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our authors today

Luisa HOCSON is one of the young full-timers at the National CLC Center in Manila. In this role she is called to tour the Philippines to organize seminars and formation courses. In particular she is one of the leaders for the "Training Institute". She gives an account in this issue of that formation session, which lasts 3 to 4 weeks and is addressed mainly to leaders in CLC. We have already in the past singled out its quality and the interest it evoked.

Father Vincenzo INSOLERA s.j. has for many years been the soul of our movement in Italy. A very dynamic ecclesiastical assistant of the National Federation, he is the indefatigable organizer of the congress, the editor of reviews and books of spirituality. His latest writing is a new presentation of the Exercises. Father Insolera still finds time and energy to give each year several courses of the Exercises to CLC members of all ages.

José Luis VELASCO is already known to our readers by several previously published articles. Member of the Executive Council of the World Federation and chairman of the International Commission on "Liberation and Development", he is a person for whom one's esteem grows through the witness he reflects and the warmth of his presence. He is education director of a school in one of the poorer sections of Madrid, is married and the father of two children.

Raymond ZAMBITO of New York is active in the field of dental and university education. The warm atmosphere of the Zambito family (both are CLC members) resulted in exchanges with youth about love and marriage, since published. Ray, member of Loyola CLC and indefatigable CLC promoter, is currently president of the USA federation. His energy, vibrant personality and Ignatian sense of commitment impress everyone.

LIBERATION OF ALL MEN :  
LINES TO EXPLORE

by José Luis VELASCO

"Liberation of the whole man and of all men". A happy expression, but to achieve it Christians have not found a simple path, one open to all men of good will. Neither has a profound approach been found--not because the theory is complex, but because it must be incarnated in the problems of our time. That path we must find by travelling together. These lines would like to be simply a cooperation in this search by the CLC. Its possible usefulness will come from the help that, in my personal search, I have received from the Spanish Communities and from the World Federation, which, for many of us, is beginning to be an authentic community.

A first step is to reflect on the process of liberation and to see it in all its amplitude. This helps us to overcome the frustration that arises when we find ourselves unable to implement it along lines presented as the only ones, when in fact they are a partial and limited option. It avoids too confrontation with persons--Christians or not--who are working and struggling for the same thing as we are, but in a different way. The liberation of each man and of man in history is a single process, but one very broad and very complete. We will mention three of its main lines. They cannot be separated from each other, but neither should we ignore the value of each. Naturally, they are not neutral. Our personal option must be the object of a careful and continual discernment. Each person should choose that activity that will allow him to work most effectively for the concrete needs of the men around him. There are options that are in themselves good or at least not bad, but which are negative in a concrete

situation, because they situate us in an egoism and make us indifferent to the suffering of others. For example, in our time there are men who, as a result of discernment, change their field of activity: from a scientific or humanitarian work they pass, at a certain point in their life, to a political struggle, to which they give themselves exclusively, or which they insert in work of another kind. The essential thing is to be attentive to the needs and the situation of others, especially of the very poor, and to remember always that we tend to find more bearable those problems from which we ourselves do not suffer.

In the first place, one part of the liberation process is formed by the activity through which man masters nature, overcoming--in great part--the limits heretofore imposed and making use of the laws of nature for man's benefit. The concrete means by which this process takes place is work in the widest sense. In this way is created a world which to a large degree is now cultural and human, not only one of nature, and which makes possible new steps towards dominion over nature and over ourselves. Marx has studied this process and its ambiguity: source of progress and of alienation. Teilhard de Chardin has presented the progress of man in the framework of an evolution constantly perfecting all reality which is advancing toward awareness and freedom. His thought makes us see in this evolution a concrete and authentic realization--although neither complete nor sufficient in itself--of the plan of God, which will culminate in the second coming of the Lord as Omega. Science and labor cooperate in this line of liberation, not through a blind advance, but through their utilization for the authentic good of man. This is related to political liberation, but is not reducible to that: Are we Christians cooperating in the use of the liberating power of science and of human labor? In the perfecting of agriculture, of medicine, in the better and more effective use of techniques for obtaining and applying peaceful energy? In the several means of communication, in psychology, in an education that frees men in place of oppressing them? Or do we remain apart from many of the anxieties of men of today in these fields, and so play a part in perpetuating the unhappy attitude that as a group we had with regard to Galileo or in the face of psy-

choanalysis? Of course, these are only suggestive thoughts, they do not exhaust the question.

