



# PROGRESSIO

## SUMMARY

1991

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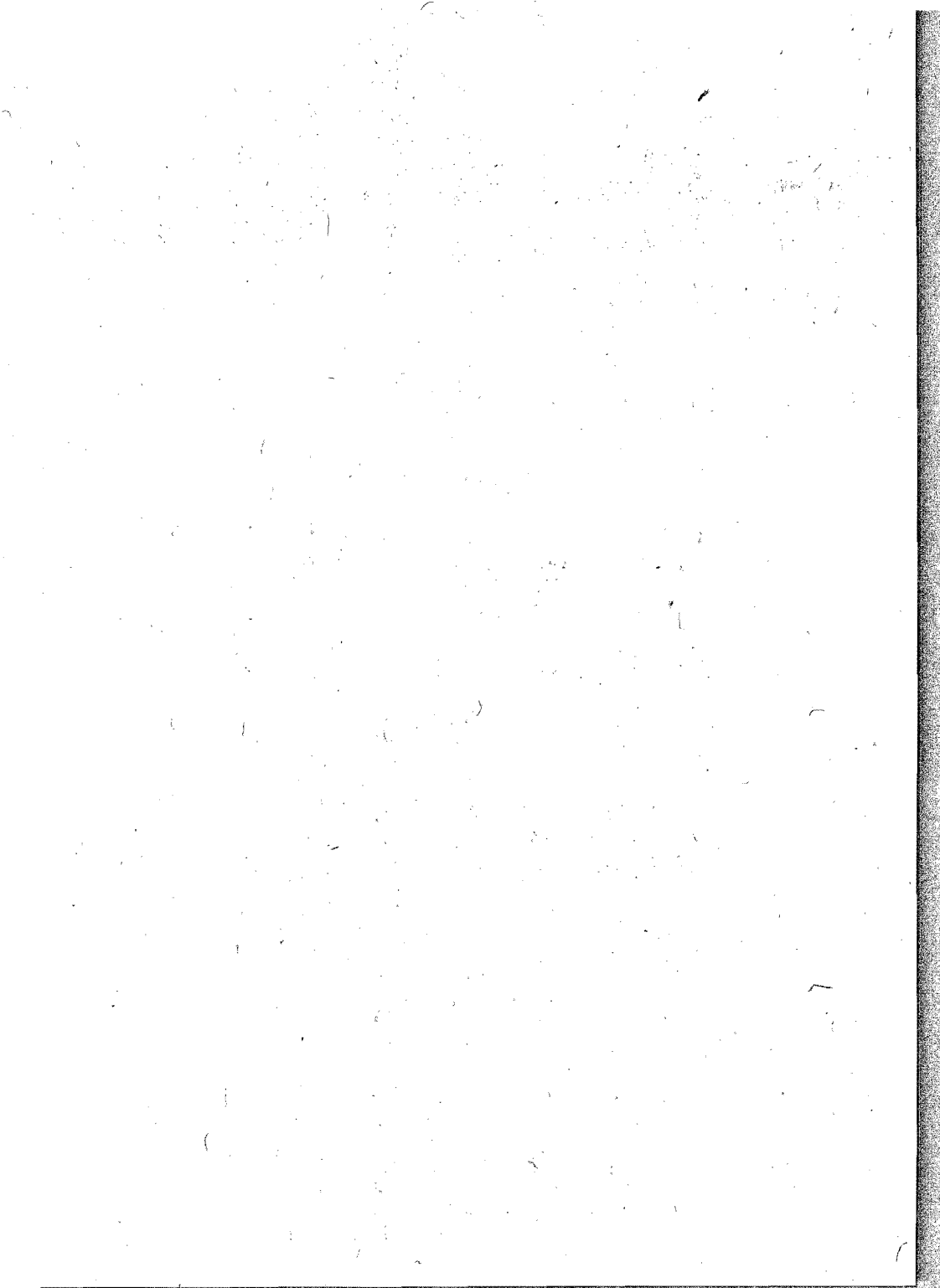
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## Youth and Life in the Church

### **A PILGRIMAGE OF YOUTH TO CZESTOCHOWA: A MESSAGE AND AN INVITATION**

"You have received a spirit of sonship" (Rom 8:15)

Dear young people!

1. The World Youth Days mark important stages in the life of the Church, as she seeks to intensify her commitment to evangelization in today's world, looking towards the year 2000. By proposing every year for your meditation certain essential truths of the Gospel teaching, these Days are intended to give nourishment for your faith and new energies for your apostolate.

As theme of the 6th World Youth Day, I have chosen the words of St Paul: "You have received a spirit of sonship" (Rom 8:15). These words lead us into the deepest mystery of the Christian vocation: in the divine plan, we are indeed called to become sons and daughters of God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

How can we fail to be amazed at the heights to which we are called? The human being - a created and limited being, even a sinner - is destined to be child of God! How can we fail to exclaim with St John: "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are!" (1 Jn 3:1)? How can we remain indifferent to this challenge of God's paternal love, inviting us to so deep and intimate a communion?

As you celebrate the next World Day, let this holy amazement take possession of you, inspiring in each one of you an ever more filial attachment to God, our Father.

2. "You have received a spirit of sonship..."

The Holy Spirit, the true agent of our divine sonship, has regenerated us to new life in the waters of Baptism. From that moment, He "bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom 8:16).

