



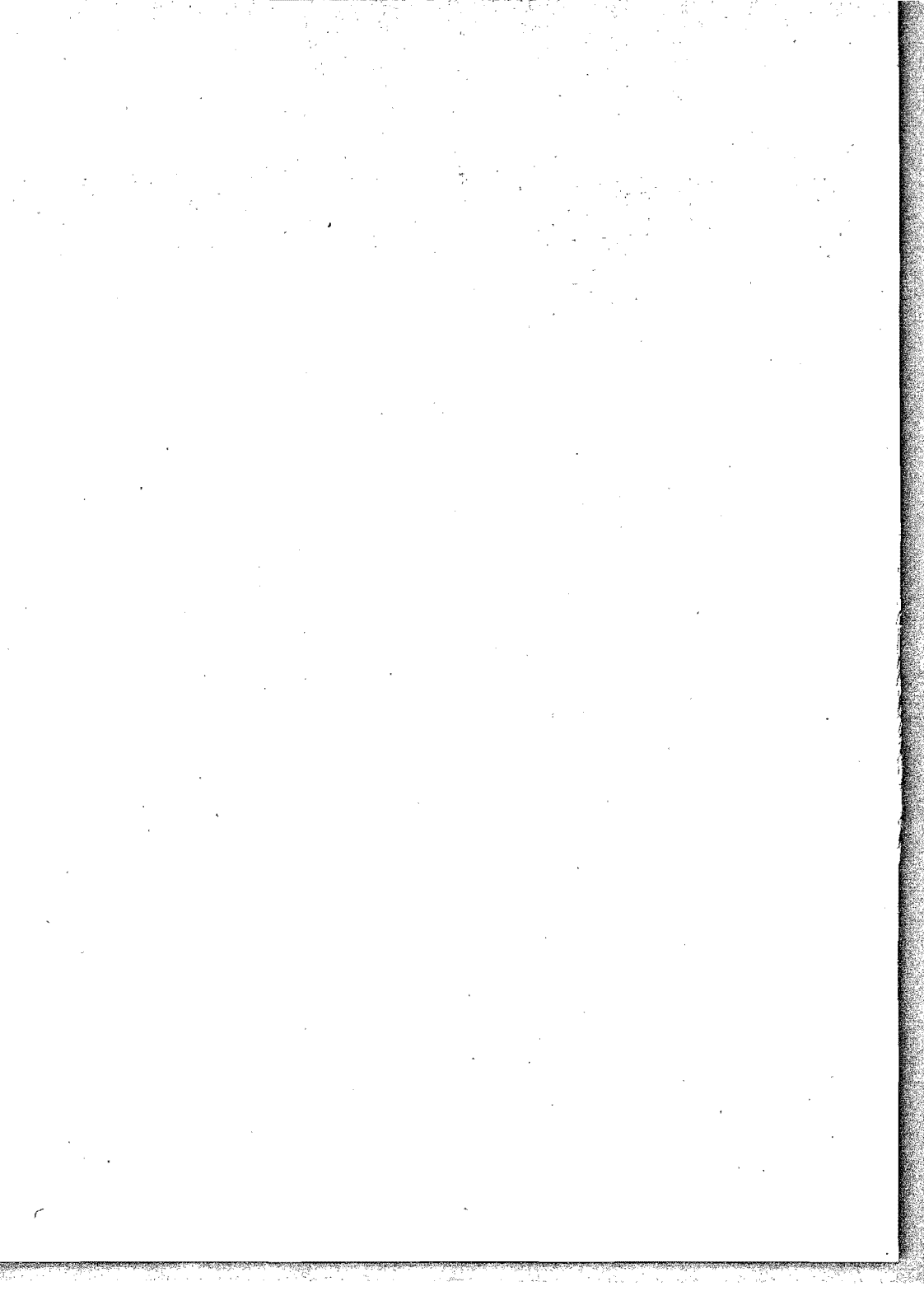
PROGRESSIO

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CLC WORLD ASSEMBLY:

What is it and how does it function?

Question: "I know that every so often there is a CLC World Assembly, but I had a problem the other day when somebody asked me to explain what it was about. I have come to think that many of us members of CLC do not know exactly what an Assembly is. Now that there is a World Assembly coming up, should we not take time to become somewhat better informed?" (From a letter)

Reply: The reason for the World Assembly is the fact that there exists a living community scattered throughout the world. The life of the World Community finds expression every day in very diverse local situations through programmes of formation, apostolic initiatives, gestures of solidarity, fraternal communion and the celebration of the Eucharist. The World Assembly grows in proportion to the growth in fidelity on the part of each member to the grace which is at the root of the Community. Although members live in isolated places all over the world, with little possibility of establishing visible contact with other members, they know that in the Assembly there is a shared grace that reaches out to everyone. They are conscious of being members of a Community which is indeed widespread but which exists because the Holy Spirit enlivens it in accordance with the special charism which God wishes to be poured into it.

The "Synthesis of Recommendations" from the last Assembly, that of Loyola, begins like this: "We have experienced in these days how a Community, 'for dispersion', which has gathered together for living, praying, reflecting, listening and sharing, can be strongly moved by the Spirit. From an initial experience of communion built on truthfulness and trust, without hiding our differences, we were led to a deeper union..." It is obvious: a World Assembly is first and foremost a privileged opportunity

for being open as a community to the action of the Spirit and for strengthening the ties that unite us. So, if there is not sufficient interchange, prayer, silence, intense work, this first objective cannot be attained.

