



PROGRESSIO

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INTRODUCTION

At a time when international tensions are mounting high and the world anxiously witnesses growing conflicts, the Pope has sent a pressing appeal to the chiefs of state of the two super-powers, President Reagan and Chief-Secretary Andropov, not to leave the negotiation table, "the only means of regulating differences and conflicts of interest, and eventually the arms race which is so feared by people today". The proceedings of the Synod echo a similar note: the message of justice and peace is an integral part of reconciliation and penance.

All these events challenge us to form our conscience and to live concretely the law of love and brotherhood, so that these may become the basis for all relationships. This issue of Progressio, which aims at making a contribution to this reflection, is to be seen in this perspective.

In A World which prefers war, the author shows how the proposals of an independent commission, like the Palme Commission, carry little weight among "the powerful ones" of this world, whose vision is decidedly the contrary.

The Message of the Synod of Bishops is an appeal to construct a just and peaceful society. This is a text that a group could take up at one of its meetings, to study and meditate on, so as to be instructed by it and to put it into practice in our lives.

As we journey together, does not the Christian Life Community provide concrete opportunities to foster peace?

The letter from the Christians of Jerusalem portrays the sad situation of an entire people. In the midst of the present torment, it can remind us that peace is not obtained by force. Rather, peace is based on justice which respects the legitimate aspirations of all peoples.

Finally, Echoes, as usual, furnish us with news and experiences of our brothers and sisters throughout the world. This is a gentle occasion for us to open our heart, to expose it to something 'new', and to welcome willingly others in their difference.

The world is seeking for ways of living which give witness that peace is founded on mutual trust and love.

A WORLD WHICH PREFERS WAR+

by Milton Leitenberg

After two years of study, the Independent Commission on Problems of Disarmament and Security, also known as PALME, published a report in 1982, entitled Common Security : a Programme for Disarmament. This report, which deals with the problems of international security, war, conflicts and armed interventions, the arms race and military rivalries, contained a large number of recommendations and propositions. With the exception of one recommendation concerning the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe, between the NATO and Warsaw Pact blocks, all the propositions were soon forgotten. They suffered a fate similar to that of the previous Brandt Commission (an Independent Commission on the problems of international development), which was concerned with the problems of developing countries.

From September 2-4, 1983, an international conference was held at Stockholm on Common Security, to draw attention to the question of Common Security which occupies a central place in the report of the Palme Commission - since the next conference on Security in Europe is due to take place at Stockholm towards the end of 1983.

The question raises two problems. The first stems from the fact that the political authorities in a considerable number of countries prefer war and conflict. And these countries are fully aware of what they are doing; it is not a matter of their not being able to avoid conflict. They want certain things which they cannot obtain, or think they cannot obtain, by other means - more than they want peace.

+ We publish here, with permission, extracts from the above article which appeared in the November issue of Le Monde Diplomatique. Mr. Leitenberg is a Research Fellow with the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

From South Africa to Afghanistan, from Tchad to Indonesia, from Central America to Eastern Europe, the list would be long if we had to enumerate the wars and internal conflicts which evidence this attitude. Since 1945, without interruption, there have been between 150 and 250, at the cost of 25 million dead. Perhaps this is some sign of progress, since this number is only half the number killed in the second world war, over a period of 10 years?

Confronting an Invader

The second problem is the inverse of the first: what to make of Common Security when one country invades another? On the evidence, the invader does not believe in the idea of Common Security; otherwise he would never invade. The Vietnamese had good reasons to fight the Americans. It is perfectly legitimate for the Afgans to resist the Russian invasion. The Indians of Guatemala have the right - if only they had the means - to defend themselves against the government troops who come to slaughter them like chickens in a barn. Yugoslavia remains an independent country only because it has made it very clear that it will fight to preserve its national integrity. At the start of the second world war, Japan, Italy and Germany set out to conquer their neighbours; Russia did the same in 1939, and no one has been able to forget the aftermath of that war. England and France (like Germany and Russia) acted in this way in the previous half-century. Not one of these countries would have been very impressed - let alone dissuaded - if the country they invaded had brandished before them a program of Common Security. Common Security is nothing more than a further plea so that nations - and first of all their political leaders - may follow different norms from those leading to day to a confrontation. The world has always counted numbers of generous men opposed to the invasion and oppression of other countries, or of their own people. Such men have always proposed the solution of "Common Security". From Salvador de Madriaga to Albert Einstein, the number of quotations is endless. But it seems that there are always people who want to take what legitimately belongs to another - both within their own country and outside it - and who draw profit from the death and misery of other human beings.

Accidents do not happen

As Richard Ned Lebow shows in a brilliant book (Between Peace and War, 1981), a war never happens by accident. The heads of state make war in a calculating fashion - even if the events which they trigger off do not always follow the

path they had foreseen. Some years ago, Bernard Brodie posed the question as to whether or not a conflict of some magnitude could be the result of an "accident" and he came to the conclusion that nothing in the nature of an "accidental war" had occurred in 300 years. Moreover, he does not think that nuclear arms make this eventuality any more likely than in the past. In all the known cases where nuclear arms were used as a threat or restraint during some international crisis or 'alert', the situation was never the result of chance. It was perhaps a question of a line of behaviour not sufficiently reflected upon, which appears as sheer folly or terribly dangerous provocation, but in no case was it an "accident".

It can also happen that political leaders make no calculations, or are even blind - but then it is a question of a willing blindness. That does not mean that they do not follow a particular politic, even though it may rest on a superficial interpretation of events, or be not properly thought out. Whoever has studied the attitude of the American authorities towards the dictatorships and oligarchies of Central America can hardly doubt that these regimes will end in an explosion. The only uncertainty is when the explosion will occur, as was precisely the case in Iran, and will be the case in the Philippines and elsewhere.

