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From a "PROGRESSIO" reader:

"I enclose a cheque for a copy of the Acts of Rome '79. Whatever money is not needed for this please add to the Pentecost Fund. (...) I have borrowed the Acts and read it quickly and was delighted with 'Towards a more just world'. For people here who are only now becoming more aware of justice issues it could be very useful. It is so clear. Otherwise I am a little shaken by the questions asked of Fr. Arrupe. I have never considered priests 'the same as' lay CLC and I have taken our World Community for granted. Which leads me to say this is possibly the first time I have written. When I left our National Executive I became very busy in other fields and decided that I might save some money by cancelling 'Progressio'. I had to ask for it again. I have a family, work full time and travel little. I have not the physical energy to travel regularly to a group. It is the sense of World CLC Community that sustains me. I have received so much from priests and lay people from overseas that to say 'CLC is not a world community' does not make sense to me.

"So may I thank you for the beautifully produced Acts, for the work of 'Progressio', for all that is unseen and monotonous. It may be Pentecost before this reaches you and my possible expressions of prayerful wishes are overlaid by the thought 'look out world - here we come!'"

HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER

(On the occasion of the prayer meeting with
International Catholic Organisations connected with UNESCO)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

1. As a part of my visit to UNESCO, I have also been concerned to meet with representatives of the International Catholic Organisations (OIC) and of the international catholic Centre for UNESCO. I know that you follow very closely, according to the status given you as Non-governmental organisations, the activities of the UNO. I thank you for your presence and your interest.

As I did in New York on the occasion of my visit to the UN, I wish to emphasise through my presence at UNESCO the interest of the Holy See in the life of international organisations, in meetings where the major problems of the world today are discussed, and in the numerous efforts of international cooperation which seek to promote, on a world scale, a life in common marked by justice and respect for the inalienable rights of man. For, as my predecessor John 23rd, who was the first of the permanent observers from the Holy See at UNESCO, said in his encyclical "Pacem in Terris", socialisation on the world level is a fact. And this reality demands now, more than ever, that a new order of international relations be established on the basis of an ethic of justice, respect for the human person, recognition of the sovereignty of each nation, and solidarity.

2. In this context, it is necessary to foster exchanges between peoples so as to enable each one to establish

Homily...

its own identity, based on a dynamic conception of culture, which plunges its roots into the past, draws on the benefits of different historical developments and becomes capable of creating new ones while at the same time remaining faithful to its own proper values and open to the values of others and to a future of progress.

The Church cannot remain aloof from this enterprise for She, by reason of her special situation, is not tied to perspectives of political power or economic interests, but is inspired solely by the mission which Christ has given Her.

In effect, strengthened by Her mandate from Christ to announce the Gospel to all peoples, the Church is present in all nations and all cultures as the universal sacrament of salvation and unity for mankind: through Her, humanity is reconciled to the Father; through Her, brotherhood in Christ is open to all persons; through Her, finally, the Gospel nourishes men's moral and religious energies and brings an original contribution to the establishment of a culture, of a civilisation founded on the primacy of the spirit - justice and love.

3. In this perspective I would like to express my appreciation and my encouragement for all those Catholics who assume their proper responsibilities in international life, whether, like many of you here, at the service of UNESCO, or whether - in a special way - in the international catholic organisations which have understood what an important role they have to play in this domain.

Actually, whether it is a question of the study of great international problems or of the sensitizing and formation of public opinion in their regard, an irreplaceable contribution is made by the international catholic organisations by virtue of their status as Non-governmental Organisations, as is also done by the Conference Centres of the OIC.

In no way do I underestimate the need for technical competence in approaching these delicate and complex problems which are raised on the international level. But your own contribution should consist in always endeavouring to

assert at the heart of these problems, which affect the destiny of individuals and whole peoples, a religious and ethical dimension which is an essential component of the human reality. No solution is possible on the political, economic or technical level - as necessary as these may be - which does not respect and draw inspiration from these values. May respect and tolerance, the willingness for a trusting collaboration and dialogue, never be an excuse for disguising or minimising your own unique contribution as witnesses to the truth of Christ, who in His own person, reveals the truth and dignity of man.

4. The contribution you make will be all the more effective to the extent that it is based on the experiences and reflections which come to you from the members of your organisations and movements in different places, countries and continents. This is a very important aspect of the O.I.C.'s. On account of their structure and the geographic diversity of their membership, they instinctively know how to go beyond the limited view of one country or even a region, while at the same time avoiding the error of thinking that an approach to international problems is limited to an elite of the 'power people' or is the privileged domain of specialists. Through the extent of their presence in so many different cultures and countries, through their numerous channels of communication on the local and national levels, through their active union with the Church on those levels where international cooperation is taking place, the international catholic organisations are giving and must continue to give, even more, a witness and an important witness to the building of the city of men and the Kingdom of God.