The principal fruit of this shared opening to the Spirit of the Lord is that the Assembly formulates certain broad orientations for action which should reach out to all local situations and be put into practice at a concrete level. The method used is that of Ignatian deliberation. Starting from reality, praying over it, appreciating its diversity, the delegates come to identify certain common callings. Each delegate has the opportunity of expressing his/her intuitions at different levels: in meetings of small international groups, in meetings of other delegates from the same region, in plenary sessions, within his/her own national delegation. At all these levels the delegates have the opportunity (and the duty) of listening to each other. In prayer they endeavour to recognize the voice of God in all that has been said and heard. In this way, at the final plenary sessions, the Assembly arrives at the formulation of those broad orientations of which we have spoken above.

The delegates, therefore, do not bring to the Assembly a "mandate" or try to "defend a position" of their national community. They bring the most accurate knowledge that can of their own reality: of the problems and tensions, the challenges and desires of their own National Community. They also bring a discerning spirit, disposed to learn from others, to make analyses distinct from those which have already been made. Once the World Assembly has begun the delegates should feel responsible for the growth of the entire World Community, offering their own particular experiences without feeling that they must either defend or promote them.

There are other ends and means which are availed of in a World Assembly, but we can speak of those in future numbers of PROGRESSIO. For the moment let us reflect on this aspect.

PROGRESSIO

TOWARDS GUADALAJARA '90

With Mary of Guadalupe

It is already a tradition that World Assemblies be named after the place in which they are held. Thus, we speak of Augsburg '73 or Loyola '86. Obviously the Assembly may be held in any country and in any place... but the fact is that in the present instance it is being held in Mexico, in Latin America. The World Executive Council desired to choose a place which would place us close to the poor and with young people; so it thought of the so-called "Third World". Its choice fell on Latin America, a young continent with a lively faith, just as it was preparing to commemorate the 500 years since its discovery, its conquest and its evangelization. It took account of the fact that in Asia it had celebrated Manila '76 and Bombay '59 and that in Africa there are very few places in which CLC exists. It considered various places within Latin America, and for many practical reasons it chose Mexico.

Mexico, and Latin America in general, is noted for "La Guadalupana" or "La Lupita", as the simple people lovingly call her. She is the Virgin of Guadalupe, Patroness of Latin America, who appeared to a poor Indian in a new manifestation of the Father's love for the poor.

We who "venerate the Mother of God in a special manner and rely on her intercession in fulfilling our vocation" (PG n.8), will be able to say at the close of our Assembly and with the same simplicity as that of the Mexican people:

"Holy Mary of Guadalupe: we, your children gathered here, wish to tell you that we truly love you. That is why we have come together here during these days. And now, as a sign that we will endeavour to build the living temple which you requested of Juan Diego and which you continue to ask of us, we are going to exchange the

embrace of peace in your name and in the NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AMEN" (Closing prayer of the "Guadalupana Novena" of the Base Ecclesial Communities of "Cerro del Judío", Mexico).

I was in Mexico recently to visit, among other things, the site of the Assembly. At midnight I took a taxi in the airport of Mexico City, and the first thing that caught my eye was an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe. After a short distance the taxi-driver, a very simple man, began to talk to me about the blessing it was for Mexico to have "La Lupita". Early the following day I went to the Sanctuary of Guadalupe, and I met with thousands of people on their way there, the majority of them poor. Many of them carried young babies or were accompanying old people. Many were in tears or showed sorrow in their faces. In the act of giving the sign of peace all the hands I grasped were working people's hands. I realized that Mary was drawing me close to the poor and consequently to God, without the medium of great thought processes or preconceived notions on my part. And I thought: Our World Assembly can be confided to the intercession of Mary of Guadalupe, sister and defender of the poor.

On another occasion I happened to find a booklet (*) from which I have taken a large portion of the material we shall publish here. It is a guide for the recitation of the Rosary. The readings are taken from the account of the apparitions to Juan Diego, and the mysteries are the joys and hopes of the simple people of Mexico. And I thought: if we in CLC wish to live anew the marian dimension of our spirituality, we must begin to learn from the poor. That is why I have decided to publish these pages. With grateful acknowledgement to the Base Communities of Cerro del Judío of Mexico City I transcribe here the "mysteries" of the Guadalupana Rosary.

(*) Misión Guadalupana - Novenario, Enrique Neascoechea, s.j., y Rocío Caracheo, messt. Ediciones CEB. Cerro del Judío.

MYSTERIES OF THE FIRST DAY

The reading for the first day recounts the circumstances in which, in the year 1531, the poor Indian Juan Diego noticed that somebody was calling him in the midst of a beautiful chorus of singing birds. He followed the voice and to his surprise beheld a lady of more than human grandeur. She was surrounded by beautiful flowers and the first conversation between them was one of great tenderness.

FIRST MYSTERY: Ten years after the capture of the city of Mexico, when peace had come to the country, God nourished the growth of the faith in our people which was beginning to establish itself.

* In this mystery we give thanks to the Lord for his nearness and the love he has shown us from the beginning of our history.

* Our Father, Hail Marys (ten or five or as many you wish), Glory to the Father... (This is repeated several times at the end of each mystery).

SECOND MYSTERY: The people who wish to open their hearts to hear the Word of God, can do so only from an attitude of humility and simplicity like that of Juan Diego.

* In this mystery let us ask God to grant us the attitude of the Indian Juan Diego.

THIRD MYSTERY: Juan Diego was capable of discovering the wonderful presence of God in his surroundings.

