

# PROGRESSIO

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## S U M M A R Y

- EDITORIAL  
by José GSELL ..... 3
- WHERE ARE WE ? ..... 5
- "CONTEMPLATION FOR LOVE"  
of the WORLD in the CHURCH  
by Jacques SOMMET s.j. .... 8
- DISCERNING THE SPIRITS  
by Maurice GIULIANI s.j. ... 13
- OUR YOUTH GROUPS in CLC  
by Nicholas RIEMAN s.j. .... 18
- "Still O.K."  
a letter of Jun EBOL ..... 21
- THE WORLD COMMUNITY ..... 23

Our authors in this issue

Jun EBOL. One of the highlights of the visit last summer of three WFCLC representatives to Asia was meeting the CLC groups of Malangas and in particular Jun Ebol. The integration in these members of solid and deep spirituality with an intelligent and courageous social commitment was such a joy to experience that it made the long, rocky, dusty ride by jeep necessary to get there only a minor difficulty.

Father Maurice GIULIANI, born at Lyon in 1916, was teaching French literature when the Jesuit Provincials of France chose him to found the review of Ignatian spirituality which he edited for 8 years. In 1959 was added the collection entitled Christus also, which he began with his translation and publication of the Spiritual Journal of St. Ignatius. In 1966 the 21st volume collected under the title Prayer and Action various studies of his on Ignatian spirituality. After having spent 7 years as Regional Assistant to Father Arrupe, the Jesuit General, he is again at Paris.

Father Nicholas RIEMAN, born in Ohio in 1917, before coming to Rome last year as full-time vice-assistant of the World CLC Federation, had been assistant to three adult and two youth CLC groups in four American cities, principally Cleveland. Besides his conferences and writing on CLC, he was involved in pastoral work, especially the longer Spiritual Exercises, oecumenical activity and work with the blacks.

Father Jacques SOMMET, born at Lyon in 1912, is a specialist in problems of social morality and of the apostolate to the working class. For twenty years he has filled the function of the intellectual and apostolic direction of his Jesuit brothers, evidencing both a large human experience and an educational approach much appreciated.

"YOU SAY OFTEN: 'I WILL GIVE, BUT ONLY TO THOSE WHO DESERVE IT'"  
"YOUR TREES AND YOUR ORCHARDS DO NOT SPEAK THAT WAY, NOR THE FLOCKS IN YOUR PASTURES."  
"THEY GIVE IN ORDER TO LIVE, FOR TO HOLD ON TO IS TO PERISH."

E D I T O R I A L

Khalil Gibran

By highlighting a quotation from the Lebanese poet, we simply wish, as this new year begins, to make us mutually aware of how enriching is our opening to others. And to stir us to discover and to recognize in each culture and in its various expressions, man's way of saying who he is and what are his yearnings. And, as we are touched and moved, to admire the immense human values contained in each culture. It is in this cultural pluralism, with its source in the earnest search for self-identity, that one comes to perceive how all parts of the human family have something both unique and complementary to contribute in the building of a better world.

It is this recognition of the specific contributions of each country, each culture, each man, which is at the base of human brotherhood. Its roots go very deep, even to the place where a purified conscience sees in each man a brother. Which is to say too that the failure to express themselves of men deprived of responsibility or ground down by misery ought to alert us and prod us to action.

Let us face the fact that it is seldom a very natural thing to leave behind our a prioris, our already-formed opinions in order to go out to meet the other, whether individual or group, with that attitude of welcome and of respect that is due each one. But let us add at once that it is this we desire in our deepest heart, and that there is no greater joy than that of a true coming together and of fruitful dialogue.

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Does not our world Community of Christian Life represent for us an extraordinary opportunity to forge and to live out in a concrete way the sense of international sol-

identity? The multiple communications between the some forty member-countries, are they not a symbol of this? To enter into communication by a letter, by an article as a kind of go-between, by the interest we feel in the news coming from different countries, by a personal encounter, by participation in a session or an assembly, by our response to an appeal that is launched, etc...., may that not be the path to a discovery and to a mutual appreciation? May we not see, in the achieved unity of a project and in the awareness of our legitimate and fruitful differences the building up of a cell of the Body which is called the Church? In our concern to be faithful to the dynamic of the Exercises, should there not be this desire to be-what-we-are in order truly to dialogue with those around us? Yes, surely, there is in the exchanges and the mutual help practiced in our Community a formation, an apprenticeship to openness and to the selfless service of our brothers.

