

**THE PROCESS OF GROWTH
IN CLC**

Guidelines for formation

CONTENTS

Foreword	5
Introduction.....	9
1. Aspects of the CLC Growth Process	13
1.1 Jesus as our Model of Growth.....	13
1.2 Service in the Church	13
1.3 The Ignatian Process	14
1.4 Fundamental Aspects of Personality	15
1.5 Spiritual Guidance.....	17
2. Dimensions of Vocation	20
2.1 The Spiritual Dimension (Ignatian)	20
• Jesus Calls Us to be with Him	20
• We are Members of the People of God.....	21
• Ignatian Identity	21
2.2 The Community Dimension	22
• Being/Being with Others	22
• Growing in Universality	23
• Feeling/Feeling with the Church.....	23
2.3 The Apostolic Dimension	24
• Preaching the Gospels.....	24
• An Apostolic Community.....	26
• Sharing Responsibility for Greater Service	26
• A Special Preference for the Poor.....	27
3. Phases (and the Dynamic) of CLC Formation	29
3.1 The Desires.....	29
3.2 The Search.....	30
3.3 The Discovery	31
3.4 The Confirmation	32
4. Stages of CLC Formation.....	33
4.1 Stage 1: First Contact and the Reception/Welcome Period in CLC: ‘ <i>Lord, where do You live?</i> ’	36
• Objectives of the Reception/Welcome Stage.....	37

•	Approximate Time Scale	37
•	Content of the Reception/Welcome stage.....	38
•	Fundamental Means of the Reception/Welcome stage	38
•	Signs pointing to the end of the Reception/Welcome.....	40
4.2	Stage 2: Laying the Foundations for Vocation.....	41
•	Objectives of the Vocation Foundation stage	41
•	Approximate Time Scale	42
•	Content of the Vocation Foundation stage	42
•	Fundamental Means of the Vocation Foundation stage.....	44
•	Signs pointing to the end of the Vocation Foundation	47
4.3	Stage 3: Discernment of Vocation Stage.....	48
•	Objectives of the Discernment of Vocation Stage.....	49
•	Approximate Time Scale	49
•	Content of the Discernment of Vocation Stage	50
•	Fundamental Means of the Discernment of Vocation	51
•	Signs pointing to the end of the Discernment of Vocation Stage	53
4.4	Stage 4: Apostolic Discernment Stage	54
•	Objectives of the Apostolic Discernment stage	55
•	Approximate Time Scale	55
•	Content of the Apostolic Discernment Stage.....	56
•	Fundamental Means of the Apostolic Discernment Stage.....	57
•	Signs when the Apostolic Discernment stage is being lived to the full.....	60
5.	Community Organisation and Roles in the Process	62
5.1	Various Community roles	62
5.2	Role of the Community in the Process.....	71
6.	Epilogue.....	74
Annex 1:	Meetings.....	75
Table 1:	Dimensions of CLC Vocation.....	78
Table 2:	Stages of CLC Formation/Growth	80
Table 3:	Signs of Formation/Growth by Dimension in CLC	88

Foreword

Every now and then in the life of a community such as CLC, with God's Grace, a special opportunity for renewal presents itself. With the production of this document "The Processes of Growth in CLC", such an occasion is presented to us.



It is already quite a number of years since the last Formation document appeared, ie "The CLC Charism" – unfolding our journey of at that time nearly 30 years -. As explained in the Introduction to these Guidelines, the 1996 document, published as Progressio Supplement Nos 45*46, consisted of two parts: Part I – "Criteria for CLC Formation" and Part II – "The CLC Process of Growth". Based on the experiences and fruits of Itaici 1998, a revised version of the first part was published in 2001 (Progressio Supplement No 56).

Reflecting on the rich experiences in formation in our world wide community but also on the great challenges we are facing in formation in order to live and act as an apostolic body, the revision of Part II took even longer. In the Executive Committee, we had to develop a clearer understanding of what type of document could be helpful, facing the challenge of growing in formation for mission and paying attention to the diversity we are living as CLC in the various region of our world.

This document that we finally are presenting to all of you is of special value to us in many ways in terms of both its inspiration and its practical wisdom on how to proceed - not only in matters of Formation, but also more generally as a "prophetic community". In the spirit and tradition of our General Principles, the Survey (1982) document and two subsequent Charism documents, it is an instrument for a further deepening of our collective vocation and apostolic mission in the world. It is a further step

in our renewal, our rebirth, and our new identity, commenced in 1967. Along with our General Principles, it aims to help us express our deepest desires of apostolic service. As “by living our charism more deeply, we will act more effectively as an apostolic body” (Fátima, #2.4).

Document content: In practical terms, this document is a comprehensive guide to CLC processes of growth, developing the key experiences in our CLC formation process. It addresses the nature of CLC growth processes, the dimensions of CLC vocation and the phases and dynamic of formation in CLC as experienced at the personal level. It also describes the various stages of CLC formation as experienced and implemented at the communal level. Finally, it addresses the matter of community organisation and various roles to facilitate all aspects of CLC formation and functioning.

Throughout this document there are also running a number of other important themes. These relate to engagement in Christ’s mission, apostolic discernment (both personal and communal), Ignatian spirituality (especially the Spiritual Exercises), personal vocation and CLC collaboration with the Society of Jesus and the extended Ignatian Network. It seeks to facilitate formation at both the individual and community levels and describes processes of growth and integration appropriate to both levels.

While this document contains valuable information, its true fruits are to be found in its committed implementation and a wholehearted engagement by all. These guidelines, serving as a framework and pathway, will live from being “translated” and adapted to national and local realities.

Document usage: This document has been prepared for all CLC members, but especially Guides, Formation Teams (ie those people responsible for CLC Formation processes), and those with other formal responsibilities in CLC. It assumes considerable prior experience and familiarity with the CLC way of life and its essential formation processes.

The document will be of greatest use to those with a full grasp of the total CLC Formation process thereby enabling them to choose freely what is required for the task at hand. While it is a valuable resource in facilitating a full and integrated CLC formation experience, it is still only

a part of the total arrangements that need to be brought to that task, be they other texts, people and experiences.

In addition, there is an important Leadership role for CLC national communities, namely, the implementation of Formation processes in a way that is appropriate for their context in terms of community needs and their environment.

We encourage those with special responsibilities in CLC formation to see their task as a special mission in itself aimed at nothing less than facilitating CLC personal and community renewal.

Document limitations: This document will be applied in many diverse cultural contexts. In doing so, it is acknowledged that there will be a need for its style and expression to be adapted to such contexts. It may need to be complemented by other locally produced documents enabling the fullest appreciation, implementation and practice of its contents.

As with previous CLC Charism publications, this document is comprehensive and therefore seems to be somewhat lengthy. However, Exco and editors decided that the document should be published in its entirety as a valuable resource document for all. Some countries or regions may wish to create a more abbreviated version of the whole or parts for more local usage.

We want to thank wholeheartedly the team, consisting of CLC members from Ecuador, Perú, Spain and the United States of America, responsible for the production of the Formation document and the many others who have been influential in the project. In doing so, we acknowledge the very significant amount of prayer, reflection, consultation and work that has gone into its production.

This document makes a further contribution to our understanding and living of the Charism of CLC as a particular vocation within the Church. It is another step in the history of Christ's presence and call in our lives and our response both individually and as a community.

Those age-old questions asked by the ancient Greeks, "How shall we live?" and "What shall we do?" are universally relevant and always in need of answering anew, according to time and circumstance. We have

our answer in our way in Christ, “the Way, the Truth and the Life” (Jn 14, 6), in Ignatian Spirituality and in our CLC Charism. This document challenges us to see our responsibilities seriously and clearly, to respond generously without deferment and to seek, constantly, the answers to the needs of our times. Importantly, it provides practical advice on how to proceed in all these matters. Along with our General principles, let us use this document as an inspiration and a point of reference when we review our lives and program our activities.

On the occasion of the publication of this document, we endeavour to bring a generous and willing disposition to the possibilities before us and ask the Holy Spirit for the Grace needed to be renewed and strengthened in our vocations and mission. We ask this that we may bring the light of Christ and the promise of His message to wherever in the world we live and where it is needed most. Or as the Fátima assembly put it: “May all members of the World community ‘store up all these things in their hearts’ (Lk 2,51), that we might live more deeply and act more effectively as an apostolic body journeying with the poor and humble Christ through human history, and become ever more closely identified with his mission (GP 8).”

Daniela Frank
World CLC President

October 2009

INTRODUCTION

I. Bringing together CLC traditions, life experiences and needs as perceived at the 1994 Hong Kong World Assembly, the original version of the document “*The CLC Charism*” Supp No 45 & 46 (Dec 1996)) was published. This two part document offered to the CLC World Community reflections on our characteristics as CLC members, on formation and on the nature of our vocation and mission in the Church.

II. The first Part of this 1996 document (that part entitled at the time “*Part 1: Criteria for CLC Formation*”) was subsequently revised. In the year 2001, having been previously approved at the Itaiçi World Assembly in 1998, the document was published by ‘Progressio’ and entitled “*The CLC Charism – Revised*” Supp No 56 Dec 2001.

III. Revision of the second part of the 1996 document (entitled “*Part 2: The CLC Process of Growth*”), was postponed in order to allow detailed study and revisions to take place. It was felt, at the time, that there was a need for a deeper examination of the various aspects of CLC formation processes and of our personal and community vocation. This document here is the revision of that second part of the 1996 document and is now being published as “*The Processes of Growth in CLC*”

IV. Since its very inception, CLC has journeyed along a path leading to mission, a fundamental element of our charism, and the subject of special emphasis at more recent CLC Assemblies. At the 1994 Hong Kong World Assembly, the Community experienced confirmation of the desire and the grace of being ‘*a community on mission*’. At the 1998 Itaiçi World Assembly, we understood that ‘*our common mission*’ as a World Community was to respond to the Lord regarding the most urgent and universal needs of the world today. At the 2003 Nairobi World Assembly, faced with the reality of the globalised world in which we now live, we received the grace of being “sent out by Christ as members of one body” to ‘*walk together supporting each other*’¹ and to respond as an apostolic community to the challenges of our times.

¹ Supplement 58 of ‘*Progressio*’, Recommendations of the XIV CLC General Assembly, Nairobi 2003, p. 95.

V. Wishing to respond to the call of Our Lord in our times, the 2003 Nairobi World Assembly also invited us (in its recommendations) to go more fully into those processes which help us to live out our CLC vocation and mission and, in a special way, to move forward with strong formation and leadership, *'these being essential requisites in this step towards an organization which is more apostolic'*².

VI. The World Executive Council, in order to implement this process, commissioned an international team to draw up a draft text to assist communities with their proposals about formation in CLC.

VII. In drawing up this document, full account has been taken of the recommendations and directions of the most recent World Assemblies, as well as the responses received to surveys carried out by the World Executive Council over the past two years. Also noted have been concerns expressed at recent International Encounters and Formation experiences of various national and regional communities. It goes without saying that, at all times, the work being undertaken has had, as its point of reference, *'The Spiritual Exercises'* of St. Ignatius (these being the specific source of our Spirituality³), the General Principles and General Norms and also the Formation Criteria contained in the CLC Charism (2001) document.

VIII. The present document aims to integrate what we ***already are*** with what we ***hope to be***. For that reason, on the one hand, it gathers together principles of the CLC formation *'process'* and the experiences of people and communities and, on the other hand, it attempts to look towards the future and to bring up to date the CLC growth processes in accordance with the *'call'* of Nairobi. We recall how the Nairobi Assembly invited us to move forward ***'in order to become an apostolic body which discerns, sends out, supports and evaluates'***. The objectives of this document are, firstly, to foster a greater unity within the World Community while still recognising the value and richness of diversity. A second objective is to serve as a guide for Formation processes of national communities. It seeks to do this by offering a framework and pathway to national

² Recommendations of the XIV General Assembly, Nairobi 2003, p.93

³ General Principles 5

communities to assist them in working out their own formation plans according with their own needs and realities. The document does not set out to establish a set of norms which must be complied with. Rather, it seeks to encourage us to go deeper within, to journey along our own path of growth with the ultimate aim of sharing our vocation and participating more fully in the mission we have as an apostolic body within the Church.

IX. Firstly, this document brings together certain common and fundamental features of the vocation process as proposed by CLC and these are referred to as ‘**aspects**’ of the **CLC growth process**. The document then deals with the various *dimensions* that define the CLC vocation after which it examines the *phases* of CLC formation process from the perspectives of both personal and community growth. We offer these sections in the hope that they will help in understanding the interior processes and experience of CLC formation and Vocation and also help us to evaluate of our personal, community and apostolic growth processes.

