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### The "Acts" of Rome '79

The full account of what took place during the 8th General Assembly of the CLC is now available. It is contained in a document we describe as the "ACTS" of Rome '79.

It is a document of 300 pages which contains, among other items, all the major conferences given on CLC charism, on lay spirituality and on mission (by Fathers John Reilly, Pedro Arrupe and Michael Campbell-Johnston respectively), the points for meditation suggested every night by Father Dominic Maruca, the discernment process we have made as we opted for "A world community at the service of one world", etc.

We at the CLC Secretariate have put in a good deal of effort in the last four months to come up with this detailed account. We believe that this document is going to be of tremendous help to all our CLC leaders, guides and assistants as it gives us ample material for our study, reflection and orientations in the next years.

For those interested, the "ACTS" can be ordered from the CLC Secretariate (C.P. 6139, 00100 Rome, Italy) at the price of U.S. \$ 5.00.

**AN EXAMPLE:**  
**Father Rufo Mendizabal s.j.**

The Lord has called to Himself a great friend of the C.L.C. - Many of you, dear readers, will ask : "Who was Father Mendizabal?". As a matter of fact, our publication never made mention of the constant and devoted help which Father Mendizabal, who celebrated his 91st year last December, gave to PROGRESSIO since 1952.

Former Provincial of the Province of Loyola (Spain), he was entrusted with a succession of responsible posts involving the formation of Jesuits. Called to the General Curia at Rome in 1952, he assisted Father Paulussen at the Jesuit Secretariat, founded by Father Ledóchowski in 1924 for the renewal of the Marian Congregations. For a period of 27 years, the Spanish version of PROGRESSIO and the translation of other documents published by the Secretariat depended on him; for 27 years he was for us a collaborator who both followed closely and encouraged the renewal of the CLC that was under way.

Called to the house phone to be asked for a translation, infallibly I would hear him reply "scendo subito" (I'll come down immediately). Two minutes later he would arrive, with discrete step, take the text in question, and we knew that by the following day we would find the article translated on our arrival at the office. His devotedness was equaled by his efficiency. His sudden appearances at the secretariat were greeted with joy, we appreciated the humour of his conversation. Sometimes his visits were occasions for the sharing of ideas.

I loved to hear him talk about our current activities, the efforts being made by the World Federation, the difficulties encountered. He would listen, instantly grasp the gist of the matter and smile. Thanks to his deep understanding of the Marian Congregations and of their history, coupled with his great clarity of mind, he was among those who were able to recognize in our renewal the fundamental inspiration of the old tradition flowering forth in the post-conciliar world through the witness of the new CLC. Because he was a good listener and had great discernment, he could appreciate what was essential and welcome new forms and expressions with the fresh spirit of a free man. When Father Paulussen went to see him in the infirmary, where he had to remain until the end because of an incurable illness, he said to him - just before ROME'79 - "Every day I pray for the CLC and for ROME'79".

His return to the Father moves us, even more than sadness at his loss, to give thanks from very grateful hearts. Because we were blessed for 27 years with an expert who, working quietly in the background, helped to chart out the path of renewal. Much more, we were given a witness: a witness in the welcoming of God's ways, of openness to the Spirit and of faithful following - without fear or anxiety or opposition - for the work that He is continuing in the gentle rebirth of a lay Ignatian community. Such an example calls for profound reflection.

*José GSELL*

## CLC IN MARRIED LIFE

### WITNESS

#### PROFILE

Years of Marriage : 30  
Children : 4, and 2 grandchildren  
Years in the CLC's : 11 years, as a couple  
Occupation : Mother of family  
Activities : prayer groups; teaching catechism; 'Catholic Action' on the village level; numerous contacts with people from different backgrounds, guiding some and leading others into an experience of prayer; I have given the Exercises to a number of people.

Experiences of the Exercises : the 30 day retreat some years ago; a yearly retreat since 1960-initially only a few days, but for the last 10 years, my retreat lasts from 8 to 10 days; I have experienced various types of retreats: the 19th annotation retreat at home, group retreats, individually guided retreats, and once I made my retreat completely by myself in a convent.

I would say that my interest in reading about Ignatian spirituality has been a considerable help in enabling me to

## *CLC in married life*

enter into the Exercises, even when my experience of them was rather short. Actually, I have read rather widely - for example, I have followed Christus since it began, and some of its publications. This background reading has led to a fruitful experience of the Exercises because the retreat, for me, has never been a "time apart"; rather, it has been a "unifying" experience in my life - a time for seeing things in their proper perspective. The Exercises have moulded me and made me what I am. I find it difficult to separate the Exercises from the CLC's, but I'll see if I can say what is specific about each of these two.

After experiencing several retreats, I felt the need for some sort of framework in my life that would also be a follow up to my retreat experiences; and I felt the need of support of like-minded people. Though I was very much aware of other spiritualities, and had had some experience of them, I came to the conclusion, during one retreat, that Ignatian spirituality was the only one in which I felt completely at home.

At that time I was a member of our diocesan Laity Council, and I spoke with our Bishop about the CLC's. The Bishop did not reject the idea, but neither did he take it up; the CLC's were not in his diocese and he was more interested in developing Catholic Action.

Some years later, after I had made contact with some CLC groups in the neighbouring diocese and followed a formation course, I managed to gather together a group of 5 couples, and a Jesuit came to help us. I presented the Bishop with this 'fait accompli', and he accepted it - not wishing, as he said, to "quench the Spirit".

My husband - somewhat reluctantly, at first! - became a member of the group as he very much liked the other couples. This group became a new inspiration for our married life. New depths opened up in our relationship and this led to our making our first retreat together. Since then we have made the Exercises faithfully each year.

