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## A MESSAGE TO REMEMBER

Many will already know that Father Arrupe spent his last working day as General, August 6th, 1981, in Bangkok. He had gone there after his visit to the Philippines to discuss Jesuit work among refugees. The entire morning was dedicated to a meeting on this theme attended by 7 Jesuits from the Thai Region and 7 others with past or present experience of refugee work in the area. This was the last time he spoke to Jesuits before his illness and, as he himself says in a remarkable final paragraph, (which we publish here), "*this is perhaps my swan song for the Society*". We give it without correction as transcribed from the tapes.

*Please courage! I will say one thing. Don't forget that. Pray. Pray much! These problems are not solved by human efforts. I am telling you things that I want to emphasise, a message, perhaps my swan song for the Society! We have so many meetings and gatherings, yet we don't pray enough. We pray at the beginning and at the end. Well! We are good Christians! In our three-day meetings, if we spend half-a-day in prayer about our supposed conclusion or points of views, we will have such different lights, and such different syntheses, in spite of different points of views, that we could never find in the books nor in the discussions. This is a classical case here: if we are in the front-line of a new apostolate of the Society, we have to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. These are not pious words of a novice-master, but it is Saint Ignatius one hundred percent. I am so happy and I think it is providential that I came here. When I decided to come here, they said you can visit the refugee camps. What we have done is much more important than visiting the camps. I have been in camps before. I think there has to be a basic unity of minds for a new type of apostolate which is going to be born... And we are going through this 'dolor partus' - birth pangs - before this apostolate will be born! ...With this medical point of view I finish my talk.*

## CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES

- A Christian who concerns himself with social problems, should, no matter what he does, work for reconciliation and justice. In the realm of social questions many changes are taking place daily. The answers that any individual can give are only relative ones. There is no system which is completely correct. Rather one must speak of an approach to given questions, always ready to be revised, always ready to be further perfected. From this point of view, the Church has much to say to those who are concerned with these problems. But she does not have the definitive answer, the final solution. The final solutions that she proposes are not in the realm of time.

- It would be false to consider social problems and employment in a perspective that is "milleniarist". The world is not like that. Christian teaching tells us that this is a fallen world. As soon as a problem is resolved, another one takes its place. During the 1960's, we reached full employment; we attained a level of education never known before; and yet many problems presented themselves perhaps more than ever before. For a Christian, all the solutions to these problems are means to an end: they are the means by which the Kingdom of God is advanced, never final solutions.

- The Christian should want to do battle. He has the example of the life of Jesus who fought against the forces that kept man in chains, that prevented him from having a close relationship with God. There is no place for despair in a Christian's life. We have with us the power of the Holy Spirit; we must continue to do battle. We must believe that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, solutions will be found in all sorts of ways, even those we least expect. Why are Christians so often conservatives? Why are they for maintaining the status quo, even when they pretend to be radicals? We should always look for new solutions: that is the Christian challenge.

- It is, of course, necessary to be a realist with respect to the world we live in. It is a hard world, difficult, where the actors of the drama of life are not altruists. We

should remember that we are all prisoners of this situation: it is an illusion to think that all would be better if only we could remove "the bad guys".

- Christian realism consists in seeing that we are prisoners of the human situation. But there is still something that can be done. The Bible tells us that God takes all men into account, the unemployed, the unskilled, the illiterates, the prostitutes. Each individual can, within a certain measure, take control of his or her destiny. He can rise up against what he sees as unjust, false, sterile. It is not the privilege of the rich and powerful to do this. We have been told: "You are the salt of the Earth", which is our invitation to take action.

- A Christian can never be alienated. Unemployment is a terrible situation of alienation. But Jesus had his own great moment of alienation and his crucifixion reconciled man with God. That is certainly the message which the Church should address to those who try to face the problems of employment. The role of the Christian is the role of reconciler.

- None of these considerations will by its nature resolve the existing problem of unemployment. But I do not believe that there is a Christian politics to bring a solution to the present situation. There is only a Christian approach to this situation which is extremely important.

*Representatives of Catholic associations from the Countries of the EEC, of Spain and of Portugal, for the most part affiliated with the OIC, met in Brussels from November 23 to 25 in 1981 at the invitation of the OCIFE (The Catholic Office for Information on European Problems). The colloquium dealt with the social problems which presently are occurring within the EEC and with the contribution that the EEC institutions are making to bring about a solution to these problems. The general theme of the conference was, "What society should we build in Europe during the 1980's?"*

*Giancarlo Murkovic represented the CLC at the conference (cf. his article in Progressio March, 1982).*

*Mr. David White, an employment official, explained the situation of employment and unemployment in the EEC.*

*The text published here is an extract from his contribution.*

## FIRST LATIN AMERICAN COURSE FOR CLC GUIDES

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From 12th - 27th of January, 1982, the first Latin American course for Assistants took place. The locale was Chile and the course was organised by the World Federation of the CLC's. Among the participants were lay people, religious and Jesuits, coming from Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Chile, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela and one Jesuit from Spain - 34 participants in all.

The session was divided into 4 parts. The first part was an individually guided retreat (7 days), preceded by a day of reflection on the link between the Spiritual Exercises and the CLC's, which was presented by Eddie Mercieca S.J. The retreat was held in the Loyola Retreat House, at Padre Hurtado, which is a suburb on the fringes of Santiago. After the retreat, we left for Punta de Tralca - a very fine beach where the diocese of Santiago has built a number of small houses (holiday-cabins, really), which are both used for sessions like the one we were having, and also provide the opportunity for poorer families, on the fringe of the diocese, to have a vacation. In this way, many families with low income can spend part of the summer together, at small expense. The complex is quite an extensive one, and the life in common was enriching.

At Punta we were divided into 4 working-groups, which were a mixture of the religious, Jesuits and lay people from the different countries; the original groups stayed together till the end of the session.

The second part of the course was devoted to personal reflection on the Spiritual Exercises as both an experience and process, and the fruit of this reflection was then shared in the groups. In this way, the Exercises were integrated into the whole of the session, just as they are integrated into the whole way of life of the CLC's. Eddie Mercieca was the coordinator of this section, which finished with a presentation and discussion led by some CLC members from Santiago. They shared their experiences of the Spiritual Exercises and of the CLC's as a way of life, and responded to many questions put to them by the Assembly.

