

PROJECTS: World CLC Day 2017— Remembering

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“Do you remember the lovely time we had together at your birthday party three years ago?”

“How lucky we were to have encountered a person like Sister Clare during our school days!

Nobody could match her in the classroom.” Etc. etc.

It is a part of human nature to remember past events and reflect on their significance for us. We do this for happy moments, for sad moments and for those ‘ordinary’ moments that make up such a large part of our lives. We constantly recall events and persons who have left a mark on our lives. This process of remembering is important because it helps us see how an impact from the past influences our present and in some way shapes our future. Going beyond the life of individual persons, we also note the important role of remembering in the life of associations. Every group carries with it an institutional memory, a history of persons and events that have contributed towards the shared identity of the group.

Our Golden Jubilee

Remembering is a natural process that takes place all the time. There are however certain occasions that spark off a conscious and collective act of remembrance. For us in CLC, one such occasion was the recent celebration of 450 years as a Lay Ignatian Community. Now we prepare to celebrate 50 years of another landmark in 2017. The 4th Assembly of the World Federation of Marian Congregations took place in Rome in October 1967. At this Assembly, the delegates approved the General Principles and adopted the name Christian Life Community. This marked a key step towards rediscovering Ignatian Spirituality and affirming the lay character of our community. As we approach the Golden Jubilee of that event, we invite you to remember your CLC journey as an individual and as a national community.

CLC members have grown beautifully in their understanding of the lay vocation, nurtured by God’s abundant grace. At times this grace has been manifested in peak moments of consolation but for the major part it is present in faithfully living out the daily requirements of this way of life. We acknowledge that we have often received this grace through inspirational

persons who have accompanied CLC members along their journey. The journey of individual members reflects in some way the collective journey of each national community. Every national community has its own history of grace. Every national community also owes a debt of gratitude to some wisdom figures who dared to walk this path and then showed others the way. On this Golden Jubilee, we invite you to remember with gratitude the graces received through your history and the special persons who mediated these graces.

We also remember how the Church has set us along this path towards a renewed identity and way of life. In 1948, Pope Pius XII affirmed the Ignatian origins of our community. The Second Vatican Council then opened up the way further, encouraging the laity to explore their full baptismal vocation. Today we continue to live out Ignatian Spirituality in daily life and explore the frontiers of the lay vocation, seeking to make our specific contribution to the life and mission of the Church. The gestures and language of Pope Francis, so familiar to us, are a constant reminder of this calling.

The Christian understanding of remembering

When Jesus instructed his disciples “Do this in memory of me”, he was not merely requesting them to recall the memory of the last supper and the breaking of bread. The Church has rightly interpreted this instruction as a mandate to not only recall the event but also re-create it constantly.

Let us keep this context in mind as we remember our graced history as CLC. Part of this remembering will be to recall the graces received and suitably express our gratitude for this. Another important aspect would be to make this history come alive by re-living these graces in our current situation. Our faith and experience show us that the graces received as part of a calling are a free gift, bestowed generously all along the journey. For our part, we need to identify and remove the inordinate attachments that obstruct the free flow of this grace. We re-create our graced history by gratefully acknowledging the past, applying its lessons to the present and laying this as the foundation for future dreams. Ignatius applies this in the

Contemplation to Attain Love, stating that gifts received should be remembered and cherished in order to generously use them in greater service (Sp.Ex. 233 -234).

Some suggestions

At the time of writing, the theme for the next World Assembly is in the process of being finalized. Hence, the suggestions for celebrating World CLC day do not include specific references to the Assembly. Please feel free however to link these suggestions to the Assembly theme if the theme is known before World CLC Day.

Here are some suggestions for celebrating our Golden Jubilee.

- Pray with the General Principles. Share how the GPs have nurtured your journey in CLC. Mention favourite citations from the GPs.
- Find suitable ways to celebrate and honour some special persons who have built up the national community.
- Identify delegates who have attended previous World Assemblies, going back as far as you can. Invite them to share one or two key graces they received at these Assemblies.
- The vocation to CLC is a gift you have received. Discuss how your local/national CLC community can be a gift to the local Church and society you live in.

Please send in reports, reflections and photos of your celebration to exsec@cvx-clc.net

In gratitude, we thank the Lord for the superabundance of graces received over these fifty years. In humility, we ask the Lord to show us the way ahead. May the Prince of Peace bless you and your families this Christmas season and always!

Luke Rodrigues s.j., Herminio Rico s.j., Mauricio López
With the World ExCo