When political repression is mixed with poverty or misery, that becomes an explosive mixture, and what is surprising is how such a situation can be perpetuated for so long in many countries (cf. The Brandt Report). One may fear that the American democracy has not been able to produce a class of politicians enlightened enough to understand that through supporting dictators who practise repression and exploitation, it actually worsens the situation, which runs the risk, eventually, of leading to a foreign military intervention (...)

Just as neither wars nor repression are the result of a momentary distraction, so neither do arms appear as if by magic. Contrary to what happens in the case of war, governments have to take numerous decisions throughout the whole process of acquiring armaments, which today is spread out over a dozen years or more for the majority of nuclear arms or other sophisticated systems of armaments. And well before these decisions, they undertake works of research-development without which the arms could never be mounted. The Palme Commission has demanded, with particular insistence, that a halt be called to the "arms race" presently going on between the USA and Russia, precisely on this point

of mounting strategic arms. But it would be difficult to find a better example than the 10 year period from 1970 to 1980 to show to what extent the politics of the great powers moves resolutely in the opposite direction (...)

The Alibi of being Threatened

Neither arms nor wars happen by chance, and the decisions concerning these are not accidental but are part of a long succession of choices. There are always other possibilities, as are shown in the detailed recommendations of the Palme Report, or more simply in the general idea of Common Security. But these possibilities have been rejected. The notion of Common Security is based on the hypothesis that all conflicts and all wars happen because certain countries feel themselves threatened. That is not quite the case. It is true in certain cases, but not in others - and surely not as far as the country, which is guilty of aggression, is concerned. Vietnam and the Dominican Republic did not threaten the United States, no more than East Timor was a threat to Indonesia. Tanzania did not threaten Uganda, nor did Afghanistan threaten Russia. And Tchad is in no way a threat to Libya. The number of cases where countries really threaten each other, and to which the idea of Common Security would properly apply, is very limited. Mutual fear hardly explains the behaviour, on the international level, of the super-powers. The goal for their means of strategic intervention is not to assure their own defense, but precisely to intervene in other regions of the world. In the course of these last years, more and more countries have found themselves involved in foreign wars.

The whole problem, with ideas like that of Common Security, lies in the fact that such ideas are merely hopes - and that has never proved sufficient. Their supporters do not realise why the state of affairs which is desired does not presently exist, nor why the aggressive politics of nations are not on the point of changing. When definite propositions are presented - as in the Report of the Independent Commission on Problems of Disarmament and Security - which suggest how to change course, there exists no way of obliging the countries to pay attention to them and of modifying their way of acting on the world scene. So they are practically ignored. No one has yet found a miracle-solution to push governments to act against their will...

**COHESION AND COLLABORATION
TO HEAL DIVISIONS AND TENSIONS
IN THE WORLD**

The human heart cries out unceasingly to be freed from its anguish and to find fulfilment.

Assembled from all parts of the world, we the Bishops of the Synod, together with our Holy Father, are one with you in your pain and in your hope.

With sadness we have considered those evils in our world which are denying people the possibility of true liberation and the fullness of human life. In particular we deplore and condemn:

- the deprivation of human rights and attacks on the freedom of individuals, on the life and liberties of the powerless;
- the obstacles to religious freedom which prevent believers from fulfilling their duties and carrying out their tasks;
- all racial discrimination;
- warlike aggressiveness, violence and terrorism;
- the building up of arsenals of both conventional and especially nuclear arms and the scandalous trade in all weapons of war;
- the unjust distribution of the world's resources and those structures whereby the rich become richer and the poor poorer.

In our world injustice abounds and there is little peace. Yet hope can never be extinguished. In the depths of this suffering, the human heart never ceases to long for life and love.

And yet the human heart is divided and sinful. From it have sprung too often the cruelty and injustice of our society.

The Word of God speaks to mankind about its pain and its hope. It calls us to repent and to turn back to God. The word of the Lord at the beginning of his ministry of reconciliation is addressed to believers and unbelievers with a special urgency in this Holy Year: "*Repent and believe the Good News*" (Mk 1: 15).

That word calls us to repentance and a change of heart, to seek forgiveness and so be reconciled with the Father. The plan of the Father for our society is that we should live as one family in justice, truth, freedom and love.

The Word of God will lead us into the mystery of God's love for us and so to an understanding of the Gospel precept of the Lord to love God in return and our neighbour as ourselves. Then, together with the whole Church, we share the mission given to us by Christ to create a civilization of love by healing, reconciling and making whole a divided and broken world. But first of all, as Christians, we ask forgiveness for our failures and sins, the causes of many divisions.

Pastors and people together carry out this mission in the name of Christ. Like him we identify with the poor, the suffering, the oppressed, with all humanity. The whole world must become increasingly a reconciled community of peoples.

The Church, as sacrament of reconciliation to the world, has to be an effective sign of God's mercy. It is in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, especially, that we celebrate and receive God's forgiveness and know his healing love. The sacrament restores and deepens personal friendship with God and frees us for his service.

Furthermore, prayer, fasting and alms giving, together with faithfulness and patience in bearing the trials of daily life, are all necessary for growth in personal holiness.

To this generation the Holy Spirit speaks with remarkable force. It is a call to radical spiritual renewal and to unity in faith. The Second Vatican Council makes clear what must be done to fulfill God's plan for his people in our time.

To carry out this mission we have to be one in mind and heart. Within our own Church we call for greater harmony. We urge all the baptized to discover together the way forward to visible Christian unity by abandoning themselves to the truth of the Gospel. We shall collaborate with other religions and persons of good will for the good of humanity. We do not make this appeal in our own name: *"We are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5: 20)*.

The Church will work to heal the division and tensions of the world. We shall be tireless in the search for peace and disarmament and the reduction of tension particularly between East and West. We have no political power but we can voice to the leaders of states the anxious longing of their people for a safer, more peaceful world.

The Church can never rest content with economic and political structures which perpetuate injustice. We shall use, for example, what influence we have to achieve effective reform of the inequalities which exist between the northern and southern hemisphere.

