



PROGRESSIO

SUMMARY

MAY 1988
7th. Year
1.3

- THE FIFTY DAYS OF EASTER
(Everett Diederich s.j.) 3
- SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND THEOLOGICAL
REFLECTION (Center of Concern) 9
- AN EXPRESSION OF OUR ROOTS
(Tim Quinlan s.j.) 11
- "THE PILGRIMS" Adelaide (1976-1988)
TWELVE YEARS OF COMMUNITY LIFE
(Maxine Hogan) 15
- THREE OBJECTIVES OF THE FORMATION OF THE LAITY
(Cardinal Eduardo Pironio) 18
- ECHOES... ECHOES... ECHOES...
*CLC in Central America (El Salvador) 27

PUBLICATION OF THE WORLD CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY
C.P.6139-(Borgo S.Spirito 8)-00195 Roma-ITALIA
ENGLISH-SPANISH-FRENCH EDITIONS
EDITOR: JOSE REYES

PUBLICACION DE LA COMUNIDAD MUNDIAL DE VIDA CRISTIANA

Toda correspondencia debe ser dirigida a:

C. P. 6139 - 00195 ROMA (Italia)

EDITA Y DISTRIBUYE:

Federación de Comunidades de Vida Cristiana de España
Maldonado, 1 - A - 28006 MADRID (España)

Depósito legal: M. 38.911-1986

IMPRIME:

Impresos y Revistas, S. A. (IMPRESA)
Torneros, 58. Políg. Ind. Los Angeles
GETAFE (Madrid)

THE FIFTY DAYS OF EASTER

Often religious practice, which is very important in our faith life, is not that which attracts or impresses us most. This may well be the case with the Easter season, the fifty days between Easter Sunday and Pentecost. Advent/Christmas is probably our most popular Church season and Lent our most impressive. The first is popular because it coincides with a secular season of expectancy, fellowship, and festivity. The second is impressive because, as we put it, "We are doing something for Lent", meaning that we are trying harder to overcome the things which hold us back from loving the Lord and our brothers and sisters as he would have us do. It is easy for us to remember that we are in these seasons. During the Advent/Christmas season the advertising media is counting the days for us. During Lent because we look forward to the end of the Lenten discipline, we count them for ourselves. We tend, however, to look forward to the celebration of Easter in the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday as the end of Lent, not as the beginning of the Easter Season.

Yet Easter is the greatest of the Church's seasons, the one in which the fullness of the Paschal Mystery is revealed in Jesus the risen Lord and shared by his risen Body, the Church. More than any other season it puts us in touch with the Lord as he now lives and communicates his life to us. Its celebration is our annual preparation to receive the Lord's greatest gift, his Holy Spirit, which makes us Church and fulfills his promise to be with us until the end of time. It deserves our best effort to enter into its spirit.

The reflections which follow, focus on the celebration of the Easter season, the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost. It will become obvious, however, that the kind of celebration proposed needs a great beginning, one so intense and full that the fifty days are

experienced as an unfolding of its richness and depth. The Easter season has this in the celebration of the Easter Triduum, beginning with the Mass of Holy Thursday evening and ending with vespers on Easter Sunday. The Easter Triduum deserves our very best in planning and participation. The celebration of the Easter season is its prolongation.

Notice the way the Sunday is counted on April 10. It is called, "Second Sunday of Easter", not "Second Sunday after Easter". The Sundays are counted this way until Pentecost. It is a slight change but one making the point that Easter is not just one Sunday. It is a season lasting fifty days until Pentecost Sunday.

The Easter season calls for a unique kind of celebration. The Church's official guide for keeping these fifty days says that they are to be celebrated in joyful exultation as one feast day and goes on to call these fifty days the "Great Sunday", borrowing the phrase from a third century father of the Church, St Athanasius. The season prolongs the celebration of Easter for fifty days!

Celebrating the Easter season as one great Sunday means we stop counting days. We stop counting days when we wish they would never end. In a true sense we celebrate the days of the Easter season as a beginning of time which never ends.

Unlimited time has irrupted into our time-bound human existence through the presence among us of the crucified risen Lord. "I know you are looking for Jesus the crucified, but he is not here", the angel said to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. Yet he comes to them. Before these brave loving women, at once fearful and joyful at the good news whose bearers they were, Jesus stands suddenly, without warning, and says "Peace!"

Jesus the crucified is risen and is not here in time like we are, and yet in the mystery of his new life he can be present in time to all of us in an intimacy and richness that surpasses all understanding. Through our baptism either received or renewed in the Easter Vigil, we

believe that if we have died with Christ, "... We are also to live with Him" (Epistle for the Easter Vigil Mass).

The crucified risen Jesus is among us and greets us. "Peace" he says. We celebrate his risen life and ours, overflowing with peace, forgiveness, light, joy, love, mystery and fulfillment. This is the spirit of the Easter season when time's limits are transformed in the mystery of celebrating fifty days as one great Sunday. This spirit is Jesus' Easter gift to his Church. It is He, not we, who makes our fifty day joyful celebration one feast day.

This the risen Jesus does by his presence to us especially in the celebration of the Sunday and weekday Masses during the Easter season. During and since Vatican II we have been invited by the Church's official teaching to experience in faith Christ's real presence in the celebration of Mass in a dynamic way, that is, as being multiple and emerging gradually as the Mass is celebrated. First the risen Christ is really present in the assembly gathered in his name, next in his word proclaimed and explained, also in the eucharistic elements. We shall have to limit our reflection to the first two, the risen Lord's real presence in the assembly and in his word.