I think it is the CLC's which have helped us accept that we are two very different people. For God, in showing us our vocation, has also shown us what is unique in the other

## *CLC in married life*

This has led to a deeper respect and a deeper freedom in our relationship- though this does not happen without risk and trust. We are still "on the way", as it were, but we know that the way we are going leads to a deeper understanding and an ever greater loving.

Paradoxically, it was my 30 day retreat that brought us so much closer together; it cannot be doubted that when God comes into our lives, He comes to bring us closer to those we love. The bond between us is a bond of love - a love ever younger, ever stronger, ever true which does not fear the passing of the years because it is rooted in Christ.

Each of us has our own rhythm of prayer; I go to Mass every day, when that is possible. My husband prays the rosary; I prefer a time for silent prayer, at the very beginning of the day. Our common prayer quite often consists in the recitation of the Office, in the evening.

The quality of our marriage relationship has had its effects on our children. I think that almost instinctively we have passed on to them our own CLC experience: sharing, discernment and respect for the individuality of each person - a friend is someone who gives you your freedom.

The CLC's have helped us give a concrete expression, in our own life, to the desires aroused from the contemplation of Christ poor and humble in the Exercises. One specific fruit of the Exercises has been to make us freer persons - free in relation to our milieu, its life-style, its social conventions, its idea of success, and political options; and all that is particularly important in our country where the CLC's are found mainly among the upper classes.

To undertake a genuine change in lifestyle, both partners must work together - one alone cannot do it. As we already had rather a simple lifestyle, the change for us took the form of not worrying about appearances, and sharing our resources - affective resources, material resources; we have a long way to go, but at least we have made a start.

We have a place in the mountains and we lend it to

## *CLC in married life*

people who need a change of air but have nowhere to go. We also share our summer house when we are not using it, and that has cost me a great deal as it is full of family "treasures" that I cherish.

As the CLC's come from much the same social level in our country, it has been through prayer groups that we have come into contact with the poor, as well as through our relations with people in the village. To receive them into our home, share meals, to be on a first name basis proved to be a real "conversion-experience" for us. All this has led to a certain rupture with our milieu; initially we rejected it, and in turn were rejected. Since then, however, a further growth has taken place; we are not independent of our milieu, and we are very conscious of what we owe to our background, especially our education. From being somewhat aggressive and frightened of not being recognised, we have gradually acquired a certain freedom which enables us to truly love those who accept us as we are.

I would like to add that when one of my old uncles needed somewhere to go, we set him up in a house next-door to our own. We have done this for my uncle's wife, my mother-in-law and my mother too; they are all over 80 - the real poor of today. To care for them, to support them, to love them and especially to "waste" time with them - that is the best way to show them how important they are. For us it has been a very rich experience, and I have learnt, through contact with them, the meaning of old age and total dependence.

The CLC's are a privileged place for forming adult Christians, capable of facing new situations. I think of of parish which - due to a lack of priests - will have to envisage, in the not too distant future, celebrations without a priest. My husband and myself are ready to assume this ministry, not only because we are "formed", but also because we are "recognised" by the parish community.

We were the first members of the CLC's in our region, which began 10 years ago, with the help of a Jesuit priest. The priest was stationed in another town quite some distance away, and on account of the distance involved, we became the link between members of the group, and responsible for preparing the meetings.



*CLC in married life*

We had our problems; some couples dropped out; but to day there are three groups, of about a dozen persons, with out counting the couples who have left the region and joined other groups or set up new CLC groups.

We have a monthly meeting, prepared in turn by one of the couples with the responsible couple. The Curate of our village has been a member for the past 5 years, but he is not the guide for the group. Very often our sharing is done in the context of the Eucharist. Sometimes we have a theme for our meeting, sometimes it is a revision of life, leading into a common discernment: change of profession, membership of a political party, difficulties encountered in the children's education, and so on. I think that the CLC experience, especially at the beginning, has helped us all in our married life, through fostering a real exchange between partners; and I think that our own groups has helped one couple weather a crisis.

It seems to me that the greatest difficulty encountered by couples is how to live a real unity in the difference of vocations. Moreover, it often happens that one partner feels more at ease in the group, or more concerned or more engaged in the CLC's, and the other always becomes more or less frustrated. I believe it is very helpful for couples to do formation sessions together.

In conclusion, I would like to say that my personal vocation has deepened each year with my retreat and is very much strengthened by the CLC's. Through listening to others, it has become more and more clear to me that the Lord has chosen me to be a guide for groups and individuals, to help them discern their way. I believe there is a great need in the Church at this level, but it is not always clearly seen by those most concerned. As a result, I am now in contact with persons from very different backgrounds; exchanges with them are a genuine privilege, though listening takes pride of place. These people are mainly mothers of families, like myself. I have introduced a certain number of them to prayer, and I have given the Exercises to some who were ready to make them properly.

S. B.

## PREPARATION FOR THE 19th ANNOTATION RETREAT

At the very beginning, a person who wants to make this kind of retreat must understand that they are taking on a commitment 'to seek the Lord' which involves not only time given to prayer, but also a complete readiness to enter in to a process which is quite unpredictable in the way it may develop and the demands it may make. The decision to undertake this should be made only after the retreatant has had several interviews with his/her guide; and other members of the household - who inevitably will be involved, one way or another - have indicated their approval. Perhaps the decision, at this stage, is quite unreal; the person may be over conscientious and sustained by the rather ambiguous hope that he/she is going to solve all personal problems. However, the decision to make the retreat is a commitment - the person's conscience is 'engaged' - and so, on this level, the person may be considered to have made a beginning.