What does it mean, in the life of the Christian, to be a son and a daughter of God? St Paul writes: "All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God" (Rom 8:14). To be sons and daughters of God means, therefore, to receive, the Holy Spirit, to let ourselves be guided by Him, to be open to his action in our personal history and in the history of the world.

To all of you young people, on the occasion of this World Youth Day, I say: Receive the Holy Spirit and be strong in faith! "God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control" (2 Tim 1:7).

"You have received a spirit of sonship..." The children of God, that is the men and women re-born in Baptism and strengthened in Confirmation, are among the first to build a new civilization, the civilization of truth and love: they are the light of the world and the salt of the earth (cf. Mt 5:13-16).

I am thinking of the profound changes taking place in the world. For many peoples the doors are opening the hope of a life more worthy of them and more human. In this connection, I recall the truly prophetic words of the Second Vatican Council: "The Spirit of God, who with marvellous providence directs the course of history and renews the face of the earth, is present in this evolution" (Gaudium et Spes, 26).

Yes, the Spirit of the sons and daughters of God is the driving force in the history of peoples. In every age, the Spirit raises up a new men and women who live in holiness, in truth and justice. On the threshold of the year 2000, the world, that is anxiously seeking ways of

living together in greater solidarity, urgently needs to count on persons who, with the help of the Holy Spirit, are capable of living as true children of God.

3. "The proof that you are sons is that God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts: the Spirit that cries, "Abba Father", and it is this that makes you a son, you are not a slave any more; and if God has made you son, then He has made your heir" (Gal 4:6-7). St Paul speaks to us of the heritage of the sons and daughters of God. What is meant is a gift of eternal life, but at the same time, a task to be carried out already today, a design for life that is fascinating, especially for you young people, who, in your inmost hearts, have the nostalgia for high ideals.

Holiness is the essential heritage of the children of God. Christ says: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). This means doing the will of the Father in every circumstance of life. It is the high road that Jesus has pointed out to us: "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord', shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 7:21).

I repeat, again today, what I said at Santiago de Compostela: "Young people, do not be afraid to be holy!" Fly high, be among those whose goals are worthy of sons and daughters of God. Glorify God in your lives!

4. The heritage of the sons and daughters of God includes brotherly love, after the example of Jesus, first-born among many brothers and sisters (cf. Rom 8:29): "Love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12). If we call upon God as "Father", we cannot fail to recognize in our neighbour - whoever this may be - a brother or sister who has a right to our love. This is the great commitment for the children of God: working to build a society in which all peoples will live fraternally together.

Is not this what the world most needs today? Within nations, we can feel the strength of longing for unity that will break down every barrier of indifference

and hate. It is especially for you, young people, to take on the great task of building a society where there will be more justice and solidarity.

5. Another prerogative of the children of God is freedom; this also is part of their heritage. We touch here on a subject to which you young people are particularly sensitive, because what is at issue is an immense gift that the Creator has placed in our hands. But a gift that must be used rightly. How many false forms there are of freedom, leading to slavery!

In the Encyclical *Redemptor Hominis* I wrote on this subject: "Jesus Christ meets the men and women of every age, including our own, with the same words: 'You will know the truth and the truth will make you free' (Jn 8:32). These words contain both a fundamental requirement and a warning: the requirement of an honest relationship to truth as a condition for authentic freedom, and the warning to avoid every kind of illusory freedom, every superficial unilateral freedom, every freedom that fails to enter into the whole truth about the human being and the world. Today also, even after two thousand years, we see Christ as the one who brings men and women freedom based on truth... (n.12).

"When Christ freed us he meant us to remain free" (Gal 5:1). Liberation by Christ is liberation from sin, the root of all human slaveries. St Paul says: "You who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness" (Rom 6:17). Freedom, therefore, is a gift and, at the same time, an essential duty for every Christian: "You did not receive the spirit of slavery..." (Rom 8:15), the Apostle reminds us.

Exterior freedom, guaranteed by just civil laws, is important and necessary. We rightly rejoice that today, in an ever increasing number of countries, the fundamental rights of the human person are respected, even if, not infrequently, there has been a high price to pay in sacrifice and bloodshed. But, however precious, exterior

freedom alone is not enough. It must be rooted always in the interior freedom that belongs to the children of God, who live according to the Spirit (cf. Gal 5:16) and are guided by an upright moral conscience, capable of choosing what is truly good. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor 3:17). This, dear young people, is the only path to take, if humankind is to become mature and worthy of its name.

See, then, how great and challenging is the heritage of the sons and daughters of God, to which you are called. Receive it with gratitude and responsibility. Do not waste it! Have the courage, every day, to live by it coherently and to announce it to others. In this way, the world will become, more and more, the great family of the sons and daughters of God.

6. At the heart of the World Youth Day 1991 there will be another world youth rally.

This time, to conclude the customary meetings and celebrations in the dioceses, we will meet to pray together at the Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, in Poland, my home country. Many of you, remembering the experience of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela (1989), will flock joyfully to this rendez-vous, on the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 14 and 15 August 1991. In our hearts and in our prayers, we will bring with us the youth of the whole world (\*). Set out therefore, already now, on your way to the dwelling of the Mother of Christ and our Mother; meditating, under her loving gaze, on the theme of the 6th World Day; "You have received a spirit of sonship...".

