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S U M M A R Y

ASIA '81

YOUTH-PROGRESSIO

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"Today we keep the festival of your holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem, our mother. Around your throne the saints, our brothers and sisters, sing your praise forever. Their glory fills us with joy, and their communion with us in your Church gives us inspiration and strength as we hasten on our pilgrimage of faith, eager to meet them."

Preface from the Feast of All Saints (Nov. 1st)

Beyond the tomb . . .

The session was under way and things were happening which touched the participants on all levels and drew them into a process they all wanted to experience. There were 38 of us from 9 countries in Asia; we had come to spend the month of August at Novaliches (Philippines), to prepare ourselves to be CLC guides in our own respective countries. The location provided ideal conditions and the necessary "resources" for such a course, in an atmosphere of simplicity, recollection and prayer that goes with a house of formation.

We occupied one wing of the Jesuit novitiate. Some distance away was the Jesuit cemetery - a grass plot in front of three rows of vaults, one on top of the other. On one of the more recently sealed vaults I read:

Horacio de la Costa S.J.,
Born May 9th, 1916,
Entered the Society 20th June 1935,
Died 20th March 1977.

It was a very moving experience for me and memories came rushing back. Though several years had passed, I was reminded of the important moments which have marked the recent history of our CLC's (Augsburg '73, Manila '76), and of crucial assistance given us by Fr. de la Costa, who sharpened our perception of the world and opened us up to a sense of MISSION in the world. In spite of the years, the image remains clear and the impression is as vivid as ever of this one person's contribution, which was something much more than his addresses to us, notable as they were. His contribution was such as to inspire us by his example and to impress us by the simplicity of his own witness.

It was quite a coincidence, then, that the first Asian CLC formation session should take place here! I cannot help thinking of the appeal made by Fr. de la Costa in 1976: "...it is for the worst that we must get ready, namely, for what has happened in mainland China and is happening in Vietnam... Under such conditions, the presence of Christ in Asia, the continuation of Christian life, worship, and evangelization, will depend, must depend, on the survival of purely indigenous Christian communities."

This session, like so many other efforts, can be seen very much in this perspective. The formation of lay Christians and of Christian communities, "on mission" in places and "zones of humanity" where they happen to live, is the intangible goal of the CLC's and the aim of the spirituality which animates them. The insistence placed on the lay character of the CLC's at the time of our last world assembly surprised some people. However! Through contact with the reality of the situation in different countries, the responsibility of the laity becomes clearer and clearer as a call, more and more concrete, for a service of the Church in the world of today. Our Asian meeting, and the gathering together of so many different experiences that it represented, are a good example of contact with situations in different countries.

As the conviction that the CLC's are a vocation for lay people grows stronger, the more it will make us aware of the maturity this involves. One of the signs of this maturity is to know how to collaborate with other vocations - especially those closest - in a mutual appreciation and in the respect due to each vocation. No long reflection is needed to recognise what has been given us - and continues to be given us - by the Society of Jesus. Significant assistance, like that of Fr. de la Costa, and others, and the devoted service of so many Jesuit assistants - and other priests and religious - have contributed considerably to the slow development of the CLC way, which now appears after so much labour and trial and error. Perhaps it can be rightly said that close collaboration benefits all concerned, as it demands of each a greater fidelity to their own vocation. Finally, we might add, without any fear of contradiction, that such collaboration carries with it a certain apostolic zeal which, most happily, is clearly evident in many places, and confirms what Evangelii Nuntiandi reminds us of: "*This diversity of service in the unity of the same mission constitutes the richness and the beauty of evangelisation.*" (J.G.)

AUGUST 1981

THE HANDS THAT TRULY FREE

It was 4:15 in the afternoon of Sunday, August 30, 1981. The 1st Asian Formation Course for Guides at the Sacred Heart Novitiate, Novaliches, Quezon City, Philippines, was about to close. We were seated in a circle. Setsuko Nagashima, a member of the Guiding Team and the facilitator for the brief closing session said:

"Please sit with someone from a country other than your own".

A few stood up to change seats. Then she continued:

"Please get into the footwear of the person on your left".

There was a wave of surprise at the simple, clear instructions. Setsuko herself, gave away a beautiful smile, with her tiny Japanese feet getting into a big Australian Jesuit's sandals. John, a Jesuit scholastic from Korea, managed to slip his toes into Sister Rumi's Japanese pumps. It was fun!

In a few moments, the giggles and laughter died down. We were silent. We moved into moments of reflection. With gentle words of instructions, Setsuko led us to feel the person whose footwear we were in. We were asked to feel the person's joys, pains, dreams, feelings, aspirations. We were helped to feel one with the person in the years ahead.

Eadaoin's step-ins were too small for my size six and a half feet. The few minutes of reflection re-captured the whole month's experience. Setsuko's words in her opening talk reverberated clearly in my heart: *"Let us exchange shoes with our Asian brothers."* During the entire month, in a hundred-and-one opportunities, we were called to exchange shoes with one another. There were moments of joy, there were moments of doubt, of pain, and of failure.

After the brief, soul-searching activity, Eadaoin and I turned to each other, embraced, shed tears. No words were said but we understood. It was a moment of grace, of opening oneself, to getting up and loving again. It was an Easter moment. There was life flowing from the cross and leaping through the centuries... giving us a strength not our own. That precious moment wiped all the pains away. We had won. We gave way to loving... and forgiving fully.

Our dream for an Asian CLC Community started to be a reality in our hands. The first steps had been taken. They were unsure, toddling steps. What was important was that we had taken these steps together. There was a price to be paid. We were willing to pay it.

We want to share this dream with the rest of the world community. We want you to look into our small, yet significant steps. We expect your help and support. We invite you to watch us grow into a truly vibrant CLC unit in this side of the world. Allow us to give a brief account of this initial step in our growth process.

...a journey begins...

July 31st - St. Ignatius Day.

It was a beautiful day to start a month-long study and prayer time. I was light-hearted and excited about meeting other CLC members from Asia, learning with them, sharing our discoveries on how to live out our CLC vocation and searching for a more relevant response to the call of building the Asian church. During the bus ride to the Sacred Heart Novitiate, I looked back at my CLC involvement through the years. I was deeply grateful for the chances opened to me to grow in my personal life, in my community experience and in my knowledge of the Spiritual Exercises. I looked back at the slow steps I had made in response to the Call of CLC. Once more now, I was saying YES - FIAT!

