



progressio

Publication of the World Christian Life Community

**Our creativity at the service of
an intergenerational embrace**

Progressio is the official publication of the Christian Life Community (CLC). It seeks to build community, supplement formation, and promote apostolic works. By publishing stories, reflections, events and opinions, it endeavors to reinforce, challenge and deepen the community's understanding and living of the CLC Charism, Ignatian Spirituality and the gospel values

ABOUT OUR LOGO

We did not go too far to find inspiration for the logo of the Christian Life Community (CLC). Countless books have been written about the Salvation history of CLC and its beginning in year 1563. From that came the Marian Congregations and its symbol (shown on the top right), having the "P" over the "X" (for the Greek Christus) and the inserted "M" illustrates that the Congregations were put under the patronage of Mary, the mother of Jesus. The blue curved line illustrates a movement forward to **one World Community in 1967**; hence the globe. From this new beginning came a new name: Communauté de Vie Chrétienne (CVX) in French; Comunidad de Vida Cristiana (CVX) in Spanish; Christian Life Community (CLC) in English.

PHOTOS BACK COVER

- XI International Youth Forum, organized by Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. Photo: Vatican News.
- Young CLC students at a Leadership Conference at Boston College.
- XI International Youth Forum. Final Mass. Photo: Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life
- Promotional photo of the The richness of many years of life.
- Celebration of World CLC Day (Argentina).
- Virtual Meeting of the Executive Councils of Latin America (CENAL).

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Editorial

When we, the World Secretariat, started working on this Progressio issue, I was told that the original idea was to focus on youth. Upon hearing this, I immediately remembered the CLC General Assembly in Buenos Aires in 2008. There, some delegates took the opportunity to raise their concerns about the lack of youth presence in our national communities.

Back when Pope Francis made a call in 2017 for the Youth Synod, which then later took place in 2018, the Church was already on a path of reflecting upon, and attuning itself to the way youth live in these modern times, asking what their preoccupations, wishes and proposals might be and how they look at the world and at the Church. In the CLC, loyal to our vocation of “sentire cum ecclesia,” we sought creative collaboration, and participated in two encounters on this synodal path. Álvaro Salazar, of CLC Peru, attended the pre-synod meeting that produced the document “Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment.” (this document formed the basis of the work in the Bishop’s encounter of October 2018). Carolina Cardozo of CLC Uruguay represented the World Community in the International Youth Forum, promoted by the “Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life,” that took place three months after Pope Francis issued the Apostolic Exhortation called “Christus Vivit” as a “gift of a grandfather to a grandson.”

”How I long for a church that challenges the culture of wastage with the ebullient joy of an embrace between youth and elders.” These words of Pope Francis came back to me as soon as we found out that in January the first International Pastoral Congress for Older People would take place. Magdalena Palencia of CLC Mexico and Marcos Morales of CLC Spain were able to attend, and later recounted to us the impressions left in their hearts from this congress. Marcos described the experience of the Clock of Life, explaining it as a practical tool for working with people of advanced age (or people in their third or fourth life stage - as it was fondly referred to by Magdalena).

Without trying, the Lord through this publication is giving us the gift of a first embrace between youth and elders. It is our duty to continue applying our creativity, our continued communication and our deep wish to share, in a way that ensures that many more of these embraces will keep taking place.

The initial impulse of focusing on the youth in this Progressio issue, although proven to be right, has matured into a bigger realization which touches on a much broader challenge facing society and the Church, and CLC. This challenge is intergenerational integration. It is not enough to focus on one

part of the equation, but rather to see the whole picture of participation and integration in a variety of different processes and viewpoints, including Christian Life. Let’s pray to the Lord for the grace to be able to recognize Youth as an essential part of our apostolic body, and the grace to be able to communicate and pass on this gift of CLC to the succeeding generations. There is, as Projects 173 points out, “a vital matter of communion and historical responsibility with young people, the Ignatian Family and with the Church” (and the World).

Many embraces have been happening these days in the World Secretariat, and this is because, as you will see at the end of this issue, Alwin, Rojean, and Aeraele, after five years of service in the Secretariat, and myself at the beginning of this mission, had the opportunity to live some time together, to be able to say adios and hola¹. A goodbye that is not easy to say because it is like accepting that something inside us dies, but it also implies personal growth, which opens our lives - and opens us to the opportunities of saying hello. It allows us to establish a dialogue with a new reality. It implies changing to continue being ourselves but in a different way. It is to say hello to new things while being able to understand that we are not able to control everything. Saying hello is believing in something or in someone who can happen in my life. It recognizes us as being alive and able to embrace newness into our lives. We wanted to share some of this in the second half of this Progressio Issue.

Now let’s talk about the latest embrace in these recent times. It is a type of embrace which takes on many forms, but which shares a common feature: it is a virtual or spiritual hug. Many of our national communities are living through the effects of the Covid-19 epidemic. Many of us have had to celebrate our World CLC Day on March 25 through the celebrations of the Eucharist on social networks. These community meetings are happening through different internet platforms, often through methods that we are not accustomed to using. However, this is a time that has awakened in us our creativity, our drive for community, our desire to be present and take care of each other, even at a distance. It has become a time to rediscover the important things inside our hearts, and to realize that despite the individual circumstances which we are all experiencing, we can all feel our days with deep meaning, and with a prayer that carries trust and hope: We shall embrace again.

(Original: Spanish. Translated by Sarah Walker)



Manuel Martínez Arteaga

¹ García Monge, José A. Treinta palabras para la madurez, Desclée De Brouwer.

Pre-Synod of the youth a way of revitalization

Álvaro Salazar Torres
CLC in Peru



Álvaro Salazar Torres

Álvaro is member of CLC Pedro Arrupe. He collaborated as Secretary of the first Coordinating Committee of CLC Youth of Peru. Currently, he is member of the CENAL Youth Border Coordination Team. CLC Delegate at the Pre-Synodal Meeting in preparation for the Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops

**“Do you know what happens to young people who don’t take risks?
They get old. They are retired by 20 years old!
When young people get old, the Church gets old”**

Pope Francis

Opening of the plenary assembly of the pre-Synod encounter

Pre-Synod of Youth, Faith and Discernment was the name we were given by the Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops. We were a group of 300 young people (Catholics, Christians of different denominations, and non believers) from around five continents who gathered in Rome from March 19 to 24, 2018 to share our feelings and experiences, with the hope of capturing “without filter” the reality of youth in today’s world.

Throughout the six days of conference at the Pontifical International College María Mater Ecclesia, I could see the courageous efforts of so many youth from different parts of the world to keep their faith alive and to search for Christ in the midst of concerns, problems, joys and individualities. Being surrounded by these people, who I now consider friends and brothers and sisters, getting to know their different

cultures, idiosyncracies and realities, allowed me to broaden the horizons of my life and become conscious of and grateful for the diverse humanity to which I belong.

It is exactly in this recognition of diversity that can be found the similarities and differences which enliven the Final Document of the pre-Synod meeting: a text that carries in it the many hours of prayer, dialogue, listening, laughter and screams; a document that intends to reflect the long hours of debate during which the Writing Team struggled to draft a statement from 9pm to 3am for presentation to the Plenary Assembly at 9 o’clock the following morning, only to revise and rewrite it in the evening.

At the meeting we came to realize that the youth are there not just to criticize but also to share and build new processes within the Church. Thus, it is clear that we are asked to discern from our particular realities a universal vision of the Church, which together with the

- Celebrating World
CLC Day in the
Pre-synod



formation in the accompaniment of the laity for the laity, can search for new ways of being present in the life of our brothers and sisters.

In this way, it was possible to identify Ignatian discernment as a pillar in the search for one's vocation in life, since many of the young people present understood vocation as the religious life only. It demands a lot to understand that vocational discernment means more than that. Vocation is the way in which we desire to respond to the call of Christ to be/to live in the world. This response, clear and offered, is like the example of Mary that we treasure in CLC: "Be it done unto me according to your word." (Lk. 1:38) Today's youth also desire to respond with this "Yes" to Christ in our lives and with that to dispose ourselves in absolute surrender for the universal service of building the Kingdom.

One of the important topics that we developed and reflected upon and which appears five times in the final document as the most important issue is the need to show the importance of the role of women in the Church. Remembering the faces of our grandmothers, mothers, aunts and sisters and many other female role models, we came to understand the figure of woman as a Gift from God. We therefore ask for the reaffirmation of her invaluable presence in our Church, the recognition of all her capacities, one of which was mentioned by Pope Francis as the capacity to nurture the future that lives in each and every one of us, a capacity to take up the fight against so much dehumanizing objectification¹.

It was there in the midst of the dehumanization of being, where the youth are involved in the fight for a world that includes the marginalized, that we recognized that the diversity in which we encountered one another in those days, was the inexhaustible source of the universality of the Church and the magnificent work of God. Thus, we could affirm that the youth "search for diversity and we love and respect it"² in all its breadth and, with that, we ask our Church to closely welcome and accompany the processes of our many brothers and sisters in the LGBT community and to take a clear and compassionate posture in response to the Gospel.

As participants of the encounter we took the risk of commenting on all forms of discrimination and marginalization that we might have been part of in our pastoral work: the scant recognition of our work, the use of our energy as the only possibility of presence, the scant invitation for our participation, our absence in the decision-making of the Church hierarchy on all levels. These are just some of the symptoms of the aging of the Church that we seek to heal in order to heal others. Nonetheless, concurring with the words of Germán Villarroel, we believe that the "Pre-Synod encounter confirms the wish of the church to put youth at its heart, opening itself to discover along with them and within them prophetic ways of conversion both ecclesiastically and socially."

This is where I pause to reflect on the call of the young Church to the Christian Life Community, considering that we are heirs of a great

- Álvaro Salazar at the Pre-Synodal Meeting for Youth.

- Visit to the Domus Pacis Conference Center

¹ Speech by Pope Francis at the Women's Penitentiary Center de Santiago de Chile (16 January 2018)

² First draft of the Final Document of the pre-Synod encounter (22 March 2018)





tradition of discernment and lay community accompaniment. Who better than us can hear the clamor of the youth? It will have to be our youth frontier that will respond to the signs of the times. It is only a welcoming Church that can listen to this call and continue walking together, and with this, we can only return to our roots: discern, send, support, and evaluate every step we take as a world apostolic body.