Collection

THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF JOHN PAUL II

- * The purpose of this series of brochures is to gather together the texts of Pope John Paul II dealing with a variety of subjects within the social teaching of the Church and thus make them easily available.
- * These brochures have a limited perspective. Obviously, they will consider only those topics which have already been the object of emphasis or which have received greater consideration by the Pope. It must be remembered, however, that it was not the intention of the Pope to comment fully on these topics in the space of one year; nor in fact, would it have been possible for him to do so in so short a time. Our purpose is simply to direct the reader's attention to the basic concerns of the Pope so that he or she may better assimilate any new developments.
- * The presentation of each brochure is meant to help the reader make maximum use of the Papal texts quoted. Each brochure in the series is individually authored under the sponsorship of the Pontifical Commission *Justitia et Pax*, and in no way is intended as an official exegesis on the papal documents.
- * The Commission is offering these brochures as working papers to help local Churches share the concerns of the Pope. Within the context of their specific situation, they can develop their own thought and action, thus enriching the whole Church through their living contribution.

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ON THE ENDING OF A NINETEENTH ANNOTATION RETREAT

I have already proposed some reflections on the appropriate time for beginning a 19th annotation retreat ("the Exercises in daily life"): in the concrete situation where the retreat takes place, the actual moment when the retreatant finds he/she is ready to be fully involved is a decision that can only come from the person's own heart - it can never come from the "outside". A similar situation arises at the ending of this kind of retreat: there is no fixed date on which to end; the interchange with God continues, as the days go by, according to a definite rhythm which is not brought about by any outside factors or pressures; and so the decision to "end" the retreat is freely made by the retreatant himself; and it is an appropriate decision to the extent that it takes seriously into account all the factors which determine who he is, in himself, in relation to others and in relation to God. The actual decision to end the retreat, then, is a very important moment. This importance is sometimes obscured when we make a closed retreat, but in a 19th annotation retreat, the significance of the decision is abundantly clear.

When he presents the Exercises as comprising 4 'weeks' (in the 4th annotation), St. Ignatius says: "...the Exercises should be finished in approximately 30 days." This "approximately" means that each retreatant should be al-

spiritual exercises

lowed whatever length of time is necessary for him/her: ...some are slower in attaining what is sought...some may be more diligent than others...or more...tried by different spirits." This suggestion of an 'average' length of time for the Exercises entails a certain freedom, so that the retreatant may hasten matters if he/she so desires, or patiently 'stay with it', waiting for a particular grace to be given. But when the Exercises are made in a very flexible way, which does not envisage setting a definite time for them to end, they can only be terminated when one is certain the particular fruit of the Exercises has been allowed to grow and ripen.

But how do we recognize this ripening, this maturity? This is not an easy question to answer because what is real gets all tangled up with dreams and desires precisely on this point of ending the retreat.

To begin with, we should clarify a number of situations where the last days of the retreat lead to an ending which is really a "false" ending.

For example, the retreatant comes to the end of a period of time which, without maybe being fully conscious of it, he/she had unwisely already decided on, whether out of a need for security, or whether because some other matter seemed to require urgent attention. And here it happens, doubtlessly unconsciously, and in apparent sincerity before the Lord, that the "election" is formulated and decided on, but without any real continuity with what has gone before: prayer becomes more tense; obstacles which were holding back the movement of the retreat are slurred over and not resolved. It is just as though a fruit has been picked before it is properly ripe. No wonder, then, if, as a result, the decision taken proves quite uncertain, or if the person experiences a hidden restlessness, which is a sign that true freedom was not achieved.

This sort of illusion can take many forms. There can be the desire "to finish it off", and a final effort is made to do this. There can be fear (even anguish) in the face of new, deep experiences which would raise the possibility of questioning what the retreatant believes he/she

spiritual exercises

has already gained. There can be the refusal (or simply the incapacity) to make a decision at the level which would be truly liberating. In all these cases, the ending of the retreat carries overtones of constraint, repression, "violence". After the retreat, as life settles down and the sense of urgency dies away, the ending of the retreat is seen as a useless decision, made in a moment of nervousness.

In contrast with those situations where the ending of the retreat seems like a sudden decision of the will overriding all other considerations, there are other situations where the retreatant, so to speak, refuses to end the retreat. He/she remains, often for quite some time, in a state of "sweet expectations". Even though they have passed through the various stages of the retreat, and their experience seems to have borne fruit, the return to daily life leaves them with a feeling of dissatisfaction, as if there were some other goal to be achieved and as if their capacity for action remained if not paralysed, at least 'out of gear'. The ending of the retreat figures for them as an obstacle to the progress of their growing.

These false endings are often tied up with narcissistic forms of prayer, or with the sort of generosity that projects a glow into the future, but which is soon extinguished by reality. Here we have a vast area that calls for the exercise of the discernment of spirits.

No rules have ever been written for this discernment on when the retreat should end. However, some things are clear, or can be made clear. So I would suggest the following four attitudes - orientations - to help the retreatant find the 'point of no return' which moves into an authentic ending of his/her retreat.

