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VI GENERAL ASSEMBLY

WORLD FEDERATION

OF

CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES

ADDITIONS and CORRECTIONS
to the List of Officers Given in
PROGRESSIO 1971, No. 5. (Sept.)

FRANCE : Ass. P. Claude FLIPO s.j., 14 rue de la
Tombe-Issoire, 75-Paris 14

HONG KONG : Pres. Antony CHEUNG, 50 Johnston Rd, 6th Floor,
Wanchai

MALTA : Pres. Oscar VELLA, 689 High Street, Hamrun

PHILIPPINES : Pres. Marte VINZONS) 1339 Perez Street
Ass. P. José BLANCO) Paco, Manila D-401

REP. of CHINA : Pres. Peter KONG MIN CHU, 65 Feitwo II,
Chungho, Taipei, Taiwan
Ass. P. Simon CHU s.j., Sect. 1, Lane 183
Hoping E. Road 24, Taipei, Taiwan

SCOTLAND : Ass. P. James GIBLIN s.j., Acre House,
100 Acre Road, Glasgow G20. OTL

A.C.U. : Pres. José MESTRE, 3555 Oxford Ave,
New York, N.Y. 10063, U.S.A.

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER

There are moments when all is silent within us, as if to confer on the present event all its intensity, all its resonance. There are moments when grace lays hold of our being at its very depths so as to prepare it for a more generous "yes"

It was surely such a moment we were allowed to experience when, on January 15th just passed, Pope Paul received in audience the Executive Council of the World Federation. In the audience he forcefully reaffirmed the vocation and the reason for existence of the Christian Life Communities. And simply and without formality, he made clear to us his fatherly affection for the Communities and his confidence in them.

We are at a period when our Communities are giving increased emphasis to their efforts at renewal and are entering resolutely on the path of service. May this witness of love and of gospel simplicity given us by the Pope and the clarity of his message remind us constantly of the mark of our spirituality, which is to be men and women of the Church.

Dear Sons and Daughters,

The World Federation of Christian Life Communities which you represent is well-known to the Holy See, as you are already aware. Just recently we had the opportunity to examine and approve the revised General Principles and Statutes of your group. So it is with joy that we are receiving for a short time this morning the members of the Executive Council, with their president, Mr. Roland Calcat.

Yes, we encourage you with all our heart to keep on with what is, in our eyes, a top-priority goal in the Church of today: the forming of solid Christian personalities, who integrate the fullness of their human life and their varied responsibilities with a continually deepening spiritual life.

The means you use to do this seem to us simple, sure and effective, like the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, from which you draw your inspiration; meditation on the Word of God, on the doctrine and faith set forth by the Church; prayer, personal and communitarian; the search for God's will in the events which are His signs to us, done with the help of spiritual direction and of that brotherly exchange that you make use of in your 'communities of Christian life'; frequent participation in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist; an organic bond with your assistants; and, in line with the origin of your movement, your eyes turned always towards Mary, our example of disponibility in her cooperation with the work of the Saviour.

Drinking from such springs and faithful to such demands, you are ready to grow in the life of faith and to become authentic witnesses of the Gospel in today's world by a concrete, well-adapted and effective commitment, in line with what the recent Council called for. As the program of your current meeting makes clear, you want to contribute, on your part, to the development of the whole man and of all men. And you show a concern for the young which we are glad to see. May their generosity find in the call of Christ the living water which quenches their thirst and the fire of love which sets aflame their action.

In this immense field of action which is the Church, you feel a sense of solidarity with those who devote themselves to the apostolate according to other methods in their social milieu, so as to penetrate its mentality and structures with the Gospel yeast of justice and peace. We urge you to put into practice that preoccupation which we notice with joy in your General Principles: 'sense of the Church'. Dear sons and daughters, keep this deep affection and fidelity to the Church, this openness to her pastoral projects, this insertion into the ecclesial communities of which you are part. Bring to this what is perhaps most characteristic of you: a continual resort to the well-springs of Christ and His paschal mystery, following in the path of Mary. In expressing these desires, we give you, and those whom you represent here before us this morning, with all our heart, our fatherly apostolic blessing.

