



PROGRESSIO

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54th Year
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SUMMARY

- FATHER KOLVENBACH HAS BEEN NAMED
WORLD ECCLESIASTICAL ASSISTANT
FOR THE CLC 3
- LETTER TO FATHER KOLVENBACH
(Tobie Zakia) 4
- SOME REFLEXIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE FAMILY AND THE CHURCH
(Josefina Errazuriz) 5
- NEWS 10

YOUTH-PROGRESSIO

- THE POPE WITH YOUTH 13
- YOUTH COLLOQUIUM
(Paco Sanz - Jackie Mulundika) 14
- WORK IN THE POLYCLINICS (Beatriz Paladino) 16
- PENBOC'H '84: AN INVITATION TO TAKE A RISK
(Jean Dravet) 18
- HUMAN COMMUNITY OR CHURCH OF GOD?
(Jacques Trublet, s.j.) 25

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This number of *Progressio* begins a new year, the 54th of its existence, to be more precise. An advanced age..., you could say, but its spirit has stayed very youthful through being continually challenged by the demanding and yet elating experience of a Christian Life Community that has been renewed in fidelity to its original charism. A spokesman for the progress of the CLC, *Progressio* has also tried to be its reflection by publishing facets of its life (reports of experiences, news,...), and reflecting its principal aspects. As a link between the CLC's through out the world, it is also a channel of communication and an invitation to reflect on experience.

The 1985 numbers and supplements are to be set in this perspective. But they will be enriched by an ever wider collaboration, beginning with the contribution of the working-groups, a tangible sign of a worldwide exchange.

So, concretely, what will we find in *Progressio* in 1985? Experiences, witnesses, a reflection on some themes highlighted by Providence '82 or evoked by present day experience:

- The working-group "CLC and Family Life" has finished its initial reflection and we are profiting from this in the form of a series of articles beginning in this issue;
- The Sense of the Church, which came out strongly at Providence, presupposes and requires that each of us examines his or her own understanding of the Church. There will be a number of articles to help us in this regard.
- Evaluation is still the specific and special means for living in fidelity to the permanent attitude of discernment amongst the numerous choices involved in our life and mission. Several experiences of this practice are to be published.
- In addition, several CLC groups expect us to relate the apostolic option they have taken;
- and, of course, we shall continue to publish news from the four corners of the world.

Together, at the service of one world, we set out again, united in following the same Lord. A happy and fruitful 1985.

Progressio

Father Peter-Hans Kolvenbach - General of the Society of Jesus - has been named by the Holy See to replace Bishop René Audet as World Ecclesiastical Assistant for the Christian Life Communities.

As was stated in a recent copy of Projects, from time to time, it does not seem out of place to remind our CLC members that we are a member of the International Catholic Organisations (and presently serving on their Continuity Committee, i.e. Executive Council). Part of the protocol for this official recognition by the Church is that our world ecclesiastical assistant is appointed by the Holy See. (Unlike most other ICO's, we also have a vice-assistant, located at our Rome secretariate). Until last year, our ecclesiastical assistant was Bishop René Audet, in charge of the diocese of Joliette, Canada. Owing to pressure of work, Bishop Audet had to resign; we would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his friendship and support over the years.

On account of the close links which exist between the CLC's and the Society of Jesus - owing to our common Ignatian heritage - the Ex-Co, at its last meeting, began a series of consultations which has finally resulted in Fr. Kolvenbach's appointment as our world ecclesiastical assistant.

The letter of appointment, dated November 22, 1984, and signed by Cardinal Casaroli, also spoke of the close links between the Christian Life Communities and the Society of Jesus, and referred to the CLC's as "già ricche di tante benemerienze" ("richly blessed by the Lord").

We have already introduced Fr. Kolvenbach to our readers ("Progressio", November, 1983), on the occasion of his election as General of the Society of Jesus. We take this occasion to welcome him as our new ecclesiastical assistant, and look forward to a fruitful and cordial collaboration with him and "his men".

PROGRESSIO

LETTER TO FATHER KOLVENBACH

My dear Father,

You have just been named Ecclesiastical Assistant for the World Community of the CLC's.

I am delighted, and so is the Executive Council, with this good news.

You are the successor of St. Ignatius, and your fidelity to his spirit makes you our witness and our guide.

Witness

- of our belonging to the Church and of our fidelity to its teaching;
- of our desire to live, in an Ignatian way, our response to the call of Our Lord, addressed to us where we are.

Our guide

- to deepen our Ignatian spirituality, in the way we understand it and also in the way we live it;
- so that our "Thinking with the Church" becomes a part of us;
- so that our service to our brothers may be just like that of Our Lord "even to the death of ourselves".

Dear Father, I ask you in the name of the whole CLC community, and I know that you will do it, to help us in these three areas which are so closely bound up with our vocation as lay people.

I also know that you will help us through your companions throughout the world.

From our side, you can count on us.

Dear Father Kolvenbach, please accept the assurance of my friendship and affection.

Tobie Zakia
Président

SOME REFLEXIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FAMILY AND THE CHURCH

The christian family has been called the "domestic church" by Vatican Council II (Lumen Gentium, n.11). Is this just a beautiful image or a holy desire remote from life's reality, or does it express a lived and profound experience of family life recalled by the council fathers?

This image of the family as the "domestic church" adequately expresses, to my point of view, the role the christian family is called to play in the Church as the "People of God"; the People of God who, in their concrete life from day to day, try to establish the conditions needed in the world so that the reign of the Father may be showered on us as a gift and made a reality.

Reflecting on the close relationship existing between the family as the "domestic church" and the Church as the "People of God", one discovers two complementary aspects which mutually nourish and enrich each other: on the one hand the family builds the Church in its daily living and in the relationships that develop at its core; on the other hand the family is built according to the model the Church suggests. Experience shows that, in a christian family, in addition to conjugal love which is a sign of Christ's love for His Church, there are human dimensions and fundamental relationships which are precisely those by which we recognise ourselves as christians: the experience of being sons and daughters and the experience of being brothers and sisters.