Where better than at the feet of God's mother can we learn what it means to be sons and daughters of God? Mary is the best Teacher. The role entrusted to her was fundamental for the history of salvation: "When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the

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(\*) The CLC groups who wish to participate may contact the World Secretariat for information and help.

law, so that we might receive adoption as sons" (Gal 4:4-5).

Where better than in her maternal heart can we guard the heritage of the sons and daughters of God, promised by the Father? We bear this gift in vessels of clay. For each one of us, our pilgrimage will be, therefore, a great act of entrustment to Mary. We will be going to a Shrine which, for the Polish people, has a very special significance as a place of evangelization and conversion; a Shrine to which thousands of pilgrims make their way from all parts of the country and of the world. For more than 600 years, in the Monastery of Jasna Gora at Czestochowa, Mary has been venerated in the miraculous icon of the Black Madonna. There, at the most difficult moments of its history, the Polish people has found, in the Mother's house, the strength of faith and hope, its own dignity and the heritage of the children of God.

For the young people of East and West, of North and South, for all, the pilgrimage to Czestochowa will be a witness of faith to the whole world. It will be a pilgrimage of freedom across the frontiers of States which, more and more, are opening to Christ, Redeemer of humanity.

7. My intention with this Message is to inaugurate the itinerary of spiritual preparation both for the 6th World Youth Day and for the pilgrimage to Czestochowa. These reflections are meant to serve as initial steps on this itinerary, which is above all one of faith, of conversion and of a return to the essentials of our life.

For you, young people of the countries of Eastern Europe, I have a word of special encouragement. Do not miss this appointment. Already now, it can be seen as a memorable encounter between the youth of the Churches of East and West. Your presence at Czestochowa will be an immensely meaningful witness to faith.

And you, dear young people of my beloved Poland, you are called this time to give the hospitality to yours



friends from all parts of the world. For you and for the Church of Poland this encounter, in which I too will take part, will be an extraordinary spiritual gift at this moment of your history, so full of hope for the future.

Kneeling in spirit before the image of the Black Madonna of Czestochowa I entrust to her loving protection the whole event of the 6th World Youth Day.

For you, dear young people, my warm paternal Blessing.

From the Vatican, 15 August 1990, Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

*Joannes Paulus II*

John Paul II

\* \* \* \* \*  
\*  
\* "The Kingdom of God is like a fire in a cold \*  
\* night; those who need warmth must feed it." \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* CVX Uruguay \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

**WHAT DOES THE CLC WAY OF LIFE MEAN TO ME?  
The members of the ExCo answer**

On the occasion of the last CLC World Assembly, all candidates to the Executive Council (ExCo) answered this question. In this article, we publish the answer of the candidates who have been elected.

Brendan:

It gives an orientation to my life which has allowed me to become more aware of the uniqueness of the part I have been given by God to allow me as an individual and as part of a World Community to participate fully in the building of God's Kingdom where I am, in whatever situation I find myself.

Maria Clara:

A way to holiness according to Ignatian spirituality, with the help of a community of friends in the Lord with whom I share the same spirituality and the same style of life.

An apostolic life: of union with the Lord, of service, of discernment, of trust of others, of constant search for the more universal good and for the greater glory of God.

Ingeborg:

The way of life/community the Lord gave me to love and serve Him in His Church.

The constant source of growth, inspiration, peace and challenge.

The gift as well as responsibility to live as a member of a World Community not just of a particular country.

The "place" for identifying, living out and sharing my mission and to do this as a companion to others.

Anthony:

It means following Jesus Christ more closely in building His kingdom through a concrete "living of the Exercises".

Eadaoin:

For me, CLC is a vocation or call from God to be a lay Ignatian person. CLC offers me the means to integrate every aspect of life, to discern God's will in everyday situations so that my life can be a service for God and for others.

José Maria:

The method of combining Faith and Life in the work of each day. A spirituality which permeates all my decisions and actions, keeping me alert to the Lord's call to announce the Kingdom in all aspects of my life: personal, family, professional and service of others.

Mary:

CLC offers a means for a deep meeting of persons beyond roles and differences, for "real" collaboration. I believe this to be gift for our time and to offer great possibilities for dialogue and peace.

**MY EXPERIENCE IN THE CLC WAY OF LIFE**

I was born in Mangalore, India, on the 8th Dec 1948. I joined the Sodality when I was 12 years old in 1960. My studies were with the Jesuits in Mangalore until 1971. I was really touched by St Ignatius Loyola and a great admirer of my Jesuit teachers and fathers in the community. I learnt many things in the Sodality and got inspiration for my life too. Till 1971 I was only a learner and participant in the Sodality. I had a great question in my heart which said that the Sodality meant something more than what I was experiencing at that time. I was searching for it.

In 1970 I was elected as the President of the Mangalore Sodality Centre of Youth. This was an opportunity for me to search for the reality of the Sodality. I had no formation from the National level nor any deepening from the diocesan level as well. Through my own reading and life experiences, I led the Youth Sodalities with a basic idea: "Community and belief in our Christian life". During the three years we had three camps of 8 days each. We lived like a family by working together, learning together about life and our CLC way of life, and by praying together.