We were, may we add, especially impressed by the spontaneous remarks the pope made to the Council members apart from the text of his address. Before beginning his talk, he said that he was "one of you". In giving his talk, he departed from the text to insist on "the maximalism" which ought to inspire the CLCs and on the intensity and solidity of their formation. At the end, he said he would be glad to address the Communities as a whole at some future congress.

Formation is an essential need for a member of the Christian Life Communities and a special responsibility of the national federations, for these are anxious to offer their members formation methods of real quality. Last July, Monique Brunel traced for us the evolution of their training sessions in Canada. Today, Ben Sim, S.J., describes their experience in the Philippines with a course using group dynamics followed by the Spiritual Exercises.

A PROGRAM OF FORMATION

by Ben Sim, S.J.

Our CLC movement is barely three years old. In this way we are starting from the beginning. Through these years we have accumulated experience. And this article will deal with some mechanics involved in our program of formation. In our experiments on various approaches to CLC renewal, we have found that an effective means is to start with a seminar using group dynamics, followed by the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius.

Jaime Bulatao, S.J. and Eugene Moran, S.J. describe this technique as "a method whereby a 'spiral process' might be set up in individuals leading to individual and social maturity." The principle behind this method, according to Bulatao and Moran is that "Human growth is along two lines: the individual and the group. No man grows as a man by himself; neither does the group grow as a group unless somehow or other its members grow too, not merely in numbers but in new attitudes and skills suited to the changing situation of an evolving and enlarging group."

In general, our seminars (involving group dynamics) are held for four days and four nights. There are some variations like weekends, six days or more etc. Our seminars are mainly for students but they are also given to adult CLC groups. There are no assigned speakers or topics in the seminar, except for one session each day on personal prayer. And that session is optional to the participants. The staff members (also students) merely facilitate group discussion and interaction among participants.

Seminars using group dynamics usually bring about self-confidence, and sensitivity to the feelings and attitudes of others, and usually a deep appreciation of religious values. Some examples of typical remarks taken from questionnaires sent out after the seminars give an indication of what the participants experienced.

To the question, "How did the seminar affect you personally?"

A participant answered, "It developed my faith in God, by realizing people as they are."

Another replied to the same question, "It's really very difficult to express how the seminar affected me. To sum up everything, I feel great. For the first time in my life, I've felt that life is nice and Christ is very near."

The seminar begins with the participants getting to know one another. This can go deeper with the participants' sharing personal experiences, or undergoing some exercises that deal with communication. Some of these exercises emphasize the problems of audio-visual communication a combination of various forms of communication. We have found that one of the stumbling blocks to CLC progress is communication. And so the CLC members are made aware of this through an experience of the various aspects of communication. These exercises make the participants desire to understand the way people behave rather than give value judgments. The exercises on communication usher in the world of feelings. This world of feelings which says a lot about a person and the group is another important aspect to be considered. An understanding of one's feeling and the feelings of others brings about sensitivity which is a key factor in group functioning.

Some exercises, to bring about the world of feelings, could be made also. Oftentimes, role-playing is used. Role-playing is exactly an exercise of "putting oneself in another's situation." One becomes aware of others and their situation.

The next stage usually is the building up of group consciousness, and responsibility to the group. This can be brought about by the use of collage which is an exercise where a group gathers pictures that expresses the group's sentiments. Pictures are taken from old magazines and newspapers. Another exercise in this stage is problem-solving.

When the above preparatory stage is over, the group tries to form a common goal or goals for the rest of the seminar. The group also decides on the means to achieve their goals. Thus they are responsible for the outcome of the seminar. The coordinator and the staff members merely point out the process going on, and supply the necessary information when needed.