1) One should be quite sure that whatever has come to birth in the course of the retreat has been acknowledged, clarified and 'stabilised'. For example, certain forms of prayer simply impose themselves as a better way of praying: the meaning of this should be made clear. Or, deep feelings - 'movements' - have brought to light an awareness of memories, desires, past refusals; without playing the psychologist, the retreat guide should help the person interpret

these vital experiences in the light of faith, for these rich experiences of living - tumultuous as they might first appear - can reveal the pattern of the individual's own salvation history. Or questions have been posed at a number of levels (emotional ties, what to do about poverty, life style, etc.) which can only be truly and radically resolved in the course of this privileged experience of the Exercises: practical decisions will come later, but what is called for, first of all, is a total and fundamental response to this new experience of - new birth into - the mystery of God.

The advantage of the 19th annotation retreat ('Les Exercices dans la vie') is precisely the fact that there is no pressure to end and that this time, that is to say, the gradual awareness of all that lies in our heart, is the occasion for every murmur of our heart to give up its secret and to be peacefully integrated into our whole life.

2) One should recognise the continuity between the successive experiences which form, as it were, the fabric of the retreat. There are prayer experiences; experiences of joy or sadness; interior states are repeated, or discontinued and these can be a sign of some natural inclination which reveals the presence of God, leading the person on. The time of the retreat is the time when the individual is built up as a "spiritual" person, a person of faith, because the successive states are not discontinuous - one state does lead on to the next - and because the abundance of these experiences finds its coherence, its proper meaning and order in far beyond anything that a purely moralistic act of the will could provide.

It would be pointless to hope to arrive at the ending of a retreat while the retreatant is interiorly fragmented and subjected to conflicting tendencies and experiences, even in his prayer..

3) There is a growing correlation between desires, which in various ways, deepen the retreatant's fidelity, and reality itself which is ever present, not as a distraction, but as an invitation to greater authenticity. Daily life continues to provide its quota of urgent matters to be attended to, pressures, unexpected meetings, humbling

spiritual exercises

experiences of weaknesses thought to have been overcome: this is reality, this is the real situation - more sharply seen through the eyes of faith and more deeply lived through a sense of gift (or pardon) - where the person, in all seriousness, can make a judgment about his/her experience of God. For daily living to be seen as really the only place where personal fidelity is expressed, it is necessary for the retreatant - during the retreat, but especially as the end approaches - to know how to modify his desires through a realistic love of self and love of life. In this case, the ending will not be a jarring event, nor an occasion for more or less bitter disappointment: it will simply be a moment of transition and the retreatant will be able to see that the retreat is finished because it has been absorbed by ordinary daily living.

4) The retreatant can be helped to accept, to welcome the interior certitude that, no matter what happens, no matter what resistance or obscurity remains or re-appears, the "alliance" with God is such that henceforth his/her entire being is "seized" by Him who alone is faithful. Of course, this certitude is not new; it has grown by stages in the course of the retreat. But now it has reached a certain level of fullness, of tranquillity which can be expressed through images of union, of interiority, of confidence (through all that speaks the language of love).

At this stage, every reticence before God creates anew the impossibility of finishing. On the other hand, an authentic ending imposes itself, we might say, as something blessed and beyond doubt - when the retreatant recognises that his/her human existence, liberated and gifted with a deep peace, continuously reveals the presence of God ever-faithful.

In the light of what we have been saying about the ending of the retreat, it seems possible to suggest some signs by which the retreatant can recognise that he/she has come to the end of the retreat, and so should refuse to prolong the experience; for if the experience is continued beyond this point of "maturity", it could lead to a regression.

(Cont. on page 21)

YOUTH - PROGRESSIO

Only a few words at the beginning of this September-issue. In May, the European members of the Youth Commission had the opportunity of meeting in Dublin, on the occasion of the European meeting.

This issue is rather a European one. There is an excellent testimony of an Austrian Youth group and a text of a young girl (16 years) who is not a Christian. I thank her very much for her article that reveals a great honesty. The next issue will bring us to Latin America.

So long, all the best...

Jean-Claude HOLLERICH

Be-Ne-Lux CLC - Meeting

Some of the young CLC members who were in Assisi last year had the bright idea of a Be-Ne-Lux meeting! So we were invited by a Flemish group to come to "de Pinte", near Gent, for the week-end of April 19-20. About 25 came, including 2 from Luxembourg and 4 from Netherlands. On Friday night we arrived, had a warm welcome, shook hands, had a little sing-song and all too soon it was time to go to bed, full of expectations as to what this week-end would bring us.

Saturday morning, we divided ourselves into 3 groups to think and talk about our ideals for the future, concerning our life in general, our study, our work and our CLC groups. Ideals, but also problems and fears!

The theme of the week-end was: a stop on the way. This exchange was a real stop, to think about our relationship to people around us and to Christ. After lunch we had a good walk and then after preparing a few hymns we had mass together. The night we spent telling each other about the way our CLC meetings were organized. It was very interesting to hear the differences, e.g. having supper together, opening with a time of silence and meditation, a Mass, possibility of confession, week-end-retreat every now and then.