In 1974, I was selected by the National Team for a Moderators' course of 20 days in Bombay, which gave me a clear and deep vision of the CLC way of life. After that in sequence I underwent two Moderators' courses; one All India CLC Course, the Spiritual Exercises, and the annual National CLC Assemblies. All these formation courses gave me a good experience of CLC, a knowledge of the Way of Life and the Spiritual Exercises touched my heart which burned with the love of My Heavenly Father. Though I had so many problems and hurdles, crises and the coldest of wars, nothing could cool me down, even to the present day, from the warmth of My Heavenly Father and His service to all my brothers and sisters. All these experiences have

helped me to serve the CLC of Mangalore diocese during the past 15 years: meeting the needs of units, zones and the diocesan level of CLC, by conducting formation processes at each level and doing the necessary follow-up. I have given weekend initiation programmes, CLC life experiences for 5 days at the diocesan level and prepared people for the Spiritual Exercises. During the last 6 years I have given diocesan level 'CLC Guides' courses for 15 days each. All this helped the CLCers of Mangalore to accept the CLC spirit not only in name but as a Way of life.

After 1980, I was looking forward to a deeper and more solid training in and experience of the CLC way of life. As I was counselling lay people: youth and married couples in my area, and teaching in a Non Christian school, I had a great desire for a deep experience of the Spiritual Exercises. God blessed me with that experience in 1988 by giving me a chance to undergo the "40 day Institute on the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola" in Guelph, Canada. This was my Spiritual Pilgrimage; it gave me a new direction for my life. I was fully relaxed and it was a real eye opener to me about the deepest things of life. This Institute on the Spiritual Exercises gave me immense joy, peace and strength to make my life peaceful and happy - to accept life as it comes and live even in misery.

Since 1989 I have been giving CLCers the 19th Annotation retreat and spiritual direction in daily life. I enjoy this work to the utmost. I am really touched by the outcome of the 19th Annotation retreats which I have guided.

I have observed:

1. The tremendous impact in the lives of the participants;
2. The way they integrate prayer and the daily reality of life.
3. The way participants change their way of relating to impossible situations by welcoming God into their lives and noticing how God's Spirit helps them transform the meaning of these situations.

4. I am greatly inspired within my own life since I have grown much and gained many insights.

I am a teacher and my subjects are Maths and Science, I am a NCC Army Officer and a Mountaineering Trained Instructor, With all my experiences in CLC, which have helped me grow and relax, I am better able to help my students.

Now my heart feelings are saying: the CLC way of life is my life vocation. God has called me through CLC, with others, to live a fuller Human/Spiritual/Social life for His Kingdom. He calls me to be ever more generous in my responses as time goes by, through prayer and discernment. He leads me with Mary to encounter "Abba" Father through His Spirit in the daily events of my life.

Theodore Marian Lasrado  
President of the Diocesan Community of CLC  
Mangalore, India

\* \* \* \* \*  
\* "The Kingdom of God is like the pieces of a puzzle: \*  
\* each one has its own form and colour and is \*  
\* necessary for the completion of the image". \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* CVX Uruguay \*  
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**IS EUROPE OPEN TO THE WORLD?**

On November 23rd, 1989, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, addressed the members of the European Parliament at Strasbourg. We present here part of his address from European Vision (n.7 1990), a review of the OCIFE (The Catholic European Study and Information Centre).

The schism between the churches is not the only great schism which Europe has exported to the world. There is also the political divide between East and West and between two competing social systems. Now after more than forty years of stagnation, there is real political movement in Europe again; and while it looks as if at the moment communism has lost the battle for hearts and minds in Europe, it certainly cannot be said that capitalism as a total world view has won. The closer it comes to triumphing totally, the more questions are raised about its capacity to be magnanimous in victory, to heed the cries of the poor at home and abroad, to seek the paths of peace and to care tenderly for the earth which alone can sustain growth and affluence and the precious gift of life itself.

There is no Europe worthy of the name if it is not open to the world. A Europe united only by its own desire to become yet more prosperous would have no attraction for me or, I suspect, anyone in this room. I am no Eurofanatic, but I am a passionate European. I am not passionate for uniformity. I have to say that I do not believe that the member states of the European Community are in all circumstances necessarily right when they act together in matters of external policy, much as I welcome the principle of concerted action...

Some four centuries ago William Shakespeare wrote some words which speak to our condition:

"There is tide in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune".

Robert Runcie

## SAINT IGNATIUS 500 YEARS DOWN THE TRACK

The author of this article (\*), Mrs Maxine Hogan from Adelaide (South Australia), attended CLC World Assemblies in the Philippines in 1976 and in Providence, USA, in 1982. She started the first CLC in Australia in October 1976, in the wake of Vatican II and the renewed Sodalities or Our Lady which became CLC. She is still very active in the church in Adelaide and is guide of two CLC groups.

1991 is a special year for all people whose lives have been touched by the Spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola. This is the year when we recall his birth 500 years ago and celebrate with gratitude to God the wealth of his religious experience which we have inherited. CLC is especially grateful that as lay people we too are called to follow the Lord in the specific way of Saint Ignatius. So, what has Ignatian Spirituality meant for me?