* In this mystery let us ask God to help us to find him in the happenings of our daily lives.

FOURTH MYSTERY: Juan Diego heard the voice which called him by name from a height, and he answered with joy and confidence.

* Let us ask the Lord to help us also to make a like response to the calls which he addresses to us.

FIFTH MYSTERY: God selects the poorest and despised, people of no importance in the eyes of men, to be his witnesses.

- * In this mystery let us thank the Lord for his preference for those who are weakest and in most need.

LITANY

Each day, at the end of the fifth mystery, the litany is recited. The traditional litany may be used, or a spontaneous one or the one we suggest here:

Father of All Good grant us your love
Compassionate Jesus grant us your forgiveness
Spirit of fellowship teach us how to love

Mary of Nazareth pray for your children
Mary (our) Mother (repeat the invocation)
Mary poor and simple
Mary maiden, spouse, widow.
Mary peasant worker
Mary housewife

Mother of Jesus
Mother of the people
Mother of the poor
Mother of orphans
Mother of those who suffer
Mother of children and youth
Mother of prisoners
Mother of the sick
Mother of those who suffer injustice

Woman strong and gentle
Woman determined and prudent
Woman joyful and silent
Woman simple and gracious

Working woman
Affectionate woman
Refined woman

Life-giving woman
Faithful woman

Queen of our land
Queen of our barrio
Queen of our home
Queen of our hearts

Remain with us, Mary:

With the humility of your faith
With the Spirit which made you fruitful
With the Father who chose you
With the Word which increased in you
Human and saving,
Jew and Messiah,
Son of God and your son,
Jesus, our Brother. AMEN

(End with a hymn of one's choice)

MYSTERIES OF THE SECOND DAY

The readings of the second day relate how the Lady revealed to Juan Diego that she was the "Mother of the True God, the Author of Life" and she asked him to go to the bishop to say that she needed a church, in that place, in order to hear the laments and to heal the sufferings, the miseries and the sorrows of all who have recourse to him. Juan Diego accepts the mission and goes to the bishop, who is kind but does not give him much credence. Juan departs down-hearted from his meeting with the bishop.

FIRST MYSTERY: Mary presents herself as an envoy of God, the GOD WHO GIVES LIFE TO ALL.

* Let us ask Mary for the grace to imitate her so that, after her example, we may give God first place in our lives.

SECOND MYSTERY: Mary is also our Mother, the bearer of love, compassion, help and protection.

- * In this mystery we give thanks to God for the support he gives us through Mary, particularly in the circumstances of suffering which afflict our country at the moment.

THIRD MYSTERY: Our Lady desires that in the midst of this emerging nation a Living Temple should be built, a community, that is, by means of which the love of God should become the bond of unity. The sanctuary is merely a symbol of that living temple which we are.

- * Let us ask Mary for help in forming among us, Mexicans, that community of sisters and brothers which she desires.

FOURTH MYSTERY: After the manner of the Father and Jesus, Mary too is at once calling us and sending us forth: giving us a mission, that of being her envoy and witness before others. That is the mission which she gives to Juan Diego.

- * Let us ask Mary to help us know, love and put into practice the mission which God has given us, individually and as a christian community.

FIFTH MYSTERY: Juan Diego diligently sets out to realize the mission which Mary had entrusted to him.

- * Let us ask Mary that in the fulfillment of our mission as christians we may be as enthusiastic as Juan Diego.

FINAL PRAYER FOR THE SECOND DAY:

God our Father, you have willed to invite us to be your collaborators in the building of community. Grant us the strength and courage to fulfill your will, THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD, AMEN.

(hymn)

(to be continued)

CLC Mission & Social Reality

CANADA: "TO BLOOM WHERE WE ARE PLANTED"

Service to Family:

In order to be true to our vocation to the married state and our call to parenthood, being missioned to our families is our top priority. As parents, and grandparents, we are very aware of the many forces in society today that militate against the family. The high cost of housing, the spread of materialism, unemployment, competition in the work-force, divorce and so on, are eroding the stability of families.

We endeavour to be a Christian witness to our single and married children by living prayerful, Christ-centered lives, caring, supporting and guiding them where possible to make good decisions.

We share a common desire for unity in our families and discern frequently the subtle forces of evil busy at work to destroy the precious gift of peace and harmony in the family.

This area of mission is a constant challenge that calls us to deeper trust in God for we so often feel helpless. We appreciate the prayerful, caring support of our community as we try to be parents in today's self-centered society.

Service to the Church:

Lourdes CLC has always had a deep desire to be visible in our home parish and in the wider Church. Over the years we have responded to many calls to service in parish life. We have acted as Eucharistic Ministers, lectors, sacristans, prepared para-liturgies and Sunday liturgies and organized daily recitation of the parish rosary. Members have also taken an active leadership role in parish organizations.

We used our experience of small communities when we accepted responsibility for the formation and training of a group of leaders in our parish Renew Programme. (A three year parish renewal programme). We offered CLC at an information night following the end of Renew, but were disappointed with the response. However, a group formed in another parish and one of our members has guided it through their formation towards affiliation to the National Community.

Concern for the sick, calls us to respond wherever we see need in our neighbourhoods, hospitals and extended care facilities. Some of our members have made this work an apostolate and have spent endless hours bringing the love of the Lord to the lonely, the sick and the dying.

Social Justice:

Our members have always been justice oriented but prayer, awareness and study of justice issues through social analysis has helped us to get in touch with root causes and respond more effectively. We have worked closely with Development and Peace (CCODP) and have responded to their Fall Action campaigns annually, promoting them in the parish and school.