Regular evaluation sessions are held during which the participants assess the progress of the seminar, analyze the hindrances--even personal ones and try to resolve conflicts. Thus, more efficient progress can be achieved.

When the group or community is formed, then they decide on their program and task after the seminar. What is very important in the seminar is the informal atmosphere and the spirit of acceptance. Also very important is a meaningful liturgy whereby the participants really experience a community of love.

In most cases the group decides to undergo a closed retreat (Ignatian) usually a few months after the seminar. The retreats range for 4, 5 or 6 days. Christmas and Summer holidays are the most suitable and convenient time for all. The places of retreats are varied due to financial circumstances. They are held on mountain tops, beaches, homes, schools etc.. The overall effect is informality (less rigidity) so that there will be more chances for personal contact and consultation with one another and more participation in shaping the retreat format. A word must be said concerning the size of the group. Usually the retreat is for small groups. This is to insure guidance. There is room for more sharing. The retreats are handled by Jesuits or a team of Jesuits or a group of Jesuits and laymen.

The closed retreat (CLC) follows the basic structure of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius (the 4 weeks, rules on discernment, election, ad amorem etc.). If there is a renovation, it is a happy combination of individual- and group-centered retreat. This is an experience gathered from the seminar using group dynamics. Another addition is that of the discussion on the various methods of prayer and the practice of it. Also the evening group evaluation of the day wherein the retreatants share the insights, problems of the day. There is an extensive treatment of the Discernment of Spirits since this is a necessary tool for an effective CLC member. There is always an effort to provide a modern (here and now) connection between the meditations and its expressions. The retreatants give these connections.

The liturgy found in the seminar is very important especially the Eucharistic Celebration (cf. No. 4, Part I General Principles, CLC). It is a general consensus that the Eucharistic Celebration and Liturgy in general bring home the point that liturgy expresses the life of the CLC member. During the retreat also an all-night vigil is scheduled. Usually this is an hourly watch of the Blessed Sacrament, done during the meditation on the Passion of our Lord.

As of writing, there are plans to include Penitential Services done locally, as an addition to the dimension of the Sacrament of Penance. Bible Services are also in the plans.

A last but important innovation is the addition of a discussion of the General Principles, towards the end of the retreat. This session was added to enable the retreatants to see the relation of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius to the General Principles. The experience of the Spiritual Exercises is articulated in the General Principles. In this way, the General Principles of the CLC come closer to the life of a CLC member.

The comments of the retreatants have been encouraging. When asked about the effects or the relation of the Live-in Seminar and the Ignatian Retreat to their lives, they have this to say:

"I think that like most people, I needed the Live-in before trying to make the closed retreat; we have first to free ourselves to be able to meet others, and once we are free we can follow up on that and meet God."

"Yes, in the Live-in I realized I had too much of a front dealing with other people. Only after removing this front, will I be able to remove my front before God."

"True, the live-in taught me to treat people as persons; the retreat taught me to treat God as a person."

All these sentiments indicate a certain relationship between the effects of group dynamics and closed retreats to an increased sensitivity in one's personal relationship with God. According to survey reports, the three most predominant feelings are confidence and self-understanding and acceptance and sensitivity to the feelings of others.

Today we make the acquaintance of the "International Sodality of Our Lady of the Sick", affiliated to the World Federation. During this time of the year when the liturgy of Lent and of the Passion prepares us for the Great Pasover, we thought it good to present to our readers this branch of the Church Suffering, whose specific contribution constitutes one of the riches of our World Community.

A COMMUNITY FOR THE SICK

by Msgr. Wilhelm GILLMANN, eccl.asst.

This Sodality of Our Lady -- I would like to note this at the outset--is obviously the work of the Mother of God. It would take too long to recall the "accidents" that presided over its birth. Seen with the eye of faith, these "accidents" are the hand of God and of our Mother. God always gives us his grace when we need it. So I consider our Sodality for the sick as a grace, a gift of God for our Church and for the world of today.

