



PROGRESSIO

SUMMARY

1991 N. 6	THE ECCLESIASTICAL ASSISTANTS And their service to CLC (José Reyes)	3
	THE JESUIT-LAITY RELATIONSHIP In reality... and vision (Fr Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ)	15
	ECHOES... ECHOES... ECHOES... World Secretariat (New publication), Hungary, United Nations (NGOs), Conference of International Catholic Organisations (ICO)	25
	INDEX OF THE YEARS 1990 & 1991	26

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General Principles

THE ECCLESIASTICAL ASSISTANTS and their service to CLC

At a recent meeting of Spanish Jesuits who work with CLC, the author of this article gave a talk on "The role of the Ecclesiastical Assistant in CLC in the light of the General Principles and General Norms". The article which we publish here is an adaptation of that talk. It may be of help to many Assistants throughout the world.

1. Introduction

One of the themes on which the General Principles have not easily been able to find consensus is precisely that of the Ecclesiastical Assistant. In the Church in which we are living at the moment, a period characterized by, among other things, an increasing evaluation of the laity and a greater awareness on their part of their role in the Church and in the world, some difficulties, both theoretic-al and practical, have become evident in the area of relations between lay and ordained ministers.

Although nobody now accepts the figure of the "Father Director" as the one most adapted to our times, we should admit that we have not yet created an alternative figure with such a clear profile as we had formerly. We are going through a period of exploration, of renewal of mind, of apprenticeship through trial and error which sometimes produces conflict. This rich experience of these latter years has not been free of a "pathological dimension" resulting from exaggeration, from defect or simply from inertia.

The General Principles clarify the role of the Ecclesiastical Assistant and not so much by those paragraphs directly related to them (GP 14, GN 42-46) as by a global clarification of the project which the Ecclesiastical Assistants are called upon to serve. GP 14 is a clear

example of a classical and acceptable formula which, however, contains all the difficulties of the present moment. I shall comment upon it in the first part of my exposition, together with some of the General Norms referring to procedures or which help to interpret the text of GP 14. In the second part I shall try to propose some conclusions which are drawn from the global vision expressed in the General Principles and the General Norms, for the benefit of the Ecclesiastical Assistant.

I. General Principle 14

The text approved by the Assembly is as follows:

"Christian Life Community on each level has an ecclesiastical assistant, designated in accordance with Church law and the General Norms. The assistant takes part in the life of the community in its various levels according to the General norms. Working in collaboration with other leaders of the community, he is principally responsible for the Christian development of the whole community, and helps its members grow in the ways of God, especially through the Spiritual Exercises. In virtue of the mission given him by the hierarchy, whose authority he represents, he also has special responsibility for doctrinal and pastoral concerns and for the harmony proper to a Christian community".

The first phrase is of a juridical character, and in the text proposed by the Executive Council it is all that was said on the subject. The rest was left to be treated in the General Norms. The reaction of many was: "The Ecclesiastical Assistant cannot be defined in purely juridical terms", which is undoubtedly true. For this reason the "Alternative Text" incorporated all that comes after the first phrase, and which the Executive Council had left in the General Norms.

What comment can be made in this respect?

- 1) The role of the Ecclesiastical Assistant has a juridical dimension which can not be ignored either by

the community or the Assistant. Every community, no matter at what level, is linked with an assistant who in turn expresses the link with the Church's hierarchy. From the juridical point of view, the Assistant is an official of the Church. One common case of confusion is that of giving the title of Ecclesiastical Assistant to every priest who collaborates with the Christian Life Community, solely because he is a priest. No. A priest can be the guide for a group, give Exercises, be a group member (especially if he is diocesan) or the treasurer of a community or centre, or be coopted by an executive council as a consultor, and that does not make him an Ecclesiastical Assistant. Not every priest is a church official, whereas there are many lay people who are church officials (the lay rector of a Pontifical University, for instance, or the head of a department or a lay person who has been appointed by the competent authority as Ecclesiastical Assistant of a section of a lay association, etc). So then, in a national community there can be many priests... and few assistants. One, certainly, at national level. One for each of the levels which the community itself decides to establish with a certain degree of autonomy:

"Each National Community may establish regional, diocesan, parochial or other suitable units as may facilitate its development" (GN36).

2) Understood in this way, the Ecclesiastical Assistant can succeed only if he works in relationship with others. Every local community or small group is linked to an Assistant, but his physical presence is not a condition for the legitimate existence of this small cell. Cf. the necessary interpretation afforded by the General Norm 45:

"At the level of the local community the link with the ecclesiastical assistant will normally be maintained through the local community guide" (GN45).

One immediate conclusion is that a principal preoccupation of the Ecclesiastical Assistant will always be the formation of guides, the formation of "animation teams" at their respective levels (centre, city, region,

country). Another immediate conclusion is that there should be close collaboration between the Ecclesiastical Assistants of the various levels, so as not to waste effort. I like to think that between the Assistants there is a communion in mission which permits them to fulfil their role with serenity and confidence in God and in others. Otherwise, who would accept the post of World... or National Assistant?