I can hardly stop thanking our brothers and sisters in CLC present at the pre-Synod meeting, who were a tremendous source of companionship during those days:

Joana Serodio (CLC in Portugal) – Representative of the Episcopal Conference of Portugal

Elsabeth Efrem (CLC in Ethiopia) - Representative of the Episcopal Conference of Ethiopia

Germán Villarroel (CLC in Chile) – Representative of the Episcopal Conference of Chile

Rui Teixeira (CLC in Portugal) – Representative of the International Catholic Conference of Scouting

Alwin Macalalad (World CLC Executive Secretary) – Facilitator of the English Group

(Original : Spanish translated by Sarah Walker)



Young delegates from Latin America



Official photo of the Pre-Synodal Youth Meeting

A look at *Christus Vivit*

On March 25th 2019 – World CLC Day and Feast of the Annunciation - Pope Francis signed the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit* to Young People and the Entire People of God. It is a document consisting of nine chapters in which the Pope, inspired by the depth and richness of the dialogue and reflexions of the Faith and Vocational Discernment Synod for Youth, opens new horizons and proposes a new frame of reference to reflect and to work with and for youth in the Church. The resulting framework is more essential, profound and apostolic. Even when the exhortation is primarily about working with and for youth, the Pope makes a general call to all of us.

On the anniversary of the signing of this Apostolic Exhortation, the World Executive Council invited the World Community to celebrate this day - 25th March – to focus again on youth. Youth, as it has been said, are an essential part of our apostolic body. “Youth of today are strongly committed to values such as freedom, sustainability, equity and solidarity... Working with young people is the most meaningful, preventive and long-lasting method to improve every aspect of the world”. In this Progressio Issue, focused on intergenerational matters, we want to share some key points from “*Christus Vivit*”.

Chapter one: “*What does the word of God have to say about young people?*” (5-21)

Pope Francis starts with the Sacred Scriptures. He presents some instances in both the Old and the New Testaments noting: “they often speak of young people and of how the Lord draws near to encounter them.” “In an age when young people were not highly regarded, some texts show that God sees them differently” (6). “The devotion of the prophet Jeremiah to his mission shows what can happen when the brashness of youth is joined to the power of God.” (10).

In the New Testament, Pope Francis reminds us that “Jesus, himself eternally young, wants to give us hearts that are ever young.” (13). It is natural for the young as “they are meant to dream great things, to seek vast horizons, to aim higher, to take on the world, to accept challenges and to offer the best of themselves to the building of something better. That is why I constantly urge young people not to let themselves be robbed of hope; to each of them I repeat: “Let no one despise your youth” (1 Tim 4:12).” (15). Later, the Pope adds: “(...) young people are also urged “to accept the authority of those who are older” (1 Pet 5:5). The Bible never ceases to insist that profound respect be shown to the elderly, since they have a wealth of experience; they have known success and failure, life’s joys and afflictions, its dreams and disappointments. In the silence of their heart, they have a store of experiences that can teach us not to make mistakes or be taken in by false promises.”(16) Finally, the Pope reminds us that the Gospel of Matthew“ (...) also speaks about a group of wise young women, who were ready and waiting, while others were distracted and slumbering (cf. Mt 25:1-13). We can, in fact, spend our youth being distracted, skimming the surface of life, half-asleep, incapable of cultivating meaningful relationships or experiencing the deeper things in life (...) Or we can spend our youth aspiring to do beautiful and great things.” (19).

Chapter two: “*Jesus, ever young*” (22-63)

“Let us ask the Lord to free the Church from those who would make her grow old (...)But let us also ask him to free her from another temptation: that of thinking she is young because she accepts everything the world offers her (...)The Church is young when she is herself (...) is young when she shows herself capable of constantly returning to her source..” (35)

“(...)we must dare to be different, to point to ideals other than those of this world, testifying to the beauty of generosity, service, purity, perseverance, forgiveness, fidelity to our personal vocation, prayer, the pursuit of justice and the common good, love for the poor, and social friendship.” (36)

This implies we stay constantly creative in reflecting the image of Jesus“...in an attractive and effective way.” (39).

Mary’s yes is for those who are“(...) prepared to be committed, willing to take a risk, ready to stake everything she has, with no more security than the certainty of knowing that she was the bearer of a promise. So I ask each one of you: do you see yourselves as the bearers of a promise? What promise is present in my heart that I can take up?” (44).

Chapter three: “*You are the “now” of God*” (64-110)

“(...) once the Church sets aside narrow preconceptions and listens carefully to the young, this empathy enriches her, for “it allows young people to make their own contribution to the community, helping it to appreciate new sensitivities and to consider new questions” (65). “Each young person’s heart should thus be considered “holy ground”, a bearer of seeds of divine life, before which we must “take off our shoes” in order to draw near and enter more deeply into the Mystery.” (67)

“(...)Try to learn to weep for all those young people less fortunate than yourselves. Weeping is also an expression of mercy and compassion.” (76)

“(...) It is no longer merely a question of ‘using’ instruments of communication, but of living in a highly digitalized culture that has had a profound impact on ideas of time and space, on our self-understanding, our understanding of others and the world, and our ability to communicate, learn, be informed and enter into relationship with others. An approach to reality that privileges images over listening and reading has influenced the way people learn and the development of their critical sense.” (86)

“(...)“Migration, considered globally, is a structural phenomenon, and not a passing emergency. It may occur within one country or between different countries. The Church’s concern is focused especially on those fleeing from war, violence, political or religious persecution, from natural disasters including those caused by climate change, and from extreme poverty. Many of them are young.” (91)

“Recently, urgent appeals have been made for us to hear the cry of the victims of different kinds of abuse perpetrated by some bishops, priests, religious and laypersons. These sins cause their victims “sufferings that can last a lifetime and that no repentance can remedy. This phenomenon is widespread in society and it also affects the Church and represents a serious obstacle to her mission” (95)

“(...)If the years of your youth are to serve their purpose in life, they must be a time of generous commitment, whole-hearted dedication, and sacrifices that are difficult but ultimately fruitful. As a great poet put it:

If to regain what I regained,
I first had to lose what I lost;
If to achieve what I achieved,
I had to endure what I endured;

If to be in love now
First I had to be hurt,
I consider what I suffered well suffered,
I consider what I wept for as well wept for.

Because in the end I came to see
That we do not really enjoy what we enjoyed
Unless we have suffered for it.

For in the end I realized
That the blossoms on the tree
Draw life from what lies buried beneath”. (108)

Francisco Luis Bernárdez

Chapter four: “A great message for all young people” (111-133)

A God who is love. “For him, you have worth; you are not insignificant. You are important to him, for you are the work of his hands. That is why he is concerned about you and looks to you with affection.” (115) “His is “a love that does not overwhelm or oppress, cast aside or reduce to silence, humiliate or domineer. It is the love of the Lord, a daily, discreet and respectful love; a love that is free and freeing, a love that heals and raises up.” (116)

Christ saves you. “(...)Christ, out of love, sacrificed himself completely in order to save you. His outstretched arms on the cross are the most telling sign that he is a friend who is willing to stop at nothing (...)” (118) “(...)For only what is loved can be saved. Only what is embraced can be transformed. (...)” (120)

He is alive! “(...) Christ is alive! We need to keep reminding ourselves of this, because we can risk seeing Jesus Christ simply as a fine model from the distant past, as a memory, as someone who saved us two thousand years ago (...)” (124)

“If in your heart you can learn to appreciate the beauty of this message, if you are willing to encounter the Lord, if you are willing to let him love you and save you, if you can make friends with him and start to talk to him, the living Christ, about the realities of your life, then you will have a profound experience capable of sustaining your entire Christian life. You will also be able to share that experience with other young people. For “being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction” (129)

Chapter five: “Paths of youth” (134-178)

“God is the giver of youth and he is at work in the life of each young person. Youth is a blessed time for the young and a grace for the Church and for the world. It is joy, a song of hope and a blessing. Making the most of our youthful years entails seeing this season of life as worthwhile in itself, and not simply as a brief prelude to adulthood.” (135)

A time of dreams and decisions. “(...) At this stage in life, the young are called to move forward without cutting themselves off from their roots, to build autonomy but not in solitude” (137) “The love of God and our relationship with the living Christ do not hold us back from dreaming; they do not require us to narrow our horizons. On the contrary, that love elevates us, encourages us and inspires us to a better and more beautiful life. (...) Restless discontent, combined with exhilaration before the opening up of new horizons, generates a boldness that leads you to stand up and take responsibility for a mission. This healthy restlessness typical of youth continues to dwell in every heart that remains young, open and generous. (...)” (138)

“(...) Yet youth cannot remain on hold. It is the age of choices and herein lies its fascination and its greatest responsibility. Young people make decisions in professional, social and political fields, and in other more radical ways that determine the shape of their lives (...)” (140)

A thirst for life and experience. “While drawn towards the future and its promise, young people also have a powerful desire to experience the present moment, to make the most of the opportunities life offers. Our world is filled with beauty! How can we look down upon God’s many gifts?” (144)

In friendship with Christ. “Friendship is one of life’s gifts and a grace from God. Through our friends, the Lord refines us and leads us to maturity (...)The experience of friendship teaches us to be open, understanding and caring towards others, to come out of our own comfortable isolation and to share our lives with others.” (151) “Friendship with Jesus cannot be broken. He never leaves us, even though at times it appears that he keeps silent (...)” (154)

Where does Jesus send us? There are no borders, no limits: he sends us everywhere. The Gospel is for everyone, not just for some. It is not only for those who seem closer to us, more receptive, more welcoming. It is for everyone. Do not be afraid to go and bring Christ into every area of life, to the fringes of society, even to those who seem farthest away and most indifferent.” (177)

Chapter six: “*Young people with roots*” (179-201)

“The world has never benefited, nor will it ever benefit, from a rupture between generations. That is the siren song of a future without roots and origins. It is the lie that would have you believe that only what is new is good and beautiful. When intergenerational relationships exist, a collective memory is present in communities, as each generation takes up the teachings of its predecessors and in turn bequeaths a legacy to its successors. In this way, they provide frames of reference for firmly establishing a new society.” (191)

“If we journey together, young and old, we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future. To revisit the past in order to learn from history and heal old wounds that at times still trouble us. To look to the future in order to nourish our enthusiasm, cause dreams to emerge, awaken prophecies and enable hope to blossom.” (199)

Chapter seven: “*Youth Ministry*” (202-247)

“I want to state clearly that young people themselves are agents of youth ministry. Certainly they need to be helped and guided, but at the same time left free to develop new approaches, with creativity and a certain audacity. (...) I am more concerned with helping young people to use their insight, ingenuity and knowledge to address the issues and concerns of other young people in their own language.” (203)

“Youth ministry needs to become more flexible: inviting young people to events or occasions that provide an opportunity not only for learning, but also for conversing, celebrating, singing, listening to real stories and experiencing a shared encounter with the living God.” (204)

“In this outreach, we need to use above all the language of closeness, the language of generous, relational and existential love that touches the heart, impacts life, and awakens hope and desires. Young people need to be approached with the grammar of love, not by being preached at.” (211).