Basically, it has given me a way of life, a way that picks up the dynamic of the Spiritual Exercises retreat. A significant aspect of the Exercises is the experience of conversion, brought about by the grace of God and perceived in a new intuition or understanding about God, in a way that involves a movement from the head to the heart. This is an important part of the retreat experience, but it can also occur outside the retreat as the movement of the Exercises carries over into daily life. Conversion is not a once and for all experience. It can occur in a moment of prayer and touch us deeply, but it can also be a lot of little conversions of the heart here and there, or a deepening of a previous experience, and often includes some slipping back and reconversion as we discover areas of our life where we have become unfree and the Lord calls afresh. At times I've had to struggle with my unfreedom, at first blind to its source, then perhaps wanting to disown it, and often having to go on living with it, trusting in the Lord's patience and grace.

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(\*) From Australian CLC Newsletter - June 1990, n.10



In contemplating Jesus in the gospels I have felt a growing sense of his "person". Watching him stop for a blind man, or a leper, being thirsty at a well, tired in a boat, climbing a hill to be alone to pray, weeping for his friend, cooking fish on a beach and sometimes being exasperated with his followers, makes Jesus more alive and real. I think it was in seeing how Jesus always met people at their level that I was able to move into more relational prayer. Where previously I talked to Jesus in prayers (talked incessantly I'd say), now I dialogue with him, and I'm sure we both look forwards to it more. We each get our turn at talking, listening, questioning, telling about ourselves and sometimes being a bit boring! Often we just sit and share a feeling...

And talking of feelings, there's the key to Ignatian Discernment. When I was first introduced to CLC I had a sense of the rightness of this for me. It FELT right. I didn't realize it then, but I now believe that it was my first step on the path of Ignatian Discernment, i.e. I took notice of feelings and I trusted them. Since then I have found the practise of the daily EXAMEN encouraged in CLC, a helpful way of developing this sensitivity to, and respect for, feelings. When we begin to notice and own our feelings we are ready to learn from Ignatius how to reflect on them. In sifting out the wheres and whys of them with the Lord, it is possible then to discover how he touches and calls us in different ways each day. Sometimes I have difficulty locating and naming what I have been feeling. It's easy to identify emotional responses, but much harder to pin down the underlying feeling, but it is in these deeper movements of the heart that the Lord touches us and invites a response. Here again, attention to my feelings enables me to clarify whether or not the response was a life-giving one. I experience an inner calm and peace (even though I may still be in a difficult situation) then I know the Spirit is guiding me. On the other hand, if my reflection and response leaves me anxious, fearful, self-doubting - unpeaceful in any way, then I know it is not of God but probably a temptation of some kind, i.e. I may be depending upon my own resources instead of placing my trust totally in God.

Let me give an example: some years ago I was employed in one of our diocesan offices. I found it life-giving, very enriching for my own faith and I enjoyed working with the team there. More importantly, the work seemed fruitful and "of the Kingdom". As the years passed, circumstances in my life changed and I began to feel that maybe it was time to withdraw. For some time I resisted and rationalized; after all, it was in the "service of the Lord", and I had experienced his Presence in it. But the unease stayed with me. If that feeling of unease had been strong I might have made the decision to leave there and then, but it wasn't. It was just a persistent little niggle that wouldn't go away, and it was making me unpeaceful.

Eventually I decided it needed some serious prayer, instead of the "head ramblings" I'd been giving it. So I got down to the business of looking carefully at my feelings about it with Jesus. We came to see that the "persistent niggle" was not so much about the question of giving up work, but rather a fear of "retirement" and questions about my self-worth and of entering another phase of my life... With incredible clarity I saw that my work and my fears were beginning to possess me and I was unfree to hear the gentle but insistent voice of Jesus calling me elsewhere. With that clarity, however, came the grace to make the change, not altogether easy, but bringing a deep sense of inner freedom and the Lord's peace. I was learning something of Discernment of Spirits.

Ignatius must have had an eye to the future (like 1990) when he came up with the concept of Detachment. We live in a society that has such a "getting" mentality that it's difficult not to be drawn into it, and with the media constantly telling us that anything less than healthy, wealthy and suave is a failure, it's hard to remember the Lord's words to Saint Paul: "My grace is sufficient for you..." and Ignatius' words about indifference. I have two little sayings I find helpful for prayer: "The Lord wants my whole heart, and nothing less..." and Jesus asking "Put your security in nothing but me".

Disponibility, with Discernment and Detachment make up the three Ds in Ignatian Spirituality. (I believe there's a fourth, Desperation, which I'm feeling right now as I battle with the clock to finish this!). Disponibility is all about being fine-tuned in our availability for the Lord (the very opposite of the controlling stance). As we grow in intimacy with Jesus we want to be with Him in His mission, but it must be how and where He calls.

A trap for me is to look for radical calls and dramatic commitments, whereas I think it's more about doing little things with love and learning from Jesus about care and forgiveness, patience and understanding, but Jesus did challenge where he saw injustice or hypocrisy. It seems this is what Ignatius meant when he spoke about taking on the mind and heart of Jesus, to see things as He sees them and to respond as He would whether at home, locally or on the world scene. We have to recognize our limits, but it's amazing how the Lord extends them as we grow in disponibility!

Finally, I'm not too sure how Saint Ignatius would be viewing my interpretation of aspects of his Spirituality, but I'm sure "the most urgent and universal" thing for us on this, his 500th anniversary is to thank God for such an extraordinary man.

Maxine Hogan  
Adelaide CLC - Australia

**GUADALAJARA '90 FROM BEHIND THE SCENES**

Cachis, the writer of this testimony, belongs to the CLC in Mérida, Yucatán. During the World Assembly in Guadalajara she, together with other members of the CLC in Mexico, worked tirelessly on the Service Team, that group of people who were responsible for the smooth running of the Assembly on the material level and treated the delegates with great generosity.