We have made a social analysis on the abortion issue and East-Asian refugees. Now we are exploring the justice issues involved in free trade with the United States.

In the past we studied the effects of militarization and lobbied our City Council to put the question of Canada becoming a nuclear free zone on the ballot in a municipal election. We see the danger to peace in the build-up of nuclear weapons and the social cost. This social action was a very threatening experience for us. We faced some strong opposition and suffered some very real personal rejection, but were successful.

In 1982 we acted at the request of Development

and Peace and Father Rodriguez of Guyana to have the Catholic Standard, the only Catholic newspaper in Guyana, supplied with previously denied newsprint. The government was trying to suppress the paper which opposed their unjust policies. We obtained the names and address of the Board of Directors of Domtar and wrote to them requesting they provide the necessary newsprint for the printing of the paper. We subsequently learned that the Jesuit Center for Social Faith and Justice in Toronto were also pursuing this matter so we turned over our information to them.

Our support for the pro-life movement is on-going but has intensified with the recent Supreme Court decision. We are kept well informed on this issue by one of our members who has an apostolic commitment to working for the rights of the unborn. Over the years we have written many letters to protest abortions, marched in silent vigils, circulated petitions, attended prayer services, etc. We are now in the process of supporting the nomination of a pro-life candidate to lead our local region in the next Federal election. We are hosting an information night for him in our parish hall.

Members of our CLC have helped to settle many refugees in Canada. We took a leadership role in the parish refugee sponsorship programme. Seven Salvadorians and seventeen Vietnamese were settled here from 1979 to 1984. Hard work for all concerned - finding housing, clothing, food, schooling, orienting them to the Canadian culture and finding jobs for them. However, it has been a rewarding experience. Jesus too was a refugee and serving them was serving Him.

Service to CLC: Our community feels called to support the National Executive Council by active representation and using our gifts wherever they are needed. Members are serving as group guides of local communities and on the National Formation Team where two ladies were actively involved in the preparation of our Canadian Phases 1 and 2 Formation material for groups. We are the base community of our National President whom we try to support in her apostolate. Three members also serve as prayer guides in the Spiritual Exercises.

Lourdes CLC has edited the National Newsletter for the past four years - a challenging experience.

We look on these activities as kingdom-building.

Conclusion:

The mission endeavours of our CLC have been many and varied as you can see from our limited submission. Our responses to mission have come from our prayer and identification with Jesus. In the Spiritual Exercises we are invited to put on the mind and heart of Christ, to love Him more and to follow Him. We, as disciples of Christ have been missioned - sent out - to spread the Good News. Our General Principles also inspire us to work to transform society, to bring the attitudes of Christ to our world.

We have found the Spiritual Exercises very helpful in our attempts at missioning. We often refer to the Two Standards, The Three Degrees of Humility and the Three Classes of Men for reflection.

Mary, the Mother of God, is our patroness and we use her as model for mission. We honour her as our Lady of Lourdes and encourage devotion to her under this title especially. Her mission was to bring all to her Son. What better mission for us!

Our involvement in social justice issues has increased our awareness of the consequences of personal sin - social sin - in the world.

Often we are tempted to believe that we are too small to be effective, the "what can I do?" surfaces when issues like militarization are so big. Our discernment has led us to appreciate that working with other organizations who already have the structures in place to effect change and have more clout, is in some cases the way to bring respond. In working with Development and Peace, Project Ploughshares, Peace groups, etc., we have felt encouraged to see the Holy Spirit working in so many dedicated people. This gives us new energy and hope for the future.

We have seen many examples of what one person can do and have become more aggressive and less intimidated when we are called to move out alone to right an injustice in our personal lives or the wider world. Our experience has helped us to grow. We encourage each other to "bloom where we are planted", at home, in our workplace, parish, CLC, etc.

Our Lady of Lourdes
CLC, Waterloo-Ontario
Canada

Mission - Youth

THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF YOUTH IN SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

Last August there took place in Santiago de Compostela the Fourth World Youth Meeting with this theme: "I am the way, the truth and the life".

This series of meetings had began with the International Youth Forum at which some two hundred representatives of young people from more than sixty countries and movements were able to meet and exchange experiences, to pray and to make a realistic assessment of the problems, achievements and aspirations of young people in to-day's world. Then, there were three days, then, of cultural events, prayer and catechesis, culminating in a meeting with the Pope on Monte del Gozo. Over 400.000 of us were present, from all parts of the world but mostly from Europe.

The International Youth Forum was more of a coming together for those exchanges of experience than a mere venue for debates and motions to be voted. The occasion was one where young people were present from rich countries and poor countries, from social contexts marked by violence and those enjoying calm and opulence, and from radically different cultures. Above and beyond all this diversity it was a meeting of persons - persons seeking, each within his/her own context, the coming of the Kingdom of God, and knowing full well that this cannot be achieved save with such evangelical predispositions as simplicity, interior freedom and solidarity.

The three-day Forum was opened with a keynote address by a cardinal. This was followed on the first day by discussions on general matters of concern to young people, their problems, their situations, the crises and changes that affect them, their coming to terms one way or another with the realities among which they are cast. After a wide-ranging review, we shared our experience of the way Our Lord comes to us and presents Himself to us, the image we have of Him, and the way and the moment that

young people encounter Our Lord in the Church. By the last day, the concern was how to proclaim and bear witness to Jesus Christ today, amid the realities and the give and take of the milieu where we live out our lives.