The Church, and especially through the voice of the Holy Father, has consistently called for justice and peace in our society. The Synod recognizes that many have the will to achieve change but not the power. We call on those who have the power to summon up the necessary will to give us a more just and peaceful society.

«BLESSED ARE THE PEACE-MAKERS...»

The preceding articles confront us with two quite different realities. The first one shows us how the natural tendency of the world leads to war, and the second is an appeal of the Synod Fathers "to those who hold power; that they may find the determination that is necessary to create for us all a society of justice and peace".

The theme for the World Day of Peace, last January 1st, was - "Peace is born from hearts that are new". This theme is a challenge for each one of us and for all our Community. From an experience of conversion we are led to make peace, to enter into peace, to move towards peace. And this happens, not at the level of ideas and good intentions, but very concretely within our own living situation.

Peace is not the absence of differences and contradictions; it is the capacity to keep them all in proportion, to assume responsibility for them and to discover the values held in common.

Peace does not happen without suffering. There are many number of examples of this : the recent Falkland/Malvinas crisis, the present situation in Lebanon, and other conflicts show us people caught in a situation of conflict which is beyond them. A person identifies with the aspiration of his/her people, but should not stop there. The first and essential step is to begin to talk to one another, to put aside animosity and to undertake together, step by step, the difficult road that leads to reconciliation.

The CLC is a natural place for dialogue; a place where we learn how to make peace, to live in peace and to spread peace. How do we exercise the "power" we have, and find the determination necessary to make our contribution to a society of justice and peace? On the level of our group, our national Community, our international relations, our world Community? That is precisely the question, that each of us must ask ourselves. Better still, it could be a question for our groups - to evaluate their capacity, their ability to be genuine peace-makers.

The letter that we publish here is a modest, but on-going attempt, to share this peace which we all must build.

(Editor's Note)

Mr. Krzysztof Ostrowski
Senior Political Affairs Officer
Department of Political and Security Council Affairs
United Nations

Dear Sir,

I make reference to your letter of 5 May 1983 to Miss José Gsell, Secretary General of the World Community of Christian Life Communities, in which you invited our organisation to join in the preparations for the International Year of Peace. Unfortunately I was unable to participate in last Monday's meeting in which you intended to formulate proposals for possible inclusion in the draft programme. As the Christian Life Communities' representative at United Nations Headquarters, I am most interested in this program area and I ask you to advise me of future meetings to be held in New York.

The Christian Life Communities are most concerned that the world moves closer and closer to the ideals of peace and concord among peoples at all levels. We look to form a people for service which will assist each individual to achieve human dignity as a child of his/her Creator. We seek to develop and sustain men and women, adults and youth, in their commitment to the service of the Church and the world in every area of life: family, work, professional, civil and ecclesial. Our communities are for all who feel a more urgent need to unite their human life in all its dimensions with the fullness of their Christian faith, especially for those concerned with secular affairs. Thus we seek to achieve a unity of life which is a response to the call of Christ from within the world in which we live.

Our ideals are directed to the universal approach to spirituality and mission - but realising this goal is gradual and painful as individually we let go our national and ethnic biases and prejudices.

Historically, in the first days of the United Nations, peace was defined as "absence of war." It was then recognised, as the colonial countries were liberated and the First Development Decade was announced in 1960, that peace could be achieved only with economic development. Social development was a necessary ingredient of the planning for the Second Development Decade. In the preparations for UNCSTD, Dr. J. Frank Costa stated that:

"Development must transcend purely economic dimensions in order to include social considerations - food, health, living conditions and employment - and the whole dimension of cultural and spiritual self-realization embracing creativity, quality of life, liberty and man's control of his own destiny."

Development must be directed to enhancing the human dignity of each individual in the world, therefore it must have a spiritual dimension.

The United Nations Charter and the UN Declaration on Human Rights speak to the dignity of each individual, which must be the thrust of any spirituality. United Nations programs have become increasingly person-centered, addressing, directly or indirectly, concerns of the world's peoples. Thus, there is a spiritual dimension to the UN agenda, which is demonstrated in programs concerning women, children, youth, the aging, the disabled, as well as the several UN-sponsored conferences which have impact on the total well being of individuals, families and other social groupings (Environment, Habitat, Food, Population, Energy, Science and Technology, etc.) Similarly, the debate on disarmament leads to questions of the quality of life today with high arms budgets and of what life could be tomorrow when expertise, finances and natural resources are freed to be employed in social and cultural programs - a truly spiritual question.

We in the World Community of Christian Life Communities endorse and support the many United Nations programs in development. We shall continue to work to support your efforts in our many programs at the field level. We will increasingly bring our experience and expertise to bear as we collaborate in planning future programs at the level of the United Nations.

Sincerely,

Thomas I. Monahan

YOUTH - PROGRESSIO

THE KINGDOM MEDITATION: AN INTERPRETATION

Last December, when I was making the Spiritual Exercises, in the meditation on the Kingdom I was confronted with a problem which I think is common enough for anyone who takes up the text of St. Ignatius. The difficulty was how to translate into contemporary and relevant terms the figure of the King, which is quite strange to our culture and our history, has nothing to do with our life, and really does not make sense.

Given the centrality of this meditation in the structure of the Exercises and in the spiritual experience of our community, it occurred to me that I might share with you my experience in asking myself what person or what situation, today, could call for the gift of my life, who or what could ask me to dedicate myself completely, with the same authority, the same urgency and the same significance as the figure of the earthly king had for Ignatius. Who might be my king and who might make this sort of demand of me?

So, then, here is my Meditation on the Kingdom: Lord, there are no people who can ask me to give them my life... there are no specific situations that call for this. I have thought this for a long time; there are no such values, or ideals or ends in themselves.

But there is one thing that can ask me to give my life, and that is life itself. I imagined it as a person, but I did not really succeed, because it is something inside me. It has asked me to give my life so that it may be spent and not kept, poured out and not 'guarded', shared and not kept to myself... I have seen the impossibility of not making use of my life, the need to really live it, to fulfill it, to be consumed along the paths of this world and in the midst of the lives of people.