X. Secondly, the document presents the four essential *stages* of the CLC *formation journey* and also examines various *roles in the CLC growth process*. In each one of the stages *of the journey*, we indicate what the objectives, approximate time scale, content, the fundamental means and the signs that point to the end of the stage, should be.

- ***The ‘Objectives’ and ‘The Signs of a Change’ Stages:*** *These are* both based on the actual experiences of many people who have made their way along this journey. These people present some of the ‘*milestones*’ which are characteristic of the CLC ‘*path*’ and these represent the fruits which ‘*set the pace*’ of our journeying along each stage of that path. These (milestones) can also help us situate ourselves both personally and as a community at the exact point of our journey in the vocational process,
- ***The ‘Contents’ and “...Means...” Stages:*** *These* offer certain proposals to be adapted in accordance with the special circumstances of each national and/or regional community so that the desired fruits of growth may be obtained.

- ***The Periods of Time (Approximate Time Scale):*** *These* offer us guidance to discern progress and possible ‘stagnation’ in the process.
- ***The Roles*** describe some functions and necessary responsibilities which can contribute to the organisation of the community and to the proper development of the process.
- ***Comment:*** Both the ***Journey*** and ***Roles*** sections offer certain ‘*indicators*’ to guides, coordinators and formation teams and will help them gain a deep interior knowledge of the process so that greater fruit might be obtained. Finally, ***Tables*** have been included at the end of the document to facilitate the use of the text and give an overall vision of its content.

XI. We put this document at the disposal of the community to be used ‘*as much and as often*’ as it helps and leads us to an intimate encounter with Jesus and might serve to illuminate and to inspire the way, the life and the mission of our communities.

XII. We place our confidence in the Lord who invites each one of us to live out this vocation and who accompanies us in our processes because we know that ‘He does not abandon the work of His hands’.

1

ASPECTS OF THE CLC GROWTH PROCESS

1. The search for one's own vocation is a personal journey of human and spiritual growth. In CLC, this growth process encompasses the entire life of a person. It is a process of increasing affirmation through consolidation of apostolic responses at each moment of the person's life.
2. Every human process reflects a definite vision of humanity including that about human growth. The 'essence' of our processes of growth are rooted in our beings as Christians and in our specific charism.

1.1 Jesus as our Model of Growth

3. We believe that God's Spirit, present in all people and all things⁴, prompts us to search for and grow towards the purpose He has for each of us.
4. Our model of humanity is that offered by Jesus in what he taught, what he did and how he lived. He was poor and humble; He recognised God as His Father/Mother and He discovered in each person a brother/sister to love so much that He gave His life for that person. The goal and hopefully experience of living, more closely, the way of life offered by Jesus⁵ is a central aim of the CLC process.

1.2 Service in the Church

5. The Church entrusts to the Christian Life Community the care of the treasure of the CLC charism - something it has received

⁴ Sp. Ex. 235 "to see how God dwells in creatures ...So He dwells in me, giving me being, life, sensation, intelligence; and makes a temple of me since I am created in the likeness and image..."

⁵ "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one goes to the Father except through me" Jn 14:6; "He who has seen me has seen the Father" Jn 14:9

from God. The Community accepts that mission and is vigilant to ensure that the processes of personal and community growth are consistent with our specific charism and contribute, in different ways, to the mission of Christ and His Church.⁶

6. From this perspective, CLC communities, attentive to the call of the Spirit⁷, seek to establish structures and look, from among their own members, for those who could help to form and accompany others in discovering their vocation and accomplishing their mission⁸.
7. Those who provide formation (and our CLC formation structures) carry out a mission of the Church, received by the World Christian Life Community. They are the channels of the Universal Church in the formation of its faithful in that journey of continuous conversion, always seeking to look for and find God in all things.

1.3 The Ignatian Process

8. The CLC way of life is a lay expression of the Spiritual Exercises⁹. Their pedagogy and methodology are present, with appropriate modifications¹⁰, in all phases of our personal and community growth and formation.

⁶ The World Assembly of Nairobi 2003 reminds the National Communities and the Executive Council (ExCo) of CLC of their responsibility to ‘...4. Have a more profound understanding of the second part of the Document “*Our CLC Charism*” (*Processes of Growth in CLC*) (“*Progressio*” Supplement No. 45-46, December 1996). 5. Guide all the formation programmes so that an apostolic body of laity is achieved and one which looks outwards, towards the world.

⁷ The policies and directions outlined by the World and National Assemblies GP 13, GN 16), CLC documents and recommendations of the various assemblies guide our proposals for development.

⁸ Christifidelis Laici, 58, “*The formation of the laity keeps as its basic aim the discovery of one’s own vocation and the greater readiness to live it out in the accomplishment of one’s own mission*”

⁹ Recommendations of the Nairobi Assembly, 2003. Our Charism document.

¹⁰ Sp. Ex. 18

9. The dynamic of the Spiritual Exercises brings the life of Jesus nearer to our deepest selves. We become ever closer to His interior dispositions, actions and words. In doing this, we experience conversion; our lives are transformed at both personal and community levels such that we are able to commit all our personal and community life in the salvation of all human kind¹¹.

1.4 Fundamental Aspects of Personality

10. Given that the CLC vocation is a personal one, the processes of growth and formation should help the person to know and reflect both upon oneself and upon the world in which s/he lives. It will also help a person to acquire an inner knowledge of God's will for him/her and to interiorise this in a personal and communal way that is for the good of the world.
11. Therefore, this CLC formation process includes, of necessity, a reflection of mind and heart which makes possible a deeper understanding of life and faith within the social and church context in which we live. In this way, we are able to form a relationship with God, with others, with nature and with ourselves, and to love that which we come to know.
12. **Intellectual Reflection** is carried out within the cultural context of each person and in the CLC group. It attempts to develop, by means of exercising spiritual discernment and social analysis, the capacity to understand reality in all its complexity and to think in both a critical and a creative manner.
13. Through the formation process, knowledge and experience will be gained which will allow a person to be affected by them as his/her own, to form one's own judgements in the light of Christian criteria, and to look for suitable solutions to world problems through our own personal life choices and apostolic service.

¹¹ GP8

14. The formation process will allow and encourage a person:
 - to reflect on the Christian message through theological and biblical study and the teachings of the Church
 - to enter into the spirit and practice of the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatian Spirituality and the CLC way of life as set out in the General Principles and Norms, and
 - to reflect on individual and social reality at all its levels: psycho-pedagogical, political, economic, socio-cultural and religious.
15. A person's *Affectivity* is also fundamental to human behaviour. Affections are reactions which spring forth from a person when one enters into relationship with his/her environment. Affections include tendencies, desires, emotions, feelings, and passions etc., which arise spontaneously, independently of our will. Affective maturity contributes decisively to the unfolding of the spiritual life, to positive relationships with others and to more profound apostolic action.
16. Because of this, the CLC formation process gives importance to affectivity so that a person, in a mature way, can live the pathway of knowledge and experience of the heart, can dialogue with his/her own feelings, can spot the inner resistances and possible deceptions, can cultivate healthy interpersonal relations and can promote a sense of justice, honesty and service. This is not just a matter of introspection but one of dialogue and trust in the unconditional love of God who constantly renews us, our relationships and our hopes for the present and the future.
17. Attaining affective maturity does not mean that all tensions disappear. Rather, they are being resolved without damaging personal integrity. They are being managed and integrated into the moral and spiritual life through the ability to make decisions without excessive doubt and with a sense of peace.
18. In CLC, we try to integrate faith and life in all their aspects, seeking to carry out God's will in family, married,

professional, working, and civil life. It is an apprenticeship of discernment of feelings and movements which helps make discerning individuals contemplatives in action.

19. The growth in human maturity must be evident in the coherence reflected in our way of life. Our wish is to grow in authenticity, freedom, generosity and responsibility.

1.5 Spiritual Guidance

20. *‘We recognise, particularly, the necessity of prayer and discernment (personal and communal), of the daily examination of conscience and of spiritual guidance. They are important means for seeking and finding God in all things’.*¹²
21. When the CLC Community accepts a person, it takes on the responsibility of accompanying and helping him/her to find out if the way of life proposed by CLC is his/her manner of responding to the call which God is making.¹³
22. National Communities articulate ways of spiritual guidance and of coordinating the processes of welcoming and growth within the various local communities. Among the tasks they see to, are the adaptation and diffusion of policies, guidelines and recommendations concerning CLC as set out by the World and National Assemblies¹⁴. These will relate to various matters – eg matters that are financial, cultural, and social in nature etc and also those that relate to membership, formation and governance.¹⁵ eg, rules for admission and membership.

¹² GP 5

¹³ GN 2 New members must be helped by the Community to assimilate the CLC style of life, to decide if they have been called to this and if they wish and are capable of living it out and of identifying themselves with the Christian Life Community beyond the confines of their own immediate group.

¹⁴ GP 13, GN 16.

¹⁵ GN 35 a, GN 40

23. The National Communities, taking into account their special cultural environment, will look for proper structures and processes to assist, in an efficient way, the spiritual guidance of persons and of groups through the different phases of the process.
24. The essential task of the Communities or formation teams is to watch over the Community at every geographical level (world, regional, national), so that formation contributes to the discovery and growth of the CLC way of life and to the service of the mission to which we are continually being called by God.
25. The CLC Community arrangements and structures for spiritual guidance and formation are meant to reflect and promote the CLC way of life. The Community calls together those who have this charism of spiritual guidance and/or formation and discerns who should form part of the structures which will look after and care for the vocational and apostolic growth of individuals and groups. It also participates in the choice of guides sent to accompany each group.
26. Spiritual guidance (and spiritual experience) in relation to one's own life is an important means for the growth of people and groups. This spiritual guidance takes into account the stages of growth and personal or community circumstances so that the fruit of each of these stages might be obtained.
27. The role of the guides, and the associated formation arrangements, is adaptable to the level of maturity of people and their groups and to their vocational and apostolic situations.¹⁶

¹⁶ *'The guide (...) helps the community to discern the movements at work in the individuals and the community, and helps them to maintain a clear idea of the CLC goals and process. The guide assists the community and its coordinator to find and to use the means needed for the community's formation and mission. The guides' participation in the life of the community is conditioned by what is needed to carry out effectively the role of the guide'. GN 41-b.*

28. The Community supports the members sent in mission and evaluates their apostolic work on a regular basis seeking always to serve better as '*an apostolic body of laity turned to face the world*'.¹⁷
29. As part of support for mission, the National Community creates and provides formation for Group Guides¹⁸ in the various aspects of this work, namely, human, theological, social, ecclesial, Ignatian (Spirituality) etc. This will help equip them for the task of spiritual guidance in the processes of vocational and apostolic discernment of individuals, groups and communities.
30. Additionally, the National Community organises and leads regular meetings for those (ie guides) who share the mission of spiritual guidance in the community, helping individuals and community to grow and be faithful to their mission. These meetings (as a body of guides) might include various encounters, opportunities for celebration, sharing of apostolic works and reflection/discussion of better ways to serve community, Church and the world.
31. The Community celebrates the progress which both individuals and the Community itself make and recognises the gifts which Our Lord has given to each person and to the Community. The discovery of the treasure of one's own vocation (although it need not be within CLC) and the making of advances in mission, eg in the promotion of justice, are reasons for joy and celebration in the body of the Church. Cherishing these moments of celebration symbolises our commitment and our desire to be faithful to the call God is making to us.

¹⁷ Recommendations of Nairobi 2003 (Formation, point 5)

¹⁸ GN 41b 'The guide, well formed...'

2

DIMENSIONS OF VOCATION

32. CLC life unfolds in three dimensions (sometimes called ‘pillars’ of CLC) which, from the point of view of the growth process of each person and community and of the response which they give to his/her vocation, cannot be separated from one another and they condition each other in a mutual way.¹⁹ These dimensions are:

Ignatian Spirituality – Community – Mission

33. These dimensions describe the type of person and Community we are. They arise from the formation we experience and are the source of our inspiration in attaining personal and community hopes. But, at the same time, these features are always present as a potential ability to be developed further and, in fact, have been the object of our desire from the very outset of the process.

2.1 The Spiritual Dimension (Ignatian)

Jesus calls us to be with Him.

34. Our life of faith begins with an opening up to the Transcendent, to God, and to being human in all its potential. We recognise the divine within the human and in the whole of creation. We seek to offer a sense of life and hope to the world.