FIAT to the Father who loves with an everlasting love;
FIAT to the Son who is continuously transforming the world and invites men to join Him in this task;
FIAT to the Spirit who speaks in the silence of men's hearts.

The next day, almost everyone in the course had arrived and slowly we were getting to know one another. A brief description of our community would be this:

27 trainees : 4 Jesuit priests
3 Jesuit scholastics
3 religious sisters
1 diocesan priest
16 lay persons - 9 women, 7 men

5 members in the Guiding Team
4 resource persons
2 secretariat staff members

Total of 38 persons from 9 different countries.

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*
 * SOME OF THE GUIDE QUESTIONS GIVEN
 * FOR THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COURSE
 *

*
 * 1st Phase - A JOURNEY BEGINS
 *

*
 * 1. WHO AM I?
 *

* 1.1 Introductions
 *

* 1.2 - How do I feel about this Formation Course?
 * - What would I like the course to do for me?
 * - What are my fears about this course?
 * - What preparations did I have to do
 * for this course?
 *

* 1.3 - What does CLC mean to me
 * as a personal vocation?
 * - When did I first feel attracted to CLC?
 * - What attracts me most in CLC?
 * - What am I looking for in CLC
 * as a member and as a potential guide?
 *

* 1.4 - What am I trying to accomplish
 * in my efforts?
 * - What is my basic assumption
 * for doing what I am doing?
 * - How do I situate myself and my work
 * within a national community?
 *

* 1.5 - What have been the objectives and
 * directions of my CLC on the local and
 * national levels through the past 10 years?
 * - Is there a growing appreciation of the
 * lay character of the CLC vocation?
 * - What are the needs and necessary support
 * of our national community?
 * - What is our national community
 * going to achieve or
 * what is the dream to be achieved?
 *

* * * * *

We were coming together - each one from a different background, culture and experience. We were to discover one another and move towards an experience of unity in diversity and brotherhood in the midst of language and cultural differences.

It was a real challenge. But things got slowly on the way to learning about each other and accepting each one, and opening to the small group members. It was quite difficult at the start but risk-taking gave way to trust and trust grew in no time.

In this initial phase, we had sessions aimed at getting to know one another deeply - more than just names and addresses. There were beautiful surprises and discoveries. There was Fr. Peter who looked like the TV 6-million dollar man but turned out to be a very young Jesuit from Australia. Although he had no experience with a CLC unit, Fr. Peter is in campus ministry and is greatly involved with youth groups. There were two lovely Japanese - as pretty as dolls - who turned out to be Emiko, secretary to a Japanese bishop and Setsuko, mother of three children. The delegates from Hongkong appeared to be college students - yet they turned out to be an all-professional group. The sisters could not figure out how I managed to be in the course with five children - with ages ranging from thirteen to four years! Soon, we had situated ourselves - both in our personal lives and in the CLC life we were all seeking to live out in community.

In this phase, we also expressed our expectations from the course. Listening to each one gave us a glimpse of personal and group needs. As national groups, we looked into our national movement and shared what we are doing, and why. Soon, we began to discover more about one another. We realized that we were similar... and yet different in many ways.

Having attuned ourselves to the reality and richness of each other, we moved to prayer and personal growth where we checked ourselves and deepened our patterns of prayer and learned new ones.

To facilitate the learning process, we were organized into smaller groups called Responsible Teams. It was here that much of our learning took place through sharing, reflection and prayer. We took turns to facilitate group sessions, prepared liturgical celebrations and checked security needs. A group representative together with others chosen by the RT's became the Host Team. It was the task of

the Host Team to sit down with the Guiding Team and share what they perceived was happening to the groups. They identified emerging needs and were responsible for the routine tasks in the daily sessions.

While performing our tasks or while meeting or responding to someone's needs, we were once more discovering ourselves. Once again, we saw the uniqueness of our experiences in the discovery of God in our lives and how personal the call is. to serve Him.

I was inwardly happy that many of the participants liked the site. There were tall trees, towering to the sky ... trees which sheltered many who were in prayer even on a drizzling afternoon. There were long, quiet corridors. There were big and small chapels with many symbols of our faith - the fisherman's net, a small nipa hut and images of Mary. There were giant roots - stitched into the earth reminding us of our own roots at home and the ones we were beginning to grow.

Deep in my heart I knew that what was happening was pleasing to our God for it is His desire to *"make men holy and save them not merely as individuals without any mutual bonds, but by making them into a single people, a people who acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness."* (LG n.9)

... walking with Jesus today ...

Having been initiated to group life and after days of prayer and personal growth, we were ready to look at the wider social reality. On the 7th day of our training, we started out for our one and one-half days of exposure in the depressed areas of Metro Manila. One group went to Das Mariñas, another to Tatalon, one in San Pedro, Laguna and our group went to Sapang Palay.

Sapang Palay is the first relocation area in Manila. It rests on the hills of Bulacan. This government project started almost twenty years ago when many urban settlers had to be re-settled to give way to factories and new buildings. We were greeted warmly by our hosts, most of them mothers and parish leaders. Fr. Resty Ahyong, a Jesuit-trained diocesan priest was glad to welcome us in his sub-parish. Fr. Resty's life which he briefly shared with us was good news in itself. A certified-public-accountant and a lawyer, he had given up a high-earning job for his priestly vocation. *"I too came from a squatters' area in Tondo"*,

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* 3. SOCIAL ANALYSIS *

* 3.1 - What do you understand by social analysis? *

* - Are you aware of the impact or influence *

* of situations or systems in your life? *

* - Are you aware of the insistence of the GP *

* that we read the signs of the times and *

* respond to them? *

* 3.2 Exposure - WALKING WITH JESUS TODAY... *

* - What is happening to me? *

* - Why is this happening to me? *

* - What is the meaning of what is happening *

* to me in the light of the Gospel? *

* 3.3 Reflection over the exposure experience *

* - Look back at your feelings before, during *

* and after the exposure. *

* - What were the powerful, significant and *

* self-revealing feelings or dispositions *

* that you experienced when you were *

* in the area? *

* - What do these tell you about yourself? *

* - Is God saying anything, however small, *

* in and through the experience? *

* - Can you relate or connect your experience *

* with any of the Scripture passage given? *

* 3.4 Moving towards a vision for Asia... *

* - How has the Church of Asia and Australia *

* been responding to her call *

* of being a Church of the poor? *

* - How are the CLC units in this part *

* of the world responding to this call? *

* - Has your recent experience given any leads *

* or indication as to what your CLC unit *

* should be doing? *

* - What is the correct, authentic, evangelizing *

* work the Church must carry out today in Asia? *

* * * * *

he said. "I understand what it means to be poor. I am glad to be here for these are my roots. I want to serve my own people".