3) The Assistant is at the service of the unity and Christian growth of the community... the community expects a contribution from him in the doctrinal and pastoral sphere, in the style of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Fr. Kolvenbach recommended to all the National Assistants of Europe (in September 1988) frequent reading of the Annotations of the Exercises for a better fulfillment of the role which the community expects them to perform. So, granted that the Assistant is an official of the Church, appointed by the competent authority, his authority also comes from the community itself, which asks a certain type of service from him and a certain style of work... under pain of being excluded from the community for failing to comply with the General Principles. Certainly, the text of General Principle 14, in its current form, can be read with a vision of archaic clericalism. Several delegates in Guadalajara '90 pointed out this danger and voted for a different text which had been proposed by a national community. The English text is more prone to the error of which I speak than the Spanish one because, when speaking of the assistant, it says: "He is principally responsible..." In the mind of an English speaker, that translates into "He is the principal person responsible". An interpretation of this kind smacks of clericalism which today is unacceptable. The Spanish (and French) versions say: "The main responsibility which he has...", a rendering which does not present any great difficulties. The reading of General Principle 14 takes note of the fact that the Ecclesiastical Assistant is generally a priest. It has no fear, therefore, of attributing to him certain functions which are typical of the ministerial priesthood, though not exclusively so.

Allow me to consider briefly a different text which was under consideration during the last Assembly and which won a little less than a third of the votes:

"Christian Life Community has ecclesiastical assistants, designated in accordance with Church law and the General Norms. The overall role of an EA is to be the official link between CLC and the hierarchical Church, to foster the Ignatian ethos and to encourage the collaborative model of Church as the People of God proposed by Vatican II".

The text is attractive and denies nothing of what has been said in the approved text. It was criticised for being a little emphatic while speaking of "The collaborative model of Church as the People of God proposed by Vatican II"... when Vatican II proposes many models and images of the Church. But in my judgment, if the Assembly did not adopt it, it was not on account of any basic disagreement. It was simply because it thought that the functions which this text confers on the Ecclesiastical Assistant, were already conferred, with different words, on the Executive Council, of which the Assistant is a member. It wished to avoid a duplication of functions which does not contribute to the promotion of the model of collaboration which we all desire. See norm 22, in which I underline some words and include some comments in parenthesis:

The Executive Council is responsible for:

- a) Promoting the implementation of the General Principles and General Norms. ("the Ignatian ethos", defined by the community)
- b) The implementation of the policies and decisions taken at the General Assemblies. (here again, the "Ignatian ethos" interpreted by the community)
- c) Fostering national communities, stimulating their mutual assistance and collaboration, and promoting their active participation in the world mission of CLC.

d) Assuring CLC representation in programs of international cooperation wherever it may be opportune, for example in collaboration with the Conference of International Catholic Organizations.

e) Promoting the implementation of the teachings of the Church, especially that of Vatican Council II and its further developments.

f) Encouraging the fuller sharing, by national and other communities, between each other and with the World Community, of their documentation, experiences, personnel and material resources.

g) Promoting and encouraging specific projects particularly in accordance with norms 10 and 11.

h) Encouraging and creating initiatives necessary to fulfill all these tasks.

There are many other norms which refer to the "Ignatian ethos" (e.g. 41b, 39a, 8, etc.). Many other deal with the sense of the Church as People of God (see the "covenant with the Church" in GP16... or in GP8: "as members of the pilgrim People of God". Or in GP2 "to work together with the entire People of God").

In our efforts to create an up-to-date language form which avoids the earlier clericalism and verticalism, we always run the risk of adopting "neo-clerical language", in which, for instance, the Jesuit is presented as some kind of "guru" who understands what "Ignatian" means; one who is at the service of a community who do not understand it, and who should be instructed in it, or (the risk), maybe, of presenting the modern priest as someone who has overcome clericalism, who has understood Vatican II and now is capable of promoting a different model of Church. I grant that this comment is not based on the text itself nor on the intention of its authors. It is simply a caricature of the risk which threatens the ecclesial language which we all desire to renew. The Assembly gave preference to a classical style in the paragraph on the Ecclesiastical Assistant (the Executive Council was proposing merely one phrase), because it opted for seeing the Ecclesiastical Assistant as a member of the Executive Council, at the service of the whole vision which is expressed in the General Principles.

I now take the opportunity of proceeding to the second point of my exposition.

II. Challenges for the Ecclesiastical Assistants and for priests, arising out of the General Principles and Norms

I have already said that not all priests are to be considered Ecclesiastical Assistants, but to reduce my exposition to some who are, without expanding the more ample theme of the priests/laity relationship, appears to me insufficient. The fact is that a priest is always a priest and the community expects from him a special contribution, independently of juridical aspects; because it knows that in ordination he has received a particular grace for helping the growth of a community. The community, at any rate the Christian Life Community, desires to have priests. A common pathological state is that of thinking that because CLC is an association of lay-people, the figure of the priest is every day less necessary and less important. Lay autonomy, as it has come to be called, does not consist in confining priests to those very few things which are exclusive to them. Neither does it consist in having just a few priests in a strictly juridical role. In fact we should not think that because the priest is no longer the director he is no longer necessary and that he should depart and exercise the role of director elsewhere. Put simply, lay autonomy (an unhappy phrase, at best) means for the priest the need to develop a new style of priestly presence within the community. In a few words, I should say that this style consists in:

- * Accepting that the Spirit breathes in the whole Community, not merely in the ear of the priest. Hence the importance of the General Principles and other lesser sources as working tools in the hands of the priests, without being subject to prejudices or personal projects.