“Any educational project or path of growth for young people (...) It is likewise important that it have two main goals. One is the development of the kerygma, the foundational experience of encounter with God through Christ’s death and resurrection. The other is growth in fraternal love, community life and service.” (213)

Chapter eight: “*Vocation*” (248-277)

“(...) vocation in the strict sense, as a call to missionary service to others. The Lord calls us to share in his work of creation and to contribute to the common good by using the gifts we have received.” (253)

“Your own personal vocation does not consist only in the work you do, though that is an expression of it. Your vocation is something more: it is a path guiding your many efforts and actions towards service to others. So in discerning your vocation, it is important to determine if you see in yourself the abilities needed to perform that specific service to society.” (255)

“To respond to our vocation, we need to foster and develop all that we are. This has nothing to do with inventing ourselves or creating ourselves out of nothing. It has to do with finding our true selves in the light of God and letting our lives flourish and bear fruit (...)Your vocation inspires you to bring out the best in yourself for the glory of God and the good of others. It is not simply a matter of doing things, but of doing them with meaning and direction. Saint Alberto Hurtado told young people to think very seriously about the direction their lives should take: “If the helmsman of a ship becomes careless, he is fired straightaway

for not taking his sacred responsibility seriously. As for our lives, are we fully aware of the course they are taking? What course is your life taking?” (257)

Chapter nine: “Discernment” (278-298)

“Without the wisdom of discernment, we can easily become prey to every passing trend”. Indeed, “this is all the more important when some novelty presents itself in our lives. Then we have to decide whether it is new wine brought by God or an illusion created by the spirit of this world or the spirit of the devil” (279)

“A particular form of discernment involves the effort to discover our own vocation. Since this is a very personal decision that others cannot make for us, it requires a certain degree of solitude and silence. “The Lord speaks to us in a variety of ways, at work, through others and at every moment. Yet we simply cannot do without the silence of prolonged prayer, which enables us better to perceive God’s language, to interpret the real meaning of the inspirations we believe we have received, to calm our anxieties and to see the whole of our existence afresh in his own light.” (283)

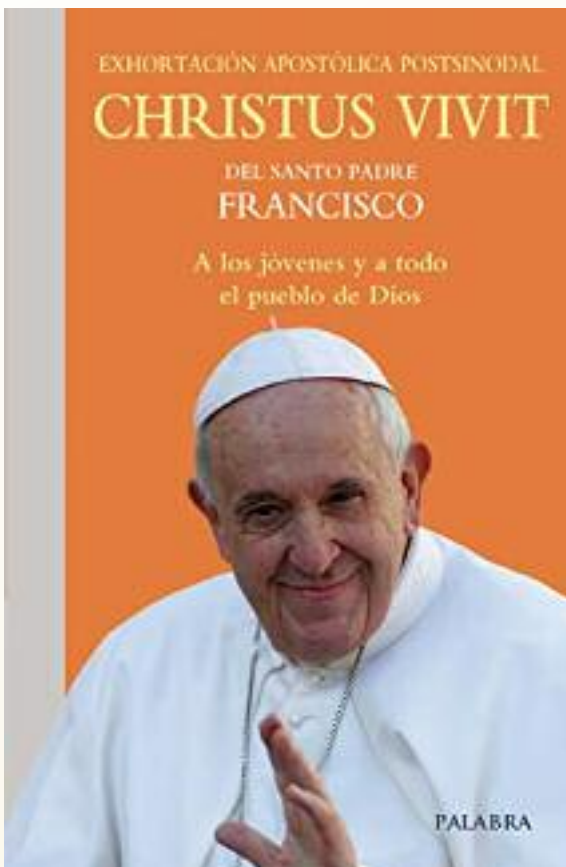
“I want you to know that, when the Lord thinks of each of you and what he wants to give you, he sees you as his close friend. And if he plans to grant you a grace, a charism that will help you live to the full and become someone who benefits others, someone who leaves a mark in life, it will surely be a gift that will bring you more joy and excitement than anything else in this world.” (288)

And to conclude... a wish

“Dear young people, my joyful hope is to see you keep running the race before you, outstripping all those who are slow or fearful. Keep running, “attracted by the face of Christ, whom we love so much, whom we adore in the Holy Eucharist and acknowledge in the flesh of our suffering brothers and sisters. May the Holy Spirit urge you on as you run this race. The Church needs your momentum, your intuitions, your faith. We need them! And when you arrive where we have not yet reached, have the patience to wait for us” (299).

We have briefly presented to you the Apostolic Exhortation. We hope that it has ignited in you the wish to read and pray further with it, if you haven’t done so already. And If you have, we hope that you come back to it. We need to keep the Exhortation present. We have pointed out in Projects Number 173 that we are starting a path to better understand the apostolic work with and for youth. We need to keep working, innovating, creating and collaborating to become a more youthful CLC, in the knowledge that our only hope is Christ alive.

You can find the preliminary documents, the final Synod document and the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus vivit* in: <http://www.synod.va/content/synod2018/en.html>



A Church that wants to listen

Carolina Cardozo Bello
CLC in Uruguay

“Dear young people, let me say once again: You are the today of God, the today of the Church! Not just the future, but today. Either you start playing today or you lose this match. Today the Church needs you so that she can be herself fully.”

Pope Francis

(International Youth Forum, June 22nd, 2019)

From the 19th till the 22nd of June, 2019, the Eleventh International Youth Forum in Rome was convened by the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, at the request of Pope Francis at the last WYD in Panama. In this encounter young people from more than 100 countries and 37 international Lay Associations and movements participated. The Forum ended with a Papal Audience with Pope Francis during which he addressed some words to the young people.

It is part of the post-synodal process after the Synod of Bishops about “the young people, the faith and vocational discernment”. The synodal process consisted of various stages, in which the Church made an effort to listen and understand the young people: their perspectives, needs, their weaknesses, but mainly to take a close look at what the young people have to offer.

After completing the preparatory document, the Vatican launched an online survey which

sought to take first-hand the pulse of the young people. Youth members of the CLC were encouraged to participate in it. Afterwards a pre-synodal meeting was held, in which the World Community was also represented, through a young CLC member. Later on the Synod itself took place, in which 34 young people from different countries participated, with possibility of participating and giving their opinion about what was being tackled during the Synod.

In April 2019 “Christus Vivit”, the Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father for the Young People and all the People of God was published. Barely two months and a half after the publication the post-synodal Assembly took place, in which the Church once again demonstrated her greater attentiveness to the youth. The CLC was invited to participate in this encounter through the representation of a young member.

I had the privilege to represent the World Community in this encounter. For me it is really special to have been able to live such an exceptional moment, it is a very big gift having been able to participate directly in this process. I find myself very thankful to CLC because of the opportunity they gave me. In my vocation of being lay, Ignatian and member of the CLC, to encounter such a desire to feel with the Church, to live the Church as very present and to find myself in a moment of such openness and listening is very moving for me, and I deeply value it.

I can say it that was an incredible experience from several points of view. The aspect that first moved me was being able to share with so many different people. While the universality of the Church is no novelty, it was very new for me to experience it in this way. There were people from many countries, with diverse cultures and very specific situations, but we were

Carolina Cardozo Bello is 26 years old and is part of CLC in Uruguay since 2011. Married to Sebastián, both actively present in the local CLC community called "El Nido".

- Greeting Pope Francis



united by what is fundamental for us: following Christ. Along with this wonder, I also learned of some very strong situations of persecution that our brothers experience in some parts of the world today, and of which perhaps we are not aware. Putting faces and stories on some of those situations feels very deep. . Another aspect that turned out very interesting, more from the anecdotal perspective, was the presence of some young members who participated in the Synod of Bishops. They gave us their testimony about their experience in that particular month in their lives; they talked to us about the closeness and warmth with which they were treated by the Holy Father, Pope Francis, and of the experience of working together with the Synod fathers to be able to present some issues, and of how during that month a spirit of synodality was generated to which we are all invited today.

Christus Vivit

The forum had the Apostolic Exhortation as guide for many of the reflections. In this, a lot of work in the synodal process is reflected, adding elements with the characteristic imprint of Pope Francis.

In the encounter one of the participants said that, for the young people of his country, Christus vivit was like a gift that a grandparent gave to his grandchildren. That was an image that I really liked, because I think it represents what many young people of the Church felt when they received this text. They consider it to be a very valuable gift, from someone very close, who considers them important, and who invites them especially to participate today, and principally because it was done with immense affection. It also feels close because although its content is very profound, it is expressed in a very simple way, making it accessible to all. A gift that was not expected, that surprised itself, and also surprised with its message.

My impression when reading the document was that it was an interesting document, closely accessible, that addressed topics of major importance. Throughout the text we can find an Ignatian theme in many aspects; it even includes chapters on vocation and discernment, which are fundamental elements of the Ignatian charism. Therefore, I found it very pleasant that the Holy Pope Francis reminded the young people some things that we consider fundamental for our life, and I considered that very good but not that impressive.

It was at the encounter that I recognized the real value of this document. Terms such as dis-

cernment and vocation, that are so familiar to me, were a totally new discovery for most of the young people. This made a great impact. For many young people the word vocation was related directly to religious vocation in other words it was a term associated only with priests and consecrated sisters and brothers. Something similar happened with the word discernment.

- Pope Francis addresses a few words to young people.

- Youth during the Forum



Later on, the topic of accompanying young people was tackled again, because it is a topic that the Pope Francis talks about in the chapter on Youth Ministry. Here he emphasizes the need to accompany young people and the urgency of having people trained especially for this purpose.

In this chapter he also comments the need to develop the capacity of a warm welcome to the young people, to offer them their own spaces, free, of encounter with other youngsters, recreational of reflection, with an environment of sharing valued in this the person to person, and recognizing the young people as fundamental agents of the Youth Ministry.

In this chapter he also comments on the need to develop the capacity of warmly welcoming young people, of offering them their own free space for encounter with other youth, for recreation and reflection, with an environment that allows person to person sharing of values, and for recognizing young people as themselves fundamental agents of the Youth Ministry.

This also surprised in general. Many young people commented on the various situations of their countries, where they felt alone and do not

find adults with whom they can walk together. With this chapter of Pope Francis, many young people started considering whether they could start asking the ministers in their groups or local churches for utmost care. This recommendation of the Holy Father was new to them and it stirred up a lot of enthusiasm, given that they can count on the support of Pope Francis who considers it very important.

Another original element of the document is that the Holy Father Pope Francis made reference to the need for a “Popular Youth Ministry”. Father Alexandre Awi Mello¹ cited the fact that “you almost have to “become Argentine” or make the experience of “pastoral incursion” in a Latin American slum or favela to be able to understand clearly what the Holy Father wants to say”² Then he explains what it means “to integrate” “ young people who did not grow up in Christian families or institutions , and who are slowly growing to maturity, and to encourage in them all the good that we can.” (cf. ChV 232; EG 44-45).”

During the time of the Forum, I understood that I had absolutely been privileged. I studied at a Jesuit School in Montevideo, and at a very young age I became acquainted with the Ignatian charism. I grew up immersed in it; it enriched me a lot and became part of me. I always considered this as something very valuable and at the same time a gift, but after this I must say this feeling took on a much greater dimension.

