

PROGRESSIO

PUBLICATION OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF
CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES

MAY 1974
43rd Year
N° 3

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Today PROGRESSIO has the feeling of a boat newly launched, its sails billowing in the wind... A fresh breeze, young and dynamic, breaks into its pages with its Youth Section. Our review, a link between the CLCs of all countries, becomes now a link too between youth and adults. The new arrangement of PROGRESSIO, with its inclusion of YOUTH-PROGRESSIO, offers to all its readers beginning now an opportunity for mutual understanding and comprehension. And these are the things that form the basis of esteem and brotherly love. But above all, it teaches us all that the young and the less-young follow the same path and look to the same service of others. Today is a time to rejoice.

PROGRESSIO

PROGRESSIO SUPPLEMENT N° 3, FREEDOM FOR SERVICE, The Use of the Individually Guided Spiritual Exercises, has appeared in English and French. The Spanish edition will appear at the end of June.

M A R Y
IN THE LIFE
OF MEN AND WOMEN OF TODAY

We urge all our CLC members and subscribers to get and read the recent Apostolic Exhortation issued by Pope Paul VI entitled Marialis Cultus (For the Right Ordering and Development of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary). It presents Mary in a truly modern way, keenly aware that "in our time, the changes that have occurred in social behavior, people's sensibilities, manners of expression in art and letters and in the forms of social communication have also influenced the manifestations of religious sentiment".

Our devotion to Mary, we are told, should be biblical, so that it is "imbued with the great themes of the Christian message". It ought "to be in harmony with the sacred liturgy" and "somehow derive inspiration from it". It "reflects the preoccupations of the Church herself" and so "is in accord with the deep desires and aims of the ecumenical movement". Lastly, - and here the document speaks very clearly and vigorously - it should take full account of "modern anthropological discoveries and the profound changes which have occurred in the psycho-sociological field in which modern man lives and works".

The exhortation both recognizes the value of ancient forms of devotion to Our Lady, such as the angelus and the rosary - when used in accordance with the guidelines given above - and also encourages the "creative impulse" of those who "through genuine religious inspiration or pastoral sensitivity wish to establish new forms" of devotion to her.

SOME EXCERPTS

"In the Virgin Mary everything is relative to Christ and dependent upon him.... it seems to us particularly in conformity with the spiritual orientation of our time... that in the expressions of devotion to the Virgin the Christological aspect should have particular prominence."

"... without in any way detracting from the unique character of this devotion, every care should be taken to avoid any exaggeration which could mislead other Christian brethren about the true doctrine of the Catholic Church.... it is the same power of the Most High which overhadowed the Virgin of Nazareth and which today is at work within the ecumenical movement and making it fruitful.... Just as at Cana the Blessed Virgin's intervention resulted in Christ's performing his first miracle, so today her intercession can help to bring to realization the time when the disciples of Christ will again find full communion in faith."

"...the modern woman, anxious to participate with decision making power in the affairs of the community, will contemplate with intimate joy Mary who, taken into dialogue with God, gives her active and responsible consent.... The modern woman will note with pleasant surprise that Mary of Nazareth, while completely devoted to the will of God, was far from being a timidly submissive woman or one whose piety was repellent to others; on the contrary, she was a woman who did not hesitate to proclaim that God vindicates the humble and the oppressed, and removes the powerful people of this world from their privileged positions (cf. Luke 1:51-53). The modern woman will recognize in Mary, who "stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord", a woman of strength, who experienced poverty and suffering, flight and exile. These are situations that cannot escape the attention of those who wish to support, with the Gospel spirit, the liberating energies of man and of society.... the figure of the Blessed Virgin does not disillusion any of the profound expectations of the men and women of our time but offers them the perfect model of the disciple of the Lord: the disciple who builds up the earthly and temporal city while being a diligent pilgrim towards the heavenly and eternal city, the disciple who works for that justice which sets free the oppressed and for that charity which assists the needy; but above all, the disciple who is the active witness of that love which builds up Christ in people's hearts."

ECUMENICAL ACTIVITY TODAY

by Walter M. ABBOTT, S.J.

The most widespread ecumenical activity is not something directed by the World Council of Churches or by local Councils of Churches. It does not come from international or national dialogue commissions. It is not the annual Week of Prayer for Unity, jointly sponsored by Churches in most parts of the world.

All those organizations and their activities are important, and we shall return to them, but we begin our survey of ecumenical activity with the fact that the most widespread form of it in the world today is, providentially, the most basic and essential thing of all: cooperation in Bible work and prayer, i.e., interconfessional Bible translating, distribution, reading, study and prayer.

Paradoxically, most of this common or interconfessional Bible activity is the result of the work of an organization that is not, and cannot be, formally engaged in the ecumenical movement: the United Bible Societies (UBS), a federation of 56 national Bible Societies with offices in another 105 countries.