¹⁹ There is only one vocation and, therefore, it must be appreciated that some topics are repeated at various points. We think that this repetition will help to make things clearer and show the unity of vocation. It is true that sometimes it is useful to look at our vocation from a special dimension, especially when we observe that we are neglecting that dimension, but that does not mean that that dimension is less important than others. The dimensions would be poorly interpreted if each one was being read separately from the others.

35. In a world where it is difficult to speak about God and God's plans for human beings, we are called to explain our faith and our hope.²⁰ And so we strive to grow in reflection and understanding of the Gospel message in order to be faithful witnesses in various contexts (professional, academic, rural, urban etc.) and cultures. Above all, we try to have the Gospel way so embedded within us that it has become our habitual way of life.²¹

We are Members of the People of God

36. The Church is the sacrament of salvation²² and CLC is called to '*feel with the Church*'. We live out our communion with Christ and the Church through our frequent participation in the sacraments, prayer and familiarity with the Scriptures. We desire to reflect, through our lives, the graces received from the various sacraments (especially the Eucharist) and we renew our commitment to live according to the way of Christ in our everyday lives.
37. Our Community celebrations, those of CLC, of the Church and of life itself, all have a sacramental dimension which we seek to discover and live to the fullest.

Ignatian Identity

38. Ignatian Spirituality invites us to union with Christ in order '*to love Him more dearly and follow Him more closely*'. The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius are fundamental and, after Christ, lie at the very heart of CLC.²³ They are the centre of our spirituality, a foundational and life-giving experience without which our belonging to CLC would cease to have any meaning. Fundamental too are prayer, spiritual guidance,

²⁰ 1 Peter 3, 15; GP 12; Charism 2001 no. 94

²¹ A regular and prayerful reading of the Bible, both individually and as a Community is a helpful way to achieve this. Theological and spiritual formation courses are also very important.

²² Vatican II LG 1

²³ GP 8; Charism 2001 no.18, 50.

review of our lives and the awareness examen (or the daily pause for reflection).

39. All of this helps us to serve, to be people for others as Christ was and as Ignatius understood and exemplified so well.
40. Our spirituality also disposes us to find God in all things, that is to say, to be contemplatives in action, with Mary as our example.
41. We value Ignatian Spirituality and we deepen our knowledge and experience of it as a means of conversion to and identification with Christ.²⁴ It helps us to recognise and accept our richness and our limitations and to deepen our sense of responsibility, to be empowered, to offer advice and to be available to accompany others and to work for justice, peace, freedom and for the dignity of all.²⁵

2.2 *The Community Dimension*

Being/Being with Others

42. We come together in small communities or groups to live out inter-relational communion with God and to help each other to grow in our own vocation and mission.²⁶ The invitation to live in Community, which reflects the progress of its members, their steps forward and their steps backward, derives from Biblical tradition.
43. Our participation in community life is marked by its quality and relationship with others²⁷, where we discretely and openly

²⁴ 'I no longer live but it is Christ Who lives in me; the life I live at present in the flesh, I live it in faith of the Son of God Who loved me and handed Himself over for me. I do not consider God's grace to be useless, since if by law justification were obtained, then Christ would have died in vain.' Galatians 2, 20-21.

²⁵ GP 2

²⁶ Charism 2001 no.28; GP 4

²⁷ We would like to recover the attraction which was characteristic of the first Christian communities. Seeing these small and new Christian groups many said '*look how they love each other*'. Tertullian (11th century) notes that this was said by the

share in the life experiences of the members. We focus on the discernment of our personal and community life 'projects'. We are discerning communities.

44. Formation, which is lived and offered with spiritual guidance in the Community, has as its ultimate aim our gradual integration into a particular group, into our National Community and into the World Community and the Church. At the appropriate times, we take on temporary and permanent commitments as a natural step in our identification with CLC and out of our love for our own vocation.²⁸

Growing in Universality

45. CLC is a World Community but membership is expressed, on an everyday basis, through commitment to one particular group.²⁹ Collectively, all CLC members form one body and we identify ourselves with the General Principles, the General Norms and the Charism documents. It is there that can be found the fundamental basis and universal character of our vocation. This vocation transcends cultural and any other special differences.
46. In the same way, we take on the decisions of the World General Assemblies and the World Executive Councils. Community life extends to work and various service communities: eg apostolic teams, teams of guides, leadership communities (councils at local, regional, national level) etc.

Feeling/Feeling with the Church

47. Since we are an ecclesial community, we live in communion, in all ways, with the Church. The lay vocation of CLC is one option among many others which enriches the Church (whom

critics and detractors of Christianity. It cannot be denied that communion of lives, wills and even goods in certain circumstances, fascinated those who were not Christians; thus many conversions came about, in spite of the persecutions.

²⁸ GP 10 GN 2-4.

²⁹ GP 7, 10, 11

we ‘serve humbly because we love her passionately’³⁰). We maintain stable relations with Church hierarchy, religious and various organisations or movements in the local churches. We have a special and natural affinity with those organisations which share Ignatian Spirituality.³¹

48. As laity, the Church entrusts us with sharing in the evangelisation of the world ie the evangelisation of the family, of culture and of political and economic structures etc. In this context, we are called upon to discover the richness of the lay vocation, to live it fully, and thus to nourish the Church, being creatively faithful.

2.3 *The Apostolic Dimension*

Preaching the Gospels

49. Each person is invited to respond to the call of Christ from his/her own particular circumstances. To be loved by God also involves being sent by God. Because of this, CLC promotes formative apostolic experiences with the aim of inviting the person to respond to that call from his/her own particular circumstances and to fully embrace the theme of mission. Apostolic experiences provide not just theoretical but also practical knowledge and experience of the world in which we live.
50. Mission is not just one more activity – it lies at the very heart of all Christian and CLC identity. A CLC vocation implies being on mission. This means that all of our life, our activities and our ‘spaces’ are nourished through our being sent out by Christ. For that reason, the CLC mission field knows no limits. It extends to all aspects of human life³², wherever God

³⁰ Arrupe. ‘*The Church of today and of the Future*’, p. 491, Ed. Mensajero, Sal Terrae, Bilbao- Santander.

³¹ Nairobi 2003, Our National Dimension, 8.

³² GP 8: Charism 2001 no.87 gives an extensive account of the possible areas of mission. We could mention among those, daily life, the family, our profession, studies, culture, politics, economics, service to CLC itself, taking part in Parish and

may wish to call us – to the Church or to the world, to those within and to those without, to family or to work, to cultural, social and production organisations, and to political and cultural life.

51. Through the witness of our lives, we answer some of the questions and confusions of our culture and times³³. The life of a CLC member is characterised by making real, the way of Jesus with freedom, solidarity, transparency and simplicity. We consider of great importance that our moral life is faithful to the dignity of the human person, to the spirit that gives it life³⁴ and to Christian values.
52. We understand our personal action in daily life as an answer, in freedom, to the invitation of God. Our way of life is based on discernment which helps us to evaluate the facts of life situations more critically and to uncover the will of God in each concrete situation³⁵.
53. CLC applies Ignatian principles of apostolic discernment showing a clear preference for the most urgent and universal calls, thereby helping to bring about 'liberation' from those barriers discriminating between rich and poor, evangelising our culture and promoting the unity of Christians.³⁶
54. The wide scope of our mission makes personal, community and apostolic discernment within CLC an especially important activity.³⁷ This practice needs to be applied at all levels and significant instances, evaluating with Our Lord the calls to

other church institutions etc. We should also keep in mind the fields suggested by the Itaiçi World Assembly. *'Progressio'* Supplement No. 59, December 2004.

³³ We accept that there are diverse and equally valid ethical approaches. The problem is with certain extreme attitudes when one acts on their basis, like hedonistic subjectivism (*'I'll do what I like'*), exaggerated pragmatism (*'what matters is what is easier and more practical'*), scepticism about values (*'no ideal is worth the trouble'*), the relativisms, etc.

³⁴ Charism 2001, no. 87

³⁵ GP5, Charism 2001, no. 19, 61-70, 109-124

³⁶ GP 8d

³⁷ GP 12 a and b.

serve Him in others, recognising the voice of God in the needs of our brothers/sisters.

55. It is important to offer free and specific opportunities for service. Commonly known as '*apostolates*' or services, these serve to provide valuable direct experiences, which, in turn, are likely to increase our sense of and preparedness for availability.

An Apostolic Community³⁸

56. The world in which we are sent requires from us a joint responsibility in mission. Contemplation of the suffering world, contact with reality and the apostolic experiences of service inspire us to carry out our mission as one body working for the Kingdom of God bringing forth greater fruit and in a more universal way.³⁹
57. In order to share in responsibility for mission, we have to discern together, to commission and be sent, to support each other and, finally, to evaluate what has been carried out. When a Community lives out this process, each also shares the responsibility for those missions entrusted by God to each of its other members and in this way it is transformed into an apostolic Community.
58. Eventually, members of CLC can take on a common apostolate or a group mission. To do this, we discern our mission together with the tasks and means relating to it. So that better service can be given outside CLC, the organisation and life of the community must be strengthened and served.

Sharing Responsibility for Greater Service

³⁸ '*And He called the Twelve and began to send them out in twos, giving them power over unclean spirits.*' Mark 6,7.

³⁹ Motto of the Nairobi Assembly, 2003: '*Sent by Christ, members of one body*'.

59. CLC life and its evangelising action take place within the context of the Kingdom of God: it is a task which God begins and is continued with the Church⁴⁰ Our spirituality presents us with valuable opportunities for collaboration with those who share it. CLC promotes collaboration with the Society of Jesus as well as with other religious congregations and lay movements, doing all it can to contribute to the development of new apostolic undertaking.
60. At the same time, we recognise the value of other churches and religions with which we collaborate with a view to creating a 'more divine world'. In the same way, we collaborate with various institutions and persons in civil society to promote a 'more just world'. We link up with and collaborate with all people who are working for justice and fighting for peace, no matter what their social condition, their race, or their beliefs.⁴¹

A Special Preference for the Poor

61. Jesus Christ lived as a poor man and fought against the structural causes of poverty and marginalisation. We share in His special preference for the poor and we want this to change our way of life. We express this through an effective commitment to and solidarity with those who suffer most and who are least taken into account.⁴²
62. In this way, we undertake our daily commitment to accomplishing our rights and duties, promoting them in society, especially in defence of the rights of the underprivileged. We believe that we can offer a more universal good, a fairer and better order, working for the

⁴⁰ GP 6: Charism 2001 no. 96

⁴¹ GP 8. Likewise our public commitment to justice will be carried out in various forums such as civic collectives, NGOs, State organisations, volunteer groups, companies etc.

⁴² Charism 2001 no. 20, 92, 93, 95. We recall especially the motto of the Manila Assembly of 74: '*Called to be poor, Poor in Christ to serve better.*'

common good. Because of this, our presence in politics, expressed in a daily Christian way, is important⁴³.

63. The divine message and offer of salvation are universal; they do not exclude people or groups. Nevertheless, the option for the poor is based on the fact that God loves and cares for those whom society marginalises. The poor are the protagonists in the building of the Kingdom of God.
64. We recognise the dignity of all and their ability to be active in the creation of a world which is more just. Our special preference for the poorest leads us to approach our marginalised and excluded brothers and sisters to discover what their needs and desires are and to work with them in the creation of a more humane society. We seek ways in which might bring about a life of dignity for all, realising our potential and in doing so, helping make the Gospel message a reality. Our commitment to and hopefully noticeable change in the circumstances of injustice in which the marginalised live is the key test of our identification with Christ and the effectiveness of our apostolic action.⁴⁴

⁴³ *Christifideles Laici* 42 and 43

⁴⁴ Jesus presents His Mission (Luke 4, 16) as a time of grace for all, especially for the poor. We can find a clearer explanation in the scene where those sent by John the Baptist ask Jesus about Himself: 'Are You the One Who was to come?' (Luke 7, 18-23). Jesus does not reply either by interpreting the Scriptures or by speeches but by showing what He does for those who suffer. He replies: 'Go and show John what you have seen...' The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are made clean and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor. If the Good News has arrived, then something must change. 'Look all around you!' This 'all around you' is not the same place anymore since Jesus has come. The reflections made by Pope John Paul II in his Letter 'Novo Millennio Ineunte' (49-50) also inspire us; as he comments on Matthew 25, he challenges us to seek the face of Christ in the poor.