But we cannot present this dimension of liberation as definitive. That would be angelism, in the worst sense of the word: a tranquilizing vision of the real situation. The material means to understand and subdue nature do not of themselves alone assure the liberation of man. On the contrary, the control and the understanding of nature have been and are being used by groups of men and by some countries, in so far as they are global political powers, to dominate and oppress other social classes and other countries. Therefore, liberation is also an economic, social and political process. The oppressed groups and countries --and also other men in solidarity with those who suffer this situation of oppression--combat so that the power of men may help every group and every individual to build more effectively an autonomous and authentic personal life, in place of materially enriching some few at the expense of the immense majority. In this sense, liberation is a conflictual process, a struggle. Here we must point out that the struggle is a fact and that the choice of Christians is to place themselves either at the side of the oppressed or of the oppressors and to take part in this conflict in a gospel way or not. We must be aware that in this second option there are essential differences--it is not enough to say, "I am with the oppressed" to have an acceptable Christian option--but that to ignore the conflict is to give support to those who at this present moment have the greater power. Perhaps a text of Girardi clarifies the matter: "We cannot choose about recognizing or not the class struggle, but only about which side we range ourselves on. The transcending of the struggle takes place necessarily by means of the struggle.... Without doubt the Gospel commands us to love our enemies, but it does not tell us that we must not oppose them or not struggle against them.... The Christian must love all, but not love all in the same way: the oppressed he loves by defending them and liberating them, the oppressors by accusing them and opposing them. Love demands of us that we struggle to free all those who live in a state of objective sin. The liberation of the poor and of the rich is effected at the same time." Our age sees clearly that this political dimension is essential at this moment. In

the final analysis, it is not a question here and now of perfecting the present order through a reform of details—although these be important—which, in the long run, make the oppressive system more endurable and so more solidly entrenched, but of searching, by one path or another, for a new order that is more human and has different qualitative values.

Finally, liberation has a personal dimension—not individualistic in the distorted sense that we sometimes give to the word, "person". It is not easy to define this dimension. By it we become capable of realizing in our lives truth, respect and love for others, creativity. We overcome our consumer mentality, our alienations, the destructive and anti-rational forces of our own psychology. We are not speaking of an egoistic perfectionism. The very sign that this dimension is authentic is when this personal liberation increases our solidarity for the liberation of others. This solidarity, like liberation itself, culminates in the gift of ourselves to Christ, the Lord. There is a real danger of ignoring this dimension and of reducing the planning for liberation to a "scientific" analysis of the economy and of the class struggle. We, Christians, will collaborate in a fuller planning and execution of liberation if, as an ecclesial community, we give witness of a radical commitment, concrete and realistic, which is not evasive, and which, at the same time, respects the complete reality of man.

I cannot say much more here. An effort to listen to the word of God and to respond to it with our life is worth much more than knowledge. The Kingdom is a free gift, although it is not built without our contribution. Therefore, let me suggest to you to meditate on what the meaning was for the contemporaries of Christ of the thrust that He gave to his mission as it appears in Luke 4:16-30. Let us take account, besides, of the fact that it was not a theoretical formula but one pointed towards practice through a series of options in favor of the very poor—not against the rich as persons--options which stirred up very concrete reactions.

I must stop here. Many problems remain untouched. It is enough that each one of us listen attentively to the

Lord. He, through his Word, through our personal prayer, through our community, through the anxieties of men is pointing out to us the problems and what our choice must be in their regard. And that now we search together.

In closing I would ask that at Augsburg '73, we the CLCs seek and pray that each one of us--and not only the delegates--find our authentic solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. That we be able to carry forward the struggle and to give witness that Christ is total liberation and that He brings us to the full flowering of Man and of History. That the values of prayer, of humanity, of attention to the poorest, of love of God and of men are not an escape. And that all of us cooperate in the search for a true spirituality of liberation which will be vital and alive in the whole Church, according to the vocation and the gift of each one, but with all of the radicalism of Christ.

## News from Chile

### A Christian Life Community of Youth Working in a Factory

A Christian Life Community at the Colegio de San Ignacio (Ovalle) is made up of students of the last year of secondary school. At the close of that final year of school their classes finished early, and they made use of this situation to go away for fifteen days with their assistant to work as laborers in a glass factory.