The one aim of the UBS is ever wider circulation of the Scriptures, without doctrinal note or comment. UBS leaders, who are devout clergymen and laity of various Churches, say the Bible Societies cannot engage in ecumenism because it is a controversial thing among Christians. Because the Churches do not have the same concept of unity, the Bible Societies have nothing to say about ecumenism, just as they have nothing to say about the proper method of baptism, ordination, or the number of the sacraments. No controversial material enters their publications, because they aim to serve all the people everywhere with the Scriptures.

Accepting this understanding, the various Churches co-operate with the Bible Societies to get the Scriptures to all the people. The Roman Catholic Church joined this work as a result of the Second Vatican Council (Dei Verbum, Ch. 6). The Bible Societies have therefore turned out to be more "ecumenical" than the Councils of Churches. In the USA, for example, the National Council of Churches, commonly regarded as the chief ecumenical instrument of the country, has 35 member Churches. The American Bible Society, however, has 70 Churches in its Council, including anti-ecumenical ones (i.e., anti-NCC Churches). There is a similar pattern in the Philippines and in many other countries. Twice as many will work with the Bible Societies, in fact, almost all, although some will not cooperate with each other in anything else.

In the process of cooperating with the Bible Societies there is a vast, interconfessional return to the Scriptures, to the Father and the Son and the Spirit speaking to the world in and through the Scriptures. In the process the Scriptures and the Bible Societies become mighty instruments in the hand of God, for Christian renewal and for missionary outreach and for ecumenism.

We are talking here about an annual production of more than 200 million Scriptures by the Bible Societies - more than 5 million Bibles, 15 million New Testaments, 30 million portions (booklet editions of Gospels, Psalms, etc.), 165 million selections (pamphlets and leaflets, attractively illustrated, giving a key passage of Scripture) in more than 500 languages in more than 150 countries and territories. We are talking here about Catholic participation in UBS translation work in 119 languages around the world (119 out of 585 in which the UBS is currently at work). This interconfessional work is at various stages of completion. The New Testament has been published in Korean, Thai, Sinhala, French, Cebuano, Chinese, Bulgarian. Work on the Old Testament is well advanced in most of these languages also. Meanwhile people don't have to wait for the new version. By order of Pope Paul VI (Decree, Nov. 15, 1966) the laws against versions produced under non-Catholic auspices have been revoked, and all of the Episcopal Conferences have been informed (Jan. 29, 1969) how to make use of already existing Bible Society productions.

Much of the Christian renewal around the world is be-

ing achieved by the use of these Bible Society productions. Christian renewal is the pre-condition of the ecumenical movement. As the Second Vatican Council said, "There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart, and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the ecumenical movement" (ibid., No. 8). Wherever Bible Society productions are used they do the work of Christian renewal, in the privacy of the home or in observance of national Bible Week, national Bible Sunday, and local distribution campaigns, which are especially effective in the Bible Society training program (called "Operation Philip" in the Philippines, where they have been very successful). In this way the Bible Societies are actually the most widespread, productive and efficient instruments of ecumenism, and all who cooperate with them are de facto doing a basic work of ecumenism.

The Bible Societies at their World Assembly (Addis Ababa, September, 1972) resolved to reach an annual distribution of 500 million Scriptures by 1980, with special emphasis on selections for literacy programs, for children, youth, students, women, special groups and situations as opportunities arise. Anyone who engages in this vast program contributes to ecumenism and to the basic Christian missionary outreach. Missionary outreach with the Scriptures, by everybody - man, woman, child - is another result of the Vatican II document on the Bible, which not only recommends but urges that it be done interconfessionally or ecumenically (Dei Verbum, No. 25). One hears many people asking these days if ecumenism is dead. If one means by ecumenism the work and prayer for fulfillment of Christ's prayer that all may be one, ecumenism is not dead and it won't be as long as the Word of God is in circulation - and the Bible Societies will see to that.

Anyone who reads the Scriptures and tries to share their message with someone else - and that's what Christian renewal and missionary outreach and the Bible Societies are all about - must be able to explain the Scriptures to some extent. At this point he (or she) needs, and will be well served by, the Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) or Scripture Union (SU), interconfessional organizations that were originally Anglican (BRF) and conservative Prot-

estant (SU) but have, as a result of Vatican II, extended their services to include Catholics.

BRF guides and commentaries for daily reading (all of which have the imprimatur of Westminster) come in four series: A, for adult readers with some knowledge of Scripture; B, brief notes for busy people with Scripture passage printed on the same page; Compass, with illustrated notes for children (ages 10 to 13); Discovery, for young people (14 to 18) with Bible passage printed in full. I've used Series A, and I can assure all of you it's worthwhile. If you don't know the BRF address in your country, write to international headquarters, St. Michael's House, 2 Elizabeth St., London SW1W = RQ England.