The Family Builds the Church

This may sound very pretentious, but it expresses a reality. The family builds the Church because in its womb the children of God are born, grow and develop; because at its heart men and women who make up the Church are formed. On this occasion I would like to consider only some of the multiple aspects and dimensions through which this "building up of the Church" by the family is expressed: living out our lives as sons and daughters in brotherhood.

The family is the community where each of its members learns to be a person, learns to relate and to share so as to become, in reality, a person. In the family we learn to live as children and as brothers/sisters. Our family history influences the concrete way we feel, understand and live out our being a son/daughter and our being a brother/sister. The family experiences mark us so deeply in these essential dimensions of being a human person that this "way" of being sons and brothers will inevitably appear in our ecclesial life since this is fundamentally expressed in terms of our being "children of God" and "brothers and sisters" to one another. A good and deep experience of being loved as a child and of feeling solidarity with our own brothers and sisters in our family will color and give vitality to the depth of our being and to our concrete commitment to be children of God and brothers/sisters of all men in Christ.

The past experiences and the personal history of how these dimensions are lived, shapes the way in which each marriage partner feels and considers him/herself as a son/daughter and as a brother/sister. Every marriage joins two personal histories with their unique and diverse characters which can complement each other for bad or good; two lived experiences of belonging to the Church come to-gether, and each can learn from the other, thereby enriching his/her relationship with God and with men/women. In every family, the way of living out its relationship with God and with men/women is unique and can not be repeated. It is influenced by the previous experiences each partner brings and by his/her desire to live, in family, something personal and new. This is realised at the interior of the new family, shaping the children and, through the children, the future Church.

There are many ways whereby each partner can integrate the experience he/she brings to form the family. I will simplify them and mention only two, to better clarify what I want to say:

- One way is to learn from the other what is lacking in one's own experiences. In this way, the whole family

and, through it, the Church is enriched. Let us think of all the nuances which can mark the relationships in a family if into these relationships are integrated different forms of generosity, of richness of expression, of freedom to be different, of involvement with others, of the gift of love in mutually accepting and forgiving one another...

- On the contrary, if instead of affirming the positive in each one, a couple maintains the negative counter-values they both bring with them, then the family will be lost and with it the Church. We refer to the fear to recognise and accept mistakes, rigidity, the desire to dominate, personal and family selfishness.

The life, development and growth, from day to day, of the family continuously offers concrete occasions to evaluate, actualise and improve our christian life which comes alive through the experience of beings sons and daughters, and brothers and sisters, in welcoming, accepting and forgiving one another. In this way, our small "domestic church" becomes the germ and the seed of the People of God on its way towards the Father's House.

The Family Is Built on the Model the Church Presents

At the same time that the family is the seed of life in the Church, the Church - the community of those who believe and hope in Christ - presents a model according to which christian families should be built, to become truly the visible "sign" of the hope that gives life. The model the Church presents to us is the immense, free and radical love of Christ for His Church, a love given unto death, death on the Cross. She proposes to us the "sacrament", the "sign" of this Love: the Sacrament of Marriage.

Through the Sacrament of Marriage, the christian family becomes a community of love based on a commitment for life, like the everlasting and definitive love of Christ for His Church and through her for each one of us.

Experience tells us that in a united family, love is freely given. There is no need for a person to win it or to deserve it. I am loved for who I am. I belong to the family through bonds which cannot be broken and which make up the core of my being. The assurance of love in the family is necessary for children to grow up healthy, confident and balanced. The assurance that one is loved by one's parents and brothers and sisters, beyond what one does or does not do, is the foundation of life for a growing child, just as the definitive, warm and forgiving love of God in Christ beyond one's own merits is the foundation of life for a christian. A child who learns to establish cordial and warm relationships with others in the family, who learns that good relations depend on the generosity of each member of the family, who is aware that selfishness produces pain and separation and that repentance generates pardon and love, is a child who is being prepared to participate in the life of the wider family which is the Church, the People of God, with truly deep and human relationships.

The Church, through the Sacrament of Marriage, proposes as a model and task to christian families what she has discovered in Christ regarding the love of the Father: it is a love that is freely given, everlasting, overflowing; it is a love that forgives everyone, that is given unto death, that favors the weak and lifts up those who have fallen, that gives life to the "dead". The challenge of this love that the Church presents to christian families finds an echo and correspondence in the depth of the human-heart made in the image and likeness of Christ. Our human love naturally dreams to become everlasting and definitive, to give itself gratuitously to the loved one, to be productive both biologically and spiritually.

But this ideal of human love has to grow in an unfavorable atmosphere, unfavorable both exteriorly and interiorly. We are interiorly marked by selfishness and sin which eats away love. The world in which we live is also structurally marked by this disorder in people who have built our world. It is deformed by our external and internal rebellion against love; by selfishness and idolatry.

For this reason, when the Church sets before us as a model the Sacrament of Marriage, she is not being idealistic but very realistic; she shows us that the christian family, if it is to reach its fulness, has to pass through the trials and contradictions through which the love of Christ for His Church has passed. She reminds us that human love also needs to pass through death on the cross in order to be resurrected. And the cross is painful and can be accepted only by trusting, like Jesus, in the power and fidelity of the Father - the fidelity of the Father which becomes a "sign" and shows itself when human beings remain faithful even in times of difficulties.

When our family incarnates a love which becomes increasingly identified with the love of Christ, we begin to discover that it is a love that can give life through the power of God. Thus, we discover the full and enduring strength of the Sacrament of Marriage in our concrete family life.