It is in this service that PROGRESSIO ought to and desires to collaborate. It wishes to be a place where members of Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania can meet, come to know each other, exchange. To reflect their unity at the same time that it explores more deeply our common specific path and apostolic orientation. To highlight, finally, their diversity and so to help us all to appreciate so many values that, alas, we too often ignore.

An ambitious project, no doubt, but which nevertheless is already in the process of realization, thanks to the unfailing collaboration—the editor of the review can attest to this—of so many friends known or unknown. With this issue PROGRESSIO, in token of its esteem for all its readers, appears with an improved format and readability. It wishes at the same time to express its gratitude to all those, and they are many, who write for it and who voice their encouragement. Its presentation, one can notice, remains simple, in line with the means and the style that is ours.

On the road which we take together at the start of this new year, let us challenge each other and proclaim joyously, from one end of the world to the other, as New Year's greetings, "keep love and justice, and hope in your God always".

José Gsell

## WHERE ARE WE ?

To aid us in our evaluation  
of the year just passed.

The questions below are to help us evaluate the year of 1972 just passed. They will be most effective if members first use them for personal prayer over several days, and then in a meeting share the insights arrived at in each one's prayer with each other in a kind of "listening group". Thus the evaluation will be both of the individual and of the Community. One hint: before beginning this community revision of life, a few minutes of silent, prayerful reflection is most helpful, for a CLC evaluation is not simply a business checkup, but a spiritual discernment of how one stands before God. The three parts of the evaluation are a unity, together comprising the CLC vocation, the CLC way of life.

### Personal Living of Our Vocation:

- Have I understood CLC as involving (eventually) a permanent commitment that includes:
  - an entire gift of self to God?
  - a decision to live life the CLC way?
  - in and through life in this Community?
- Has God been for me Alpha and Omega (A and Z), the center of everything?
- How strong was my faith commitment to Christ? To what degree was Jesus for me Way, Truth and Life?
- Has the Church been for me truly "the Body of Christ"? Did I love her, striving to make her ever more truly a sign of God's love for men by my personal witness and activity? Was I intelligently but sincerely docile to those members of the People of God gifted by Christ with authority?
- Was the Eucharist the center of my Christian life? Did I participate in it fully, daily if at all possible?
- Have I made use of the sacrament of Penance with the frequency and in the manner that would best aid my continuing conversion?
- Personal prayer, especially that based on Scripture--was this a regular part of my daily life? Of sufficient length and depth? Truly relevant to my ordinary living?

- Have I been advancing in discernment by an evaluation each evening of the day just passed?
- Did I seek the spiritual guidance--personal when possible, but also as received in a group--that I needed?
- Has Mary, Mother of God, been for me the model of the fully developed, truly liberated human person? How have I prayed to her and tried to imitate her?
- Did I practice a certain simplicity of living as part of my following of the poor Christ? How well did my material resources contribute to building God's kingdom?
- My human and professional skills, how well were these developed and used so as to make more effective my Christian witness?
- How often and how well did I participate in CLC meetings? How well did I prepare for them?
- Was my life last year one life, with its human and Christian elements truly integrated?
- Did I renew the experience of the Spiritual Exercises in sufficient length and depth to make their spirituality a dynamic force in my daily life?

Our Vocation: Community Life and Discernment:

- Our CLC--was it during the year just finished more truly a community than an organization? Was there in its meetings a deep sharing among members of their life of faith and prayer, as also of their human life and experiences? Was this done in such a way as to involve true discernment?
- To what extent and in what way was there a sharing among Community members of their material resources? Of personal and professional skills? In which of their needs did members help each other?
- Was our Community concerned to make known the CLC vocation and to afford to interested persons the best conditions for initiation and growth? Does the atmosphere and style of our Community present an attractive image to youth?
- What criteria are used for permanent commitment in our Community? Is there a carefully planned program to prepare members for it? Are the Spiritual Exercises a key part of it? Is the program through? Well-balanced? Involve real participation by those who receive it?

- The meetings, decisions, publications of our Community-- did they represent a team effort, reflecting the fact that CLC is a lay organization, with lay responsibility predominant?
- Has our Group participated fully in our national CLC life (publications, meetings, sharing) ?
- How did our Community reflect its participation in the world Christian Life Community of which it is part? Use of PROGRESSIO? Taking part in CLC gatherings, and sharing with CLC of other countries through letters, visits, exchange of ideas and material resources?