Christ's real presence in us gathered in his name, has been renewed in two ways in the celebration of the Easter Vigil: first by the baptism of the catechumens and secondly by the solemn renewal of baptismal promises by the already baptized. The baptismal font should remain prominent during the entire Easter season, surrounded with plants and fresh flowers as a symbol of its life giving waters. More importantly, however, the assembly of the baptized should be conscious of its new members, welcoming them and helping integrate them into the community. Throughout this season as we gather in our places of worship we should be especially mindful that the Lord Jesus is making us into a living house of prayer. He is in our midst, praying in us through the gift of his Holy Spirit. The Spirit is uniting us to the Father and bonding us with one another, gifting us with the power to love one another as he has loved us.

Christ is really present in his word during the Easter season to help us interiorize the Paschal Mystery of his Death and Resurrection and make it our own. No time is so appropriate as the Easter season for our Lord Jesus to reveal to us the mystery of his Risen life and how he shares that with us even now. It is the season par excellence for Jesus to open the Scriptures to us.

He opens the Scriptures to us as the stories of his appearances to his friends after his death and resurrection are proclaimed. Jesus comes to them who were saddened, confused, questioning, doubting, and searching because he in whom they had placed all their hopes, upon whom their lives centered, was crucified. He reveals that he the crucified one lives, that his death was the way to new life from the Father for them. He gladdens their hearts through his new unlimited presence to them.

He adapts his presence to their needs. To Mary Magdelene and the women seeking to continue their loving ministry to him even in death, he reveals himself as he whom their hearts seek and gives them a new ministry, to bear the good news that he lives. To the disciples walking in deep dejection because the scandal of the cross was too much he opens the Scriptures. When their hearts and minds are ready, he reveals himself in the breaking of the bread. He comes to frightened apostles who had abandoned him, greeting them with peace, showing them forgiveness by his very presence, and empowering them with his Holy Spirit to forgive others. In short he comes consoling, forgiving, enlightening, strengthening his chosen friends, transforming them into believing witnesses to his resurrection, forming them to be the beginnings of his Church on Pentecost.

In the Scriptures for the weekdays and Sundays of the Easter season there are readings from the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel according to John. The first is the history of the Church born on Pentecost, of how those lived who followed the way and began to be called Christians, how Peter and especially Paul preached the Good News. The passages from John's Gospel are especially suited to reveal the mystery of the Risen Lord's love for

his Church, the intimacy of our union with the Father and Son and with each other.

The fifty days of Easter, the "Great Sunday", are graced in a unique way to permeate us with the mystery of our Lord among us as he now lives and as he now communicates and shares himself with us. He reveals himself to his friends as the same Lord with whom they once ate and drank. The angel at the tomb calls him the crucified. He shows his friends the marks in his hands and side. Yet he has not just come back to life like Lazarus. He has been raised up. He is beyond time and space, and yet he is present, making our hearts burn with love, and opening our eyes of faith to recognize him in all the ways he is with us, but most especially in the Holy Eucharist. Such a grace lets us taste even now the fullness of life that never ends when days are no longer counted in the one eternal feast of the Lamb.

The fifty days of the Easter season end with the celebration of Pentecost Sunday, as we commemorate the day of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles. This gift of the Spirit was the beginning of the Church, the beginning of her mission to bring salvation to the peoples of all tongues and nations.

It is the gift of the Holy Spirit to his Church that makes the Church itself the most abiding sacrament of his saving presence in the world. We renew that gift of the Spirit as we celebrate Pentecost Sunday, and with that celebration the one great feast of fifty days ends. We the Church go forth to be the permanent sacrament of salvation to the world in which we live. The risen Christ through his Holy Spirit in us brings men and women to know and believe in him and so receive from him the gift of eternal life.

It is difficult to be concrete and specific about how to prolong the celebration of Easter through fifty days. Perhaps the following suggestions will be helpful. They are for our prayer both during and between our liturgical celebrations as well as for our Easter living.

The Risen Jesus, walking with his disciples and opening the Scriptures to them, gave them a faith vision to recognize him in the breaking of the bread. He does the same for us during the Easter season. We often make an effort to participate in the Eucharist daily during Lent. Why not extend the effort to the Easter season? Let some of our prayer time during this season be before the reserved Eucharist.

To remember the great moments of the Easter Vigil which were linked with the Easter candle and the baptismal font let us give special attention to these symbols of the new light and life. To show our gratitude for these gifts why not try to make the Easter candle and baptismal font conspicuous with living plants and fresh flowers during the Easter season?

Finally during the Easter season search among your friends and acquaintances for one whom you experience as deeply transfigured through suffering. I think at once of a Lutheran lady in a nursing home, a long time bed patient, to whom I always gave communion because she believed in our Lord's real presence in the Eucharist and longed to receive him. She welcomed me bringing her Lord, and her face radiated back to me the gift of his peace.

Peace is the name with which our Lord sums up the gift of his Easter presence to his friends. It is his gift now to his Church to be savored and interiorized during the fifty days of the Easter season.

Everett Diederich s.j.(1)

(1) Father Diederich's speciality is Liturgy. He has helped many people in the practical aspects of liturgical renewal. Several bishops have called on his services within their dioceses and appreciated his informed, prayerful and dignified approach to community celebration.

Formation - Mission

SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

1. STEPS TOWARDS SOCIAL ANALYSIS

Social analysis is a way of understanding all the important elements which influence a particular situation -an event, a problem, an institution, a place- by showing their assumptions, structures, interconnections, and implications.

