projects 121 (point 4: A, B, C, D, E, F)*. Your responses to the questions outlined for each of these Steps will inform your sharing and participation in the Assembly.

The role of the Preparation Team is to facilitate the participation of the whole national community of CLC so that the national body can participate in the Assembly through its delegates. This preparation is essential for national delegations to participate in the Assembly.

Program

- Step A: The present State of the CLC Body
- Step B: Asking for the Grace of responding to the Call to be an Apostolic Body
- Step C: Called to be an Outreaching Apostolic Body
- Step D: Collaboration with the Society of Jesus
- Step E: Structures and Processes for CLC as an Apostolic Community
- Step F: Election of the World CLC ExCo

Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach, our World CLC Ecclesiastical Assistant, and General of the Society of Jesus, has written a letter to Jesuits who have been involved with CLC on National levels asking for their opinions on the state of CLC. The responses from Jesuits will provide valuable information and themes for the Society to engage with CLC. Delegates need to be well-prepared and fully informed about concrete experiences (past and present) and expectations in their own national CLCs for Part D, "Collaboration with the Society of Jesus in mission". This will enable us to better engage in good dialogue at the Assembly.

Proposal for Structures

During the meeting we formulated a *draft proposal on Structures needed for World CLC to be an apostolic body to be further developed before Nairobi by the World CLC ExCo*. This draft proposal will be enriched at the

Assembly and presented during Step E for consideration. As well as changes to the World CLC ExCo, other Structures are being considered by the World ExCo to assist and facilitate this 'movement' of the World CLC.

The first is a **“Juridical Group” to be appointed by the Assembly with a mandate and time line to reflect and prepare necessary changes to the General Principles and Norms** to ensure consistency with our history and the experience of World CLC after Guadalajara 1990. The time line would ensure that **decisions could be made at the next World Assembly in 2008.**

The second is a **Financial Commission.** In Itaiçi 1998, the Assembly chose not to elect a Treasurer and asked the World ExCo to decide how to manage WCLC finances. As a result of this mandate:

- We established a Financial Team of 4 members with expertise in financial matters. This team has been acting in an advisory capacity for the World CLC during these past years, and has been very helpful. Three of the members of the present team have agreed to continue in this role if the new ExCo requires them.
- An amendment to General Norm 21a) is being proposed to this Assembly (See Annex A: amendment to GN 21a).

Other structures being considered:

- **Regional Co-ordinating Teams (RCTs):** clarifying and establishing a greater unity of role and function, link with World CLC ExCo. RCTs have a coordinating role. They are not an intermediate structure standing between National CLCs and World CLC ExCo.
- **A team of experienced CLC members** (of all ages) to assist greater continuity and availability of experience and knowledge of CLC. Such a team could reflect with the new ExCo and National CLCs and make recommendations for ways to incorporate experienced CLC members with the wisdom and knowledge they hold, into the apostolic body.

Symbol

Delegations will present a *symbol to express the present state of their National CLC*. Be imaginative and honest with your symbol to present the lights and shadows of your reality! As CLC, we tend to hide our light under a bushel – we tend not to be readily identified! You may use a phrase or 3 - 4 words to enhance your symbol. Each National CLC symbol will be displayed during **Step A**, and enriched during the Assembly by the sharing and understandings.

While your symbol will illustrate the present state of your National Community, you are also invited to bring material for a National CLC display. This can assist other delegates to know, understand and gain ideas from your national community, and facilitate exchange. Your display could include photos, information on special projects/mission and/or your reality – social, political, economic, CLC – and resources. As space will be limited, again be imaginative and succinct!

National CLCs that will be confirmed as full members at the Assembly include:

Croatia, Dominican Republic, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Puerto Rico.

Candidates for the new World CLC ExCo

Information on candidates for the new World CLC ExCo was sent to you on April 10, 2003.

4. IMPLEMENTATION in NATIONAL CLCs after NAIROBI

After Nairobi, the next step is assimilation and implementation back in the National CLC. Preparation of the National CLC is vital for the members and the body of CLC to receive and assimilate the decisions of the Assembly. In some National CLCs in the past, changes in national and regional leadership in CLC and/or lack of commitment of delegates after they return home has meant lack of continuity and little or no implementation phase of the directions and decisions of the Assembly.

To avoid this situation and to ensure continuity for this process through to the implementation phase, we suggest National ExCos (and Preparation Teams) seriously consider the formation of an Implementation Team to operate after Nairobi. We suggest that members of the Preparation Team (or at least some members) form an Implementation Team after August 2003.

5. SUMMARY

We trust that this ‘repetition’ of what is expected and new information will assist National CLCs to send well-prepared delegates who can:

- a. Present a symbol of their National CLC reality
- b. Participate fully in the discerning process of the General Assembly
- c. Have authority to make decisions in the Assembly and find support when they return to their National CLC
- d. Assist with the assimilation and implementation stages in their national community after Nairobi

6. SOLIDARITY FUND

We have many requests from National CLCs for funding from the Solidarity Fund to pay travel expenses to Nairobi. As well, we have invited several emerging CLCs to send an observer so that their continuing growth in WCLC can be encouraged and enhanced. Thank you to all CLC members and National CLCs who have given generously to assist National CLCs to attend. At present, the amount we have in the Solidarity Fund is sufficient to allow supplementing the costs of only **one delegate** from each National CLC (member and Observer) in need.

Unless we receive more money, however, we will not be able to assist these National CLCs to send more than one delegate or allow emerging CLCs to send more than one observer. This creates a situation of inequity in WCLC and we ask you to consider this situation prayerfully as individual members and National CLCs of the world community. Attached (Annex B) is an accounting of how much is in the Solidarity Fund, and a list of contributing countries and a list of countries requesting support.

PLEASE SEND ANY DONATIONS TO THE ROME SECRETARIAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

7. FEEDBACK/RECOMMENDATIONS/QUESTIONS

Finally, *we reiterate our invitation to send us, by email, a summary of your reflections as the National Preparation Team* (Secretariat email is: mcvx.wclc@agora.it). Your recommendations, orientations and concrete suggestions (and any questions) will be a great help for us. During the Assembly, we wish to have time for reflection and prayer so as to discern and take possession of these ideas, following the steps we have already outlined in *Projects 121* and in this letter. If anything is unclear, please contact your ExCo link person or the Secretariat for clarification.

Let us be united in prayer and willingness to respond to what the Lord is asking of us in this time of change in both our world and the apostolic body of World Christian Life Community. We look forward to meeting you in Nairobi.

May we truly become what the Lord dreams for us to be!

José Maria Riera and Mary Nolan
For the World CLC ExCo

PS. For the latest CLC information you are invited to visit our web site: www.cvx-clc.net