Work proceeded in language groups, throughout the day. Before the evening meal, the conclusions reached by this or that group were read out and we heard the testimony of people from countries torn by war, hunger or violence, as in the case with our brothers and sisters from Lebanon, Latin America and South Africa. The great thrust being made by the Church in Latin America was a source of joy and hope, engaged as it is in building up the Kingdom here and now, with the efficacious and liberating actions it has undertaken. The European Church was concerned that it not become paralysed in a disembodied spirituality. It welcomed the endowment that the new Churches bring with their cultures, their constancy and their charisma.

The meeting was also an occasion for us to share with each other our vision on youth, to illustrate the situation of our respective peoples, and to take cognizance of the obstacles standing in the way of our achieving development consonant with our dignity as persons, and turning the fact that we are young to good purpose. Especially when there are in the world far too many unjust structures that bring poverty in their train and violence, social and political discrimination, the suppression of original cultures before the inroads of alien ones from outside and the loss of the critical faculty through exposure to the media; and, then, indifference, individualism and the consumer society setting up facile values - power, money, reputation, and with the sham freedoms they offer and the dulling of consciences in order that the status quo and the structures of sin be perpetuated.

And yet, there are hopeful signs in the enormous capacity for a tolerant and constructive dialogue that one can see, where there is an opening up of consciences to the dignity of every human being, to the solidarity among peoples in development, and in those moments when actions performed without thought of reward, and the faith which spurs them, transfigures peoples' lives and society along

with them. That being so, what we are offering is a conception of life that we have tried and tested within ourselves. In fact, we have experienced Jesus walking with us, whenever we enlighten our lives with the spirit of the Beatitudes and live with our fellow youth in equality and truth. This fosters a process of liberation which is expressed through very concrete signs. But things are not always like this, and there are times when we turn into "counterwitnesses" of the Gospel, when we cease to follow Our Lord coherently and fail to let God shine through us and in the Church. Let us be aware, therefore, of the need to continue building up a civilization, a process in which the witness of our lives is enkindled from the heart, and in which we as Christians share what we have - our freedom, our lives, our knowledge, our hopes - even our illusions - and our determination to fight the good fight. And we will also share our prayer and all that we are and all that we have, working so that our commitment may be efficacious whenever the future of our young people is at stake. All this demands a coherent integration of our faith and our lives, a coming together of our social action and the inspiration that the Gospel provides - the whole lot finding expression in our lives lived in accordance with evangelical principles, commitment and, not infrequently, a preparedness to risk.

This new found evangelization, then, demands of the New Woman and New Man, novel instruments and novel approaches; and it demands that there be efficacious and highly liberating signs of the Kingdom of God in our human history. Care must be taken to employ means that are adequate to the task and are intelligible - means that have undergone inculturation in the milieu where we proclaim our message. This implies that our presence is needed in those contexts where we have our being and that we must witness to our faith in the service of others, and adopt a critical stance in order to be able to share in the work of improving the conditions in which people must live out their lives. This, then, means our presence in the work environment, in the world of culture, of economics and politics, the family, the rural scene, and so on.

However, for this task, we are in need of our

integrated formation - a formation that integrates our faith with our lives, where the two coalesce into one. For this, again, we are called upon to scrutinize the scriptures for the Word of God, to read in an evangelical key the signs of the times, to acquire a thorough knowledge of the teaching of the Church and, above all, sensitivity and approachability for the disinherited of this world.

During the last two days of the meeting, up there on Monte del Gozo, there were over 400.000 of us coming together to meet the Pope. Most of us were still adolescents rather than young adults. There was a massive presence of lay movements, where the pursuit of spirituality is far more emphasized than the mission to transform the world. The atmosphere, then, was wonderful, what with the sense of participation and joy, and this possibility of communicating and sharing. The Pope was not there to make resounding statements, but told us simple truths that needed no explaining; we were all very well disposed to welcome his words even before he uttered them. This was a very favorable atmosphere for conversion. But of course an interior process of growth must follow this occasion.

Together with the Church, we of the CLC, have a mission to the world. And our presence is needed if the Kingdom is to be established. We must maintain our readiness to read the signs of the times in order, in turn, to be able the better to proclaim and bear witness to Christ in our part of the world. This means that our social commitment is called for - an integral presence in every field. There must be no sliding into a convenient refuge or escapism, for our task is to participate and be a source of and a stimulus for this mission within the Church. It is here that Mary is our model and exemplar whereby her Son may be truly present in our midst, as she herself has so clearly described in the Magnificat. With Mary among us our communities will be communities of discernment in the Lord in order to serve others. May she be ever at our side in our journey and lend her light to the decisions we are called upon to make.

Juan Carlos Yuste
CVX Malaga (Spain)

COMMITMENT TO GOD'S SERVICE IN THE CLC

Commitment is more than a promise, more than a word given. Commitment is a tangible assurance - a pledge - to do what we have promised to do. The pledge can take different forms; it can be a signed document, or perhaps a solemn statement before witnesses.

Service is the object of commitment. We make a commitment to serve. Whereas commitment belongs to the realm of intentions, service concerns implementation. The term service applies to any action undertaken for the benefit of another. For Christians, the other is ultimately God, who considers that anything that we do for the least of his people, we do it for him (Matt 25:40).