Our Vocation: Apostolic Service and Commitment to Justice:

- Were our members kept acquainted with the guidelines and documents set forth by the Church, whether on the world level or locally?
- How did we as a Community grow in our grasp of the national and local situation (social, political, economic, spiritual) and needs?
- Has our group used community discernment to pinpoint the apostolic priorities for our group (as individuals and as a Community)? How effectively?
- Has our Community or its members in their action aimed especially at eliminating the causes of social ills?
- How have we furthered a greater political awareness and involvement of individual members of our Community?
- Is the world dimension of the problem of justice and human liberation sufficiently taken account of by our Community?
- Apart from the area of liberation and development, are there other pressing apostolic needs in our area? If so, is our Community striving to respond to them?

Revision done, how well have I--how well has our Community  
--lived out the CLC vocation that is ours? How will I--how  
will we--live it out better?

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"CONTEMPLATION FOR LOVE" of the World in the Church

by Jacques Sommet s.j.

The "contemplation to gain love", which closes the journey of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, begins with a double remark: "It will be good, first of all (says the text) to call attention to two points:

First: that love ought to manifest itself in deeds rather than in words.

Second: that love consists in a mutual sharing."

In the context of DEVELOPMENT, there can be question only of MAKING the love of God LIVE in the world. In the context of the GOSPEL, there can be question only of welcoming the Church in its growth, its unity and its diversity in the world. MAKE LIVE and it is God in the world. WELCOME or INTRODUCE and it is God in the Church in the world.

I - LOVE MEANS TO RECEIVE THE CHURCH, ONE AND YET MULTI FORM SINCE ITS FOUNDATION, and to return, each day, to its origins, its source in Scripture.

To love one must live in unity. Otherwise one leaves bits of oneself along the road, one does not love with everything that one is. But to love there must also be diversity, a diversity that transforms the differences into a richness, into a loving communication. Now the New Testament, come alive for a modern person given to the Spiritual Exercises as a result of the meditation that he makes on it, reveals to us the wonderful variety in the unique message of God's love in the newborn Church, so young and yet already with such variety in it.

Let us review it together: God has willed to speak to us from the start by texts that are different, coming from different gospel writers, and from communities that are neighboring but distinct, to suggest to us the rich unity of the MAN GOD.



There is first of all THE CHURCH OF PETER, conveyed by the Gospel of Mark (one could begin with another). The Church of Peter is the Church of unity by means of a certain organization of it, a certain obedience. "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church." But let us not view this as a juridical "structure" with a certain power; but much more as the Church whose organic unity is the path by which comes and is found the Spirit. At Pentecost, in Chapter II of Acts, Peter certainly presides for a moment, but to speak of and to give freedom to the Spirit. He insures the unity of the community for its dynamic thrust toward the exterior. And this role of openness by means of a certain hierarchy is so clear that Peter, in John 21, recognizes himself as inferior to St. John, and in the Acts, he brings about the recognition of Paul, this apostle come from among the pagans... Church of the rock in order to support love.

And it is the CHURCH OF JOHN by his Gospel and his Epistles and the Apocalypse. John and his community. But first of all John in the Gospel, the John of those fresh and bright scenes of the call of Christ, where always the call is more an affair of love than a command: "Come and see...". The John of the profound ecclesial meditations in the boundless perspective of the Trinity's love and in the realism of Christ's imminent death: the discourse after the Last Supper. And this same John, mystic of the Spirit of Peace, is the same John who is mystic at the heart of the combat in the Apocalypse. And also he is the apostle of practical love in the tender accents of his unforgettable letters. There the Church is revealed to us as the presence of the triune God, wherever a man begins to love unselfishly and by humble acts of service. Here we are beyond conditions, though these are not scorned. The Church and God are Love received... But love received is not living unless it gives itself. And then, the Church of St. Paul.