I have to live a life that carries a smile, that breathes love, radiates warmth, that speaks of brotherhood, that is familiar with fantasy and understanding, and joy and hope, and courage... that loves the world, the land and people.

Of course, there is in myself another life which carries no smile, does not love or radiate warmth, is not con

structive but silent, is unfamiliar with fantasy and under-
standing, and joy and hope and courage, and which does not
love the world, the land and my brothers and sisters... which
only loves itself and its own tranquillity.

...I can only say 'yes' to a life that is really living.
I can only drive away from me the life that seeks to keep
itself, and as it comes around me I must deny it, refute it,
tell it to be off, fight it, hoping that one day it may be
overcome in the hearts of men and where they live.

I can say 'yes' to a life that is really living because
I know there is a God who delivers me from the belly of the
whale, who carries me beyond indifference, beyond fear, be-
yond old-age, beyond self-preservation. A God who is my God
... who knows me and whom I love.

This God is Lord of a Kingdom of communion and brother-
hood, of paths that cross and histories that intersect, where
the only weapon is love, resolute and practical, and the only
enemy is the fragility and limitations we all carry.

To this King, to building up this Kingdom, I can indeed
say 'yes', from the very depths of my heart, without reser-
vations, asking only for the grace to be faithful to this
'yes', and to the concrete ways in which the Lord may wish
it to be incarnated.

Giovanna Chirri

* * * * *
* **S.O.S.** *

* For Youth Progressio to cover as wide a range as
* possible for individuals and communities, we need
* more contributions on such themes as formation
* and building communities, together with a larger
* number of accounts of personal experiences. *

* In thanking those who have sent me material (they
* are few), and those who are on the point of doing
* this (I hope they are many), I would once again
* ask communities or individuals - especially those
* who are working in commissions, or formation
* courses or working-groups - to send me material
* as soon as possible. Thank you. *

* * * * *

THE UNITED NATIONS' CONFERENCE ON YOUTH: IN RETROSPECT

In September of 1983, Brian Doyle, Peter Jordan and I attended a conference in New York, conducted by the non-Governmental Organizations of the United Nations, for International Youth Year: 1985. The conference featured speakers and participants from across the globe. Upon its conclusion, Fr. Dominic Totaro S.J. entreated me to prepare a report on it. After an unfortunately long delay, I have hereby attempted to give a summary of my experiences. Because of the elapse of time since the conference, the facts have become clouded. Therefore, the following is an account of the impressions that remain long after the event.

By the nature of the conference, its participants had an interest in promoting comity. The singular elements were: the wide range of interests represented, the ideological roots represented, and the degree to which relationships were formed. The people who attended the conference represented many interests. These interests were represented by individuals who, working together, produced a great force for good. All this contributed to the overwhelming success of the conference.

The delegates to the conference represented many wide ranging interests. They came from the free world and the communist world. They represented Soviet Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States, the Philippines, the Fiji Islands, and many other nations as well. These people brought with them ideas that proved beneficial to all who attended. It enabled the delegates of the conference to realize the humanity which lies under ideological differences.

Part of the human element of the conference was the individuals. One delegate from the Soviet Union presented his country's attitude concerning youth. He also shared the fundamentals of his nation's plans for the International Year of Youth: 1985. Surprisingly, these goals were not much different from the objectives presented by the delegates from the United States. As a participant, I saw the idealism of the young Filipino delegates. By this I saw the potential that the Philippines have for development. With this came the realization that, if a nation -- seemingly as divided

as the Philippines are -- has potential for positive development, then many other nations, and situations between nations, have the same potential... What the participants gained by seeing the varied individuals was a sense of purpose for our world.

If a sense of purpose was gained by listening to the delegates present their views, much more was gained through interaction of the participants. Interaction was done on an informal basis. As part of the conference, delegates participated in workshops designed to better relationships. One such conference had the delegates engage in activities whose main aim was to promote comity; these activities ranged from forms of meditation to experiments in handshaking.

On one evening, some of the younger delegates took the initiative to meet on their own. This group drafted and later presented at the open forum a summary of their expectations for the International Year on Youth. All this gave the delegates a sense of possibility for a newer world.

Delegates of the conference shared many experiences. They came from wide-ranging backgrounds with the will to achieve good. Through the formal presentations, many participants gained a sense of purpose. Along with this, they gained a sense of possibility. As a participant, I returned with a hope for a better world.

Bernard J. McKenna, III
Loyola High School CLC
Baltimore, Maryland

FRANCE - YOUTH CAMP ORGANISED BY THE CLC'S: AUGUST 1983

GERMAGNON

a hermit's hill for a common life?

The top of a hill in Ardeche, the only things to be seen are the sky above and the endless horizon of the Plateau des Gras, exposed to the heat of the sun and the fury of the storm: the vegetation is arid and sparse, with shrivelled shrubs and stone formations as far as the eye can see; there is only one way to the nearest village - a path that winds

among the small limestone walls and the stone steps which lead down to the road; no shelter except an "arrangement" of stones, hewn by hand and piled together to form a sort of oratory;... who would ever have dreamed of such a setting for "retiring into the desert" so that, far from the hustle and bustle of the world that a person must endure in daily living, he might listen to the Lord who knocks at his door.

To avail oneself of moments of solitude is becoming more necessary than ever, but faith only makes sense if there is communication between those who wish to share it; the love of God only makes sense if it goes hand in hand with the love of one's neighbour.

To search by oneself - without which no true relationship is possible - should be a part of our life, all the time; but it is also a means for living more effectively with others, for really feeling what "community" is all about - the community of all those who are called to live the Kingdom, namely the community of all men and women. A particular place can help us experience a certain form of solitude and discover our own identity before God... a place like the Germagnon, which also became a group of people, enjoying a common life with each person reaching out to the others, communicating with the others and yet knowing when to respect their freedom and their silence. The desert... yes, but in the midst of brotherhood! Mention should be made of one couple who brought their son and small daughter. With freshness and spontaneity the mere company of the children was sufficient to keep us joyful, inviting us to live like them in wonder and enthusiasm. Like sparkles from the sun, they inspired in us, at each moment, the desire always to remain little, with the natural simplicity that goes with being little.

