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MEETING ON THE

*"Identity and mission of the priests
within the Associations of the faithful."*

A further theological and pastoral reflection"

18-23 June, 1983

Taken from

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE LAITY

Mgr. Cordes
Vice-president

... I will limit myself therefore to indicating a few more general orientations which emerge from the discussions as a whole. Two realities call for our attention:

On the one hand, collaboration between priests and laity as experienced by the associations in the exercise, respectively, of the ministerial priesthood and the common priesthood, which are ordered one to another; and on the other hand, further theological reflection on the priestly ministry as a service rendered to the common priesthood within the associations.

1. The Pontifical Council for the Laity has become aware once again of the need to alert Bishops' Conferences to the importance of the role of lay associations in the ecclesial community - a role which cannot be fulfilled unless the Bishops prepare priests for this form of service and make them available for the different lay groups. This pastoral concern must also find expression in providing these priests with the means for an ongoing formation that will be theological, spiritual and human.

2. Many questions remain open and call for further reflection:

2.1. Many Ecclesiastical Assistants expressed the wish and the need to be more fully integrated into a presbyterium and to find some form of priestly community - between the various movements and within each movement.

2.2. Lay people and non-ordained religious can take over tasks which, traditionally, have been carried out by priests; what forms does this service take and how does it fit into the structures of the local Church? (Cont. on p.32)

"PACEM IN TERRIS" AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Twenty years ago Pope John XXIII addressed a challenge to the worldwide Catholic community and to all people of good will everywhere. The challenge - to make peace possible - was contained in an encyclical letter, Pacem in Terris, dated 11 April 1963, only weeks before the beloved Pope's death.

The challenge of John XXIII still stands before us. Wars, preparations for wars, and consequences of wars have scarred deeply the twenty years since Pacem in Terris. But the Pope's splendid vision and prophetic call are no less true and compelling today.

Nowhere is this vision and call more evident than in his strong endorsement of an international organization to assure the "universal common good". That he had the United Nations specifically in mind is clear from the text. This endorsement is grounded in the Pope's understanding of political order, and dependent on his emphasis on the common good. It is important to look closely at both these points and see what their implications are for today.

Political order From even the opening sentence of this encyclical, "order" becomes a prominent theme: "Peace on earth, which men and women of every age most eagerly yearned for, can be firmly established only if the order laid down by God is dutifully observed".(1) The peace which Pope John emphasizes is not simply an absence of conflict. It is a positive presence of sets of relationships - ordered relationships - between men and women, between individuals and the government, between nations, and within the world community as a whole. The order of these relationships must, if they are to promote peace, embody four values: truth, justice, charity and freedom.(35-38)

Political order for Pope John has a dynamic quality. Because it involves both individuals and their communities, it changes and develops according to historical circumstances. Central to the thrust of Pacem in Terris is that we live today in a time of new situations, new questions, new demands. Hence it is imperative that we "read the signs of the times". The Pope singles out as distinctive characteristics of our age the rightful demands for equality and dignity of workers, women, and the developing nations.(33-44)

Pacem in Terris is well known for its listing of the essential human rights which must be protected and promoted if the dignity of every human person is to be recognized. These human rights do not flow from the political order, but are themselves the foundations of that order. Similar to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Pope John's listing includes both civil and political rights and social and economic rights.

Common good Political order is rightfully directed toward the achievement of the common good. It is an all-embracing concept which includes the totality of those conditions - social, political, economic, cultural - by which men and women can reach more completely their full human perfection.

Pacem in Terris lays considerable stress on the concept of the common good. The letter develops what is a primary Christian understanding of the role of government: to promote the common good. Government is not an evil; governmental structures and institutions (laws, agencies, etc.) are precisely the instruments through which the people cooperate together in promoting the common good.

This positive conception of the role of government is made concrete by Pope John when he speaks of the necessity of governments to give "wholehearted and careful attention" to both the social and economic progress of citizens, to the development of essential public services, to the promotion of employment, and to the wider share in a country's cultural advantages. (62)

Need for United Nations It is against this background of an understanding of political order and an emphasis on the common good that we can now appreciate the strong endorsement of the United Nations found in Pacem in Terris. Pope John perceives very clearly the inadequacy of purely national orders to achieve what he calls the "universal common good". (134)

Far-reaching changes have taken place in the sets of relationships within the human family. The complex issues of security and world peace, for example, pertain to a common good much wider than that of any individual nation. We need to address a universal common good, which includes the conditions for peace, development, justice. But the public authorities of individual states simply cannot measure up to this task.

For those who fear either forceful imposition of world government or creation of a vast bureaucracy of global authority, Pope John has serious words of caution. He urges respect for common consent in the establishment of a supra-national public authority. And he repeats the traditional principle of "subsidiarity", stressing that this supra-national public authority tackle only those problems posed by the universal common good and leave local problems to national governments.

Achievement of the ideal which John XXIII proclaims for a global authority promoting the universal common good was the motivation behind the establishment of the United Nations at the end of the Second World War. For this reason the Pope declares with considerable hope : "it is our earnest prayer that the United Nations - in its structure and in its means - may become ever more equal to the magnitude and nobility of its tasks". (145)

Implications for today But what is the contemporary meaning of Pacem in Terris' strong endorsement of the United Nations? After twenty years what practical relevance do the words of Pope John have for us?

Surely the United Nations today is sharply criticized. While many critics are willing to acknowledge UN contributions through its specialized agencies (dealing with refugees, health, relief, education, etc.) they point to performances in the Security Council and General Assembly with dismay. Building a world order, however, is no easy task. In any objective evaluation, the United States bears considerable responsibility for problems in the United Nations today, since our government has frequently chosen to ignore the multilateral approaches of UN mechanisms, and has engaged in tactics to downgrade the image of the international organization.