- * Accepting that the grace received in priestly ordination, like every grace, must be lived in relationship and be freely offered to the Christian

community for the growth of all. Herein lies the importance of developing a style which is not given to authoritativeness or paternalism but which does not abdicate either, giving way to excessive timidity or marginalisation from the life of the community.

I should also like to indicate other challenges arising out of the General Principles. These challenges have reference to the whole Community but, granted the kind of Assistants which CLC has, I think we have the right to expect a significant contribution of them in these areas:

1. The tension between maturity and the process of growth

The General Principles quite clearly provide a vision, a project. The life-style of an adult member of CLC and the profile of a mature community are clear, demanding and attractive. Nevertheless, the General Principles do not wish to crush the process of growth but the weight of a distant goal. The CLC desires to be a dynamic reality in which there is a formation proposal with different kinds of people in mind, in which young people and adults can find a space for growth and a platform for service. On numerous occasions the General Principles hark back to this dynamic element. Suffice it, in resumé, to quote general norm no.6 (my underlining):

"All that is said above must be understood and practised according to age, culture and other specific characteristics. For this purpose the National Communities must develop formation programmes, diversified if necessary for various groupings of members and the various exceptional circumstances which may arise for individual members".

The CLC is a life-style, a community of apostles gathered together from the experience of the Spiritual Exercises. True. But the CLC is also an educational project, a path of formation, a road towards Christian adulthood in which God calls people at different points

along the road. The Ecclesiastical Assistant, who is aware of the step-by-step pedagogy of the Exercises and who possesses the special grace of building community, must work with the community in that direction.

2. The breadth of the horizons

The General Principles recognize the desire of CLC to be a broad ecclesial current, rather than the coordination of many isolated efforts. In order to give an apostolic response to the complexity of the modern world, the CLC has the dream of being a World Community with universal appeal and broad horizons. While clearly defining their own identity, the General Principles do not close any door: there is place for all: "men and women, adults and youth, of all social conditions who want to follow Jesus Christ more closely and work with him for the building of the Kingdom..." (GP4). There is a place for individuals who desire to join a local community (GN 1c), there is support for groups of people who desire to set out on the road together (GN 1a). Already existing groups who after a process of discernment wish to join this community of universal dimensions are accepted (GN 1b); and there is a place for those who have decided to "emphasize one or more of the many evangelical counsels by taking private vows" (GN 7). There is the possibility to "affiliate other associations of people who wish to share in our way of life but not to become full members" (GN 12). There is also room for "persons or institutions who are somehow related to the same tradition" (GN 12). There is the wish of a "good collaboration with the Society of Jesus and with other persons, communities and institutions that share in the Ignatian tradition" (GN14). There is place for "joint projects", "specialized apostolic teams", "workshops, seminars, courses, publications and other such initiatives" (GN 10 & 11).

I know that presenting all this together is tiresome. We do not wish to do everything nor would that be possible. Simply, we do not desire to shut ourselves off from anything but to look for the best way to arrive at being "One World Community for Service" (Rome'79). Every

Ecclesiastical Assistant finds in these norms a programme on which he can work.

3. And the poor... where are the poor?

From the start, the General Principles have endeavoured to look at reality from the perspective of the poor. The preferential option for the poor runs through the whole text and is the expression of a genuine desire of the CLC. Our problem is not to be found in any lack of desire or any theoretical discussion.

We have said that the CLC is open to "all social conditions", and that is something we have been able to prove in the Assembly of Guadalajara and on other occasions. We are also aware of the difficulties which we - and not only we - have in forming CLC in poorer areas. When reading his report on the past four years, the World President said in Guadalajara:

"With joy, we realize that within the World Community there is a large consensus that social awareness and social action are not just accessories, but essential to our charism. Where CLC is attracting only middle-class members, we are searching for ways of coming closer to the workers and marginalized. We experience sadness when we are not able to attract them to our community. Let us pray that we never stop feeling sad for this reason!"

There are many CLC communities in the world composed of simple working people, miners, fishermen. There are many individual members and entire communities who make courageous options for living in solidarity with the poor. There are members of CLC who endeavour to learn how to meet the poor and to converse with them. On the other hand, the Spiritual Exercises have proved that they can be carried out in the poorest areas. Nevertheless, apart from external difficulties with which we meet (opposition of pastors, the distance of colleges and universities from the poor), we have also to strive against our own limitations. In this struggle we are hoping for much from

our Ecclesiastical Assistants and from those priests who are with us.