To live in community is to share. To share in the Eucharist, to share moments of prayer, reflection, to try to give to others as much as one receives, to learn to listen and also to share... in the work to be done. Working each day close to nature, all together... working to restore and improve the facilities is the most marvellous way to blend Martha and Mary; with times for recollection and praise, and discussion, work is also an excellent way of learning to know oneself and to fraternise.

Prayer also can be very much a common experience. To be alone, to place oneself in the presence of the Lord, but knowing at the same time that, not too far away, someone else is united in our prayer... To pray is to listen to Christ,

to let his word sink into our very depths, to taste his presence; but it is also to offer him our day... and this day, which we have lived out together, is also a value held in common. In our private prayer, there are events we have experienced, the people with whom we have shared and their faces that we learn to know and love a little better each day. And it is this unifying, all-embracing aspect that enables us to come together, each morning and evening, to glorify God through the psalms. These prayerful songs add a peaceful rhythm to our days and fill us with the serenity that too often we lack.

The group highlights the differences among us. We must discover the "pearl" that lies in each one of us. Each person has his or her history, each one follows quite a different road (some live their faith in a parish, or in a group; others are left more to themselves) but all these roads intersect: Drawn from different parts, we have come to experience something all together, because each and every one of us, whatever our present situation and regardless of our future situation and plans, desires and seeks the same thing - to dwell, to dwell near God that he may dwell in us. We would wish to cast aside all that binds us, to finally become free, so as to let Christ act in us.

... That is a rich experience; but how do we situate such a moment in the context of our "ordinary" life? Is it not a flight from the world? I believe, rather, that it is a very special time, a pause to gather together our resources, and to draw our resources from God, so as to experience more deeply nature, prayer, brotherhood; to reflect on our life and how to live in the world, with others - everyone, not just members of the Church; and to change our life in some way, both to listen to and experience the word of Christ.

I pray that this camp will leave us not just with the wonderful memory of an experience, namely that the love of Jesus can be experienced in common, but that the hope it has given us will always permeate our lives and help us continue our journey in peace.

Pascal Raguin

LETTER TO A FRIEND

Dear Lung,

I do not know if you have noticed that I was not so keen about going to the disco dance when you invited me. I was making all the excuses not to go. I told you that I have changed; this includes my lifestyle which I am trying to live more simply. I do not know if I can make you understand, but I will try to explain.

When I committed myself to the CLC, it was at the same time submitting myself to be in solidarity with the poor. I felt that going to the disco would be a waste of time, money and effort. But of course being with you is another case. Definitely, it would not be a waste at all.

I prefer celebrating in simpler ways, perhaps by just talking, or through other less expensive means. I am not being "kuripot" (stingy); I just want to spend wisely. If possible, I do not buy or spend for things which are not basic necessities. Also, in solidarity with our countrymen with whom we are facing a crisis at this time, I try to boycott as many products of multinational companies as I can: I do not drink softdrinks; I do not buy signatred jeans; I boycott Rustan's Department Store (a shop known for selling highly expensive imported luxury goods).

Lung, all of us must participate so that we can solve our country's problems. We Filipinos are now awakened. We must no longer be blind and deaf to the cries of our people. But let us not forget our Faith. It should be strong and firm. Our struggle for justice and peace must be founded on Faith in Him.

You may ask: Why? Why do we have to do all these? Maybe you have already come across the term "social conscience"? It would be very dangerous if we go on fighting for justice, peace and freedom, and not having Faith as our foundation. Our action should stem from Faith that does justice. There are some sectors of society which are now beginning to feel

the needs of our suffering country, including the leftists and the rightists. If we Christians do not make our move in non-violent ways, there might be bloodshed. There is a call for us to take a stand now.

I hope I do not sound very preachy to you, but I just feel the need to tell you how I feel and why I am this way now, why my attitude towards life has changed. I do hope you will understand and respond. If you are interested I can share more with you. Again, I hope I am not putting pressure on you, but I would like to invite you to taste and see the goodness of CLC. I experienced and am experiencing some kind of fulfillment in it, that's why I want you to taste it. Let me know if you want to try and see what CLC is all about. I can give you addresses of CLC members who are living in Cebu and have their CLC groups there.

Love,

*Lucy**

During the month of November the student nurses were discussing their plans of having the Junior-Senior Prom in a luxury hotel. Lucy expressed her intention of not attending. When the department head heard about it, she called a meeting of the faculty members to talk about it. As a result, the faculty members came out with their own stand against lavish spending, especially at a time when most of the people are starving. They suggested having the Prom in school as a move towards a simpler lifestyle. When the students failed to heed the advice, the faculty members as a group wrote letters explaining their stand to the parents of the students.

* Lucy is a young clinical instructor of the College of Nursing at the Ateneo de Zamboanga. She belongs to a Teachers' CLC and is a guide of the College group.

AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE CHRISTIANS OF JERUSALEM

We have long hesitated to write this letter, as it is so difficult to speak of what our Palestinian friends have experienced during 1982, the hardest year in their history. The reason why we now write is to bring home to you, in the depths of your own heart, their distress, their suffering and their agony. Moreover, we can no longer keep silent before so much injustice, knowing that God will demand an account from us if we remain silent... The plain fact is that a local Church, the Mother Church of Jerusalem, is in the process of quietly disappearing as her children, the Palestinian Christians, are being scattered; in 1948 they numbered 45,000 in the Holy City, and now they number about 10,000. The number of pilgrimages will grow and grow, crowds of pilgrims will come to pray in the land of Jesus that is "guarded" by religious from everywhere in the world... while the descendants of these first christians will have disappeared, driven from the cradle of christianity.