The third part began with 2 talks which gave a picture of the CLC world reality, and the historical development of

the CLC's. Then we entered into the first stages of the formation process: pre-community, the stage of initiation (Principle and Foundation), the stage of redemption (first week and the Kingdom). Each day was introduced by a summary talk which highlighted the main aspects and the internal dynamic of the particular stage. These introductory talks were shared by members of the guiding team: Juan Miguel Leturia S.J. (Assistant for Chile); Patrick O'Sullivan S.J. (Vice-assistant for the World Federation), José Gsell (Executive Secretary for the World Federation), Francisco Botta S.J. (Assistant for Italy). Personal reflection and group sharing on a number of questions that were presented helped the groups progress in the exchange of experiences and in the understanding of the process of formation. This part ended with the groups recapitulating the various stages of formation, in the sense that each group had to give a detailed account of one particular stage of the formation process. The account consisted in presenting, in tableau, the objectives of a particular stage, the means and activities which are helpful in leading to this stage, and the criteria and signs suggesting that the group is ready to pass on to the next stage. In this way, we finished with a visual presentation of the formation process (starting from the pre-community stage up until the offering of the Kingdom).

The fourth part of the session dealt specifically with the Latin American scene. Different activities (talks, an audio-visual montage, personal and group dynamics) prepared us for an experience of discernment on the socio-politico-economic level. Actually, this part of the session had been planned as part of the national Chilean formation course which was going on at the same time at Punta de Tralca. We joined the 40 Chileans for the introduction and beginning of this part. However, we did not do all the exercises involved since the themes were essentially for Youth and especially geared to the Chilean scene. This is perhaps why the objective for this part of the course was not fully realised, and why this part was the most criticised in the final evaluation of the course.

Overall the session provided opportunity for other activities, depending on the particular interests of the participants. As a result, 4 work-shops were formed: 1) the CLC's in a poor milieu, 2) guiding the Spiritual Exercises, 3) the experience of Youth CLC, 4) CLC and married couples. These work-shops met twice, to share their experiences and to exchange with one another on the application of the process of formation, in the context of the living and working situation of each one. For several participants, the CLC's were an entirely new discovery.

In the course of the session we had a meeting with the Cardinal of Santiago, Monsignor Raul Silva, who impressed us all with his simplicity and wisdom. On another occasion, Fr. Ferdinando Montes S.J., the Jesuit Provincial of Chile, visited us and we had an interesting exchange with him. Alberto Lopez S.J. from Nicaragua, at our request, gave us an historical over-view of his country, and its present situation. The participants from Brasil profited from the presence of representatives from four provinces of the country to meet and discuss ways of developing a more effective approach to the work of CLC.

At the end of the session we had time to reflect on and evaluate our experience. As we shared our evaluations in common, we would see that the session was viewed very positively by the participants. Among the positive points, people mentioned their appreciation of the use of the Spiritual Exercises as a methodology - 'the methodology of the Exercises' - and the exchange of experiences between the representatives from the different countries. There were different suggestions as to how the part of the session dealing with socio-politico-economic discernment could be improved. From the point of view of the methodology of the session, there was one proposition to begin more from the experiences of the participants, and perhaps to change the order of the different parts of the session.

The session for guides and the Chilean formation course ended at the same time, so we came together for a common celebration. After the Mass, we sang folk-songs from our respective countries, in an atmosphere of joy, where all of us could see that our unity of faith and spirituality transcended the frontiers, the customs and the particularity of each country.

Gina TORRES

## A VISIT TO LATIN AMERICA

We (José and I) left Rome on Jan. 2nd, and 32 hours later, arrived at Cochabamba in Bolivia, to be greeted by Jorge Vila S.J. Jorge is the national assistant for the CLC's; he is also assistant to the master of Novices, screens vocations for other religious orders, works in a college, is vocations promoter for his Province, and also runs a candidacy program for the Jesuit novitiate. In his spare time he eats and sleeps a little, and grows a black beard. He tells us that the CLC's are in La Paz, Druro, Sucre, Santa Cruz, Charagua, Beni, and Cochabamba. Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, but the hospitality is princely - one of the great traditions of the country that makes a profound impression on visitors.

A visit to the National Shrine of the Heroines shows the close association of the Church with the people in their struggle for freedom.

On Jan. 5th we leave La Paz for Santiago. After about 30 minutes the plane develops a bad cough and we are told that we will be returning to La Paz as some "mechanical difficulty" has developed. The passengers are moved to the front of the plane; I look out the window and the fields seem a little closer since the last time I looked. As we land at La Paz, we flash past a row of fire-engines who take up the chase in a rather half-hearted fashion, as though they were hoping for better things. Another half-hour and we are on our way again to Santiago; this time the fields keep a safe distance.

Juan Miguel and Josefina (Errazuriz) are waiting for us at the airport - a welcome sight; and later we meet up



with Chico Botta (from Italy) at the Jesuit residence. We spend some time with Eddie Mercieca in planning for Providence, as Eddie will be the 'process guide'; we visit Josefina and her family, and then the new CLC Centre, on the morning when 120 young CLC'ers are given a cross and sent off on a 10 day mission to poorer parishes in the country. Mostly students, the CLC'ers look after the children, teach catechism, give instruction in the faith and offer their services for whatever needs to be done. This has been going on for many years now, and is one of the many impressive facets of the CLC's in Chile, as about 1,000 young people, each year, are sent on such 'missions'.

On the 10th we leave for the retreat house at Padre Hurtado, about 25 kilometres outside Santiago, and arrive there mid-morning. There are 35 participants on the course - lay people, nuns and Jesuits from Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Brasil, Venezuela; Colombia planned to send 2 Jesuits but they were prevented at the last moment, and Uruguay was running its own Mini-Manila at the same time. Eddie Mercieca sets the tone for the retreat with a conference on the Exercises as the means for personal and community growth in the CLC's. In the afternoon there is an open forum on Eddie's presentation, and then the retreat begins after supper.

We have a visit from Juan Ochagavia S.J., master of novices and assistant to Josefina's group. There is a long and interesting discussion on Mission and Service in the CLC's; Juan emphasises that the CLC's should see very clearly, from the moment formation begins, that formation is for Mission.

The retreat ends on the night of the 17th; the 18th is a free day, and in the morning we journey to Punta de Tralca for the rest of the course. Soon after we settle in, the effects of having apricots three times a day at Padre Hurtado (retreat house) begin to show - not quite the sort of interior movements envisaged by the Exercises. At Padre Hurtado, and at Punta de Tralca, the Chilean formation course is being held at the same time. We have been meeting together for meals, but as from Jan. 23rd, we come together more often for the last part of the course - 3 and a half days on socio-political discernment.

During these days we have a visit from the Cardinal of Santiago who impresses us all with his freedom and wisdom - a man of God and a man of the people. Two visits from the Provincial, Fr. Ferdinand Montes, give great encouragement as he expresses his strong support for the CLC's. And the

youngest participant on the course, little Nicholas (aged 6 weeks) is baptised by Juan Miguel; we ask if it is customary for babies to make the Exercises before their baptism... Two other young participants are Maria Ignacia (8yrs) and Vicente (4yrs), the two youngest children of Josefina's 6. They make a deep impression on everyone, especially Vicente, who bites Ignatio (from Brasil) on the leg.