An immediate consequence of this decision is to give time regularly to prayer. To do this, of course, the retreatant must find the necessary time, and this involves a number of small but quite significant options, at the very heart of daily life. At the start of each prayer session, the retreatant must also decide what will be the theme of his/her prayer, what text is to be used, what spiritual attitude and grace are to be asked for. To avoid being overwhelmed by external difficulties and by the first experiences of light and darkness in prayer, the retreatant must be quite realistic about what is feasible, and what is felt to be a help or hindrance. He/she must also be realistic in coming to terms with the continuity - and lack of it - which will soon appear in his/her prayer, once it settles down and starts to develop. There will be innumerable opportunities to move from fixed resolutions or a nicely set-out program to concrete choices which are a sign that the retreatant is now open to the movements and impulses he/she feels deep within himself/herself.

The initial experience of this 'burden' of prayer slowly provokes a sort of cleavage at the very heart of the retreatant's life. Particular incidents, meeting people, the retreatant's own sensitive reactions, conversations with people he/she likes or would prefer to avoid - all these factors become faith-questions and challenges to the individual's faith-life. We could almost describe this as an "awakening": in the normal course of ordinary living, the retreatant sees that the different aspects of his/her life - even the most ordinary - take on a new "meaning" which is a revelation of the action of God in the person's life. The individual learns to "discern", that is, to distinguish between the various interior movements that occur deep inside, and so comes to realise that some movements are a source of strength, others are simply draining, some open the heart in love, others lead to self-centredness. Perhaps some evening, when work is over, or during a period of peace and calm, the retreatant begins to ask himself/herself questions like the following: "Why did I feel so uneasy today? What were my real motives for doing such-and-such? What weight, before God, would I attach to such-and-such a decision, which I took so quickly? What does it really mean when certain interior states keep coming back? Surely their repetition can only be a sign of some significant inclination I have? How much notice should I take of the feeling that I am continually "resisting"? However, the answer to these questions, though based on the psychological fact of human growth, is a faith-response. The underlying question would be: "In the course of my life as a man or a woman, how is God leading me?", and the reply is sifted out slowly, as the days go by, through a new understanding of apparently ordinary events which reveal the impulse of the Spirit of God. I have just spoken of an awakening, but what can often happen is that the retreatant has such striking experiences which appear so new that he/she feels that life is taking off in a fresh direction, and the retreat, quite unexpectedly, has really begun. And a real "beginning" it is - if the individual moves from a life-situation, dominated by considerations of what is good and what is evil, to a depth of living where he/she experiences the effects of the action of God, deep within the whole of his/her life.

As a matter of course, there is a mutual interaction between the attitude of discernment and prayer. Inevitably,

## *spiritual exercises*

any fruit, any sign of the active presence of God is brought to prayer - whether the sign of His presence is luminous and clear, or obscure and yet compelling. The Gospel itself assumes a new reality, shedding light on every-day life. The attitude of prayer becomes an attitude of humility and, at the same time, more of an offering of oneself to the action of the Spirit.

The retreatant is prepared to wait patiently for the Lord to come, in His own time; he/she is "passive" before the Lord, in the very best sense of the word. The various "movements" experienced in prayer, and their continual recurence in the course of prayer, betray some kind of design, or better still, a real history of moments of prayer and a rhythm of praying which in some way reveal the action of God. And this "revelation" of the action of God will be extended, through discernment, to moments of life and a rhythm of living embracing the person's whole life.

The whole process of explicitly beginning "the spiritual life" obviously requires some preliminary stages which should not be hurried. First of all, there is a discovery, or rediscovery of what it means to have a vital relationship with God. And it is here that the retreatant, even with out theorising or deeply reflecting, begins to realise, through experience, that his/her spiritual life is not some thing apart from one's psychological life, but rather the whole meaning behind it; and that the Will of God reveals itself at the very heart of a human will that has been genuinely liberated and therefore is capable of making a real option, in line with the Gospel.

As the days or the weeks go by, with the retreatant liying a life of prayer and discernment, and constantly being confronted by the "reality-factor" - the inescapable truth - of daily life, some kind of "interior distance" begins to appear in the person's life, that can be best explained if we consider it on different levels. First of all, the retreatant feels a real distinction - a difference - between "being" and "doing": "doing" does not express the full reality of what the person is, and the "successful" outcome of any action is by no means the sole criterion by which to judge it. There is a distance - a conflict - between the retreatant's basic desire for God, and the multiplicity of desires which are at variance with it. There is a distance

(continued on p. 21)

# YOUTH - PROGRESSIO

"Youth Progressio is our magazine. Write soon, write regularly to your CLC World Secretariate in Rome". It is like this that the poster made by Sidney in Assisi about the green pages, ended. Meanwhile much time has passed, but these words remain still true. Youth Progressio should be a link between all young CLCers. Therefore the promotion of Progressio is absolutely necessary. So, I appeal for your help to start this promotion among the youth of your countries. Only in this way can the green pages achieve their aim to inform each CLCer about news, about formation programmes held in the different countries. Our magazine can contribute to our formation in CLC commitment.

Would it not be interesting to rouse a world conscience among our youth? Surely, this is rather difficult. It isn't a plan that can succeed immediately. Perhaps it will never even succeed. But our Lord has not told us to look primarily for success; but rather to put all our forces at His service; it is He who will do the rest. Therefore let us try to make of Youth Progressio a real platform where we can meet, where we can share our experiences.

It is certainly interesting to see that in Africa our young members want to strengthen and extend the links between the different federations; it is certainly encouraging to hear the news from Latin America where our brothers live their CLC commitment for the most poor people. And who of you is not eager to know what has been done in the different continents and countries after Rome and Assisi?