When, thanks to our experience in our own family, we begin to perceive our belonging to the Church as similar to our belonging to a family, in which basically we are children of God and brothers and sisters to one another, then is created an important and generous openness to the world, a feeling of "being at home" which goes beyond our merits because it is a very part of our being. Gratefully, we become aware that we belong to this bigger family which helps us to grow towards the fulness of Christ who makes us brothers and sisters and invites us to work with Him in building the Kingdom of the Father who has made us His sons and daughters.

(These reflections were made on a "witness" given by the Atria-Lemaître couple at St. Ignatius College, Santiago, Chile.)

Josefina Errazuriz

NEWS... NEWS...

CANADA

Thirty six persons participated in the national Congress which was held on Saturday, September 22, in the Marian room, underneath the Jesuit chapel in Dauphine street, Québec. The interim president, Monique Saint-Pierre, welcomed the participants and explained the program for the day.

Three talks, about 20 minutes each, recalled the important phases of the Marian Congregations, now known as the Christian Life Communities since 1967. Agatha Perreault spoke of the period from the origins to 1773; André Paradis dealt with period from 1773 to 1948; and Father Paul Mayer spoke of the period from 1948 to the present time. In the half-hour which followed, three workshops sought to draw lessons from each period which would be helpful for us today. In the plenary session, the different contributions were gathered together and, at the suggestion of the 'process guide', Father Remi Potvin sj., they were summed up in two words: enlightened fidelity. So, according to the participants, the lesson to be gleaned from our 400 years of history would be one of fidelity (to Jesus Christ, to the Church, to the spirit of the Exercises, to what our way of life demands of us, to our rules or general principles), but an enlightened fidelity (that is, properly motivated, fully aware of what one is doing, as opposed to a purely routine fidelity or external conformity). The theme of the Congress had been chosen to recall the 4th centenary of the Bull "Omnipotentis Dei", promulgated by Gregory XIII on December 5, 1584, in which the Church officially recognised the different Ignatian groups spread throughout Europe through associating them with the sodality of the Roman College. Father Adrien Pouliot sj. read us some extracts from this Bull which he had translated from the Latin.

The afternoon was reserved to what is known as our General Assembly which meets every two years - on the occasion of the Congress - and is composed of three

delegates from each group and the members of the Executive Council. The Assembly discusses and votes on the different resolutions proposed and elects the office-bearers for the National Federation. Carl Hébert was asked to guide the deliberations of the Assembly, and admirably fulfilled our expectations of him. Everything was dealt with expeditiously so that the observers (members who were not delegates) had no time to be bored, even if they did not have the right to vote. The outgoing president, Monique Saint-Pierre, presented the report on the state of the groups; Camille Gervais, the report on the activities of the Executive Council, and Monique Saint-Pierre, the financial report. The first regulation of the National Federation was amended to what it had been some years ago, before there was any mention of the groups, "Living Stones", being included among those groups which were part of the Federation, with the status of observers.

The Assembly ended with the election of the members of the Executive Council of the National Federation for the next two years. A Eucharist of thanksgiving brought an end to our day.

INDIA

Forty CLC members from all over India participated in a course on SOCIAL ANALYSIS from October 1 to 7, at Christhall, Malaparamba, Calicut. The course guides were Fathers Dominic George, Mathew Arekail and P.T. Mathew of the Society of Jesus and Sister Alice Lukose of the Assumption Sisters.

I had attended a similar course at Bangalore three years ago where purely scientific analysis sought to establish causes and seek solutions. This course was truly Christian. Scientific analysis of structures was coupled with the need for a "change of heart", with the message of the Gospel, with the teachings of the Church and with integrated, authentic (not ritualistic) spirituality. This was

achieved through well-documented inputs, sharing sessions including WITNESS and 2 telling games/role-plays. If we could only step in fantasy into the shoes of the 350 millions in India "below the poverty line"! We integrated the day's theme into our CLC meetings in the evenings and shared the day's experiences at the Eucharist that followed.

Some people had warned me before I left for Christ-hall - "You are going to listen to Marxist gibberish". For those (at whatever level in the Church) who think this way about the programme or the ministry of the committed folk out there, I would humbly suggest "come and see". Why not go and experience for yourself what goes on before "throwing stones"? It is sure that much that is good in Marxism was used in the programme. We were told to be "critically aware" of the injustices in society, to "take sides", as our founder did, with the poor/oppressed, to involve in "issue-based collaboration" with "agents of change" be they Marxists or Maxalites, or atheist. The leaven has to be mixed in the dough, not decorate the kitchen stands. I believe Vatican II and several Church documents support this.

We were in the train, on the long journey back. We were talking of the "Beach Blossoms" project where the Jesuit priests are taking a stand with the poor fishermen in the struggle against the rich boat and trawler owners; we were speaking of a sister who dared to go on a 15 day fast unto death. A Janate leader of Calicut was eaves-dropping.

"Are you supporting them?" he asked. I told him I didn't know too much about this struggle. But I also said "We must, as Christians, take sides with the poor, even as our founder did ... though I'm not exactly a shining example!", "Don't waste your time", he told me "they will never get anywhere. Do you know, your Church leaders supported the politicians and the rich, in this struggle. What chance have the fishermen?" I don't know if what he said was true. But he has seen an IMAGE of US and I felt sad. Change is a slow process.

Tony Martyris

YOUTH - PROGRESSIO

THE POPE WITH YOUTH for the International Youth Year

On the feast of Christ the King, this past year, Pope John Paul II addressed the following message to young people throughout the world.

"I turn now in a special way to youth, on this feast in which the Church proclaims the kingdom of Christ, already present, but still growing mysteriously towards its full manifestation. It is you, the young people, who have an indispensable role in carrying forward this kingdom, you who are the hope of the Church and of the world.