To help us do that analysis, here are a series of questions to ask about our experience (1):

1. What is the history of the situation?
 - stages, developments, key moments.
2. What are the major structures influencing the situation?
 - economic: "resources": business, market, labor;
 - political: "power": decision-making, power, government;
 - social: "relationships": education, associations, family;
 - cultural: "meaning": religion, customs, media.
3. What are the connections between these different structures?
 - explicit and implicit linkages.
4. What are the major values operative in the situation?
 - motivations, expectations, aspirations, norms.
5. What is the future direction of the situation?
 - trends revealed in the present.
6. What are the conclusions we can draw about the situation?
 - the most influential factor(s).

2. STEPS TOWARD THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Theological reflection is an effort to understand more deeply the situation we have analyzed, by seeing it in the light of our faith, scripture, church's social teaching, and the movement of the Spirit. The Word of God is brought to bear upon the situation and raises new questions, suggests new insights, and opens new responses.

Here are some steps to take in a simple approach to reflecting on our experience:

1. Pray for light to discern the presence of the Spirit in the midst of the situation.
2. Read some scripture which suggests itself as relevant to the situation, or pick some passages from the church's social teaching.
3. Ask questions about the situation, such as:
 - a) What reinforces gospel values here?
 - b) What undercuts, destroys those values?
 - c) Where is Jesus present here?
 - d) What are signs of the "Kingdom" here?
 - e) What is "grace" in this situation? "Sin"? "Salvation"?
4. Ask questions about Christian values and church practices such as:
 - a) How "realistic" is Christian teaching here?
 - b) Is the Christian approach the only or the best here?
 - c) What is the role of the Church?
 - d) What is the meaning here of "ministry"? Of "sacrament"? Of "community"? Of "spirituality"?
5. Discern what points were most important in our reflection, when we felt most moved by the Spirit?

These guidelines have been offered to us by the CENTER OF CONCERN, Washington D.C.

AN EXPRESSION OF OUR ROOTS

In June 1539, Pope Paul III sent two of St Ignatius' companions on mission to Parma. He did this reluctantly and only at the insistence of the Papal Legate, Cardinal Ennio Filonardi, who wanted two good priests with him. These two men, Jaime Lainez and Pierre Favre, set off together with the Legate for the northern Italian town. These companions were united in spirit, but as yet they had not been officially recognized as members of the Society of Jesus. That recognition was to come in the following year, 1540.

But what is important for us about this mission to Parma is the light it sheds on the spirit which underlies the CLC.

Parma had recently been returned to the jurisdiction of the Papal States. In fact it had been overrun by Pier Luigi Farnese, the Pope's nephew. He was hated intensely by the local people who had suffered badly during the campaign.

The constant change of rulers had had its effect on the people. Public morality was at a low ebb; there were bitter quarrels, many murders and a great number of children born out of wedlock. The surrounding countryside had been devastated by war: houses were burnt, crops ruined and people were starving - 3000 of them swelled the number of beggars in Parma to 6500.

The knowledge and practice of the faith was minimal. There was little instruction in catechetics, preaching was unknown and there was little care for those in need. The clergy needed reform. It is into this setting that the Cardinal Legate brought "two priest of reformed life".

Lainez and Favre were invited by the Legate to reside in his palace. They chose instead to lodge at the hospital where they could minister to those in need. They preached, they celebrated the Eucharist, they instructed in catechetics, they lectured on the Scriptures, they exhorted people to receive the sacraments: frequent confession and monthly or weekly Communion. In other words they performed the normal pastoral functions associated with the priesthood. The fruits of their work were dramatic to say the least. Within a year the town of Parma became a flourishing Christian community. Great care was taken of the poor and God was praised.

People attributed the profound conversion in the community to the deep faith, practical charity and simplicity of life of these two priests. But very specially, their influence was felt deeply in their guidance of people through the Spiritual Exercises. This involved intimate, person to person, talks with small groups and individuals about the things of God. It is what the tradition calls spiritual conversation and is a most privileged form of evangelisation. It is the art of talking about God in personal terms which happens down in the local pub or supermarket and over the back fence; wherever informal social contacts usually occur. The early Jesuits practiced it among themselves and recommended it very strongly to others. For many years it remained a feature of the small community groups which evolved into the Sodalities/Marian Congregations.

We hear of many people being guided through the Exercises. Lainez and Favre guided diocesan priests and religious, laymen and laywomen. They supervised some of these people as they in their turn guided others through the Exercises. So we hear that parish priests guided some of their parishioners and that schoolteachers guided some of their promising students. A young Spanish priest, Jeronimo Domenech, was sent by Ignatius to Favre for guidance through the Exercises. He stayed to join their company and under the tutelage of Favre became a very skilled spiritual guide. Lainez wrote back to Rome and said of him: "Domenech gives the Exercises to fourteen or

more ... many of those who do them give them to others, some to ten, some to fourteen. As soon as one brood is fully fledged another is hatching, and so it goes on until we see our children's children to the fourth generation". (Fontes Narrativi, I, 212-214).

Favre was called away from Parma in July 1540 for a new mission in Worms. The people protested and appealed to Rome. The decision remained, but in response to many pleas, he wrote out a way of life to keep alive the spirit of the Exercises. He recommended morning and night prayers, a short meditation on the life of Christ in the morning and a examination of conscience in the evening plus a particular examen on one of the virtues, weekly confession and communion and care for the poor.