Sunday morning, we broke into 2 groups (because a few of us had already left) and, after a time of silence and a talk, we made a poster, written or made with pictures out of periodicals. These posters expressed our feelings about the future, our way of life, our hopes, our talents. We thought and talked about Saturday morning and Sunday just after dividing in those two groups. We took these posters to mass and prayed the Lord to help us, to make our world more peaceful, more friendly, to use our talents as much as possible.

After lunch we all said good-bye and went out to different corners of Be-Ne-Lux.

Wil NOORDIK
Netherlands

A TREE...

I'm living on an island. One day I walked along a river - alone. The sky was blue, emptied of all clouds. A tree was lying in the grass; "He" was blown down. He was killed against his will. He was so beautiful! He was 15 m long and had a diameter of 1.5 m. I strongly wanted to carry him... I couldn't succeed. He became my friend and I baptized him "tree of friendship".

I reached the bridge under which ran death, the wild waters! I faced it. I felt the urge to jump down. But this desire fast faded... I didn't jump. I felt the cold. I had had a chance, I had stayed myself. I had the shivers. I was afraid.

I only was a grain of dust among so many others. I was a foreigner, foreigner to myself, foreigner among foreigners. I hated myself. I felt alone, though having many friends. My LIFE, a running with time. Impossible to fly my own thoughts. Impossible now.

The waters went their way. They were prisoners like myself. They couldn't stop. They were carried on. IS THERE NO BEING THAT IS FREE??? ??? ??? I remained on the bridge. He had become my friend. A bridge made out of wood. I loved him as I love simple things. He remained for the quasi totality of his life; not like men, they grow old or they die. IS THERE NO BEING THAT HAS NOT TO DIE??? ??? ??? I had to leave the bridge. I continued walking and dreaming. Why couldn't the sky be free! Emptied of its clouds! Why didn't the clouds fly away! My life, covered with clouds I do not succeed in chasing away. I had to limit my freedom, respect a time table. I hated this life, thought to be my life. But in fact, it isn't.

What do you want me to be in such a society?

Jimmy (Martine Ernzer, Luxembourg)

GREETINGS FROM VIENNA

We are a CLC group in Vienna and would like to send greetings around the world to all our known and unknown friends. We thought that a description of us, the members of this group and the way we have gone together so far, might interest, encourage and help you too - and also link us a bit more on the way to a real world community. On the occasion of our 5 year-jubilee (we became a group in 1975) let us share our thoughts, our reflections, our joy and difficulties with you. The different members of our group will introduce themselves.

Elisabeth

In 1975, I belonged to the Austrian Youth Federation when one day, at a meeting we thought that not only bureaucracy should link us: we wanted to start a CLC group. Elli, Lilo, Liesl and I were in fact ready to join a group and we even found a group leader on the spot (sic!): Pepp, who was a novice of the Society of Jesus. Now he has been ordained and is working in the West of Austria. Pepp brought along his friend Walter; Liesl brought along her friend Sandra and I my boyfriend Paul. Fr. Neureiter was willing to be our spiritual guide. In the beginning we often didn't understand what the other person wanted to express and these misunderstandings still happened several times in the following years. Once I was already determined to leave the group. That was around the time when Paul and I got married. I went through a difficult period before the wedding and the group and I had got alienated. The group realized this fact; but misinterpreted it and didn't want to intrude. When after the wedding I turned again towards the group, the other members were like strangers for me. But they didn't let me go without any comment; and after some discussion and talks I have gladly remained up to now. Apart from Paul and me, there is already a second couple in our group. Besides that, many things have changed. Many of us have already taken up their profession and now we even have to deal with questions of education; Paul and I had our first baby (our "group-baby") one year ago, Elli is his godmother, but all feel responsible for him. Since his birth the group meeting always takes place at our flat. We are very thankful for the possibility to fully belong to our group together.

Paul

"L'union fait la force" is an old French saying. I think all of our group could already experience that community and commonness not only ally each other but also make us feel strong. My laziness is my greatest enemy. My group helps me to pray, to read and interpret the Bible and to come to a better understanding of Jesus and my life. We have come to know each others' weaknesses. I saw that others were and are seekers, had and have to deal with the same difficulties and shortcomings. I learned to understand and accept others and myself better. A few years ago I would never have dreamt of writing to you or of letting strangers take part in my life. But now I think that we should know more about each other in order to help each other, with the aim to prepare ourselves for Jesus.

Elli

My name is Elli and I'm 30 years old. I'm working as an editress in an Austrian catholic news agency. I come from a Viennese city parish and I felt really lost in a mass of 22.000 Christians who are just Christians by baptism. I looked for a real community and got to know the students' congregation (MK) in Vienna's first district. But talks, parties and eucharists couldn't fulfil all my expectations. Then a few of us came together and tried to become a CLC group. In the beginning this name was just an empty formula for me. The statutes, the General Principles soon were nothing but a cramping corset for me. Why should we be so Ignatian? Difficulties in the group arose. Should we carry on? We began again and again looking for new ways towards a community. Together we became adults and perhaps even better Christians than before. We learned to settle and solve conflicts. Gradually we opened to community prayer. This community, aiming at a Christian life, has become an encouragement, help and homeland for me.