3

PHASES (AND THE DYNAMIC) OF CLC FORMATION

65. CLC formation is a process of personal and community conversion in which we grow in identification with Christ⁴⁵ in new situations, in new dimensions of our personality and at new levels of profundity. At each phase of formation, the CLC member tries to assimilate certain values and develop certain attitudes which are those of the Spirit of the Lord. These values relate to his/her way of being and living, with new ways of loving God and one's neighbour. The ultimate aim of CLC is to form communities of discerning men and women ready for mission in any sphere of life as the call is experienced and discerned.
66. During the process of assimilation of values in following Christ, CLC formation proposes a journey based on the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius: Reception/Welcome, Laying the Foundations of Vocation, Discernment of Vocation and Apostolic Discernment. During this process, we live through a continuous conversion by the grace of Our Lord which will last throughout our lives. We will also journey through certain phases of personal growth in a cyclical manner: desires, search, discovery and confirmation.

3.1 *The Desires*

67. The first step in human and spiritual growth is desire. The interest with which an ideal is pursued and the influence this has on the transformation of the person depends on the strength of the desires. Although to begin with, many desires do appear in a vague and uncertain fashion only, formation

⁴⁵ Let 'Christ dwell through the faith in our hearts.'(Ephesians 3, 17) in order to have 'the same feelings as Christ had' (Phil. 2, 5)

should be motivated, primarily, by strong desires and by wanting to search for 'something more' so as to give a more profound meaning to life.

68. One of the tasks of the one providing the formation is, precisely, to help a person and a group discover and articulate those deep desires inspired by God and to get to know their own aspirations, attitudes and life experiences. The one providing the formation should be aware of the means which they should use so that people and the group move forward in the process.

3.2 *The Search*

69. The desires are progressively transformed into "a search". Without this decision to search, we could remain only with our desires and we could easily become deceived and believe that desires are sufficient to promote a response to our own needs and aspirations or to those of our neighbour. As a good master, St. Ignatius teaches us to test the authenticity, the sincerity and the coherence of our desires. The gauge is precisely the effectiveness of this process, ie the decision to use the most effective means to reach the aim we have set for ourselves.⁴⁶
70. In the process of this search, there are some very key moments. These include meeting with inspiring examples, the spiritual guidance of the community, the activities of apostolic service, and profound spiritual experiences putting us in touch with situations which have moved us. All these experiences should be supported by individual spiritual guidance.
71. If, at each phase of the spiritual journey, the search follows an orderly process, the discoveries will contribute to personal integration thereby avoiding 'activism', a lack of focus or inconsistency.

⁴⁶ Sp.Ex. 149-157

72. Throughout this spiritual process, people will grow in their capacity to recognise inner movements and possible deceptions and also to incorporate discernment processes into everyday life. The process will lead to an increasing integration of the life stories of the person and of his/her apostolic choices.

3.3 *The Discovery*

73. *Discovery* offers at least a partial if not a full affirmation to the desire and the search. It is an intuition or a new way of understanding the reality which is our lives. This discovery produces a significant change in the attitude and behaviour of the person experiencing it. It facilitates the liberation processes. It makes us conscious of our limits and of our sin. It helps resolve misunderstandings and prejudices. It enriches knowledge and service. It opens up ways for action. It raises new desires. But, above all, it opens us up to the love of God who chooses us, in spite of our limitations.
74. At each phase, there are discoveries relative to the level at which the person finds him/herself. The richest and most useful discoveries are those which emerge from experience. St. Ignatius said ‘...it is not knowing that fill and satisfy the soul but rather feeling and savouring things in an inner way’⁴⁷
75. The experience of the formation process, adapted to the required level of maturity and stage of the individual’s growth, lead to a deepening of the encounter with God, personally and communally, at each practical moment of our lives. The changes in personal and community attitudes, and also the life options which arise, are signs of progress. These signs will signal a possible change of phase leading to conversion to a more profound way of living out a person’s vocation and mission.

⁴⁷ Sp.Ex.2

3.4 Confirmation

76. Confirmation is the sign God gives when we have acted according to God's will. It is a proof of the authenticity of our discovery. Only when we have set out on the journey and feel positive interior effects or movements, do we know that we are on the path that the Lord has mapped out for us. We now experience a greater harmony at personal and community levels. Confirmation, thanks to the element of experience it brings with it, helps us to clarify the journey ahead and make adjustments to our directions, intensity and ways of acting.
77. The personal and community evaluations of our decisions and actions are also ways which Our Lord may use to confirm us on our journey. Both in our personal and community decisions, we have the support of the community which helps us to look with greater clarity at the paths we should be taking and how we should order our lives to do God's will.
78. When we see that our desires have been fulfilled, we may conclude that God has awakened these desires in us. Genuine confirmation consists in realising that the discovery leads to the opening of new desires and a new search, beginning in this way a new cycle of growth and grace.

4

STAGES OF CLC FORMATION

79. The Spiritual Exercises are the fundamental means for (and the central element of) CLC formation for vocation⁴⁸, for the development of its members into the fullness of their vocation and mission. For that reason, the CLC growth process unfolds according to the dynamic and pedagogy of personal and spiritual experiences as outlined in the Exercises.
80. The Weeks of the Exercises are a human and spiritual journey which we are called to live throughout our entire lives. They form a journey based on the experience of the love of God who creates us, saves us in Jesus Christ and who calls us, in spite of our limitations. It forms a way of identification with Christ; helping us to make a commitment to and to show solidarity with Him and to live our lives as a grateful response to the goodness we have received. Receiving and accepting the grace of one of the Weeks helps us to accept and to cultivate the others in a continuous process of growth and conversion, both personal and in community.
81. In the process, and as fruits of the experience of the First Week, we discover not only our own limitations, but also various social disorders in their different forms. These are embedded in society in its structures, social norms, and values and hence influencing all culture and society. We understand the link which exists between social sin and the personal inability to grow in love and freedom – but seek always to continue to purifying the image we have of God.
82. The personal experience of the Exercises and the CLC way of life will, little by little, have an influence on our principles and on our way of seeing things. The person grows in the recognition of the necessity of conversion and purification

⁴⁸ GP 5 and Charism 2001 50: *(the Sp.Ex.) are a fundamental and life-giving experience, an essential element of the same vocation*

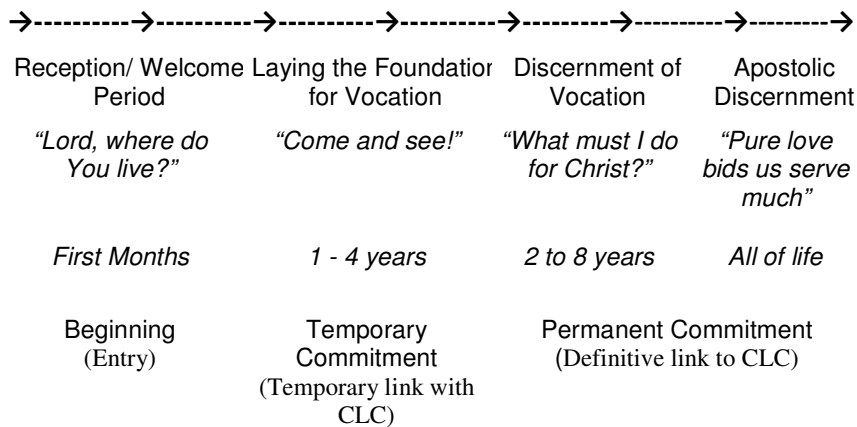
through the liberating force of love and compassion. The desire grows to continue getting to know Christ more closely and to identify with Him. The person begins to prepare for the foundational phase of vocation.

83. Progressively Christ becomes the core of the person's life in a more profound way. The person draws closer and closer to Him, to His values, and to His ideal. The person grows in inner knowledge and desires to commit his/her liberty to the project of Christ. The person lives the dynamic of the Second Week of the Exercises and places him/herself at the Lord's disposal. His/her vocational and apostolic choices become better defined and the commitment to service increases. S/he sincerely desires to search for his/her vocation and mission and a time of vocational discernment begins.
84. The apostolic experience and service, when confronted with the contemplation of the Life and Passion of Jesus which the Third Week helps to realise, to deepen and to confirm one's vocation and mission. Decisions begin to acquire a direction; they are more integrated and more constant. The person feels a sense of solidarity with the sorrow of the world redeemed in the Cross of Christ; s/he longs to strengthen his/her identification with Him out of love and in the service of others, especially of the most poor. From this experience, the person makes an election according to his/her vocation.
85. As the process advances, the ability to search for and find God grows in all spheres of life. There is a greater personal and community discernment in search of the 'magis', ie the greater love and service. Gratitude for so many graces received, fruits of the Fourth Week of the Exercises, is gradually assimilated into the person's life. We begin to understand better the global dimension of our reality and to discover that we are sent by God through both the community and the Church. Discernment becomes a constant in the life of a CLC member.
86. The growing intimacy with Jesus and with Ignatian Spirituality leads us to live a greater sense of Church. There is, at both a personal and a community level, a growing

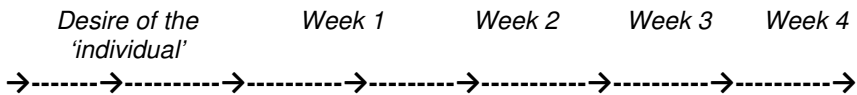
interest in and a preoccupation with the cause of the Kingdom and for the needs that surround us. We feel that we participate more fully in the mission of the Church in the world and we reach a deeper awareness of the One who is present in all things. We grow in the options of Christ which are continually translated into concrete apostolic initiatives be these personal, communitarian or organisational. The CLC group is being transformed into an apostolic community.

87. Taking as a reference the experiences of the Spiritual Exercises and the way of life of the World Community, and in the light of the CLC Formation Principles (Part 1 of Our Charism), we consider how the CLC process to seek the will of God for our lives (in each concrete moment) is divided into the following stages:

1. Reception/Welcome Stage
2. Laying the Foundations for Vocation Stage
3. Discernment of Vocation Stage
4. Apostolic Discernment Stage



JOURNEY OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES



4.1 First Contact and Reception/Welcome Stage in CLC: “Lord, where do You live?”

88. CLC offers an Ignatian way for personal growth in a vocational and apostolic way. To live this way and to experience *the encounter with God in life*.⁴⁹, the candidate requires certain qualities. Such a person, living out the experience of the Exercises, needs to be capable of entering deeply into his/her personal experiences of life and with God in a way that s/he could become someone ‘*ready to love and serve His Divine Majesty in all things*’.⁵⁰
89. The candidate is a person who is looking for ‘*something more*’. The qualities, which should be present in him/her in order to enter into the CLC growth process are⁵¹described in the following statements.
90. From the human point of view, such a person will be one who:
- *Is able to accept reality* and sensitive to the socio-political atmosphere in which s/he lives
 - Is keen to live with an expectation of a dynamic and meaningful life although s/he may not know how to express this or how to carry this out at this point
 - Is dissatisfied with him/herself, and is searching for a way of transforming his/her way of life and being useful to society.
91. From a Christian point of view, such a person will be one who:
- Is spiritually ‘*restless*’ and who is searching for a greater familiarity with God and the power of His Spirit
 - Is keen to learn to pray and to deepen his/her knowledge of scripture, especially of the Gospels
 - Is keen to collaborate with those who work to bring about a better world - one more human and more divine

⁴⁹ Charism 2001, no.32 and 33

⁵⁰ Sp.Ex. 233

⁵¹ Charism 2001, no. 35 and 36

- Is open to the needs of others and of the Church to which s/he belongs.
92. The 'reality' of those who associate with CLC is very diverse. Each person comes from a different environment and brings with him/her a past, a level of formation, experiences of life and faith, hopes, needs and wounds.
 93. They are people who are more or less consciously searching for something else; they are restless people. It is possible that CLC can become a channel for the generosity which is the cause of that restlessness and search. Faithful to the gift of discernment which CLC has received from the Spirit, we work to search for and to find in the Church a place for all those who associate with our local communities.
 94. Instability is a characteristic of people and groups in this phase. The group has no clear identity and this lack of identity with the Community can bring about, in turn, a lack of attendance. When some candidates do not find what they were looking for, they may even give up the process.

Objectives of the Reception/Welcome Stage

95. The objective of this stage is to get to know each other - as well as to acquire a basic knowledge and experience about self, CLC and spirituality. We try to ensure that the participants get to know others in the group, that they work on self-knowledge and personal acceptance and that they discover within themselves those profound desires inspired by the Lord. Also, it is expected that participants will receive basic information about CLC structures and spirituality and, to a certain degree, begin to live out of their CLC experience. All this will help them to decide if they wish to start the process of discovering whether CLC is the path or vocation to which God is calling them.

Approximate Time Scale

96. Coming into CLC, finding out all about it, and reflecting on it can last for several months.

Content of the Reception/Welcome Stage.