Pierre Favre, who was later beatified, had a rare gift of attracting those he met. "He had an extraordinary charm in spiritual conversation, for he never met a person, no matter how far gone, who was not totally changed by dealing with him. Father Ignatius used to say that Pierre could draw water from a rock." (Jerome Nadal, a Jesuit friend of Favre). I mention this here as an encouragement towards sharing our faith informally which is such a vital form of evangelisation. But let us take it further. What about sharing our faith with those who strongly disagree with us? Sometime after leaving Parma, he was asked for some suggestions for dealing with heretics. We could replace the word "heretic" with "those who disagree with us strongly" and listen to his words:

"In the first place it is necessary that anyone who desires to be serviceable to heretics of the present age should hold them in great affection and love them very truly, putting out of his/her heart all thoughts and feelings that tend to their discredit. The next thing he/she must do is to win their good will and love by friendly dealings and converse on matters about which there is no difference between us, taking care to avoid all controversial subjects that lead to bickering and mutual recriminations. The things that unite us ought to be the first ground of our approach, not the things that keep us apart." (Quoted

in The Conversational Word of God, T.Clancy, S.J.,
Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis, 1978, pp 19-20)

So many aspects of CLC life come together in this story from Parma. Guides who lived what they preached. Guides who formed and informed. Guides who handed over responsibility and moved on. The fruits of the Spiritual Exercises abounded in the care taken with those in need. People, starving in body and neglected in spirit, were nourished and cared for in so many ways. The people who helped them, developed a reflective style of life. They learned to thank God, allowed His Spirit to transform their sinfulness and followed Jesus in reaching out again in fraternal love.

Tim QUINLAN s.j.

* * * * *
* * * * *
* Your prayers are asked for *
* IGNATIUS NAMBONDI *
* who died at Oshakat prison in Namibia. *
* Ignatius was a leader of the C.L.G in *
* Namibia. He had graduated from a teacher's *
* training college a year ago and was on the *
* staff of a public school at Oshikushashipya, *
* Uukwambi. On the 9th. Feb. this year he was *
* taken by the South African police and beaten. *
* On the 25th. of Feb. the police told his *
* family that he had died in prison. He was *
* buried in Oshikushashipya, his home town, *
* on the 5th. March. *
* C.L.G. (Catholic life groups) is the name *
* given to the High School section of C.L.C. *
* in Southern Africa. *
* * * * *
* * * * * PROGRESSIO * * * * *

"THE PILGRIMS" - Adelaide
TWELVE YEARS OF COMMUNITY LIFE

On 11th November, 1976 our first meeting was held at 31 Fulham Park Drive, Lockleys, South Australia. Present were Ted and Dawn Cleary, Anne and Martin Dodson, Bob and Terry Nicholas, Jim and Maxine Hogan, Fr Greg O'Kelly s.j. Diana Herd joined the group soon after, followed a year later by Reg and Pat Pak Poy. When Fr O'Kelly left S.A. We were joined by Fr Ian Howells, s.j. ('78 - '84) and Fr Jim McInerney, s.j. ('84 - '86). We are grateful for the support they gave.

We were certainly not aware, at the time, of the historical significance of that meeting; that it was the first gathering of what was to become an ever-widening Australian CLC (1). Nobody here knew much about CLC then, except Fr Gerald Jones s.j., who was of course the real initiator in Australia. His instructions were to start one group, no more at that stage, to have a kind of model to see if CLC would work in Australia.

Armed with the French CLC Formation Programme, my experience of one eight day Spiritual Exercises Retreat and a CLC course in the Philippines, we set out on what was to become a real journey together in faith. From early on, there was a unanimous committment to attend meetings. This was certainly one of our strengths in those early days, and I think showed that we were serious, at least about looking into CLC. We began to rotate the venue of

(1) At present, the Australian National Community is made of 105 small CLC groups in 14 cities, with a total membership of about 900 people.

the meetings, with the host for the night taking responsibility for preparing and leading that particular meeting.

Before long, there were the first signs of a growing freedom. We were starting to take the risk of disclosing something of ourselves in shared prayer and reflecting on the influence of scripture in our lives. Soon there was a genuine spirit of trust and a fast growing sense of community. Although we were somewhat in the dark and unsure of 'what we were getting into', we all seemed drawn to keep going and tried to be open to where the Lord was leading us. Mind you, he doesn't always point the way very clearly and can be doggedly slow sometimes about showing the 'how'. We had moments of frustration and inevitable tensions from time to time. We know now it really was a sign that the group was growing; we were feeling free to express how we felt and what we really thought. Working through this, though hard, enabled us to move to a deeper level of relationship, but there were times when we had to call a halt and simply turn to prayer. As we experienced these ins and outs of group growth, there came about over the years a real love and acceptance of one another as we are, allowing and cherishing the differences in each other, just like God does with us.

We have learned the centrality of the Spiritual Exercises retreat for CLC. Real growth came in our community as more members experienced the Spiritual Exercises retreat on a regular basis. Coming to know Jesus present and active in our lives, learning to take on his mind and heart, to see things as he sees them, leads to a growing intimacy with him. It seems that it is only in this deepening relationship that we can discover our true mission.

We also found that social outings, shared retreats and other happenings outside the meeting time, have had a real bonding effect and opened up new levels of friendship in the group.

One might question why, after eleven years we are still together and have not split up to form other groups, but I think it needs to be remembered that, as the

beginning group in Australia we were alone in discovering our way. We were learning as we went and were fully occupied getting our own act together! The American CLC have a saying 'We make our way by going...' This certainly applied to our situation (Actually, we have initiated further CLC groups, two of which are presently being guided by members of our community).