4. An apostolic community

Another element, almost the backbone of the General Principles, is the apostolic character of the CLC. Here we have made notable advances, and clearly advances will continue to be made as the national communities go beyond the first stage of formation, the healing of old wounds and consolidation, to pass fully to the unselfish stage centered in the "Service of the Kingdom" (the theme of the last World Assembly). The General Principles have tried to overcome the dichotomy between formation and mission, they have extended the range of CLC mission, they have clarified the relationship between the personal and organized apostolate, they have placed important emphasis on evangelization, they have suggested means and structures for apostolic action. A conference could be given on the sole theme of the "apostolic orientation of the General Principles". Since what occupies our attention at the moment is the figure of the Ecclesiastical Assistant, suffice it to say that what we are hoping from them is a capacity for positive attitudes in this field, for being a stimulus, for calling forth challenges.

5. An Ecclesial Community

One of the merits of the General Principles is that they insert the CLC in the fabric of the Church, preserving its particular identity and granting it a well-defined status within the Church (a public Association of faithful). We know that it is not easy today for many Catholics to understand certain aspects of the Church and to find in it a role which allows them to grow. In that sense the General Principles are of a positive nature; they are not disputatious nor too centered on intra-ecclesial discussion. They have a broad view of the Church: without avoiding the theme of authority they go beyond its formal aspects to centre themselves on missionary communion in which we are anxious to take part. The General Principles are imbued with a love for the

Church and the desire to work in her and for her. What we look for from our Assistants and priests is that they use their priesthood in such a way that our reaction to the complexities of the church becomes one of growing in love for it, rather than standing back, perplexed. Nor do we wish to see them paralysed by difficulties which we all experience, and which we will all continue to experience.

* * *

It strikes me that this, and probably much more, is what the General Principles are hoping for when they say that the Ecclesiastical Assistant "helps its members grow in the ways of God, especially through the Spiritual Exercises" (GP 14).

José Reyes

Ignatian Spirituality

THE JESUIT-LAITY RELATIONSHIP

In reality... and vision

It is not usual for the Superior General of a religious congregation formally to address the laypeople he feels close to. The text we publish here is a letter from Father Kolvenbach "To friends and fellow-workers of the Society of Jesus", a vast body of people of which CLC is most certainly a part. Presenting this letter to the Major Superiors, he says "This letter is certainly something of a novelty, in terms of its content and the people to whom it is addressed". By publishing it here, we hope to contribute to the task of reflecting on the important question of relations between laypeople and the Society of Jesus.

The Anniversary of the approval of the Society of Jesus, which occurs one year after the beginning of the Ignatian Year, is a good opportunity for me to greet all of you -- men and women, friends and fellow-workers -- who are generously involved in the Society's varied, world-wide apostolate.

My first word to you is thanks, heartfelt thanks. For without you, without your cooperation Jesuit apostolates could not offer effective service to the Church, to the people of God. Gratitude is a virtue which the Jesuits were taught to practice by their first superior general, St. Ignatius of Loyola. From the very beginning of his long pilgrimage toward God -- from Pamplona to Manresa to Jerusalem to Salamanca to Paris and, finally, to Rome -- Ignatius was vividly aware of how much he owed to the goodness of the men and women who helped him along the way. He never ceased thanking them. He prayed for them without fail. Throughout his life he did everything he could to help them.

And when he wrote the Constitutions, which govern the order that he founded, Ignatius noted in more than a dozen

places the responsibility which its members have to pray for their co-workers and benefactors. In the part of the Constitutions that deals with the educational works of the Society, the very first chapter is entitled: "The Remembrance of the Founders and Benefactors of the Colleges." There he gives instructions that every year, on the anniversary of the institution's founding, a solemn Mass should be celebrated for the founder and benefactors, and a waxed candle should be presented to the founder, "decorated with his coat of arms." That was a different moment of history. The gesture may seem quaint today. But the intent and spirit are clear. Ignatius wanted his sons to be grateful -- grateful to their friends. And he wanted them to pray for their friends faithfully -- as indeed they do.

Purpose of this letter

During the course of the Ignatian Year many laypeople have told me that Ignatian spirituality is an important part of their lives. Some have told me that this year provided their first occasion to know Ignatius, his spirit and spirituality. Many have asked that we continue to share the Ignatian heritage together beyond the end of the special events of this year. In response, as a beginning of what I hope will be a continuing dialogue between yourselves and my brother Jesuits in all of your countries, I wish to offer you a number of reflections, drawn from Saint Ignatius, which can help us to grow as persons and as believers. Shared reflection of this kind can help us also to strengthen the bonds between us, and open prospects for even closer cooperation. For this is one moment in a movement of the Spirit of God who urges us to greater union of minds and hearts in our service of others.

Who Are We?

We are a widespread network of lay and religious people with varied relationships all sharing the same gift - the heritage of Ignatius Loyola. The Society's field of

activity is large, and the Jesuits who work in it differ in their tasks and their talents. In this diversity you have your part: some of you are our former students, our families, our friends who share in many ways in our Ignatian spirituality; others share in the apostolate at different levels, supporting us by your spiritual life and your reflection as well as by your labours, your financial help for our apostolic works, and in many other ways. In many and diverse ways you are present: in universities and schools, in centres of social action and culture, in missions, parishes and retreat-houses, in publishing houses and editorial work, in refugee camps and even in Provincial curias! In these undertakings some of you are in major positions of policy making together with Jesuits, whilst others teach or carry out research, or are responsible for administration and office-work. In some cases, it is you who have invited us to cooperate with you in enterprises that you have begun. And, there are cases in which we have asked you to take major responsibilities in Jesuit works. It is wonderful to see how you have assumed this stewardship with generosity and success.