The content of this stage will entail the following:

97. To know oneself and to discover the deep desires which have been inspired by God. To welcome and to accept one's own life.
98. To draw nearer to the figure of Jesus, beginning on a journey towards a greater intimacy with Him – and to be initiated into the practice of Ignatian prayer.
99. To try the sharing of one's personal life and faith, and to engage in the acceptance and welcoming of others.
100. To take on some responsibility in the group.
101. To understand and experience something of the CLC vocation⁵²: as apostolic, lay, Ignatian and communitarian. To appreciate something of the global, national and local community mission aspects of CLC.
102. To be introduced to the initiation sacraments – Baptism and Confirmation.
103. To look at reality, with all its joys and sorrows, as a place of encounter with God, to let reality affect and question.

The Fundamental Means for the Reception/Welcome Stage

104. **Meetings:** A new member will usually join the nearest community to their place of living. This will be their place of privileged apprenticeship. The structure and dynamic of the meetings are flexible in line with CLC requirements and the circumstances of the group or community. It is recommended that the Meetings should keep to CLC process and structure⁵³.

⁵² Charism 2001, no. 172

⁵³ See structure of the meeting in appendix CLC Meetings.

During this reception phase, the various elements of the CLC meeting can be adapted to help candidates to manage, and make their own, the methods used by the group.

105. The dynamic of the meetings will be such as to maintain a prayerful atmosphere of respect and listening which will, in turn, help promote a sense of mutual welcome. This dynamic (or atmosphere) is proposed for both group meetings and also other induction activities which the community offers to people and to groups such as spiritual guidance, witnessing, shared activities and so on.
106. To promote initiation into Ignatian prayer and community prayer, the guide will pay special attention to the times of prayer and will promote, together with the convener (coordinator), a prayerful, listening atmosphere. This will also enhance the feeling of welcome.
107. The content of the main body of the meeting should be basically one of formation involving the practice of sharing one's actual experiences with all those present. This will help them to get in touch with and to share their feelings.
108. Bible study groups, prayer workshops, experiments in various methods of prayer, spiritual sharing, etc. will encourage initiation into personal and community prayer.
109. This will be a time for getting to know better both the community and CLC documents eg through the following: reviewing CLC history from its Assembly Documents, hearing CLC members' testimonies and personal experiences of our way of life, meeting with other groups, participating in community celebrations, Eucharist, retreats, and CLC World Days of Prayer.
110. Prospective new members will be invited to participate in experiences of service and make some commitment to help in community mission. They will also hear presentations on apostolic priorities and activities of the local community.

111. New members may experience contact with the world of the poor by means of '*experiments*', or guided service (immersion) experiences.

Signs Pointing to the End of the Reception/Welcome Stage

112. Feeling positive about one's own history, one's own lived experience, and feeling accepted and appreciated by the group and the people of the community who receive them are important. Individuals may express their desire to get to know themselves and others better.
113. Individuals will experience a desire to deepen their relationship with God, to get closer to the Church and to this specific vocation. Individuals will feel called by God and be prepared to begin the CLC process and also to express this in their attitudes and signs of commitment such as regular attendance at meetings and a sense of enthusiasm etc.
114. Individuals will feel responsible for each other and for the group. They will have an identity as a group and together they will plan tasks and future directions. They are able to take on responsibility and do so with pleasure, both in the presentation of the meetings and also in the planning and organisation of activities.
115. The members of the group will feel both concerned about and sensitive to the reality of the world; they will want to know this better in order to be able to engage with it. They are prepared to collaborate with the community in tasks of internal and external service.⁵⁴
116. Others, for example, may reach the conclusion that 'This is not what I wanted' and they leave the group. Let us bear in mind that CLC is only one of many ecclesial organisations which help us to live out our Christian vocation more fully.

⁵⁴ *Charism* 2001, no.35

4.2 *Laying the Foundations for Vocation: ‘Come and See!’*

117. This stage may be reached directly from the reception/welcome stage, or, people may enter it having come from another CLC group. All who reach this stage recognise that CLC responds to their inner desires and they elect to deepen their knowledge and experience of this way of life.

Objectives of the Vocation Foundation Stage

118. This stage is inspired by a call to conversion to the way of Jesus. It belongs to the First Week of the Spiritual Exercises, informed by the light of the Principle and Foundation. God calls us to abandon our way of thinking and acting and to ‘live in His image and likeness’⁵⁵. Here we recognise Him as the ‘*Principle and Foundation*’ of our existence and of all reality, responding to the gifts of His goodness with praise, reverence and service.
119. When understood in this manner, this stage has as its fundamental experience the realisation that we are unconditionally loved by God, our Creator and Saviour, Who invites us to the status of sons and daughters, living as such, and destined to be fulfilled in love and service. This corresponds to a transformation of our Christian vocation into something interior and personal. We experience the process of changing from an external and institutional relationship into a very personal relationship with God.
120. From that experience of knowing oneself as a reconciled sinner, during the Second Week of the Exercises the contemplation of the call of God is proposed. This is the invitation to go more intimately into the knowledge of Jesus, to experience His freedom, (from the Christian perspective) enabling us to become more fully His disciples.

⁵⁵ Gen. 1, 26

121. We could, therefore, describe this stage also as one of getting to *know each other*: of being known and of knowing others in the community; of knowing Jesus Christ personally and of being known by Him; of knowing the human environment in which we move from a more critical standpoint; and, finally, of getting to know the CLC way of life sufficiently well to be able to judge whether this way might be the way of our vocation.

Approximate Time Scale

122. This stage usually lasts no more than 4 years and no less than 1 year.⁵⁶ During this time, the members of a particular community begin to build their personal vocation. Those who wish to undertake vocational discernment and are ready to do so, begin a new stage. Not everyone makes this transition at the same time. The end of the stage is marked by the celebration of Temporary Commitment.

Content of the Vocation Foundation Stage

This means:

123. To accept and love oneself as God knows and loves us; to grow in the knowledge of being a son/daughter loved by God and chosen for some great purpose.
124. To know and be known as an individual through personal relationships and communication; to live out the experience of being welcomed and accepted by others and to act in a similar way towards them.
125. To know our Lord more closely, to discover a personal faith. This implies purifying the image of God and moving from the God of institutionalised religion to the God who is the Father of Jesus Christ. The benefit is to personalise the relationship in faith with Jesus Christ in Whom we find the compassionate

⁵⁶ GN 2

love of God, Who calls and saves us, giving a new horizon to the meaning of our lives.

126. To go more deeply into the Christian sense of sin and guilt, and the personal experience of forgiveness, believing that God does not love us because we are good but because we are His children; it is because of God's love that we are able to love and to act. We try to live out our journey of personal conversion, bearing in mind our Lord's compassion.
127. To explain and begin the practice of Ignatian Spirituality so as to discover the presence, the call and the constant action of God in our lives and those of our community, we attend to the following:
 - The Daily Awareness Examen
 - The Review of Prayer⁵⁷; learning to share the fruits of prayer. This learning will be fundamental in order to benefit from personal guidance and to enable the revision of life and communal discernment.
 - The Meeting Evaluation: This helps to enlighten further our experience of the Examen and also our experiences within particular community processes.
128. To carry out initial experiences of the Exercises⁵⁸ in order to grow in the experience and knowledge of Ignatian Spirituality and intimacy with Christ.
129. To get to know CLC: its identity, way of life, spirituality, mission, organisation and means of growth.
130. To share community life and to deepen our experience of 'The Trinity' as revealed by Jesus, to feel God present in the community, in people and in commitment with others.

⁵⁷ Sp.Ex.77 5th Addition I will see how things have gone for me and why.

⁵⁸ Sp.Ex. 18: The tenth octave: According to the disposition of the people who wish to undertake the Sp.Ex.; that is to say, it will depend on their age, education, intelligence as to whether these exercises should be undertaken. In some circumstances, it is not recommended.

131. To be sensitive to and to go deeply into the reasons for poverty. To experience an initiation into a more critical analysis of social reality.
132. To understand the CLC option for the poor. To recognise that we are all children of God and as such we are brothers and sisters. To discover that the way of understanding the Father and one's brothers and sisters is to share and to become committed. To take up contact with the poor - we no longer lock ourselves away in a world made up of our own aspirations and we no longer fall into a relationship of merely being present or of helping in a paternalistic way.

Fundamental Means for the Vocation Foundation Stage

133. There are a series of ways of living which are present throughout this stage and the rest of the person's life. Some of these start in the reception/welcome stage. In accordance with the stages of the processes already described, the person will discover each one of them as they journey through these different stages and will grow in his/her appreciation, practice and experience of the following:
 - Personal spiritual guidance (which cannot be replaced by the life of a particular community). This should help to acquire:
 - ◆ self-knowledge and growth in acceptance of oneself and of others
 - ◆ a personal relationship of faith with Jesus Christ which gives a meaning to life
 - ◆ a new critical stance with regard to the socio-cultural environment.
 - Sacramental life.
 - A deepening appreciation and practice of the general and particular Awareness Examen⁵⁹.

⁵⁹ Sp.Ex. 24-43.

- Group meetings: These will follow the CLC way with an ever-increasing responsibility on members for the preparation and running of the meeting compared to the reception/welcome stage. Spiritual sharing takes on greater relevance and this prepares the community to experience and to integrate the practice of Review of Life. The Review of Life gives a special direction to CLC meetings. Its objective is to integrate faith and life. Strictly speaking, the Review of Life is an open exchange of experiences of the members in order to better discover, with the help of the community, what the Lord wants to say to us and, with the support of the community, to put into practice. The Review of Life should highlight positive aspects. Only starting from here, can one make a start on both sharing and personal questioning.⁶⁰
- Workshops and experiences in Christian formation and the deepening of that vocation.
- A shared responsibility in the life of the local community and collaboration to sustain apostolic activity and community life.
- Initiation into the practice of a more critical analysis of social conditions.

134. Some topics and experiences which belong to this stage are proposed in a progressive way by the guide, adapting them to the journey being lived out as follows:

- Working on the autobiography of St. Ignatius, especially the part which corresponds to the First Week of the Exercises⁶¹ and examining one's own life in the light of this autobiography.

⁶⁰ Sp.Ex. 22: '... one has to pre-suppose that all good Christians should be more ready to put a good interpretation on another's statement etc than to condemn it as false; and if it cannot be saved, to ask how it may be understood; and if it is badly understood, correct with love; and if that does not suffice, to search out all convenient means to save it and to understand it well.'

⁶¹ Autobiography of St. Ignatius, no. 1-24.

- Having a basic knowledge of psychology, being able to recognise, work on and share one's feelings and learning about the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits of the First Week⁶².
- Attending bible workshops for a deeper knowledge and reading of scripture
- Attending prayer workshops for a wider knowledge about different ways of praying as set out in the Spiritual Exercises⁶³ and in the Annotations (Additional Directions)⁶⁴.
- Having a progressive experience of the Exercises, from the 4-day retreat to undertaking the 8 days. The themes of these experiences range from the Principle and Foundation up to the Second Week.
- Experiencing formation through the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist⁶⁵, with a deepening of the sense of ecclesial communion
- Going more deeply into the General Principles and Norms, our Charism and other CLC documents
- Hearing the testimonies of committed members which are used as role models to lend greater impetus to the personal search
- Acquiring knowledge of the rules of discernment of the second Week at a conceptual level, as preparation for the following stages of the journey
- Participating in experiences of service under the guidance of the community. The meeting should help to look for and to identify possibilities for action and to agree on some criteria for organisation and evaluation
- Acquiring a Christian vision of the world and of society (*Gaudium et Spes*)

⁶² Sp.Ex. 313-327.

⁶³ Sp.Ex. 238-260

⁶⁴ Sp.Ex. 73-90.

⁶⁵ Sp.Ex. 44

- Deepening one's appreciation of apostolic priorities and activities of the local community and taking part in them.
135. During this stage, there should be organised certain well-defined events in order to facilitate the achievement of the set objectives. This may involve:
- Experiences of universality; participation in the celebration of the World CLC Day, activities, meetings and community experiences at both local or regional level
 - Participation in courses or days for formation
 - Participation in activities organised by the local Church
 - Periods of exposure for those who have not had experience of involvement with and service of the poor.