The Message of Pacem in Terris nevertheless remains as true today as it was twenty years ago. Peace will only be possible if an international political order conducive of the universal common good is concretely promoted.

Peter Henriot, S.J.

(Fr. Henriot is director of the "Center of Concern", Washington, D.C.).

We publish here a review of the Second Brandt Report, which appeared in the "Guardian Weekly" earlier this year (author: Thomas Harford). We thank the editor for granting us the permission to publish it.

We hope this article will be of interest to our readers since the North-South Dialogue is one of the important issues that one of the working-groups, co-ordinated by Tony Martyris, from India, is working on.

THE INDIVISIBLE WORLD OF BRANDT II

It is three years since Willy Brandt's independent commission produced its first report on the world economy, and they have not been well spent. The world's economic crisis is graver. The slow growth of world trade became last year's absolute decline. The mountain of Third World debt is greater. The banking system is weaker. The deflationary policies of the developed world, as country after country scrabbles for larger shares of dwindling markets, offer no clearer promise of significant recovery than they did in 1980. Brandt I, with what must be recognised as notable perspicacity, foresaw the consequences of the course on which the First World's governments had embarked, and warned against them. Yet, through the Cancun summit, three meetings of the Big Seven's leaders, and countless gatherings of their finance ministers, the message of Brandt has largely been ignored. The arrival of Mr. George Shultz at the State Department, West German fear of unemployment, the election of the French Socialists - even the speedy welcome to Brandt II from our own Foreign Office, in such contrast with its reaction three years ago - all point to openings in the Friedmanite phalanx. But the dangers remain of doing far too little far too late. The need for a second Brandt - "Common Crisis" - was clear. It is welcome.

The first lesson of Brandt is the fact of inter-dependence. More than ever before, the effects of policies pursued in one country rebound on others, and no country can or should be free to pursue unfettered its own way regardless of good neighbourliness. That road leads not only to damage abroad, but to compound damage at home. The restrictive policies adopted by the major industrial nations in the wake of the OPEC-induced inflation in 1980, sharply depressed both the prices and the quantities of their commodity imports, there by catching much of the Third World in a pincer between

falling export values and rising import costs. Combined with the burden of high interest rates on existing debts, many were confronted with the need to borrow more merely to service their existing payments. The consequence for the banks in the West, which were mistakenly encouraged to lend, is weakened balanced sheets as their assets - the loans which are being rescheduled - look doubtful. So they are cutting back their lending. The consequence for the less developed countries is that they are unable to finance even present levels of imports. So they too are cutting back. The consequence for us is that our exports fall. One job in twenty, and one industrial job in six in the United States, depends on exports to the Third World. So our unemployment rises.

There is no point in hoping against hope that the recovery which is probably now under way in America can alone lead the rest of the world out of slump. America's reduced importance and the likely decline in the dollar as its current account deficit reaches a predicted \$ 31 billion, will mean that its impetus can only be mild. It will certainly not be enough to lift Europe, nor will it be enough to lift commodity prices. Brandt rightly argues that emergency measures are vital. Above all, the United States should relax its monetary policy, while Britain, Japan and Germany relax their budgetary policies. Secondly, the IMF should provide its members with more SDRs - the "special drawing rights" which are the nearest thing to world money. Only a quick issue of SDRs could stabilise Third World living standards and imports.

Those are holding measures, the first thumbs in a dyke which merits thorough structural repair. We must never again allow ourselves the luxury of fictional loans which in all likelihood cannot ever be repaid. Existing debt should be refinanced through official channels while for the future we must lend less and give more. We must stop paying lip service to the UN target of 0.7 per cent of national income in aid, and rapidly achieve it. We must give, moreover, in ways which help the sepoys, not the satraps. The most successful aid is soundly based on the projects which accord with the training and the aptitudes of the aided. The projects can be big : an irrigation dam, for example. But more often they are small : a pumping system, a new bridge, or an agricultural advice service. Best of all, they impart skills and an ability permanently to raise living standards. Brandt rightly commends matching funds for some of the most effective non-governmental organisations, such as Oxfam, Save the Children, and the World Council of

Churches. But our own national programme should also be modelled much more closely on the project-based aid of the Netherlands, Canada, and the Scandinavian countries.

The North has a task, too, in putting its own house in order. Brandt quotes one of the Bank For International Settlements' rare flights into classical allusion: "Between the Scylla of a renewed acceleration of inflation and the Charybdis of protracted stagnation, the path looks extremely narrow". We doubt indeed that there is such a path without a basic reform of many of our domestic and international institutions. A greater degree of currency stability, together with the swap arrangements to support it, is essential. Unlike the old Bretton Woods system, there must be a real obligation on the part of countries in large and growing current account surplus to expand, possibly by sanctioning countervailing tariffs. Brandt II rightly recommends a deal between OPEC (OIL countries) and the developed world to stabilise the increase in real oil prices. The real price of such a dwindling resource is bound to rise, and it would be far less disruptive for that rise to be gradual. But countries like Britain, which have overvalued their currencies, will still suffer rising inflation as their currencies fall and import prices go up. Higher commodity prices, a condition of Third World recovery, are also inflationary. Yet we still have much to do to ensure that our pay bargaining systems are able to absorb such shocks without triggering the familiar price-wage-price spiral. If there is any criticism of Brandt II, it is merely that it does not ask nor answer this central question about why the North depressed its demands and its output in response to the price hikes of 1972-3 and the subsequent oil shocks.