I. COMMITMENT

The importance of explicit commitment to CLC can best be understood by taking a look at three major objections that are frequently raised:

- 1) All Christians are already committed to God's service through Baptism and confirmation; do we really need anything else?
- 2) There is an implicit commitment in the simple fact of coming to CLC, and that is sufficient.
- 3) There is always something questionable about this sort of pledge or commitment. In making a commitment, I prejudge God's will for myself, and close off the possibility of choices that might seem preferable at a later stage.

1. Baptismal commitment is sufficient

Commitment within CLC does not claim to add anything to the commitment inherent in baptism or in confirmation. Rather, it is a way of reaffirming it consciously and of becoming aware of concrete ways in which the baptismal commitment might find expression at a given time in a specific person's life. Commitment to CLC is a response to a more specific calling to live the baptismal commitment according to a particular model proposed and encouraged by the Church, namely the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius.

2. Inner commitment is sufficient

If we claim that a commitment made deep within our own hearts is sufficient, we deny an important dimension of Christianity: the mediation of the visible Church. To become Christians, we must be accepted into the Church by a minister who represents the Church, by means of a visible ritual. Similarly, those who believe they are called to live their Christianity within a particular cell of the Church, the CLC, must be received into it officially by the community, and stay within it first for a certain time as "catechumen". There are two reasons for this. In the first place, human nature being what it is, it is obvious that a commitment made solemnly in public is more likely to last than one that is made only deep in the heart. Secondly, when a commitment has to be fulfilled with others, it is essential that each person know who can be counted on. CLCs are not supermarkets where one shops to fulfil one's own needs; it is a team, set for action.

3. Any kind of commitment is suspect

Reluctance and suspicion concerning any kind of commitment are typical of our times. Couples no longer get married; there are few candidates for religious life; those who are already committed to marriage, to priesthood or to religious life regret their decision and ask to be relieved of their obligations. Underlying this attitude is the following theory: "Nobody knows what the future will

bring. Circumstances change. Nobody can know today what will be right for tomorrow as well. Therefore, it is not wise today to eliminate the possibility of doing tomorrow what may then appear preferable:.

This kind of sophistry clearly ignores two fundamental Christian values: the historical and temporal dimension of the Kingdom, and the meaning of mission. The Kingdom is subject to the laws of time. One of these laws is that in order to have a harvest tomorrow, we must decide today what kind of seeds to sow, a decision which, once made, is irreversible. In addition, CLC are associations for apostolic action: "for service to the Church and the world: (PG 3), and their apostolate cannot be left to the discretion and the free initiative of isolated freelancers. In the Church, we do not become apostles, we are sent. This means that both within the CLC and in the Church, apostolic action must be organised. This in turn implies a firm commitment on the part of members. No group can be effective if its members have not defined and stabilised their identity as members.

The General Principles do not define in what way commitment to the CLC must be expressed. No doubt this is to allow for cultural differences from country to country. No clear definitions are given of "commitment" and "consecration to Mary"; but the meanings attached to the two appear to be very similar (see GP 8). This point should perhaps be clarified next time there is a revision of the General Principles.

II. SERVICE

Commitment finds its meaning in service. There is no point in reciting a public statement of commitment, if we do not then act in accordance with this commitment. It is not enough to pray, to receive the sacraments and to come to the meetings. Prayer, sacraments and meetings are for us a source of renewal for action. The spirituality of the Exercises is a spirituality of service, of concrete service. If people who are consecrated or committed do

nothing or do little, they play into the hands of those who disparage this kind of commitment. It would have probably been better not to declare their commitment at all, as Jesus suggested in his parable about the two sons whom the father, in turn, invited to work in his vineyard (Matt 21:28-31).

Father Kolvenbach has frequently pointed out that CLCs are not bound to any particular form of apostolate. Their spirituality guides them toward the best, not the best in itself, but the best in particular circumstances. Circumstances change from place to place, from time to time, and the good must always be redefined. That is why each person must see what is the best that he or she can do to serve the Church. In discerning, we must certainly take into account our own particular aptitudes and availability; but we must also consider the most urgent needs of our environment and the request expressed by the local Church and by the universal Church. The General Principles note in Article 7 that as lay persons "we must consecrate ourselves first of all to the renewal and sanctification of the temporal order... to work for the reform of the structures of society, participating in efforts to liberate the victims of all forms of discrimination and especially to abolish differences between rich and poor within the Church so that we work in a spirit of service to establish justice and peace among peoples" Here, the General Principles echo the words of the decree on the Laity issued by Vatican II. And we all know that in recent years the Holy Father has never ceased encouraging Catholics to become involved in the struggle against social injustice, in favour of peace, the respect of human rights, the defence of life, the unity of Christian Churches. These were also the themes of Loyola '86. Our process of discernment must take into account these appeals from the Church and other similar appeals, and give them some priority. However, every kind of service has its place, as we can learn from the history of the Congregations, and more recently, from that of the Christian Life Communities.

Alone or with others

Are we talking about individual service or group apostolates? The answer is, both. It is hard to imagine someone who would be so involved in service to the wider community that he or she would be insensitive to the needs of the immediate community. On the other hand, it would seem that some form of collective apostolate would be necessary to insure the full vitality of any Community. Psychology teaches us this and experience confirms it. There is no better way to consolidate a group, to strengthen existing bonds among members than a shared activity. Once more, our history is a source of countless tales of charitable acts accomplished by our groups. A recent issue of PROGRESSIO told about the members of a community in Rome who had agreed to serve supper every day to immigrants from Africa. In French-speaking Canada, a local community has been involved for some years in a joint activity known as "Tricotons pour le Tiers-Monde": their free time is put to good use knitting woollen blankets for poor people in the Third World.