As is already known, 1985 will be the International Youth Year. The Church, which encourages all young people to help construct a world more worthy of the human person and which reflects the Lordship of Christ, cannot let such a Year pass by unheeded. It must give its own contribution and witness, together with all young people who have met Christ.

I therefore want to invite young people from all over the world to come to Rome for a meeting with the Pope, at the beginning of Holy Week, namely Palm Sunday and the Saturday immediately preceding it next year (i.e. 1985). We will celebrate, we will proclaim, we will give witness together that "Christ is our Peace", the Lord of peace in the heart of those who have been reconciled and who are themselves peacemakers.

I ask the Episcopates of every nation, as well as the international Catholic movements and associations to support this initiative, to encourage the participation of many young people, and to arrange meetings that will deepen an awareness of the theme of the meeting in Rome. The encounter with the Eternal City will give expression to the vitality of the Church today".

YOUTH COLLOQUIUM
Rome, 18-28 December 1984

What we experienced in this meeting was so rich and so intense that it is difficult to pass it on in all its fullness. It was ten days full of discovery, meetings, the presence of the Lord and his gifts. That is why it seems necessary in this "witness" to choose a concrete aspect to share, and I believe that - with the inevitable limitations involved in using words - it could be called the experience of a personal confirmation of the youth CLC perceived as something valid and viable in the reality of the world, in my personal life, and in that of the group.

The experiences shared during the sessions, the Eucharist, prayer, the unscheduled personal meetings with those participating, allowed me to compare my way of living in the CLC with other types of experiences, and to see how the Lord guides us all along paths which, although different, have many points in common.

So, during this 'Colloquium' I was able to interpret my own history in the CLC and see how it had developed, with its crises and discoveries which had led me - like the members of my community at Zaragoza - to grow in the knowledge of the Lord, of my mission and of my neighbour, in openness to the Church and to the world.

Loving and accepting this history with thankfulness has been something important for me that I want to share, to the extent that it can help to link me with CLC young people who have already been committed for some time and who will perhaps be able to find here some reference points or interpretations for their experiences; or with those who are beginning now and feel at the same time both attracted to and ignorant of what the CLC can lead them to.

But the experience that I gained at the meeting is not limited to that. It had other dimensions. It was not only my past that I was able to understand but also the present, and that partially illuminated the future. Let me explain: I came, like all the others, with a number of

open questions of various kinds, from the need for a personal clarification regarding the way of life in a CLC to the problems of organisation or questions about the direction that my group will be able to take.

I also found answers to other questions there, not definitive answers, but orientations that will help me to understand the real challenge of CLC, and how to respond, when the time comes. For example, a crucial time in the life of an individual, and the life of a group, is the moment when it becomes possible to undertake the CLC way of life as a personal option which really integrates faith and life and eliminates the possibility of the group staying on a level of being caught up in itself.

I could continue to write for quite a long time because, as I said at the beginning, the experiences were numerous and intense. I do not want to end without thanking the Lord for his presence, as well as the 'Colloquium' members, the Jesuit community of Saint Andrew, and all of you who, in one way or another, made possible this experience which can, it seems to me, be of such great profit to the CLC's.

Paco Sanz

When I was invited to this CLC Youth Colloquium, I kept wondering what it would be all about. As preparations went on, I looked forward to what we would be able to derive from it for the betterment of youth CLC groups. Now after we have had it, I feel I have gained a lot. Firstly the sharing of our countries' youth realities as well as our political, social and economic situations made me aware of the world around me since I am not particularly politically oriented. As we shared our CLC processes and realities, it was quite evident that we are all trying to attain the same goal of unity with Christ, individually as well as through our groups. But, at the same time, we are searching for better ways to do this, and feel that we need a particular kind of formation which will make us understand CLC better, especially in our local communities so as to help us be aware of our call to this way of life.

This Colloquium is the beginning of a very useful project which I feel will improve the youth CLC reality both at national and international levels. Therefore a continuous follow-up of it will definitely result in fruitful achievements. This colloquium has presented a lot of challenges to me. At this time my National Community has no National Assistant and the National Office is almost non-existent, but I feel something can be done as long as we want and feel strongly called to see to this. The community life we shared was a great experience of the World Community. The meals, the Eucharistic celebration, our free time, etc. helped me to see Christ's love in every person which made me realise that where Christ's love is appreciated, no barrier is impossible.

Jackie Mulundika

WORK IN THE POLYCLINICS

Certain CLC members whose profession or work is connected with health, work in Polyclinics (Private Health Services for the People).

These polyclinics are situated in poor areas on the outskirts of Montevideo. They offer medical help to people who do not have enough money to go to the Public Health hospitals in the more central parts of the town. That was their main function for some years.

Now, most of us who work in the polyclinics have seen that, without neglecting our commitment to help, we can organise other services: preventive medicine, the participation of neighbourhoods and our 'clients' in the activity

of the polyclinics at the levels both of employment and decision making. It is necessary to organise the districts in such a way as to obtain the active and organised participation of individuals in national and local decisions, as well as in the area of health. All of these changes can begin in the polyclinics, although they go much further. In some polyclinics we are already working towards that goal. In others we are looking for a way to get there, but it is a common objective for most of us.

Another important aspect of this work, begun this year, consists in the 'Coordination of the Polyclinics'. A coordination bureau has been set up consisting of two delegates from each polyclinic (a technician and a member of the community) who meet every two weeks. The objectives of the coordination are:

- The unification of objectives common to all the polyclinics;
- Bringing together people involved in accidents, or suffering casualties so as to be able to press their claims for compensation;
- The pooling of human and material resources;
- Common finance;
- Common formation and exchange of experiences.

The coordination bureau is at present working on a document setting forth principles and objectives which will be discussed in each polyclinic so that it may be corrected and then adopted.