Thomas HARFORD

"JOB FOR A NEIGHBOUR" CAMPAIGN

Josefina ERRAZURIZ

The last encyclical of Pope John Paul II on human work, read at this time of recession affecting our country and many other parts of the world, disturbs our conscience. How can we remain indifferent when confronted by this situation of unemployment if, as christians, we consider work to be a fundamental right of man and woman? Can we who do not have to suffer this tragedy continue to be at peace when many of our neighbours in our environment are being destroyed?

Thousands of unemployed and their families, in the area of Santiago, are abandoned by God if no one comes to their assistance, if no one approaches them as brothers and sisters to understand their pain, to care for them and to try to alleviate their distress.

Christ is suffering in each of the unemployed who, though wanting to work in order to support their families, cannot find a job. Christ is being crucified again today, close to us, in each one of them. The awareness of this impelled the CLC members to do something about it, something which is more than just giving alms; it is to offer them dignified jobs.

What is expected to be achieved

We are aware that we cannot offer a real solution but only temporary relief. It is merely a matter of trying to do what we possibly can at this critical moment. The real solution should come from general politics directed towards facing this enormous national and international disaster called unemployment, taking into serious consideration the value of human labor.

It is a matter of being brothers and sisters in fact and not only in words by merely saying the "Our Father". It is not to ask as Cain did: "Am I my brother's keeper?" but to let ourselves be penetrated by the feelings of Christ, who made Himself our brother and taught us to do likewise. It is a matter of sharing because no one of us lives in abundance. It is to part with what we are accustomed to owning, what we earn for a living, in order to share with

those who have nothing with which to feed their children... Today... not tomorrow... because it might be too late... homes destroyed, children abandoned and miserable, child prostitution, drug addicts, physical and psychological illnesses. It is "to give until it hurts" (Fr. Alberto Hurtado); not simply to dole out food, clothing or medicines, but to provide job opportunities so that the heads of the families will be able to meet these needs with the salary they earn from their toil, with full human dignity.

What is being done

With this preoccupation a group of CLC members got in touch with leaders of other apostolic movements in the Church. At the first meeting, there were discussions about the CLC initiative and the feasibility of embarking on such a difficult task. It seemed like a fool's undertaking. The organisers were given the task of consulting the Bishop on this lay initiative.

The meeting with the Archbishop of Santiago, Cardinal Raúl Silva Henríquez, was very encouraging. He not only gave us his blessing to go ahead but also offered us the use of one of his offices and the possibility of operating through Caritas-Santiago.

After this confirmation of our initiative we started to work; some months later, a second confirmation arrived: A Pastoral Letter of the Chilean Bishops' Conference. Entitled, "Called to Share", it read: "We hope that our words will lead to action. Therefore, at the national level, we assume as ours the campaign 'Job for a Neighbour'. May this proclamation of love echo throughout our territory. Not to arouse criticisms but in order to give positive contributions from each one of us so as to eliminate this misfortune affecting all of us."

Today, thanks to the wide acceptance we have received, we are able to say that during its first ten months of existence, the campaign has been able to finance 81 projects of a social character in the most needy sectors of Santiago. It has given dignified jobs with reasonable remuneration - at least for the time being - to 666 unemployed heads of families.

These 81 projects can be grouped as follows:

- 4 concerning the completion or construction of nurseries for children or homes for the aged
- 9 for the construction of classrooms
- 21 for improving community services: gardens, bakeries, shops, nurseries, painting places, putting public squares in order, building artesian wells, etc.
- 24 constructions of sites for community use
- 7 putting some community centres in order
- 5 constructions of chapels in towns not having any
- 12 repairing of chapels.

The campaign only pays the salaries and social benefits of the workers as provided for by the law. The rest of the financial aspects of each project must be taken care of, in all cases, by the interested community.

As you can see, the jobs undertaken are all of great social interest for the poorest sections. Furthermore, they are jobs which require a lot of laborers so that many heads of families can be reached. In addition to their salaries, they receive the family allowance to which social work taxes give them a right.

Another very positive result is the way in which the unemployed organise themselves in some places. They meet in order to reflect together and to plan out projects of community interest in their own towns. We have excellent manifestations of this solidarity and community growth, thanks to the campaign.

The data we have given are gathered only from Santiago. In other places in the country like Valparaiso, Osorno, Punta Arenas, Los Andes, etc., something is also being done in this area but we have no statistics since they do not depend on us.

All the people involved in this campaign to provide jobs are volunteers. We rely on the valuable collaboration of professionals, housewives, businessmen, etc. They either give money to pay the workers or supervise the jobs being undertaken in the towns to express their solidarity with the unemployed.

Personal reflection

The truth of the matter is that up to this moment everything functions as if falling from the hands of God. For this reason the future is uncertain and what we have been able to do so far creates in us a feeling of being helpless servants with empty hands but with a lot to be done. The future is uncertain but we have the certainty that the Lord is doing something important through us.

I think that this campaign is, above all, a "sign" in the Gospel sense of the word. It is a christian witness which implies becoming aware and being converted: denunciation and annunciation. Awareness and denunciation of an inhuman situation; conversion and annunciation of the Good News that we are all brothers and sisters, children of one Father.

I believe that what is most important in this campaign is to pray a lot so that we may be able to listen to the voice of God speaking through this situation of unemployment. Thus, we let God perform a great miracle today in our midst, a miracle leading to our change of heart so that the hearts of other men and women may be converted and that we may feel and act as brothers and sisters.

I think that this miracle (for it is a miracle that is happening) can be considered a modern version of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. In the Gospel, Jesus did not multiply the 5 loaves and 2 fishes so as to have a lot of bread and fishes with which to feed the five thousand. No, it was not like that. He took the 5 loaves and the 2 fishes which were useless. After he gave thanks to the Father, he broke them and distributed them to the disciples and the disciples in turn did the same for the people who divided what little they had and shared it with their neighbours... And in this way all were fed and something remained.