In Sapang Palay, I was to stay for 28 hours with a family of ten whose widowed mother kept house for the four unmarried daughters. We were an all-women crew! Their family had a beautiful story to tell. That evening, we sat down together after a meal we all helped cook while I listened to a modern version of Exodus. A few years back, they were living in the province. Life was hard. The future seemed dark for them. So, they decided to move to the city to send their deaf-mute son to a special school. It was their hope that Pedro, now 15 years old could get an education. He is now in Grade I and has learned some skills and someday, may be able to earn a living. In the meantime, the young unmarried girls work to support their brother and their widowed mother. Rebecca works in a local shoe factory while Lec-Lec weaves beautiful shawls in a house nearby, earning around four pesos (US\$0.50) a day. The two youngest girls, Tita and Inday are in school. After sharing experiences, their dreams for a stable job for Pedro, a comfortable home for their mother and their own families, we knelt to pray the rosary. I was deeply touched by their simplicity and devotion to Mary, the Queen of their home. Inday, the youngest girl led the prayers with reverence. I felt so ashamed that I couldn't say the prayers in my own native tongue!

The next day, Inday, (12 years old) and I roamed the streets of Area H of Sapang Palay. It was like being with the child Jesus walking the streets of Nazareth - curious about what was going on and sharing the life of the people. We saw a crowd gather at the community jail. Something had happened, we thought. We went closer, pushed through the crowd and saw that a young man had been arrested for stealing. The "tanod barangay" (local police) had tied him up and was saying that if he did not tell the truth, he would electrocute him. The young man sat, silent, confused, afraid and ashamed.

I stood there paralyzed, unable to say a word. Deep in my heart, I wished that the investigation could be done in a more gentle, human way - but no words came out of my lips. I was too scared to say a word.

That afternoon, when the crowd had gone, I went to the prison cell, wishing to talk to the prisoner. As I approached trying to figure out what to say, two little girls came out of the place with an empty plastic food container. Shyly,

I asked the little girl:

"*Kilala mo ba siya? (Do you know him?)*"

"*Hindi (No). Hindi ko siya kilala. (No, I don't know him.)*"

IT WAS THE AFTERNOON OF THE ARREST.

Sapang Palay was an experience. It was an encounter with Christ once more. It was meeting the Christ of history who says:

I AM YOUR GOD. I AM THE GOD OF HISTORY.

I AM THE GOD WHO DWELLS IN THE HEARTS OF LITTLE CHILDREN WHO WALK THE MUDDY STREETS OF SAPANG PALAY.

I AM THE GOD IN THE HEART OF EVERY YOUNG BOY AND GIRL IN SCHOOL LEARNING SKILLS TO PREPARE THEM FOR WORK;

I AM THE GOD WHO DIES WITH UNDERNOURISHED BABIES AND THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE TAKEN FROM THE MOTHER'S WOMB.

I AM THE GOD WHO STRUGGLES WITH THE WORKERS IN THE FACTORIES FOR THEIR RIGHTS AND FOR BETTER WAGES.

I AM THE GOD WHO IS WITH YOU IN YOUR SEARCH FOR JUSTICE.

I AM THE GOD WHO SLEEPS ON THE MUDDY GROUND AT NIGHT WITH YOU - AND SHARES YOUR DREAM FOR THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY.

I AM THE GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE PRIEST WHO OFFERS ONCE MORE THE SACRIFICE OF MY SON AND BRIDGES YOUR HOPES WITH MY OWN DREAMS FOR YOU, MY PEOPLE.

I AM WITH YOU. DO NOT BE AFRAID. I AM YOUR GOD.

I AM HERE.

As we took our bus ride home to the Novitiate, we looked into our hearts and asked: Are the "joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties" of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, "my own joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties" too?

... listening to Christ ...

After nine days of experiences, we entered our 8-day directed retreat with joyful anticipation. With four other retreatants, Fr. Jose "Papa Joe" Blanco, SJ, directed our intensive days of prayer ordered to action and service. With fidelity to silence and meditation we spent the days in loving contemplation of the mysteries of Christ once more.

Once more I heard the angel Gabriel call upon Mary. It was being in Bethlehem once more and sharing the poverty of Christ. I listened to Mary as she told Jesus the secret of His birth. I journeyed with Mary and Jesus. I walked the streets once more of Nazareth.

(cont. on page 21)

YOUTH - PROGRESSIO

Dear friends,

Allow me to present this present number.

Our first article shows what can be done with the conflicts that arise in a group. Stephan Rothlin, the author of the article, has spent two years with me at the German College before entering the Swiss province of the Society of Jesus this autumn. It has been of capital importance for him to belong to a group while working out his vocation. I thank Stephan for sharing with us what he has learnt during that time.

The two articles which follow show us the action of God in our lives. In fact, together with the first article, they form a sort of block, whose message might read - "Finding God in all things".

The last two articles take us more specifically into the world of the CLC's, in this case Colombia and Malta. But enough said by me about the articles.

By way of concluding this editorial, I would like to thank you for the friendship - and the patience - you have shown me during the two years I have been editing Youth-Progressio. While I am conscious of the shortcomings in what I have done, I hope nonetheless it has been of some help spiritually to you and your groups. So, now I say goodbye as I am leaving to join the Society of Jesus. I would be very grateful if you would keep me in your prayers.