SU Bible reading aids are produced for children, teenagers and adults in 150 languages, and SU has staff at work in 70 countries. Perhaps SU publications are more simple than what Christian Life Community members need themselves, but they will discern what others in their care will find useful. For information write to the central office, 5 Wigmore St., London W1H OAD England. The French branch is La Ligue pour la Lecture de la Bible, 15 Avenue Foch, 68 Guebwiller, France. If SU publications don't have the imprimatur in your language or your country, perhaps you can do something about it.

Common Bible study is good as far as it goes. How far it goes depends on how competent the people are who engage in it. Catholics need everything they can get from the World Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate (WCFBA), which came into existence in 1969 to promote development of national biblical apostolates and publication of all the helps Catholics need - priests, teachers, people in Bible-study groups - for understanding and praying with the Scriptures in the Catholic tradition. The founders of WCFBA, including Cardinal Bea and Cardinal Willebrands, rightly regarded Katholisches Bibelwerk of Germany as the model for a national organization, since it has representatives and members in every diocese of the nation, Bible-study courses for priests, teachers, the laity of all ages, and periodical publications, books, helps of all kinds. If you don't know the address of your national Catholic biblical apostolate office, and above all if it turns out that

your country doesn't yet have an organized biblical apostolate, write to the central office: Silberburgstrasse 121-A, 7 Stuttgart 1, West Germany.

The second most widespread ecumenical activity in the world today is certainly the annual Week of Prayer for Unity, in January or in the week preceding Pentecost. Surveys by the World Council of Churches and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity show that in many places the Week of Prayer needs to be rescued from dullness and lack of power. The people who have studied the Scriptures together are the ones who can be counted on to know what is happening and to give leadership in the matter.

The third most widespread ecumenical activity is cooperation in health work and hospitals, university chaplaincies, industrial plants, prisons, the armed forces, work among youth, drug addicts and distressed people of all kinds, in relief services, response to national emergencies, development and social action, work for human rights and social justice. There is great progress in all these fields, with and without collaboration of Church leadership. Where clergy and people have a deepened knowledge of the core content of revelation, they hold liberals and conservatives together in projects which would otherwise fly apart. The same can be said about mixed marriages, with regard to the pastors of the partners, who must assist in the best way possible before and during the marriage, as well as with regard to the partners themselves.

The fourth most widespread ecumenical activity includes collaboration in education, in ecumenical centres, in use of communications media. Africa leads the way in this last field. Multimedia Zambia joins together the radio, publishing and audiovisual work of the principal Churches but each Church also has facilities for expressing its own doctrine and practice. Interconfessional Bible work is rightly at the core of all this activity.

Fifth and last on our list comes ecumenical dialogue. At its top level there are the bilateral dialogues (Anglican/Roman Catholic, Lutheran/Roman Catholic, etc.), the joint working groups (at world and national level), the work of Councils of Churches (all levels). This is the least widespread activity because of its nature it requires

the total dedication of a small number of highly competent and specialized people. The hopes of these people and the effect of their important work ultimately depend on clergy and people at grass-roots level, as it is called. There is not yet anywhere near the level and amount of local dialogue that are needed for the understanding of the theological work that has been accomplished by these groups. There is more and more dialogue at local level as a result of conflicting views on family life, sexual mores, abortion, support of parochial schools, etc. By and large, the clergy and people who will best contribute to the dialogue on doctrine and on practice will be the ones who've read the Scriptures and want to share their message with others, the ones who've had a change of heart and are striving for holiness of life along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians.

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YOUTH - PROGRESSIO

ABOUT OUR NEW YOUTH COMMISSION

Youth have always been associated with Christian Life Communities, both as students and young workers. The specific goals of youth communities are to assist youth in arriving at a mature response to their Christian vocation and to guide them in their search to discover the designs of God in their lives. (See General Principles, Numbers 3, 10, 11).

Did you know that the very first Christian Life Community was a Youth group? It was founded in 1563, for the students of the Jesuit Roman College. Since that time, we know that youth CLCs have constituted a unique and important part of this world movement. A part that is growing in number, too - as those of us who were in Rome and Augsburg last summer could see, by the large percentage of "under 25ers" present, from all over the world. Youth's influence is really growing, not only in CLC but in the rest of today's society as well.

Therefore, in response to this sign of the times, the Executive Council took action to form a "Youth Commission" which would act as a working body of the World Federation. This article will hopefully serve as a brief introduction to the Youth Commission: its members, its function, its hopes for the future.

Make-up of the Commission: there are ten members altogether, two from each of five continents. These members were chosen by the Youth delegates of Augsburg '73, through a mail ballot last fall. Here are the results of that election:

Africa :	Aloysius Mahachi	(Rhodesia)
	Timothy Smith	(South Africa)
Asia :	Aleli Raymundo	(Philippines)
		co-chairman, secretary
	Yorizumi Watanabe	(Japan)
Europe :	Angela Clarke	(England)
	Helene Muller	(Germany)
Latin America :	Carlos Lecaros	(Peru)
	Martin Morales	(Argentina)
North America :	Diane Chagnon	(Canada)
	Peggie Telscher	(USA) chairman

The chairman of this commission is an appointed member of the Executive Council, and so will take part in its meetings. The co-chairman will continue in her role as secretary for all youth groups, at the International Youth CLC Secretariate in Manila, Philippines. She is also editor of the new section of this magazine Progressio.