The members are all sick persons (women, men, youth, priests, religious) who, because of their infirmities (illnesses, bodily handicaps, infirmities of age), cannot take an active part in another Community, but maintain a desire to grow in the spiritual life, and to give themselves wholeheartedly to apostolic service. For this reason they want to belong to a community whose members are linked "by their common commitment, their common way of life, and their filial love for Mary" (General Principles, No. 6. Its members are scattered among 21 dioceses of Germany and German-speaking countries.

We are aware of being a Marian community. Our members have entrusted themselves to the Virgin so as to be, in union with her and by her help and example, at the disposition of God in all circumstances in their mission of service to the Church and the world. The sick are the great hope of the Church. The Church needs their prayer, their expiatory suffering. Christ needs the sick. "With Him you will save -- if you wish it -- the world" was written in the message of the Council Fathers to the sick.

To accomplish their apostolic mission, they offer God each day their prayer, their suffering and their difficulties, in reparation, and in the sense of asking of the Father, "Thy kingdom come".

Their general mission reaches out to include all the preoccupations of the Church. The monthly intentions formulated by the Pope give each month new directions to their prayers.

Their specific tasks include:

- 1) the personal concerns and intentions of the Pope. Our Sodality considers the first of its tasks to be a group at the service of the Pope, as was the first community of Jerusalem in its prayers for Peter when he was in prison: "the prayer of the Church for him was directed to God without ceasing" (Acts 12: 5).
- 2) the responsibilities of our bishops. This tie with the hierarchy has always been a characteristic of our movement.
- 3) the advancement of the Christian Life Communities throughout the world; for our group is convinced that, just as all during the past 400 years, the Communities have as their vocation "to form committed men and women, adults and youth, for service to the Church in every area of life" (General Principles, No. 3). The members of our community feel themselves co-responsible for the growth in quality and in number of our Communities throughout the world.
- 4) Helping the sick in their own parish, especially those without family or without aid.
- 5) Helping those within our own community. All the members of the Sodality are aware of their responsibility to each other, and help each other by prayer and personal contact. What is essential is not following the General Principles to the letter, but to live them out in the spirit of the Gospel and the interior law of love.

The unity of Christians who form one body in Christ is signified and realized in the Eucharist. The members of our Sodality unite their demand to that of the whole Church that "by tak-

ing part in the body and blood of Christ we may be gathered together in the Holy Spirit in one sole body" (Eucharistic Prayer). To come together around the altar is not possible for them, but that is not what counts. They are invited to unite themselves each morning in spirit with the Holy Sacrifice celebrated by their ecclesiastical assistant, who is aware of their unity around the altar. The fruit of the Eucharist is the fullness of love, which "has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Romans 5: 5). It is He who unites our members ever more closely in a fraternal community. Yes, we have gradually become a real "family", strengthened by the contacts between the members, and by those between the members and the ecclesiastical assistant.

Our other means for reinforcing the bond of community are:

- a monthly exchange of information, the letter of the assistant, the bulletin, the points of meditation for our daily prayer,
- the various "correspondence groups" who form working teams of 6 to 10 members, corresponding with each other by letter,
- the regional groups of members living in a certain district,
- the occasional gatherings in small circles, whether these be of formation or simply of friendship,
- the regular gathering in autumn, linked with the annual assembly that follows the Spiritual Exercises made just before the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows on September 15th. Only some of the members are able to take part; the last one found 40 of the sick in attendance.

Since the life of our Sodality is very demanding for its members, entrance into the group is made only after a period of probation, at the end of which the decision is made. The consecration is the expression of the decision; it involves also for the members a commitment to the specific tasks of our Sodality.