This needs not only the promotion of our magazine, but also an active collaboration. So I invite you to make sug-

gestions, to write articles, and you will see that this green paper can come to life; that on these modest pages you can encounter your friends, your brothers in the same spirituality. These eight pages will help you in your personal growth. They will help you in developing and giving your formation programmes.

There you will find inspiring initiatives and support when your work in CLC is discouraging, when you only have failures, when you question the meaning of your adherence to CLC.

Here is the content of Sidney's poster, content that had been discussed by our Youth Commission. This poster shows me the guidelines for my work (for those who want to see it, it is in my room in the Germanicum, so that every day I remember what I have to do). But my work remains a work like that of Sisyphus if I cannot count on your helpful participation.

"Youth Progressio contains OUR writings from All countries and cultures:

1. INFORMATION: news, programmes to be held, results...
2. CHALLENGES for youth in our world: social reality, service and mission, the poor.
3. SIGNS of hope youth see today in CLC life style.
4. FORMATION: prayers, hymns, meeting outlines that worked in your group, social analysis questions.
5. OUR UNDERSTANDING of CLC, General Principles, Spiritual Exercises, human, christian and CLC development.
6. OUR EXPERIENCES: Spirituality, community, mission and service, how to take decisions, discernment, life style witnessing to the Gospel."

At the end of this article I would like to express my gratitude to all those who help in the composition of Youth Progressio and to all those who will answer this call and will help in the future.

*Jean-Claude HOLLERICH*

#### EASTER 1980

There was one a peasant who, while walking through a forest, found a baby eagle. He took it to his barnyard and put it with the chickens, so it would live!!

A naturalist who visited this region was astonished to

see the king of the skies among the chickens. The peasant however said to him: "It eats with the chickens; it never learnt to fly; it is not an eagle any more; it has become a chicken". "But its behaviour doesn't change its nature" replied the naturalist, "it still has the heart of an eagle".

The two men could not agree. Finally, they decided to test the reactions of the eagle. The naturalist took the eagle on his shoulder and said very tenderly to it: "You are an eagle. You are a creature of heaven. Open your wings and fly into the sky, your real home".

The eagle did not know what to do with the liberty that was offered to it. It jumped down to earth and played with its friends, the chickens.

But the naturalist did not give up. The next day he put the eagle on a roof and encouraged it to fly away. The eagle waited; however it had greater fear and jumped to earth to join the chickens again.

Then the naturalist went with the eagle to a high hill. He spoke to it in similar terms: "You are an eagle. You are a creature of heaven and earth, open your wings and fly away! The eagle trembled with fear and looked down at the barnyard at the foot of the mountain. But the naturalist was not dismayed. He lifted the eagle as high as possible. The rays of the sun touched the feathers on its head. It bathed voluptuously in this light of the heavens. Then with a cry of joy, it opened its wings and flew away, first a bit timidly, but soon with great assurance because it is an eagle.

It is true that sometimes the eagle flew over the same barnyard where life was more easy. It is also true that sometimes it paid a visit to its old friends, the chickens. But never - the author can testify for it - never again did it live like a chicken. It is an eagle.

What is true for this eagle is also true for man who has not recognized his true nature. He can change. He can be re-born to what he is meant to be.

(After an extract from Muriel James, "Born to Win")

Bible reference: Jn 11, 1-44, The resurrection of Lazarus.

## QUESTIONS

- In what sense am I this eagle? Am I conscious of this fact?
- What is my barnyard? (cf. Mt 9, 1-8)
- Jesus calls me to life. How do I perceive this call? Which are the conditions necessary to hear this call and follow it?

## PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, I have forgotten the aim for which Our Father has made me. I am living in the darkness, in the world of sin, of death, God is speaking to me in you. You are the word of the Father, the word that calls me to life. You are the naturalist who shows me how to fly, who pushes me to dare to advance into the uncertain, into the new. Give me the force to abandon my barnyard, to surpass the goal of comfort I have drown myself into. Help me to accept your call to life. Help me to participate in your Easter. AMEN.*

## A BEGINNING IN LUXEMBURG

During the General Assembly Jacques de l'Arbre and I had decided to conduct a course of initiation to CLC for youth in January. We asked Erik de Jongh to help us and he spontaneously accepted.

So we (11 young people) met in a "chalet" at Medernach in Luxemburg on the first evening of the year!! Shyness began to be overcome; first contacts were established. During this moment I didn't think that at the end of the session we could get very attached to one another. Yet three days of common life were enough to initiate a sense of community. The common work has also played a great part in this result.

The first day was centred on ourselves!! In the morning, everybody made a poster of the image he has of himself. There was sharing in little groups. In the afternoon we answered the following questions: all the positive things we have done and that have been done to us in our past; all the negative things we have done and that have been done to us; our limitations and our strengths (each time personal reflection and sharing in little groups).

But we are not alone in the world, we are only a part



of creation. We are only one little piece of the social mosaic. Therefore the second day began with two prayers from Saint Francis: The Canticle of Creatures and "Make me a channel of your peace". Then we went two by two to Larochette, a little tourist town near Medernach. Each pair had to search a special aspect: immigrant workers, parish life, etc. After sharing our experiences, we refound ourselves in our little groups to speak about social reality in our town. We examined our own attitudes, as young Christians, regarding this reality. In the evening everybody had to make a gift to his companion of the morning. It was a fascinating experience to see that giving is so beautiful.

The third day began with a written discussion: "What is the role of Christ in my life?" because it is He who is the Word Incarnate. It is He who has taken our human condition, so as to bring His light to the world and into our hearts. After having spoken a long time about prayer we gathered in the Chapel to pray in silence in the presence of Jesus. And before long the time had come for a final evaluation. We had to ask ourselves: how do we continue with this group? how do we continue in daily life? To answer these questions everybody was asked to write a letter to himself which is to be sent to each one after a certain lapse of time

In the morning of January the fifth, the time for saying goodbye had come. Everybody had to go back to his part of our little country or to Groningen or to Rome.