My belonging to the CLC's, and my working with them, have been an experience of growth for me and have helped settle my vocation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariate team for the example, and the help, I have always found there.

And with thanks to you all, too.

Jean-Claude HOLLERICH

CONFLICTS IN A GROUP - WHAT CAN BE DONE?

=====

The following reflections do not pretend to present a global solution to this question; rather, they simply reflect my own experience with groups during the last four years.

Sometimes I have had the impression that specifically christian groups tend to hold back, to repress conflicts (those that do not fit in with the ideal of the group), or to make them disappear as quickly as possible. Whether people are conscious of it or not, they consider conflicts like symptoms of sickness!

For myself, I consider that conflicts are real signs of life; they appear when people are genuinely committed to a community, when they communicate at depth with one another, when they take the first step. In this way, difficulties arise - fortunately! - which have to be resolved in common. (You have only to read the letters of Paul to be able to appreciate the depth of the conflicts in the early Church). When the members of a group want nothing more than mutual confirmation, often a stage of "petrification" sets in - there is no longer the possibility of a person allowing himself to be transformed by others or by God; one is no longer exposed to uncertainty, to contradiction; one is no longer challenged. And so we come to this paradoxical situation that, on the one hand, many christian communities speak constantly of loving God and our neighbour, of christian charity, but on the other hand they ignore obvious conflicts in their midst. In so far as we are christians, we should face the risk of conflict. A group of christians cannot allow itself to ignore disputes and jealousies; neither can it ignore their spiritual dimension and try to resolve them purely as a psychological problem!

I believe that an attitude of humility is of the utmost importance for resolving conflicts in a christian way. It is in difficult situations that I experience the weakness and limitations of myself and others; this calls for openness and generosity to make the first step and to confront the difficulties either privately or in the group. One

point should be noted here: group conflicts cannot always be resolved in common as quite often this can place one or two people in a very defensive position.

This first step is not possible except in an atmosphere of prayer and love; only realistic prayer which equally presents difficulties to the Lord can unravel the situation.

However, it is necessary to be on one's guard against rapid solutions; it would be a mistake to want to get everything settled quickly with the help of some particular method, because this does not take into account the manifold character of the difficulties.

It has been very enriching for me to have had the experience of going through a time of crisis when we brought our difficulties, which seemed almost unsurmountable, before the Lord. After a long period of marking time, "reconciliation" was "granted us in abundance". In Danish, "to forgive" is "to give in abundance". We must understand that we can accept the weaknesses and the faults of others and ourselves, because God never ceases to work at forming a more solid community between us who are sinners and others - always on condition that we open ourselves to Him in honesty and prayer.

When all is said and done, it is a question of being open to the Holy Spirit in painful situations and processes like these. Too often we have had the experience of being in a situation where we were lost and saw no way out of our problem. At moments like these, the light of the paschal experience seems like a faint gleam a long way off. When that happens, let us not look for an "easy" solution but let us have confidence in the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. Let us enlist His help as we pass along the path which frees us from our rigid fixations and leads us towards a resolution; He "will teach" us and "remind us of everything" Jesus has told us (Jn 14:26), awakening our hearts to things already known.

This experience of an ever growing union in the Holy Spirit will help us to stand alone before God. And this solitude will enable us to cultivate anew our prayer which is the inexhaustible dynamism of every christian community.

Stephan ROTHLIN

ALMOST A LOVE STORY

=====

When I was still a child, I had even then thought - He is interested in me. His gentle invitations followed me very early in my life.

One time a missionary, with a beard, came to our kindergarten and showed us slides about his work. I was full of enthusiasm and even dreamed of becoming a missionary myself. After this experience, I began to think about heaven. But other matters caught my attention - I was interested in football, TV fascinated me, the world of adults loomed on the horizon. I forgot Him.

Years passed in this way. I looked for adventure, for unknown lands. I loved far away countries, bars and discos, cars and girls. I was bursting with energy.

When I was seventeen, once again He was there. During 5 days of retreat, a sort of love for Him was born in my heart. It was not a great fire, rather, small sparks. I spoke to Him little. I did not even think of Him in the midst of my hectic life. But I always felt His affection - through little daily signs which made me immensely happy.

I was not very much concerned with Him, but my behaviour towards other people had changed. I noticed the times when I was lazy, inconsiderate and irritating. In some way I began to understand - I treat Him as I treat my neighbor. I felt His love more and more often. I learnt to see Him everywhere - in an amiable person, in a magnificent landscape, in exciting music...

Finally I took the decision to be concerned only with His friendship. Entering a religious order seemed to me the best way to respond to His invitation and His love. Then my fine feelings, my enthusiasm and my plans to live only for Him quickly disappeared. I saw nothing more of Him.

Questions came up - does He exist, yes or no? Were all my love and my feelings nothing more than the fruit of my imagination? Should I not rather put myself simply at the

service of others? These doubts lasted for some time but I remained firm. Perhaps He was going to call me a second time? Such was the case. I was completely worn out but it was then that I understood what He wanted to show me - the essential thing in love is not fine feelings but a solid relationship where one can count on the other, even in a desert-experience. My love for Him must become free - free from fears, from vanity and free from being self-righteous.

Matthias UNTRAUT S.J.

WHERE WERE YOU?

=====

It was a spring evening, with a light breeze. A man, tall and strong, was walking along the beach. His face showed a vigorous life, but also a certain calm, a certain peace. For he was not alone; Jesus walked with him, at his side.

Their walk was very significant for, in effect, it was a review of the person's whole life. The sky was transformed into an immense screen where could be seen bright colours, full of joy, but also sombre colours, grey and with sadness. And so the person's life unfolded, stage by stage.

The man saw his life pass before him, stage by stage. He noticed two sets of footprints which accompanied his life - his own, and those of Christ. With amazement and, to be honest, with a certain amount of bitterness he noticed that in the difficult moments, in the crises of his life, one set of footprints disappeared and only one set showed in his life at these times.

With eyes full of sadness and reproach, he turned to his companion and said to Him - "Where were you during my crises, my conflicts, my despair, my solitude? That was when I needed you most, but I do not see any sign of you. Where were you in my misery?" Jesus' reply was simple: "I was there all the time. There is only one set of footprints during those times because I was carrying you."