Each member of the commission has a big responsibility, both to the other members and to the World Federation as a whole. Having two "official" representatives from each continent, will, first of all, facilitate communication: among the youth groups themselves, with adult CLCs, with the Rome Secretariate. Communication and sharing of ourselves and our ideas is tremendously important! For the youth groups, it will help to provide mutual inspiration and encouragement in our CLC way of life. This sense of world community and mutual help is essential in these times of rapid change, especially for young people who are caught up in the very center of change.

For the World Federation in general, better communication between youth and adult groups could result in much learning on both sides. Youth could benefit greatly from the experience, commitment, and perspective of adults, while the adults could profit from the spirit, involvement, and new ideas of youth. Too often in our world, a "generation gap" exists; this sad state cannot be ignored. But with Christ as the center of our communities, there can be no gap. We experienced this in Rome and Augsburg, where adults and youth shared, not just superficially, but from the depths of their beings. This aspect was truly wonderful - and gives us much hope for the future. The very fact that this youth publication is now an integral part of Progressio is another positive sign.

The members of the commission will also play an important part in any projects undertaken for the promotion and growth of youth CLCs, like finding new ways to present the CLC way of life to youth, how to integrate the Spiritual Exercises and the General Principles into one's life at this age, developing formation programs, etc. Continuing information about specific projects will appear in later issues of Progressio.

To conclude - though actually, this is just a beginning! - we can say that a tremendous job lies ahead of us. There will be many problems along the way: distance, language differences, finances... but this is all part of our growing identification with Jesus in the paschal mystery. If it is our Lord's will, the new Youth Commission will be a decisive help for youth CICs across the world. Let us be united, then, in prayers of thanks!

Peggie

HAPPENINGS

MADAGASCAR : A total of 67 CIC youth leaders from all over the island, went through the adventure of the Spiritual Exercises together. The atmosphere? "Very open to Christ and to others".

PERU : "We've studied n°. 10 of PROJECTS, just received, which deals with "Twinning" by National Federations, and we're deeply interested. Count us in. The same as regards full and helpful exchanges about our experiences and our programs of formation, and on how to achieve economic help".

AN INVITATION TO ONENESS

We have all been asking for something which would be dedicated just to CIC youth groups. Something that would be a product of our efforts. Something that would give us a chance to air our views, write down our thoughts, share them with our international community. So our first Youth Section of Progressio is indeed a great occasion for rejoicing. It is what all of us young people have been looking forward to.

Our request has been granted. But with it comes the responsibility of continuing the struggle to make sure this LINK stays alive.

As your servant I am asking you to be one with me in this undertaking. Our pursuit can be called "ours" only if we all are one in labouring for it. I shall then, from time to time, be asking you young people to share your views in the form of articles for our Youth Section. I am also inviting you to freely write your thoughts or share with us events which are meaningful to you and your groups.

We are indeed ONE IN THE SPIRIT!

Aleli.

YOUTH CLCS - AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

by Nick RIEMAN, S.J.

One of the striking things in our Christian Life Communities today is their swiftly growing sense of being in fact a single world community. One sees it everywhere. Just the volume of mail we get here at the World CLC Center from members around the globe proves it. And so often the letters ask: what is going on in the rest of our world community? how can we exchange with others? how can we share with them more? It was the same on all the Executive Council trips. At every stop one of the questions was sure to be: what's happening in the other parts of our world CLC family? The Solidarity Fund too was concrete proof that CLC members are beyond just talking about being an international community. We are beginning to act like one. And the events of last summer - the Rome Course, the Augsburg Assembly, the Taizé Youth Session - deepened this sense unbelievably.

This sense of world community is strongest among CLC youth. This is hardly surprising, since the world's young people are already one to a degree that sometimes startles their elders. They are completely at home in the one-world frame of reference created by radio, television, travel. Their concerns are the same everywhere - poverty, injustice, war, freedom, identity, community, authenticity. Their frustrations, their dreams are the same, sometimes even their songs and their hair styles. And beyond all that, CLC youth experience their oneness in Christ, and in CLC as their way to Him. It's natural, then, that CLC youth, at their insistence, now have a Youth Commission and a Youth Section of PROGRESSIO.

One of the best things in all this is that this growing youth activity has not been a separatist, barely-tolerated, side-effort, but a normally functioning part of world CLC community life. At both Augsburg and Rome, youth members entered fully into the taxing demands of the guided

Exercises, the shared exchanges, filled too the role of facilitators. All this is most encouraging. It means that youth initiative is encouraged, that CLC believes its young members have a special contribution to make, and wants them to make it in their own way. But even more important, it means that the World CLC Federation looks on youth as persons capable of participating, not just in some special section of CLC which would not really be taken seriously, but in the life and mission of CLC as a whole.