Our unity respects both freedom of conscience and the amazing spectrum of gifts the Lord has given to each of you. Thus, among you are people from every walk in life, every profession; among you too we discover the richness and variety of ways in which you relate to God. Some of you have made the Spiritual Exercises in their entirety and are able, in consequence, to give them to others with profit. Others, as is provided for in the Exercises, have had experience of only one or other aspect of Ignatius' spiritual journey. There are others again who have never had the opportunity to make the Exercises, and still others whose spirituality is not Ignatian. All of this is entirely legitimate and, indeed, bears witness to the wealth and variety of the Church's spiritual heritage. Nor is it rare that others who do not share our faith and practice, nevertheless take part in our works on the basis of the values we share in common. In several countries, Christians of other denominations give us their valuable support. In Asia and Africa, in particular, there are many examples of our working alongside non-Christians, either in their institutions, or in our own.

Many Jesuits and laypeople have been mutually enriched by their working together in freedom and maturity in such a way that they have been able to share their experience of God, very often thanks to the inspiration of the Exercises. In fact, the four hundred and fifty years of the Society's history have been a record of fruitful association with the laity, in which the Ignatian spirit has manifested itself in the Church in many forms, and it continues to do so with vigour today. At the present time, in fact, the Universal Church has devoted special attention to the laity in a Synod of Bishops. The Apostolic Exhortation, Christifideles laici urges that the participation of the lay faithful in the salvific mission of the Church be "more rich, complete and harmonious". (no.52)

Growing interest in the Exercises and Ignatian writings has prompted many laypeople to seek in them the strength to live a Christlike life, and this has given rise to many and varied apostolic enterprises. More and more people wish to take part in the Society's mission and in its ongoing process of evaluation and apostolic planning. And so it is that Ignatian spirituality - a gift that belongs to the whole Church - is taking root and spreading among you, the laity, with excellent results for all concerned.

In a situation of such wide variety, is it possible to say something, in the name of Ignatius, that would be useful for you? In spite of the obvious difficulty raised by the great variety of cultural and spiritual backgrounds of those involved, there is good reason to believe that the answer is "Yes". Ignatius has a message today for all who seek truth and justice. To Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants, to Christians and believers of other religions, Ignatius can be a source of inspiration and spiritual vitality. In his own time, he saw that what he had learned from his own experience was useful also for others, and the same is true today.

Ignatius' Words To Laypeople

Human life has meaning. This is the first and fundamental reality for Ignatius. We are not aimless beings, without a goal or purpose. We have been created by a God who loves us. We are called to build the Kingdom of God by knowing, loving and serving God and other people and thus entering life everlasting. The values, priorities and fundamental commitments that really steer us at the level of our hearts as well as our minds flow from such a purpose; they make all the difference in life between happiness and hopelessness. Ignatius raised this question of meaning by citing Scripture, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but suffers the loss of his immortal soul?"

While some people view "the world" as a religious desert, Ignatius was convinced that the world is filled with the Spirit of God, and that the Risen One has conquered the world which was hostile to God. If only we seek, we will find God present. If we watch carefully through the darkness of the night, we can discover the dawn, as light reveals God always at work for us as Creator and as Saviour. From this comes the desire of Ignatius to discern, to distinguish light from darkness, to discover the goodness of God working even in the midst of human evil.

God calls each and every one of us to share in a great enterprise. Ignatius tells us that no one is left out of God's invitation; young and old, lay, priest, religious, women and men - all are called to share in God's plan. The lay person has a vocation, just as the religious and the priest has. The one thing that matters is to recognize our calling and respond to it faithfully. This is not something theoretical. It means rather that our lives should be centred on a person - the person of Christ: Christ sought, loved and followed in the profound conversion of one's heart and in attentive listening to his word; Christ the Friend with whom one has a vital, personal relationship; Christ the Lord and eternal King, who, with the whole world before Him, calls each

individual to live with Him and work with Him, so that following Him in suffering we may be joined with Him also in glory (Exercises, 95). This is the theological basis of community and cooperation between Jesuits and laity. It is this which gives us the courage to commit ourselves, the joy to work for a common cause, and the humility to give, and at the same time to receive, so that no one dominates others.

The call of Jesus extends also to the way we use the gifts God has given us. For just as Jesus used all that the Father gave Him for the service of others, even unto death, he reminds us that our gifts too are for others. In Scripture all gifts, talents, wealth, move in a circle. First there is the openness to see that the gift is from God; then it is received and appropriated; next, one grows through the gift by sharing it with others; and finally the gift is returned to God through praise and thanksgiving. But at the moment when sharing should take place, there can come the great temptation to hold on to the gift and turn it into a means of accruing personal power. And so the desire to seek more and more power through wealth becomes insatiable. Thus the seeds of injustice are sown. The example and testimony of Jesus teaches us an alternative to such destructive attitudes and practice. In following Jesus we are reminded that "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many." This grounds Ignatius' understanding of the great venture of life which is building the Kingdom of God.