Signs pointing to the End of the Vocation Foundations Stage

136. Here, an awareness grows of personal limitations viewed from the perspective of a healthy self-esteem which allows for personal sharing in meetings. There is recognition of the qualities and abilities of the other members of the community in question.
137. The members are convinced that they have lived through a significant emotional, personal and community encounter with God. Jesus is the centre of their lives. They have discovered that spirituality is born of life and from within and is an essential attitude to life. This experience leads them to want to go more deeply into this discovery and to commit more completely both at a personal and at a community level.
138. Members will live out of experiences of the Spiritual Exercises proposed at this stage and practice some form of prayer in daily life. There is an appreciation of and constancy in one's sacramental life and in other practices proposed for this stage (eg spiritual guidance, awareness examen)
139. Positive value is attached to that which has been lived out in the community during the initial years. Trust is placed in the

potential of community life. Members feel responsible, to a certain extent, for each other and live in a climate of trust, respect and mutual acceptance.

140. There appears a desire, as a particular vocation within the Church, to adopt the CLC way of life in a more conscious manner and to establish greater links with the World Community. Signs of this desire are:
- The making of a Temporary Commitment, and
 - Living an awareness of the necessity to contribute to a strengthening of the Community at its various levels, being available to participate in its activities and commitments, serving within its structures and missions and contributing economically.
141. Sensitivity to the problems of injustice and social marginalisation has been developed and strengthened. The necessity of opening out towards politics and socio-cultural matters is understood at a deeper level, the signs being:
- A sympathy with and concrete moves towards the simple and austere way of life of CLC⁶⁶
 - A carrying out of the first probationary experiences⁶⁷ through pastoral or social activities
 - An identification with the apostolic priorities of the community and timely participation in the community mission.

4.3 *Discernment of Vocation Stage: “What must I do for Christ?”*

142. Members who reach this stage are those who, having embraced the CLC way of life, freely surrendered their personal freedom in order to follow Christ.⁶⁸ They live out this discovery in a joyous way as they make a commitment to discover their vocation and their mission.

⁶⁶ GP4

⁶⁷ Charism 2001, nos. 71-74

⁶⁸ Charism 2001, no.190

Objectives of the Discernment of Vocation Stage

143. This stage means to discern and to confirm our personal vocation: this may be either the personal CLC vocation within the Church (as a member of this apostolic body) or another vocation within the Church. This stage can therefore lead to a double discernment depending on the age and the life situation of the person concerned. These discernments are:
- Discernment and choice of *status of life* in which a person seeks to serve God be this secular, priestly or religious
 - Discernment and *choice of way of life* to which the Lord is calling the person to live out his/her life more fully with all its ramifications (personal, family, work, politico-social, use of money, apostolic, commitment etc.)
144. Vocational discernment usually takes place in two moments characteristic of the Second Week of the Exercises. Formation in this phase aims to help living out of these two moments:
- The *first* moment corresponds to the *development of the necessary disposition* in order to make a good choice about a state in life (an election). In particular, it deals with inner freedom (Ignatian indifference) and with a progressive identification with the Spirit of Christ, poor and humble, totally given over to the service of His brothers and sisters, according to the will of the Father
 - The *second* moment corresponds to the *choice itself* of a specific way of life following Christ. This deals with desiring and choosing what God desires of us.

Approximate Time Scale

145. The time between temporary and permanent commitment should not exceed 8 years nor be less than 2 years.⁶⁹ During this time, people go more deeply into their vocation. Those who confirm their CLC vocation make their Permanent Commitment.

⁶⁹ See GN 3.

Content of the Discernment of Vocation Stage

This stage involves the following:

146. The integration of Christian values into all areas of life is apparent.
147. Christian faith is envisaged as a vocation and mission. There is a welcoming of the status of children to freely undertake the journey of vocational discernment:
 - To grow in personal love for and in the desire to follow Jesus more closely through the contemplation of the mysteries of His life
 - To commit to the plan of salvation for humanity by sharing a feeling of profound solidarity with the suffering and needs of all men and women
 - To enter more fully into the meaning of vocation
 - To grow in love of the Church and make a commitment to her mission of announcing the Kingdom of God to all
 - To become acquainted with the various vocations within the Church – orders, religious congregations, associations, communities and lay movements – whether these are Ignatian or not.
148. Knowledge and experience of Ignatian Spirituality is characterised by:
 - A total experience of the Exercises in any of their formats – in retreat, in daily life or in retreat by stages
 - A fuller understanding of Ignatian discernment, ie rules for Ignatian discernment and criteria to seek and find the will of God.

149. To live out the universality of our CLC vocation and to know and fully appreciate the meaning of being a body of the laity directed towards the world in its mission.⁷⁰
150. To promote a critical Christian understanding of contemporary problems (globalisation, protection of the environment, conflict and wars, consumerism etc)
151. To live fully the CLC option for the poor: to have the world of the poor as a reference for all discernment, vocational or apostolic processes.⁷¹ We seek:
- To discover more clearly the reality of social disorder, the values and prevailing norms and their influence on culture and societal structures (structural or social sin).
 - To understand the conditions for following Christ and the potential fruits of apostolic service, being prepared to give up everything and oneself for the greater love (Magis) of the Lord and for His Gospel.

Fundamental Means of the Discernment of Vocation Stage

152. Some of the means involved throughout this entire stage are:
- Reading, studying guides for topics in meetings, undertaking theology courses for the laity etc which will all lead to a deeper knowledge of Christ
 - Undertaking study and prayer about experiences of vocation in the Bible: eg Abraham, Moses, the Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah), Mary, the Apostles.
 - Becoming familiar with the vision of the Church in Vatican II (*Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*)
 - Going more deeply into the knowledge of different vocations and models of Church lived out by the faithful, developing a sense of belonging to the Church, of

⁷⁰ The Recommendations of the 2003 Nairobi Assembly

⁷¹ Hong Kong 94 Assembly

collaboration and mutual responsibility in the participation of the mission of a universal Church which welcomes cultural diversity

- Studying Church teachings regarding the laity: Vatican II, *Christi Fidelis Laici*
- Undertaking formation regarding the Sacrament of marriage and the living out of Ignatian spirituality and discernment in family life
- Practising personal prayer and the Ignatian examen, and also personal and individual community guidance oriented towards vocational discernment
- Developing the necessary disposition for election through:
 - ♦ progressive identification with Christ
 - ♦ Ignatian indifference, inner freedom
- Learning to discern inner feelings and movements and becoming familiar with the Ignatian method of election
- Placing increasing importance and giving more time at meetings to spiritual sharing of inner movements arising in prayer and in life. These are meetings of deliberation or discernment of spiritual movements of members with the help of the Guide. At this stage, the Community helps with personal discernment and it compares and contrasts these experiences. The experience of this community support prepares us for an integrated living out of the process of community deliberation and discernment.
- Acquiring experience and knowledge of the 8-day Spiritual Exercises or other formats to prepare the person throughout this stage for making the full Exercises leading to the election. The Rules of Discernment will be incorporated into and will accompany the entire process of this election.
- Gradually, undertaking some responsibility at different levels within CLC structures.
- Studying and acquiring knowledge of CLC history and of the National and World Assemblies – also working with

documents relating to the life of the National and World Communities and testimonies of CLC members

- Participating, in some way, in the apostolate of the Community

153. During this stage, arrangements can be made for some specific experiences enabling a deeper knowledge of and involvement in the following:

- Participation in the life of the local Church, various Church events and celebrations etc
- Taking on some role of responsibility in the local Church, and collaboration with other Church associations
- Being introduced to experiences of service with the very poor and marginalised. This will be under directions and evaluated
- Meeting with people who are living out the process of discernment of vocation within the community itself or with people from other communities
- Witnessing testimonies and role models for the various vocations within the Church
- Participating in courses relating to the social doctrine of the Church and socio-political formation.

Signs Pointing to the end of the Stage of Discernment of Vocation

154. An effective way of using Ignatian methods to integrate faith and life is now emerging. The person has attained a balance from the emotional, spiritual and professional point of view and is integrating the various elements of his/her life with one's own mission.

155. A total experience of the Exercises has been carried out.

156. The individual looks at his/her life in an apostolic context and is convinced the Lord has called him/her to serve in CLC. S/he has made an election for a state in life and/or life conversion and commits to a definitive relationship with the

apostolic body of CLC. S/he makes commitments and undertakes community service and becomes co-responsible in the life and mission of the community.

157. The individual engages in the activities of the local, regional and national CLC community, in various ways including involvement in financial support.
158. The member participates in the life of the Church in a responsible way and s/he feels part of the Church.
159. S/he shows ability, availability and freedom to practise communal discernment and to accept the commission of the community. The particular community itself is able to discern, send, support and evaluate both personal and communal mission.
160. Generous participation is evident in practical services within and outside the Community.
161. A person gives witness, through life choices and other circumstances, to an evangelical sensitivity and knowledge of the world of the poor.

4.4 *Apostolic Discernment Stage: "A Pure Love Bids Us to Serve Much"*

162. Those who participate in the life of the Community at this stage recognise, in the Christian Life Community, their particular vocation in the Church to follow Jesus Christ more closely and proclaim God's Kingdom.⁷² They understand their lives as a response to God's love, Who loved us first.⁷³ For this reason, they cultivate a way of life which helps them to give apostolic meaning to all dimensions and activities of their lives.

⁷² GP 4

⁷³ ...freedom is motivated by the love of God and offers itself to Him. He loved us first: God made the commitment first. See Charism 2001, no/196.

163. This is a stage marked by apostolic discernment and a sending out on mission during which different and ever-changing life situations will be experienced – both in a personal and community context. While different occasions may arise from within personal and/or community contexts (eg consolations, desolations, ups and downs, doubts and also crises), at this stage the CLC member tries to live in a state of permanent readiness always seeking to practise discernment, be available and seek integration. In this context, mission is also nourished by prayer, the examen and the Eucharist.

Objectives of the Apostolic Discernment Stage

This means:

164. To maintain the integration of everyday human and Christian life as well as that of the personal journey and the Community apostolate (in collaboration with others): also to grow in constant and sensitive openness to reality in order to become agents of social and cultural change for the building of God's Kingdom in this world.
165. To put the skills of the CLC apostolic body at the service of Christ's mission and of His Church in the world; and to create communities that can generate a more effective apostolate in promoting justice for the poorest.

Approximate Time Scale

166. This is the stage for living out one's own human and Christian vocation in all its fullness. Vocation is developed and confirmed in mission.⁷⁴ People who are at this stage have opted to respond to Our Lord by living in a permanent attitude of apostolic discernment. Throughout the rest of their lives, they will continue with their process of formation which will

⁷⁴ Permanent commitment corresponds to the stage of apostolic life in its plenitude: when personal vocation is lived as apostolic mission. All vocation develops and is expressed in mission...Charism 2001, no. 190

help them to discover the meaning and the extent of gifts received.

Content of the Apostolic Discernment Stage

This means:

167. To deepen the integration of life, faith and justice and to cultivate a spirit of listening, of creativity and of initiative to better enable individuals and communities to recognise the voice of God in the needs of others. Some of these calls may come, in the name of the community, from their own leaders.⁷⁵ Also involved is the promotion and fostering of attitudes of discernment, availability and integration.
168. To bring Christ and His saving grace into the concrete circumstances of our lives, thereby evangelizing our daily life⁷⁶. Also involved will be the integration of mission into one's personal life (family, friends, parish, relatives, work, leisure) taking life in its entirety as an opportunity for service⁷⁷.
169. To cultivate an intimate communion with Christ the missionary and to believe in His saving love and power. We also seek to encourage a docile attitude to the Holy Spirit and to develop a healthy interest in the problems of others. We do this with apostolic charity, understanding, tenderness, compassion, and with a will and strength to overcome barriers and not weaken in the face of difficulties. We seek to go deeper into the call or invitation of the Eternal King⁷⁸ to work with Him⁷⁹, our response being expressed as fully as possible through the CLC Apostolic Body.

⁷⁵ GP 6, 8 13b,14

⁷⁶ The three priorities of common mission defined in Itaici 1998 are: social reality, cultures and daily life.

⁷⁷ As a response to the call which Christ makes to us we try to carry out this unity of life from within the world in which we live. (GP, 4-5)

⁷⁸ Sp. Ex. 91-100

⁷⁹ Sp. Ex. 95.2-98

170. To go deeper into and renew the experience⁸⁰ of the Spiritual Exercises by applying them to discernment in daily life. This means to live in a spirit of gratitude, in an affective and effective communion with God and one's neighbour which leads to the gift of self in love and service.
171. To use the methods of Ignatian spirituality (Ignatian examen, discernment of spirits, spiritual guidance) to give apostolic meaning to all activities in daily life⁸¹.
172. To deepen the experience of being sent, a sending expressed in the form of various personal, community and ecclesial activities. In the celebration of each sacrament, we receive a specific mission. The Church, having approved the CLC apostolic way of life, accepts and makes her own, the instances we have presented as part of our apostolate and she entrusts specific missions to CLC, either through her own initiative or at the request of CLC.
173. To develop a sense of universality, of ecumenism, of sensitivity and ability to respond with greater service to the greater need.
174. To develop an affective and effective co-responsibility as members of an Apostolic Body and as members of the Church.