So, youth CLCs have already come a long way. But in this existential universe, we never stand still, we are forever becoming. Which is another way of saying, we still have far to go before CLC youth become fully and truly an international community. So, just three short thoughts on what can help in that direction.

The first is to deepen your shared vision and your living of what CLC is. The greater is our sense of CLC identity and the more we feel from our lived experience that we share the same vocation - a call from the Lord to live Ignatian spirituality in the lay state - the more we will be one. The shared experience of the Spiritual Exercises will forge more tightly the bonds of world community.

Second, more communication. You are very fortunate that the sessions this past summer at Rome, Augsburg and Taizé initiated, for a few of you from many nations, personal friendships with CLC youth everywhere. They are friendships I hope you will continue and deepen through personal correspondence, and somehow share with other CLC youth of your country. Exchange of publications between different places will help. The whole of PROGRESSIO, too, is an important link: last year, for example, besides many short news items about youth CLCs, it had four articles written by youth groups themselves from France, Chile, Canada and Italy. And then, very specially, this Youth Section you are beginning.

Third, community grows through love-in-action. When we can, it means sharing our money. It surely means sharing experiences, methods, successes - or even just your attempts - in witnessing to Christ's truth and love and justice in your own region or country. Having visited CLCs in

many countries, we are strongly convinced that each of your groups have something to contribute to each other and to learn from each other. Don't fail to share these things. Your Youth Commission will surely have further ideas on how to do this.

"Community Lives !", as the song puts it, for CLC youth the world over are already one in Christ and one in their CLC vision of life. But, though it lives, we - you - must keep it growing.

AKO, KAYO AT SIYA *

YOUTH FORMATION PROGRAM, PHILIPPINE STYLE

It was suggested that part of the Youth Section content be a presentation of formation materials in the form of articles, sharing sessions, group dynamics exercises, etc. The first of this series is a sample program of group dynamics exercises and "lecturettes". (Since space is limited, after outlining the program, only two of the sessions are here developed in detail.) I have personally formulated this and tried it out with our youth groups here in the Philippines. It is hoped it will be of some help to other CLC youth groups.

Aleli

I - METHOD

- A. Individual reflection
- B. Small-group sharing
- C. General assemblies for the "Lecturettes"

II - GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- A. To reassess one's own life in terms of one's relationship with oneself and with others
- B. To communicate (converse and commune) with oneself and God

* Me, You and Him

III - SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF SESSIONS (9 sessions in all)

A. Getting-to-know-you:

- To make the members feel at ease with one another
- To facilitate the involvement of individuals in the later sessions

B. Counting Off

- To divide the big group into permanent small groups for the facilitating of sharing

C. Live and Learn

- To cause the group to have an initial feel of looking back into their lives in terms of relating an experience
- To cause the group to have an initial feel of group sharing
- To introduce what the whole day will be all about

D. Lecturette on Live and Learn

- To summarize and explain what Session C was all about
- To give an introduction of what is expected of the whole day

E. The Giving Tree

- To cause the group to look back into their lives, particularly on their relationships, through the use of a fairy tale

F. Christ Encounter

- To enable the person to evaluate his present relationships in the light of Scriptures and share the results with his small group

G. Depth-Sharing

- To enable the group to deal with the basis of their relationships from the standpoint of Scripture

H. Evaluation

- To evaluate the whole day as to content and method

I. Celebration

- To celebrate and give thanks for the entire day

SESSION THREE: LIVE AND LEARN: Procedure

- a) You will try to look over your life and try to describe an incident that has happened to you and that has taught you an important lesson.
- b) In addition, you will try to reflect on these questions:
 - How did you benefit from this experience?
 - What was involved in your learning from this experi-

ence? Was it hardship, pain, tears, anxiety, fear, etc.?

- c) When the signal is given, you will then go into your small groups and share what you have reflected on.

SESSION FOUR: LECTURETTE ON LIVE AND LEARN: Content

We value the learning we derive from experience.

- A common expression is "live and learn". We could also turn that around to say "learn and live", meaning, learn from experience and you will live more fully.

Learning depends a great deal on ourselves.

- From our sharing we see that learning involves things, other people, ourselves.
- It is true that with better facilities - schools, books, laboratories - we can learn better. It is true that good teachers are very important. But it is also true that even with the best facilities and the best teachers, one can fail to learn fully because learning depends on us. Just as no one can eat and grow and get fat for us, so no one can study and experience and learn and live for us. We have to do it ourselves.

Just how do we really learn?

- Are there different degrees of learning in people undergoing the very same experience? On what does one's degree of learning depend?
- Just what is the difference between a carabao (native animal) watching the sunset and a boy watching the sunset as he rides the carabao home in the evening?
- What is the difference between a dog and a man listening to the radio as both man and dog sit in the same room with the radio turned on?
- Is it possible for the man to be as little aware of the radio as the dog is?
- Is it possible for the boy to be as little aware of the sunset as the carabao is?
- Is it possible to go through life less aware of sunsets, birds, flowers, of things around us, than we could be?