Since the basic Pastoral of School, next to the deepening of the Ministry I started living many experiences of which the Holy Pope Francis wants for the young



- Participants of the Youth Synod giving testimony at the Forum.

- Opening of the Forum, P. Joao Chagas (responsible for the DLFL Youth Office), Card. Kevin Farrell (Prefect of the DLFL), Card. Lorenzo Baldisseri (Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops), Fr. Alexandre Awi Mello (Secretary DLFL).



¹ Secretary of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life.

² Panel of the Forum: Towards a synodal, popular and missionary youth ministry - Fr. Alexandre Awi Mello, I.Sch. (available online)

people today. When reading the exhortation for the first time it did not generate on me a great impression since I considered them normal proposals for me, since I had lived them during my adolescence and early teen years.

From the basic pastoral school and on to the next stage of pastoral deepening, I was living the many experiences that Pope Francis wants for the youth today. When I read the Exhortation for the first time, it did not make a big impression on me, since they were normal proposals to me which I experienced in my adolescence and early youth.

I had the support of my family and of the adults from the educational institution, as is recommended by the Pope Francis. I was involved in a school movement that provided a space of encounter among young people 16 to 18 years old. Here we had activities of service to the most needy on weekends, space to encourage reflection and prayer, recreation and profound exchanges about faith. The program included retreats that initiated me in the Spiritual Exercises. I reached the Principle and Foundation, and I started to have a glimpse of my vocation.

In this we were accompanied by other young people who were older than us and who guided us and served as examples for us. We also had responsible adults and priests who were closely monitoring their work.

At the same time I started spiritual accompaniment for myself when I was 17 years old with a Jesuit brother who worked in campus ministry and who knew the right words for my questions and who always guided me towards God. I think that maybe much of what led to that accompaniment would be things of little importance, but it was through that accompa-

niment that I started to know how God moved in my life and to discover the movements that were not of God. I carried within me my uncertainties about my vocation and I was confronted and questioned, thereby helping me to understand a little bit more where God was leading me and what He wanted for me. . And in all this nothing depended on me. All of it was a gift from God.

For the young people in the forum, what Pope Francis proposes is extremely new, revitalizing and refreshing; in their realities is implied a profound change. CLC has the capacity to offer all of this and much more to the young people all over the world.

Sense of the Church

The Church today looks at the youth with great interest and with great love. At the WYD in Rio de Janeiro the Pope Francis asked the young people to make a mess, to shake the Church a bit, to appropriate their role in it. I believe that now the Pope insists on this, and invites young people to take a more participatory role in the Church, a more committed role. . The exhortation is for the young people, but also for the whole People of God : he is asking all of us to look a little more at the younger generations and to collaborate with them.

Because of our charism, we can count on excellent formation in the use of discernment,



- During the visit to Pope Francisco with Ariel and Natalia, representatives of Chile and Sofia, representative of Uruguay..

- At the Forum with Sien and H el ene representatives of Belgium and France.

accompaniment, , in the desire to live according to our vocation and that our faith continues marking our next steps. I believe the Church today is asking us especially to make our contribution. We receive a great grace with our spirituality and we believe that this is the best way of following Christ. It is part of our missionary vocation to be able to make this available , and this is really an opportunity to assume the responsibility of leadership in the Church .

I joined CLC when I was 18 years old; I came with an Ignatian identity that has been in the process of formation. It was in CLC that I found my vocation as an Ignatian lay woman, as a way to follow Jesus for the rest of my life. It was a place where I could reaffirm everything I brought, continue forming myself and deepening in Ignatian Spirituality, discovering that this also was a vital part of my vocation. I can hardly think how my life would have been if this would have not been in me fundamen-

tally in those moments of defining myself and making choices that in some manner determine my past and future life. I would like that CLC could offer all the young people such valuable spaces as it offered me.

The world ExCo considers it important “to share our CLC charism and our Ignatian Spirituality with the young people, wherever they are committed in the Church and in the society, without having to necessarily adhere to CLC , with the objective “to help the young people so that they can find the correct path in their lives. Our priority is in helping them to search and find God.”

I believe this means for CLC today “ Sense of Church.” It is in our hands to put the means to follow the path that the Church is pointing out.

*(Original : Spanish.
Translated by Jennifer Fox)*

- Photo of the participants of the Forum after the final Mass celebrated in St. Peter's Basilica.

³ Projects 167: An extraordinary meeting with World Executive Council 2017.

⁴ Supplement of Progressio #74, Report of World ExCo.



The richness of many years of life

Under this name, the First International Conference for the Pastoral Care of the Elderly was held in Rome from January 29 to January 31, 2020.

The conference was organized by the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life as a response to Pope Francis's concern regarding the elderly as well as his expressed desire to promote a renewed ecclesial reflection on what he called the blessing of a long life.

After consultation with the World ExCo and the World Secretariat, there was great interest and agreement on the importance of having CLC represented at this conference. At this conference, among the topics discussed included: how to deal with the culture of discarding the elderly, their role in the family, and their specific vocation within the Church. These topics have a strong connection to the frontiers our World Community has adopted as our apostolic mission. From the beginning of his pontificate, and on numerous occasions, Pope Francis has emphasized the elderly's indispensable role in society in dialogue with young people, in the transmission of the faith and in the youths' rediscovery of their own roots.

*María Magdalena Palencia G.
CLC in Mexico*

It was also an opportunity for CLC to attend and be part of a privileged ecclesial space, since representatives of the Episcopal Conferences, religious congregations, associations and lay movements from all over the world, involved in the pastoral care of the elderly, were invited to this conference.

The experience was a "true spiritual experience" in which the Lord gave himself to us and gave us amazing gifts.

First of all, we experienced the gift of the Community. We were able to feel, once again, the connection, affinity, harmony and immediate mutual trust that our shared CLC vocation offers to all, despite living in geographically distant places, belonging to different cultures and generations, and having different professions and life experiences: we all share the same spirituality and lifestyle.

We also experienced the gift of Ecclesiality, where we could feel the richness of universal-



María Magdalena Palencia G.

Magdalena has been a CLC member since its passage from the Marian Congregation. She is currently committed to the Pastoral Care of the Elderly, especially as a spiritual guide.

Bottom from left to right:

- The manifesto of the Congress

- Marcos and María Magdalena at the Congress



CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE LA PASTORAL DE LAS PERSONAS MAYORES

ROMA, DEL 29 AL 31 DE ENERO DE 2020



ity since the participants came from five continents and over sixty countries, representing all the ecclesial strata: hierarchy, presbytery, religious life and laity.

The following CLC members, sent by the World Community, had the opportunity of participating in this conference: Manuel Martínez, our World Executive Secretary; Marcos Morales Mollner from CLC Spain, who dedicates both his professional life and his apostolic activity to the care of the elderly; and myself, María Magdalena Palencia G., already at the “fourth age” and dedicated to serving other people of my age and even older through spiritual and fraternal accompaniment, and by promoting and organizing appropriate programs.

The topics discussed were carefully chosen and inspiring, helping us deepen our understanding of the three themes chosen for the conference: The Church and the elderly, the family and the elderly, the vocation of the elderly. In addition to listening to three speakers on each of these themes, we also had the opportunity to deepen and share our comments and ideas about them, which contributed to the conversations that followed each of the sessions.

During the breaks we also had the opportunity to exchange ideas and learn more about other attendees’ activities and charisms as well as to share our own experiences.

More than a conclusion, and considering the heterogeneity of the situation of the elderly in the hundreds of dioceses spread throughout the world, as well as in the different cultural and social contexts, Gabriela Gambino, Un-

dersecretary of the Dicastery, who served as a conference reporter during the event, presented a summary of guidelines discussed at this conference:

- Consider the elderly as part of the people of God: they have special needs that we must take into account, therefore, it is important for the dioceses to create areas and programs dedicated to the pastoral care of the elderly;
- The pastoral care of the elderly, like all pastoral care, must be included in the new missionary era started by Pope Francis with *Evangelii Gaudium*. This means announcing the presence of Christ to the elderly, since the call to holiness is for everyone, including grandparents. Not all the elderly have already met Christ and, even if they have, it is essential to help them rediscover the meaning of their baptism in such a special stage of their lives;
- Do not organize the pastoral care of the elderly as an isolated area, it should be a cross-sectional pastoral approach;
- Value the gifts and charisms of the elderly in all areas: charitable activity, apostolate work and in the liturgy;
- Support families and be close to them when they need to care for elderly grandparents;
- Stop the culture of discarding: According to Gambino, “many elderly individuals ask to be hospitalized in institutions so as not to be a burden” and “euthanasia, explicitly condemned by the Church, is already being proposed in some countries as an alternative for lonely and weary older individuals. Therefore, Gambino clarifies, “wherever people ask themselves if their life is still useful or of inter-

Below from left to right:

- Manuel, María Magdalena and Marcos representatives at the Congress, sent by CLC.

- With Pope Francis



est to others, that is a void that the Church's pastoral care must fill.

- Care for the spirituality of the elderly so that, together with piety and devotional practice, they may be immersed in an authentic and deep spiritual relationship with God. It is not about approaching the end, but needing to come closer to God and the mystery of eternity.

In addition to the above, several of us agreed to place a written record emphasizing the following:

- The importance that the elderly are not perceived only as objects of welfare action, but always treated as subjects, even when in need of special attention and assistance. They always possess the dignity that helps us to see the presence of God in old age and makes us recognize their capacities for collaboration and autonomy - although limited - which deserve our respect.

On behalf of the Dicastery for Laity, Family Life - where CLC is one of the 122 organizations associated to the Dicastery - the participants were guaranteed accompaniment and support: "We do not need strategies, but human relationships from which networks of collaboration and solidarity can emerge between dioceses, parishes, lay communities, associations and families. We need solid networks with a strong foundation, not fragmented and fragile initiatives; oftentimes, the largest projects are born from the smallest of seeds."

The concluding part of the conference - no less relevant than what took place at the conference room and hallways - was held at St. Peter's Basilica where we celebrated the Eucharist, presided over by Cardinal Kevin Farrell, Prefect of the Dicastery, and concelebrated by participating cardinals, bishops and priests. As closure, there was an audience with Pope Francis, where he addressed briefly¹ our conference group, and personally greeted each and every one of those present.

At a personal level, in addition to the insights and experiences gained at the conference, I am grateful for the warmth and

affection shown by Manuel, Rojean, Van and Alwin who made my stay in Rome even more pleasant. To me, they were a manifestation of the presence of God shown in their service and joy, as well as in the gift of the fraternal community.

And I am also grateful for the opportunity to have participated - along with Manuel and Rojean - in the Eucharist celebrated in the General Curia of the Society on the 29th anniversary of Father Arrupe's passing away. Father Arrupe was a model of total surrender into the hands of the Lord during his third age and at the dawn of his fourth. He knew how to abandon himself in Him as he experienced illness and diminished capacities. I especially entrust the older members of our community, and the life and growth of our whole CLC so that we may become a true gift for the Church and for the world.