Sylvia

My name is Sylvia and I am studying mathematics and physics. I became a member of this CLC group at the beginning of November 1979 because I believe this to be a very good way to talk with others about religious questions and about the way to lead a Christian Life.

Heini

I'm a student of history. The main question for me is: How is Christian life possible today? For me the corner- and keystone for this aim is set up by our CLC group. Our daily life and our problems are firmly woven into the life of our group. While we all experience this community, personal friendship grows. I already was in a CLC group during my studies in Innsbruck and there was no doubt for me that I'd try to join a group in Vienna, when I moved here to continue my studies.

Gundrun

My life in CLC actually began during the time at school, when I joined the MK. I liked the group, last not least because of its spirituality. It was also through these people that I got acquainted with the Ignatian Exercises. They became a key experience for me. From this moment onwards, I spent a lot of time in the MK. When I finished my education to be a kindergarten teacher, I moved to Vienna to be able to study at the "Religionspädagogische Akademie". All my friends were members of the students' congregation in Vienna's first district. For a short time I was in a small group there, where I had great difficulties of communication. So I left the group. After a national CLC meeting in Vienna, I became a member of this new group where I still am. Sometimes the different lifestyles of the individual members made me feel oppressed and uneasy and blocked my sense of well-being in the group. In order to escape this feeling of being torn inwardly, I once again considered the question of leaving the group. At the moment I feel rather relieved in the group. But I miss thoughts on the commitment, which is demanded from us as a couple. When my family status changed (I'm married with Hans), many problems were shifted to another level. For the following weeks and months I'd like more consideration of this family status.

Hans

I'm 25 years old, a teacher at a Technical College at Mödling. I've been in this CLC group for four and a half years. During the time at school, I first was in good contact with Catholic Youth. At the beginning of my studies, I

was so busy with my work that I had neither time nor interest for the church. Elisabeth brought me in touch with a CLC group. At the beginning, the name and the General Principles didn't mean much to me. But what impressed and fascinated me most was the good community and the feeling of acceptance by the group. By and by, I became a real member of this community and came to know principles and aims of this group. The Ignatian Exercises with Fr. Neureiter were a basic experience for me. It was also in this time of inner renewal and new orientation that I came to know Gundrun and married her. She was also accepted as a new member in our group. During the last months, many of our group have finished their studies and have started to work. I've been working as a teacher for 6 months now and I'm getting acquainted with lifestyles, which were considerably different from mine, among my colleagues. Therefore I am continuously obliged to reflect upon my Christian life and my aims and to decide anew for my way each day. In doing this my CLC group offers me help and support.

Andreas

I am a student of medicine and 22 years old. Maybe some of you know me from Rome '79. I joined this group after coming back from Rome, and I think, it was a great fortune for me. I expected to find young people to talk, pray, have jokes... to share with. And then I found all these things and besides new friends. They also give me new inspiration for my life. Yes, sometimes there are some differences of opinion. But nobody feels uneasy (in a negative sense) about them. I think they are necessary in a community. At the beginning, it was not so important for me to take part in the group meeting. But now our CLC group is a part of my week, like the eucharist on Sunday.

Sandra

Some of you will know me too, either from "Austria '78" or from "Assisi '79" Greetings to you all, my friends! As you will have read at the beginning I belonged to those who were the first members of this group. The first months, even years, were terribly hard for me. I had never had real friends before, so I didn't trust people and wouldn't talk. This situation only slowly improved. There were many moments

when I was determined to leave the group for good. But then something always happened that kept me back. Slowly I found out that the CLC way suited me and I decided that this was my way to follow Christ. Then I had the possibility to attend both national and international meetings and I am deeply thankful for all the experiences, for all the new friends I found. These meetings always gave me strength again and I tried to give some of this joy to my CLC group, not always very successfully. We had and survived a lot of crisis, but now we feel that we belong together. We know that new crises will come; but we hope to overcome them as we did before. One of our main difficulties is still that we are too much centred upon ourselves and not open enough for the world around us - be it our parishes, our social commitment or the national and international big CLC family. But I hope that gradually we'll get closer and closer, as we find our aim which is Christ.

Perhaps these reports were of some interest to you. Perhaps they can help you to compare and overcome difficulties. What we want to say is : We are with you, we all share the same joys, problems and difficulties but we can support each other in our prayer and in our mutual sharing. Don't give up even when you think the obstacles are insuperable. The Lord is at your side - and we too! God bless and love to you all from this one CLC group in Vienna.

Sandra PRIMUS

NEW HORIZONS FOR CLC?

=====

What may be done for the knowledge of CLC in the Second World?

This long-time concern increased at Rome '79. Fortunately, a group of young friends opened a way by inviting us to Poland during May '80. We could describe this way of life to our friends, to groups of University students, etc.