The theme of the Assembly "CLC at the Service of the Kingdom", came alive for me when I had the opportunity of rendering service to so many brothers and sisters assembled from the four quarters of the globe. We had the chance of getting to know each one of them personally on the day of registration. The different countries took on a human face and those friendly faces since then have heightened our interest in the daily international news items. Often the different languages appeared to be an obstacle but we learned that being of service to people knows no barriers. A smile, a handshake, an embrace are a sufficient means of communication. Love does not have to learn a language: that experience made me recall Pentecost.

I am convinced that it is in serving that we experience the Kingdom. If our service is done with Jesus, for Him and in Him, it takes on a new dimension. It is in being of service to others that we experience in our hearts the characteristic "flavour" of the Kingdom.

Sometimes it is very difficult to accept the fact that it is not flattery or thanks that we should be looking for. It would appear that the Lord Jesus admonishes us: "Are you aware of the importance of your glance, of your treatment of a brother or sister? Are you ministering out of love?"

Being a member of the "Service Team", (familiarily known as "Staff") was a wonderful experience. The sense of

belonging to a team was vital so as to avoid caving in when physical weariness or nerves or worrying that all should go well caused us to see the dark side of things. Manuel, our ecclesiastical guide, with his calm disposition, his comradeship and sympathy was a great help to us in our meetings. There, in the presence of the Lord, the problems would just vanish and the weariness would be felt no more.

Our coordinators, Mary and David, were an example for us as they shared in our service. Mary, convalescing from a grave illness, was always available to help whoever came by. David would wisely remind us: "Leave to each day its own share of worry..." "When you lay your hand to the plough, never look back". So there was no need to waste time lamenting or looking for someone to blame when something went wrong. The goal was: How are we going to do things, beginning from today? Each one had his/her own responsibilities, and we always tried to respect the next person's domain. I learned a great deal from them all: Pajarita, Gloria, Maria Luisa, Lupita, Licha, Aaron, Jorge, Javier, Gilberto, Edgar. The understanding and cooperation of the kitchen staff was wonderful. How many were the times when we had made provisions for the following day only to find that we had to give them out to the guests who had come in tired and hungry! Brother Glodo, Fr. Dingler and his sister Magdalena - they were always well disposed to facilitate us in arranging a proper service, and did a marvellous job in keeping all of us fed. I honestly consider myself fortunate in living with them while we served the others.

So long, delegates from Asia, Africa, Oceania, Europe and America! Thanks to you, the world has acquired a new face for me. I carry all of you in my heart and I know that we are still united as we strive for the same ideals and seek to BE ONE, as Jesus has taught us.

Guillermina Montes de Oca (Cachis)  
CLC Mérida - Mexico

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## Witness - Young people

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### LETTER TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY

A team of young French CLC members met to evaluate the year 1989-1990. They chose to write to the Christian Life Community to say what they thought about it, what the CLC means for them, what they received from it, where the community disappointed them and what they wish for the future. Here are some parts of their letters.

Dear Community,

I thank God for the year we have been sharing. We have lived it with trust and often with joy, in our talking and listening to one another. We, women and men from various backgrounds, were able to open our hearts and form a Church community, thanks to the Spirit of God...

You are a human and real community in your wandering and searching for meaning and seeking God. I would define you as a "network of friendship in action"... a place to pray, to renew ourselves, to take stock of our situation...

Thanks to you, I have been able to have a home for my own faith; you are one of the principal places where I share my experiences of life before others and God. You are a grace for my growing...

Some meetings touched me, in particular because of our respect, our kindness, our listening attitude, and the effort we made to understand each other! There, we felt the warmth and the comforting presence of God for all of us... I also thank you for giving me the opportunity of seeing in others the surprising ways in which God chooses to make them come to Him...

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(\*) From CVX-Info (Information Newsletter of French CLC) n.3, June 1990.

You are a means given by God to be connected with Him. I cannot follow Christ alone. I need to say things aloud and listen. You are a place where I have been able to speak about my difficulties in faith, but also of my desires... I am happy to have this place when I cannot talk to God directly (I am a bit stiff-necked!).

I had begun a new group, and it seemed as though it would be a year without clouds and full of hope! In fact, I had imagined it was going to be a similar routine to that of the previous year: meetings at friends' places, discussions about Christ, Scripture and professional life, a meal and separation. And there came the unexpected!... There was a big crisis, maybe it was my youth and a matter of maturation, a step towards adulthood? Anyway, this crisis has been an opportunity to find meaning in my life, and find out why I believe!... Maybe it is a sign from God that this experience occurred to me while I was part of the group! So I must admit that I have never received as much as I did during this year. I have discovered young people who had the same concerns as I did and a real warmth about them.

I expected a lot... I was very demanding of the others, but did I make any real efforts myself? I discovered my limits, I was challenged to communicate, to balance my life. It is still difficult to speak about myself. If I felt disappointed about the group, it was because, I felt disappointed about my own efforts.

I hold a grudge against you, Community, because I felt you had a certain lack of interest in my convictions and my desires of being faithful to the group. If we want to remain committed to God, we must be present to one another. Everyone must reflect on his or her feeling of membership; it is the attachment of each of us to Christ which makes it possible for us to become a community... "the more we journey personally towards inner unity, the more this feeling of membership grows and deepens" (Jean Vanier). We also have to pass from "the community for me" to "me for and in the growth of the community", we must belong to one another...