On the 27th we leave Punta de Tralca for a visit to the CLC's at Valparaiso, kindly arranged by Fr. Carlos Hallet, who leaves us in the capable hands of Rodrigo. We meet with the team of this region, see the slum where some CLC's are very much involved, and then experience the great kindness of other CLC'ers at Renaca.

On the 28th we visit Sylvia who was with us last June for the course with Fr. Giuliani, and hear of her work with her groups, which is most impressive. On the 29th, a final farewell to "Loro", Josefina, Pia and Paolo, who have look ed after us so well, and then we leave for Mendoza.

At Mendoza we are met by Francisco (the national president), Jorge, José Luis and Oscar and his wife, Martha. The next day we meet to discuss CLC matters in Argentina, and then dine with Francisco and his family, and other CLC'ers, including Maria Christina from Rome '79, and Miguel from the Rome course of '78. On the 31st we visit the sights around Mendoza, have Mass with Fr. Urquiza in his barrio (named Our Lady of the Poor), and meet with about 25 CLC'ers after Mass; the situation looks promising. José stays with the Sisters of Mary Immaculate, who ask for a talk on the CLC's and I enjoy the hospitality of Fr. Vicentini and the Jesuit community.

On Febr. 1st we fly up to Buenos Aires with José Luis, to be greeted by Clara (Migliaro) who very generously takes us under her wing. José addresses the Superiors of Latin America (of the Sisters of Mary Immaculate), and is well look ed after by Juanita; I go on to the Jesuit House of studies at San Miguel, to be greeted by Hugo and Jorge who were on the course in Chile.

I am also welcomed by the Rector, Fr. Bergoglio, who in addition is the national assistant for the CLC's; after hearing me speak Spanish, he sends out for reinforcements, and Bernardo and Gustavo appear who speak very good English. Later I have an interesting meeting with Fr. Bergoglio and the Provincial about the CLC's in Argentina, and visit the National Shrine to Our Lady at Luján.

On the 4th we arrive in Montevideo where Jorge Crova-

ra S.J., who has never met us, picks us out from the crowd. In the afternoon he takes us to visit "La Huella" - a community of 4 young people, 2 married couples, one Jesuit and 15 abandoned children between the ages of 4 and 18. Perhaps it is best to let "La Huella" speak for itself: "La Huella is made up of a group of young lay people who are inspired by a common faith in Jesus Christ and seek to live together, sharing everything in common, with a life style of service to, and in solidarity with, those who suffer injustice with whom they work to overcome the causes of injustice. They are dedicated to a specific task - being with marginal children in their difficult journey to becoming adults..." Sarah, the 'Mother' of the four youngest shows us round; the atmosphere is one of peace and love and faith. Alejandra, aged four, picks up our trail; when she hears me speak Spanish, she looks me in the eye and pronounces - "Tu sabes nada... (You know nothing)..." Delighted at her discovery, she repeats it and repeats it and repeats it... Then a very pleasant evening with Antonio and his wife Monica; many may remember Antonio from Rome '73.

On the 5th, we meet with the Jesuits in the morning and the exchange continues up until lunchtime. In the evening we have a session with participants in the recent Mini-Manila course in Uruguay, and then an extended session with others interested in the CLC's - about 40 in all. The meeting is most impressive, both on the level of the sharing of the participants in the recent course, and through the interest shown and the questions asked in the larger group. We leave Uruguay with the deep conviction that the CLC's there have a bright future, thanks to the wisdom and guidance of Jorge Crovara.

Arriving in Ascuncion on the 6th, we are met by Maria no Leon S.J. (who was with us on the course in Chile), and the Provincial, who invites us to stay with him. In the afternoon he takes us for an interesting drive and we visit the National Shrine to Our Lady at Caacupé; and in the evening we sample the different cultures of Latin America.

The next day we have a meeting with the Jesuits about the CLC's, which continues in the afternoon with the Superior of the Jesuit Juniors; there are many questions about and lively interest in the CLC's which are just beginning in Paraguay. In the evening, we meet (through the Provincial) with some members of the national council of the laity. This meeting carries over to the next day when one of the members comes to see us, for further information and planning.

While in Paraguay we meet up with Angela, Ernesto and

Sebastian who had been with us in Chile. Though our stay in Ascuncion is brief, it is most inspiring, due to the kindness of Mariano and the interest and support of the Provincial. The spirit of the early Jesuits is very much alive in Paraguay.

On the 8th we arrive in Rio de Janeiro and a 'delegation' awaits us at the airport, headed by José Pires (national president), and Fathers Dutra and Cesar. With Cesar we visit the statue of Christ that dominates Rio, and take the 'teleferique' to Sugar Loaf; with Moacyr we drive over the 14 kilometres bridge that spans the bay; and with José Pires we visit some of the islands just off the coast. We meet with the national executive and discuss the situation in Brasil; visit the retreat house which is on the point of completion; join with Fr. Dutra as he celebrates his 50 years a Jesuit; and have a short session with members from some of the younger groups. Gina looks after José and I stay at the College of St. Ignatius with Cesar; the prospect are bright in Brazil.

We leave for Rome on the 12th, and as we land on the 13th, it is six weeks to the day since we left... a little tired but greatly encouraged by all we have seen.

Patrick O'SULLIVAN S.J.

# YOUTH - PROGRESSIO

## CLC IN THE LIFE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

### Before the call

Initially what Peter, aged 18, was looking for in a CLC group was to get away from his feeling of loneliness. He had a great desire, a real need to communicate himself to others, but he never succeeded in doing so. There was a barrier between himself and his parents who lived, or seemed to live, in a different world, with different values. The relationships with his friends were only superficial, as each one played a game and hid behind a mask. Peter was the leader of the game, and though he was envied much by the others, he felt himself alone - a prisoner of the game he had made.

Peter scarcely reflected on the reasons for his unhappiness - it seemed to him that Society was responsible. It was other people who were "the baddies" for it was other people who stifled life by making silly rules. If only people would treat him as he should be treated; if only they could discover his true worth!

Peter's life revolved around his own little world where he lived in his ivory tower caught up in his own dreams and romantic fantasies. The CLC group by no means came first in his life; that was simply one of his many activities; what came first was himself. But he was really alone and at the bottom of his heart he was profoundly unhappy.

Peter's group was a gathering of solitary people. Each one lived in his own crystal bowl and saw reality only in terms of his own feelings and desires. But in coming into the group, Peter took a step which God took seriously. God is always our Father, even if we are not conscious of being his children. Peter made a move which gave God an opening to lead him on.