(Cont. on page 32)

1) The first sign is the inner feeling that "something" has really come to its natural conclusion. There is a capacity to act without getting overwhelmed by activity; prayer is habitual and is an adhesion to God even beyond words and an explicit awareness of Him; there is constancy, without tenseness, before trials; there is a more fraternal presence to people; and there is a new and peaceful attitude to the future. All of that comes together in a feeling of really being present to oneself, or in other words, of being present to God at the heart of all human existence.

In such a case, the person has really succeeded in overcoming a certain repetitive process which over and over would produce the same difficulty, just at the moment when it seemed to have been resolved. The final point of the retreat is accepted, not endured; it is experienced as a moment when the person can love himself/herself in peace because all the dominant lines of the person's interior world have been recognised and brought together. The retreatant is certain that, by the grace of God, nothing will be quite the same as before.

2) The person can now make an offering of himself/herself, something that was impossible before the retreat experience. Fear has been dissipated. To "stake" oneself on the future no longer seems to be a leap into the unknown, fraught with anxiety; rather, the future is faced with confidence. We could say that the bonds, which hampered the dynamism of the person, under the grace of God have been broken: to offer oneself to God and to say "yes" to Him in one's heart is simply to offer oneself to life.

3) A third sign seems clear to me. When the retreatant has arrived at the moment where he can take a global view of all that he has just been through, and actually recognise himself in the various stages that occurred - though at the time they happened, the experiences seemed fragmentary - then that is a sign that he has achieved a certain necessary "distance" and already has moved beyond the movement of the retreat. Each one of the points he has passed through is now situated in the totality of experience which from now on can only be regarded as something behind him. This is the moment, above all, for giving thanks to God.

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4) Finally, the retreatant feels free in relation to this "past event" that he/she has just experienced. That is to say, free with regard to what the Exercises have achieved, but also free with regard to what this experience has not achieved. The person feels a certain joy and encouragement in the idea that perhaps one day - without knowing exactly how or when - he/she should return to this experience and take it up again : the stage that has just been passed through leaves no trace of regret, but rather the feeling that "everything has been accomplished" just when it was needed.

That the above situation is one sign for recognising the Exercises have "run their course" is further reinforced by the opposite situation where one gets the feeling that the retreatant remains attached to the retreat as to a treasure which has not yielded up all its riches. The person is full of nostalgia. Some tie, not yet resolved, keeps him from giving himself totally to the future, and even to the present. It seems that a threshold had not been crossed as the retreat progressed, and that threshold would have been precisely the ending of the retreat.

Obviously the Exercises must come to an end - otherwise we will never know the meaning of the experiences they have given us: "when the exercise is finished, I will look ..." writes St. Ignatius, who gives numerous indications to help us interpret as signs from God how the retreatant has conducted himself/herself in their prayer, their affectivity and their openness to the Spirit.

But the true end of the Exercises is not the moment when they are completed. Rather, it lies beyond the Exercises in the new way of living the Exercises have led to; it is not so much that the Exercises End, as that they gently merge with the birth of a new life, completely given to the action of God.

Maurice GIULIANI

MANIPULATION OF CHILDREN AND THE MASS-MEDIA

The Mass - Media, especially the 'electric' and 'electronic' media, have profoundly affected the ways people communicate and consequently the ways they relate - in fact, the whole way people live. The Declaration on the Rights of the Child, whose 20th anniversary we are celebrating, is concerned with the kind of child who no longer exists today; and so it is important to consider the child of today in its new situation, and establish its new rights.

We must recognise that it is part of the reality of the world of today that education, communication and the whole of life proceed and develop on the 'mass' level. Every individual and every group of people is open to the influence of the media, and continually exposed to suggestions of how to behave, what values to act on, with little or no opportunity for a critical appraisal of what is being offered. All of us are immersed, as it were, in an 'atmosphere' created by this continual flow of 'messages', and it is very important to be aware of this situation: any education that simply continues along traditional lines, as though nothing had changed, is evidence of an unreal attitude to the world. To try to live apart from the influence of the new audio-visual 'civilisation' is just as unreal as to accept uncritically all that it offers.

A child comes into the world in a society where it must discover itself and establish itself - to achieve personal identity - in a context where the emphasis is on 'mass' (rather than individual) reality. This means that social life is strongly conditioned and full of ambiguities, but on the positive side it also means that people are more open to other cultures, have broader horizons and a wider range of choices before them and can be more aware of the world's problems. In this situation, we must assert the

mission territory

right of the child to originality, creativity and liberty of conscience; far from being in conflict with these ideals, the mass-media should positively contribute to the development of the person. Family, school and those responsible for social communications should all be involved here.

Granted all this, what is needed is something in the nature of a "new alphabet" in relation to the language of the 'image'; for though the 'image' is easily - too easily - accessible, it still needs to be 'decoded'. And the first step towards being freed from the way images can condition us (through acting on the unconscious) is to understand exactly what they say. A critical approach to the language of the image is very important, then, for through it we are in a position to read the 'messages' correctly and then make up our own mind as to whether or not we go along with what is presented.