ST. PAUL and the Churches. For here it is in the plural that we must speak, of the churches. Not to oppose them but to recall the many foundations, even as far as Rome and Spain. Here the faith has become a contagion, a word spread abroad, to the farthest places. But it is also a Faith of conversion--and what conversion! This conversion

fell, if one may so put it, on a man of action, a man already en route, but it made him change the direction of the route. And it is at the same time a repentance, and so a commitment without limit to announce Him whom he had persecuted. But in this action nothing of the adventurer who would oppose himself to the disciplines of the community: in case of difficulty, Paul confers with Peter; he does not go beyond this explanation, this solidarity. When there was need for food at Jerusalem, he at once made appeal to all the members of the new catholicity. And finally this man always active and busy with projects has the tenderest of hearts, he is most concerned about the lowly: witness his letter to Philemon, overflowing with affection. Such is Paul and the Church which is a-building in small cells as far as the limits of the known world; but around Jerusalem and around Peter, in a dialogue and a help without ceasing.

ST. JAMES and JERUSALEM. And now another face of the same Church: that of faithfulness on the home ground. Jerusalem is the walls between which the Christ passed. It is the Jewish structure at the point where it received the message of the Son of God. It is there that was achieved the first merging of the past and the future. There is then a concern for the purity of its origins. At the head, this James with the stern word, recalling that an action ought to follow every word, that this great Greek world where the Good News is being spread is also a world of the sophisticated and facile word, and that the first duty is to speak the truth. But this sternness is not a rigidity, a closed outlook. As proof, it is St. James who intervenes to soften the requirements to be demanded of pagans who come to the Christian light. (Acts 15:19).

Such is the Church in the world, varied even in its beginnings, but always ONE in Him whose richness it revealed. The Church of Peter, the first at the resurrection to race toward the tomb. The Church of John, the first to see through more deeply, to recognize the traces of the Risen One. Thus one aiding the other, each one different, they are the sign of the paths the Church offers us through the ages. A Catholicity which is a discovery, a communication in the harmony of the different melodies of the Spirit, in a humanity transformed by love. That is

what the "contemplation to gain love" reveals to us, if we search out by what means this Love penetrates the earth, through believers and unbelievers, offering to each one a path to discover the future which is being shaped through crises, the future of God in the world by the Church.

## II - And Hence OUR PRESENT TASK in the Contemplation to Gain Love.

That is what is meant, for a follower of St. Ignatius, by active love received from God. It means to bring Christians to share with each other, starting with the gifts that they possess, the spiritual gifts of their national and social communities... Then, going on to share the gifts of each sector of the modern world: the youth of Asia and of its Christian members, the realism of the sons of North America, the thrust for change in Latin America, the profound intuitions of Africa, the maturity of old Europe. Each person, each group, each Christian Life Community, must start from what it is, to receive the gifts of the other, of the others, even the most distant.

And love, a love at once given and received, means still more. It means to hear and listen to all men of good will in every human grouping, whether these be the neo-pagans of the secularized world of today or those who use Christian words for more restricted ends... An immense throng, hesitant before a difficult and impending future, before revolution or reform. People have never so earnestly searched for hope in a storm. Then we must hear their cries, welcome them, engage with them in a dialogue of truth. Yesterday Paul and Peter and James welcomed the pagans; today, what welcome are we capable of giving them? Not the demagogic welcome which says yes to everything and so presents only a ridiculous Christianity, a sort of least common denominator. We do not need that kind of catholicity; it would be only that of the lie and of luke-warm water. Men would vomit that out. Rather it is a question of our receiving the love of God, as it comes to us through all. And that supposes a search together for the truth. The truth of situations: where is true justice? What are we doing for it? When is there need for frankness, difficult when dealing with adversaries but even

more when dealing with other followers of the Gospel? The Kingdom of God, the effective Love of God for us, is there and nowhere else: at the meeting point, at the point where men the most diverse, those who believe more and those who believe the least, dialogue in their search for the Light, in their attempt to discern it.

And I think of that youth, so far from all that makes up my life, who declared: "I am an atheist and none of your affairs interest me". That was his first statement. But at the end what he said was: "Isn't there somewhere, with or without the name of God, a chance for man to live standing up, to pass beyond the gadgets, to find the Absolute...?". The Love of God was speaking in that young man. He speaks, let us not doubt it; but it is up to us to listen to Him, and that He will manifest Himself a little more; that finally one "obtains" this Love, as says St. Ignatius. Such is the path that the Gospel leads us on. In the Gospel are the Exercises of St. Ignatius. And in and through the Exercises, DEVELOPMENT, the real development, the symphony of the nations, not the sum of their dollars.