*(Original : Español
Translated by María Celia Galli)*



¹ http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2020/january/documents/papa-francesco_20200131_congresso-pastoraleanziani.html

Richness of Many Years and the Clock of Life

Tools for Pastoral Care of Older Adults

*José Marcos Morales Collmer
CLC in Spain (Sevilla)*



José Marcos Morales Collmer

Born in Argentina, Marcos graduated with a degree in Social Work at UNAM (Argentina); He worked in his home country with different vulnerable members of our society: with street children, in rural development with small producers, and in community development with indigenous communities in the Misiones jungle. In 1996, he moved to Spain and worked in the disability sector with people with sudden brain damage, with immigrants as Project Technician and director of the CEPAIM business area and later as director of the Sevilla Acoge Foundation. In 2008, he started a Day Center for the elderly with his wife, which he now devotes his time exclusively to. In 2016, he joined the CLC of Sevilla and is currently part of the senior commission on the Family Mission of the community.

Faced with the lengthening of the average lifespan and the aging of the population, Pope Francis has stated that "even Christian spirituality has been taken a little by surprise," expressing that he wishes a renewed ecclesial reflection on what can be defined as the blessings of a long life.

The International Congress of the pastoral care of older adults: "Richness of many years" has been the response of the Dicastery (Pontifical Council) to this request of the Holy Father with regard to Laity, Family and Life.

At this Congress, there were representatives of Episcopal Conferences, of religious congregations, of associations and of lay movements from all over the world who are involved in the pastoral care of older adults. Specifically, representatives from 66 different countries

attended the Congress, reaching a total of more than 550 participants.

CLC was represented by Magdalena Palencia (CLC of Mexico), Manuel Martínez (Executive Secretary of CLC) and José Marcos Morales Collmer (CLC of Spain).

The meeting discussed the issue of how to deal with the current culture where the elderly people are left aside, and about their role in the family and their particular vocation in the Church. Each of these sections involved the presentation of the demographic reality, the situations of suffering which the elderly undergo in today's society and the various initiatives that are being developed in different countries. If we take into consideration the situations that generate suffering in the elderly, we can point out those that include the loss of their capabilities and the lack of autonomy, loneliness and absence of meaning in life. When considering the proposals submitted, we can notice very disparate and diverse realities: those in which older adults are not able to cover their basic needs and require support care to survive (such as in



- On this page: Presentation of the Clock of Life in the Parish of Palomares.

- On the other page: The various moments during the workshops.

the case of Angola and Brazil) and, on the contrary, those in which their needs were covered and required support more in line with entertainment, leisure or occupational activities (as in the case of Chile and Argentina). The above even included situations in which the proposal involved more the accompaniment and spirituality of the elderly (as in the case of ascending life groups).

Both in the more theoretical approaches that focus on the importance of caring and accompanying the elderly, with emphasis on their situations of suffering, as well as in the various actual proposals that are being developed in different countries, no specific tools were presented that facilitate the spiritual accompaniment at this stage of life based on the real situations of suffering.

Thus, at the end of the Congress, the following conclusions were presented in order to develop Pastoral Care of Older Adults:

1. Create offices in episcopal conferences, in dioceses and parishes dedicated to the pastoral care of older adults.
2. Pastoral care must involve "projecting outwards," where older people are not only recipients but also protagonists; "elderly missionaries, with action and prayer."
3. Intergenerational cross-cutting pastoral care.
4. A pastoral care approach that values the gifts and charisms of older adults in the apostolate.
5. A pastoral care approach that supports families so that they in turn can become a "home" for their elderly people.
6. A pastoral care approach to curb the culture of discarding in effect in our current model of society.
7. A pastoral care approach that takes care of the spirituality of all older adults.

In this sense, the tool developed by CLC in Spain, which we call "The Clock of Life," fulfils and meets many of the lines proposed in the final conclusions of the Congress. It happens to be a "projecting" tool, which can be used in different spaces (exercise facilities, parishes and nursing homes for the elderly), one that considers the elderly not only as recipients of the action, but also as subjects of change in whom the gifts and charisms of older adults are valued. It is a tool that combines action with prayer and that cares for the spirituality of older adults, both for those who still preserve their autonomy, as well as those who see a decrease in the same and begin to require the help of third persons to carry out the basic activities of daily life.



Origin of the Clock of Life

It is necessary to clarify that the family, as a mission field, is a priority for CLC at global, national and local levels and, it was in a local Assembly (CLC Seville 2015/2016), where the need was proposed for accompaniment in the various family spheres, covering all family realities at any stage of its life cycle.

Various answers were given in our local CLC community: with the Family Clock as a tool to review and update the family-life project, with the accompaniment of people who have undergone some rupture in relations with the creation of the four-seasons project, with the accompaniment of family members of LGBT people with the group ICHTHYS CLC FAMILY... and voices began to arise in the General Assembly that proposed other realities that require attention: accompaniment of families with adolescents and elderly people.

Where is the Lord leading us? What is the call?

A reflection was made with some people who were more involved emotionally or professionally and we began analysing this reality.

Sociological data show that the elderly appear as a vulnerable sector and in need of attention and care...

Several possibilities of action were proposed:

- ▶ Accompaniment to prepare people for old age: older adults living in full use of their

capabilities and enjoying retirement, who are doing everything that, during their working life, was relegated to a more propitious time, which suddenly and without realizing it becomes a reality.

- ▶ Accompaniment of family caregivers of older adults with some degree of dependency. It is a reality that sometimes intersects with the upbringing of children and with professional life, leading to situations in which it is not always possible to carry the burden with gratitude.
- ▶ Accompaniment of the elderly who are experiencing a decrease in their capabilities that cause suffering, thus generating dynamics that require accompaniment.

It was found that, for the first group, there are currently many alternatives in our society, both at therapy level as well as for active aging, including even spirituality with the groups of Ascending Life or in the format of Ignatian Spiritual Exercises for the Elderly, such as the activities developed in Manresa (Spain).

It was important to bear in mind the second action group, directed to family members, given that the demand in the assembly arose from this group. However, it was not considered a priority, given that it involved the group of older adults who were beginning to lose their capabilities, where conflicts were generated due to lack of support and spiritual accompaniment that make it possible for these people to address and face the different situations at this stage in life, referred to as the last stage.

- The Workshops in the Parish of Palomares



Finally, priority was given to this last action level considering that, any action which is effective for the older adult, would also have an impact on the families and loved ones.

A tool to reach the borders with feet in the mud

Another issue that was the subject of reflection was whether the tool to be developed should be in the form of spiritual exercises to be done at retreat facilities or should be offered also to persons without that experience, who could not afford to get away to do some exercises, either because they cannot afford it financially or because they do not have the necessary time or even more so, in cases where they have lost their autonomy in mobility (disabled), thus requiring the help of third parties for getting around.

Therefore, the tool to be developed should be sufficiently flexible to operate in three different spaces and with three different profiles of people, according to their level of autonomy or dependence. In addition to the first one involving retreat facilities, similar to the one being developed so far, two others were added: the parish format, for people who still had some sort of autonomy and could afford to travel short distances without an economic cost (of travel, stay and/or support) and on a monthly basis. The third modality had to be capable of implementation in nursing homes where there are already people who, due to their physical condition, have seen their autonomy decrease and do not have the support of family to receive them within a home environment. A

greater intensity of suffering could be seen in these last two scenarios and, because of this, it was decided that the tool to be developed should begin to operate and be implemented as a matter of priority in parishes and nursing homes for the elderly.

Just as the sunrise and sunset are part of the same day and at both moments a person can behold, experience and live wonderful things, the same thing happens during the stages of birth, growth, and aging that form part of the same life and, in each of these life stages through which we pass, we can experience and live wonderful things. We are totally convinced of this, but, as was seen, the tool to be developed should not have an idyllic or utopian vision of old age, but it should address the real situations of suffering faced by older adults, without denying or deviating from the same. The tool to be developed should not only have its feet on the ground, but it should also be involved to the point that its feet become muddied by contact with real life in providing spiritual accompaniment based on the reality of older people, addressing the different triggers of suffering and enabling a personal encounter with the Lord, allowing them to discover God's presence in their day to day living and in the suffering often undergone in the latter part of their life.

Alleviate suffering and create living spaces

The mission of the "Clock of Life" workshops is to alleviate suffering and create living





- The Workshops in the Parish of Palomares and in the Residence for the Elderly.


spaces for older people who are entering "the sunset of life."

The workshops deal with five important triggers of suffering in these people. These triggers of suffering endeavour to structure each of the six modules that will provide "moments and spaces for reflection," from an Ignatian approach to the same. These triggers are linked to:

- ▶ **The loss of capacities:** lack of acceptance of the capabilities that are being lost, of the causes that can give rise to such losses and the inability for resilience in some people, derive in much of the suffering in both the older adults who realise that they cannot do or be what they used to be, as well as in their family members who see with greater clarity that their loved ones will no longer be able to have all the independence which they had enjoyed up to that moment, and that changes must be made in life habits to ensure the survival and quality of life of the older adult.
- ▶ **Loneliness:** the loss of loved ones, of friends and the absence of a desire to enter into new relationships, reduce the social circle considerably, while the emotional and affective needs begin to show significant deficits, generating greater demand for attention toward those family members and persons who are still alive, realising that they should also change lifestyles in order to meet the affective demand arising therefrom. The inability or refusal to change, both of the elderly persons as well

as of their close circle of reference, will give rise to suffering on both sides.

- ▶ **Unresolved problems:** sometimes the situations experienced by clashes between loved ones, or by situations of conflict or abuse, are not fully resolved and prevent us from progressing and continuing with our life; the lack of forgiveness or reconciliation does not allow us to live in peace in this final stage of our walk on earth.
- ▶ **Preconceived idea of old age:** when the original idea of old age which they dreamed of for this stage in life does not correspond with reality and there is no possibility or desire for change and of letting go of the preconceived idea, unnecessary suffering is generated in both the older adults as well as in their close relatives, who try to ensure the autonomy and quality of life of their loved ones which continues to be impacted over time
- ▶ **Reason for living:** when we have not reached our life goals or objectives and our strength has dwindled and we give up, or when the life goals have already been fulfilled and there are no new desires; when the life that we have lived has not satisfied us or made us feel fulfilled, we reach this stage in life and we are likely to feel empty, without a reason to live, without a life purpose, thus, giving rise to questions such as; why live? Why continue living when I am no longer what I used to be? Why live when there is no reason for my existence?



"It is not how much you know that fulfils and satisfies the soul, but the capacity to feel and taste things internally."

The workshops try to approach each of these causes of suffering from an Ignatian methodology, without telling participants what they have to do to alleviate this suffering, but by encouraging the encounter of these people with the Lord, reflecting and contemplating on their life walking in God's presence, making good and healthy choices regarding what should emerge freely to relieve that suffering.