Doubtless the above account is focused mainly on simply communicating information about our group. In a brief space, it would not be possible to speak of the life and the total commitment of our members. Still I am always deeply amazed when I find myself before certain of the sick, bedridden for 10, 20, 30, 40 or 50 years, who have not shut themselves off from the world nor

turned in upon themselves, but rather, forgetful of their own illness, have offered themselves to be open to all the sufferings of the world and the Church, keeping their joy, their understanding and their sense of humor. One can feel the Spirit at work... I thank the Lord for each sick person that He draws into our community (we count 352 members, and this without any publicity), and for so often being witness to their life, their suffering, their sacrifice and their love. We have often asked ourselves whether it might not be necessary, in order to retain a true community life, to limit the number of our members. Our team of leaders, on the wise advice of Father Paulussen, has refrained from doing so.

To conclude, let us give this reflection written to us recently by a young woman student who had become acquainted with our community:

"I found real joy in the life and the intense sharing which exists in this community. In spite of the fact that I had regarded them from the point of view of one in good health, the worth and the relevance of the apostolate of this group took hold of me. Very often our modern society offers only smoke and evasion of all sorts even to the extent of suicide as an escape from situations of personal misery. How easily one declares that one is at the end of one's endurance, and how quickly one flees panic-stricken from misery and from oneself! Knowing this, it is almost frightening to meet people who do not flee from the burdensome reality of their grief and vexation, but possess the enormous courage to shoulder it. More still, these sick strive to transform their suffering into a precious contribution for the life of the Church.

May the Lord make this community "a city set on a mountain-top" as a sign of hope for all of us, "so tempted daily to flee like cowards before seemingly hopeless situations, or before the demands of the present moment."

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN ROME

by Hildegard EHRTMANN

The fact that the Executive Council met January 13 - 16 at Rome assumes for our future work a quite special significance. No one could foresee how the private audience with Pope Paul VI and the long session with Father General Arrupe, SJ, would reveal so clearly how much the Church-- in the person of those who bear within it the chief responsibility-- recognizes the relevance of the CLCs, and how much it counts on the persons and the communities who live out in this way of life their commitment to the Church and to the world.

The agenda, as planned, actually would not have allowed time for these "extra" events, since it included 19 matters for discussion and a day of study on the Exercises in the world today. So the first decision taken was that, for the future, the agenda of meetings would be limited to one principal topic. All information and matters not requiring general discussion would be communicated in writing beforehand. For a better use of the time and talents and knowledge of each one, preparing proposals by means of work done in small groups remains a specially effective method.

The study day on the Exercises certainly had for the movement as a whole particular importance. Three groups at the same time probed the difficulties which the Exercises present in today's world. One group assembled the problems met with by retreat directors, a second the difficulties that stem from the mentality and situation of the world today, while a third ferreted out the difficulties which seem to be inherent in the Exercises themselves. The results of this effort brought to light that, underlying the listing of the problems, lay experience with personally-guided Exercises; but also experience with other forms of them which correspond neither to the needs of people today nor to the aim of the Exercises. At the same time it was evident that the problems are fundamentally the same in all continents. It was seen as important that the Exercises not be employed haphazardly; that while they are unequalled in their relevance for our day, the criteria determining their usage by the instructor, the retreatant and so too by the CLC movement generally ought to be sought for from those men who have had real experience with them.

One decision taken among others was to draw up a questionnaire aimed at exploring more fully the difficulties already lis-

ted. This would be sent to persons both favorable and unfavorable to the Exercises, so as to test the solutions proposed by members of the Executive Council. A parallel study concerning the preparation for the Exercises needed by people today will also be sent out. This latter would be of help both to members and to ecclesiastical assistants.

The questionnaire and the study on preparation referred to above will be done within the coming year. Another project, more long-term, will be that of publishing a booklet presenting in parallel columns the text of the Exercises, an explanation of terms, and a modernized translation. Such an effort, it is obvious, will demand the collaboration of experts, particularly Jesuits.