Here I want to thank Erik for the witness he has given to us. I want to thank Jacques, especially for his words in our prayers and our eucharists. And finally I want to thank all the participants for having committed their whole person.

*Jean Claude HOLLERICH*

#### NEWS FROM GERMANY

Report about the annual conference of CLC-Youth, 2-6 January 1980.

"We are building the New Jerusalem with a solidarity-team conscious of its own situation".

We wanted to begin, to leave. We wanted to build the new Jerusalem. We did not want to build an Utopia. There-

fore, it seemed necessary for us to begin with our concrete situation. The delegates of the different local groups and dioceses presented the work of last year, e.g. an action with UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), the work with marginalized people, actions for the Third World and so on. We also discussed our difficulties: the lack of adult cooperators, the lack of a sense of community, the lack of motivation and so on.

We took our time for analysis. We were not satisfied with characterising our situations with some slogan, but everybody had to look for the reasons himself, in the social sphere and in the whole of society. Little groups de-  
liberated after that about the possibilities of change.

Here are some of these little groups:

- the structures of our federation: are we ready not only to receive but also to give?
- tiredness: the problem of transition at the age of 16.
- identity: what is our CLC identity? How should we share this with our little groups at home?

I think that the delegates have become conscious of their situation; they see now that they can question them-  
selves about their situation and that they even have to do it. We have seen that solitary work does not help very much; everybody should have a little group that can help and sus-  
tain. (Solidarity-team). We have found some stones for the construction of the new Jerusalem:

- we have to know our motivation, if we do not want to stop at the first difficulty;
- in our actions, we have to stress the concrete dimension; we should know the people to whom we want to bring our help;
- we have to develop our sense of community;
- we have to become conscious of all that surrounds us;
- we have not to separate action and contemplation, we have to achieve a Synthesis.

We have not discovered any completely new line, but I hope we have gathered stones enough to begin the foundations of this new city.

We have not neglected the administrative side: we elected Geli Grimm and Sabine Lenke from Munich and Guido Kabederer from Passau as our new youth representatives. (Congratulations from the Youth Commission). Our adult cooperators Father Knufer and Sister Cordula will remain faithful to us. Now our goals are fixed. It is now our turn to realise them.

Anne RUSS

## SPAIN

When Sidney and I touched the Spanish soil, in the evening of December 6th, it was three months after the General Assembly. Our journey was an answer to the challenge everybody received in the General Assembly-Rome '79, where the idea of this visit was born and developed.

With our presence we wanted to do a service to our Spanish brothers. They, being in a delicate but important moment of their development, invited other brothers, united in the same vocation, to share their efforts in the construction of a national community.

During the week we spent in Spain, we made much contact with a lot of people and with many groups at Barcelona, Zaragoza and Madrid (and for Sidney, also at Alicante). All this was only possible because of the presence and the disponibility of Javier Leach SJ, the director of the national CLC secretariate.

In the different meetings, we had the opportunity to see their strong desire not to remain isolated but to be open to the realities existing in the country (there are some groups orientated to the CLC, but isolated from each other) and to the CLC of other countries and of other continents.

This need gave birth to the proposition: "Spain'80" (Manresa, 21 august-6september). During our stay in Spain, 7 Spanish leaders and the 2 of us planned this formation course for young CLCers from Europe. A great number of Spanish youth will participate, a fact that allows them to build a foundation to restart the CLC in Spain.

What struck me is their profound desire to live a christian community, as a visible sign of the Church today. The University groups (which are very numerous in Spain) and the young CLC couples have astonished us by their vitality. Their witness, disponibility, and contributions have confirmed our impression.

There are two fundamental demands that have always appeared in our meetings: a greater stress on the communitarian link and a greater openness towards the exterior. It is in this way that the Christian Life Communities of Spain

want to continue in a Church sensible to the signs of our time, in a Church that becomes more and more an interpreter of human problems, and in a society in transformation that is always making new and pressing demands.

Gian Carlo MURKOVIC

YOUTH FORMATION PROGRAMMES 1980

SPAIN'80

Theme : "Towards a CLC without frontiers: projection of our local community".

Date : 21 August (arrival) - 6 September (departure)

Place : Retreathouse of Manresa

Costs : About 175 US \$

For more information write to:

National Secretariate

or to

CLC Secretariate

Pablo Aranda 3

Borgo S.Spirito 8

Madrid 6 - SPAIN

C.P. 6139

00100 ROME

CHILE'80

Theme : marginalisation

Date : 25 July - 10 August

Place : Santiago, Chile

Costs : 4 US \$ daily

Write immediately to:

Secretariado CVX Chile

International Course of Social Formation 1980

Fanor Velasco 13

SANTIAGO-CHILE

(continued from p. 12)

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between the experience of "coveting" persons, and things, and finding in the experience of these very same persons and things, the sign of Another Presence (the Spirit of God who is at the heart of all creation), and the call to give oneself in love to them. And finally there is a distance - an interior "space" - which makes for a certain "ordering" of the retreatant's feelings, through revealing the relationships between them. This "space" also brings about a certain peacefulness so that the person no longer goes from one extreme to the other (especially with regard to fears, bursts of enthusiasm, scruples, desires); the person becomes much more relaxed and more accepting in the face of unconscious motivations which now begin to reveal themselves.