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## DISCERNING THE SPIRITS

by Maurice GIULIANI, s.j.

"The Spirit of God lives in you." How can we help but be overwhelmed by these words of Saint Paul, if we really yield ourselves to their infinite mystery? And yet, they only express the simplest reality of the Christian faith. By the Spirit we have become sons of God, by Him we triumph over sin, by Him we live in the power of the resurrection that transforms us day by day.

There is no need, to experience this Spirit, who is the life of our life, of complicated introspections, of ar resting the dynamism that constitutes our human existence, of tending toward an ideal that recedes to beyond the possible. No. The Spirit lives in us as a life of a different sort than that of our body, our mind, our heart: for us who grow in the faith, He is the very sense of our entire human existence, He is the link that unites all the forces of our personality, He is in us the gift of God that orients our freedom toward a response of total love to Him who has taken us for himself and wishes us to open and expand in Him. To be aware of this, it is enough to perceive in its full meaning the present moment that we live. To recognize it as the place, or the time, or the means (all this is only an image) of the presence of the Spirit of God in and through our very being.

At every instant our destiny is woven of many threads: the health of our body, the dynamisms and the obscurities of our psychic nature, the demands of our family and social surroundings, professional responsibilities, commitments to be kept, etc. All of that forms a perpetually moving line, or rather the point of equilibrium that gathers together all these forces and expresses our fidelity to God in the present moment of his grace.

It is in fact an equilibrium, a balance, that is involved. But this equilibrium is the meeting of a thousand decisions that have repercussions one on the other. My prayer may be lengthened or shortened, or its form may change, according as my health or my social responsibilities permit or suggest. My apostolic action in the Church is to expand or be restricted according as this will help or affect my family life. A decision needed in a certain sector of my life has no chance of being the right one except when the spiritual conditions are present which will let me take it in peace of soul. One could multiply the examples: God calls me at each instant, but by means of the multiple, fragmentary and sometimes contradictory situations where I am placed, that is, where His grace places me. How am I to give Him a response which is not the adhesion to an abstract formula nor the application of yesterday's resolution already out-of-date in the situation of today, but the offering of a life and a love?

What has been said shows the conduct to be followed: discover the will of God for me by judging the spiritual equilibrium that it preserves in my life as a whole. This means to judge the correctness of a decision, even a small one, by its relation to the ensemble of my activities and the demands which I must satisfy. It means to refuse every excess, even if objectively generous, that would cause tension or interior hardening. It means to favor whatever increases in me the taste for the evangelical virtues, by the gift of myself and the preference given to the paths of poverty and humility chosen by Christ. On condition, that is, of respecting the right degree, judging the repercussions that the approach or the decision taken will have on my psychological forces, on the persons with whom I am linked in one way or other, and on the sum of that equilibrium that maintains my entire life in its peace and in its truth.

Even more, as I become aware of all these interior forces linked together, I come to realize that the present is itself rich with the long history by which God has led me. All the data of the present situation explain themselves by what God has already asked of me: by the manifestations of his grace at privileged moments, whose sense as I now remember them is clearer in the event of today

than it was when I, with an awareness still obscure, first lived them. "God was in this place and I did not know it." One discovers then that this divine pedagogy is always the same because God is faithful to his love. It is a call repeated to certain demands of prayer, an opening to the needs of the Church, a mastery of certain impulses in a quiet way that allows one to purify without breaking. How many times the present event casts light at the same time that it reveals the long road which has prepared it by renewed touches of grace.

Perhaps enough has been said to convey the essentials. "To discern" the will of God, that is, to recognize concretely where his Spirit is leading us at each moment of our history, means first of all to develop in ourselves a refined spiritual sensitivity which makes us perceive the divine here-and-now in and through the multiple forces of the here-and-now of our human existence. Such forces, for example, as the sense of and the taste for God, attentiveness to His action, the welcome given to all those "motions" of grace at the core of a spiritual life formed by many necessary acts of fidelity, the acceptance of the lines that God traces in our life by the repeated interventions of His love for us.