In the locality of Hurtado just in front of the Jesuit retreat house there is a bottle factory with more than 400 workers. The CLC lived in the retreat house and every day left at 6:30 in the morning to report with the morning shift. They were scattered among the different work areas, which meant that some were assigned to the unwelcome work at the oven, where the temperatures were very high.

Before taking up the work we presented our plan to the supervisor of the plant, who was a Communist. He willingly accepted our presence in the factory. We insisted that our request be approved also by the labor union leaders, since it might look like unfair competition with the other workers, and we received the approval too of these union officials. We explained that our aim was to experience the reality of the workers' life and at the same time to complement our too-intellectual formation received in the Colegio. On our part we would attempt to convey to the workers a stronger cultural interest and an awareness of their responsibility in the process of production by means of our conversations and any exchanges or gatherings we might have.

The young people quickly became good friends of their working companions, who would invite them to have a beer or to take part in their soccer (football) games or other amusements. During our stay a general assembly of the labor union local took place, and the chairman made use of it to ask the assembly how it felt about the experiment that was taking place. Loud applause was the answer.



Every night, after some well-merited relaxation, a short meeting was held to exchange our experiences and to make an evaluation of the day. At the end of our two weeks of work the supervisor was given, at his request, a report presenting our ideas on some of the needs we had noticed, and on what improvements might be introduced to lessen the boredom and drudgery of the daily work and to raise the cultural level of the workers.

At the end, one of the young men gave at the Colegio a farewell talk, part of which had been prepared with the help of the whole group, and in which special mention was made of the experience they had just had. As a result their example was followed by another CLC group of the same school for a fifteen-day period, and later on by the students of another Colegio for a whole month.

We hope that during the scholastic year of 1973 this experience can be organized on a regular basis for students of various schools in such a way that it can become part of the regular plan of studies. In this way one would arrive at the ideal where every student would have worked for a period and where every worker would be involved in some sort of study. We are counting on the recommendation of the supervisor who has both promised us facilities for other groups and said he would recommend the plan for other industries that have been nationalized or whose management has been taken over. Both students and workers remain very satisfied with the experience, and a friendly camaraderie has grown up between them that reaches much beyond their days of work together. The same students who began this experiment have committed themselves to help and stimulate other groups of students to continue with it during the scholastic year that began in March.

Other Christian Life groups of the same Colegio took part during the summer in volunteer work organized by the scholastic community in small villages of the province. They took part in a pastoral effort in a town while others of them worked at the same time on construction of buildings and other activity in favor of the community where the camp was held.

## DISCERNMENT IN DAILY LIFE

by R.F. ZAMBITO, D.D.S.

When I was first asked to write this article on discernment in daily life, I willingly and quickly accepted. For after all, in the years since 1956 that I have been making the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, I had learned my lessons from the Exercises and spiritual direction well!

As the time for the writing of the article drew near, I began to be troubled that all of the self-confidence I felt at the acceptance of the request was somewhat shaky and not a little uncertain. At that point I began to read and reread new and older manuscripts on the Discernment of Spirits and within a short time I was truly troubled.

In the years since I have been making the Exercises, I had come to know them well and even had the opportunity to share them, as a retreat master. My spiritual direction was always drawn from the Exercises and the elections of the year's retreat. St. Ignatius has spoken to me, through the form of the Exercises, and has asked me, constantly, to "do more, and do it better" for the sake of Christ, the Crucified; Christ the Risen One; Christ the Redeemer; Christ the King and Prophet. I had learned my lessons well and was very capable of verbalizing these lessons to others when discussing the nature and thrust of the Spiritual Exercises. With this mental requirement to "do more and do it better", my day was never far away from me and my actions, and my nightly examen was quick to be made and clear in its commissions and omissions and in the quality of my actions.

For some time, I have known that I had learned my lesson too well, for I had intellectualized the art and skill

of the examen and of the determination of the Spirit as a force in my life. I had learned well how to think and judge and act, for the King, but I had almost forgotten to listen with my heart as well as with my mind. Since the real appreciations of the Exercises and Discernment did not penetrate and become a part of my total sense of person for almost ten years, I must apologize for my stubbornness in not permitting the Spirit to be in me until I was an adult in the late thirties of life. I have missed so much!