Our Risen Lord lives and wants to perform His miracles again for us. To do so He needs disciples who, trusting in His word, are willing to share what little they have so that those who have nothing can have a minimum amount of work. If we allow ourselves to go on sharing, He will perform the miracle; He will not only provide work but also our faith will be strengthened and we will have a formidable message to announce: that Jesus is risen and is Lord and this can be felt in that, despite the materialism and competitiveness of this world, we love one another in a concrete way.

YOUTH - PROGRESSIO

My name is Giovanna. I am 24 years old and I am Italian. I was asked if I would be interested in working for YOUTH PROGRESSIO. I accepted wholeheartedly for several reasons. I very much like the idea of using it as an instrument of encounter, of growth and of collaboration among youth. Furthermore, I love the opportunities and the space given for diversities and distances to confront, understand, accept and love one another. The common denominator, our age range, can serve as an occasion for sharing very different experiences and life situations.

Therefore, it seems important to me that these pages should be developed along two main lines. One line would be the gathering together of different experiences which in every country form the background of our being young and of our being youth members in a CLC group; our relationship to the Lord and to the world, to faith and to society, starting from our concrete existential situations.

Moving along in these directions would mean telling each other about ourselves, expressing who we are; what problems we have to face, how we live out our relationship with the Lord in the world today, how we seek Him, respond to Him, adhere to Him, to His plan for us.

The second direction for our work could be the mutual help we can give to our communities, exchanging materials about meetings, issues challenging us and those we have to confront, the conventions and congresses taking place, the occasions for encounters at all levels: local, national and international.

In this area, information about what others are and do would certainly be a help and encouragement for all our communities, besides being an opportunity to get to know one another.

Furthermore, it could be meaningful to follow, in YOUTH PROGRESSIO, the activity of the working groups established by the Executive Council. To achieve this, any contribution whatever given by those working in any of these groups will always be welcome.

I therefore invite everyone to send me material in order to accomplish this plan and to get to know concretely what is going on in these working groups.

* * *

As for me personally, I would like to present myself and to let you know a little about my life:

My 24 years have been almost entirely spent in Italy and in Rome, a country and a city I deeply love despite the fact that I know with clarity the contradictions existing in them, and, at times, have even suffered on account of them. Perhaps it is precisely because of these contradictions that I got to love them both.

Next February I hope to finish my studies in Philosophy. I have been working for three years now; the only advantage I see in this is that the job helps me to support myself. The disadvantages, however, are many, the greatest being the inability to make use of, in the smallest degree, what I have studied and am studying. It has been quite a trying experience for me because I am aware that, being who I am and knowing what I have learned, I could do a lot more, and better. Let us say that I can face this situation firstly because of my lack of dependence upon my family and secondly, because I got married; these have been two important moments in my life's decisions, and the job made them possible.

There is still another problem in my life today, that is, being unable to understand up to this moment how to respond to the Lord from within. I encountered Jesus during my studies in school, after the traditional religious instructions which were relatively sterile. From the very beginning I admired His way of being human, of relating Himself to life, His deep sense of justice. I have tried to answer to this encounter in my life, passing from one area to another, from one community service or service outside the community to another. At present, for me Jesus is not only a just Man who sacrificed Himself for what He preached, He is also Lord. But I believe I still have not found the way in which I personally should respond to Him.

What I have done until now in trying to answer Him is to say "yes", as much as possible, to all that is asked of me, and at this level this is the reason for my collaboration in PROGRESSIO. At times this attitude gives me serenity; at other times it gives rise to anxiety, to the fear of having lost some things and of being unable to recover them today, in and for the Lord, and for the world.

The things I fear I have lost are, concretely: the sense of justice Christ has which has attracted me to Him from the very beginning and a sensitivity towards the social and the political, which I used to have; but, because I do not know how to channel these, I have the impression that I am wasting my time.

* * *

Well, in short, that is who I am. I hope that all of us can collaborate in this Youth Section. I would especially like to hear from the participants of the Formation Course in "Malta '82"; some of whom I have written to personally.

Love and greetings to all of you. In the Lord,

Giovanna CHIRRE

(In this issue, there are three items: one from Spain, one from Canada and the last, "Reflexions from a warship".)

FORMIGAL '83

Formigal is the name of a little village situated at an altitude of 1600 metres in the mountains of the Aragon Pyrenees. It was there in the second half of July that the local community of Zaragoza held a meeting. After various attempts, the following plan of action resulted: in our local community there are different groups, each one of which has, in recent times, been evolving in its own way;

it seemed the right time to meet and share how we had been living this process; we had our own history and many points in common and a rich experience which had not, however, been manifested in an explicit way. Furthermore, all this would make for a better understanding of the life of our world and national communities and will thus facilitate mutual interaction.

The best method, we thought, was a sharing of experiences, rather than a formation course, with some learning and others teaching, or a mere exposition of ideas. We decided to concern ourselves with listening and sharing our experience of themes which have, at times, been distorted without concerning ourselves with making decisions or reaching conclusions.

With this orientation and method, the meeting developed in a "family" atmosphere, the tasks of cleaning, feeding, housework...being shared. In various listening sessions we approached themes which channelled our progress and which we chose as the most important at this point in time: my experience of community, of the Exercises, of service in the local, national and world communities and initiation groups. Our assistant, Fr. Artigues, gave us a summary of the history of the last 12 years of our community, which made our origins much clearer to us, especially with regard to the transition from Sodality to CLC.

Parallel to this were presentations about the National and World Assemblies. There was prayer in common and the Eucharist presided over the day. Finally, a short walk over the mountain gave a festive tone to the meeting.