The development "of the whole man and of all men" was the second important topic of the gathering. The Council members were glad to learn that the review *Progressio* would soon be publishing a series of five articles by Father Sommet, SJ, on this subject. Council members stressed strongly that the question of development would not and should not be considered as if detached from the total human and spiritual formation of man, nor from the global mission of CLC.

To become acquainted with what the different national federations are doing in this field, and above all to provide inspiration and motivation, it was proposed to set up a commission of CLC leaders including some members of the Executive Council, which would make possible a coordination at the world level. It was clearly recognized that our movement, for example, was not in the category of those involved in development at the world level in such a fashion that it could or should send an official delegation to international congresses. Nonetheless it was also very clear that we should be aware of all these efforts and that to the degree possible, CLC members should take part in sessions and gatherings of this sort.

It is not merely in development that the World Federation needs collaboration. It depends also on close contact of the federations with each other, so that people who share the same vocation may know each other and mutually support each other, ever ready to give and receive brotherly counsel and mutual assistance (Gen. Prin., n°. 11). This perspective led the Council to accept the plan of Father Rieman, José Gsell and Fred Leone for a trip to nine countries of Asia from June 22 to August 3 this year. This trip was viewed as urgent in spite of the scarcity

of funds. The Council members were asked to do everything possible to find the money needed. Here it is not a question only of a gesture of solidarity, but of a necessity -- to have dialog and exchange and to get to know each other.

Still in the course of this year, an attempt will be made to initiate in Latin America what might be called a center of spirituality and of action, so that the youth of the continent find there the help they need, and steer clear of two extremes--an action cut off from its roots, or a flight into a purely spiritual world. The session with Fr. General Arrupe singled out particularly how well we can in the CLCs offer this total formation which allows Christians solidly rooted spiritually to commit themselves totally in the world to the struggle for justice and for peace.

The question of ecumenism in the CLCs was first worked on in sub-groups. The results, which were a good beginning, will, after further reflection, be submitted to the members of our Communities for discussion. It was clear that in all ecumenical collaboration and still more in the question of non-Catholic members within CLC, the aspects specified in the General Principles should remain a common base; among others, the central place of the Eucharist, the sense of the Church, the role of the Blessed Virgin in the plan of salvation.

The theme and methods of the next General Assembly will be the main topic for the next meeting of the Executive Council, August 3-6, 1972, at Augsburg in Germany. Nonetheless, an important decision had to be made even now regarding participation. The National Federation of Germany, host to the Assembly, requested the Council to limit the participants to the number specified for the national delegations. It will be then a Congress of at most 150 delegates. A religious ceremony in which CLC members of Germany, families of delegates and any guests present will take part, will be celebrated one of the evenings in the Cathedral of Augsburg, and be the culminating point of the week. Apart from this ceremony, the Congress will have the character rather of a work session and a community deliberation, such as was planned for Rome in 1967 and for Santo Domingo in 1970.

As regards the cost to delegates for the expenses of the Assembly, the decision was made to charge somewhat more to members from the so-called "First World" so that delegates from the Third World would be better able to take part in a gathering in Europe.

The Council took up again the question of its method of work, and of the makeup of the group during its meetings. It was stressed strongly that the sessions were not for socializing but for serious work; that in this light, experts might sometimes be invited for a limited period, as well as two young members of the host country who might have something to contribute and at the same time get a view of our movement as a whole.

When the pope, in his striking identification with the renewed CLCs, said that he was "one of you", this was for each member of the Council not just a phrase, but a serious call to labor--and not just in his own country but also on the world level--so that the greatest possible number of Christians might have access to this way of intensive spiritual and apostolic living, with--the pope stressed it quite pointedly--the Exercises as source, a serious interior and external commitment, a clear vision of Mary collaborating by her attitude of disponibility and openness with the work of her Son. It was with some trepidation, but even more with encouragement, that the members of the Executive Council heard both Pope Paul and Father General say to them that this kind of life was not easy, could not be offered or lived lightly, but demanded a serious and deep formation, thorough study, a formation, a total commitment to the living of the paschal mystery of Christ.