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I said that this perception of God through the effects of His grace in us is the essential. But our entire experience proves strongly that this perception is obscure, sometimes even hidden in darkness. Obscurity in all the advances, since one step taken leads to another still ahead. But also an obscurity born of our very freedom, which has the strange power to refuse the grace of God, and, in doing so, to disturb the judgment by which we begin to understand where this grace is leading us. God calls, but then our egoism persuades us that prayer is fatiguing, or that it is impossible in the midst of our activities; that the peace of our home does not lend itself to so many commitments to the service of others; or, on the contrary, that these commitments must at all costs be developed--and they do in fact develop, without our being aware that we are guiding our home toward its spiritual ruin. There too, how many examples could be given!

In fact one can hinder the action of God in us by concealing it through cowardice, by welcoming it but with a generosity so excessive as to make it ineffective, by not paying attention to the difference between what it is in us and the way in which we interpret it in the light of our psychological and cultural habits. These are so many occasions to "discern the spirits", that is, to discover what comes from God and what is opposed or tarnishes this by the limits or the refusals of our freedom--which we call evil or the Evil One.

I have already pointed out some of the criteria that help us to make this discernment. They are perhaps summed up in a few simple propositions, starting from which each one can judge by his own experience and make application, taking into account the variety of situations, since it is always a question of the most personal history of all, that of our love relationship with God. The Spirit of God acts in us always in a way calculated to "build", to "develop" our spiritual being in its unity and its dynamism, while the spirit of evil is in us a source of division and of disequilibrium, on the spiritual level but also generally on the psychological level too. The Spirit of God casts light on, and brings to conscious awareness, all those secret energies that explain our conduct and motivate our decisions, while the evil spirit tends to obscure them and to make us more and more impenetrable to ourselves. The Spirit of God sets free in us the desire to work for the Kingdom inaugurated by Christ and to give ourselves to the work of the Church, while the spirit of evil closes us in on ourselves and makes us more and more insensible to what is not part of the tight circle of our preoccupations and our affections.

The ultimate reason for this opposition? It is as clear as day. On the one side, God who makes live, because He is the Living One. On the other, Evil who kills because he is Death, "a murderer from the beginning", according to the expression of the Lord Jesus reported by St. John.

The "discernment of spirits" then is not effected by a sort of "stroke" by means of which we try, at a given



moment, to know whether such an interior movement, such a call felt, such a generous desire, comes from God or arises, on the contrary, apart from Him or against Him. Rather it operates in our living history, interpreted in faith as the history of the permanent signs that God addresses to us in the secret of our conscience and in the series of events that touches us. The criteria that allow one to "discern" are precisely those that allow us to judge our spiritual life, in its development, in its inhibitions, in its stagnation, in its dynamism. It is not possible to remove at a stroke and for good all ambiguity, because discernment deals with signs whose interpretation is linked to the intensity of our faith, to the interior freedom acquired by conversion and which opens into clarity and into a gift of self. "Happy are the pure of heart, for they shall see God" working in their life and incessantly calling them to pronounce the "yes" that commits them more and more to his service. But it is always possible to find the humble certitude of being faithful right now to what God asks, each time that it is question of removing a doubt, of solving a complex problem, of choosing among the paths offered for our interior journey. To the degree that our spiritual experience is enriched and purified, we recognize more signs of the presence of God in us, we compare them more easily with each other, coming gradually to see, from one sign to another, the marvelous face of Him who loves us--though never revealed completely. To "discern the spirits", in a word, is to bring a judgment which, by one and the same look, banishes and dissolves all that is marked by the perversity of death and of nothingness, and on the other hand to recognize lovingly all the traces that God leaves in the soul of those who seek only Him.

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## OUR YOUTH GROUPS IN CLC

by Nicholas RIEMAN sj

Renewal in the Christian Life Communities has had this happy result: CLC in most countries is by now largely made up of adults. The question is therefore sometimes posed: what is the status and role of youth groups in CLC? Our GENERAL PRINCIPLES and the experience of the best groups everywhere make clear that the answer must be a double one: Youth groups in CLC are preparatory, but they are important.

Even a glance through the GPs leaves a strong impression that what is here presented is something quite serious. The three words most used to convey the meaning of CLC are "way of life", "vocation", "commitment". "Way of life" says two things. The first is that CLC must touch and inform all areas of one's life - "spiritual, apostolic and human". The second is that this is expected to be done in a settled, habitual, enduring manner - reference such words in the text as "continuously", "constantly", "always", "annual". Both elements require time and maturity to develop. "Vocation" implies much the same thing, but from a different viewpoint: a call from God to a settled and definitive way of living that will touch not part but all of one's existence.