The experience was very gratifying for us. Without entering into the content because of lack of space, I must highlight the benefits of going on calmly sharing, without discussion, the experience which each one has lived. It produces a marvellous effect inasmuch as it clarifies many things and does so at an existential level. It lights up ways to go in the future and reinforces the common points.

Paco SANZ
Salvador CLC
Spain

OPEN THE DOORS TO CHRIST

(Report on "Monday Evenings' Faith Experience" '82-'83)

Last autumn, some CLC members of the Leunis Center launched the program "Monday Evenings' Faith Experience" for young people from 18 to 30 years of age. These meetings (18 this year) for deepening faith experience enabled the participants to relate themselves to Christ and to the Gospel values, as well as to the main aspects of christian life (faith today, the commandment of love, forgiveness, prayer, christian witness and commitment, the calls, the crises, the meaning of suffering, of resurrection...) An average of 12 young people attended the sessions each evening, making up a total of 40 young adults gathered together, nurturing and questioning one another.

"Monday Evenings' Faith Experience - that's Diane, Josée, Linda, Sylvain, Maurice, Yvan, Yves, François, Jean and all the others whom the Lord gathered together every Monday evening... An encounter, a welcome, a fraternal sharing... A taste of truth, a feeling of confidence and of well-being. It was in this atmosphere that each one was able to contribute what he/she has lived, his/her questions, receiving and at the same time giving some answers. I appreciated the work of the facilitators very much. Faithful to the Gospel and to the teaching of the Church, they helped us know our faith better. These evenings have shown me how best to serve the Lord and the Church."

Carmen S. (26 years)

"What a chance to find myself in the company of other young people!... to share, to pray, to be formed... It is good to know I'm not the only 'fool' who believes. These meetings have given me the stimulus to be closer to Jesus and to share with others what I already know."

Pierre L. (26 years)

"These evenings have been real breaks in my life, oases of peace. They have brought me closer to God; they have given me a better taste of prayer, the strength to live a little more according to the Word of God... also, the courage to bear witness to my faith."

Diane P. (22 years)

Through the "Monday Evenings' Faith Experience" about a dozen of these young people have in the same way been able to intensify their search for Christ and to satisfy their need for a faith which is more alive, integrated and incarnated. Some, through personal guidance; others, through introduction to prayer or participation in sessions of initiation to the Spiritual Exercises, or even through the experience of the Exercises themselves (in daily life or in closed retreat, according to the needs of the individual).

On the wavelength of the Spirit

From the Church and from christians, young people expect a lot today.

"I would like our faith to be so great that it would shine through, that we would no longer put on masks, that we would be transfigured by the love of God. I would like us to roll up our sleeves and, TOGETHER, start building the Kingdom of God. Would that we had the force to fight against all forms of evil."

Diane P.

"What heartaches! I no longer understand. What a distance there is between my ideal and reality! I see the christian people dispersed, divided... We ought to form small communities of about 100 people everywhere, with one community helping the other... be a living example of the love of God. It is not enough to celebrate the Eucharist; we have to become 'eucharist', to commit ourselves

to following Christ. My encounter with Jesus Christ Saviour, my return to the Church dates back to only a year ago; I am still in search of how I should be in this Church; even if at times I'm a little ashamed of it, I continue to believe and to hope in it."

Carmen S.

If we listen to the Spirit, such remarks cannot but make us question ourselves. In this light and by way of conclusion, we would like to share with you some of the convictions that this experience with young people from 18-30 years has imprinted on us:

- 1) The glowing reality of diocesan pastoral projects in these past years. "Build communities which are alive", "Together, announce Jesus Christ", "Christian responsibility and commitment".
- 2) The importance of working for the formation of authentic christians: integrated formation, spiritual as well as doctrinal, human as well as apostolic.
- 3) The absolute necessity of authentic witnesses of faith, of educators "in love" with Jesus Christ, attached to the Church and desirous of making both loved.
- 4) Finally, as Msgr J. Julien, bishop of Beauville, said in France: "Save the franc, this is important. Save the economy, that is even more important. Save the young people, that is the priority of priorities."

How do we gatehr together high school youth, university students, those who are jobless, the workers and the professionals of Quebec? How do we give back to them the taste of life in the footsteps of Christ and the courage to face the future awaiting them? That remains to be known. It is a challenge which, though modestly, we shall try to take up once more next year, with the grace of God and the help of the Holy Spirit!

Diane CHAGNON

SOME REFLEXIONS ON A WARSHIP

(Extract from a letter)

I often take a walk on my warship and let myself be transformed by the Lord. Little by little my life becomes unified. On May 28 I leave on an international military pilgrimage to Lourdes with 4 or 5 other young people from the ship.

I think the time is ripe to start creating something christian here, on my ship. Pray for this because I am a little apprehensive. My life has not always been easy in this military context, but it is where I should be and I realise that it is the "Here-and-Now of God" for me today. The more consistent the "Here-and-Now of God" becomes, the more I feel the call and the desire of a life where God is everything...

Jean-Michel

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INTERVIEW ABOUT THE ASTALLI CENTRE

How was the idea of this Centre for Refugees born and who in particular is it aimed at?

1. In a letter to the Jesuit Superiors, Father Arrupe described the refugee problem as "a new modern apostolate for the whole Society, of great importance both today and in the future and the bringer of great benefits even to the Society itself". Following on this particular show of interest, the USG/UISG Commission for Justice and Peace, by means of a circular on the refugee problem, asked the religious in Italy to provide, among various other possible types of intervention and help, "a place in the centre of Rome where essential services for the refugees could be provided, as well as part time volunteers to perform the various services".