From that time on, the situation that Peter had committed himself to was not an easy one for him. In the group meetings he began to see that he was not the centre of the world; he saw that his presence did not create any great waves of enthusiasm; on the contrary, he felt challenged by the situation. He discovered in the others spiritual experiences

much deeper than his own. He saw for the first time that he was not the only person who had a history, that he was not the only person with problems. He noticed that the world around him was a real world.

The group helped Peter break out of his vicious circle, so that he was no longer closed in on himself. It helped him see the world as it really is. This new way of looking at reality changed the way he looked at himself; he noticed that the cause of his loneliness was not the "bad" world, that Hell was not other people. The barriers he came up against were of his own making; the stone wall around his heart was a wall he had built, and it was painful to come into contact with it. In the group he had a fundamental experience of becoming aware of himself as a sinner.

*"Their eyes were opened...and they saw that they were naked..." (Gen. 3:7a).*

### The Call

The group meetings (sharing about and evaluating the previous week, meditating on some passages from the Bible) created a strange anxiety in Peter; his stone wall gradually crumbled and left his heart unprotected; he became more vulnerable, but at the same time more sensitive to the call God was addressing him from his creation. He grasped that he had to make a move, that he had to leave his universe to go towards the unknown, to a distant shore. He had to leave the world of his imagination, he had to leave behind the world of appearances to meet the God "Who is".

Alone he would not have had the courage to take this step, as he was too much aware of his own weakness. But the relations that had been formed in the group did not allow him to take refuge in the excuse that all this was "impossible". The interaction with the others made him go on, in spite of himself. He discovered the mutual support of a group; he felt carried by others, while noticing with a certain amount of astonishment that he, in turn, was able to help others.

At this stage some friends left the group, which troubled Peter considerably. Previously this would have left him completely lost, but not any more; he knew he had to continue, that he had to keep going towards the God who is Life.

The call of God touched him at the depths of his being, at the very heart of his person. He knew that he should do something, that he should leave his whole world, without

yet realising the grandeur, the sacrifices and the beauty of such an action.

*"Leave your country, your relatives and your father's house for the country I will show you...I will bless you."* (Gen. 12/1b, 2c).

### The Meeting

Some weeks after this, the guide of the group suggested an 8 day retreat. The members of the group accepted the suggestion; it seemed to follow logically from what they had experienced.

For Peter the Exercises were to be the meeting-point - a meeting-point that completely turned him upside down. He realised that this was a moment he both feared and hoped for. And this God whom he was so afraid of meeting showed himself in the humanity of Christ Jesus.

Peter learned to re-read his own history, his difficulties and his crises. He saw God present at each moment, beside him at each step. It was God who led him, while respecting his liberty; Peter re-lived, in a fashion, his own personal liberation.

*"You saw for yourselves what the Lord did... You saw the terrible plagues, the miracles, and the great wonders that the Lord performed. But to this very day he has not let you understand what you have experienced."* (Deut. 2b-4).

Peter understood because he had met the God who decided to intervene on his behalf. (Ex. 3/16). He could be the little servant who accompanied Jesus in his hidden and his public life. The presence of Jesus healed him, opened his eyes and his ears. He began to understand what previously he had regarded as fables: the incarnation, the death on the cross and the resurrection. He was able to cope with his limitations and his sins, under the cross, and exclaim with the centurion - *"Truly, this man was Son of God"* (Mk. 15/39). With his patron saint and the twelve, he became the witness of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15/5).

In a rambling sort of way we have described the experiences of Peter during the Exercises; to go into greater detail would take us beyond the scope of this article.

As a witness to the death and resurrection of Jesus, Peter understands better the relationship of the Trinity with humanity. The Word who is with the Father from all eternity, in the love of the Holy Spirit, has taken flesh for him in his meeting with Jesus Christ.

Henceforth he knows that he must become more and more like Jesus, that his relationships must evidence this, that they have to reflect the image of the Trinity. In this way, the experience of the Exercises transforms the way he regards his group; the 'group' slowly begins to become 'community'.

*"I pray that they may, all be one, Father! May they be in us, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they be one, so that the world will believe that you sent me. I gave them the same glory you gave me, so that they may be one, just as you and I are one. I in them and you in me, so that they may be completely one, in order that the world may know that you sent me and that you love them as you love me...I made you known to them, and I will continue to do so, in order that the love you have for me may be in them, and so that I also may be in them". (John 17/21-23,26).*

### Sense of the Church

Peter has changed profoundly. Formerly he was a prisoner of his past and his own fantasies blocked out the future. Now he lives in the present, while being conscious of his past and looking to the future. The other members of his CLC group have made similar steps, and now they are all together in a living cell of the Church, open to the reality of the world and the reality of God.

They are conscious of being a group of witnesses. The sharing which used to be motivated by a sense of loneliness is now a sharing motivated by the presence of Christ; the community becomes more christo-centric.

Fine words and catchy slogans dwindle away; the life of the group becomes more "ordinary", but richer and deeper, fully engaged with the demands of christian living. Community discernment, which formerly was just an empty word borrowed from theology, now becomes a more tangible reality.

At this moment, when the group is experiencing its deepest unity and harmony, the young members must go their separate ways; their future commitments, their future mission, the call of God which they have experienced together now sends them to different parts of their country. Some continue their studies, one chooses the religious life, and others are on the threshold of marriage.

Peter is now 20. His CLC group helps him in deciding his future; a discernment is made and Peter decides to study medicine. He does not know if he will marry, but one



thing he does know - in his life at the university he will again join a CLC group, which is HIS way of living as a christian. Peter is happy. He knows that new difficulties are going to come, but he also knows that he belongs to a world community and that his future is open to God.

*"They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship and in the breaking of bread and the prayers... All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another...they broke bread together in their homes, eating with glad and humble hearts..." (Acts 2/42, 44-47).*

*"You will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". (Acts 1/8b).*

### CLC in the life of young people

No doubt you have been wondering as you have read this article -"who is this Peter?What country does he come from? What has happened to him"? Actually, Peter is an imaginary character, but that does not mean this little story is purely fictional! For many, Peter is ourselves. He reflects my own experience and my own growth, though of course I realise that my experience is by no means the only one possible, that there are other experiences richer and deeper than mine, that there are important elements lacking in my experience which are found in others. So I have given you a picture of Peter who perhaps is more typical of Youth-CLC than I am.

When a young person enters a CLC group, normally he or she has some ground to cover in the areas of personal development and affective maturity; he or she must pass from adolescence to adulthood. This human growth is accompanied by a spiritual growth, so human history becomes salvation history.

Many groups of young people do not succeed in harmonising and combining these two growing processes so that they become one; they do not discover Christ and as a result, they no longer see their own identity. The CLC group will remain for them on the level of some external activity which will stop sooner or later, without leaving much trace of it in their life. This type of group is perhaps more common in the first world where a certain alienation among people causes the feeling of God being far away.