Ignatius greatly values reasoning, but he knows that reasoning that does not touch us more deeply in our affections, will not change or mobilize our life. When it comes to this stage of life, people often do not want to make big changes in their life, they are submerged in immobility, which further heightens the suffering they are undergoing. These experiential meetings are intended to move the whole person, the entire core, the persons' heart, their affections, their feelings. This will be sought through different dynamics so that people can delve into the innermost part of their life, there where the decisions, impulses and energy of life emanate.

*(Original : Español
Translated by Clifford Schisler)*

- Workshop 3
Palomares Parish:
Evaluating



The View from a Five-Year Window

Alwin & Rojean Macalalad

The Woodcarving

On the wall of every house we have lived in hangs a woodcarving of the Holy Family—Joseph and Mary looking far away and forward, with the child Jesus asleep, head leaning on his mother’s shoulder. It was a wedding gift from one of our godparents. That was 2007.

Counting where we are now, that would make four homes. Our first family apartment was in Mindanao, southern Philippines. We lived there for six years. It was where Aeraele Jean, our daughter, was born. Rojean left first, to live in our second home, so that she could finish her graduate degree in Manila, 980 kilometers away. When we found out that we were chosen to serve in the World CLC Secretariat, Aeraele and I left the house in the south to follow Rojean in the transitory home, generously rented to us by friends from university CLC. I flew to Rome first, to begin the transition into the World Secretariat work. After two months, Rojean and Aeraele followed, leaving everything – family, friends, previous professions and contacts, things – to begin a five year mission in Rome. The third home that we have come to know was the Josée Gsell House—a house named after CLC’s executive secretary some years after the renewal. By this time, we realized that once again, we were starting over, with close to nothing, save a calling.

We hung the woodcarving there, and through

the years it has gone largely unnoticed. Life’s hustle and bustle do not always allow for a consistently contemplative state. Things hang on the walls. Cooking needed to be done. The floor needed sweeping constantly. Aeraele needed to do homework. And every day, work needed to be done in the World Secretariat.

Life in the World Secretariat

The Secretariat is located within the compound of the Jesuit General Curia, within the Canisio community gate. It’s a small office. I used to joke that there were five windows where you can glimpse the outside world in the Secretariat, but the most important window was the PC screen. A significant amount of our time was spent responding to mail, videoconferencing, writing and reading. The Secretariat serves as the operational arm of the World Executive Council. It needs to be able to support the ExCo and the national communities directly. Part of our mandate also required us to liaise with, and represent CLC with Vatican Dicasteries and councils, NGOs, and Jesuit offices and networks. There were four of us – Rojean and Alwin, Van (our administrative officer; she holds the long thread of the secretariat together for more than 25 years!), and a full-time Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant. Even then, it was difficult ensuring that all functional areas were attended to: Communication, Knowledge Management,

- The sending of Alwin and Rojean to Rome

- In the World CLC Secretariat with Fr. Adolfo Nicolas SJ, Fr. Gian Giacomo Rotelli SJ, Fr. Luke Rodrigues SJ, and Van Nguyen



Office Administration, and Financial Management. We also needed to provide strategic support for the ExCo. We were also responsible for taking care of ourselves.

Our first year was one long adjustment year – which included language learning, getting to know the networks, finding out how all the many small tasks connected. We started getting to know the communities, re-connecting and reaching out to lost ones, discovering the needs of others. This was also the year Rojean and I realized that it was our first time working together! Yes, we were married, but we did not realize how incompatible our working styles were, and in our first year, we entered a new territory of partnership: sometimes riddled with conflict and questioning, sometimes with joy being together in a completely different way. We discovered new things about our relationship, both difficult and graced.

During our second year, we began ordering things, and making relevant improvements stick. It was during our third year when we started feeling confident about our role; but by then, it was also time to prepare for the world assembly. Our fourth year was marked by the Buenos Aires Assembly—we were consumed by the preparation and the aftermath. In our fifth year, we continued working with a new ExCo, selected a new Executive Secretary, and designed and implemented a transition program.

A Five-Year Window

Throughout these years in the World Secretariat, we were given a window of service, and

a glimpse of the life of the Christian Life Community. It's a small window to look through, when one considers that the Marian Congregations began in 1584, and that the renewal happened in 1967. History is a landscape, and it is easier to consider only the view from the window.

In these five years, we have worked within two sets of Executive Councils. We worked with two Vice EAs, and two World Ecclesiastical Assistants. It was Pope Francis who inspired our discernment to make ourselves available, and we were fulfilled. During these years in Rome, we were witness to the Synod on the Family; The Jubilee Year of Mercy; the Synod on Faith, Youth, and Vocational Discernment; the Amazon Synod. It was during this span of time when *Laudato Si'*, *Amoris Laetitia*, *Gaudete et Exsultate*, and *Christus Vivit* were revealed to the world.

During these years of journey from the Lebanon Assembly, we felt with great confirmation our *sentire cum ecclesia*, and the call to grow further in our life and service in the Church and in the world¹.

Our window culminated in the Buenos Aires Assembly, where, through a process of communal discernment, we were moved to see communal discernment as the special gift that our CLC charism can offer today's reality². There are deep movements rumbling from the depths of the Church and the world. There is a theme and a rhythm that goes beyond what we can perceive in the surface. The next stage of our life as a world commu-

- The CLC Manresa
- With Fr. Arturo Sosa SJ, Superior General of the Society of Jesus and World CLC Ecclesiastical Assistant

¹ See the final part of the World ExCo Report in 2018: bit.ly/WorldExCoReport-pdf

² See the final document of our Buenos Aires World Assembly: bit.ly/WA2018FinalDocument-PDF



nity is being renewed. The essence of what it means to be Christian laity is being redefined and lived in this moment. And we have something to say, as Christian Life Community. Something to do.

And yet, the Kairos is such that we only have a glimpse of the moment, even if that moment is a 5-year moment, or a 50-year one. And just as swiftly, Rojean and my moment of service has passed. The view is passed to new seers, new co-discerners to the world community.

A Heart to Embrace the World

There was irony embedded in a mission in Rome. We had been thinking that Rome was the center of the Catholic world. We came here to be closer to the beating heart of our faith – San Pietro, the Pope, the Vatican. Italy - where saints were born. Imagine us, in 2014-- weary travelers, a family who just left their country for mission. Just as we were approaching these cold Vatican walls, Pope Francis was calling on the faithful to go out. Out to the peripheries! The heart of Christ was out there! “But,” we thought, “we had just arrived!”

And this was what would define our work. Transitions, balance, discernment. Yes, disconnection from all that was familiar. Yes, pain and suffering. Yes, weariness. But also learning to see clearly, and catching the light whenever it appeared.

This became apparent, when we realized that we could not respond to everything. In 2015-- and throughout our term-- there were wars, there were bombings, there was great suffering in the world. Confusion and fake news. Great polarities. I was reading news from the communities, imagining what all of you were facing in that moment. And yet, anything I can conjure in my mind would be frail construction of reality. It was so overwhelming.

I remembered that, in the early part of the millennium, I prayed for the grace of a heart to embrace the world. In the World Secretariat, one realizes that a heart can only be so large. One heart cannot contain the ails of the world – we could not even glimpse a complete picture of what ails the world! A few arms cannot embrace the world, not even the Macalalad family’s total of six arms. Not the World ExCo’s total of hearts and souls.

Weeping in front of a computer screen, I felt Christ gazing at me. And I realized, I did not have to be the heart that embraces the world. And that moment, I embraced Christ. And there was nothing else my arm could hold. And yet, this was the closest I could get to that grace I asked for. This was consolation.

I share this humbling / humiliating experience with CLC – we are so diverse, and we are so many. We are still growing. We will never completely agree. There is no single project that will be a complete response, no single lens that will describe a complete reality. And yet, we are all part of a single, living, apostolic body. The consensus of consolation is the way to our unity. It is the fruit of a truly communal apostolic discernment. I point again to the grace of the Buenos Aires Assembly. There is only one Heart that we can truly contemplate.

The Cost of Mission

Our “yes” to the mission in the Secretariat was without reservation. If CLC needed us, we would go. Our collective experience of vulnerability and darkness in the past were stepping stones to the kind of openness that we brought with us as a family. Even Aeraele, as she grew over the past years (she arrived when she was 4; now she is 9 years old), slowly came to terms with her part in this family endeavor. She grew in closeness to members of the World ExCo, and to many CLC members from around the world. She also grew in maturity and broadened her horizons. These were good things – gifts of our experience.

However, in the past five years, we slowly realized that this work was not a “break” from the life that we left behind in the Philippines. We expected that we would change, although we did not know in what ways. We were sent by friends and family. We were sent by the CLC in the Philippines, trusting that we would serve the World Community well. In a hyper-connected world, what would distance mean?

Work in the Secretariat was not always easy. We had to grapple with a sense of isolation and helplessness in our first years. It was not always easy to explain to people who were not with us. It was a different world, but it was such a focused reality: being CLC, and working for CLC. Rojean felt disconnected from the grassroots community she used to work

On the other page

- The ExCo 2015 meeting in Rome.

- the newly elected World ExCo (2018-2023) in Buenos Aires.

- The ExCo 2019 meeting in Namur.

- World CLC Assembly in Buenos Aires 2018.

with – Rome seemed so detached. I felt so unused, facing so much administrative tasks, and too little facilitation and executive tasks. We would surmount these and some other crises by finding some niches for creativity and expression of expertise.

In 2019, near the end of our term, we lost some dear friends in the Philippines, companions from three CLC local communities— Gian Puyo (Come & See) in the month of May, Kuya Edward Rollo (Lawig) in September, Ate Rose Yngente (Umaga) in October. We never considered that our last meetings were going to be our final ones, and that we would never be able to hold them in an embrace again when we returned. We were at the other side of the world, with the internet as our only windows to a home country, and friends that we could not touch. Ever again.

But what can one expect when one chooses to follow Christ? We did not expect to do dazzling acts of heroism, or extraordinary deeds. We simply responded to an invitation – In 2013, there was a moment that presented itself to us. We took off our sandals, and heard a whisper so intimate – “Would you go if I asked you?” It took us a while, but we said, yes. There was some fear, some anticipation, great uncertainty. There was readiness, but it was tentative, waiting to be articulated, to be enfolded.

We realize now that the cost of mission is no less than life itself. There are no breaks between life-previous, life-now, and life-future. Between life in Rome and life in the Philippines. No break between the story of our past, our five year window, and life that is to come. There is no break between what constitutes life, mission, and our ordinary life. There is no extra-ordinary. We lived our life responding to each moment as it unfolded. I would have loved to call it a dance – contemplating an eternal rhythm, as it manifested itself in the everyday (but that would have been smug, knowing how much Rojean and I stepped on each other’s toes in these past years). Mission will cost no less than one’s life, because life is mission. We could not have divided our life into home life and professional life. Or family life and personal life. Or between mission, and everyday life. These were tempting but superficial categories.