A certain visibility

While reminding us that we are not a pressure-group or political action group campaigning for this or that cause, Father Kolvenbach nevertheless insisted, at a meeting of European spiritual assistants held in Rome early in 1988, that our service should be visible. "We must not forget, he said, that we live in the era of communication. I believe that the Christian Life Communities must do all that is necessary to ensure that their apostolic commitment is visible". And our World Ecclesiastical Assistant added that, although we should avoid showing off, it would be normal for the Holy See and the bishops to hear about us and to know concretely that we are at their side in the service of the Church. In addition, we need a certain visibility if we are going to recruit new members. If nobody ever sees us in action, nobody will ever think of joining us. People must see us, and they must see us concretely involved in apostolic activities. We must not appear to be simply good people gathering in church to pray.

Some communities have encountered difficulties in organising a genuinely visible common apostolate. Let us hope that these communities will not abandon the idea of doing something, even if it is only to participate, once a year, in a fund-raising project for a charity or something in that line. This will enable them to keep alive a spirit of service; when circumstances become more favorable, this spirit will blossom into more significant actions, more in line with all that the General Principles expect of us and with things being realised elsewhere by CLCs.

In the meantime, we must all rejoice and be thankful to the Lord for all that is happening and for the hope he gives us that we shall make progress, day by day, in committing ourselves effectively to our Christian Life Communities, to the service of the church, for the greater glory of God.

Rémi Potvin s.j.

THE PRACTICE OF "CLC COMMITMENT"
IN MEXICO

We, the Metanoia Community, want to present our commitment before the Father and before our national community. In CLC we have found the answer to our concern to make the Gospel alive; in the Spiritual Exercises we have strengthened our faith and ratified our commitment to walk with Jesus and collaborate with Him in the building of the Kingdom. We want to be free men and women within His service. The following is a slightly modified form of a popular Spanish song and expresses a lot of what we feel:

I will give you a simple life
with things that people have forgotten
without comfort but with smiles
and your eyes open to the sun.

The best of life is freely given
there is no poverty for those who hold on to God
Hope will be our guest
Trusting, we will understand.
I give you the breeze of May
the flowers of October
and all my love.

We will fly like birds
there are no frontiers in the sky
I will cover you with my love
and winter will become summer.
Our embraces will be a space for life
our dreams will be our guide
on the beach we sing barefoot
let's go together in life and play.

God has made joyful what is simple
this is the way towards happiness.

I want little and the little I want,
I really want it.

WHAT DOES "EVANGELIZATION OF CULTURE" MEAN? (*)

An excellent explanation of "the evangelization of cultures" will be found in Christifideles Laici (n.44), a post-synodal exhortation of Pope John-Paul II, issued 30 December 1988. The specific role of the laity is clearly emphasized: "Service to the individual and to human society is expressed in the creation and transmission of culture, in which it also finds its fulfilment. Especially in our own times, this service constitutes one of the more important tasks of living together as a human family and of progressing socially". The document recalls the notion of culture of Vatican II (Gaudium et Spes n.53) and then continues: "In this sense, culture must be held as the common good of every people, the expression of its dignity, liberty and creativity, and the testimony of its course through history. In particular, only from within and through culture does the Christian faith become a part of history. The Church is fully aware of the pastoral urgency calling for particular concern for culture in circumstances where cultural development becomes disassociated not only from Christian faith but also from human values and in situations where science and technology are powerless in providing an adequate response to burning questions of truth and well-being. For this reason the Church calls upon the lay faithful to be present, as signs of courage and intellectual creativity, in the privileged places of culture, that is, the world of education - school and university- in places of scientific and technological research, the areas of artistic creativity and work in the humanities. Such a presence is destined not only for the recognition and possible purification of the elements that critically burden existing culture, but also for the elevation of these cultures through the riches which have their source in the Gospel and the Christian faith. The extensive treatment by the Second Vatican Council of the

(*) From Church and Cultures - Bulletin of the Pontifical Council for Culture - n.11, 1989.

relationship between the Gospel and culture represents a constant historic fact and at the same time serves as a working ideal of particular and immediate urgency. It is a challenging programme given as a pastoral responsibility to the entire Church, but in a specific way to the lay faithful" (...)

The document cites here n.58 of Gaudium et Spes and n.18-19 of Evangelii Nuntiandi where Paul VI shows how the Good News renews cultures and at the same time participates in a civilizing action by profoundly transforming, through the power of the Gospel, the ways of life, of thought, and of action, the very constituents of a culture.

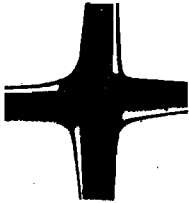
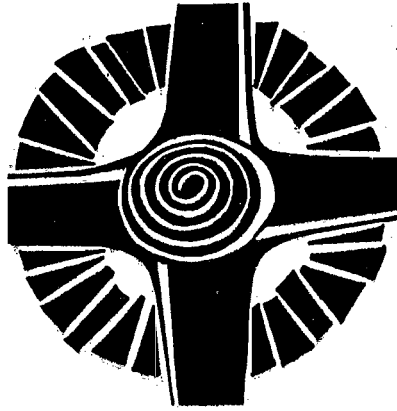
"The privileged way at present for the creation and transmission of culture is the means of social communications. The world of the mass-media represents a new frontier for the mission of the Church, because it is undergoing a rapid and innovative development and has an extensive worldwide influence on the formation of mentality and customs. In particular, the responsibility of the laity as professionals in this field, exercised both by individual right and through community initiatives and institutions, demands a recognition of all its values, and demands that it be sustained by more adequate resource materials, both intellectual and pastoral.