What does it really mean to be open to experience?

Just what is important about experience?

Other questions to stimulate reflexion.

LIBERATION EFFORT IN A RURAL MILIEU

How the Demands of a Service of the Very Poor Led to the Creation of a C.L.C.

Margosatubig is my first pastoral experience, and my first experience of oppressing structures operative within the rather simple framework of a rural parish community. The parish organisations were rife with political rivalries, gambling, usury, unjust landlordism and even status-seeking, among the relatively few who had the good fortune to have been to high school or even to have graduated from college. Silently suffering all this, very much in the church but very little forming part of the Christian community, were the fish-vendors and washerwomen of the town, and the frequently seen but seldom noticed farm-labourers, tenants and small farmers of the barrios in the mountains, above and behind the town. I knew that out of this feeble expression of a local "church" a Christian community had to rise. What precisely should characterise that community I could not spell out, for I had in mind only something like a beginning of what sprang up in apostolic times. Furthermore, unlike the physics teaching I had just left, there was no formula that only needed to be filled out with data in order for the task to be brought to completion. By personal decision I was the lone priest in the area, with one companion, a teacher named Jun Ebol whom I had met at a social action seminar. And I was a new pastor, with no methodology, no ideology to bolster me except for what I had held on to personally throughout the years - the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. So, willy-nilly, I personally and formally abolished discrimination in the parish (my first principle learned directly from Vatican II).

Then we invited any and all to join with us in meetings, group dynamics sessions, bible-reading, just ordinary discussions, even T-groups; hopefully seeking to form a "core" group, though not quite certain what that core group should be like. There were many mistakes, and many dropped out. But it gradually became apparent that a few of us were becoming more united.

Our two became three, then almost imperceptibly grew to the present number of 21. Meanwhile, the barrio people had awakened to a consciousness of their identity as children of God, as brothers and sisters in the same family with Christ. So with almost nothing said, no call for volunteers, no thought of support, we set about approaching these long-forgotten folk, welcoming help with out effusiveness, plunging ourselves into the still uncertain depths of Christian brotherhood with all, no matter how poor and unlettered. It was Jun who suggested that a felt need, hitherto unexpressed, of our developing small community of prayer be answered - spiritual deepening. So I immediately agreed; and before long we had our first three days of closed retreat according to the method of St. Ignatius, letting the Church also speak to our brethren through her recent documents calling for greater and deeper social involvement. The rest apparently came from above. That first closed retreat was followed by eight others, like the first, but even more intense in their clear vision of Christ as Teacher of the oppressed, and in the strength of the call to actively prepare for the advent of the Kingdom. As our small group of "little" people grew spiritually, a like spirit of awareness and commitment caught fire among our barrios, thanks to the more active (and the physically stronger!) members who helped advance the cause of Christ among them. Gone from our midst are the politics, the promoters of gambling, the usurers, and snobs. Even the lesser landlords have softened their ways towards their tenants. Thus, in a manner so non-directive as to be almost disorganized, we began to realize that a CLC was forming amongst ourselves.

José A. DACANAY

OUR COMMITMENT IN C.L.C.

Wishing to reflect the orientations set during our last Assembly at Augsburg, we continue to include concrete experiences in our series on "Formation".

During this year we will publish several "presentations of CLC" elaborated by national federations. They aim at giving a concrete and global picture of the experience they are living, and thus avoid, among interested adults, the ambiguities that can arise from entering into CLC without knowledge of its specific approach.

Here is a text recently adopted by the National Executive Council of France. To make the reading of it clearer, we should add that in 1968 the French National Federation changed itself into a single national Association (Community), which seemed to it to express better the reality of its community experience. (Editor's Note)

I. - THE GOAL CLC AIMS AT

We believe that Christ continues to call men and women today in order to associate them more closely in His work, and to consecrate them along with Himself to the mission He has received from the Father. Jesus Himself explained clearly the meaning of this mission when He began His public life:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and new sight to the blind. to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favor." (Luke 4:18).

Then, before passing from this world to the Father, He entrusted this same mission to those whom He had chosen and to the whole Church:

"As You have sent Me into the world, I send them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate Myself, so that they too may be consecrated in truth... I pray also for those who through their words will believe in Me" (John 17:18).

Thus the members of the Christian Life Association wish to live more fully their baptismal consecration by mutually helping each other to work at this mission in and through all the situations of their life.

Our Specific Mission Within the Church

Desirous of serving in the Church, we wish to respond to the calls that she addresses to us today. We seek with her to discover the signs of the Holy Spirit in the aspirations of the men of our times. We are therefore aware that we must penetrate with the spirit of Christ the relationships between men, in particular by working for the spiritual and human liberation of those who are victims of any form of oppression, by witnessing to justice, by having a truly brotherly attitude toward all without distinction. We desire to accomplish this mission through a personal life inspired by the spirit of the beatitudes, and through concrete action aimed at making society more conformed to the gospel, going where necessary to the roots of the evils that disfigure it.