One final thought: It seems important not to be too worried about doing everything according to a fixed pattern. People often ask 'What do you DO at your meetings?' It would be a tragedy if we forced a stereotype on people. So long as there are elements of shared prayer, shared reflection on scripture and our lives, and some evaluation on a regular basis, we should search our own ways of making the meeting time fruitful. In our call to follow Jesus in the way of St Ignatius, we need to listen to the Spirit in our daily lives and our community experience. The response will vary with different groups, but we need to allow this diversity if CLC is to be ALIVE AND REAL for all.

We would not want to give the impression that we are a community that has 'arrived'. Significantly, we have named ourselves 'The Pilgrims' (People always on a journey) trying to be attuned to God in our lives, so that we are always 'growing into' our CLC vocation. (It just happens that Ignatius referred to himself as a pilgrim too!).

Maxine Hogan

* * * * *PRAYING WITH THE AUSTRALIAN CLC* * *
* * * * *
* Feast of Mary, *
* MAY Help of Christians, *
* 24th. Patroness of Australia *
* and *
* Feast of Our Lady of the Way *
* * * * *
* * * * * PROGRESSIO * * * * *

The Pontifical Council for the Laity has recently published a booklet entitled "The formation of the Laity", from which we have taken the following article. It is the opening address by Cardinal Eduardo Pironio to the 9th. Plenary Assembly of the Council for the Laity, proposing three points of reflection concerning the objectives of the formation of the Laity.

THREE OBJECTIVES OF THE FORMATION OF THE LAITY

"Friends of God and prophets"
(Ws 7:27)

Let us begin with a text we read a few days ago during the liturgy of the Mass: "Although alone, she (Wisdom) can do all; herself unchanging, she makes all things new. In each generation she passes into holy souls, she makes them friends of God and prophets; for God loves only the person who lives with Wisdom" (Ws 7:27-28). Friends of God and prophets! That is the goal of our formation: Christian men and women who are deeply involved in temporal realities, rooted in the heart of the Church and always ready to give the reason for the hope that is in us (cf. 1 P 3:15). This presupposes the continual growth in us of Christ, our life, sent by the Father to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom to the poor. The goal of our formation, ever new and ever incomplete, is Christ: "until Christ is formed in you" (Ga 4:19), something that will only be accomplished in full when Christ is revealed (cf. Col 3:4) and then "we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is" (1 Jn 3:2).

This does not mean an unrealistic and disembodied formation. It means returning to the centre of our

Christian faith. It is not naive to think that the response that we Christians must give to the dramatic challenges of the contemporary world is one that must always be based on the Gospel; but a Gospel meditated and contemplated, enacted and shared, a Gospel really proclaimed by the force of the Spirit and given concrete expression each day in the ordinary conditions of our life. "Friends of God and prophets; for God loves only the person who lives with Wisdom".

I would like to propose to you three points of reflection on the theme that concerns us: "formation". The three points are as follows: first, formation for a missionary presence in the contemporary world (being fully a Church of communion, a Church of the Trinity, and being deeply involved in the world of temporal realities); second, formation for a new evangelization (the need to interiorize the person of Christ by contemplation, to read "the signs of the time" in the world and the presence of the Lord in history, to proclaim the justice of the Kingdom with courage and to call men and women to conversion); and third, formation for witness and prophecy (in other words, a profound ecclesial formation in hope, since "each individual layperson must be a witness before the world to the resurrection and life of the Lord Jesus, and a sign of the living God" (LG, 38).

I - FORMATION FOR A MISSIONARY PRESENCE IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

"As the Father sent me, so am I sending you" (Jn 20:21)

"As you sent me into the World, I have sent them into the world" (Jn 17:18).

It is the whole Church who, clothed in the Spirit of witness and prophecy, is sent into the world to be a "universal sacrament of salvation". It is interesting to recall here two great texts of the Council, linked to each other, that reveal and explain to us the meaning of this key expression of conciliar ecclesiology: the Church as "universal sacrament of salvation". The first is taken

from Lumen Gentium in speaking to us about eschatology: "Christ, lifted up from the dead, sent his life-giving Spirit upon his disciples and through his Spirit established his Body, which is the Church, as the universal sacrament of salvation" (LG, 48). It is not superfluous to emphasize here (since the matter is of concern to us for our projects of formation) that the expression "universal sacrament of salvation" is bound up with three fundamental realities:

- the definitive renewal in Christ ("the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home"; the eschatological dimension of the missionary and pilgrim Church which is already realized in history and will achieve its fullness in eternity). It is the need for the "new creation" in Christ (2 Co 5:17) that forms the basis of every authentic project of formation: the need to put aside the "old self" in order to "put on the new self that has been created in God's way, in the goodness and holiness of the truth" (Ep 4:24; cf. Col 3:9-10). Formation is a continual process of conversion which leads us to hope and to live "the paschal newness" each day;
- the paschal Mystery of Jesus (death and resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost) is the centre of our life and action, is the fundamental point of reference for our formation. In the last analysis, forming witnesses and prophets, Christians engaged in the world on the basis of the Gospel, is to prepare them to accept gladly the cross and martyrdom, and so make them feel solidarity with the suffering and create in the world "the hope (which) is not deceptive" (Rm 5:5). It is on the basis of the paschal Mystery of Jesus that the Christian acquires a greater evangelic capacity to discover the plight of the world and assume as his/her own, the grief and the hope of the poor;
- the Church is a Body animated by the Spirit of life and established by him as a missionary community. The Church cannot fully be a universal sacrament of salvation if she be not first an authentic communion in the Spirit.