My own perception of my character and personality was what first brought me to Sodality, seeking the missing 'something' in my life. At the time, I was and still am, aware of a personality I call 'service oriented' for lack of a clearer term. To be at the service and care of others, no matter what the cost in inconvenience to me. At my introduction to the Way of Life of Sodality and the Exercises and spiritual direction, I knew I had found a method suitable to my personal identity as a Christian and one that could build on the great sense of tradition and respect for authority I held very dear. During the years that followed, I was led very carefully by two special persons who served me as spiritual director. From both I learned the strength and frailty of love; the meaning of faith; loyalty and a perception of the Church of Christ I had not known before. Both led me through the Exercises many times, with care, concern and detachment - my spiritual and personal well-being their only concern. Slowly, the rays of light penetrated this egotistical head and with many prayers, some evidence of progress in the spiritual life was present. My day was and is constructed around certain psychological strengths and perceptions developed over the years, so that I begin my day with the prayer of all CLCers to Mary and through her to Our Lord in petition for that day; to be of service; to continue the sense of the Church in all my dealings and to be aware that I must 'do more and do it better'. The word 'disappointment' and the word 'discouragement' are not to be found in my vocabulary, for I believe they are the antithesis of 'hope', my sense of the Christian faith! Too, over the years, the major virtues have been a part of my study and attempt to improve the quality of my life. The sense of the virtues has and is woven into the fabric of my daily life, so that it is a sensible part of all my dealings and a major focus for crit

ical review during the day and at night. Through the years, I have been very much aware of the fact that my very presence and reputation have been formidable forces for the Church in daily dealings with troubled Catholics ; concerned non-Catholic Christians and non-Christians and with this sense I have realized the obligation and accepted it; to be evermore available and ready to serve and be of service.

These lines above I have written so that you might become more acquainted with me and my person. My faith commitment has been made in Consecration to Our Lady. but I have been very diligent to carry it out according to my best judgment - normal human prudence! This is a strange and difficult realization to come to and not an easy one to admit. But the temptation to be free and easy with the words in describing daily discernment was set aside as I realized I had been of service to many, but had forgotten how to listen with my heart as well as my head! Through the years, when talking before many CLC groups, I have been aware of using combinations of words to describe my life as a CLCer that were new to my word construction usage. It is a remarkable reaction within oneself, to be speaking to an audience and be fully aware of another presence strengthening and aiding in the presentation. I have and do believe this was the presence of the Spirit aiding my poor efforts for the greater glory of the Lord.

In my dealings with my colleagues, there is always an opportunity for anger and sarcasm. Usually, before each meeting where sensitive subjects are to be discussed, I carefully review the materials to be discussed, plan a presentation where I have a position to take and then trust in the Lord that I keep my mouth shut except to be constructive. Over the years of retreat elections, I have made decisions related to moral values and the strength of virtuous attitudes, so that the daily experience of certain temptations (such as deceit; lying; half-truths) find no place even for a hearing. However, this psychological control has been so internalized, that I have almost forgotten how it came to be!

In my dealings with my dear wife, Doroty, a CLCer

too, I am always mindful of my reasons for asking her to marry me. I was and am convinced that she will assist me to heaven more assuredly than if I tried all by myself or with another woman as a wife. In each of my daily dealings and in the carrying out of my obligations as a husband and father (we have five children), I am reminded of my first reasons for my marriage, my love for her and with her, and my need to have a strong ally for the daily struggle to please the Lord. Our realization of the truth of 'two in one flesh' does not allow for anger or ill feelings between us, for it would deter and make false the reasons for our joining together in matrimony. So, anger and ill feelings do not share our household, and in this we concur daily - with the acknowledgment that we do not succeed by ourselves.

Each meal is a faith expression as we all pray for and offer thanks for special favors and our food. At night, Dorothy and I (when I am at home and not at a meeting) pray with our children together, a prayer of thanksgiving, for one special happening that day, by each person; a prayer of petition by each, for a special favor or request; and a prayer of contrition by each, for an action performed that day that we know was not pleasing to Our Lord. We conclude with a prayer and a hymn chosen by the children and then proceed to bless each one in turn, as they bless us. In this way, we have tried to inculcate the sense of responsibility for actions placed and the knowledge that God desires us to please Him before all else and only constant repetition of this truth will make it real in life.