In the part we have worked on, the following principles are expressed:

- The adoption of the WHO concept of health;
- The need for a health plan which will combine Primary Health Care with the work of the polyclinics in establishing health care centres on the outskirts;
- The need for the ordinary 'working-people' to participate in decisions so that these changes are possible.

Beatriz Paladino
CLC Uruguay

PENBOC'H '84: AN INVITATION TO TAKE A RISK

We publish below the account of a course which took place at Penboc'h (France), from July 10-22, last year. 25 young people participated, 21 of them coming with an experience from Third World countries.

A report

Herein lies the originality of the Penboc'h 'formula' that it offered both a course, and a retreat experience. It took the following form: 3 course days, 1 day of relaxation and pilgrimage, 5 retreat days, and 2 to recapture the experience. We followed the line of Ignatian spirituality, which does not separate prayer and action, and which links culture with faith. As it was a matter of reflecting upon contemporary world issues, notably questions relating to the Third World, the organic link between Faith and Justice as expressed in the mission entrusted to the Society of Jesus was highlighted. On the last day, an exposé by Henri Madelin allowed us to make explicit what had been done in the earlier stages and to bring together, in one and the same experience, a knowledge of the world with all the risks involved, and a journey through the Spiritual Exercises that is set against this background of reality.

The participants underlined the essential nature of a step (the first for most of them) which links availability to the call of the Gospel and takes into account the challenges of our time. Since then, you will not be surprised to learn, several of them have been able to discover the direction that their christian vocation might take. This endorsed a conviction that had guided us: a sensitivity that is really alive to the vital questions (for humanity) today is, in most cases, expressed in terms of one's capacity to commit oneself unreservedly along the lines of the Gospel. It is important to allow this desire to identify and express itself.

Lay-Religious Cooperation

The preparation team which had begun its work in the previous December was composed of 6 lay people (3 couples) and 4 religious. During the meeting itself the number of religious was increased, notably in response to the re-
18 -

quest for retreat guides, but an appeal was also made to other lay people to take on roles during the session and in the liturgy - a total of 10 lay people and 13 religious.

Several participants remarked that they had been impressed by the lay-religious collaboration, the more so because the one group did not specialise at all in spiritual functions and the other did not specialise in cultural tasks. Thus four lay people took part in the guidance of the retreat, another was responsible for the liturgy and all wanted to be responsible for the whole session.

A Demanding Proposition

Those who have proposed the Penboc'h session to young people know from experience that this 'holiday activity' formula gains the enthusiastic adherence of only a small number. Some others agree to try the experience because the theme appeals to them, but they fear the great unknown of the retreat. Many who had at first been attracted by the prospect of the adventure finally chose less risky activities. Of course, a selection was made, ultimately according to the criterion of people who really wanted to come. Is it not precisely that sort of disposition that authorises us to propose the Exercises?

With regard to the meeting itself, the participants commented on:

- the intensity of the session, due to the competence and the personal commitment of the speakers and, among others, the presence and the often disturbing witness of Father Ceyrac; and due also to a first experience of the Third World, which 21 participants had shared (either working or staying for at least a month), and to the way they were questioned by the others;
- the deep spiritual experience in terms of the retreat: personal guidance was an integral part of the experience, so that the third and fourth periods of prayer each day were settled through the dialogue with one's guide;
- the place and the value of the liturgy, thanks to the competence and talent of Patrick Soubrié from Grenoble,

and thanks also to the climate of creativity, in particular during the main celebrations of the retreat.

A Network

The Penboc'h 'formula' contained within itself a good number of obstacles to be overcome by the person who felt attracted: it was an innovation, the demands were very high, so wouldn't one end up with only a handful? To that was to be added the reticence of a certain number of potential candidates: the activity was too elitist, it would rival the activities of the chaplaincies... Barely half of the participants came on the invitation of the Jesuits of the French province. This shows the existence of quite a network, especially when you consider that, apart from some groups whose members already knew each other and who together made up a third of the actual total, the participants came from very different places and situations. An example: the 33 French coming from the provinces belonged to 17 different regions.

After Penboc'h

Apart from the suspicion which is sometimes rightly aroused by certain forms of Third Worldism, there is a new awareness of daily reality along the lines of Faith and Justice. This invites us to commit ourselves from now on to the service of the poor here, notably the immigrants, and to be ready one day to join those who are 'over there', in accordance with each one's call, to deepen in various ways the experience of the Exercises (and so new groups of youth-CLC are being set up), to make oneself available to sensitize one's acquaintances, including younger boys and girls, to the issues of which they already intuitively see the importance... In Paris a group which started from Penboc'h has begun to grow by enlisting other young people who share the same expectations.

The Penboc'h site and its resources have shown their adaptability to the 'formula'. The Jesuit community, the religious and the personnel have shown how they contribute to the meeting. The place, with its evocatively sounding name, can become for many the focus for the desire and the call to a new solidarity.

Jean Dravet

A VISIT TO POLAND

In one of his fairy tales about the magic land of "Narnia", the English writer, C.S. Lewis, begins his story with a description of Narnia at a time when it was under the curse of a wicked witch. It was bitterly cold, the land was covered in snow, and - "it was always winter, and never Christmas". That is the sort of impression a visitor to Poland might easily form, and maybe that is the only impression a visitor would get, unless he visited Czestochowa, or met with the people, especially in their homes. There he would find a very, very different experience - an experience of vibrant faith, courageous hope, infectious laughter and over-whelming hospitality.