The war in Lebanon, launched to settle once and for all the resistance of the Palestinians, has aroused world-wide indignation. The departure of the Palestinian combatants in groups of some thousands to places as far away as possible has quieted the world's conscience, since this has avoided further bloodshed. But no one has bothered much about what might be the fate of the combattants' families which remained, suddenly defenceless and unprotected. It needed only a few days for the massacres of Sabra and Chatila to confirm the existence of a plan for the "resolution" of the question.

And since then, we who live in the occupied territories, see day after day the systematic implementation of this plan. Lands are confiscated; between 50 and 60% have already been requisitioned by the Israeli Government. Practically no building permits are given to the Palestinians, while the "colonizers" have all the rights and build their towns all around and on the hills overlooking the arab localities. There have been more than 110 new colonies founded. The water reserves have been taken over by an Israeli Company and, since 1967, a third of the water used in Israel is drawn from the occupied territories. The colonizers have the right to dig deep wells while the Palestinians are only allowed to have shallow wells that easily run dry. And so we see arab villages die... from lack of water; the under-

ground water-level is tapped at a considerable depth and irrigates the lands that have been conquered. At Jericho, in one of the Refugee Camps, there is one tap that gives a thin trickle, and people have to queue up for hours, with their bucket, to get water... and a few hundred metres away, clearly visible to everyone, sprinklers are watering the lawn and gardens of a new kibboutz... much to the admiration of naive tourists. The armed colonizers sow terror and, alas, sometimes death... in the villages and on the lands which they occupy. It is true that they are stoned and feel threatened... but who is really threatened? and what can bare hands of 12 year olds, 10 year olds and even younger do against one of the most powerful armies in the world?

It is true that no one can kill the soul of a people with even the most sophisticated arms and that the Palestinians struggle against being eliminated, with all the strength that remains to them. But in breaking up their families, in dispersing them, in demolishing their houses, in taking their lands away from them, in preventing any form of cultural or political expression, in taking away their identity in every way and especially in sowing fear, insecurity... in depriving them of any means of establishing themselves again, we see the gradual collapse of a whole civilisation, a whole culture, the loss of values that are most precious and an overriding discouragement that drives them to leave. What is going on in South Lebanon, and here, in the Refugee Camps, after the massacres of Sabra and Chatila, is symptomatic. The people are without a head of the family who has been arrested or expelled or has disappeared ... they are threatened in every way... there are pamphlets against them, curfews... they are intimidated, provoked by the colonizers, the army... and they live in the fear of being massacred.

For 35 years this people has been threatened, hunted, misunderstood. When we speak of a Palestinian, many think of a terrorist. They have become the damned of the earth, the people under a cloud, a people nobody wants... and right in the middle of this poignant drama, what sign is the Church giving? what face is she showing? what do these people expect from her? what words has she for these desperate people? what witness is she giving?

The Church is there from the very beginning, faithful to the apostolic tradition, first witness of the Resurrection of the Lord, guardian of the Holy Places. The Church and Palestine, throughout the centuries, have passed through

a sad and a rich history: the divisions of the schisms, Islam, the Crusades, colonialism. The Christians from here feel the weight of tradition - all the richness of the Holy Land which is claimed by the whole world and from which they are gradually being excluded. The Church is divided into numerous confessions which undermine her unity and scatter her children; she is immersed in a world of Islam and is truly the minority among minorities. And the Palestinian Christians feel alone, isolated, ignored, voiceless. They long to take their destiny in their own hands, to have the right to exist; they long to be recognised as Palestinians and as Christians. We must be with them, truly and yet humbly their friends. We must give them courage and stay close to them, right to the end.

You who read this letter, at least may you become close to them through the compassion of your prayer, your understanding, and if you should meet one of them, treat him or her with respect and give them a warm welcome. If you can, help your friends to understand a little this suffering of the Palestinians, without judging them! And if you have friends who are setting out to visit the Holy Land, help them to have a vision which sees beyond the archeological sites, or the holy places, or the beauty of the desert which "has flowered again", so that they may make contact, in all kindness, with those who are living out today the Passion of the Lord, and who yearn for brotherly understanding.

(From INFO: the publication of the European Conference for Justice and Peace)



EMBLEM OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEACE: 1986

* * * * *
* RESOLUTION 37/16 OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTED *
* ON 16 NOVEMBER 1982 *
* * * * *

* The General Assembly of the United Nations *
* unanimously declared 1986 as the International *
* Year of Peace. The Year will be solemnly pro- *
* claimed on 24 October 1985, the fortieth anniver- *
* sary of the United Nations. *
* * * * *

* The General Assembly recalled that the *
* Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations *
* proclaims the determination of the peoples of the *
* United Nations to save succeeding generations *
* from the scourge of war and for this end to *
* practise tolerance and to live together in peace *
* with one another as good neighbours, and to unite *
* their strength to maintain international peace *
* and security. *
* * * * *

* The General Assembly resolution stated that *
* the promotion of peace is the basic objective of *
* the United Nations. However, peace continued to *
* be a goal instead of an achievement, in spite of *
* the resolute efforts of the United Nations. *
* * * * *

* The objective of the International Year of *
* Peace is to "*devote a specific time to concentrat* *
* *ing the efforts of the United Nations and its* *
* *Member States to promote the ideals of peace* *
* *and give evidence of their commitment to peace* *
* *in all viable ways".* *
* * * * *

* The resolution invites all States, all or- *
* ganizations within the United Nations system and *
* interested non-governmental organizations to exert *
* all possible efforts for the preparation and ob- *
* servance of the International Year of Peace and *
* to respond generously with contributions to at- *
* tain the objectives of the Year. *
* * * * *

* The Secretary-General will prepare, in ac- *
* cordance with proposals made by Member States and *
* in consultation with interested organizations and *
* academic institutions, a draft programme of the *
* Year and will submit a report to the General As- *
* sembly at its thirty-eighth session in 1983. *
* * * * *

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

POST-PROVIDENCE IRELAND

I would like to be able to say that there has been a startling revitalisation in Irish CLC as a result of Providence, but such is not the case. However, there has been some growth, and certainly a great welcome for the move towards world community.