After all of this writing, I do believe that I am more fully aware of what discernment is and especially discernment in daily life. Discernment is the desire and ability to listen to the Lord, in prayer and in action, developing options and selecting the better one and always remembering for Whom all of this is done and why. To carry out this process daily means, to me, to bring the dynamics of the process into its human, personal and social dimensions - the real evidence of witness for the other to see.

I carry with me each day the knowledge that I have

a heavy obligation to create a bridge with the past and the future of my Church through my Way of Life. That I have the obligation to be and to witness to, the rightness of the truth as expressed by the Fathers of the Church given us by Christ and the Father in the Old and New Testament. I have the foreknowledge, too, that if I renege on this obligation, no one will be able to fill the void I will leave. In all of this, and more, I have and do try to serve the Lord more fully and more forcefully, each day in each interaction with all my family, friends, colleagues and patients. Yet, each day, I am aware (and more so these days as I write) that I do not listen enough before I act and am not yet fully a captive of Our Lord and His Spirit. Please pray for me as I pray each day for all CLCers throughout the world.

## Formation Seminar in the Philippines

### General Orientations

by Louisa HOCSON

At its planning stage, the Institute was thought of mainly as a training school involved in an in-depth study of the CLC, in both its temporal as well as its spiritual aspect. It was to present methods and techniques in handling but also with organization, theology, sociology of leadership, etc.

The initial phase of the Institute was the Summer Training program last year. It was the start of a program for a group of trainers who were willing to make themselves available for CLC work in their own particular areas or for the National Federation.

Below is the program from which the nature and the topics of the Summer Training Seminar were drawn:

Actual  
experiences

OBJECTIVE. The setting up of a team of Christians who would train assistants or members of a Christian community to arrive at a commitment to Christ and to the group and to live the commitment in service to the world according to the plan of the Father.

Its dynamics

MEANING OF FORMATION OF THE ADULT CHRISTIAN. While there are times set aside for an intense experience of formation processes, seminars, retreats, liturgical activities, etc., the formation must take place in the day-to-day life of the Christian in the world.

## Scripture

The adult Christian is a man in the world gifted with faith. What he must be well versed in is the interpretation of that faith, what it is calling him to, what response it is asking of him. To arrive at this interpretation, the adult Christian must know how to get in contact with the word of God in Scriptures. He must learn how to experience this work that is come to pass; learn how to seek himself in the events and learn what are God's ways in the Christ he sent. The Word of God must be accessible to him in and through the Spirit who shows to us who and what Christ is. How in Christ God's promises are initiated and will be brought to pass and completed.

## Theology

### Theology of the Word Hope Liberation

It is the total world, man in all his historic decisions that God's promises bear upon. The modern adult Christian must very clearly see what God's designs are for the individual person that he creates; how the world and its riches are meant not for the oppression but for the liberation and development of man. How God wants righteousness to reign now, justice among all peoples now and hope in the secure expectation of a universal resurrection.

## Sacraments

He must participate meaningfully in the Liturgy particularly that of the Eucharistic celebration and be able to relate this communion with divinity in terms of the stresses and strains and tasks in the world of man and human strivings. He must have a very clear view of the Church and the mission of the Church in the World. As a layman he experiences a personal call and grows in ever more perfect response.



Analysis and  
Reflections on  
the World

The adult Christian asks to what extent is this kind of kingdom viable now. If it is far from being implemented, why? What are the causes? How in the company of his fellow Christians and that of all men of good will can he effectively bring about this kingdom of righteousness and justice among men and in the totality of society?

Human means that  
are effective  
and have an  
impact

In what methods and processes must he be an expert to have an impact on society? How can his smaller community and bigger federation in conjunction with other groups and communities make their vision and dynamism bear on the world of power and conflicts and very often dehumanizing decisions.

Receiving and  
Communicating  
abilities

To have an impact whether as an individual or as a member of a group, he has to learn how to communicate, to be sensitive to needs; he has to convince and persuade others. How does he get these qualities and proficiencies?

Analysis of  
Society

Society has its own dynamisms and power structures. It has its own motivations and attitudes. Flowing from these attitudes are patterns of behaviour. And all these become institutionalized. The adult Christian to be of influence on that society must understand these dynamisms. How will he get an understanding of these?

What competences in the concrete should this training take in?

1. Undergoing the Exercises so that one arrives at total commitment. Learning the dynamics of the exercises.

2. Personal contact with the Word of God in Scriptures; understanding of the Scriptures
3. Meditation and reflection on the New Theology
4. Analysis of Society
5. Change Agents
6. Group Dynamics
7. Types of Christian Communities.