Any genuine formation programme is aimed above all at the communion of the Church. It is not enough to form brilliant but individualistic personalities; the aim must be to form men and women capable of communion (with pastors, with religious, with laypeople, with all the movements and associations). Forming for communion means to be formed in poverty, in capacity for dialogue and service, and in a sincere and concrete love for the Church (both at the universal and local level). Forming for communion necessarily means to be formed in the cross.

The second important text that explains to us the meaning of the expression "universal sacrament of salvation" is found in *Gaudium et Spes*, when the Council propounds, in the light of Christ, Alpha and Omega, the fruitful interrelation that exists between the Church and the world: "Every benefit the people of God can confer on humankind during its earthly pilgrimage is rooted in the Church's being "the universal sacrament of salvation", at once manifesting and actualizing the mystery of God's love for the human person" (GS, 45).

It is important for our theme of formation to emphasize the following: all the fruitfulness of our presence in the world as witnesses to the resurrection, our capacity to change from within the structures of injustice, depends on our capacity, as a Church, to manifest clearly and communicate effectively the mystery of God's love for the human person. This means: forming "witnesses of love", men and women who have a profound experience of God's love, who are ready to live in "the sincerity of love" and who proclaim that the only way of changing the world -of making it more human and more fraternal- is to live in daily fidelity to the Gospel Beatitudes.

I would like to add some further remarks. In speaking of formation for a missionary presence in the contemporary world, I would like to emphasize the following points:

- Firstly, if the whole Church must be present in the world as "universal sacrament of salvation", it is more

particularly the layperson who is granted a providential ecclesial experience of secular presence and temporal endeavour. With all that this involves both of exhilaration and danger, of joy and the cross, of sin and holiness.

The laity must be formed in such a way that they simultaneously embody in their life their growth in Christ, their communion with the Church and their involvement in the world. It is not enough to form apostles who go generously into the world; Christians need to be formed who, on the basis of the difficult conditions of the world, continue growing in Christ and building the Church. The whole spirituality of the laity is epitomized here.

- Secondly, this leads us to speak of the urgent need for a formation "in the Church and for the world". Formation in interior unity confronted by these two distinct but inseparable realities (Church-World): the layperson "lives" the Church on the basis of the temporal dimension of the Kingdom. This demands a very great understanding of the Mystery of Christ in the Church; but, at the same time, a great capacity for contemplation to discover and assume "the sin of the world" in human suffering. The formation of the layperson to be both a Christian and an ecclesial presence in the world entails a dual dimension: on the one hand, the capacity not to flee from the world by exclusively taking refuge in the ecclesial community (a kind of "clericalism"); and on the other, the capacity not to empty his/her faith in Christ and his Gospel, or lose sight of his/her ecclesial identity and fundamental vocation to be a witness to the Risen Lord (a kind of "secularism").
- Thirdly, this leads us in turn to a final consideration full of hope. The laity must be formed to be conscious of their providential mission as active members of the People of God, and to regard the world with the redemptive regard of Jesus: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son... not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved"(Jn 3:16-17).

This requires on the part of the layperson a threefold way of regarding the world: a world that has been injured by sin, a world that has already been redeemed in hope, and a world that offers itself to the layperson as a providential space in which he/she can grow in holiness, enact his/her ecclesial vocation and build with all men and women of good will the new civilization of truth and love.

II - FORMATION FOR A NEW EVANGELIZATION

"The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour" (Lk 4:18-19)

The Lord has made us all witnesses to his resurrection. It is to all of us that he said: "Go out and evangelize". Evangelization is not the privilege of a few -of priests and religious- but the obligation of everyone. It is the whole people of God that is prophetic; hence the responsibility and the involvement of the laity in evangelization: "Woe to me if I do not proclaim the Gospel". The contemporary world presents a series of new challenges to our evangelization: a particularly secularized society, the new problems posed by scientific and technological progress, the hunger and thirst for the Word of God in the world. More urgent than ever is the Lord's appeal to us for a new evangelization faithful to the Good News of Jesus, attentive to the dramatic challenges of history, and with the characteristics peculiar to an evangelization conducted on the basis of the temporal situation. Forming for a new evangelization presupposes the following conditions:

- a) penetrating the Word of God by contemplation. What is required of us is an explicit proclamation of Jesus and his Gospel. This presupposes that we penetrate the person of Jesus, that we assume and experience it. Then, we preach "Christ and Him crucified". We center

the message on the Pasch of Jesus. We run the risk of satisfying ourselves with a mere analysis of the problems, or at most sharing them, but without giving them an evangelic illumination based on Christ, without redeeming them. The world has a right to our evangelizing presence. The peculiar characteristic of the Church -the specific role of the layperson immersed by vocation in the world- is the prophetic enunciation of the Good News of Jesus with all its requirements for justice, peace and love. What Saint Paul writes about himself holds good for everyone: "I am to carry out my priestly duty by bringing the Good News from God to the pagans, and so make them acceptable as an offering, made holy by the Holy Spirit" (Rm 15:16). This does not mean turning ourselves into intellectuals of the Word. But what is essential is the continual interiorization of the Word of God with a humble and contemplative heart: "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children" (Mt 11:25);

- b) listening to the signs of the times, the new challenges presented to our evangelization (in the field of science and technology, culture and work, human promotion and international relations between peoples). What does it mean today to be sent to evangelize the poor? Who are the poor? How are they to be opened to the consoling richness of the Good News of Jesus? What are the fundamental requirements in us for the acceptance and communication of the Word on the basis of our secular condition?
- c) preparing witnesses and prophets. The world no longer believes in teachers alone: it demands witnesses. A new evangelization presupposes men and women who are profound, coherent, strong, capable of the cross and of martyrdom. Men and women strongly imbued with the Holy Spirit, with a great capacity for contemplation, but at the same time deeply involved in the world of temporal realities. Men and women who proclaim like Jesus that the Kingdom of God has come, that we need to be converted and believe the Good News (cf. Mk 1:15).