This critical approach should be operative especially in relation to the all-pervasive media, like T.V. and Comics, for example, but it should also take account of how the different media - their 'messages' - reinforce one another. We should be aware not only of the influence of a particular branch of the media, but of the total impact of all the media on a child and the different ways they can affect the child's life (e.g., people made into little toys, posters, books and so on).

Granted that so many different messages are constantly being offered to us, the problem is not only how to educate people to receive these messages but also to choose among them.

To educate someone in a critical approach is to form a person with the ability to take a critical stance, but this is impossible in families or schools where the education is authoritarian or paternalistic, instruction is compartmentalized and knowledge handed on in a rigid and formalistic way. The ability to respond critically and creat-

ively to reality on the 'mass level', as it were, is formed in the child from earliest infancy. Today, more than ever, the family and the school can lead the small child to discover the world as an organic reality, and in that knowledge, to see it as a totality of different factors.

It is urgent for Christians and for all men of goodwill to form children to live in the midst of the ceaseless flow of 'messages' and to be able to confront all this; such a formation is based on attitudes which are acquired in the family and on the ability to really listen, which is the school's prime responsibility to develop. Youth groups and catechesis should also be involved in this. Given the risk of being manipulated, it is important to indicate present or possible values of our new civilisation: liberty and pluralism in the matter of information, the broadening of a person's horizons, the ready availability of cultural experiences, the presentation of good quality material. Consumer objects, as produced by the media, can become the focus for critical appraisal and judgment.

This priority of educating in a critical approach should not stop those who are responsible for media programmes from facing up to the problem of how to respond to the needs of child viewers (or 'customers') and to respect their rights not to be 'drowned' in too much noise, nor be caught up in publicity and consumerism, nor be subjected to programmes that are skimpily produced and technically and artistically inadequate. In particular those officers who are financed from public funds have the obligation to see that their T.V. programmes are of real service to people - in collaboration with the family and school and not in opposition to them.

And all those responsible for social communications have the obligation not to be motivated by economic or selfish interests, but to see that best quality material is placed at the service of the young.

Domenico VOLPI

ECHOES

CELEBRATION OF WORLD CLC 1980 *by Maltese Federation*

On the 13th of April 1980 all the Maltese communities met to celebrate WORLD CLC DAY.

We gathered in the Conference Hall of Mount St. Joseph, and it was pleasing to see old and young mix so well together from the beginning. There were more than 150 members who attended this meeting.

The Theme chosen was the one suggested in "Projects": "Union of Hearts", "Union of Minds" and "Union of Hands", as a follow-up of Rome '79. We started the day with a reading from St. John's Gospel Chapter 17 in which Christ prays for Unity in His Church. Since we are the Church this was an appropriate beginning towards the spirit of complete unity.

The first item on the programme was "Union of Hearts" given by our National Promoter, Rev. Paul Deguara, S.J., who, amongst other things, said that as members of the CLC we should struggle to build in us this unity which will strengthen us each time we meet in our respective communities. Is unity felt in us and in our community or is it something abstract? There must be a personal commitment in order to create union.

The second talk "Union of Minds" was given by Rev. A. Deguara, a diocesan priest who is the E.A. of the Diocesan Commission of the Apostolate of the Laity. He emphasized

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the importance of the laity's involvement in the parishes especially among other groups and movements which exist in one's parish, as these are all aiming for the same goal.

It was time to celebrate the Mass and here one could feel a deep sense of community and unity. It was surprising how the older generation actively participated in the sharing in different parts of the Mass and this greatly impressed the younger members. The songs chosen were appropriate and the choir was able to lead the members in a harmonious way.

After lunch and a long break, we gathered for the afternoon session which started with the last item "Union of Hands", which was prepared by two CLC members. It was expressed by a poem illustrated by slides which rendered the idea of work done by hands. Afterwards there was a film of about 25 minutes entitled "A New Life" which brought out the work of volunteers amongst the handicapped people.

The afternoon passed quickly and we rounded up the day with songs and refreshments.

Antoinette BORDA

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INDONESIA

We had the General Assembly of our National Federation from May 16 to 18 at Lembang near Bandung. It was a really great meeting of 28 delegates from 8 local federations. During this meeting we finished and approved the Statutes of our National Federation. We had to go through discussions and discernment before reaching the decision. Our difficulty was that we have no real equivalent for "community" in Indonesian. Our official name is now: "Komunitas Hidup Kristiani".

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During the meeting I introduced also the idea of our Asian Course for Guides. It was accepted enthusiastically; 7 local federations want to send 1 participant each. If this can be realized it will be one more giant leap forward for us.

John VOSSEN

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ZIMBABWE

I would like to report on our Youth Assistants' Meeting which took place last week.