The use of these instruments by professionals in communication and their reception by the public demand both a work of education in a critical sense, which is animated by a passion for the truth and a work of defense of liberty, respect for the dignity of individuals, and the elevation of the authentic culture of peoples which occurs through a firm and courageous rejection of every form of monopoly and manipulation.

However, the pastoral responsibility among the lay faithful does not stop with this work of defence. It extends to everyone in the world of communications, even to those professional people of the press, cinema, radio, television and theatre. These also are called to proclaim the gospel that brings salvation".

CLC Images and Symbols

THE LOGO OF THE GERMAN CLC



THE CROSS

Sign of hope, because from the Cross has sprung new life which, by extending itself, reaches out to all people.

THE SPIRAL

Symbol of every person's way of life in imitation of Jesus for the service of the world.



THE CIRCLE

Symbol of the community which, in a fruitful diversity, gathers around a centre and shines outwards.

Echoes... Echoes... Echoes...

THE 19th ANNOTATION RETREAT - a retreat for our busy world/most suitable for our CLC Spirituality!

We have launched out in a big way with the 19th Annotation Retreat for our CLC'ers in Bombay. I feel it is the type of Retreat for them as they are oriented towards integrating prayer and work, and that is precisely the aim of CLC spirituality.

We received a very good response to our invitation after more than 80 people had registered, we grouped them under seven directors. We had an initial team meeting with the directors and prepared some notes for our retreatants. We provided them with some preparatory material and orientations and matter for their prayer. We decided to take the Principle and Foundation of the Exercises during the first phase of 6 weeks. Later on and well into the Ignatian year this will be followed by other phases corresponding to the other weeks of the Exercises. We arranged for the retreatants to meet their directors either/both as a group/personally once a week. We directors would meet again as a team after 3 weeks and mid-way through to share experiences, pray for our retreatants and discuss difficulties that may have come up.

We plan to ask some of our retreatants to share their experiences during CLC days and in our newsletters, so that others would be encouraged to make them. The Jesuits too in our province are very interested in learning more about the how-tos of the retreat so that they can guide persons who desire to make it during the Ignatian Year. The Centenary committee has planned such a meeting and I have been asked to coordinate and organise it.

I will end this little account on a personal note. Though I have had more than 20 years experience of directing retreats, I was deeply moved by the level of sharing of my directees. I hope the 19th Annotation has come to stay. It is a retreat for the future.

Alwyn Fernandes s.j.

REPORT FROM SYRIA: Father Zygmunt Kwiatkowski, s.j. from the Upper Polish Jesuit Province is living and working in Homs, Syria. He sent us this brief report recently.

For some years, we have been offering various forms of the Spiritual Exercises to some young people here in Syria, with increasing success each year. At a certain point we started offering the retreat in "Daily Life". From this form of the Spiritual Exercises a movement was born which has become a way towards CLC.

We have various meetings of Jesuits who are committed to guiding people through the Spiritual Exercises and working pastorally with youth. This year we had a live-in workshop for representatives from our 12 groups, which are located in various parts of Syria. The meeting went very well. During the Summer we followed it with a five day retreat for members of these same groups.

At present we are hoping to organize a CLC centre in a house, recently acquired by the Jesuits and close to the Jesuit community residence in Homs. As it is a permanent place it will give us a great opportunity for individual and group retreats. We hope to initiate more tangible contacts with the World Community.

ECUADOR: In August 1989 the Gonzaga Community of CLC in Ecuador completed an apostolate of five years in the marginal zones of La Independencia and Santo Domingo de Los Colorados. Working there are two CLC doctors, two laboratory analysts as assistants, another doctor and one French Agricultural Technician.

During the last spiritual retreat, in addition to confirming their option for the poorest, they undertook an exercise in discernment of a better economic distribution of the common fund, since there are now four married couples. There has also been a revision of the programme, reorienting it towards integral human promotion, in the areas of agriculture and health.

WE ARE STILL RECEIVING MANY LETTERS OF SYMPATHY after the death of Fr. Louis Paulussen s.j. We are deeply touched and thank you all for your friendship and prayer.

AFTER THE BRUTAL MURDER OF OUR BROTHERS IN CHRIST IN SAN SALVADOR, on 16 November 1989, the World CLC President, Brendan McLoughlin, on behalf of all the Community, sent his condolences to Fr. Kolvenbach s.j.: "I was shocked to hear of the murder of 6 Jesuits in San Salvador and offer you on my behalf and on behalf of our whole Community our deepest sympathy on so great a loss under such horrific circumstances".

The World Secretariat also wanted to show their sympathy to the Province of Central America. In his letter to Fr. José Maria Tojeira, s.j., the Provincial of Salvador, Fr. Tim Quinlan s.j. said: "Through all the mixture of emotions: rage, loss, sympathy and sadness, I experienced hope in the clear sign these men have given us. (...) So in the midst of this outrage I felt drawn to pray for the executioners of our brothers and sisters. They are on a path of neither choosing life for themselves or others. But, especially, I pray for all of you in the Central American Province during this time of terrible loss that you will keep hearts of flesh and not hearts of stone, that you will keep in touch with the deep peace, joy and hope of Christ and that through your fears you will be free to choose life. Your example has been and is a great support for our own faith".