How happy you must have felt, Community, when we were able to share the best of ourselves! How much you must have suffered with those who didn't feel at ease enough to say what they had in their hearts! Some evenings, didn't you see one or the other leaving with a feeling of frustration, loneliness or dissatisfaction? How is it that with such great expectations, everybody didn't find in you what they were looking for? How is it that with all your riches, you never succeeded in getting the top priority from some of us? In this I was disappointed by you. I would have liked you to have taken central place more often, in the midst of so many of our commitments. I wished you would have demanded more from us so that not so many people would have missed their meetings. One evening every three weeks - this was not too much! In this I was disappointed by you. But you might say that we were the ones who hurt you by letting you down... Our absences provoked us sometimes to reflect on our commitment and our fidelity, and to accept one another no matter what the exasperation or the frustration. This has taught us how to respect each other's freedom even without agreeing with their choices. Did we show that it did matter whether we were here or not?... In future, I wish you would keep your identity and your face, even if you have to let go of some of our friends and welcome others. I hope your life and identity will remain strong enough so that old and new members can go on finding in you a space of faith, friendship and prayer...

Dear Community, I thank you for encouraging us to go on searching for what is essential, to leave our talking behind and travel lightly so that God may really speak to us, to live life and meet each other in a new birth.

Your grateful brothers and sisters.

A group of young people  
CLC France



## CLC IN LUXEMBOURG

### I. A GROWING COMMUNITY

#### A. Background

1. Between 1970 and 1980, a number of school-teachers associated in various ways with the Marian Congregations (MC), inspired by the international meetings of Augsburg and Manila, gathered in small groups for mutual support in their efforts to live out more explicitly the CLC spirit as defined in the GPs, through regular meetings, week-ends, personal retreats, and a revision of life.
2. Beginning in the early 1980's, membership in the community expanded to include married and unmarried couples, youngsters, young adults and adults representing a wide range of middle-class professional backgrounds.
3. At present, our national CLC include 3 teams witnessing to the transition from Marian Congregations to CLC, and 3 groups of young adults who began 3 or 4 years ago to enter into the CLC lifestyle ("people who have acquired mastery over themselves and who are conscious of being partners in a life project that goes beyond themselves and calls them to a life that is more aware because it is more Christian").

#### B. Personal Experience

1. We feel within ourselves the desire to allow the growth of a life that is more dynamically evangelical (a life of faith), of a life that is more fulfilled and aware on a human level, of a life that is unified by faith in Christ and is more completely at the service of those who are socially less fortunate.

2. We recognise that we may need more time to strengthen and consolidate this internal dynamism, in the expectation that we shall be able to share this experience with new groups.
3. In our professional lives we are involved in a variety of groups (family, social, health, economics, school, State and others). Within us lives a hope that allows us to see our professional activities in a different light and from a perspective that is not socio-economic; this gives us a certain detachment from the fatalistic attitude of the business world (faith in humankind and in the spiritual vocation of humankind because of the Pascal mystery of Christ).

## II. A GREAT VOID AND A GREAT NEED FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

The population of Luxembourg is wealthy and comfortable, materialistic and individualistic. The economy depends largely on metal industries and services (banks and telecommunications). It is based on criteria of efficiency and prestige.

Frequently, the absence of moral considerations in economic life (and often in political life as well) is accompanied by a feeling of helplessness among well-informed citizens.

Schooling no longer seems to provide a moral formation for young people within the framework of the educational system.

Among young adults there is a desire to live the Christian faith in ways that go beyond mere participation in Sunday Mass.

The local Bishop and some of the priests have been welcoming and friendly, other members of the hierarchy appear to be indifferent.

### III. SOME PRIORITIES FOR OUR MISSION IN LUXEMBOURG

What is most important to us at the moment is:

1. to allow the awareness to grow within us that we are called to make our entire lives available in response to Christ's call, and that our first apostolate is our place of life and of work (see GP 8a);
2. to undertake jointly a spiritual renewal and an analysis of our professional involvement in order to discern what tasks or what forms of witness (whether personal and/or communal) Christ asks of us in order that we may better serve his Kingdom;
3. to express and make visible from time to time to the Church and to society the hope that motivates us;
4. to manage with freedom and generosity the "smallness" of our CLC-Luxembourg to "better serve the Kingdom":

a) there are a number of handicaps:

- the absence in Luxembourg of any creative cultural or scientific center (university);

- the absence of a student population in Luxembourg forces us to borrow from other cultures;

- the very smallness of the territory neutralises differences and weakens communications and research;

- the population is heading toward extinction (comfort is prized above life-giving values);

- from the stand-point of the church: a very "traditional" form of christianity, protected from the crucial challenges of our time and thus from all prophetic change; this is accompanied by a massive secularisation of society and a loss of faith among the young;

b) but our "smallness" has positive aspects as well:

- the new Europe that is being formed forces us to look beyond our own boundaries and come to terms gradually with the ancient cultures of our continent (in France, in Germany, in England and elsewhere) and those of other continents;

- international contacts bring with them a new awareness of the problems of large-scale political regions (North/South, East/West) and of our planet as a whole;

- CLC invite us to establish contacts on a world-wide scale, beyond our own cultural and political boundaries, to collaborate in whatever way we can in the establishment of world-wide solidarity at the service of the Kingdom in a way that would include the concern for justice as an integral part of this service.