We have the conviction, along with in a special way other groups that aim at fully living the gospel, that our words and our actions have no spiritual effectiveness unless they find their source in prayer. It is in fact the periods of our personal encounters alone with the Lord that introduce us to familiarity with Him and make us become contemplatives in action.

The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, which are an experience we have been given and that we must make bear fruit and pass on to others, specify our vocation in the Church. They lead us to a liberating conversion, and teach

us to live spiritual discernment in daily life so as to seek out what God expects of us in all circumstances. In this way we become more attentive to the interior movements of the Holy Spirit, both in ourselves and in the world that surrounds us. Thus we are helped too to discover where the true needs are to be found and what is the more universal good. We are led in this way, little by little, to find God in all our decisions.

According to a Gospel Way of Living

We must live out this mission in the midst of a world dominated by the struggle for possessions and for social success and in the end by self-sufficiency. Jesus, poor in material possessions, humble of heart, proclaimed the Gospel while giving his life. He was misunderstood and ultimately rejected. He calls us to witness with Him to a happiness that does not come from the world. That of possessing nothing and receiving all from the Father, that of dominating no one but of being at the service of men.

We desire then to conform our way of living to His, even if this brings with it lack of understanding, trusting that it will be given to us to say one day in truth:

"I desire to live poor with Christ poor rather than in riches; to live in the condition of one who serves with Christ rejected and despised rather than to seek honors; and I prefer to be looked on as ridiculous and a fool for Christ, who was the first to pass for such, rather than as wise and prudent in this world" (See Spiritual Exercises 167).

To desire this love of Christ, in which the fullness of joy is to be found, we know that we need personal prayer nourished by daily meditation of Scripture, and by an intense sacramental life; habitual reviewing of our days and of the way in which we live events; true spiritual dialogue; and, finally, an annual interior renewal in the spirit of the Spiritual Exercises. These different means, taken together, specify concretely the way of life that the members of Christian Life adopt.

As an Apostolic Community

To help us enter into this mission, and to live in this way, we form a community. Practicing together spiritual discernment, and challenging ourselves in the light of the gospel, we try to review our way of life and to make our commitments conform to the orientations set as priorities by the Church. When we enter into such a community, in fact, we accept the calling in question of our natural preferences, the use of our time, the matter of our occupations, even the direction of our professional life. We are ready too to reexamine the way we divide our budget, and how we use our social influence.

The final decision as to our family, professional, social and political responsibilities is not withdrawn from us; it becomes on the contrary more personal. By asking others to help us in a fraternal spirit, and by welcoming their counsel, we place ourselves in an attitude of greater interior liberty, we become more ready to listen to the universal Church, and so make ourselves more open to the Word of God. In this way we find confirmation and firmness in our decisions.

We are seeking then the same goal by different paths, and we wish in the spirit of the Church to accept this pluralism, not as if we did not care, but to receive an increase of life and of light: none of us has the whole truth, and we wish to learn from others, to enlarge our awareness, to support each one so that he may as a Christian carry out his options to the limit.

Such is our aim: CLC is one "way", among others, to live the Gospel. CLC is also a community, a world community spread through 48 countries, made up of persons who are very different and expressing itself locally in multiple ways. It is on the local level that this community, as a rule, takes on flesh for each one of us. In associating ourselves with each other by a reciprocal commitment of fidelity, we wish to pursue and, as companions on the road, to discover, our path within the Church.

II.- ADHESION TO THE CLC ENTERPRISE

Each one gradually discovers if this "path" corre-

sponds to his own call. When one enters a group, it is with the intention of trying it out. After a first year, one begins to see. If I decide to continue, I am already making a first option: recognizing myself as a member of the Christian Life Community I participate in its life: meetings in which one shares, review of my commitments, my prayer, my weekends... But soon, this is no longer enough!

A Personal Call

My situation is like that of the man who went to find Jesus to say to Him: "All that, I have kept from my youth. What is still lacking to me?" He wanted to do more, to go further, to give himself more fully. And this is why, says the Gospel, Jesus looked at him and loved him: "If you want to be perfect", to advance in an ever growing gift of yourself, then

"only one thing is lacking to you; go, sell what you have and give it to the poor. Then, come, follow Me" (Mark 10:21).