News from COLOMBIA

=====

In the course of 1980, the group involved with the House for Youth set about gathering information about the CLC's, studying it and taking some first steps in the CLC way. At the beginning of the year, Fathers Fernando Mendoza and Julio Jimenez, who had participated in the Rome course of November 1978, gave us some general information about the CLC's.

In April, the group participated in the Latin-American meeting for the Centres of Spirituality, and in May, organised a seminar on the Exercises and the CLC's, with the following themes:

- the dynamic of the Exercises and the stages of discernment
- the perception of reality and the social dimension in the Exercises
- the philosophy of the CLC's and growth within the CLC
- growth in the CLC's in relation to a sacramental process
- the person, faith and politics in the CLC's.

The first meetings of youth and possible assistants began in the same month, to give them the idea of the CLC's and how they develop. In the middle of the year, Fr. Juan Vicente Cordoba left for Peru, Bolivia and Chile and brought back abundant material, but especially an experience of the guided retreat (according to the Exercises) and CLC sessions for youth. He had an immediate opportunity to share what he had learnt on the occasion of our first retreat experience - August 1980, at St. Bartholomew (La Merced); the second retreat experience took place in October, and the third in December. Altogether about 100 retreatants participated.

We have also been able to count on the guides prepared by Fr. Julio Jimenez. Their preparation has been completed through weekly meetings with the team (from the House of Youth), helped by Fr. Javier Osuna, together with several Jesuit students who have acted as guides for the Exercises. In the course of this year, we plan to organise our first pre-communities and to continue with guided retreats (according to the Exercises) and the Exercises in daily life.

C. RUBIANA S.J.

SELF-EVALUATION - A MALTESE CLC

Our community has been in existence for six years. It is composed of twelve male ex-students of a Maltese Jesuit College, St. Aloysius, and a Jesuit guide. Most of us are university students who study in different fields, and work in different milieus. This year's annual retreat ended with an evaluation of our community - its role in our lives, its viability as a community, its present state and future prospects. The following is the substance of that evaluation.

What does the community mean to us?

Our community is a community-in-dispersion. Its focal point is the weekly meeting. When we meet together, with Christ in our midst, we are renewed; we draw strength and courage from one another. Through our meetings the community has become an intimate part of our lives, a landmark, a beacon, a point of reference. It is also a milieu where we meet Christ. This intimate communion with the community, and through it, with Christ, arises from something deeper than mere friendship, mere togetherness. Each of us has discovered that the community is the source of our spiritual growth. The community helps us to discern God's call and has served as a platform from which we can launch ourselves onto the sea of life; it continues now to help us maintain our headway along our chosen paths.

Our present situation

As with every community, ours has passed through a process of growth, through periods of crisis. At present it is no longer simply a collection of individuals. It does not fuel only our own spiritual growth. The community makes its presence felt in a number of different sectors of society: at University, in hospitals, public and private organisations. It can do so precisely because it is a community-in-dispersion. This is perhaps its greatest asset. The members live their lives each in a different milieu, against diverse social backgrounds. Our community has now reached a watershed... we can become inward-looking, self-

sufficient, complacent, static... or we can start to reach outwards to other communities and individuals, to be of service to others.

Whither our community?

A great deal of individual spiritual and intellectual preparation is also required. Our spiritual formation is far from complete, and we must consciously strive for an ever-deeper understanding and knowledge of the meaning of the Christian way of life, and more intimate relationship with Christ.

With this end in mind, some changes will be effected in the structure and content of the weekly meetings, as follows:

a) more time will be devoted to prayer and to the study of the Word of God; a theme will be chosen to give cohesiveness and direction to our study of the Word.

b) the community will begin a formal and thorough study of the meaning of the Christian way of life, as expounded in the principles and tenets of CLC.

c) the community will continue with periodic evaluations, discussions, sharing of experiences, and the quarterly Sunday mini-retreats.

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* On the occasion of the Eucharistic Congress at Lourdes, *
* the Youth-CLC from French-speaking Belgium presented *
* an audio-visual 'montage' on the CLC's. Some hundreds *
* of pilgrims attended the 'showing', and their reactions *
* were very positive. The text is extremely well done, *
* and the music and slides add more than a touch of beauty *
* (the next edition might be even better if there are not *
* quite so many slides). No jargon; the text simply gives *
* the essentials. This material can be profitably used on *
* the occasion of CLC activities; it can also be the sub *
* ject for some interesting and valuable exchanges. Those *
* interested should write to : CLC Secretariate, 22 rue *
* Marie Depage, 1180 Bruxelles, BELGIUM. Price : 3500 *
* Belgian francs. *

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Walking with Jesus as He ministered to people, I grew in awareness of Christ's love for the ordinary, the simple, the lowly. I gazed at the many faces for whom Christ became man and tried to reach out to them as He did. I heard Him say once more...

I HAVE A FACE. I AM NOT NAMELESS.
I LIVE SOMEWHERE. I WAIT FOR YOUR FOOTSTEPS.
I AM IN PRISON.
I AM WITH YOU.

One evening, I was awoken in the middle of the night. *"You have pierced my hands and my feet. You have numbered all my bones..."* I got up, recognized my crucified Lord nailed to the cross for my sins. I saw once more the Father offering the gift of His Son, Mary holding the dead body of Jesus and offering Him to me. Earlier that day, I had meditated on my own failings...but that early morning, how different it was when the Lord himself showed my sins to me! and in spite of what I am, He said: I LOVE YOU.

The meditation on the kingdom led me to feel the needs of the Church today. I heard once more the call to build small, basic ecclesial communities. The urgent and universal task is to continue to get people together, to build the bonds of trust, identifying common concerns, responding to needs of others, experiencing prayer, searching for the mainstream of the on-going redemptive work of Christ and joining him after discerning apostolic action. I took a closer look at my present parish involvement, at the community-building efforts among the youth and the organizing work among the urban poor. In the midst of the call of the Eternal King, the work was a small dot, insignificant. But wasn't Nazareth small too? and Galilee? and Mary?