The visit to the Secretariat where the Council at once felt at home, the invitation of Father Insolerra to the center of the National Federation of Italy, the remarkable hospitality of "Villa Cavalletti", the Jesuit retreat house where we stayed--all this played its part in assuring that the work got done in a brotherly spirit and according to the method of CLC.

We should not be surprised that a group like the Executive Council had first to become a community. We could tell that it was on its way to becoming one, and perhaps this extraordinary meeting was especially favorable to our experiencing the Church on a small scale. We are very thankful for it--as also for the fact that all the members present decided to make together the Spiritual Exercises from December 30, 1972 to January 8, 1973.

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA : New National CLG Training Centre

In January, 1972, began in Johannesburg the new CLG (Christian Life Groups) National Training Centre, under the name "KOINO-NIA" (Community). Directed by Father John Goller, SJ, the national CLG assistant, it has 50 beds, plus fine facilities for meetings, courses, etc. Plans include:

- an annual four-months' intensive CLG training course (January-April) for full-time and part-time CLG priest-, brother-, sister-, and lay-workers. The numbers for the 1972 course will be limited to 24 so that each participant can be given full personal attention,
- two "koinonumens" at a time. A koinonumen is a special 46-hour CLG training course,
- general CLG leadership courses,
- regional and national CLG conferences and executive meetings for the three CLG levels: students, young adults, adults,
- a gathering place for government school CLGs,
- a meeting place for the growing Vocations-CLG (60 members),
- the National CLG Secretariate.

Starting January 15, Father Eastwell, national English assistant, is also at the Center for 3 months to help Father Goller with the training course.

LATIN AMERICA

BOLIVIA : Enthusiasm and Inspiration

"We held a CLC Congress at the national level, in the city of Sucre, and it helped to inspire further the different Communities in the provinces of Bolivia. We hope the enthusiasm will continue to grow, for we are persuaded that the CLCs are an excellent means to revive the Christian spirit among our people, and especially among the young."

PERU : New Horizons

"On the Road Again" is the title of the lead article in the first issue of HORIZONS, the new bulletin of the National Federation of Christian Life Communities of Peru. The heading means that the national federation has just been reorganized and is again in full swing, its offices open for "interchange of ideas or anything relating to the federation". The new bulletin describes its goal as "communication, from the simplest--the information that ought to reach each member of CVX--to the most central objective, that of our spiritual and human

formation, shown in action. All this, we will do together." It lays special stress on the style of life of CVX members, and ends by saying, "HORIZONS will be, then, a horizon of Love".

The bulletin invites its members to subscribe to PROGRESSIO and to give if they can one hour's salary for World Federation needs. It gives the topic for the next meeting, which will have "two parts, both very important:

- theory: the preamble of the General Principles
- practice: how to live this out in each Community".

NORTH AMERICA

CANADA : Building the Missionary Community

The above title was the theme of a session which brought together at the end of the year some 80 representatives of the Canadian CLCs. Quite apart from being the theme of the meeting, the words also express an aim which inspires and stimulates the CLCs there to make their service in the Church more effective. "With spirit, and all the way!" That is the way 40 young members of the "Pierres vivantes" Teams express what they experienced in the course of a day of sharing, and tell us as well how they intend to orient their efforts for the months ahead. This slogan of theirs, is it not a fine expression of "the more"? Does it not remind us quite specifically of what our vocation really is?

ASIA

HONG KONG : Youth and Vigor

Twelve Communities were represented at the annual meeting of the Hong Kong CLC Federation, most of them student groups. Included was one new group, the New Asia College Community. Adult membership is mainly concentrated in the Wanchai Community (made up of working men and women) and in the two new graduate Communities started two years ago.