There we have the decisive step that the Lord proposes to us: to offer not only what is superfluous of our time and resources, but to give oneself. There then is the real question: for a Christian of today, what does it mean, "Go ... then come"? It means that one go out of oneself in order to commit oneself to the person of Jesus Christ, and to proclaim with Him the Gospel in and through all of one's life. All the rest then takes on another look: this decisive step, in fact, causes us to enter into a dynamic process, a kind of triple passage:

1) The passage from a "generous" life, where I remain after all master of my decisions, to a "spiritual" life, where I receive my action from God, in and through the situations of life and interior calls. Come, follow Me: for one person, it means entering on the adventure of the Kingdom: I turn myself over to Christ, leaving behind my securities and following Him amid the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of men, above all of the poor and all those who suffer. For another, it means becoming aware that the human solidarity that he already lives and the transformation of our society that he pursues will not be truly profound unless they base themselves totally on

Christ. In both cases, It is the Lord who goes before. And since is is He who loves and who invites, my life takes from then on the form of a response.

2) The passage from a "practicing" life to an "evangelical" life.

Come, follow Me: it is the call to go beyond the moral comfort that could come from observing the commandments or fidelity to an ideal, in order to adopt a way of life more in conformity with that of Jesus, in the desire of being more like Him. That means, not carelessness or irresponsibility, but giving up a proprietary attitude toward my resources as towards my power: I want to look on them from now on as goods whose management has been entrusted to me, and about which Christ suggests to me, as he did for Zachaeus, to share them joyously, with intelligence and competence. It means too to recognize that I find myself inserted into a social fabric which is quite often a caricature of the Gospel, and to desire at the same time, if it is possible, to share the condition of Christ and of the poor.

3) The passage from a group where one goes to be replenished to one that is an apostolic community

Come, follow Me: with Peter, James, John, who left all (Mark 10:28). With Joan, Suzanne and those other women who followed Jesus and provided for them out of their own resources (Luke 8:2). With Priscilla and Aquila, the couple of the early days who accompanied Paul (Acts 18:2; 18:26). It is the discovery, through the practice of discernment and community deliberation, that it is not I who have chosen Christ but that it is He who has chosen me so that we may go out and bear fruit (see John 15:16). In this way I become aware that the Christian Life Community is more than a monthly meeting of replenishment: it is a community in and through which Christ sends me out and makes me responsible for the proclamation of the Gospel. If I associate myself with others, it is not only to pray better but to take action more effectively.

DISCOVERING MY WAY

Accomplishing this passage is a lifetime task. It is

movement, dynamism, progressive awareness of this or that dimension. What CLC proposes is to help its members to enter into this movement or to advance in it, by integrating these three dimensions: mission, way of life, community. It helps them to do this by two characteristic means:

1) The Spiritual Exercises: Each one is invited to make the authentic experience of them—soon enough after one's entry into a group to avoid slipping into routine, late enough to allow the desire for them to grow. Some make them, for example, during eight full days, in solitude and in a personally guided form. Others do so while continuing daily life, over a longer period of time. This experience is one of knowing oneself and the Lord, knowing our resistances and his calls. It awakens the interior man to the movements of the Holy Spirit and leads him, in and through a true liberation, to decide about his life according to God, to the point where he comes to say of it, along with Ignatius, "What is then this new life that we are beginning today?"

2) Companionship: It is obviously in the group that one first lives out the goals of the Association. It is from there that the preceding experience is prolonged into daily life, it is there that the fraternal spirit is forged. But each one is, at the same time, invited to go beyond his usual small group by participating in regional gatherings, and summer sessions, both national and international. In this way one discovers other companions of the journey, near or distant, alike or different, inspired by the same spirit. One recognizes oneself, little by little, as a member of a body, a corps, accountable for its growth and its vitality.

It is in practicing these two means that each one contributes to the vigor of the whole, and at the same time discovers whether this is his way, the way that will best lead him to Christ.

The Sign of My Acceptance

Thus commitment to the Christian Life Community is something progressive. But in the very growth of love and in the fraternal spirit there is an invitation, if the ex-

perience is conclusive, to cross a threshold. In finding peace, joy and spiritual dynamism in this path, I discover that God is calling me to serve Him in this Way.

There comes then a day when the community recognizes me as a companion, and, through one of its officers, calls me to go beyond simple participation to assume with it responsibility for its task. There comes the day when, in order to work more effectively at the mission of Christ, I decide to adhere to this community, to adopt its goal and its way of life. To manifest this mutual recognition, I declare to my brothers that they can count on me as I count on them.

By this act of adhesion, I confirm the profound thrust by which, ever since my baptism, I am consecrated to the mission of Christ, and I commit myself in the Association to take the means, recognized for me as the best, to work at it.

"Not", as says St. Paul, "as if I had already reached the goal, but I run". To commit myself means simply to say to my companions that, having recognized the road, I am running with them. I do not say I am further along than others. I say only that it is my path, our path, and that, without looking back and without prejudging the future, I choose it today.

To deepen the meaning of this commitment, there is no better way than that of contemplating the mystery of Mary, particularly dear to our spiritual tradition. In saying YES, without reserve, she understood the plan of God, was the first to enter into the mission of Christ, and shared to the end his way of living. Beside her Son, she prays for us and shares with us her joy:

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit exults in God, my Saviour, for he has looked upon his lowly handmaid."