Perhaps the best way to describe this stage is to say that it is the moment when one recognises, very deeply, that there is Another in us who is leading us on in our life. Not a God who imposes His Will from outside and tries to constrain the soul, but a God who is the source of our very dynamism (it is in His "image" that we are created) and from whom we continually receive our existence under every aspect of our lives - in the depths of our heart, throughout our whole life's history.

It is at this stage that a "rupture" takes place. The retreatant no longer sees the world as a possession, but rather as a gift; no longer loves life for its own sake but rather sees it as the sign and the place for the presence of God who is constantly present, through constituting the person in their very being. At a basic level, the retreatant has an experience of "nothingness" before "Infinity". The person realises that the reality of daily life no longer belongs to him/her - however painful this initial realisation may be - but it is the means for a commitment to and a progressive entry into the exercise of faith.

When the retreatant undergoes such an experience, with its highs and lows, its stopping and starting that are a part of any genuine experience, the person also feels that God "has called him/her out of the land of Egypt"; and this call may be either an "uprooting" or a "deliverance", according to how the person is actually living this aspect of reality, at that moment. Likewise, the person feels that God is making him/her pass through the "desert" (a place

## *spiritual exercises*

of solitude, trust and purification) and finally that God is bringing him/her into the promised land (which is none other than the land one has just left, but which is now "given back" and received as gift). Is it possible to experience all these three aspects ("Egypt", "desert", "promised land") at the same time? Most assuredly: in fact, the very unity of experiencing these three aspects together is a guarantee of their truth. The element of solitude; of "rupture", of the desert cannot be isolated from the other elements without the risk of leading to a truncated experience that can only cause problems. In these first phases of his/her search for God, the retreatant inevitably arrives at the point where renunciation, trust and commitment are called for, all at the same time.

The act of commitment - "adhesion" - is undoubtedly an act which sums up the person's whole faith: we say "Yes" to God who is the master of our destiny and who already has given us the power to respond. Each one arrives there at the appointed time, after the slow journeying that I have just described. Life, so to speak, has changed its meaning (or simply taken on meaning), without the person having to leave, physically, his/her family life, or professional life (and go off into some "desert"): a "rupture" is made with life, but this occurs within the life itself since one's daily reality becomes precisely the place for a conversion from self-centredness to love. Henceforth, there is a certain ease in praying, under the action of the Holy Spirit; a more relaxed approach to life that accomplishes much more than sheer will-power; and the future is faced with peace and confidence. Discernment continues in its usual way, refining more and more the person's capacity to see the history of God in the history of one's own life.

This is the moment, it seems to me, when the retreatant is ready to move into the Exercises. What I have tried to describe, in broad outline, are the essential elements of Ignatian "indifference" - an indispensable condition for experiencing the whole dynamism of the Exercises. The initial decision of the retreatant, where the person's own will was the determining factor, now gives way to a new beginning which foreshadows an adventure in faith where, from the very first moment, we are lost in him "Who first loved us".

*spiritual exercises*

Not infrequently it happens that the retreatant feels the need for one or more days of "retreat" in solitude - especially when the person has been touched most deeply in his/her affectivity. The fruit of these days is often some thing very precious. However, the situation must be judged very carefully, for this brief "rupture" presents a considerable risk. The sudden stopping of all activity; the slightly unreal character of a silence which may encourage any number of dreams or a false sense of self-sufficiency; the absence of "the real" which is precisely the place for the only fidelity possible to God - all these often turn out to be much more of a hindrance than a help. In any case, if the retreatant does come to experience a "rupture" which leads to an authentic encounter with God, this will not be on account of the days of solitude, however fruitful they may have been, but due to his/her daily living moment by moment, in the Spirit, who leads the person "to be reborn from on high." There is no other beginning than this rebirth.

Murice GIULIANI

We have just received a work-booklet of 90 pages entitled "Growing in Christ together". It suggests steps to be taken, by any small group of lay people, to prepare for the experience of the Spiritual Exercises (Annotation 19) and thus eventually to enter into the Christian Life Communities. This approach has been used and adopted by the CLC of (English-speaking) Canada, assisted by John English, S.J. and the Centre of Spirituality of Guelf. It draws abundantly from the *Survey of the formation process in CLC* and from *Guideposts for a group*. What we consider of special importance and utility is that this contribution contains programmes, questionnaires and scripture references for about 40 meetings. Thus it can serve as a very practical resource for group leaders and assistants who wish to guide their group in the way of the Spiritual Exercises. This booklet is published only in English, edited by Barbara Paleczny, S.S.N.D., Notre Dame Convent, Waterdown, Ontario, Canada LOR 2H0.

## **SPIRITUALITY - SOME CLARIFICATIONS**

Like many others, I am sure, who were at Rome '79, I have been reflecting over the whole question of lay spirituality, and I've come to the conclusion that I, at least, have been very confused by the whole issue. In an attempt to sort out my own confusion, I have come to the following conclusions; I do not, for a minute, say they are right, but at least they are clear to me!

(i) "Spirituality" is a most ambiguous word! Let me illustrate:

(ii) a) According to Vatican II, there is the one call to holiness, addressed to the People of God; no matter who we are in the Church, we all have received the one call to holiness.

b) "Holiness" is union with God.

c) Quite commonly, our response to our common call to holiness is called "Christian Spirituality" - it is the way by which we grow in union with the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit.

d) So, at this basic level, there is a "Spirituality" common to all Christians.

e) To ask the question - "What is this 'spirituality'" is to ask - "By what means, by what 'process' do Christians grow in union with the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit?"

f) The answer to this question is - "Through being part of a community (Love), which worships (Faith), and is Missioned (Hope)."

g) So far, so good - provided we realise that according to this terminology, the Call to holiness is identical with the response! We are called to holiness - the



People of God - precisely through being members of a community which worships and is missioned; we respond - Christian spirituality - through being members of a community which worships and is missioned. It seems that the distinction between call and response, in this context, is based on the distinction between describing a situation statically, and describing the same situation dynamically (or as a process). This is quite legitimate: think of the difference between someone saying - 'I am a married person' (state), and 'I am married to...' (dynamic situation, maybe even explosive!).