In our service of others Ignatius urges us to go beyond superficial impressions to understand the drama in the human situation. He reminds us that we can easily be influenced by the networks of false assumptions, warped values, and class or cultural mythologies which distort our perception of reality. Ignatius would have us illuminate the contradictions and ambiguities within these networks, and thus free ourselves from distorted perceptions of reality engendered by many of these values. Subtleties abound, real life choices are rarely clear-cut, but where do they lead? What really motivates me

under the surface? "One cannot serve two masters." The struggle is real, the drama decisive. In the drama of life, are we, in the privacy of our consciences, with Christ or against Him? We should not be surprised if we find ourselves in a position that counters the prevailing values when we oppose all that is inhuman in the trends of our day. This might well not be a popular position.

The Christ of Ignatian spirituality is Christ in action, the one who went preaching through synagogues, towns and hamlets, healing and doing good (Exercises, 91). In our day Christ sends us into the turmoil of the world and tells us to seek God as we work for the good of human beings. Thus we too learn that, along with contemplative mysticism, there is also a mysticism of action in the world. This spirituality contains a message that is specially important for those many men and women today who are tempted to seek escape from the painful pressures of hard reality.

This reminds us that our faith must have practical consequences in our lives - our world of work and civic relationships. As with God's help our faith deepens we hear the call to strive even at the cost of sacrifice to promote justice and work for peace, to work for the countless poor people in our neighbourhoods and across this beautiful, tragic world - striving to bring about that justice, in love, which is at one and the same time, the dream of God for us and our own responsibility.

For Ignatius, the use of human means is necessary and important, so long as we do not put in them the trust that we owe to God alone. Ignatius looks for persons who are well-versed in secular learning and in a variety of expressions of human culture as well as in doctrinal and spiritual matters. Between the two he sees no conflict, but rather harmony, because "all of created reality has God as its creator and end." The great and urgent challenges facing the world and Church today require persons in whom these means are thoroughly integrated. Otherwise there is danger of imprecise thought and ineffective action, as well as of being at the mercy of ideologies.

And in this effort we should recall that mediocrity has no place in Ignatius' world view; he demands leaders in service to others in building the Kingdom of God in the marketplace of business and ideas, in law and justice, in economics, theology and all areas of human life. He urges us to work for the greater glory of God because the world desperately needs men and women of competence and conscience who generously give of themselves for others.

For Ignatius the test of effective love is to be found in deeds, not words. Real love involves self-sacrifice. Thus what we do becomes the litmus test of our verbal assertions of love. Ignatius frames questions of love concretely: "What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What should I do for Christ?"

In his desire to "help souls", the solitary pilgrim from Loyola sought companions. This eventually led to the foundation of the Society of Jesus. But Ignatius also encouraged many other men and women to come together the better to live and to serve. That he should do so is not surprising, for the experience of God and his saving power and of intimacy with Jesus Christ leads naturally to the desire to share the experience with others and to bear fruit in real life. The example of Ignatius invites us to reflect on the usefulness that more structured forms of lay association may have for the achievement of our aims. I do not think that we have thought about it sufficiently. It is true that not every layperson is called to live as a member of a permanent group and to work apostolically in association with others. On the other hand, association with others is a natural expression of the social dimension of the human person and one which makes possible operations of greater magnitude, effectiveness and durability. This is especially the case when the problems to be faced are very complex and difficult. On the theological plane, associations are living signs of communion in Christ and of the Church's missionary vitality. In a pluralistic world they are for their members a help -- sometimes a very necessary one -- to live the faith in accordance with the Gospel.

Finally, I remind you that Ignatius Loyola was a man of the Church first and foremost. He himself had suffered from the Inquisition and from misunderstandings with Churchmen; but he insisted on loyalty in word and action to "the Spouse of Christ Our Lord, our Holy Mother, the hierarchical Church," because it is the Holy Spirit sent by Christ who guides and governs the Church. Ignatius thus calls us too, in an era of secularization and skepticism to be men and women of the Church, with abiding faith in the spirit of God, the soul of the Church, who guides all things unto good.

The Spiritual Exercises

The Spiritual Exercises are for Saint Ignatius "the best means I could think of in this life for one's own spiritual progress and for the help of others" (Letter to Manuel Miona, from Venice, 16 November 1536). They have transformed many hearts and many lives, and have been the source of important social and cultural changes. They are not a rigid closed system; on the contrary, they are flexible and can be adapted to people at different stages in their spiritual journey, and to different schedules people follow in life today. Experience shows that non-Catholic Christians can make them with profit, and that they can be adapted so as to help non-Christians. I am personally convinced that we could not have anything better to offer. I invite you to make more use of them, and hope that more of you will learn to use them to help others, as some have already done. I also urge you to require of my brother Jesuits, that as they work side-by-side with you, they share with you the spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola, and especially the Spiritual Exercises.

Conclusion

I have set out a number of important ideas in the message that Ignatius has for us today. They are meant to be an invitation that could help us all. They are so many

challenges that we must face with that same wise pedagogy, of going forward step by step, which Ignatius learned in his own life and recorded for us in his Exercises. As in all great undertakings, this is a hard road, but it is one that leads to life for us and for others. Perhaps some of you will feel moved to look more deeply into these themes, bringing them to prayer and discussing together the steps you are taking, their results and their difficulties.