We have this annually at the end of the first term. This year we hit two snags : the first was that it clashed with independence celebrations. We planned it a year in advance and so it was difficult to change our dates. The second snag was that many schools have been closed during the last year and though some are now re-opening they have not yet been organised with respect to their CLC's. But we did have a welcome improvement for we had three representatives from Zambia for the first time. This was especially useful for we had the 3 representatives from the Rome meeting, Fr. Norris and the twins. The theme of the meeting this year was the theme of Rome and though we had our usual planning sessions, we also had six sessions on Rome and Assisi. I gave the first two on Charism, stressing the 7 main themes of the Exercises. Then Dave Norris spoke on Community. The twins spoke on Assisi and then a short report on Zambia. I then summarised and we discussed Mission as presented by Fr. Arrupe and Fr. Campbell-Johnston.

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In our planning sessions we formed a new National Youth Team and a Team for Gwelo and for Salisbury Archdiocese. We listed all the schools, Teacher Training Colleges and Hospitals where groups existed or had existed and we intend to contact them. We planned also for the Youth Congress in August and began to plan for Fr. Sidney d'Souza's visit in December as well as the 1981 Regional Meeting which we think should be in Bulawayo as it is central for South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia and ourselves.

Perhaps it is significant that as Zimbabwe opens itself once again to the international community, we of the CLC do so also with the presence of Zambian reps at our meeting.

Denis MANGAN

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DUBLIN '80

From 1st to 4th of May 1980 the annual meeting of the chairmen, promoters and the Eurolink (a contact-person from each country) of the European Christian Life Communities took place in Dublin. There were altogether eleven European countries represented: Austria, Belgium, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. This time also some prominent members of the World Executive Council were participating: Tobie Zakia, Brendan Mc Loughlin, Patrick O'Sullivan, S.J., Sidney D'Souza, S.J., Gian Carlo Murkovic as well as three other members representing the World Youth Commission.

After Rome '79 the main issue of this meeting was COMMUNITY - at all the different levels: at the grass-roots level, at the national level, and at the international level - particularly in Europe. There was not only sharing,

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prayer and meditation in the small groups and in the assembly for this purpose, but this time - for the first time - all participants had the possibility to leave the conference centre in order to meet members of local groups taking part in one of their group-meetings. *"It was a real experience of community and I enjoyed every moment of it"*, reported one participant commenting on this event.

The meeting was really well prepared and perfectly organised and I would like to express my deep gratitude to the host country. We were all deeply impressed by the "Irish way" of religiousness and hospitality, by this very human atmosphere. We also appreciated very much the visit of the Archbishop of Dublin, Dermot Ryan, who spent the second evening with us, expressing his personal interest in our work.

In some respect Dublin seems to be a turning point in the European "CLC-history" : we did not only talk about a subject, or discuss an issue by exchanging words, but we also learned the local situation and made community experience at the grass-roots level which was a valuable enrichment for all participants.

A practical way of expressing the practising "community" at an international level was the idea of "group-twinning". Each European Federation had brought a list of certain local groups which were twinned with a group - each of a different country. So a new flow of mutual contacts will start, at least we do hope so, just as we hope that this experiment will succeed and thus "CLC in Europe may really continue to grow into a family".

The new European Team (ET) was elected for the next three years (since there is a World Assembly in 1982):

- Helmuth Keibl (Austria), coordinator
- Maria Antoinette Borda (Malta)
- Nuala Garrett (Ireland)

There seems to be a considerable number of new tasks for the Team as a result of this meeting: they are expected

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to encourage contacts between the National Federations; they should also promote European understanding in their own countries; and they are to prepare the next Annual Meeting which will take place in Malta, in 1981. For the first time it was decided to organize an international "CLC summer-holiday course" at the grass-roots level in Germany in 1981. The exchange of CLC periodicals and national CLC publications among the Eurolink was very much appreciated and was asked to be continued, and we felt that the co-operation between the adults and the youth has to be intensified: for this reason, François Euve (France) was nominated as the provisional youth link person in Europe. The matter of a youth fund was also raised in this regard.

May all these initiatives and activities grow so that all our common efforts may bear fruit in the future.

Helmuth KEIBL

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(Cont. from page 20)

First we stopped for two days at Zagreb. Here we shared our CLC experiences and answered questions in lengthy sessions for two Jesuit Communities in Pastoral Ministry, at interesting interviews with the Archbishop and Provincial, to groups of Seminarians and Lay Theologians.

Next, entering Poland, we visited similar groups in the cities of Warsaw, Lublin and Kalisz. Unforgettable, of course, was the three hour Pentecost Vigil, in a Church packed with University Youth. Before these we gave our CLC witness and later answered questions for hours in their meeting room and hostels. At the Novitiate and Theologate, we spoke to over 40 young Jesuits in formation.

After thus holding 16 meetings in 9 days, a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Czestochowa came as a fitting finale to our prayerful mission to the Second World. Here we gave gratitude for the outstanding hospitality we received and the genuine interest with which all the participants listened to us.

Sidney D'SOUZA S.J.
Gian Carlo MURKOVIC