Other groups of young people make the most of the opportunity which God offers them. The CLC, Ignatian spirituality and the Exercises bring them to a level of human and spiritual maturity. The CLC's are an important event in their

life because they help them discover their vocation -which is not always a vocation to the CLC's. Here we have something that is specific to Youth-CLC - the groups are a stimulant, a spiritual foundation, the fertile soil out of which spring different plants. The youth groups are not necessarily recruiting-groups for adult CLC! No one should be forced along this way! We have to respect the path of each person and God's will for him or her.

Some groups, finally, will continue in the CLC's, which have helped them to become christians, and will help them to live as christians.

So we see that youth-CLC's, by and large, are a provisional stage in a person's life before he or she makes a commitment. This should not be seen as a negative comment, because these groups are in a process of becoming, and each young person has to acquire his or her own salvation history. Before humanity met Christ in the New Testament, it had to pass, thanks to Israel, through the Old Testament. Humanity had to be prepared, had to acquire a history before it was able to welcome Jesus, God-with-us. And just as an infant in its mother's womb must pass through successive stages in its human development, so the adolescent, "the affective and spiritual child", must pass through the different stages of salvation history.

I trust that each one will pass through these "dark shadows" to have access to Jesus, "God from God, light from light, true God from true God".

Jean-Claude HOLLERICH n.s.j.

#### A NATIONAL COURSE IN BOLIVIA

Recently I participated in The Second National CLC Meeting at Santa Vera Cruz (Cochabamba), where I represented a student CLC group of the city of La Paz.

Spending a week on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius was the deepest spiritual experience for me. I feel it was the same for others, as one could easily see the deep change of heart that these Exercises brought about in the participants. Faith seemed to be lived now at a much deeper level through a stronger commitment in one's daily realities. New friendships were born; people spoke with

greater sincerity and frankness, and were very generous in the matter of mortification and penance.

Participation in the Eucharist was moving, even charismatic to a point. Some were encouraged to share their spiritual experiences during the Mass. Others acknowledged their sins before the Community and asked pardon from God. The Scripture Readings were reflected upon, and this was followed by sharings both on an individual and personal, and on a social and communitarian level. Thus people made petitions not just for themselves and the gathered community, but also for the poor and the humble - the suffering people of our Country. All this touched me deeply. It made me appreciate more the spiritual richness and human sensitivity of the people I was just beginning to know. Never before had the presence of Christ stood out for me so strongly as in these Eucharists. Never before had I felt my soul lifted up as now in experiencing these Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

Much can also be said about the Conferences on the larger and smaller communities, and the aims of CLC. For me the most important was the opening talk on larger communities by Alfonso Blanco. In it was given a clear and factual picture of our national reality in its economic, social and political dimensions. This was not handled in terms of cold analysis, but seen through the eyes of Christ, in the light of His gospel message, and evaluated with the same attitudes that Jesus had when He came into this world.

The participants also impressed me by their very keen interest in following the conferences, in the questions they asked, in the debates that followed, in their work in small groups. The best proof of this was shown in their quick preparation and presentation of the socio-dramas, in which our Bolivian Youth expressed their sharp awareness of the social, economic and political problems. Even if no concrete solutions were reached, this very consciousness of the reality was a good sign of the maturity of the participants of this Meeting.

The conferences of Fr. Jesús Cortéz contributed very much to our having a clear idea regarding the "how" and "why" of a group, etc. The patterns he presented and the parallel he drew between our groups and the group of Christ and His apostles, made us re-think our work within our christian community. One very effective means he used was to place us in heterogeneous groups, demanding that we arrive at a consensus; this called for frank and open dialogue, and proved very fruitful.

Almost at the end of this Meeting, which lasted for 15 days, Clara Migliaro spoke on The Organization of CLC on the World Level, on how a deep faith and community life are the means offered for an effective apostolate. It was in these days that we reformulated the goals of our groups. We left with a deep desire to make our communities into a real CLC Movement of Lay-people committed to establishing the Kingdom of God on earth, inspired with a living faith in the Resurrection and in the Life to come.

This climate of fraternity and christian living posed many questions to us on the individual and group level. Many gave a personal answer to the call to serve others. It seems that even a few religious and priestly vocations found their beginnings here, some quite seriously. However, the aim of the Ignatian Exercises and of this Meeting was not to foster priestly or religious vocations in the Church, but to develop committed lay men and women who live a deep faith and community experience.

The results are not immediately evident and it is too soon to even predict them. Yet, this Meeting was a good starting point... Apart from what was serious and formal in this Meeting, it was pleasant to note a climate so favourable to integration, mutual awareness, dialogue and living together during these two weeks. The service in the refectory and the preparation of the living rooms were excellent. Even if there were a few shortcomings in organization, these really were of no account given the great success which this Second National CLC Meeting turned out to be.

It may be worth noting that the participants were by no means only those who could afford to pay for 15 days away from home! The economic aspect was really secondary and many could contribute only their good will, because the expenses of the Meeting were met through mutual aid funds and through benefactors of the Society of Jesus which was the main organizing body.

Finally, recalling these pleasant spiritual and community experiences, one may only hope that such Meetings will continue to be held at all levels, to build up a Church which is committed and involved according to the needs of our time.

Walker SAN MIGUEL RODRIGUEZ

# MARY: HER VOCATION AND MISSION

I would like to share my reflection on some traits of Mary, of that simple Galilean woman who lived nearly 2,000 years ago and who cooperated, actively, to change the history of the world. To do this I would like to highlight certain attitudes of this woman who was unknown and humble, yet valiant and wise; poor in wealth but rich with God who provoked an upheaval in humanity unlike any produced by any scientific discovery or ideological movement in the thousands of years of human history.

Just as one of the major emphasises of evangelization in the Church in this day and age is to make our world more human where we can both call ourselves--and be--brothers (and sisters), so it seems to me of great importance to emphasize those very attitudes of Mary that brought her to this great world revolution... in such a way that knowing them and making them our own, even we ourselves, or better, God through us, can change the world at its very roots.

For this it is necessary to know Mary. A Christian who neither knows nor loves Mary should examine his very faith. The love of the Mother of Jesus is a constant in the history of the Church and a very important factor in growing closer to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. It is also important to compare our devotion to Mary with what the Church teaches about her. The teaching of the Church is solid and it is the only means that can bring us to a knowledge of the true image of the Mother of Jesus because it is based on Sacred Scriptures, on Tradition, on the Liturgy and on the sentiments of the faithful for nearly 2,000 years. It is important to know this teaching of the Church in order to truly discover the person of Mary as she was and is today. This will keep us from falling into fanaticism or rationalism that would distance us from Mary and, thus, from God and from all true human effectiveness. For there is:

- a fanatical approach to Mary which is the product of an unbalanced devotion and which can lead to an escape from the real world, whereas the real world is very much a concern in the heart of our Mother,
- a rationalistic approach of those who believe they know everything about her. With Mary, as with any person, one can only get to know her when one loves her...