I said Mass at the shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, on a Saturday, and it was packed - especially with young people. The picture of Mary is a commanding image that is almost impossible to describe. Unlike many other images of Mary, there is no 'sweetness' in the face; compassionate, certainly, but a face that fits perfectly the lines of another English writer, G.K. Chesterton - "Seven swords were in her heart, And one was in her hand". The marks on Our Lady's face were caused by robbers who broke into the Monastery in the 15th century - one of them slashed the picture with his sword. This is probably the only image of Mary that actually shows her bearing the marks of violence done to her people. I was struck by the number of people who said to me, quite simply - "Of course, Mary is the Queen of Poland". She is, indeed - the Warrior Queen.

Poland is a land of great hope - a land where communities of christian life, that seek the 'magis', are bound to flourish, under the inspiration and protection of Mary.

Patrick O'Sullivan, s.j.

EUROPEAN CLC MEETING
Grenoble, August 1984

"Is this really the right way?" Many participants asked this question as they followed the line of arrows along little streets that became narrower and narrower. But also, what a joy to arrive, from 7 different countries (Germany, Austria, France, Great Britain, Holland, Ireland and Malta) and to discover the panorama, offered by the mountains of Belledune, of the other side of the valley!

This meeting followed on from the one at Munich, organised in 1981 by the German community. Its aim was to reinforce the links between the members of the different communities, in line with the orientations given at Providence '82.

The 9 days spent together were full of exchanges and discoveries; this was due to - people presenting themselves, in which the children played a very humorous role; walks in the Alps; camp-fires; picnics and many other activities; the efforts of the translators; and each one taking responsibility for the common services.

For a long time we will remember the Olympic Games, which the young people organised for everyone. But, for many of us, the climax of the meeting was the walk to La Salette, a place of pilgrimage at an altitude of 1770 metres. After covering some distance and spending a night in a 'refuge' or under canvas, we had to rise at 4.30am to cross a pass and go down towards La Salette. The rest of the group rejoined the walkers to celebrate a moving eucharist. What a pleasure to find one another, as the mist swirled round us, and we followed the guides - members of the CLC from Grenoble! How many symbols there were for each one of us in this pilgrimage!

Through this meeting, the unity of our small international community was forged little by little around the "Our Father", quietly meditated on and recited in the different languages each morning.

The tensions and the weariness of the preceding months gradually disappeared as the lines of communication grew stronger and stronger. In spite of the language difficulty, exchanges became quite deep, in line with people's inclination or need. What a pleasure it was to see faces recover their serenity as the days went by!

The sharing of experiences, of discernment, of joys and sorrows, of services rendered by different people, enriched our celebrations, out-of-doors or in the chapel. There each one could praise Him who founds our community.

It is very difficult to work out a 'balance-sheet' after such a meeting. It brought together families with children from 2 to 16, single people, young people involved in CLC. The request for times for meditation, for sharing and for celebration was very much greater than anticipated.

The children and the young people were frequently a part of it all. One of the 'tests' that they proposed as a game was to build human pyramids, made up of people of all ages...

And now? New friendships have been begun, others have been reinforced - these possibilities will develop as each one chooses. Some projects are already planned for the future. It will be very good if the warmth we experienced as we said 'Good-bye' to one another is converted into activities that prolong our time of being together.

*From the contributions and suggestions of
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EGYPT

Last October, from 4th - 6th, we had our annual National Assembly. The theme for this year was: "From life as a group to life as a community". For several reasons, we had had to delay the date of our meeting, and the only possible date left was too close to the time when the schools and University begin. Consequently, many of our youth members were not able to participate as the University opens on October 7th.

We met at the College of the Holy Family, Cairo, on Thursday 4th, at 5 pm, and after a word of welcome from Makram Kaisar, the president of the Council, a game for introducing people helped us to get to know one another. Then one member from each group or community presented his/her group and explained what had happened during the past year. Our first evening together finished with a Mass of thanksgiving celebrated by Father Olivier for his 25 years of religious life. The number of participants was about 70, including 7 Jesuit Fathers. There were also some 'observers' who wanted to become acquainted with the CLC's. Subsequently some of them became members of groups already existing.

The next day, October 5th, we had a 'brainstorming' on "the characteristics of and the obstacles to life in a group". People were divided into small groups, and then came together to share in a plenary session. Father Olivier spoke of "the process of development in the life of a group". As for the previous evening, the College provided a hearty meal for which almost everyone was present. In the afternoon, through non-verbal communication, we tried to express what we understood by "Community and the obstacles to community life". After a pause for tea, Father Fadel spoke to us of the stages a CLC group passes through. The Mass was celebrated by Father Paul Sarkis, the new Regional Superior for the Jesuits in Egypt, who has expressed his desire to be involved with the CLC communities. His homily reminded us of our mission, as CLC, in Egypt today. After the Mass, we had a family celebration, led by Hani and Samuel (Cairo) and Rafik and Serge (Alexandria). Hani and Samuel, as on previous occasions, showed they were born actors - they are lawyers with 'the gift of the gab'. Rafik and Serge were very much appreciated for their songs and guitar-playing. We were entertained by sketches, imitations of certain CLC members and songs.

On Saturday 6th, we began with a review of life made by each community - each community paying special attention to the journey they had made together and their transition from being a group to being a community. In a plenary session, each community endeavoured to share what they considered to be the important points of their common jour

ney. At the end of the morning, Father Pierre Courel, who has just returned from a year in France, giving the Spiritual Exercises and working with two CLC communities, introduced us to St. Ignatius' thoughts on community.

In the afternoon we elected our new Council, which turned out to be the same as for the previous year. Now that we all know one another better, we have been able, for the first time, to elect our National Council. The only changes were Hoda, the secretary, who expressed the desire to be replaced, and the two persons representing the Delta and the South. Sonia Wahbi, whom some would remember from Malta '82, is the new secretary. The two representatives have yet to be named by their regions.