And "commitment"—the term used in key phrases of the GPs is "permanent commitment"—stresses again that full membership in CLC involves a deliberate, definitive, life-long choice of this vocation, this way of life. This is made completely clear when the PRINCIPLES state that "after permanent commitment all remain members of the group" (15) and that "permanent commitment is made only after a suitable period of time when the candidate has given proof of satisfaction" (10). Quite clearly CLC is considered to be a permanent commitment to a total way of life, a lifetime vocation to be definitively accepted and chosen only by a mature person.

In the concrete, what does this mean? While maturity, not age should be the criterion for full membership, some guidelines can be given. Obviously CLC groups of secondary school age (roughly, 15-17 years) do not as yet have such maturity. Spiritually as in every other way they are still discovering, exploring, searching, trying things out. Some will be ready for commitment on a temporary, provisional basis, but not yet for life.

What of youth a little older--say, aged 18-21? Some of these, especially if they already have a job, will be much closer to maturity. If they are university students, however, they are psychologically still in a period of transition, still working out their basic values and choices, not quite ready as yet to make life-options. Young men and women are seldom prepared to make a permanent decision as to their CLC vocation till at least a year or two after they have begun their trade or profession; more often, they are not ready to do so till a year or two after marriage.

Youth CLCs then are essentially preparatory groups. Sometimes, especially for secondary school groups, this is indicated by a special name such as YCLC (Young Christian Life Communities). It is shown too by the fact that many such groups use a very modified version of the GENERAL PRINCIPLES (or even a wholly different one, though with the same spirit and general thrust). Such wide freedom is quite legitimate in a preparatory group.

At the same time, however, our youth groups are truly part of our CLC movement, as is shown in all sorts of ways. In many countries, they form part of the local or national federations. They participate, on different bases and according to different formulas, in most national conventions. PROGRESSIO periodically publishes articles or news about them. The Executive Council of the World Federation has decided to invite regularly two youth members (usually university students) to its meetings. And for the coming General Assembly, the national federations have been asked to make special efforts to assure that youth representatives be included among their delegates wherever possible.

The presence of youth CLCs in our movement is important for several reasons. First of all they constitute a solid hope for the CLCs of tomorrow. Doubtless not all members of youth CLCs will continue on in this way of life; in fact, probably only a few of them will. But it is undeniable that those who do persevere will generally furnish contributions of special value by reason of their knowledge, the depth of their commitment and the generosity of their gift of self.

Our young CLC groups are also very precious because they are good "indicators" of the new-world-a-borning. Is there any need to emphasize how necessary it is for all members of the Communities to be open to the "signs of the times"? And one of the most effective ways to do so is certainly by a close and intimate collaboration with the youth of today. For this will bring us a clearer understanding of the modern world, decisions better based, a formulation and a style of life in our CLCs that will be more up-to-date. Who would deny the importance of having youth groups within CLC?

A third reason—and we limit ourselves to this one—stems from the observation made in many countries that youth groups constitute for the Communities of adults an apostolic priority, recognized and assumed as a community by a serious discernment. Born of a concern that youth may find the answers to its questions, prepare itself for its adult options and truly advance in freedom, they collaborate in true fraternal dialogue with youth through a presence at once discrete but effective. Their only aim is that the generosity of the youth of today will bloom and grow, structured by a personal love of Christ and a commitment to the service of men. Is there any finer task than to stretch out one's hand so as to build together the world of tomorrow?

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"STILL O.K."

We publish here an excerpt of a letter received from a CLC leader in the southern Philippines whom we met in the course of our recent trip there. His witness needs no comment. We publish it, desirous that, as a community, we share with each other our joys and our sorrows. (Editor's note)

"(...) My days are really full of work, sorrow and heart-breaks. From Monday to Friday I'm in school teaching Economics and Spanish. Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon I'm at the barrios with at least three or more CLC members. We give seminars every weekend, and we really live the grassroots life. Often we have to hike for two hours or more to reach the barrios. We have no land transportation here in Margosatubig. Sometimes we have to cross flooded rivers and brooks amidst strong winds and rains. Last week, after the seminar, we went home all wet through a very strong wind and rain, crossing flooded rivers and climbing slippery hills. Yet we were still full of joy. My companions said, "This is Christification and crucifixion". When we reached home in the evening I found myself with a heavy cold and fever, but still in class the following day. Still O.K. with the help of Christ.