This led us to see that there is a gift in mission, and that was life itself. Brimming with depth and vibrance. Immeasurable moments of pain, and of laughter. Being flattened and kneaded by all experiences, great and minute. Tender moments of silence and healing. Intense moments of work – deadlines, process design, accompaniment. Mundane moments of work – email, database entries, reports. Making new friends. Deepening relationships. Seeing our daughter grow. Growing with our daughter. Resolving conflict. Letting go. Discerning paths.

We realize that it was our CLC charism that has enabled us to see into this depth of integration. It is not an easy challenge for the laity, to strike a balance between survival and service. We have

learned not to take this lightly. There are no cliché responses. Short life or long life? Health or sickness? Wealth or poverty? International or local? Through power or through weakness? These are not the frames of our choices. For Rojean, Aeraele and I, it was – Where is Christ heading, what is he telling us now? He seems to be saying something, do you hear it? There is no correct answer. There is just you, and Him, face to face. Your move.

Above:
- The Woodcarving.

Below:
- Alwin, Rojean and Aeraele at the World CLC Assembly in Buenos Aires 2018.



The Holy Family

We lay down our work in the World Secretariat with great gratitude to the World CLC. As you read this, know that we are thinking of you—the many of you whom we’ve met, whom we’ve sent emails to (whom we were not able to respond to as well, please pardon us!), to you whom we’ve shared special moments with. To you who we argued with, to you who we shared jokes and meals with. To you with whom we have shared small windows into each other’s life. You were our inspiration and our five year purpose. You have shown us the shape of CLC, and we have tried our best to mirror it back. You might think that work in the World Secretariat is special work, but it is not. It is no more and no less than what you do, when you pour your life and passion into what Christ calls you to be, and to do. When you hide no corner of your life from the apostolic life. In that sense, we will never be apart – One community, one way of life.

Life will never be the same. But then, life was never ever static to begin with. We are writing these final paragraphs in Rome while it stands empty, and the northern provinces of Italy are in lockdown because of the COVID-19 outbreak. We are currently in the fourth home where the woodcarving of the Holy Family is hung once again. We have just transferred from the Josée Gsell House in order to give way for the new Executive Secretary, while we prepare to depart for home.

We’ve since taken a good look at the woodcarving once again as we reviewed the past five years. In an unseen history, it used to be a slab of wood. The artist was able to chip away just the right pieces at the right places. And smooth the surfaces. And now we see an image – a father, a mother, a child—looking far away and forward. Is this the flight to Egypt, off again to a far away land to escape danger, to save an innocent would-be saviour? Or are they simply on the way to market for some bread? We only see a moment, a window to the infinite. But it does not matter, as each step of everyday brings us deeper into life.

(Original : English)

The new Executive Secretary

Manuel Martínez Arteaga

As you reach the end of this Progressio issue you may have noticed that there has been a change in the World Secretariat. After the five year mission of Alwin and Rojean as Secretary and co-Executive Secretary, the W-ExCo has designated me to take this mission forward into the years ahead. But some may be asking, who is this Manuel, the new Executive Secretary? I would like to share some words with you, to help you get to know me, and in the hope that our paths may cross in the CLC.

Some basic facts

I was born in Uruguay, a South American country neighbouring Buenos Aires (the place of our last General Assembly in 2018). I am 34 years old.

I grew up in a family where we always shared a living faith, sometimes together, sometimes following our own path, but always grateful for the way in which we could share the values and graces that the Lord gave us, allowing us to face the difficult moments that every life has. With humility and simplicity we always strived to follow the way of the Sacred Family. We are five in the family: my parents, who are 38 years married, and two brothers, both of whom are married, the eldest with three children. I have to confess that my nephews bring us all a real joy. Family for me is a place where I can have my roots. It's as the song goes in Uruguay: "a tree without roots can't withstand any storm".

I studied in the seminary college (Colegio de Montevideo de la Compañía de Jesús) and later I graduated in International Businesses and Integration from the Uruguay Catholic University, led by the Jesuits. The education, not only academic but also personal and spiritual, which I received in this Jesuit institution, has a lot to do with the way I am now, how I look at the world and how I commit myself to what I do. I like the complex world of International Relations. In fact I am currently in the middle of the final tasks to complete a Masters degree

in that area – a course which I finished just before I came to Rome.

My History in CLC

The Lord has been very generous with me. My path inside CLC that started in 2005 has been full of warm anecdotes. I would like to share three small key stories showing how this path has been for me: i) personally, ii) as a community and iii) as a mission.

i) Personally. After the process of introduction to the CLC in 2005, I started to walk along this path. I found the beginning very intense. I had to learn to share my life with others and to listen openly and pay attention to the lives of others. It is a real grace to see how my life had been knitted /interwoven with others' lives, and vice versa. We were learning to accompany each other. At that time I went through my first experience of spiritual exercises. That was a seminal experience to find the Lord, an experience in which I internalized the words of Ignacio "to feel and enjoy things internally." It was an experience of recognizing my-



Manuel Martínez

- Manuel with his family



self as a loved child,” being embraced over and over again within the infinite mercy of the Lord, being invited to follow Him, learning His way of acting and recognizing His presence in the very diverse ways of day to day life. We all have this precious gift that the Church has given us through Ignacio. It serves as a specific source of our charism, offering us an experience that we can repeat again and again with regularity. I can assure you that it is worthwhile. Every time I do the Exercises I feel that the Lord is present in more parts of my life and He is shaping me in a way that I can keep growing and maturing more humanely and spiritually.

In 2008, as a community, we did a discernment to accomplish the Temporary Commitment. Being respectful of the freedom and timing of individuals, some of us did it that year, others later.

When I look back and remember what I lived in those years I feel that the CLC has become that place in which I choose to live my life as a lay person, as a Christian, and Ignatian in a community. For me the CLC is place of gathering, a place to share, to celebrate, and hope, with individual and community discernments. It is a place to accompany and to be accompanied by others. This CLC is a gift in my life, but at the same time it is also a duty and a mission.

ii) Community. No community (nor personal) process is ever linear. The community in which I was initiated into CLC started losing some members. These were people who came to realize after a while that they didn't want to live their life there. What we must remember is that the CLC is foremost an individual vocation, though one that is lived in community. In 2011, after completing a communal discernment, we decided to unite ourselves into an-

other community. This is how RUMBO was born, my current community in Uruguay. It is so-called because of a text by San Alberto Hurtado “El Rumbo de la Vida” (the direction of Life). The members of my community have been (and still are) very important to my process of growth. They were fundamental in the discernment to nominate myself for the position of Executive Secretary. They have helped me to discern, they have sent me here, and they are with me - even despite the physical distance. One of the most important things that they instilled in me was the importance of making decisions while still listening to the thoughts and feelings of other community members. There is a moment in which you feel you really want to hear these voices before you can reach a decision. I heard once someone saying that the task of being with each other in a community is hard work but, when you do it, you can feel your life expand, you can share joy; suddenly the word ‘community’ is infused with meaning.

iii) Mission. I always understood the CLC as both a place of obligation, in which one seeks to grow and go deeper into the mission of the community, and as a broader ecclesiastical movement within the wider society. In this sense I had the opportunity of undertaking some services to my national community in Uruguay: I was a member of the National Executive Council (2010-2012), the Communication Team, the Frontier Church (a movement that we incorporated in 2013 into the CLC in Uruguay in order to align with an ecclesiastical reality of constant development and change). Being in the Council allowed me to extend my contact with the CLC outwards towards the community in Uruguay. I took part in the development course The Political Di-

Below from left to right

- The CLC RUMBO

- The ARUPA Team.

- Manuel with Alwin, Rojean and Aeraele at José Gsell House in Rome





mension of the Social Dimension of the CLC, first as a student and later as a coordinator. The course was organized by the Latin American CLC and I found it to be an extremely enriching experience in the same way as was the Mini Manila, organized by the Chilean CLC. And in 2018 I had the opportunity of living a universal experience at the CLC when I was part of the Coordination and Communication team of ARUPA during the last General Assembly in Buenos Aires. Although not directly participating in the Assembly, I consider it a real gift to have been there, to have heard the different stories, the different dreams, the joys, the hopes, the hard times and the calling of the Lord for the world community. I consider myself a privileged witness. It was to live and feel a One world community, diverse but united against its challenges - willing to be a gift to the church and the world.

We are all learning to live our lives in terms of a mission and its duties. This learning implies that we need to get out of ourselves in order to meet with others. It is difficult to understand my (our) being in CLC if it's not in terms of a mission. We have been sent as collaborators in the mission of Christ, commended to the Church, to build a more just society, more humane with more dignity.

And now in Rome, looking at the World

In October 2019 I arrived in Rome, and even though I came alone, I felt accompanied and sent by my family, my friends and the Rumbo community in Uruguay. After a transition period with Alwin and Rojean, I've been fronting the Secretariat since January. This mission that I have started, and that I will carry out through the next years, I'm embracing with much hap-



piness. I'm receiving it gratefully. I feel that I'm in a very privileged position from which I can keep serving the CLC. I am convinced that renouncing my professional development in Uruguay to work and serve here is completely worthwhile. It has to be. I have joined a very rich world executive council with a lot of fortitude and willingness to continue working to contribute to the history of Grace of the CLC. In the Buenos Aires Assembly we were granted the gift that we asked for: more depth and integration in our living experience of our CLC charism in today's world. Every one of us in our personal stories can find fundamental moments. I feel that the CLC is experiencing one of those moments. I found it difficult to express how this started. I feel certain that in Buenos Aires there was a turning point. Now is the time to start walking the path, to be open to, to pay attention to the invitations of the Lord, for the lessons he will be giving us along the path, in the same way that he taught his disciples in Emmaus. But more than anything, we must increase our ownership of the experience as delegates of the Assembly, let ourselves be guided by the Spirit to achieve a common discernment of how to truly live our identity and realize our profound wishes for service in the current ecclesiastical and world context of today.

We have been invited to look beyond the horizon. I dream of a community that is continuously looking creatively for new paths to respond to today's challenges. A community that offers itself generously with what it is and what it has, sharing its tools for common discernment, of how to act for the church and for the world.

You can count on me. The secretariat amongst other things, has the duty of being a bridge and it has the privilege to look ahead to the world of the CLC and beyond through its "windows." Feel the Secretariat close to you. You are present for us and we pray for you and for each one of your missions.

I would wish to end citing Father Arupe – the prayer "Fall in Love" that has been with me for many years. I carry it with me. The final verse of that prayer says "Fall in love, stay in love, that will decide everything." That phrase is my guide. I have felt it all my life. It brings together the desire to find God in everything. It talks about the challenge to remain in that state and it also offers the reward of life in abundance. I ask Mary to be with me on my path in these future years of mission.