Fundamental Means of the Apostolic Discernment Stage

This involves:

175. Permanent formation for mission in different areas: human, psychological, Ignatian, community-related, theological,

⁸⁰ 'We consider the Sp. Ex. as the specific source and characteristic instrument of our spirituality' (GP o. 5). '...an annual internal renewal in line with the sources of our spirituality..' (GP 12)

⁸¹ As important means to look for and find God in all things.(GP5). We thus try to find apostolic meaning even in the most humble tasks of daily life. (GP 8c)

socio-political etc. Formation recommendations are to be adaptable to the cultural environment in which mission is being carried out. This will involve:

- Some of the more important courses for CLC members about family, professional and social ethics and a deepening of knowledge of the Scriptures, Mary in the mystery of the Church, etc.
- Work and reflection on the documents of Vatican II and Encyclicals with special attention to the documents of the Social Doctrine of the Church.
- Other materials of greater present-day relevance in some countries, for example, those about inter-religious dialogue, inter-cultural dialogue etc.

176. Sacramental Life: frequent participation in the Sacrament of the Eucharist and habitual practice of the Sacrament of Reconciliation⁸².

177. An annual experience of internal renewal in accordance with our spirituality⁸³.

178. Frequent spiritual guidance. Joint guidance of couples can be offered to those who are married.

179. Support of the Community for a personal encounter with Jesus in prayer, sacraments and in all life as follows:

- Cultivation of a specifically apostolic prayer which helps to find God and to unite with Him in action itself. Prayer and Daily Examen are a means of putting us in permanent union with the Creator and opens us to the needs of the world, discovering calls, deepening and integrating faith in daily life in the context of permanent discernment.

⁸² Charism 2001, no.129. Recognising our limitations and asking for the grace to be faithful to the Message of Christ. Intense sacramental life. GP5 and GP 12

⁸³ GN 12a

These methods help us to recognise Christ's way for our lives.

- Participation in discernment processes concerning the great issues of life which affect people: marriage, professional work and day-to-day life.
- Discovery of the need and importance of making ourselves available to the Lord. Also to be able to plan, live, share and evaluate apostolic priorities and mission by:
 - ◆ Reflective reading of the texts and documents dealing with CLC mission.
 - ◆ Participation in CLC formation events on socio-political and theological issues at all levels.
 - ◆ Planning, development and evaluation of apostolic activity and mission.

180. In everyday life, acknowledging one's personal projects and community apostolate as of key importance in the make-up of one's meeting.
181. The focus of meetings: it is on everyday life, on one's personal project and the personal and community mission. The Review of Life takes on the form of apostolic community discernment and helps to deal with aspects of pain and death which are experienced on mission. The structure of the meeting is adapted to the dynamics of discerning, sending (commissioning), supporting and evaluating mission⁸⁴.
182. Application of rules and criteria for discernment in life, ie personal and community discernment.
183. Considering the needs and the requirements of the Church when we engage in discernment and evaluation of the apostolic community priorities and activities.

⁸⁴ World Assembly of Nairobi, 2003. Projects 125, October 2003

184. Participation in meetings, formation (events) and celebration of the local, national and world CLC. We engage in frequent and sustained communication with members of the community beyond the local area and also financial collaboration to support the apostolic body.
185. Creation of some kind of common solidarity fund.

Signs when the Apostolic Discernment Stage is being lived to the full

186. This stage of the process does not end. People go more deeply into it and continue to grow in the different aspects which are characteristic of living this stage in full and which can be used as criteria of evaluation and conversion. We engage in:
- A joyous living of fidelity to Christ in communion with the CLC Apostolic Body which is continually renewed by the practice of the Spiritual Exercises and engagement in a deep sacramental life.
 - Financial participation to maintain and support the Apostolic Body.
 - Participation in the ordinary life of the Church (parish, diocese, universal Church) taking part in her activities and identifying both affectively and effectively with the reality in which s/he has to live and making a commitment to its development, being attentive to its necessities and problems, and pleased with her progress⁸⁵.
 - A full apostolic life which is discerned, supported, sent and evaluated in community living with a grateful and open heart to the call of the Lord⁸⁶.
 - An attitude of permanent formation, of search for the '*magis*', being contemplatives in action, integrating faith

⁸⁵ Cf. Charism 2001, no. 160, 161, 162, 163

⁸⁶ Projects no. 125 – October 2003

and life and striving to search for and to find God in all things and all things in Him⁸⁷.

- Continuous spiritual guidance to put in order affections and life itself towards the Lord and mission.
- Cultivating an awareness of the reality of our world which is unequal and unjust; having an effective commitment towards the poorest⁸⁸; living an austere and simple life style which is an expression of inner freedom and of solidarity with the poor⁸⁹.

187. This way of living, both through the lives of individuals and the life of particular communities, builds a World CLC Community fully committed as an Apostolic Body in full engagement in the world – something for which we are thankful.

⁸⁷ Sp.Ex. 230-237

⁸⁸ Cr. 'Christ and Social Reality. On the Side of the Poor'. Our Common Mission. Documents of the CLC World Assembly, Itaiçi '98

⁸⁹ See GP 4 and 8d.

5

COMMUNITY ORGANISATION AND ROLES IN THE PROCESS

188. To achieve the objectives of the CLC growth process, it is necessary to develop a series of services which the Community allocates to those it considers most suitable to provide the human and Christian growth of its members. This service is carried out through a number of roles which are distributed and organised in a manner best suited to the circumstances of each Community. The 'commissioning' of these services is discerned, sent, supported and evaluated as an apostolic mission.

5.1 Various Community roles

189. When the Reception/Welcome/ stage is over, individuals are included into CLC and they become **members of a particular community**⁹⁰ where they begin their vocational process. Everyone is responsible for the life and process of the community and its members. As their vocations become clearer and they make progress in their commitment to CLC, their readiness to participate and take responsibility will transcend the life of the particular community. Individuals will feel co-responsible for the charism and the mission of CLC as active members of the Church.
190. Each particular small community will designate one of its members as **coordinator**⁹¹ to support and take care of the smooth running of the group. The coordinator ensures good communication within the group and helps in the allocation of tasks so that the group functions well. S/he oversees the participation of people in apostolic projects and maintains

⁹⁰ A particular Community (GPs) is a small community of 7-12 persons who share life and mission. These communities can form part of a larger Community and we refer to this as a local community.

⁹¹ GN 41 a.

constant contact with coordinators of other local or regional communities. S/he also collaborates with the guide when activities and initiatives are proposed. All community members help the Coordinator in this task.

191. The functions of the coordinator are especially important during the early stages of vocation when the person gets to know the community and its apostolate. At this point in the process, it is especially important that the coordinator, with the support of the guide and of the rest of those responsible for formation:

- Invites members to take part in meetings, Masses, formation activities and in making a financial contribution to the local community etc. in order to encourage and promote participation in community life.
- Encourages experiences of contact with the life of the local Church in order to promote an ecclesial connectedness for the individuals and for the specific community.
- Encourages opportunities for exchange visits and getting to know other communities to promote the living out of the universal dimension of CLC.
- Invites members to an active and responsible participation in the life of the specific community and to follow the CLC way. It is desirable to propose to each member, right from the very outset, a series of more or less formal commitments according to the guidelines of each National Community.

192. The community has an **Ecclesiastical Assistant**⁹² at each level who, in collaboration with those others who are responsible for serving the community, has as a main responsibility, the Christian growth of the entire community.

⁹² GP14

193. Community processes, at their different phases, are directed by the Community through the figure of the **guide**⁹³ sent for this task and supported by the Community - especially for the formation task. Guides do not belong to the group they guide: they have their own group. This does not mean that they do not participate in the life of the community but gives the guide the necessary freedom to direct the individuals and the community process.
194. Above all, the guide is a witness to their Christian discipleship. The function of the guide should be carried out mainly by the laity but may also be done by religious who know and work with CLC. The lay guide is a CLC member and is a member of another group. If the guide is a member of a religious order, then it is desirable that they should be connected not only with the particular group they are guiding but also with the Regional or National Community.
195. The qualities which, to one extent or another, should be present in the guide are those which show that s/he has followed through a process which enables him/her to be of service to others as a grateful response for so much good which has been received. The guide is a person who:
- Has experienced an encounter with the Lord leading to a life which at its core is that of His disciple, at peace with him/herself and showing openness and sensitivity.
 - Has integrated into life the Ignatian charism, is familiar with the CLC development process and has a clear understanding of the objectives of each CLC formation stage.

⁹³ The Guide, with a good formation in the Ignatian process of growth, helps the Community to discover the movements present in individuals and in the Community and to maintain a clear idea of the aims of the CLC process. The Guide helps the Community and its Coordinator to use the means for both the growth and the mission of the Community. The participation of the Guide in the life of the Community is conditioned by that which objectively is needed in order to fulfil his/her function in an efficient way. The Guide is chosen by the Group, with the approval of the regional or national Community. GN 41 b.

- Considers the Spiritual Exercises as the source of Ignatian spirituality and through them has ‘interiorised’ the way of learning to be a contemplative in action.
 - Has discovered the need for personal spiritual guidance and, through this, has discovered the importance of spiritual guidance and the directing others.
 - Feels called to become a guide and lives out this service as a mission of the Church.
196. The Guide proposes, in a progressive way, the CLC methods of development. Their proposals are adapted, in a pedagogical way, to the experience and characteristics of the individuals concerned so that the objectives of each stage⁹⁴ may be attained. This helps the community and its members to discover, try out and integrate into daily life these practices so that they can be faithful to their vocation and mission.
197. In general, during all the stages of the process, the guide:
- Suggests and facilitates the contents, means and/or experiences which belong to the relevant stage and which help the process to proceed.
 - Sets out the community process, returning to, repeating or suggesting aspects which need to be treated in greater depth.
 - Follows each individual very closely and reveals any situation where there is personal ‘stagnation’
 - Maintains close contact with the coordinator, Ecclesial Assistant and other guides both within the group and outside it. This is especially a priority with those who guide groups where there is a similar vocational situation.
198. **During the stage of reception/welcome, the guide** has a dynamic and ecclesial attitude, performing the basic task of

⁹⁴ Charism 2001 no.174

educator in the faith of the Church, drawing people to Jesus and initiating them to the spiritual life. They perform leadership duties in the group and are accepted by the members. They are persons well formed who are able to manage any instability which can characterise this stage. They are able to adapt and adjust experiences to the needs of the individuals concerned. The main functions of the guide during this phase are:

- To handle the dynamic of the group, encouraging the experience of respectful listening, helping to ensure the participation of all in order to facilitate mutual hospitality and help.
- To familiarise the group with the CLC style of meeting and methodology⁹⁵.
- To help to discover, express and articulate the deep desires (movements) and, with time, to recognise those who are indicating that they should move to the next stage.
- To direct and encourage candidates in their participation in community life and in their relations with the rest of the community and beyond. In this task, the guide collaborates with the coordinator of the specific community. To carry this out in an adequate way, the guide needs the support of the local community and of its members responsible for formation.
- To provide examples of CLC vocations in other communities and individuals⁹⁶
- To provide information about other vocations and movements in the Church to any candidates who do not want to continue.

199. Starting from *the stage of laying the foundations for vocation*, the guide presents progressively the specific CLC

⁹⁵ See appendix on CLC meeting style

⁹⁶ When the Guide is a CLC member s/he gives witness as to his/her own vocation and his/her life is a point of Community reference.

means of growth. In order to attain the objectives of this stage, these recommendations need to be adapted to the experience and characteristics of the individuals concerned⁹⁷. The functions of the guide in this stage are:

- To enable a first encounter with the language and themes of the Exercises: first experience of the Spiritual Exercises⁹⁸.
- To encourage members in their search for personal guidance and offer to be one such director.
- To encourage the personal practice of the Daily Examen (the Ignatian pause).
- To encourage the practice of the Review of Life in a specific community, taking special care for a prayerful atmosphere of the meeting, preferring that sharing be a result of the fruits of prayer and encouraging an open sharing of movements in evaluation.
- To support the work of the coordinator by encouraging participation and the assumption of responsibilities by members.
- To create a climate which facilitates the making of good decisions (including elections), familiarising the people and the particular community with the CLC way of life in which decisions are taken with an attitude of discernment.
- To make available and provide guidance for experiences of service directed at those who have least, always looking for a greater awareness of the problems of injustice and social marginalisation.
- To provide spiritual guidance in the process of clarification of vocation including in the context of

⁹⁷ Charism 2001 no. 174

⁹⁸ Whatever the means of admission, the new members should be helped by the Community to assimilate the CLC way of life...as a means to arrive at this personal decision it is strongly recommended that they have experience of the Sp.Ex., GN 2.

preparation for Temporary Commitment or an alternative election.