At the invitation of the Council, the closing Mass was celebrated by Mgr. Andraos Ghattas, Apostolic Administrator of the Coptic Catholic Church in Egypt. This is the first time that, as CLC, we have come to the attention of and been recognised by the ecclesiastical authorities of the country. After the Mass, during which Mgr. Andraos gave us a very beautiful homily on the role of the laity in the Church and the meaning of community, the members of the new and former Council entertained our guest. It was a most cordial meeting and an occasion for us to become acquainted with each other.

As the number of our groups or communities has reached 15, and the need to follow a program of formation is becoming more pressing, we have decided, in Council, to adopt the Canadian program, "Growing together in Christ", adapting it to our needs and particular situation. We have also decided to begin a series of monthly meetings for leaders (present and future) and assistants. These meetings will begin on November 15th. We give thanks to God for His Spirit Who guides us.

HUMAN COMMUNITY OR CHURCH OF GOD?

*** Present State of the Question**

For several years, the traditional parishes have been breaking up, everywhere, into small groups of different kinds. *"The people, as far as we can gather, are coming*

together more effectively in this way, and that responds to the new needs of the People of God". As a matter of fact, there is often only a vague resemblance between a team for some special form of catholic action and a prayer group. But do all these human groups deserve the name of the Church of Christ, as Paul could affirm of *"the Church which was at Corinth"* (1 Cor. 1,2)? That is a question that we would like to clarify. To be more precise, we would pose the question in the following terms: what is it that distinguishes the true Church of Christ from an ordinary human community?

* The method of approach

To find the elements for a reply, we are going to investigate the New Testament (NT), but, first of all, two remarks about our method.

* On the one hand, we will note that the NT does not present a collection of uniform documents, neither in form (gospel, letter or hymn), nor in content (the emphasis changes from one book to another). These texts reflect back on different communities which did not have the same preoccupations. That is why since the central subject of the Acts of the Apostles is the spread of the Church after Pentecost, the other authors of the NT only speak incidentally and indirectly of their community.

* On the other hand, we will not be looking, in the NT, for all the ecclesial structures that we are familiar with and which are the result of a long history. The NT constitutes only one stage in the life of the Church; essential, certainly, but it represents only one stage in the development of the Body of Christ - the 'embryo' phase.

* The two-fold 'dimension' of the Church

Every human community that would aim at being an actual realisation of the Church of Christ must fulfill certain objective conditions that are to be found throughout the NT. In effect, we can identify the ecclesial reality by reference to two 'dimensions' (space and time) which intersect and 'locate' such a reality.

* On the one hand - in terms of the 'dimension' of space --

there are all the relationships, internal or external, which make up the Church at a given moment: the relations with non-believers, the relations with other communities and the relationships among members of the same community.

* On the other hand - in terms of the 'dimension' of time - there are certain historic moments that stand out in the life of the community and the life of the community can be seen as passing from one to another.

This two-fold expression of the ecclesial reality (the community's relationships and its historical framework) is echoed in the language and life of the groups, and influences what is said and done on the level of 'Church'. One or other particular aspect will be more important at a given moment, but all these elements must function together and, if possible, with the same intensity.

THE COMMUNITARIAN RELATIONSHIPS

At each moment, the life of the Church is manifested through three types of relationships:

1. On the level outside the community

The community does not live turned in on itself; it exists for the world...

* on account of its message, it goes to announce to "those outside" the good news that it carries in its very being, while adapting itself to its audience; compare, for example, what it says to the Jews (Acts, 2,14-40), to the Greeks (Acts 17,22-31), to the Romans (Acts 10,34-43), and on a larger scale, we can verify this hypothesis if we reflect that Mark addresses himself to the Romans, Matthew to the Jews and Luke to the Greeks.

* on account of its mission it goes to encounter those who do not share its faith - first to the Jews, then to the pagans (Acts 13,13-52).

All these activities have an effect on the life of the community. Either the people who listen turn towards Christ and enter into the community of believers through baptism (Acts 2,37-41) or else, they terminate the dia-

logue politely, as at Athens: "At this mention of rising from the dead, some of them burst out laughing; others said: 'We would like to hear you talk about this again' (Acts 17,32); or quite violently, as with the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 7,54-60), or the arrest of Paul: "Some days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and gave him a hearing on the subject of faith in Christ Jesus" (Acts 24,24); or persecutions of every kind (1 Thess. 2,4).

2. on the level within the community

At the same time, the christian community must deepen its understanding of its faith and nourish its spiritual life.

* In view of the need "always (to have) your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope you have" (1 Pet. 3,15), or to reply to the questions that the believers ask about certain points: Christ (Hebrews, chs. 1-5), life after death (1 Cor. 15,12-58), or other subjects, we see the birth of catechesis and the interpretation of Scripture. While Luke, in the episode of Emmaus, sets out the principles for a christian reading of the OT, Matthew authenticates the mission of Jesus through drawing arguments from the Jewish writings. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews explains the work of Christ through recourse to the book of Leviticus. However, not everything was exactly simple for erroneous documents tried to find their way into the assemblies and it was necessary to refute them and protect oneself against them (1 Pet. 2; 2 Cor.11).

* To be authentic, the faith must become incarnated in the institutions and in concrete daily living. If love and the sharing of goods must be the rule for the relationships between brothers (Philem. 16; Roms. 12; Phils. 2,1-5), it is also important to set up leaders in the groups (1 Tim. 3,1-13) who are essentially at the service of all, in the interest of unity. Sometimes it was necessary to intervene, to rectify different kinds of abuses (1 Cor. 5; 6,1-11; Gal. 1,6-10; James 2,1-13).