Such requests were also made to the CLC Community "dei Locali" a little before the summer of 1981 by Fr. Jose Antonio Esquivel S.J. and by Fr. Achille d'Ari S.J., assistant of the aforementioned Community, and on November 10th, of the same year in the Community's headquarters in Via degli Astalli, 14a, the Astalli Centre for Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees was opened, under the protection of the General Curia of the Society of Jesus, in the person of Fr. Michael Campbell-Johnston S.J., the father at present responsible for this kind of service.

What is the situation of the refugee in Rome (the civil aspect before the Italian Government, assistance, etc.)?

2. Why Eritreans and Ethiopians? To reply to this question we need first to glance at the situation of refugees in Italy, and, in particular, in Rome. First of all, it should be pointed out that Italy officially accepts only refugees from other European countries because she ratified the 1951 Geneva Convention with a geographical limitation.

Those entering Italy who come from countries outside Europe are considered to be "in transit" and are not the responsibility of the Italian Government. In other words, they cannot obtain work or residence permits and cannot get into refugee camps belonging to the Government. At the time of the opening of the Astalli Centre, the refugees in Rome alone were estimated at a number oscillating between 60,000 and 80,000 (at present they seem to exceed 100,000). Of these some are students or immigrants in search of work, others are recognised under the mandate of the Rome Agency of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), certainly, not all are in circumstances of particular need.

The refugees who were in a particular state of need in 1981 (and, unfortunately, are still so today) were Eritreans and Ethiopians, and thus the option for opening a centre that could in some way help them both practically and humanly.

What do you do concretely for them?

3. At present the Centre, as a result of restructuring work, done for the most part by volunteers from other Italian CLC Communities, can offer 100-120 hot meals a day. The distribution of meals takes place only in the evenings because the volunteers who ensure the service are, for the most part, lay people and are therefore committed during the day to work or study; on Sunday, however, the meal is distributed at 12 noon.

In addition, there is a service for the distribution of clothing to those who need it.

Finally, courses in Italian and in English are given and scientific materials are made available which could be of use to them in the future.

From where do you get your financial resources and the personnel for this activity?

4. As I said above, the services are conducted, for the most part, by lay people helped by religious of various orders. At present the volunteers come from three CLC Communities: the "Locali" group, the "Prima Primaria" group and the community of the "Istituto Massimo", making a total of about 25-30 people who guarantee daily turns for the kitchen and the other services.

The financial resources have, up to now, been assured by the offerings which come from the General Curia of the Jesuits, religious communities (Jesuit and otherwise) and private individuals.

In general, what is the human and psychological condition of these refugees (their frustrations, pains, problems and hopes)?

5. What strike me most about the refugees are two psychological conditions: the first is a condition of sadness, of suffering and loneliness as a result of the situations they have left behind them. We cannot forget that most of them come from countries where war or situations of civil conflict exist, countries where physical and psychological tortures are practised (many bear the signs of it): they are, for example, erased, in every sense, from the records at the Registry Office, and are thus certain of never being able to return to their country. The second is the hope-disappointment see-saw which results from being or not being accepted as refugees by other countries (for the most part, North America).

In such a context, it is not easy to get close, to understand and be a real support, but I maintain that even the mere performance of any service among them, by trying to listen, smile, accept, can be a help. Normally, the refugees' stay in Italy before being accepted by other countries varies from 6 to 12 months, and, certainly, the awareness of being in a "passing through" situation does not help the building up of stable relationships, but, even so, the desire for human encounter is alive and perceptible.

What contacts have you established with other civil or ecclesiastical organisations which are interested in this problem?

6. Certainly, the Astalli Centre is not the only source of help for refugees. In addition to the UNHCR, which I spoke about earlier, there are other organisations with which we are in contact and together with which we confront, in periodic meetings, the most important problems. First of all, Caritas Romana, which has opened a Reception centre for Foreigners, supports and helps in various ways about 150 refugees and has a plan, which is in the late stages of realisation, to provide 1000 meals a day. Then there is ACSE (Combonian Assistance for Foreign

Students) which offers a variety of services to refugees and others in need. And finally, UCEI (Central Office for Italian Emigration), which depends on the Italian Episcopal Conference, and WCC (The World Council of Churches), which perform the service of helping refugees to get the necessary documentation, and conduct the work of finding guarantors so that they can emigrate.

7. Certainly, the picture I have tried to present of the refugee situation in general, and in the Astalli Centre in particular, is not complete, but I hope I have sufficiently highlighted the enormity of the phenomenon and the smallness of the means. Certainly, there are volunteers who perform precious work, but many more are needed so that the existing services may be extended and other equally important ones may be assured.

So far, the means have not been lacking, but the situation of uncertainty which comes from trusting in offerings, in addition to the ever growing needs, calls for further generosity on the part of all (religious communities, public and private bodies) who can provide it.

Massimo BALBIS
Person-in-charge
Astalli Centre

ECHOES... ECHOES... ECHOES...

... ENGLISH-SPEAKING CANADA ...

Reflecting on our past histories is an important source of consolation for us, individually and communally as it puts us in touch with the companionship of the Lord in our past histories. We have received much from reflecting with you on your past histories. Please share with us this reflection on the history of the Christian Life Communities of English-speaking Canada.

To understand our family, one has to recognise that our formation is a result of the fruitful apostolate of the Spiritual Exercises which has been growing in Guelph, Ontario, over the past fifteen years. This apostolate, under Father John English and his team, has helped pioneer the re-introduction of the Spiritual Exercises to the church. When Father English called us together (four couples), he did it out of a felt call to share the Spiritual Exercises with the laity. Further, he realized that we would need community and that the community which would best fit our Ignatian charism was the Christian Life Communities. A previous visit by José Gsell and others from Rome must have influenced this awareness.