In order to understand more deeply the person of Mary and her attitudes with regard to her vocation and her mis-

sion, I believe it would be good to look at her from different yet complementary angles:

- A. *From a superficial point of view, without capturing the mystery involved*
  - B. *From the point of view of her interior life*
  - C. *From God's point of view*
  - D. *From the Church's point of view*
- A. *From a superficial point of view, without capturing the mystery involved... Who is Mary?*

Mary was a humble woman without any extraordinary characteristics. We know nothing of her physical features, but it can help us to know that she was an inhabitant of the village of Nazareth, a small town in the mountains in Galilee, in the north of Israel.

Nazareth was a place lost to the eyes of the world. Without sparkle, without riches, without any major culture ... it stood out only for being a place of rebels. For this reason the question that St. John asks in his gospel, namely: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (Jn 1:46), is really an expression of a general sentiment of the time.

Mary's life, from her earliest days, was spent quietly, and hidden, in the heart of a Nazarean family, a family that was humble and respectful of the Law. They belonged to the ANAWIM, "the poor of the Lord", so called because they put all their hopes in God. In this way, Mary grew up in a very religious atmosphere of prayer and of doing the will of God.

She was a woman tied to the home who led a life intensely devoted to her family, yet she was also sure of herself and independent of what people would say. Just before her wedding she showed signs of great courage: she went to Judah, about 120 kilometers to the south, to visit and help a cousin. She also demonstrated a deep understanding of the Bible: her Magnificat was not something she invented totally but it was rather a hymn of praise to God interwoven with biblical quotes from several Old Testament authors. In this song, which is preserved for us by St. Luke at the beginning of his gospel, anyone who is familiar with the Old Testament will notice that Mary interpreted her life according to the Bible, which she knew profoundly. She was not simply an ordinary village woman without character, but rather someone who, from her youth, knew what she wanted and did it. And what she wanted and did was not the product of some passing fancy, but something which she saw as her vocation and mission and to which she gave a biblical foundation, as we see in the Magnificat, with simplicity and great security. She is completely a woman of Israel whose criteria for judging the world is the Covenant with God.

She married the carpenter of the village and had one son, a fact which had possibly left her somewhat inferior in the eyes of the other women who measured their blessings by the number of children they bore their husbands.

After her marriage and after being received by Joseph's family (because people during her time lived in family clans), she dedicated herself entirely to household work and to the care of her family : husband, son, relatives. She gave great importance to the biblical formation of her son, to the point where at the age of 12 he already stood out in his learning, as the episode in the Temple tells us (Lk 2:41-50). Already a widow by the time her son began preaching (an unusual fact since they did not belong to a family of experts in the Law), she accompanied him on his journeys around the country.

She had great admiration for her son, and invited the people, as at Cana, to do whatever he said. She suffered as she witnessed how the people who had followed him, little by little, began to abandon him; how they accused him of different crimes, betrayed and denied him. She saw him die the most shameful death of that age: that of a criminal rejected by his people, that of a man abandoned by the God she had taught him to believe in, to trust, to love...

Seen from the outside, the life of Mary, just like that of her son, was a complete failure.

*B. From the point of view of her interior life, who is she?*

A believing and faithful Israelite that she was, she felt herself to be a creature of God - a person with a deep relation of free dependence before her Creator. For her, this was the most intimate truth of her existence. In this profound certitude of being a creature dependent on a Creator who loved her and always wanted the best for her (even if she did not understand it) was rooted what is most characteristic of Mary: her disposition to listen to the word of God and to do His will in everything. Mary believed that God wanted to and can reveal Himself and, for this reason, she was an attentive listener. In this vibrant, attentive listening she found her Vocation and in accepting that vocation she opened herself to her Mission.

The Annunciation (Lk. 1:26-38) is a central moment in her life and helps us to understand her intimate knowledge of herself. For this reason, I would like to spend some time on this important passage of the Gospel.

- Mary was betrothed in marriage to Joseph; she was certainly in love with him. Her vision of the future was to live

with her beloved, and as a good Israelite, to bear him many sons. Everything seemed to indicate that this was the will of God, in addition to that of Joseph and herself and of both their families. In this tranquil atmosphere the unexpected was about to happen...

- God announces to Mary, in her prayer of listening, that she will conceive a son, now--not when she is already married and living with Joseph--and for her this is simply incomprehensible. She asks how this can be... for she is not yet married, and cannot have any conjugal relations...

- The messenger of God explains to her that this son will be different; he will not have a human father; the conception will be realized because "the Holy Spirit will come upon her and the power of the Most High will overshadow her". The Holy Spirit of God will be the one to effect the incarnation of the Son of God in her virginal womb.

- Mary listens, giving her attention even if this goes against all the dearest hopes of her heart. She discovers her vocation, the Proposal of God to her, and the response to this call is not easy. None of it is easy. We see what this means for her.

- On the one hand Mary is a young girl devoted to doing the will of God, in everything. She is convinced that this will is the most important of all things in her life. On the other hand what is asked of her to sacrifice is enormous.

- She would lose her intended husband who would repudiate her as was to be expected in such cases according to the Law.

- She would lose her honour in front of the whole village and she would be exposed to the full rigour of the law: death by stoning was the punishment for unfaithful brides.

- If she tried to explain, no one would understand and they would think her crazy.

- Even if Joseph would not repudiate her, all her dreams, which are so human, of bearing him many children would vanish. Because Mary knew that what God touches no man can touch... she would become the New Ark of the Covenant which no human being could enter nor possess. Since this signifies her perpetual virginity willed by God Himself: (1)

*(1) I am fully aware that the interpretation that I propose is not the only one existing nor necessarily the only one possible. Regarding this there exists another tradition which attributes to Mary a vow of perpetual virginity before the annunciation of the Angel and her betrothal to Joseph. Nevertheless, many exegetics and noted theologians question this interpretation and favor the one proposed in this article. On this subject, please consult M. Schmaus, Dogmatic Theology III (Madrid 1961, pp. 136-141; 414-417). Please refer also to A. Muller, Mysterium Salutis III/2 (Madrid 1969, pp. 456-457). As appears from these studies, it is a matter of free discussion in the Church.*



Before such a difficult situation which, humanly speaking, has no solution, what triumphs in Mary is her most intimate knowledge that she is a creature loved by a Father who cannot fail her and whose first command is to choose Him above every other thing... Before the manifest will of God she changed all her plans and did his will with simplicity and courage. From her innermost being came forth the difficult response: "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your Word".