Though rapidly changing membership (especially in the student groups) presents some problems, the members show great vigor and ability in their activities. Joint efforts during the year that were quite successful were the World CLC Day Rally, a holiday camp of several days, and a three-day seminar. The latter especially was very carefully organized and quite effective.

EUROPE

GERMANY : Formation of CLC Leaders

We call attention to the interesting experience now in progress, aiming at a more intensive formation for CLC leaders. A

bout twenty persons take part, on the basis of one weekend per month (October to June), with ten days throughout that time and a final session of several days given to the Spiritual Exercises. The originality of the effort, which rests on a combination of information, reflection, insertion into life in both its personal and communitarian aspects, following the path and the dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises, cannot be summed up in one sentence. We promise to come back to it and to ask of its organizers at the end of the course an account for our readers.

We note also the three retreats of five days which have been asked of Father Paulussen by the students of Braunshardt, Leitenhofen and Würzburg.

FRANCE : Living Community

Three sessions in the course of this summer will allow CLC members from all parts of France to live during one week as a true community. For those who have only recently entered the Community, there will be two "Christian Life Meetings" on the theme "Learning to live, to live together, to live in the Church". For those who have already experienced community deliberation, there will be a session on the theme "Life of faith and political responsibility". Starting with the letter of Paul VI to Cardinal Roy, there will be exchange of personal experiences, and, with the help of competent persons, community deliberation as to how to answer more fully to the call of the Church.

ITALY : "On the side of the weak.... Fortitude.... Joyously"

Marco Diliberto, president of the National Federation of Italy, died on December 1, at the age of 49. The members of his own community wrote: "He was an example to us in life and in death.... his humanity led him to denounce social injustice.... From that humanity too came his insistence on the essential duty each one of us had to commit ourselves deeply and with all the means at our disposal to transform radically the social structure so as to afford to all people the full development of the human persons.... He had an innate tendency to place himself always on the side of the weak."

In his last days, suffering terribly, Marco showed extraordinary Christian fortitude. "He thanked the Lord for having sent to him and not to his wife and children the illness which was destroying him. He continually expressed his conformity to the 'will of the Father' in a spirit of perfect 'Ignatian indifference', an attitude very close to his heart. A few hours before his death, he asked his wife to read him the gospel of the last judgment."

Marco had made the personally-guided Spiritual Exercises for five days just a month before his death. He himself asked that his death notice should state that he had been "formed in the school of the Spiritual Exercises", and that he had gone "joyously" to the Lord. At his request, the Ave Maria in the Sardinian dialect was sung at the close of his funeral mass.

VERY SIMPLY

Beirut - Bombay - Cochin - Colombo - Calcutta - Saigon - Hong-Kong - Taipei - Tokyo - Manila - Djakarta.

There you have the itinerary that three members of the Executive Council will take up next June, stopping to get acquainted with the national federations and some local Christian Life Communities of the 9 countries of Asia.

To get acquainted, first of all, to discover the life of the CLCs in this part of the world, to come to know their originality and their richness. Then, to share our experience and to give life to the reality of our international federation.

This sums up briefly what we hope for and what we expect from this journey. Who would not feel an interest in it, seeing the absolute necessity of intensifying personal relations among us so as to arrive at this world community which, we feel it, can tomorrow serve better the Church and the men of our time?

That conviction has led the Executive Council to take this decision, in spite of its precarious financial situation. The World Federation managed, in 1971, to pay its bills and to make ends meet. However, its financial status remains uncertain. Above all, its present budget does not allow it to support "extraordinary" expenses. So, some members of the Communities have already shown their solidarity by getting behind the project and sending us gifts. The amount needed has not yet been assembled. That is why, VERY SIMPLY, we address ourselves to those among our readers who might be able to contribute to financing the trip. They may choose any method of payment that is convenient, making out their check or international postal money order to the credit of The World Federation of Christian Life Communities.

To all those who may be able and willing to help us,

VERY SIMPLY, THANK YOU.