On our return from Providence we, - Clare, Brendan and myself - visited the different regions and shared with them - in so far as one can share an experience - all that had taken place at Providence. In a recent evaluation we came to the conclusion that, perhaps in our immediate post-Providence enthusiasm, we shared too much on all that had happened and did not place enough emphasis on the spirit of community or on the long term vision of world community. We are resolved to do something about this in the near future. We did our best to impart the Providence message and the miracle of grace which brought about the change. It proved difficult to share on the implications of the change from Federation to Community but we stressed the importance of responding to God's call, not simply as a person but as a person-in-community. Gradually the message is beginning to take root in each one of us that with the help of prayer and the Spiritual Exercises we will become a responsible and committed member of world CLC.

A major change has taken place in the CLC scene here. For the past decade we have had the luxury of a full-time National Promoter, Fr. Val McLoughlin. During that time he gave unstingingly of his time and resources and built us up in every way possible. He has left Ireland now and is in Charles Lwanga Training College, Chisekesi, Zambia. Instead of a National Promoter we now have a team of five Jesuits to assist us. Each one is combining his CLC involvement with whatever other mission he is engaged. This team has only been assigned to CLC since September, so we have no experience in any practical sense of it as yet.

Before the departure of Fr. Val we held our annual Summer Course in Emmaus, Dublin. It was a discerning process

entitled "The Way Forward 1983/84". Over forty participated with representatives drawn from the groups around the country. Fr. Val was the process guide, and many important matters surfaced - they fell under headings of Special Needs, Organisation, Communication, Promotion, Service and Finance. All of these aspects were dealt with in great detail. Our Mission and Service still centres in our commitment to the Youth (18-25) and our School Groups (15-18) with individuals involved in service on the Parish and work-scene level. Community and its world dimension was discussed during the Course. In the small group sharing it was obvious that it was uppermost in the minds of most of us. It is such an intangible thing - it has to grow, to evolve, but to do this it must be nourished and fed - by sharing our experiences, our gifts and, as far as possible, our possessions. We are resolved to foster world community by, first of all, building our own scattered groups into one body with strong links and a visible bonding. Only when we begin to feel this sense of community at home will we be able to reach out to the world in the way the Lord desires. I would like to take this opportunity to reach out to the delegates we met in Providence - those from Zambia, Hong Kong and Indonesia, to name but a few - to wish them all a wonderful Year 1984. May we all walk together in Joy and Hope towards the day when we will be truly a world community.

With a view to fostering community amongst our groups we formed into clusters, and held five one-day meetings at two weekly intervals. The theme for the daily gatherings were "Faith Sharing", "Consciousness Examen", "Service", "Mary, Mother of the Church" and the last day was given over to a Retreat. The approach differed from cluster to cluster. In the one in which I was involved - made up of three groups - each group took responsibility for a day, planning and executing the Programme. This cluster activity was deemed to be a great success and it is our intention to continue with them in some form or other.

Our Executive continues to meet regularly. In late August we had a two day meeting for the Executive only, with two qualified psychologists to assist us. It was a very rewarding experience and it has helped us tremendously to cope with the changed circumstances resulting from Fr. Val's departure.

We are facing the challenge of the coming year with great hope and confidence in the Lord. At the moment groups are meeting together for Advent gatherings which usually consist of special Advent Prayers and Eucharist. Each region is planning its own Christmas Celebration and all in all we are making the first tentative steps towards the community of the future. May the Lord be praised for all the gifts He has given us!

Una McChrystal

CLC IN ENGLAND AND WALES

The CLCs in England and Wales are fairly small in number with about 300 members spread across in England and our Assistant (Chaplain) in Wales at the retreat centre of St. Beunos. The three Regions - North, South and Midlands and Wales - are beginning to develop; in the case of Midlands and Wales they have already developed a sense of Regional identity. We have one annual national meeting but other events, ranging from the celebration of World CLC day planned by the South Region for next March to social occasions such as picnics and rambles are all organised by members on a regional basis. Some of our members live in places where there is no CLC at present; one of our concerns is how they can be helped to form a group where they are which might develop into a CLC growing over a period of time. Although our members cover a wide range of ages, there is a need to involve youth (18+) in CLC.

Members have been increasingly taking over from the Assistant the tasks concerned with running CLC - office administration, finances, production of the news letter. In the latter task we have been greatly helped by Young Christian Workers who have placed their stencil cutter and duplicator at our disposal and also by the Catholic Enquiry Centre who have allowed us space on their computer for our mailing list.

We have been discovering that our spirituality has always been rooted in the Spiritual Exercises although for so long many of us were not conscious of this. More of our members are being introduced firstly to Ignatian prayer, secondly to the Exercises themselves and there is interest in 19th annotation retreats. Some of our groups are using formation programmes and there is a growing awareness of the need for group guides. There is a very great diversity of experience and commitment.

Turning to our involvement in the Church and the World, I find it difficult to know where to begin. In terms of involvement in the official structures of the Church, CLC is represented on two consultative bodies which advise the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and also represent Catholic views to a wide range of other bodies - Ecumenical and Secular. The two bodies are the National Council for the Lay Apostolate and the National Board of Catholic Women. I can write about the latter from personal experience having been CLC delegate and being currently its Vice-President for the South. The Board not only offers advice to the Bishops but ensures that a Catholic viewpoint is expressed when, for example, the Law Commission is considering proposed changes in legislation affecting family life.

CLC members are involved in Deanery and Diocesan Pastoral Councils where these exist and also of course in Parish Pastoral Councils. Several members have been commissioned as extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist and many others regularly take a lead in the liturgical life of their parishes e.g., as lectors; others are involved in catechetics, renewal programmes, Justice and Peace work and development education. For some of us the need has been to see where God is calling us in the present moment and not to do too much without sufficient prayer and reflection.