In the fall of 1976 Father John English, having taken some of us through the Spiritual Exercises, called us together. We began simply by sharing our awareness and seeking the grace we needed in our life of following the Lord. "Vie Chrétienne" and Father Drolet's book, "Building Christian Communities," were used. As well, Father English gave basic theology and taught spiritual guidance as those of us who had been through the Spiritual Exercises began guiding the other community members through the Spiritual Exercises in daily life.

In Guelph and surrounding cities others became attracted to our formation. Our apostolate then became the formation of others into our way of life. Sister Barbara Paleczny joined our community and our developing formation program was compiled and published in a booklet entitled "Growing Together in Christ". This preparation for the Exercises tool is presently being revised to bring people to a greater realisation of the CLC identity and their call to it, as well as an introduction to the General Principles. It will simply be called CLC Pre-community formation.

Because of the great number of people interested in making the Exercises, we, the original community, recognised the need to expand our formation apostolate. Fr. John Veltri, of the Guelph Retreat Team, joined us. Together we set up a three-year formation program. The first year was basically the "Growing Together in Christ" program, followed by a year (depending on individual needs) of making the Spiritual Exercises. In the final year participants who had completed the Exercises in the second year were aided in guiding the second year participants through the Spiritual Exercises.

This program has been published by Fr. John Veltri; it is entitled "Orientations II". Our busiest year of the program saw twenty guides being trained while guiding forty exercitants through the Exercises. We, the Canadian CLC'ers, are no longer involved in this program and it is being carried out along with other valuable formation programs under Fr. John Veltri at the Guelph Center of Spirituality.

Where do the English-speaking Canadians go from here?

1. We need to become further identified with the CLC "vision".
2. Having been given a rich formation in the Spiritual Exercises we must now listen to and nurture the Lord's call to build His Kingdom.

Several other important considerations have taken place which will also need our attention in the future. In French-speaking Canada we have a mature, older community. We need to collaborate with them and seek strength from them. Also, as we come together with them we can be witnesses of God's loving action by helping to heal the division between our two cultures. In this vein we need to collaborate and share with the United States' CLC's.

Further afield from Guelph other CLC's are forming. In Halifax, Nova Scotia, an older CLC has applied for and been accepted into the English-speaking Community. There is a Sodality in Toronto, Ontario, which seeks to join our family. CLC's are forming in British Columbia, the Mid-West, Winnipeg, Northern Ontario and the Eastern Provinces. Many directors of the Spiritual Exercises have moved out from their internship program at Guelph and as they bring people through the Exercises and recognize their need for Christian Community we should be present with our CLC vision. Pray that we can form an adequate National Body to service these CLC'ers in formation.

Finally English-speaking Canada has twinning relationships in Africa and Latin America. We have so much to learn from these vital older members. How do we actualize these relationships to make them mutually fruitful?

Peter PELOSO

... CHINA ...

Dear Friends,

Greetings from the CLC of the Republic of China. We want to share with you some of our experiences during the period from Providence '82 until now.

The General Assembly for John, Theresa and myself was a real gift from the Lord; we learnt more about our CLC charism, we felt the call to be a World Community and we experienced this with all of you.

We couldn't keep this grace for ourselves only, so when we came back to Taiwan we wrote a special issue "Providence '82" with articles of Theresa, John and myself for our Chinese CLC brothers and sisters (if one day you can read Chinese we will be very happy to send you a copy!). We went also to different parts of the Island to share with our groups the experience of Providence.

One of the points we shared was the importance of the Spiritual Exercises, and now, thanks be to God, there are six communities doing the Exercises in daily life. Some of the groups are in the 8th month, some prefer, for this first time, to finish them in ten weeks. Next Monday the Ecclesiastical Assistants will meet to talk about this process and experience. We all feel the importance of using this special instrument for the formation of our CLC members.

Some time (two years) ago we used our magazine "Between Friends" to conscientize our CLC that we are a Community for Service, for others, a Community with a Mission. The talks in Providence with all of you, Tony (India), Wilfred (Sri Lanka), Bebs (Philippines), Isi, Setsuko (Japan), etc. and our brothers and sisters from South America and Africa, were a real grace and a challenge for us towards mission. We still don't do very much but there are members who go and help the economically poor, the sick, the old people, and we also help in the parishes, giving religious instruction, in the liturgy, etc.. We are still learning.

Our CLC members are middle to high class, most of whom are university students or just graduated; we haven't entered yet the workers' field, although it is a very promising field for our mission.

On March 20th we celebrated the CLC Day and the inauguration of our new CLC National Service Center. You are all welcome, any day, any time ! Our new address is 24, Hsin Hai Rd. Sect. 1, 9th fl., National Service Center CLC, Taipei (107), Taiwan, R.O.C. On that day, for the first time in our CLC history, four of our members made the permanent consecration in the CLC, and six more made the consecration for two or three years. For this we invite you to give thanks to the Lord.

On May (14-15th) we had our National Assembly. This time the theme was: "Looking at the past, Evaluating our present, Discerning the future". In the evening of the 14th., Fr. Simon Chu, former national vice-EA, helped the group to become acquainted with the thirty years history of the CLC in Taiwan. He stressed mainly the way the Lord works in history.

The next morning, based on a questionnaire sent to the members before the meeting, the whole group together shared reflections on the present situation of the CLC in Taiwan. During two hours members only (not EA) shared their insights. All came from real life, and were very concrete and quite mature. Very naturally there were insights and experiences on different aspects which have been stressed lately: mission, formation following the process of the Spiritual Exercises, progress towards a National and World Community.