I hope that the end of the Ignatian Year in which so much has been said of Ignatian spirituality can mark a new beginning in our quest to grow together with greater understanding and sensitivity to God's action in our lives under the guidance of St. Ignatius. Together we can continue to learn from him how best in all things we can love and serve Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.

Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J.

Rome, September 27, 1991
Anniversary of the Papal Approval
of the Society of Jesus

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

NEW PUBLICATION: In India, the Gujarat publishing house has just produced a book entitled "An Ignatian Journey for Lay Apostles", combining in one edition two Progressio supplements which have both been a big help to many CLC members: "Ignatian Spirituality and CLC Formation" by Patrick O' Sullivan SJ (Supplement no.23) and "Reflective Living - God's Plan & the Examen" by Una O'Connor IBVM and Brian Grogan SJ (Supplement no.32). The two supplements are available in Spanish and French from the CLC World Secretariat. Those in America and Europe can get the English edition from the CLC World Secretariat, whilst those in Asia, Africa and Oceania should write to: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, P.B. 70, Anand, Gujarat 388 001, India.

HUNGARY: During the summer of 1991, six formation courses were held in four different towns. Two Czechoslovakian women participated in one of them, and another had four Romanian participants. One of these six courses followed the form of a previous course, originally done by a group that has now been running for two years. New groups have formed - in Miskolc, Szepes and Budapest. In Romania, it has been decided to continue further, and a course for Summer 1992 is already planned. (extract from "European Team Bulletin" no.10, October 1991).

UNITED NATIONS: The General Assembly of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations was held recently in Geneva. CLC's representatives on this occasion were Roswitha Cooper, the new World Executive Secretary, and Fr Henry Volken SJ, Director of the Jesuit Secretariat for the Social Apostolate.

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC ORGANISATIONS: Tobie Zaka, from French CLC, and Fr Julian Elizalde SJ, World Vice-Assistant, will represent CLC at the General Assembly of the ICO Conference this December in Rome.

INDEX OF THE YEARS 1990 & 1991

At the end of 1991 we are publishing the index of the years 1990 & 1991. The titles and authors of the various articles are presented in 11 sections. After the name of the author, three numbers in brackets indicate the year, number and the page of the issue in which the article was published. An article may be in more than one section.

1. ECHOES

Asia (91,2,30), Ecuador (90,1,31), England & Wales (90,3,31), El Salvador (90,1,32), Hong Kong (91,2,30), Hungary (91,6,25), India (90,1,30), Italy (91,5,32), International Youth Forum (91,5,32), Japan (91,2,32), Madagascar (91,1,29), Nicaragua(90,2,31), ICO (91,6,25), NGO (91,6,25), Paraguay (90,2,30), Republic of China (91,2,30), Syria (90,1,31; 91,5,31), U.S.A (91,5,31), World Executive Council (91,2,29), World Secretariat (91,2,29), Zimbabwe (90,3,31).

2. QUESTION BOX

CLC WORLD ASSEMBLY: WHAT IS IT AND HOW DOES IT FUNCTION?
(90,1,3)

3. MISSION

TO BLOOM WHERE WE ARE PLANTED
(Our Lady of Lourdes, CLC Canada) (90,1,11)

WHAT DOES EVANGELIZATION OF CULTURE MEAN?
(Pontifical Council for Culture) (90,1,27)

ELECTED, DESTINED AND SENT TO BEAR FRUIT
(Maria Clara Lucchetti B.) (90,2,3)

OUR WHOLE LIFE IS A SERVICE (CLC of El Salvador) (90,2,26)

IT IS IN GIVING THAT WE RECEIVE
(A CLC experience, Picnic Point, Australia) (90,2,27)

EACH ONE OF US IS COMMITTED
(Jules, CLC Canada) (90,3,21)

WITNESS THROUGH SERVICES OF LOVE
(Fr. Tom Forrest C.Ss.R.) (90,3,22)

CLC MISSION AND SOCIAL REALITY: Data and reflection on our apostolic activity.
(By an International Working Group coordinated by Josefina Errázuriz) (Supplement N.35, July 1990)

THE JOURNEY OF SAINT IGNATIUS AND THE CHARISM OF CLC"
(Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, s.j.) (90,4,3).

IN THE SERVICE OF THE KINGDOM: THE PERSONAL DIMENSION
(Maria da Assuncao Carvalho) (90,4,17)

IN THE SERVICE OF THE KINGDOM: THE COMMUNAL DIMENSION
(Josefina Errázuriz) (90,4,27)

IS EUROPE OPEN TO THE WORLD? (Robert Runcie) (91,1,15)

BUILDING COMMUNITY FOR MISSION: NOTES FROM A CONTINENT-WIDE CLC ENCOUNTER. (91,3-4,20)

FOLLOWING CHRIST IN POVERTY
(Fr.P.H. Kolvenbach SJ) (91,5,21)

4. LIFE OF THE CHURCH

THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF YOUTH IN SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA
(Juan Carlos Yuste) (90,1,16)

WHAT DOES EVANGELIZATION OF CULTURE MEAN?
(Pontifical Council for Culture) (90,1,27)