Jackie Gill
Chairman

A LETTER FROM MADAGASCAR

The Peace of Christ!

A year after Providence '82 is a good time to let you know of what has been going on in the National Federation of Madagascar.

Follow-up to "Providence '82"

On their return, each of the two delegates had a meeting with their respective national committee (youth, adult), to give an account of the proceedings of Providence '82. A meeting of three days was devoted to giving a report to adult groups, preceded by a half-day of reflection and recollection. Each day closed with a Mass. A circular letter was sent to the leaders of each diocese, informing them of what had taken place at Providence, and of the spirit that had prevailed. An article has been published in the liaison journal of the National Federation.

Preparation for the Regional Meeting

As was agreed at Providence, and in accordance with the wishes of the region (Lebanon, Egypt, Zaire and Madagascar), a formation session is due to be held in the course of 1984. During this present year (1983), I have written on two occasions to Olivier Borg Olivier and Muzinga, exchanging news and information on what we had decided (...) Will this session be held in Madagascar? I would ask you to be so kind as to confirm this choice for us, to give the National Federation sufficient time to make the necessary preparations, on the material side of things. It would be also helpful for us to know your suggestions and proposals with regard to the Executive Council of the World Community collaborating in the organising of this formation session, as well as your suggestions and proposals on the outline of the program and on an estimate of the joint costs involved, as presented by our National Committee.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Best wishes and prayers,

Simone Ramielson

**THE 33rd GENERAL CONGREGATION
OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS**

The Society of Jesus recently held its 33rd General Congregation, to elect its 29th General - Father Peter Hans Kolvenbach. As well as electing a new General, the General Congregation also published an official document dealing with the life and mission of Jesuits today. However, in the course of the Congregation, some members wrote their "version" of what the final document might look like. We publish here one such version...

* * *

Draft Statement - GC 33

This 33rd General Congregation has been an historic occasion, a determining moment in the Salvation History of our "least Society". For 18 years we have been inspired and led by Fr. Pedro Arrupe, whom we feel privileged to call the second founder of the Society of Jesus. And during these last two years, we gratefully acknowledge the loyal service rendered the Society by Father Paolo Dezza and Father Giuseppe Pittau.

Under Fr. Arrupe, the Society weathered the stormy and uncertain times in the life of the Church that immediately followed the Second Vatican Council; and though his vision of the Society and its role never clouded, some of us faltered. There were many reasons for this, but perhaps the main single reason is that the spirit of General Congregations 31 and 32 was not assimilated by all of us as it should have been. With this, then, in mind we assert unequivocally the importance of GC's 31 and 32 for the life of our Society today, and we call on all members of the Society to absorb and be motivated by the spirit of these Congregations.

Against this background, the message that GC 33 has to offer the Society today is to express clearly our Ignatian charism in contemporary terms, as declared in GC's 31 and 32, and clarified and lived out by Fr. Pedro Arrupe.

- we must, first of all, ever seek to be united with Jesus and the Father, so that we may be their instruments and witnesses in the world
- we must never think of ourselves as apart from the Church since our vocation is "to serve the Lord alone, and His Spouse, the Church, under the Roman Pontiff"

- we must assimilate the spirit of Decree 4, GC 32, - "Service of Faith and Promotion of Justice"-, as a dimension of all our ministries. The methodology it proposes - exposure, analysis, discernment - is the only way to clarify the many questions that arise concerning Our Mission Today
- we must cherish and foster our heritage of 'intellectual stringency' - the intellectual apostolate - lest we quietly drown in a sea of sloppy ideas and popular ideologies
- we must become convinced of the importance of the Media in all its forms; otherwise we will continue to offer yesterday's answers to the problems of today
- we must be faithful to our long tradition of being educators - on occasions a seemingly thankless task, yet, "*Those who instruct others unto justice shall shine like the stars in eternity*" (Bk. of Daniel)
- in the footsteps of Matteo Ricci, whose memory we celebrate in a special way this year, we must seek to acknowledge the presence of Jesus in the many different cultures throughout the world, and search for ways of expressing, in appropriate terms, this Ultimate Mystery of Jesus and His Father
- we must never forget that all of us, regardless of our grades, share in the one vocation to "this least Society of Jesus", as our history; and the lives of our saints, so clearly show: Renée Goupil and John de Bréboeuf; Nicholas Owen and Edmund Campion; Alphonsus Rodriguez and Peter Claver; Aloysius Gonzaga and Robert Bellarmine
- we should recall that the importance of ecumenical dialogue goes back, in our history, to the time of Ignatius and his first companions. Peter Faber wrote that the first move in such dialogue was to love - otherwise there could never be understanding
- we must be convinced of the power of the Exercises to form not only ourselves as men of the "magis", but also lay people. The Marian Congregation - lay people formed by the Exercises - were a significant force in the implementation of the Council of Trent; we must realise that the same opportunity presents itself to us, with regard to the implementation of Vatican II
- we must be ever reading the signs of the times, and be available to respond to urgent human needs, as our modest desire to be instruments of the Father's love and concern

for his 'little ones'. The plight of Refugees is one sign we cannot ignore

- we must cherish our religious poverty as "a firm wall of religion", and "love her as a mother" - not a step-mother
- our final message is two fold. We should never forget that we are not Jesus, and we are not the Church: we are "this least Society". We do not have the answers for so many problems that are tearing apart our world today - world peace, the rights of the unborn, prisoners for the faith, the oppression of the marginalised. However, we should also remind ourselves that the victory has been won, that all things are possible in Jesus, and that any Jesuit, as long - and only as long - as he is missioned by his Superiors can risk all for the glory of God and the liberation of his brothers and sisters.

In conclusion we make our own the prayer of Ignatius:
"May it please Our Lady to intercede with her Son for us poor sinners and obtain this grace for us, that with the cooperation of our own toil and effort she may change our weak and sorry spirits and make them strong and faithful to praise God".

* * *