III - FORMATION FOR WITNESS AND PROPHECY

"You will be my witnesses" (Ac 1:8)

"I have appointed you as a prophet to the nations"
(Jr 1:5)

We are living in a period that is particularly difficult, but full of hope. It demands of us that we be realistic and be capable of assuming human sorrow as our own. For this, we need a great capacity for contemplation in order to be witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus and prophets of hope! The world is full of "prophets of doom".

But the prophet cannot be improvised. To be a prophet requires a great deal of poverty, prayer and courage. The prophet is always a person who has let himself be seized by the power of the Spirit and who proclaims, in the name of Jesus, the wonders of God. A climate needs to be created in the Church, in our Christian communities, such as to enable the Spirit of God to arouse new prophets in them: "I will pour my spirit on all mankind. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy" (Jl 3:1). Baptism has made us active members of a prophetic people. Let us not suppress the Spirit (cf. 1 Th 5:19).

But how can Christians be formed for witness and prophecy? They must be formed in prayer, fidelity and hope.

- In prayer: "friends of God and prophets". Deep, serene and contemplative prayer is needed. We do not live in the wilderness, but we need to implant the wilderness in our heart. A continual prayer having as its basis the Word of God and the sacraments (Reconciliation and Eucharist). A new evangelization always requires the experience of the witness: "Something... that we have heard, and we have seen with our own eyes; that we have watched and touched with our hands: the Word, who is life - this is our subject. That life was made visible: we saw it and we are giving our testimony, telling you of the

eternal life... What we have seen and heard we are telling you" (1 Jn 1: 1-3). A prayer bases on "the ordinary circumstances of social and family life" (LG, 31).

- Prophecy requires fidelity to the Spirit. Prophecy is not something we invent: we merely communicate it: "Go now to those to whom I send you and say whatever I command you... There! I am putting my words into your mouth" (Jr 1:7-9). We cannot therefore evade prophecy by unconsciousness, laziness or fear. Prophecy requires the courage of the Spirit: both for announcing and for denouncing - for a total annunciation of Jesus and for a denunciation of all kinds of injustice and sin;
- Forming in hope: without ceasing to be realistic and assuming the sufferings of others in an evangelic way, we need to learn how to discover the wonderful fruitfulness of the paschal Mystery of Jesus.

Cardinal Eduardo PIRONIO

CLC IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Central America is always in the news and the images which reach us through the mass media touch deeply into our souls; there is an international debate concerning this part of America; the whole world seems to be interested in it.

Lately Central America has given to the world some signs of hope amidst the sharp conflicts that exist there. It may well be that the most noticeable present given to the world and to the Church by this part of America is the prophetic image of Monsignor Oscar Romero. More recently, Central America has given us a Nobel Prize for peace and a "democratic peace plan" (Arias plan, N.3) for the whole of the region. And, from amidst the pain and conflict, the hierarchical voice of the Church has spoken clearly to the politicians:

"Remember that you have a very great responsibility on your shoulders. Your names will become part of the history of our central American people, and the manner in which your names will be remembered will depend on the courageous and seriousness with which you will face your task. Actually it appears very often that the options of some governments are based mainly on corruption, repression, demagoguery, interests created at the expense of the lives and of the basic human rights of the people. Your names, and not only those of your governments and those of your era, will live on as the names of tyrants, men corrupted and unfaithful to the people who have given their faith to you, or instead as the names of heroes who have saved our Isthmus from poverty and misery and have placed it in a position to enjoy peace and liberty. ...You can and you must bring peace back to Central America." (From the speech of the Archbishop of Guatemala at the second meeting of the Presidents of Central America in Guatemala).

We believe that the whole World Community will be glad to know that CLC is flourishing within this region. In this issue, PROGRESSIO wishes to share with you the life of the CLC in El Salvador. In the following issues we will speak of other countries in the region.

CLC IN EL SALVADOR

1. ORIGIN:

CLC groups in El Salvador came to life gradually as part of a university pastoral programme.

Towards the middle of 1982, with the opening of the Pastoral Centre UCA (Central American University Jose Simeon Cañas), Fr Isidro Perez, s.j. introduced several pastoral activities among university students: biblical circles, meditation groups, human relations classes, retreats, personal and group guidance. All these activities have been established within the dynamism which is peculiar to the spirituality of St. Ignatius. To bring these into practice help was sought from young Jesuit students (philosophers and theologians).