## Orientations of a National Federation

by Vincenzo INSOLERA S.J.

The Italian CLCs usually meet yearly in a convention of the national federation. The place of the meeting varies, the time is generally about the end of April, and the topics treated hinge on the concerns of the moment. This year the gathering was held at Rome, April 29 - May 1, and had for its central theme "CLC and the National Federation, Part of the Ecclesial Community". The 230 delegates taking part were scattered among eight work groups and probed the topic through three sub-themes: a) As an ecclesial community today, what should CLC and the National Federation be? b) What should be its tasks? c) What fosters and what hinders the emergence of such an ecclesial community?

In this framework the convention became a gathering for research and for discernment, and the end results of the work groups offered a full program for action.

1. The community is based on personal and responsible adhesion to it, in such a way that each and every member can take full part in its life and in the choice of its directions. Personal adhesion is necessary to create a true community of participation, while the exercise of responsibility and the assembling of the results of this exercise compose the unity and the articulation of the movement.

The specific mark of our movement is service within the Church, and insertion in her unity constitutes the basis of the faith. Formation has no meaning if it is cut off from this unity or from the times in which we live. In fact, growth in the faith, like every gift of the Spirit, takes place within the Church and by the Church.

To live in group is today an effective way to live "young", because it involves the search for a new style of daily living, the discovery of one's own identity, a spirit and approach that one does not easily succeed in finding today in one's family, the school or through the mass-media. In effect, the family is generally resolute in its adherence to the classical values; the school tries to develop technical man, without giving a direction to this technology; the mass-media highlight the sensational, the immediate, the emotional, the acquisitive. None of these three agencies of education are able to provide what the group, on the other hand, can.

And so the need is stressed of creating through the groups "new communities", which make to flourish again the ancient witness of the Acts: "The brotherhood remained united" (2: 44). The groups provide an answer that is both love-inspired and striking by their new and balanced style of living. They are prophetic in the measure in which they achieve a new relationship between people, leading them to share what they have and to live as a result of this sharing.

In this context, CLC was seen by the delegates as an ideal place for a confrontation of their various spiritual, cultural, social and political stances, for evangelical discernment, for the shaping of projects, for discussion, for mediation between the world and the Church. It prods the groups and their members to be faithful to the call of Christ, to find their authentic expression in the church and to see in her the sign of the unity of the world. And it aids them as well to commit themselves to action for justice, and to evaluate the way in which persons and groups witness to Jesus Christ in the midst of the struggles and hopes of this world in the ferment of change.

The Eucharist is the unifying action of this community of sharing, the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius are its lever. The CLC is a place of creativity and of searching, in which the bond of communion, as in the primitive Church, is Mary. But only love achieves this sharing, that is to say, the union of those who profess the same faith and belong to the same community.

Uncontrolled or unharmonized social differences must then be resolutely pinpointed and combatted. The same holds true for those pathological expressions of "sticking together"--individualism, fanaticism, exaggerated "groupism", intolerance, incapacity to dialogue.

2. Going more into detail, the convention members saw the national federation as a community-of-sharing too, only larger. "The Federation is US. It is not just the national Secretariat and the Executive Council. We must not make the mistake of the past which identified the Church only with the hierarchy. The national federation is the community of the groups themselves, and between the central organs and the local groups there must be no rupture."

The essential elements of CLC were seen as residing in the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, in disponibility for the design of God as expressed in the fiat of Mary in the Annunciation, in service of the Church, in a discernment at once spiritual and comunitarian, in the encounter with Christ and with one's brothers, especially and by preference our brothers who are needy.

The Exercises were universally recognized as the specific source of the spirituality of CLC, leading to the summit of the magis, the more: "The Exercises are to be incarnated in our everyday life. They constitute our point of departure, not our terminus, in everything we do. They must inspire and sustain all the other sectors of our Christian life and forge a close harmony between faith and works." Not only this: "the vocation to the Christian Life Community is tested by the experience of the Exercises, and in various ways it widens the ambit of our faith, making it recognize in others the presence of the Lord".

The encounter with Christ, which in the Exercises attains an extraordinary intensity, is "indispensable for grasping the different facets of God's plan, which involves all in a single call", and this encounter is achieved "in faith, in shared prayer and in contact with others".