THE BEATIFICATION OF PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI
(Pontifical Council for the Laity) (90,2,12)

A PILGRIMAGE OF YOUTH TO CZESTOCHOWA: A MESSAGE AND AN INVITATION (Joannes Paulus II) (91,1,3)

THE FORMATION OF PRIESTS - A point of view from the CLC
(José Reyes) (91,2,9)

5. SPIRITUALITY & LIFE STYLE

WHERE THERE IS LOVE THERE IS SIGHT: THE EXERCISES, SCHOOL
OF BEHOLDING (Xavier Quinzá SJ) (90,2,7)

TOWARDS A SIMPLE LIFE STYLE (Félix - Mexico) (90,3,27)

THE JOURNEY OF SAINT IGNATIUS AND THE CHARISM OF CLC"
(Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ) (90,4,3).

FAITHFUL SERVANT OF GRACE - FATHER LOUIS PAULUSSEN SJ
(Josée Gsell) (Supplement n.37, April 1991)

THE FORMATION OF PRIESTS: A point of view from the CLC
(José Reyes) (91,2,9)

WHAT DOES THE CLC WAY OF LIFE MEAN TO ME?
(The ExCo members) (91,1,10)

SAINT IGNATIUS 500 YEARS DOWN THE TRACK
(Maxine Hogan) (91,1,16)

FOLLOWING CHRIST IN POVERTY (Fr. P.H Kolvenbach) (91,5,21)

THE JESUIT-LAITY RELATIONS: In reality... and vision.
(Fr. P.H. Kolvenbach SJ) (91,6,15)

6. WITNESS

TO BLOOM WHERE WE ARE PLANTED
(Our Lady of Lourdes CLC, Canada) (90,1,11)

OUR WHOLE LIFE IS A SERVICE
(CLC of San Salvador) (90,2,26)

IT IS IN GIVING THAT WE RECEIVE
(A CLC experience, Picnic Point, Australia) (90,2,27)

EACH ONE OF US IS COMMITTED (Jules, CLC Canada) (90,3,21)

TO BE A REFUGEE WOMAN (Suzy Comerford) (90,3,29)

MY EXPERIENCE IN THE CLC WAY OF LIFE
(Theodore Marian Lasrado) (91,1,12)

GUADALAJARA '90 FROM BEHIND THE SCENES
(Guillermina Montes de Oca) (91,1,20)

LETTER TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY
(A group of young people, CLC France) (91,1,22)

WHAT DOES THE CLC WAY OF LIFE MEAN TO ME?
(by the members of the ExCo) (91,1,10)

CONSECRATED CELIBACY TODAY (M.G. Renauld) (91,5,6)

7. CLC PROCESS

COMMITMENT TO GOD'S SERVICE IN THE CLC
(Fr. Rémi Potvin SJ) (90,1,20)

THE PRACTICE OF CLC COMMITMENT IN MEXICO (90,1,26)

THE PRACTICE OF CLC COMMITMENT IN CHILE (90,3,26)

BUILDING COMMUNITY FOR MISSION: NOTES FROM A CONTINENT-
WIDE CLC ENCOUNTER (91,3-4,20)

PERMANENT COMMITMENT IN THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES
(José Reyes) (91,5,10)

8. WORLD COMMUNITY

CLC WORLD ASSEMBLY: WHAT IS IT AND HOW DOES IT FUNCTION?
(90,1,3)

TOWARDS GUADALAJARA '90 WITH MARY OF GUADALUPE
Part I (90,1,5); Part II (90,2,17); Part III (90,3,7)

GUADALAJARA '90: REMEMBER THE PAST & MOVE FORWARD
(Josefina Errázuriz) (90,3,3)

on mission coordinated by Josefina Errázuriz (Chile), a youth group from CLC France, J. Gsell (France), G. Montes de Oca (Mexico), Charles Hallet S.J. (Chile), F. Harijoana (Madagascar), M. Hogan (Australia), Jules (Canada), Fr. P.H. Kolvenbach S.J. (Rome), Z. Kwiatkowski S.J. (Syria), T. Marian Lasrado (India), M. Clara Lucchetti (Brasil), John P. Milan (Canada), K. Miyasaka (Japan), A CLC group from Mexico, Group Notre-Dame de Lourdes (Canada), Fr Juan Ochagavía S.J. (Rome), J. Peregin (Malta), Card. Eduardo F. Pironio (Rome), the Pontifical Council for the Culture (Rome), the Pontifical Council for the Laity (Rome), R. Potvin S.J. (Canada), X. Quinzá S.J. (Spain), N. Rieman S.J. (U.S.A), M.G. Renauld (France), R. Runcie (Great Britain), CLC members from San Salvador, Slovenia CLC leaders, John Tan (Hong Kong), G. Torres (Brasil), J. Valenciano S.J. (Rep. of China), J. C. Yuste (Spain).

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Asian Link (CLC-Asia), Australian CLC Newsletter, Cristiani nel mondo (CLC Italy), European Team Bulletin (Euro-Team), Harvest (CLC-U.S.A.), Link (Jesuit Refugee Service, Australia), Vie Chrétienne (CLC France).

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