What profound wisdom of what it means to be a human being, to be a person, is revealed in these words of Mary! They reflect a radical living of what St. Ignatius calls the "Principle and Foundation" in his Spiritual Exercises. They reflect an understanding of the world and of history as being formed by men according to the measure in which they answer the call of God, as presented by him in this same history and world.

Mary knew to the depths of her heart and of her whole life that she had an important part in the realization of this world, as everyone has, to the extent that she was open to hearing and answering with her whole being the call of this God who has chosen to be part of man's history. And she knew that God is a firm rock from whom all draw their support and that he can never fail; this is the principle and the foundation of all living. She knew that "all is possible with God".

Mary understands that man is more human to the degree that he is open to this call of God in history, in his own concrete history, however he must live this call. She understands that in this world the only thing positive and firm is to serve God and to serve him where he wishes to be served.

This understanding of man, as a being open to listen and to respond to God in concrete life, is what, from the time of Mary, characterizes the thinking and the life of a Christian. We see Jesus educated as he was by Mary, always in the role of hearing and serving those around him and always attentive to listen to and serve the Father, in establishing his Kingdom.

Today, in our world, no one wants to listen; everyone wants to be heard: no one wants to serve; all want to be served. Everyone wants to fulfill himself or herself... but in the way they conceive it. Man looks to himself as an end and excludes from his interests the will of God.

Mary, with a profound intuition, knew that the stature of man is measured by that of his master. And she became

the servant of the Lord! She knew that God who gave her life and who preserved her called her to serve, to surrender herself, to love. This was her mission. And she knew that to serve, to surrender herself, to love is the only way to be a woman, to leave a mark, to be important, to realize herself. She surrendered herself completely, even to the point of human absurdity. "Let it be done to me according to your Word". She was sensitive, open to the call, ready to accept the grace to realize herself, to serve God where and in what way he might ask her.

Mary made the will of God her own. She heard and surrendered to the call. She accepted her vocation fully and opened herself to her mission : to surrender herself to the Son of God made man in her womb, to surrender herself to God-who-is-with-us.

She teaches us, with her life, the tremendous importance for all humanity of listening to God, believing in him, letting him become part of our lives and of surrendering ourselves to others. She teaches us the tremendous vital force that flows from seeking one's true vocation and offering it in mission.

In the Gospels we discover that the whole life of Mary can be summarised from this moment on, by this : listening to God in his son, meeting him day by day in the littleness of a child, in the simplicity of an adolescent, in the words of a youth. She ponders in her heart what she hears and remains attentive, at hand, diligent in this service.

She is the one who teaches us to listen to her son, with the example of her life and with her words at the wedding feast at Cana: "Do whatever he tells you". What he says transforms... water becomes wine which brings joy to the heart... Our own life, as we follow what He tells us, will become happy, fruitful and effective in transforming the world. This is the great message of Mary : do whatever he tells us: To be ready to listen, to keep these words in our heart, to put them into practice so that the Lord can do marvels in the world today. In the inspiring canticle of the Magnificat we find an excellent summary of Mary's own awareness: "The Lord had done great things for me, Holy is His name".

Josefina ERRAZURIZ

(To be continued next issue)

# ECHOES

## NEWS FROM ENGLAND

Reflecting on my experience dealing with retreatants and others (incl. religious) has made me realise that, on top of good, generous dispositions and attitudes (Annotation 5), two crucial requirements were necessary if people's horizons and possibilities were to be opened up, with spirituality and lived experience interpenetrating.

The first requirement is to wean a person from both a total dependence on "said" prayers, and from a purely moralistic use of the Scriptures ("Jesus was kind, therefore I must be kind").

The second is, at the same time, to introduce the person to ways of praying with Scripture, so that the person can experience and respond to God speaking to me personally now.

Once these requirements are under way most lay-people take to Ignatian contemplation very easily: more easily than do most religious, in my experience.

This reflection on my experience was very heartening and ought, I thought, to benefit members of the Christian Life Communities. But the above programme takes time. OK with retreatants with whom I can spend 6 or 8 days or more. But not too convenient for most members of our CLCs.

However, a great difficulty in my work as the English Province's Promotor of Christian Life Communities is that none of the CLC Adult groups exists anywhere near a Jesuit encampment; with the one exception of the CLC which meets at 114 Mount Street.

At the root of the Ignatian life (lay as well as Jesuit) is the appropriation and living of one's own experience of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius as one's personal response to God's call in Christ. So you can see the major block to the growth and development of Christian Life Communities as a Province apostolate. Most CLC members have no opportunity for any prolonged contact with men and women who can help form them in Ignatian spirituality as a lived experience. That is, there is a lack of spiritual directors or assistants available to the groups. Most CLC members have no opportunity to experience the full Spiritual Exercises either in the 20th Annotation or 19th Annotation mode.

Few CLCers can afford either the expense or the time (many have young families) for shorter individually-guided or other Ignatian retreats. So how to help these groups?

One way has been to try to gain the interest and help of Ignatian-spirited people, both men and women. In this the CLC South Region Team has been exceedingly lucky in the help, encouragement and support they have received from Fr. Peter Griffiths. Despite his already full and diverse ministry, Peter has acted as Chaplain to the Team which aids the CLCs in the South. Likewise, the CLCs in Oxford and the Midlands, especially the Oxford University CLC, have been fortunate in the assistance given by two Jesuits, Fr. John Honner (of the Australian Province) and Mr. Michael Holman, both of Campion Hall. John is soon to return "down-under"-lucky him, unlucky us - many thanks, John.

Another way I have developed is to go to the CLCs, and to stay somewhere convenient for about a week. My plan is three-fold. First, to wean CLCers away from a moralistic "see, judge, act" approach to the Scriptures, by giving them ways of praying with Scripture that will allow them to experience the personal word of God to them individually, now. The approach of Fr. Armand Nigro I find very helpful.

Second, to introduce the CLCers to spiritual direction. This I do by making my week with them a kind of much abbreviated retreat in the 19th Annotation mode. That is, I lay down the following minimum requirements in order to make the retreat: a daily visit to me (as director) for individual guidance lasting about half hour for each day of the "retreat", plus at least fifteen minutes of prayer with Scripture each day of the "retreat", followed by a period of reflection on the prayer. If retreatants can manage half an hour or more of prayer each day, or more on some days, I encourage them to that end. Apart from these requirements, the retreatants carry on as normal a daily life as is possible.

Third, to introduce the CLCers to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, and some of their ramifications. Naturally, in only eight days in a 19th Annotation mode, we don't get very far into the programme of the book of the Exercises. What I try to do is help the retreatants with their prayer with Scripture, and with the following making of a review of that time of prayer. Here, and with regard to many other aspects of the Exercises, I have found Fr. John Veltri's Orientations, Vol I invaluable. (This book of Veltri has been available and widely acclaimed at St. Beuno's, but unfortunately at present is out of print - word is that Orientations is being reprinted very shortly).