*(Original : Español
Translated by Sarah Walker)*



In times of pandemic: we do virtual community

The pandemic has meant that our face-to-face community meetings and celebrations have had to be replaced by virtual meetings. In the same spirit and desire to build community we have celebrated our World CLC Day and so many of us are holding our community meetings. Also on April 4th, the World CLC ExCo and Regional Teams met virtually to share how CLC is interpreting what is being seen and lived about the Covid-19 pandemic in our countries and the world; and how can CLC assist in the processes that are causing the pandemic and the consequent historical change?

We share some images that express this time that we have to live and some extracts of what was shared during the meeting with the regional teams. You can also see a video at: <https://youtu.be/U0uZmrVzvo0>



The Lord asks us and, in the midst of our tempest, invites us to reawaken and put into practice that solidarity and hope capable of giving strength, support and meaning to these hours when everything seems to be floundering. The Lord awakens so as to reawaken and revive our Eastern faith. We have an anchor: by his cross we have been saved. We have a rudder: by his cross we have been redeemed. We have a hope: by his cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from his redeeming love. In the midst of isolation when we are suffering from a lack of tenderness and chances to meet up, and we experience the loss of so many things, let us once again listen to the proclamation that saves us: he is risen and is living by our side.

*Pope Francis. 27th March
Extraordinary Moment of Prayer*

World ExCo

We are living in unprecedented times where people all over the world are experiencing the impact of this novel coronavirus. This year, CLC groups could NOT gather on World CLC Day due to government advisories or restrictions.

As a World ExCo, we recognize that our members are experiencing many challenges brought on by this disease. We want to listen to the stories, to hear the pain and sorrow, to learn the truth of what's happening on the ground. We want to walk closely with one another and listen together for the voice of God within.

How are we as CLC being invited by the Spirit to respond to this crisis? What is the role of CLC and Ignatian Spirituality? How can we help in healing our world? In uniting people? In discerning the way?

As CLC, as an Ignatian Family we feel the pains and difficulties, but we also feel the hopes. People can use this time to pause, to reflect, to feel, and to pray.

We can use this time for discernment in our own lives and within society.

The best and the worst are happening together. The Good Spirit and the evil spirit are working in the heart of each person and in our societies.

At this moment now, we are responding to the call in Buenos Aires to Deepen, Share and Go Forth.





Latin America Region

We view with concern all the consequences that this pandemic is causing and will cause in our countries and worldwide, mostly at the socio-economic and cultural level. We come from a poor region, with lack of planning, where this pandemic increases and deepens injustices and vulnerabilities. Inequality kills. And the situation in which many sisters and brothers find themselves hurts us profoundly.

We also consider it a call to solidarity, an opportunity to practice solidarity, trying to heal the pain of humanity, humanity that is united in pain, fear and anguish, united perhaps as never before, without distinction of classes, ideologies and / or religions (as Pope Francis says "we realized that we were all in the same boat, all fragile and disoriented ...").



Preparing our hands, minds and hearts to accompany the brother who is already without hope or who is going to be devastated. Social isolation has also called us to the most mystical part of our spirituality, to our direct and individual relationship with God through prayer, but in an apparent paradox, we have looked for ways to maintain community ties and to stay especially accompanied, clearly understanding that CLC is a gift for the Church and for the World, and that we cannot forget propitious questions of: Where do you call me Lord? What am I going to do for Christ in the suffering and needy brother in every aspect?

Africa Region

Until we get a clearer picture and while waiting for the prevention and cure of the pandemic, many Cameroonians and Africans are turning more to God. At the same time, they are beginning to trust again in the virtues of the herbs and the natural plants that God gives to our soils. The strong desire to leave Africa for Europe, North America and China is waning, as borders are even closed. I won't be surprised that after the pandemic, people don't get out of our countries much anymore. . . But, for the moment I feel, a real surge of compassion and solidarity with what is happening in the whole world: without touching each other, we are holding hands, thanks to this encounter!



Europe Region

World community-> We are interconnected in the world, part of the world – not in the penthouse

Great need for international connectedness – feeling, sharing, exchanging

Invitation to experience other means of being community, to live our relationships

Fear, suffering, desolation -> we are surrounded by death, by threats

Invitation to open our eyes, to be with people, to accompany, to listen

Integrate Contemplation and Action

“We need gestures more than words...”

We are invited to cope with the situation “Embrace the situation...”

- “Don’t be afraid...”

- “I will be with you always...”

We experience the lack of... the loss of control...

We are invited to Trust... Faith... “it is time to move our tent...”

We are invited to small gestures towards our family, our friends, our neighbours, our colleagues... right here! right now! “take care and support the lonely, the poor, the sick ... go to the frontiers!”

We are invited to share our treasure - Ignatian tools - with the world.



Nacho from CLC in Spain

CLC members, as lay citizens, are showing commitment to their professional role in society: Medical doctors like Blanca taking care of the infected, teachers promoting on-line education for kids and youngsters, social workers, lawyers... We all are supporting the common good and public structures, giving the best of our persons in this emergency, showing hope in the good of humanity, following the image of the multiplication of loaves and fishes that happened due to the sharing of talents and possessions.



Luisa from CLC in Italy

It's a time for reflection, reading, focusing on the essential, a time which will probably bring about important changes in our future life, in the relationships, in our priorities and in the choice to protect the environment.

The Church is doing a lot: Spiritual and psychological support to revive the sense of community, our faith (info through the Diocese and parishes, Masses and prayers on line and through TV and radio).

There is a lot of spiritual input also from the Jesuits (Spiritual Exercises online); as CLC video or audio conferences in the small communities, communication from CLC national Exco and the Jesuits).

A challenging time, my vision is full of hope in people and in the Lord; from Him we receive help and opportunities to become a better humanity.



North America Region

Practicing our daily Awareness Examen will help us discover what is really making a difference in our lives and in the lives of others. Re-discovering our Principle and Foundation in light of this worldwide pandemic could provide us an opportunity to experience it at another, deeper level. Practicing discernment, personally and communally will help us direct our energies toward the immediate needs while being creative in our responses. Our “under the tent” experience in Buenos Aires calling us to deepen share and go forth is seemingly taking shape, calling us to serve, telling our story in new ways, embracing our own fragility, knowing we are strong in the Lord. The earth is at a standstill, free of all the customary noises... perhaps ready to hear the good news.



Our DSSE process will ensure us to respond clearly and effectively to go to the margins, our four frontiers (Families, poverty, Ecology, Youth) are closely repeated in the Jesuit Apostolic Preferences. Our overburdened and abused common home is at rest and our creation care in the post-coronavirus era will need to be ensured by common efforts in sustaining its vitality. In this global call to be still, to pause, we pray for Earth's regenerative healing and restoration.

What we are living globally is one of the most apparent “signs of the times” needing to be thoroughly looked at and acted upon. It is most important for CLC to be leaven to the world in these times of distress.

Asia Region

In Asia-Pacific region, the Pandemic situation is different country by country.

But today there is a lot of real pain and suffering for many people. We all expressed our feelings in common: anger, confusion, disappointment, fear and deep sadness.

Humility is a key experience. I pray for us to take the learnings and consequences of such experience!

We share the pain of those who are suffering from the harm of this pandemic. And in CLC it will move all to act with humility, love and a sense of urgency with the most needy.

It is even more urgent that we go forth to the frontiers...the frontier of loneliness which is felt everywhere even more with today's sharing. We really need to be agents of hope.

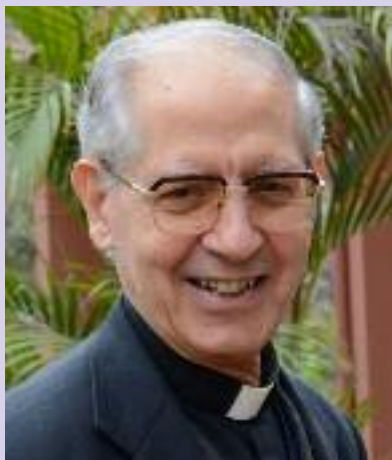


Middle East Region

This pandemic has brought the attention of everybody to all the graces we used to take for granted and that we are now deprived of such as: human relations, the connectivity between the whole world, the need of one another, the meaning of embracing one another and being close to each other...

The Holy Week this year and every year can only lead us to the resurrection, as it is the core of our faith and the summit of our hope. That is, if the pain is prolonged and the wind increases, the storm will inevitably end because Christ in the boat sees what we, his companions, don't see: that the opposite shore holds us a promise of a new land.

In Memory



Dear friends:

At the printing stage of this issue of *Progressio Magazine*, we received the sad news that Father Adolfo Nicolás S.J. has passed away on 20 May 2020, at the age of 84. Fr. Nicolás, was the World CLC Ecclesiastical Assistant in the period of 2008 until 2016. He was present at the General Assembly in Fatima (2008) and in Lebanon (2013). He was the former Superior General of the Society of Jesus, elected by the 35th General Congregation on 19 January 2008. Eight years later, on 3 October 2016, General Congregation 36 accepted his resignation. Many have had the opportunity to listen to him or have a brief exchange with him. He was a wise, generous, and warm person. A meeting with him was always imbued with wit, sense of humour, truths, and invitations.

Recognizing our particular vocation as an Ignatian lay apostolic body, he accompanied and challenged us in our efforts to be an active presence in our world. "The Christian is essentially communitarian. Wherever he goes he creates community, because he accepts, forgives, rejoices, supports, endures." His constant invitation to us to be able to, through Ignatian spirituality, provide the depth that the world needs; his words on our being prophetic lay community or his invitation to commit ourselves to the world speaking from the language of wisdom, discovering the merciful action of God in daily life, are valuable, all the more today.

We are affected by the loss of a companion on the way. But we also thank the Lord for so much good received and for the gift of communion that has been deepened with the Society of Jesus, through Fr. Nicolás. May the Lord receive him into his arms.



It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of David Formosa in December 2019 and of Patricia Kane in April 2020. David and Patricia, both members of our lay Ignatian community, generously served the world community as translators in our *Progressio* publications.

David was part of the England and Wales national community. He was a valued member, who also did so much work for CLC in the office at Mount Street, both as administrator and as Treasurer.

Patricia overcame challenges, especially with her health, to enthusiastically explore the world. She had a deep commitment to social justice, striving for environmental justice... She had a deep Catholic faith, which gradually found expression in Ignatian spirituality and Christian Life

Community. She brought CLC to New Zealand in 1997 after experiencing CLC communities in England and France

(quoted Sarah Dench – CLC in New Zealand). From 1996 to 1997 Patricia worked at the World CLC Secretariat in Rome as English translator.

We give thanks to the Lord for the gift of David, of Patricia. The lives they have fully lived have enriched and touched countless others. In the name of Patricia and David, we also remember with much gratitude those CLC members, family, friends, and Jesuit collaborators who have died recently.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