The meditations on the passion and death led me to pray:

LORD, there is a JERUSALEM
in every heart,
in every relationship,
in every family,
in every parish,
in every community,
in the Church... which we are afraid to enter.

LORD, open my eyes that I may see this Jerusalem
and enter it as you did in your time...

Today's Jerusalem for me is not a place. It is part of a life style. Jerusalem is the decision-making process in

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* 3rd Phase *

1. Identify my personal experiences of the attitudes, values mentioned in the annotations.

2. - Do the pre-dispositions, mentioned in the annotations, establish priorities among whom we should work?
 - As these pre-dispositions are necessary to experience the CLC way of life, how would you recognize and foster them in a new group?

3. *DEVELOPING FACILITATING SKILLS*
 One person has a goal,
 Simulation Exercises: Three persons help him/her attain his/her goal.

4. *EXPLICITATION OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES - 1st Week*
 - If I were a paralytic, who are the four persons here I would ask to help me? Why?

5. *CONFLICT/COLLABORATION - War Game*
 - Did you find it difficult to enter into the game? Why?
 - Did you experience satisfaction, joy, frustration, anger, confusion, etc.? Why?
 - Was there any leadership in your group? How was leadership exercised?
 - What can you learn from this exercise?

6. *SIFTING PRESENT EXPERIENCE*
 6.1 - What feelings have I experienced today?
 - Why did I feel what I felt?
 - What have I discovered about myself? about my RT (Responsible Team)? about the assembly?
 - How has God been present to me today? Is He telling me anything? How have I responded?
 6.2 What are my feelings/reactions to this course at this stage?

7. *LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE*
 - What have I learned during these two days?
 - How has God been reading me during these days?
 - Have I detected a personal call during these days?*

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our small parish, the decision-making process in every youth and adult group, the decision-making process in the family and in the community. It is also the decision-making process we have been used to. It is so central and focal to personal and communal life. Decision-making shall be the battle-ground as work among groups moves towards an invitation to become small discerning communities. *"Learning to be sensitive to the signs of the times and the movements of the Spirit, we will be better able to encounter Christ in all men and all situations."*

. . . finding the cross . . .

As we entered the third phase of the course, José Gsell gave a brief summary of what we had just undergone, looking back at the personal experiences which were preparations for the Spiritual Exercises and seeing these in the light of the objectives of the course. This phase was to complete and spell out the essential points of the growth process of a person and of a community based on the dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises.

To aid us in the experiential method of learning and understanding the growth process, the guiding team presented a reading of the process of the Spiritual Exercises focusing on the three phases of group life namely, the pre-community stage and initiation phase which draw their life from the annotations and the Principle and Foundation; the stage of redemption which corresponds to the first week of the Exercises and the Kingdom phase which corresponds to the experience of self-giving for the mission of Christ.

At this point, with the two phases in the background and a situation where participants were learning and growing at different paces, some meeting difficulties in language and some in the process itself, tension started to mount. War Game, a group dynamics activity on conflict and collaboration became an excellent tool in surfacing and confronting the experiences we were undergoing. Earlier in the course, Fr. Ben Sim, SJ, a Guiding Team member gave us a concentric circle diagram on the levels of communication among individuals and groups. We became aware that communication at this point had moved from the periphery to an inner circle. Participants articulated how others were affecting them and how they felt towards the entire course so far.

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- * 8. *EXPLICITATION OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES - Kingdom* *
- * 8.1 The Call of the Kingdom *
- * - What do these words mean to me? *
- * - What do I leave behind? *
- * - What is the cost of my discipleship? *
- * 8.2 - What would be the signs that a group is ready *
- * to move from the 1st Week to the Kingdom? *
- * - What means would you use to help this move? *
- * - What are the characteristics of a group *
- * living the Kingdom phase? *
- * - What means would you use to foster *
- * the growth of a group in this stage? *
- * 9. *CULTURAL VALUES* *
- * - In your country, which values of your culture *
- * help you in your mission of evangelization? *
- * - Which values are truly hindering *
- * in your mission of evangelization? *
- * 9.1 - Having in the background the helps and *
- * hindrances of your culture, and in the *
- * light of the GP, what do you think *
- * are the strengths and weaknesses *
- * of the formation you are giving? *
- * 9.2 - What can be done on the local level *
- * to overcome the weaknesses? *
- * - Do you need any help from other sources/ *
- * federations to overcome the weaknesses? *
- * - What help can you offer to other federations? *
- * 10. *TRAITS OF A GUIDE: Personal evaluation of my* *
- * *strength and weaknesses and potentials as a guide.* *
- * 11. *EVALUATION* *
- * - What has the course meant to me? *
- * - How can I implement what I have learned *
- * on the personal, community and national level? *
- * - What am I taking back to serve better? *
- * * * * *

Suddenly, the principles on inter-personal relationships, the attitudes necessary for effective communication and group interaction, the guidelines for feedback and evaluation came to the fore. There was tension, division, misunderstanding, pain and tears. Identification of behaviour, feelings and efforts to understand the meaning of words said sharpened our sensitivity to one another and to the events unfolding before us. More hours of prayer became necessary. For two days, we experienced darkness and confusion. Personal discernment helped us to decide on what to say, to whom to say it, when to share.

We prayed for light. And light came at moments when we gathered as one with Christ as center. In the Eucharist, we paused to look at ourselves offered on the altar and we realized how far we were from what we had hoped to become ... how distant we were from the image our model and guide has dreamed for us. But the love of the Father surpasses all our weaknesses and failings, His love overflows to the ones He loves and calls to be His own. At mass, we felt once more how great God's love is and how little we had responded to that love. We saw our limitations and God's infinite greatness and power. We became one in our weakness and there we recognized once again and affirmed the source of our strength. All we had to do was to open our hearts to the same power and love, the same capacity to die so that life may come forth.

The fact of our weakness was real, felt, seen, touched. So too was the mercy of God ... felt, seen, touched, experienced through others.

We needed no further input on the First Week. For we had lived through it... painfully but deeply.

José summarized her own learning beautifully with the words: IN A SITUATION OF DARKNESS AND CONFUSION; LIGHT COMES ONLY WHEN PEOPLE CONFRONT THE SITUATION AND CLARIFY IT WITH FREEDOM AND RESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER.