(iii) a) However, the above ambiguity does carry over. For example, "spirituality" is often used with reference to definite categories of people in the Church. So we speak of Vatican II as developing the "spirituality" of the lay person (laity). When "spirituality" is used in this sense, what is meant is that Vatican II clarified the situation of the lay person in the Church - Vatican II made very clear his/her situation, role, mission, responsibilities, as a member of the People of God. But it would be better if we used "Theology" rather than "Spirituality" in this context; for here we have the description of a 'faith-reality' (as distinct from a 'faith process').

b) Similarly, there are books, articles which deal with the 'spirituality' of Marriage. Again - very important; but what many of these writings are concerned about is to clarify - show the beauty of - the particular situation of Married People in the Church. Yet this is more truly "Theology" (description, clarification of a 'faith-situation') than "spirituality" (description of a 'faith-process').

(iv) However, there is also much thought, discussion, writing on, for example, the "spirituality" of Marriage, whose aim is not so much to clarify, as to help. The question here is not - "What does it mean to be a Married Person in the Church"?, but "How can I be a better Married Person in the Church?" The emphasis here is on insights, vision, Christian and 'secular' wisdom that can provide resources for people to achieve more fully (i.e. better) their 'faith-reality'.

(v) a) And finally we come to the proper use of "spirituality"! Used in this sense, "spirituality" does not

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describe a 'faith-situation', nor does it help me better realise my 'faith-situation'; rather, it is a 'living process' offered to me, that meshes with my own unique individuality and calls me forth to be myself, in Jesus, for His people.

b) "Spirituality" in this sense is a living process -something I will never understand unless I experience it. And what is this 'living process'? It is the lived, tried and blessed experience of one of my brothers, or sisters, from among the People of God, who moved so deeply and so vitally into union with the Father, through Jesus, in His Spirit, that this experience not only fulfilled but actually transcended his/her own particularity(individuality)and so can be similarly shared by brothers and sisters in the People of God.

(vi) a) Returning to our CLC reality, I think it would be reasonably accurate to say that we speak of 'spirituality', we understand it, first of all, in this latter sense of a 'living process'. As we say in our General Principles - "We hold the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius as a specific source and the characteristic instrument of our spirituality" (G.P.4) However, we are also affected by the different ways in which 'spirituality' is used, and so at the General Assembly we asked questions about the 'spirituality' of the priest, the 'spirituality' of the religious, the 'spiritual-ity' of the lay person, and our own CLC 'spirituality'.

b) If we are going to follow through this last question ('What is the spirituality of the CLC's?') - and it seems most obvious we should-then it will help considerably if we make it quite clear how we understand "spirituality" in this context; for if we are not clear how we are using the word, we won't quite know what we are looking for.

c) -I would say quite definitely we are not looking for a 'faith process' for our CLC's, because we clearly have one - the Christo-centric role of the Exercises (faith), within our discerning communities (love), whose orientation is towards Mission (hope).

- Nor, in this context, are we looking for re-sources to help us be better CLC'ers.

d) Rather, what we are looking for is the deeper

meaning of what it is to be a discerning community, the deeper meaning of what it is to 'receive' a Mission, in our CLC way of life. We want the answers to questions like - What is the role of discernment in our communities? Is it primarily directed to mission? What does "mission" mean for a CLC'er, if he/she is married? has a profession? is about to choose a profession? Who gives the "mission"? How directly should "mission" express solidarity with the poor, promotion of justice, liberation of the whole man and of all men, a world community? Is there a community "mission" or only personal "missions"?

e) In other words we are really looking for a theology of "discerning community", "mission", for our CLC's; that is, we want to discover, as far as is possible, the deeper meaning, for us, of these faith-realities.

f) Because the CLC's are essentially a lay movement I would expect that the way of discovering the deeper meaning of these faith realities will be through experiencing them, reflecting on and praying over such experience, and sharing these prayerful reflections with the wider CLC community.

*Patrick O'SULLIVAN S.J.*

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SOUTH AFRICA

"Tomorrow, at our Koinonia Centre, we begin a session of formation for CLC assistants which will last four months. There are 14 participants, a majority of religious, but also two lay people and two brothers. Another important factor is that this group is inter-racial; important for the credibility of the Church in South Africa. Please pray for the success of this formation course."  
(1st February 1980)

Michael AUSTIN  
new Ecclesiastical Assistant

GERMANY

Consequences for our National Federation

The Executive Council has had two meetings - Oct. 12-14th, and Nov. 23-25th - to receive the report of the German Delegation and to consider the consequences, for the CLC's in Germany, of the decision taken at the General Assembly - "To actively strive to become a world community". What follows is a summary of our deliberations.

1. The unity of the CLC's, as a world community, is not primarily a question of organisation or structure. Rather the unity consists, first and foremost, in a common life style that is clearly described in the G.P.'s. It is important that we see our common life style (way of living) as an offering to the Lord, and that each one be prepared to go through the various stages of growth and development that it calls for. The best way to help people gain this insight is to create a climate of freedom and sincerity. All this demands courage because it means we gladly - and squarely - face the truth as it comes to us through our experiences, and accept the fact that a genuine vocation to the CLC's is a real possibility for us and for others.

Perhaps only some of those who have an initial engagement with the CLC's, to see whether or not their vocation lies here, will finally decide that it does. Sad as it is

to see people move away, they must have the full freedom to be able to do that - otherwise we lose sight of the fact that the call to the CLC's is a real - and shared - vocation.