"CLC ought to be the place in which our own choices are made in the light of a sense of the Church, not just theoretical but real. It should provide each of us, its

members, with the means for a personal interior life, out of which we express ourselves fully in the world."

For a more vital Christianity, spiritual discernment, community deliberation and an analysis of the signs of the times seem necessary. These means involve the seeking of the divine will in the concrete circumstances of life. We should have special care for "poverty of spirit, the basis of every genuinely Christian attitude," and for "responsibility for our choices, joined to a sense of creativity."

The presence of Mary was mentioned as "the rediscovery of the place and the role that she occupies beside the person and the work of the Son, as a model of the Christian of today, as the lived harmony of the daily yes to God and to one's brothers, as courage in adhesion to Christ and in giving witness to Him, as fidelity in keeping the Word of God. Model, therefore, and help." Others saw in her a "key element" alongside that of the Exercises. Others expressed the desire "to be with her the yes to others."

The variable elements in CLC were found in "the needs of the times and of the milieu in which we work, the recognition of the varieties of personal vocations, the charisma of each one and of each community, the different trends of thought and of life accented from one age to another in the Church or the world and assuming different forms of expression."

3. The searchings of the convention took place in the light of the religious and social reality of the present-day Church and world.

"Christianity, as a vision of man, makes calls upon us in all our family, professional, religious and civic relationships. We should see social reform as the end result of a maturation of conscience rather than as the fruit of an external imposition... To assure to all the concrete exercise of their liberty as sons of God, the Christian will combat without cease that every man be guaranteed freely those services that are essential to human life and dignity, among which are at least a complete human formation, just treatment, sanitary facilities, etc. Christian service ought to be an expression of love, and so ideally give en without recompense."

"To spread this idea, openness, dialogue and active participation in various present-day organizations of civil and church life is indispensable. For example, in community associations, in labor unions, in political parties, in pastoral councils. And hence the task of CLCs is the formation of the whole man, capable of being a leaven also in his social and political activities."

"We do not exclude contestation and confrontation, when these become necessary. But it ought to be dictated and inspired by a great love of the Church and of men." It should be "constructive, attacking only superstructures and wrong behavior, never unity or truth."

Much attention was given to the problem of unity at the level of communities, of the churches, of the planet. "The different social classes should be represented in the ensemble of CLCs in order to give a greater completeness to gatherings and to make our language more down-to-earth. It seems to us that the time has arrived when the poor too should be a real part of our communities." Especially recommended was dialog within each CLC: "Where councils exist, decisions should not be made only by these councillors. New members should be very warmly received. The more shy members should be helped to reveal their own special gifts, so that each one feels himself an active and responsible part of the community. We must notice those who are absent, and make them feel wanted, especially if this is what is lacking. We must foster friendly groupings which facilitate the openness of one to the other, while avoiding small cliques of like-minded people closed-in on themselves, for love circulates always among all."

They were particularly struck by certain current trends. One concerns the youth-adult relationship. In the final session, it was unanimously agreed that the generation gap must be bridged "for our mutual enrichment, and so that both groups may be adequately represented in our meetings, with a good exchange resulting." "It is a positive sign when youth and adults are both present. When only a few adults are at a meeting, it is a sign that something is not working well." "We youth need the witness and experience of adults." "We adults feel the need of contact with youth, because they help us, with their problems and their expect-

tations, to understand the modern world, and to make our decisions more realistically. Youth constitutes the hope of the CLC of tomorrow." A new manifestation, this, evidence that a certain balance is returning.

Another rediscovery is that concerning the presence and action of the priest-assistant in the CLCs: "We need a spiritual guide to help us respond to the many calls of God." "Assistants ought to be relieved of administrative, technical, organizational and disciplinary tasks, so that they can inspire and guide us in our search for God, in personal prayer and in conferences with each one." "We need the voice of one who by his doctrine, experience and holiness can be for us a guide."

Another indication of maturity: "In meetings there is always a desire to say everything and in this way make the encounter general and superficial. We must know how to choose that limited facet which needs to be explored deeply, and to carry that forward."

It was then a convention in search, which pointed to CLC and the National Federation as a place of sharing and not of exclusion, as an open place in which each one could be at ease. A community sharing its work and its prayer, and especially committed today to the liberation of man at all levels. A fraternity with its unfailing source in the Lord Jesus Whom we all share.