The last part of the assembly was dedicated to the election of the new President and Vice President for the National Federation (Community). The way the only candidate was chosen is very significant. Only five days before the Assembly day we didn't have any candidate, so I invited several who have made two and three years' commitment, plus other officials of the adult and youth federations, for a two hour process of prayer and discernment before the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel of the new secretariate. Several members expressed real difficulties to accept the office of National President, as if in the case of accepting the office marriage would have to be postponed, studies in the States would have to be cancelled, present pressing work would have to be given up. These persons were ready to sacrifice these things as a concrete expression of

their commitment made in their consecration: "Jesus Christ I belong to you..." In this atmosphere of prayer a candidate was finally chosen and proposed for election to the assembly.

During the whole event of our National Assembly, several important attitudes could be felt. There was progress in the process of integrating past and present and of gaining a clearer vision of the future.

There was a greater lay participation and a desire to prepare for an even greater one.. Finally there was a progressive assimilation of the lines of the World CLC, like the tendency towards a National and World Community, the stress upon the Spiritual Exercises, considering the CLC way of life as a true lay vocation.

In the future, following the decision made in the last World Assembly, Providence' 82, we will slowly move away from the federation structure towards a National (and World) Community, expressed in Local Communities, and led by an Executive Committee. This Executive Committee will have several commissions to take care of people and of the different aspects in the National CLC life. We will keep stressing the Spiritual Exercises. We will work to have more and more members with commitment for longer time and even permanent commitment, giving them more and more responsibilities in the CLC. This leadership (in service) group will make us feel the way of life of this lay community. We will keep on clarifying our mission in terms of service to the concrete society and local Church in which we are living, without forgetting our World Community.

The whole event brought us consolation and hope and courage to meet the problems we are still facing.

In union of prayers from the CLC of China

Ricardo GONZALEZ, S.J.

... **BRAZIL** ...

Dear companions of our world community:

We would like to take this opportunity to say a few words about the journey we have undertaken in Brazil. For some time now the lay people of our country have been looking for a certain "space" in which to deepen their identity. In this historic moment, the CLC is responding in a special way to this desire of the lay people to become apostles at the service of the Church and the world. This response is made concrete when we propose themes like Ignatian spirituality, deeper community life and service in all sectors of life to different groups throughout the country. We often hear groups and individuals we have met in many cities of our country say: "That is precisely what we lack."

We are not pretending to say, however, that the CLC is the only way for Christians to live their faith at a deeper level. But it has certainly become an effective instrument at the service of groups that are already moving towards a greater consciousness of their being the Church.

We introduce this new development through formation courses for assistants which last four days. They are intended for people with experience of the Spiritual Exercises who are interested in guiding groups in accordance with the dynamics of the CLC. These people, to the extent that the will of God is revealed to them in this regard, are then able to make themselves more capable of meeting the desires for greater commitment to CLC on the part of the groups with which they are in contact.

To the members who are already in CLC groups, we try to offer opportunities for retreats along the lines of individually guided Spiritual Exercises. At present we are trying to cut down on big formation sessions because we are convinced that the privileged place for experiencing the CLC way of life is the particular community to which they belong. At the moment we are thinking of organising seminars on subjects which are of interest to lay people, for example: "the socio-political aspects of life in Latin America",

"lay spirituality", "vocation of the laity", etc. These seminars will be open to all people actively involved in the Church, whether they be CLC members or not. It is a service we wish to render to the Church as a whole.

The CLC in Brazil has grown enormously in these past two years. There are at present about 40 communities which have been formed during this time in different states of the country which are hundreds of kilometers away from each other.

This has made our work much more demanding and it is for this reason that we are trying to make the CLC in Brazil more dynamic. We have established a provisional national center (a house which the Society of Jesus has made available to us for a year) which is in Rio de Janeiro. We are trying to find financial resources so that the CLC can be financially independent. We continue to ensure that our bulletin REVISAO is, as far as possible, an instrument for sharing experiences among the different groups. Finally, we had our elections of members of the new National Council since the previous one had already been in office for three years. This was done through consultations with all the communities. They have expressed the wish that not all the new members of the Service Council come from Rio de Janeiro. The people chosen by the communities were: Maria Clara, Carlos Alexandre, Albino and myself. After the elections, we took over responsibility.

To conclude, we expressed our desire to be in greater communion with the World Community and, in a special way, with our brothers and sisters in Latin America who are with us on the pastoral road marked out by the Bishops' Conference of Puebla (Preferential Option for the poor and for youth).

United with all of you in the desire for an always better and greater service to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Carlos Eduardo CAMPOS

2.3. The fact that lay people and non-ordained religious have apart in the spiritual "animation" of the movements must not make us lose sight of the necessity both of the presence of the ordained minister within the associations and of the latter's commitment to fostering priestly vocations.

3. You stressed on various occasions the existential dimension of the Ecclesiastical Assistant's sacramental service, both for the individual and for the group. In this regard, it would be good to continue within the movements the reflection begun during the meeting held at Grottaferata in 1982, on the theme, "Penance and Reconciliation"; several of you took part in this meeting. It would also be good to follow very closely the event of the forthcoming Synod.

4. As to what the laity expect from the priests, I should like to stress the following:

- that priests be close to the reality experienced by the laity, and capable of listening to lay people;
- that their lives be a witness to what they preach and express joy in their priesthood;
- that they understand temporal realities and help the laity to discover more and more the spiritual dimension of these realities;
- that, by their fidelity to the priestly ministry, they confirm the laity in their own vocation as baptized people and in their temporal commitments.

5. As regards the understanding priests have of their own identity, I should like to stress the following points:

- the priest's originality consists mainly in what he is, not in what he does;
- the priest needs to feel that the lay people are close to him; that confirms him in his ministry;
- the priest is a believer in the community of believers. But his relationship to the community cannot be a substitute for the special relationship to Christ in which he has been placed by his priestly ordination.