As dying to self took place, new life came. Small groups continued to meet in prayer, share reflections and made decisions. We realized there were realities bigger than ourselves.

With the CLC vocation in front of us, calling us to *"consecrate ourselves first of all to the renewal and sanctification of the temporal order,"* we spent the last few days looking into the cultural values which affect our task of evangelization. We discovered that rooted in our

cultures are the seeds of faith, slowly moving towards a flowering into the fullness of Christ. The myths, the traditional religious rituals, our beliefs are so rich with deep faith in the supreme being, the prime mover in our lives and in our histories, desiring the good of all peoples everywhere.

We discovered too that while cherishing values of hard work, formality, frugality, respect for authority, love for the family, tolerance, sense of community, equality, freedom, responsibility, sense of humor, hospitality, these values somehow have, in themselves, when practiced in extremes, negative effects on human relationships and eventually evangelization.

All of us felt that the need is the re-orientation of values so that they can lead to the liberation of man and the promotion of human dignity, justice, and love. There remains the endless need to re-shape these values in the light of the gospel and in the light of the mission of Christ.

However, the change of values can only have its impact when this change starts from individuals. So, once more we focused on ourselves, our capacities, our potentials, our attitudes - and those required of guides in the process of building communities. Some of us discovered that our temperament, our whole persons are not endowed with the qualities of a guide. Some were able to identify the skills and attitudes they had to work on for more effectiveness.

The 1st Asian Formation Course for Guides was both an experience and an event. Individually, we took a stock of our personal qualities, attitudes, skills necessary in a guide. The one-month life together made us realize that more time, more inter-action, more sharing are necessary to build community moving towards a world vision. We realized that if we were to be truly a vibrant cell of the Church today, we must continue to dialogue with other Asians and begin to dialogue with the poor. During the course one of the most significant days was the visit of the families with whom we stayed during the exposure portion of the training. It was during those moments that we felt and received the generosity, the openness, the trust of the poor of the Philippines. There is so much to learn from their lives. How true were Fr. de la Costa's words when he wrote: *"We have two jewels in our rags...our faith and our music."*

The course is over but the journey continues. It has left imprints in our lives - some deeply - some to take roots, we hope, as the years go by.

We are deeply grateful to the members of the guiding team - José, Patrick, Oriol, Setsuko, Ben... for theirs were the hearts and the guiding hands that made us together in faith, in search for new paths to be what we can become. Theirs were the hands that led us to be truly free - free to love, free give ourselves, free to make choices, free to act.

As we continue to grow as guides to others, we shall endeavour to extend a hand, as we have experienced during the course - hands open enough to give away love... hands open enough to be nailed on the cross. Hands that truly make us free!

Jean LLORIN

A trip to Asia - some travel notes

Aug. 31st : The course is finished and a car takes us to Manila. Most of the delegates are going to stay on for one or two days before returning home. The Philippine Secretariate takes care of all the travel arrangements and makes sure that everyone has a place to stay. I spend the night with the delegates from China and Japan. Everyone is in fine form and our gestures make up for our lack of vocabulary though it is easy for us to understand one another after a month together.

Sept. 1st : At 7 am Lita, one of the full-timers in the CLC's, comes to pick me up. We set out for the provinces to visit some new CLC's. After a journey of 6 hours by bus we arrive at Daet, the first stage of our trip. Marte, former president of the world federation, is waiting for us there. With Luay, his wife, Marte is engaged in an impressive number of projects. We visit the private radio station he runs, the program for arts and crafts he is developing, and the fish-ponds that are a cooperative

venture with the fishermen... the time passes quickly. We speak as though we were only talking to each other yesterday. But it is 3 years since we have seen each other and we recognise with joy that distance does not affect union.

Sept. 2nd : We take the road for Naga, where Stan makes us welcome. He works permanently with the CLC's in this area and does a remarkable work there. In the evening a first meeting with a new group in the parish. About 20 men, women and young people are in the hall. They follow the "Basic CLC program" which has been worked out by the national Community of the Philippines. The program consists of 9 week-ends, spread out over roughly a year, and introduces interested people into the CLC way of life. Formation and service are intrinsically linked in the program. The exchanges in the evening and the contacts the next days amply justify the value of this method. Most of the adults present are engaged in community development in the barrios and their exchanges reflect their own personal journeys so far. They are half-way through the program, having already participated in 4 week-ends with the curate of the parish.

Sept. 3rd : All the groups of youth and young adults of Naga assemble at the Ateneo. Each leader presents his group, very openly, mentioning the difficulties and the good points. In his report, Gino asks about the opportunities for CLC on the College scene; how it fits into such a scene; what its role might be. Important questions. The development of the CLC's among the poor - which has become a reality in the Philippines - should not mean a lack of interest in educational establishments.

The afternoon brings us to San Fernando, some kilometers from Naga. Our meeting with a group of "farmers" is to take place in the Church square. They are following the same formation program. They are all peasant farmers; I notice that most of the women set out for the market in the morning to sell some produce from their farm. I am amazed by their exchanges. One man from the group concludes: *"Even if I am only a simple casual worker, getting work on the days when it is around, I have discovered that my life has a meaning."* In his sharing, he relates the steps, one after the other, that his experience in the group has taken him through. His words are very simple yet they carry such a profound experience. He speaks of the

initiatives he has taken in relation to service in the villages, and bringing people together. The formation program implies that what has been discovered, learnt, experienced by the participants during each week-end (of formation) is to be shared with others. In this way, the same movement forms people who are in touch with others, and so it has a multiplying effect. God knows that this is not an easy region. Where we are, 5 people were killed the previous week in a clash between the guerillas and the government forces. Night begins to fall and we end the meeting in prayer. It is best not to travel too late...

Sept. 4th : Stan left us at dawn this morning. With Jean Llorin, who came to join him from Manila, they set out for the island of Catanduanes - 4 hours by bus, then 4 hours by boat get them to Virac in the afternoon, to lead the second week-end of the formation program. A group of professionals is starting there. I make some inquiries - there are presently six different places where this program of initiation is being given. This is the first stage which is followed by a longer live-in session the following year. But other ways are being explored to replace the live-in session which is not always feasible. A team of leaders, with a core group of full-time workers, are responsible for these programs of initiation.