In 1984 the young people who had taken part in the biblical circles and in the meditation groups, expressed their wishes to work apostolically inside the university. To enhance these wishes the "Mission of evangelizing the University" was devised. As they were working at this project the young university students felt that they had to come up with a better response to the situation of the country, still under siege by war and poverty, and this is why they decided to focus their attention on activities towards those most stricken by poverty and war. A festival called "Festival of brotherhood" was prepared with the aim of obtaining food, medicines and clothes for the war refugees of the country. This communal work made them conscious that it would have been best to deepen their mutual knowledge of one another in order to be more efficient in their apostolic work. At this stage it became necessary to find channels to use in

order to bring this dynamism forward. The most appropriate channel appeared to be the one offering the experience of the Christian Life Communities since these coincide in spirit and dynamism with what was taking place.

In the second half of 1984 the first pre-communities were born, their aims being the deepening of mutual knowledge, the reaching of a greater identification with Christ and the cooperation in apostolic activities. Amongst the most significant apostolic activities we find the teaching of the alphabet to the refugees. This contact with the refugees created an unrest for the option, in the various activities, for the most needy rather than for the students themselves.

In December 1984 the first retreat for all the members of these pre-communities took place. The 32 young people who attended later entered the process of Christian Life Communities.

During 1985 more university students, not only from UCA but also from other universities, joined the process. In December of that same year another retreat took place; 72 young people were present.

In 1986 the various groups were becoming more consistent and, at the same time, the process to follow was becoming clearer. As a result of this, some young people decided to make the option of finally joining the CLC process totally. On July 31st. 1986 17 members of the Christian Life Communities declared their determination to belong to the CLC. In August 1986 a member of CLC, Maria de la Paz Muñoz, and the Ecclesiastical Assistant Fr Isidro Perez s.j. attended the CLC World Assembly at Loyola.

During the remaining part of 1986 and the beginning of 1987 Commissions for formation and the apostolate dedicated themselves to spell out the processes to be followed in the development and formation of CLC. The fruits of this work can be seen in the various formation materials, which outline the different stages of growth of these communities, and the preferential option to work among the most needy sections of the population.

2. FORMATION

A formation process has been agreed upon for those who wish to become CLC members. The main feature of it is the gradual assimilation of the spirituality of St Ignatius, which makes it possible to live the "way of life" peculiar to the CLC. The stages of the formation process are the following:

1st. Stage: PRE-COMMUNITIES:

- It's the beginning of the process,
- a preparation for the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius,
- and the commencement of life as a group.

2nd Stage: CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES:

This is the stage where the Spiritual Exercises are gradually made. The phases of this stage are constituted by the weeks or phases of the Spiritual Exercises.

Encounter (first phase):

- It falls within the dynamics of the first week of the Spiritual Exercises.
- There is an attempt to integrate the basic elements of this phase into the CLC process:
 - * The reality of faith (personal, communal and social).
 - * The reality of sin and evil.
 - * The saving and freeing love of God in Jesus Christ.
- Within this phase members work towards acceptance within the group.
- Members enter into the apostolate which calls into question their life style and the very meaning of their lives.

The following of Christ (2nd phase)

- It falls within the dynamics of the second week of the Spiritual Exercises.
- There is a deepening of the interior knowledge of Jesus Christ.

- The discovery and response to the call of God.
- The experience of union within the group.
- An option for the CLC way of life and the means of achieving it.
- An option for an apostolate which expresses the following of Jesus.

Confirmation (3rd phase)

- It falls within the dynamics of the third and fourth week of the Spiritual Exercises.
- There is an identification with the mystery of Easter.
- There is a confirmation of the option for the CLC way of life.
- The lived communion of the group is expressed by a greater openness and more universal view.

3rd. Stage: CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES

After going through these stages with their phases, those who have felt the call of God to follow the CLC way of life will make their consecration and become part of the CLC World Community.

3. MEMBERS OF CLC IN SALVADOR

The CLC "Monseñor Oscar Arnulfo Romero" of El Salvador is made up of ten different communities. These communities in accordance with the different phases of the process, are as follows: 5 precommunities, three Christian communities and two Christian Life Communities. In total there are 95 members.

4. STRUCTURE OF THE GROUPS

Each group has a coordinator, chosen by the members of the group among themselves, and a spiritual guide. The function of the spiritual guide will depend on the stage in which the group happens to be at any given time. The predominant function in the first stages is that of enhancing the sense of union of the group and its spiritual progress. Later these functions become that of

making sure that the spirituality of St Ignatius is followed. For the coordination of the groups there is a Council made up of the president of CLC, the Secretary and the Coordinators for formation, the apostolate and relationships with the wider Church and the World CLC Community.

5. APOSTOLIC ACTION

The apostolic action of the CLC extends to various fields. Amongst these are:

- Social work in the urban marginalized area of Lourdes and in rural communities.
- Teaching basic skills to illiterate adults in the Archdiocese of San Salvador and other areas of the country.
- Pastoral education in various schools within poor areas.
- Coordination of biblical groups and catechesis in urban marginalized communities (Población Dolores, La Chacra, Las Margaritas, Las Delicias).
- Participation in ecumenical groups.
- Participation in peace groups.
- Pastoral activities for young people in parishes and youth movements.
- Participation in the whole pastoral work of the parishes.
- Visits to terminally ill patients.
- Technical help towards the urbanization of a deprived community (La Chacra).
- Technical help in a project to bring water to a rural area (Las Delicias).
- Cooperation in an housing project in a deprived area (Col. Tutunichapa).
- Service to the refugees and marginated.

6. IMMEDIATE FUTURE

To strengthen the already existing groups it has been decided not to rush into the admission of new members. It is hoped however that next year about 30 new young people will enter the process. Furthermore, steps are being taken to form communities of adults and, most of all, of "campesinos" (tenant farmers).