By about the middle of the "retreat" I like to introduce them to the Examen, and its daily practice. Here again Vetri is excellent. The main aspect of the Spiritual Exercises that I hope to introduce to retreatants in such a short "retreat" is the awareness of and the practice of the discernment of spirits.

This introduction to the discernment of spirits is usually very easy to do since I find lay-people well-motivated (as most CLCers are) and take to Ignatian contemplation very well. They also discover that the theme or themes of their period of prayer continually well up at times throughout the day, in sometimes very unexpected and intimately personal ways. Once a certain awareness of the ebb and flow of prayer experience and life experience interpenetrating is established, introduction of the Rules of Discernment for the First Week is easily managed.

An optional extra that I suggest is that the Eucharist be celebrated each evening in a different retreatant's home, to which the others are invited, plus their husbands, wives and children, and friends.

In most ways this handling of the Spiritual Exercises is according (it seems to me) to the 18th Annotation, whilst being in the 19th Annotation mode (in the midst of life). The retreats I have given so far have turned out to be Principle and Foundation retreats, sometimes even getting to a consideration of "indifference".

I have now given two retreats in this manner. One in Birmingham I've already written about in Chaplains' Weekly. The second was towards the end of last year and given to CLCers in Leeds. Fr. John Twist very kindly let me stay with him. Eight people made the retreat (nine wanted to, but God in his infinite mercy gave one 'Flu' - I found dealing with eight heavy enough since the House Mass took up much of the evening). Seven retreatants were able to visit me at John's Chaplaincy during the day, and this without any clash of times. The eighth I saw after the evening Eucharist. The first retreatant came at 8.45 am, and I was getting back at night around 11 pm or later.

The retreatants also found the 8 days quite a load. They had their normal day's work to do, of course. But quoting some of them, they said the retreat was "very rewarding", "well worth the effort". As a result, some have been toying with making a closed 8 day individually-guided retreat.

My experience has revealed to me the great flexibility and scope of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. This

is very rewarding in itself since it does open up ways of sharing some of the gift of Ignatius to people for whom making the Spiritual Exercises would otherwise be an impossible dream and hope, or a closed and unreadable book. Perhaps it is the more encouraging since it is a relatively inexpensive (financially) way of giving the Exercises in an 18th/19th Annotation mode.

David Keith TOWNSEND S.J.

## PRAYER SERVICE FOR DISARMAMENT

The following prayer service is offered for your consideration. It was prepared by Sister Marjorie Keenan, RSHM, for the Inter-Religious Consultation on the United Nations First Special Session on Disarmament (1978).

The prayer service is a basic text which may be varied in several ways. An opening and a closing hymn may be added. It may be included in the Liturgy of the Word during an Eucharist celebration. During the times for reflection, slides and/or music may be used. The meditation may take the form of a short homily or sermon, of shared reflections, of personal prayers of intercession.

Among many other biblical texts, the following can be substituted for those used:

Ps 46:8 et seq.	Ho 2:20 et seq.	Eph 6:10 et seq.
Ps 85:8 et seq.	Ez 34:23 et seq.	Col 3:12
Is 32:16 et seq.	Mt 5:9 et seq.	

LEADER *Just as peace is more than the absence of war, disarmament goes far beyond the laying down of weapons. It implies the positive building up of a new society of justice, a setting aside of weapons too terrible to use, bought at a price costly in human needs. Disarmament is a tangible expression of the love which begins in our own hearts and extends to all nations, of a trust in God who unites all peoples as one.*

ALL Lord, we gather in prayer:  
for the *light* to see the division and war in our own heart, in our own land;  
for the *courage* to work for a society based on mutual trust and a respect for the dignity of all persons;

for the *moral strength* to put a stop to the folly of the arms race and of the possessing of nuclear arms;  
for the *humility* to accept each person, each nation, as our equal within the global community.

READER I *Hark, how the valiant cry aloud for help, and those sent to sue for peace weep bitterly! The highways are deserted; no travelers tread the roads. Covenants are broken, treaties are flouted. Man is of no account [Is 33:7-8].*

ALL The security of the global community now rest on a balance of terror, and peoples starve while nations buy and sell arms in a mad race which has developed a dynamic of its own. Why, Lord? Where is your peace?

READER II *Peace is my parting gift to you, my own peace such as the world cannot give. Set your troubled hearts at rest and banish your fears. [Jn 14:27]*

#### SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

#### MEDITATION

LEADER *The obvious contradiction between the wastes involved in the overproduction of military devices and the extent of unsatisfied needs (developing countries and the marginal and poor elements in rich societies) is in itself an act of aggression against those who are the victims of it. It is an act of aggression which amounts to a crime, for even when armaments are not used, by their cost alone, they kill the poor by causing them to starve. [The Holy See and Disarmament; 1976].*

#### PAUSE

ALL Lord, forgive us our share in this crime. Help us to feed your hungry by re-orienting our world to one of justice.

READER III *The question of disarmament lies at the heart of the problem of international order... We have become used to living in a highly unnatural state of affairs where the shadow of nuclear weapons and of vast and increasing arrays of conventional armaments has virtually come to be accepted as*

*the normal light of day. In this profoundly unhealthy situation there can be no guarantees that national independence and sovereignty, equality of rights, non-resort to force or to the threat of force, and the right of every people to decide its own destiny will in fact be honored as the principles on which we have long agreed that the international order should be based. And yet it is all too obvious that the world is still ineffectively groping for the key to this problem of life and death (Kurt Waldheim; Report on the Work of the Organization; 1977).*

PAUSE

ALL

Lord, we hold some of the answers to this problem in our heart and mind. Help us to translate convictions into practical action.

LEADER

*No one is outside the problem of disarmament; no nation free of its burden. We pray that each one of us, each nation may work actively for a world built not on the terror of arms but on your love and justice.*

PAUSE

ALL

It shall come to pass  
that the mountain of the house of the Lord  
shall be established  
as the highest of the mountains  
and all the nations shall come to it...  
Peoples shall beat their swords into ploughshares  
and their spears into pruning forks.  
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more.  
(Is 2:2-4 passim)

SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

LEADER

*Father, you have given all peoples one common origin, and your will is to gather them as one family in yourself. Fill the hearts of all peoples with the fire of your love and the desire to insure justice for all their brothers and sisters. By sharing the good things you give us, may we secure justice and equity for every human being, an end to all division, and a human society built on love and peace. (Roman Sacramentary; 1974).*

ALL

Amen.

Thomas I. MONAHAN