My wife is also a member of CLC. She is charged with the supervision of the Parish Catechetical Center here in Margosatubig. She not only trains catechists in the Center, but she also goes to the barrios with her own team to conduct barrio catechetical seminars. Sometimes she has to conduct formation seminars in the Center for barrio leaders. At times when my group is in one of the barrios, her group is also meeting in another barrio. Sometimes we don't see each other for three days and three nights. Yet we just laugh it off. It's still O.K.

Despite the threatening peace-and-order situation, we still manage to make it with our faith as the only sword.

Our school is suffering from hardship. We have few students, and very few paying their tuition. Sometimes our Parish does not have a single centavo (penny) so that my wife and I have to eat bagoong (salted fish fries). We just face each other laughing. We have adopted the Paolo Freire "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" and we make it our life, our approach to the Gospel. So there's no reason to complain. We really don't want to be inconsistent, preaching without living what we preach. Our work is gaining momentum as we find the people in the barrios accepting us. In the task of liberation and development, we find ourselves threatened, despised and laughed at. Really, I have been broken much. But still the light of hope is with us. We are storming the landlords with land reform laws and tenancy acts. We have had many enemies, but we have gained friends, true friends, the oppressed ones.

Sometimes we are very disgusted when we find our neighbors moving out without telling us, because of the threats arising from the strife between the armed bands of the Ilagas and the Barracudas. They flee without telling us. This happens because they are angry at us as a result of our stand against injustice. But no matter, it's still O.K. We always make it a point that our commitment will not weaken, and we hope you will include us in your daily prayer so that our service will be always greater for the cause of the CLC."

Jun Ebol

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## THE WORLD COMMUNITY

### in AFRICA

Kenya: A project for a seminar in 1973 is being studied. It would be prepared by a committee including the presidents and secretaries of different groups.

Tanzania: There are CLC groups in many parishes of the Diocese of Moshi. The General Principles have just been translated into Swahili by Father Dorairaj, the national CLC assistant.

### in LATIN AMERICA

Bolivia: A letter from the group at Cochabamba tells us they hold their weekly gatherings on Saturday, with two main parts to them: biblical prayer, and a sharing with each other of what each is doing in the religious and social sphere. The youth meet at the CLC cultural center, and these sessions include conferences, discussions and the editing of a paper on interesting subjects.

Uruguay: Two young CLC groups (university and high school) are progressing well, building on the Spiritual Exercises. They hope to see Uruguay represented for the first time at the World General Council of Augsburg next year.

### in NORTH AMERICA

U.S.A. : CLC activity is increasing in the California area, now that Father David Fitch is full-time regional assistant. Latest of several institutes was one for high school assistants at Los Gatos... "Contact Week-ends"--a group dynamics process using such elements as shared prayer, drama, discussion and liturgy--are proving to be a good stepping-stone toward a deeper CLC commitment.

### in ASIA

India: The Executive Council of the Diocesan Federation of Calcutta has just made together, for the first time, 5 days of the Spiritual Exercises, from October

13th in the evening to the 19th in the morning.

Indonesia: A mimeographed bulletin of 10 pages was sent to local CLC units from the National Secretariat to further the contacts made during the visit last summer of World Executive Council members.

Japan: Tokyo announces the arranging of two Exercises retreats, one a closed retreat of 8 full days, the other an open one extending over 3 weeks.

#### in EUROPE

England: The next national meeting will take place December 27-31, using the theme "Liberation and Development". It is open to CLC members from other English-speaking countries, and this year will be in the style of a community discernment.

France: The work of the last meeting of the National Committee focused on permanent commitment in the Christian Life Community. The missionary task of a corps of laity, the adhesion to the Community demanded for this, and the preparatory formation necessary constituted the principal points of discussion.

Italy: Two recent meetings of the National Council and of the regional promoters afforded the occasion for Father Rieman and José Gsell to give a report and to exchange with those present about the experiences of their Asian voyage... The Italian Federation has added its own insert to the "Solidarity Fund" Christmas card campaign in order to aid the campaign's effectiveness in Italy.

#### at ROME

The International CLC Center is a lively place. The number of visitors grows. Countries represented by recent visits include Ireland, Switzerland, United States, Philippines, India, Colombia, Brazil, South Africa, Malta, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.