* All that only makes sense if rooted in and fed by public worship and prayer. Taking up Jewish prayers, "So, my dear

brothers, what conclusion is to be drawn? At all your meetings, let everyone be ready with a psalm or a sermon or a revelation, or ready to use his gift of tongues or to give an interpretation; but it must always be for the common good" (1 Cor. 14,26), the members come together regularly to praise God. Here and there we see texts composed by the communities: "His state was divine, yet He did not cling to His equality with God but emptied Himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are; and being as all men are, He was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised Him high and gave Him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phils. 2,6-11). The sacramental life becomes progressively structured, with special attention given to the eucharist (1 Cor. 11 and the gospel accounts of the Last Supper; John 6), and baptism (1 Pet; Mtt. 28,19-20).

3. on the level of relationships between communities

* We come now to the third communitarian dimension of the Church, an important one that is often neglected today - the inter-relation between the different cells.

* Beyond their social or ethnic differences, and in spite of geographic distances, the first communities succeeded in maintaining the unity of the body. What mutual concessions that supposes, how many passionate exchanges must have taken place! The conflict at Antioch and the Assembly of Jerusalem which put an end to it (Acts 15,1-35) remained for a long time a sort of model in the history of christianity. The indefatigable courage of Paul was an important factor in this inter-communion, as he always included a visit to Jerusalem in his missions, to explain his decisions to and receive confirmation from the mother Church.

* This unity in the faith showed itself also in a concrete way through the equitable division of material goods. The rich community comes to the aid of the one in difficulties. It is not a question of "giving alms", but of practising economic equality and solidarity. Among bro-

thers, sharing resources is another way of declaring that they live the same faith. According to Paul, the churches of Macedonia were very good examples in this regard (2 Cor. 8-9).

THE HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE CHURCH

Though the relationships we have been describing are very important, for all that they are not sufficient to found the Church. Other factors must contribute to building up the framework. For, even if a human group fulfills the conditions we have been describing, it is still not yet similar to the Church of Christ. A community is only entitled to this name if it recognises that its origin, its future and its existence lie beyond its own powers.

1. The origin of the Church (its relation to the past)

The Church shows that it is not responsible for its own origin - that its origin lies beyond its present membership - by virtue of two complementary points: reference to Christ and its reading of the Scriptures.

* Though the presentation of Christ may vary according to the different authors - a Rabbi for Matthew, Lord for Luke, the Word in John and Priest in Hebrews - all converge on this central affirmation that Christ, after his death, moves to a completely new life and that it is through this Easter event that the Church is born.

* But how are we to situate this event in the history of mankind? What language can we borrow to communicate such an event? The primitive Church has resolved this question through situating itself simultaneously in continuity and in discontinuity with the OT. The Easter event prolongs and brings to term the history of the chosen people. Christ truly accomplished everything that had been announced by the law and the prophets: *"Then He told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the prophets and in the Psalms, has to be fulfilled.'"* (Luke 24,44), and the Church recognises itself as the holy people of God or the new chosen race (1 Pet. 2,9-10).

2. The future of the Church (its eschatological dimension)

The ecclesial community does not, then, owe its ori-

gin to itself, but to Christ who has raised it up. Its ending equally is not in its own hands. In effect, its finality aims to establish the "reign of God" which coincides with the second coming of Christ. The Kingdom is not the Church, but the Church is for the Kingdom. The NT gives us some information about the moment when the end will come and about the time which separates us from that moment.

With regard to the time which separates us from that moment, the NT says two things that are slightly contradictory:

* On the one hand it tells us that nothing more is to be expected as everything has been given "*once and for all*" (Hebr. 7,27) in Christ. That is why the apostles, after Pentecost, proclaim that the end of time has come and that people are living in the last days: "*In the days to come - it is the Lord who speaks - I will pour out my spirit on all mankind. Their sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams*" (Acts 2,17).

* From another point of view, we are told that all the power of the resurrection of Christ has not yet been released in time. In effect, while suffering or evil inhabit the earth, we must struggle to get rid of it, be on our watch (Mark 13,33-37), and continue to labour (2 Thess. 3, 1-15), in spite of adversity and in the certainty that the victory has already been won (John 16,25-33).

We find several particulars, of two types, on when the end will come:

* On the one hand, the date must remain unknown to everyone: "*But as for that day and hour, nobody knows it, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, no one but the Father only*" (Matt. 24,36). That is why we must be vigilant so as not to be surprised (1 Thess. 5,1-11) and discern the authentic signs which announce the end (Mark 13).

* But together with that, we can point to a presentation which anticipates the final scene. Matthew makes use of an allegory (Matt. 25) while the others have recourse to an apocalyptic style (1 Thess. 4,13-18). In both cases, we

should not look for the exact description of how things will be, but rather an abundance of symbols which try to tell us something of what follows when history is ended.

In other words, each day we live out the return of the Lord Jesus and while He is coming we build up our world, knowing that the final meaning of this world is yet to come.

3. The present existence of the Church (or the gift of the Spirit)

How can the community live harmoniously all these historical tensions (to be linked to the past and to be an eschatological sign), or contemporary tensions (to live unity in diversity)? The Church, because it has received the gift of the Spirit, can live all these contradictions.

* To root the Church in its origins, the function of the Spirit is to recall and to confirm the work of Christ:

"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you" (John 14,26). He is present at the birth of the Church (Acts 2,1-13), as He had been at work in the conception of Christ (Luke 1,35). Living in the Church, He helps it discover the inexhaustible newness of the Gospel.

* To accompany the Church throughout its earthly pilgrimage, the Holy Spirit sanctifies it through giving it all the gifts which it may need to bring to fulfillment all the tasks entrusted to it. It is He who dispenses charisms to each person and brings about unity amid great diversity, but for the building up of the whole body (1 Cor. 12-14).

We have given a very broad outline of the Church in the NT without in any way suggesting that this is exhaustive. The structure we have proposed, even though it is schematic, can easily be discovered in all the communities which were recognised as the Church of Jesus Christ through space and time. But lest this presentation remain a bare skeleton, we invite the reader to go back to the texts we have cited.

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