- To prepare a member for Temporary Commitment ensuring full community involvement and support.

200. In the **stage of discernment of vocation**, the guide has the role of ‘director’ focusing on the life experience of the individual(s) and of the particular community⁹⁹. The director’s (guide’s) functions in this stage are:

- To encourage the undertaking of the full experience of the Spiritual Exercises in some form – in retreat, in daily life or in a retreat by stages.
- To encourage acquisition of the knowledge and the ability with the necessary processes in order to be able to make an election – and in doing so, taking advantage of any helpful circumstances which pertain to the life of the individual community, eg in:
 - ♦ assisting understanding and applying the rules of discernment,
 - ♦ appreciating Ignatian insights: eg practising the *greater* good, attending to the most urgent, being prepared to go where others have not been,
 - ♦ being available,
 - ♦ living indifference.
- To encourage sharing of movements of the spirit, eg from the fruits of the daily examen.
- To encourage, as a starting point, an opening up to the reality of the world, especially to the reality of the poorest.
- To encourage participation in gatherings and courses of the National Community with others who are living through a similar process.

⁹⁹ When the Guide is a CLC member his/her life testimony is important to support the processes of decision- making.

- To direct the process of clarification of desires and life choices with regard to vocation, especially in relation to:
 - ◆ Election of a state of life, when this has not been carried out in an earlier stage
 - ◆ Change of a person's life or status
 - ◆ Permanent Commitment or other similar election
201. At the **stage¹⁰⁰ of apostolic discernment**, the guide gives guidance on how to live the CLC way of life¹⁰¹ in terms of attitudes, disposition, and openness¹⁰². The guide's function is to encourage a dynamic apostolic life according to the principles of apostolic discernment, sending (missioning), supporting and evaluation.
202. The guide helps, in an ongoing way, to bring order to the rhythm of life so as to ensure the effective and faithful living of the mission to which the individual has been entrusted. The guide also helps one to maintain inner peace, focussing on the most essential in living out mission, so that all we do, think and feel will come from our foundation which is Jesus Christ¹⁰³.
203. Among **the functions carried out by the guide** in this stage are the following:

¹⁰⁰ The collaboration of Jesuits and other religions as Guides at this stage is a grace for the Community. Appendix: Collaboration between CLC and the Society of Jesus. Recommendations of the Nairobi 2003 World Assembly to the Christian Life Community . ..This collaboration will include...guiding the groups in their transformation to apostolic communities which share responsibility in mission...'

¹⁰¹GP 8 Community members who have made a Permanent Commitment have a special call to accompany others in the process, which they have already experienced.

¹⁰²The CLC Community is a meeting of persons in Christ, a cell of His mystical body which is founded, therefore, on faith and a common vocation and not only on a natural affinity. Charism 2001 no. 136. See also GP 7 and Charism 2001 nos. 137 and 138.

¹⁰³ With all the Ignatian means at our disposal we will place ourselves before our Lords in an attitude of indifference and of Principle and Foundation and we will do all we can so that 'desires' come to maturity, that he will receive them and that they will come to life and reality, giving fruit in abundance. Cf Projects 125 – October 2003 – 'Remain Faithful in a Changing World'.

- To propose a means which will allow an active compassion towards the poorest and the most needy¹⁰⁴ within the framework of the mission of CLC and of the Church, opting for an openness to reality as a way of discovering new apostolic possibilities.
- In the context of the state of the community, to make available the necessary means, opportunities¹⁰⁵ and methodologies of the processes of community deliberation and communal apostolic discernment to help live out the apostolic dimension of the community received as mission from Christ and from the Church.
- To encourage the sharing of spiritual movements which are the fruit of the daily examen. This makes possible interpretation of the individual's sharing and the Review of Life in common.
- To encourage the use of communal discernment and deliberation as a preferred means for making decisions and thereby experiencing development
- Whenever necessary, to identify personal and/or group situations of stagnation
- To highlight, objectively, the processes unfolding in the community, identifying and making suggestions about matters which need to be addressed in more depth (to achieve an integration of faith and everyday life).
- To encourage all to practice the Sacraments as central to our Christian and apostolic life.
- To encourage the full living and expression of the ecclesial dimension of one's particular community. In this area, the community has the help of the Ecclesial Assistant¹⁰⁶.
- To promote the use of Ignatian means which relate to:
 - ♦ Maintaining indifference

¹⁰⁴ Projects 124 – Nairobi 2003

¹⁰⁵ Cf. GP 12

¹⁰⁶ GP 14; GN 44-45

- ◆ Practising, daily, the Ignatian Examen
- ◆ Practising discernment - and living with a discerning heart.
- ◆ Appreciating the importance of personal spiritual guidance. This helps to discover anew, and from the perspective of the Lord, what He wants to tell us both in consolation and desolation¹⁰⁷.
- ◆ Experiencing renewal through the spirit and experience of the Spiritual Exercises.

204. The guide directs and encourages living the vocational process and apostolic commitment. In order to carry out these tasks well, the guide maintains close contact with the coordinator of a particular group, with the Ecclesial Assistant and with other guides (of the local community and beyond) – and especially with those who guide groups in the same vocational situation or with a similar apostolic commitment.

5.2 Role of the community in the process

205. The local CLC community welcomes and makes available to all those who come to it, the gift and resources of the CLC way of life. It looks after the processes of welcoming¹⁰⁸ and formation in accordance with the CLC charism. In order to do this, the community commissions individuals, committees or working groups¹⁰⁹ who, with the support and evaluation of the community, then discern the most suitable arrangements for individual groups and appoint the most suitable guides to direct processes.

¹⁰⁷ Sp.Ex. 313-336: Rules of Discernment of weeks 1 and 2.

¹⁰⁸ When the person comes into the Community s/he is helped by it to get to know the means of growth, which belong to CLC. These means are proposed in a progressive way, in a pedagogical process in which the Guide plays an important part. GP 12, Charism 2001, no 174

¹⁰⁹ The manner in which these functions are carried out will depend on the communities, but it will be geared towards the growth of the community and its members.

206. Conscious of the importance of formation for guides, the local, regional and National communities discern the most adequate arrangements to use for all those who are involved in the formation process. It is advisable that the National Communities, in consultation with the Executive Council, coordinate the proposals made by the guides and the particular communities¹¹⁰.
207. Guidance and direction, when welcoming those who approach the community about seeking discernment of commitment to CLC carried out in the individual groups, are the responsibility of the Local or National Community.
208. If a person discovers that his/her vocation is somewhere else (outside CLC), the community should offer information and spiritual guidance to help him/her discover the alternative role within the Church which would best help the individual respond to the call of the Lord¹¹¹.
209. As a visible expression of the steps which have been taken in the vocational process (including to the point of making a Commitment), it is helpful to propose a witness of this through a sign expressed in the presence of the community, eg some event within the group or at Eucharist. This type of activity is an important sign helping the community to recognise the work of God in their lives and in that of their brothers and sisters.
210. It is appropriate and helpful to encourage events and preparatory retreats for all those who may be at the same vocational stage in making Temporary¹¹² or Permanent¹¹³ Commitments. When there are several communities in the same city, one could organise joint formation days and/or retreats. As well as going deeply into the vocational process,

¹¹⁰A means for this could be the creation of structures and intercommunity service committees which will permit the sharing of the mission of Guides, good practice, experiences, materials etc...

¹¹¹ In these cases the linking can be in accordance with GN 12.

¹¹² Charism 2001 no. 172 - 185

¹¹³ Charism 2001 no. 190-196

these occasions will provide a good opportunity to experience, concretely, the universal dimension of CLC life.

211. The making of a Commitment, whether this is Temporary or Permanent, should be carried out in the presence of the community which accepts, confirms and celebrates the step being taken - preferably within the joyous celebration of the Eucharist. The community witnessing and endorsement of the free response of a person to the call of Christ will be evidenced¹¹⁴ by means of a formal wording¹¹⁵.
212. The generous response to God's love, which is expressed in the Commitment, links the individual to CLC¹¹⁶ in either a temporary or a permanent way. This joyous event is then communicated (preferably in writing) by the Local Committee, Council or Team, to the Committee or National Executive Council and/or the World Executive Council as a witness of the unity of all.
213. As this process moves forward, the Community will gradually develop into an apostolic community and, at its different levels (local, regional, national and world), organise itself and its structures in the service of mission. It constantly evaluates and discerns these structures to find the most appropriate way for carrying out organised apostolic service. It creates apostolic networks within the community and in collaboration with others, especially with the Society of Jesus and with other Church organisations¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁴Charism 2001 no. 189: Our challenge today is to make external what we live inwardly and we want to make it a visible and ecclesial sign.

¹¹⁵Charism 2001 no. 186-189 and no. 197 and 198

¹¹⁶ GP2; Charism 2001 no. 184: It is important that the Temporary Commitment is not only linked to a series of obligations but to a generous response to God, who first loved us, made according to the spirit of the Gospels and the inner law of love.

¹¹⁷ 'We want to maintain and go deeply into this relationship until it matures fully as a collaboration between two apostolic bodies at the service of the mission of the Church'. See recommendations of the Nairobi World Assembly 2003 to the CLC.

6 EPILOGUE

214. This document brings together a personal and spiritual way of life which CLC wishes to place at the service of people and their relationship with God. This is done that they might better look for, find and live out the will of God in their lives¹¹⁸. Let us place this important mission of CLC and the Church in the Lord's hands with the words of St. Francis Xavier:

**'Let us ask God to
give us the grace
to open up ways
for others...'**



¹¹⁸ Speech of Fr. General Peter Hans Kolvenbach SJ to the laity on Ignatian Spirituality on May 1st 2006 at the San Ignacio El Bosque College in Santiago de Chile. *'For that reason Fr. Hurtado implores CLC members to get to know better the treasure they possess, that they should remain faithful to their apostolic mission and that they should be more aware of the importance of inviting and of calling others to travel along the CLC way. And he asks the Jesuits to do the same, reinforcing the decrees of so many General Congregations'*.

Annex I: Meetings

1. The meeting of the group is the ideal space for trying out and making real the life of a group or community. It is the place of encounter where the group members share their life and their faith. As the group grows as friends in the Lord, the meeting will be enriched by the spiritual experience of the group of human beings and it leads them into the development of the personal and group mission.
2. The CLC meeting has a structure that helps to place the participant in the presence of the Lord, to participate in a spiritual communion, and to strengthen the apostolic commitment.
 - **Prayer:** The opening prayer makes us aware that we are called by the Lord. It is good if a member of the group prepares this part of the meeting in a way that helps to place in context the content or aim of the meeting.
 - **Main part of the meeting:** Generally, this the longest part of the meeting and its content may serve as training, covering a particular subject, the examen, the decision-making, discernment, group prayer, etc. The atmosphere and spirit of the meeting, fully imbued by faith, hope and love that are the hallmarks of all Christian living, foster the spiritual and life sharing of the participants and the respectful and active listening by the others.
 - **The evaluation:** At the end of the meeting, and after a minute or two of silence, each one shares briefly the feelings and motions (peace, uneasiness, calling ...) arising in them at the end and during the meeting. The evaluation helps everyone to understand what God wants to tell us as a group and as an individual participant, removing the obstacles that may arise. Through the evaluation the group places their experience in God's hands during a final moment of prayer.

3. This structure for the meeting re-discovers the CLC tradition and is used by most communities and groups. They find it a useful means to deepen their vocation and apostolic commitment. Though this is a recommended format, it is not the only one. The structure and dynamics that should be adopted for a particular group should be the one that best suits the individual participants and the group in the context of the needs and circumstances of that particular group and considering the stage of their development.
4. It is up to the guide and co-ordinator to suggest the structure and dynamic for the meeting, such that they help to discover the presence of the Lord in the life of the group and in that of its participants and to deepen its growth process .
5. Governing councils or working groups of the community can adopt a similar format for their meetings, with the main part of the meeting focussing on the carrying out of the particular service or mission entrusted to the relevant group.

TABLES

Table 1: Dimensions of CLC Vocation

Table 2: A Journey for CLC Formation
Stage 1: Period of reception/welcome
Stage 2: Laying the foundation for vocation
Stage 3: Discernment of vocation
Stage 4: Apostolique discernment

Table 3: Signs of Growth (by dimension) in the Journey