CLC-Luxembourg

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\* "The Kingdom of God is built like the stork's \*  
\* nest. The storks line their nest with their \*  
\* own feathers, and look for all kinds of twigs \*  
\* and branches that are provided by the trees. \*  
\* They build it with all their love as a welcom- \*  
\* ing home for their little ones". \*  
\* CLC-Uruguay \*  
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## World Community

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### ECHOES FROM THE CLC OF MADAGASCAR

We are writing these few lines to share with the World Community a little bit of who we are.

Our presence at the General Assembly of Guadalajara'90 helped us to appreciate how much the CLC of Madagascar had withdrawn into itself. Therefore, we have felt the desire to open ourselves more in order to really contribute to the life of this large family which is our World Community.

The CLC of Madagascar is made up of young people: ECA (Christian Teams Today) who have been coming from the Eucharistic Crusade; adults: LKM-ZMM MDMDK (The Association of Catholic men of Madagascar - The Association of the Daughters of Mary) which take their origins from the Marian Congregations of 1876. The young people number 5000, the adults 25000. But because of the different stages of formation, only 1180 adults are genuine CLC, the rest are still at the stage of initiation.

Young people and adults collaborate in the CEPAL (Episcopal Committee for the Apostolate of the Laity) with the other catholic associations; they are represented in the Association of the 4 big Churches of the island (FFKM) which never fails to raise its voice whenever there is a national event which could compromise freedom, human rights, etc. This was the case during the "National Meeting" from 16th to 19th August, 1990, organized and guided by the FFKM itself.

1. "Growing in Christ together: the better to give life to others"

To reach this goal better, how does Malagasy CLC live the CLC way of life?

a) Young people

The ECA are a school of spiritual formation: team formation based on the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, on the Gospel and the Eucharist to prepare responsible young people, who live a deep eucharistic life and who become real apostles. For this, they choose as effective means: a listening attitude within privileged moments such as team meetings, apostolic camps, retreats, sessions...

Their activities are numerous: national reviews and booklets which correspond to the different psychological ages: Finarsan-Kina (trimestrial), Vatonamelanbafatra (bimestrial). They have a regular program on the radio dedicated to young catholic people. The spiritual activities consist in preparing people for the sacraments.

In the social domain, they help the needy: handicapped people, orphans, disaster victims, etc., they work in various committees (parish, teaching, social action); they contribute to the improvement of their surroundings: constructions of bridges, etc., according to the needs.

b) Adults

The CLC members are committed Christians, ready to serve, to develop the Kingdom of God with the help and goodness of Mary. To be LKM-ZMM, is to be responsible, available and dedicated. Therefore the method of work is the following: as soon as the community takes a decision, it immediately carries it out, then it evaluates it to better commit itself again.

Since they bring life to others, they must stay in communion with God through personal prayer, the celebration of Eucharist, retreats on the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius. They often meet, attend sessions of formation, try to know the needs of people around them. They use local reviews (trimestrial and monthly) to share their experiences, give information and facilitate formation.

In daily life, they live according to the CLC way of life:

- as fathers and mothers of families, they live up to their spiritual and material responsibilities.
- as committed members of the Church and the Community, they cooperate in the development of their parishes and their groups;
- as active members in society, they endeavour to transform it and promote justice, solidarity, and, as the young people do, they help the needy: handicapped people, prisoners; they assume their responsibilities in their professional and social milieu; they have their community and specific mission within the national CLC; they have their community activities for the development of agriculture, fishing and cottage industries.

2. The events which oriented and marked the CLC mission after Loyola '86

- The CLC of Madagascar dedicated itself to live intensively the theme of the General Assembly of Loyola: the imitation of Mary in the fulfilment of its mission.
- The Marian year, celebrated in various ways, has brought lots of significant consolations: conversion of people, more attentive interest of protestants towards Mary, a great number of retreats, formation sessions, awareness by CLC members on the fact that "Jesus and Mary are not separated". During the whole Marian Year, the icon of Our Lady of Syracuse was taken from one house to another, as a sign of respect and love.
- The letter from the Episcopal Conference to the faithful "National renewal", reinforced the commitment of CLC to the whole nation.
- In 1989, the coming of pope John-Paul II, the beatification of Victoire Rasoamanarivo have brought

about peace, unity after a moment of conflict and tension. Protestants, catholics and even non-believers took part in the general enthusiasm to praise God. CLC oriented itself towards a new mission: "What kind of Pentecost can CLC bring to this country?"

1990 has been the year of national councils for adults (August) and for young people (September). From the beginning of the year, CLC has been preparing the 500th anniversary of St Ignatius Loyola. Our participation in the General Assembly of Guadalajara '90 helped the members of the national community to live even better their lay apostolate by the deepening of their spirituality, the revision of the General Principles and the process of discernment during the Assembly. CLC is one of the pillars of the Catholic Church in Madagascar. Nevertheless some problems exist: lack of guides, lack of collaboration between some priests and members of CLC, etc. However, with God's help and the new impulse of the General Assembly, we hope to overcome the difficulties and be of more "service to the Kingdom of God".

Francine Harijaona  
CLC of Madagascar