Kin, a dynamic young rural leader, takes us to the Centre of Social Action for the archdiocese. Monsignor Nero, the director of the Centre and the person who really makes it run, explains to us what the goal of the Centre is, and the reasons behind it. There are about 15 social workers, young men and women, who carry out the projects with the local people, until their presence is no longer required and the people themselves take over. This permanent team from the Centre has asked for the formation program of 9 week-ends, and is now up to the second week-end. The people in the team feel drawn towards a community of service and each one wants to deepen the "whys" and the "wherefores" of what they are doing. In the afternoon we visit some projects that are just starting.

Sept. 5th : We leave Naga for Cebu, among the central islands of the Visayas, and arrive at the end of the day. Marlinda, who had been a delegate at the Assembly of Santo Domingo, welcomes us and is the perfect hostess for all of our visit.

Sept. 6th : Representatives from all the youth and adult groups of Cebu come together at the Sacred Heart School where we pass the afternoon. A report on the life of each group, pertinent questions, lively exchanges show what potential there is in these groups and what further help they need. Already steps are under way to provide this region with the means it needs to develop further.

Sept. 7th : We leave for Manila where we meet in the evening with a group of adults - all different professions - from the "suburbs". *"I have never been involved in corruption, but in the CLC's I have learnt to tell the truth"*, says a policeman at the end of his career.

Sept. 8th : With Rory we set out for Batangas. Rory gave up being in charge of a school to work full time for the CLC's, where now she is one of the central personalities. The CLC's of Batangas are not very numerous, but very active. Corbie, a dynamic young lady who is expecting her first baby, is in charge of the radio programs of the archdiocese. Every morning, from 6 to 7, she personally takes care of a broadcast. Aida left Batangas to work full-time with the formation of youth on the national level. The priest in charge of the team of priests tells us, *"We have nothing better for the formation of our leaders than the CLC's."* The archbishop confirms this.

Sept. 9th : I go with Ben to the mass he says every morning at a tobacco factory, which employs about 2,000 people. Some 50 workers come regularly to the Mass. Contacts develop and already some have made a weekend retreat. As we leave, Ben tells me, *"It will be possible for a group to start here soon."*

In the afternoon there is a meeting with representatives from all the groups in Manila. New members, old members are mixed up together, but all show the same simplicity in sharing. A pleasant meeting with Cora's family brings the day to a close.

Sept. 10th : Rest. Sonya has planned a delightful day - a mixture of culture, fresh air and friendship! - which ends at the home of Bebs and Jody.

Sept. 11th : A final word with Joe Blanco, S.J., always so dedicated and available, and then it is time to say goodbye. Around 11 pm we land at Colombo (Sri Lanka) where Shikka and Alphonsus are waiting with a big smile and a warm welcome.

SRI LANKA

Patrick O'Sullivan S.J. returns from a short visit to his Province, and together we meet up with the CLC's of Sri Lanka. Through regular correspondence with the leaders in Sri Lanka, we have a longstanding admiration for the persevering efforts in the area of formation which a team of lay people and some religious have been able to achieve. Their dedication is only rivalled by their tenacity. Not having a national assistant, they have had to work very closely together and progress according to the means available. Progress indeed has been made; it is a real tonic to see it. Wilfred, the national president; is one of the "animators"; we have already come to appreciate his discretion and his competence through working with him on the Executive Council and on the Formation Commission.

On Sunday 13th, CLC members from different regions come together for an all day session. Lively exchanges, clarifications take place; the atmosphere could not be better; Singhalese and Tamils work together in perfect harmony. The day finishes with a meeting of the national Executive Council; a dozen or so young people are there, to plan and to implement the promotion of CLC, with a serious dedication that overrides their own lack of material resources. We have a happy reunion with Sampath, Dan and Noel - the three participants in the Asian course just completed in Manila. One of them, the father of 6 children (from 2 to 12), took the month off from work, without any pay, to follow the course! The next day we meet with a group of adults which has been going for quite some time! The members run housing projects for the poor, and an apprentice-program in carpentry for youth.

Between meetings, we are able to spend quite some time with the young leaders of the federation - including a very pleasant visit to the new home of Wilfred and Cintha. (And Noel introduces us to the mystery of Arrack!) The time comes to leave; Sampath appears out of nowhere at the airport at the last minute for a final goodbye!

INDIA

We land in Bombay on the late afternoon of the 15th. A first glance at the program prepared by Oriol shows us that he values our services! Yet he has managed to arrange a number of contacts and meetings with such delicacy and attention that we pass effortlessly from one to the other. The main point on our agenda is a session of 4 days which is attended by about 30 young men and women. Faithfully each day, after work, they brave the Bombay traffic to come to the session, which lasts till 11.30 pm! Saturday afternoon and an all-day session on Sunday complete the course. Igy, a very competent organiser, has set the criteria for people participating, which helps the session run very smoothly. The session itself revolves around the general orientation of the CLC's, and the integration of their essential elements. The course is a very lively one, which reflects the vitality of the participants.

About 60 people attended an open meeting for all the CLC's in Bombay. The youngest present was a six months old baby who gave a sporadic commentary on the proceedings; his mother assured us that his comments were basically favourable! Tony Martyris invited us to his place for a pleasant meal with his family and several members of his group. Conversation revolved around the role of regular meetings in the process of formation. Florie showed us the leprosy centre she runs, where a team of specialists looks after thousands of the sick.

On one of our free mornings, Ozy - who does nothing by halves and welcomes every new situation (including the Bombay traffic) with zest and enthusiasm - took us to see the grottos on the small island of Elephanta. Winnie's birthday party, a delightful evening with Thelma and Dalton, were further experiences of Indian hospitality. At 11.30 pm we set out for the airport in driving rain, with an eye on the clock. At 2.15 am the plane took off, headed for Rome.

Two months have passed since we first left Rome. In that time, so many events have marked our lives, broadened our horizons - to be more in tune with the CLC call...

José GSELL