Through our living relationship with Jesus Christ, our whole life, little by little, becomes itself a mission which finds expression in different concrete services. Moreover, one's CLC group becomes more and more the place where the person discovers how and where he/she should live their mission - a mission that is both personal and communitarian.

According to our G.P's., and in the light of the experience of some of us, living out one's CLC vocation leads a person to look on the gift of self to the Lord as a living bond which links the person both with the CLC way of life and with the World Community of those who share the same vocation.

2. Rome '79 has confirmed, quite considerably, the experience that for personal growth in our CLC vocation and mission, personal experiences at some depth, as occur in the Exercises and CLC courses, are of extreme importance. And so the development of Formation programmes, which are now well established in our Federation in recent years, should be continued. (cf. "Uberlick 1980"). We should always bear in mind that human and spiritual progress embraces every aspect of our lives - our body, our affectivity, our desires, our thoughts. That is why our relations with people, and the actual conditions in which we live, are so important for us. Consequently, we should concentrate more on helping our members strengthen their group-life. As well as our correspondence and bulletins, we need further ways of taking up the practical experiences of what our groups are doing and of helping our communities evaluate their progress.

3. The question of a life-style that expresses our responsibility in the world of to-day, with its growing unity, is a question that remains ever present. It is not only a matter of our consuming less so that others may survive or live better. It is a matter, rather, of our making a critical appraisal of the culture and environment where our education

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and life-situation have placed us, so that we simply do not become "absorbed" by them. To achieve this sort of freedom, it can be quite helpful to go and live some time in another milieu (whether in our country, or whether in a 3rd world country), not to help the people there but to learn from them. We should give some thought to presenting the "Manila II" Formation Course in 1981, as this Course envisages such an experience.

4. It seems absolutely necessary that we should give greater emphasis to deeper personal contacts between groups and communities, to widen our perspective of the CLC's so that we see in them the growing reality of a World Community. This implies for us international contacts-especially here in Europe - through visits, "twinning" among groups, meetings and invitations to CLC members from other countries to participate in our Courses or even to collaborate as members of our guiding-teams. To foster international relations seems to us to be a very important way by which we can become a World Community. This also implies that we continue our relations with countries like Argentina, the Philippines and South Africa, with whom we are already "twinned".

*The Executive Council*

### The ASIAN LINK

Right after the General Assembly, the delegates from Asia (namely Japan, Hong Kong, China, Philippines, Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka) and Australia met for two days (Sept. 20 and 21) at Villa Cavalletti. This was a first step towards bringing about a regional sense for CLC members of these countries.

The meeting began with prayer, followed by a sharing of CLC experiences in each of the countries represented. After listening to and reflecting on our realities, there was an exchange of views (we had described them as "dreams") of what this Asian Link hopes to achieve.

We hope that it would bring about an Asian CLC identity; that it would consider what could possibly be the specific contribution of Asia to the world community; and, that it would be a bridge between the CLC and other movements and agencies in Asia. Among the means expressed for achiev

ing these were: formation courses for EA's/guides and lay leaders, a regional assembly before the next world assembly, a workshop on social analysis, and communication.

After careful consideration and prayerful reflection on the pro's and con's of each of these, the following decisions were taken:

1. A formation program for EA's/guides to be scheduled in August, 1981.
2. A regional meeting to be held in connection with this formation program and in preparation for the next General Assembly.
3. The publication "Asian Link" is to be replaced by a new means of communication wherein each National Federation shall appoint a member to send news, experiences, formation materials and reports on social action to the other seven federations and to the World Secretariate bi-annually.

The meeting concluded with a Eucharist of thanksgiving for the rare opportunity to be together, for the grace to carry on despite obvious difficulties we have to face. Our special gratitude also goes to the Bureau of Asian Affairs and to the Indian/Sri Lankan Assistency for their generous support.

*Cona SIM*

### MEXICO

The National Federation of Mexico informs us that its General Assembly was held at Guadalajara, January 19-20. The programme included : 1) an analysis of the Mexican situation, 2) a deeper understanding of the Puebla Document, 3) a theological perspective of analysis, 4) the implications for CLC.

### PERU

"It is now certain that 4 Peruvians will participate in the Formation Course being organized by Chile. I also feel sure that, in future, we will work as a team for the

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promotion of CLC in Peru. I have no doubt that the Lord will help us! Among other things, I have organized a course of three days at the end of February, in which about twenty Jesuits will participate. We would like to consider seriously the need of their collaboration. Fr. Provincial has willingly accepted to preside at these sessions".

Fausto PARDO

### SRI LANKA

We just received the Work Calendar established by the National Federation for 1980. It only includes the national initiatives. The different dioceses will have their own programmes also.

January	4-5	Executive Council Meeting
February	9	Evaluation and Planning of Service
March	15-16	Executive Council Meeting
March	28-31	Moderators Programme
April	4-11	2nd stage Formation Programme
April	13-20	Spiritual Exercises
April	26	Evaluation and Planning of Service
May	16-24	2nd stage Formation Programme
May 28 - June	1	Members Formation Programme
June	7-8	Executive Council Meeting
June	26-29	Moderators Formation Programme
July	16-20	Evaluation and Planning of Service
August	9-21	Executive Council Formation Programme
September	13-14	Evaluation and Planning of Service
October	4-5	Executive Council Meeting
October	17-20	Members Formation Programme
October	17-24	Spiritual Exercises
November	1-2	Evaluation and Planning of Service
November	20-23	General Assembly

Let us assure our Sri Lanka friends, involved in a vigorous effort for the promotion of CLC, of our support and prayer.