

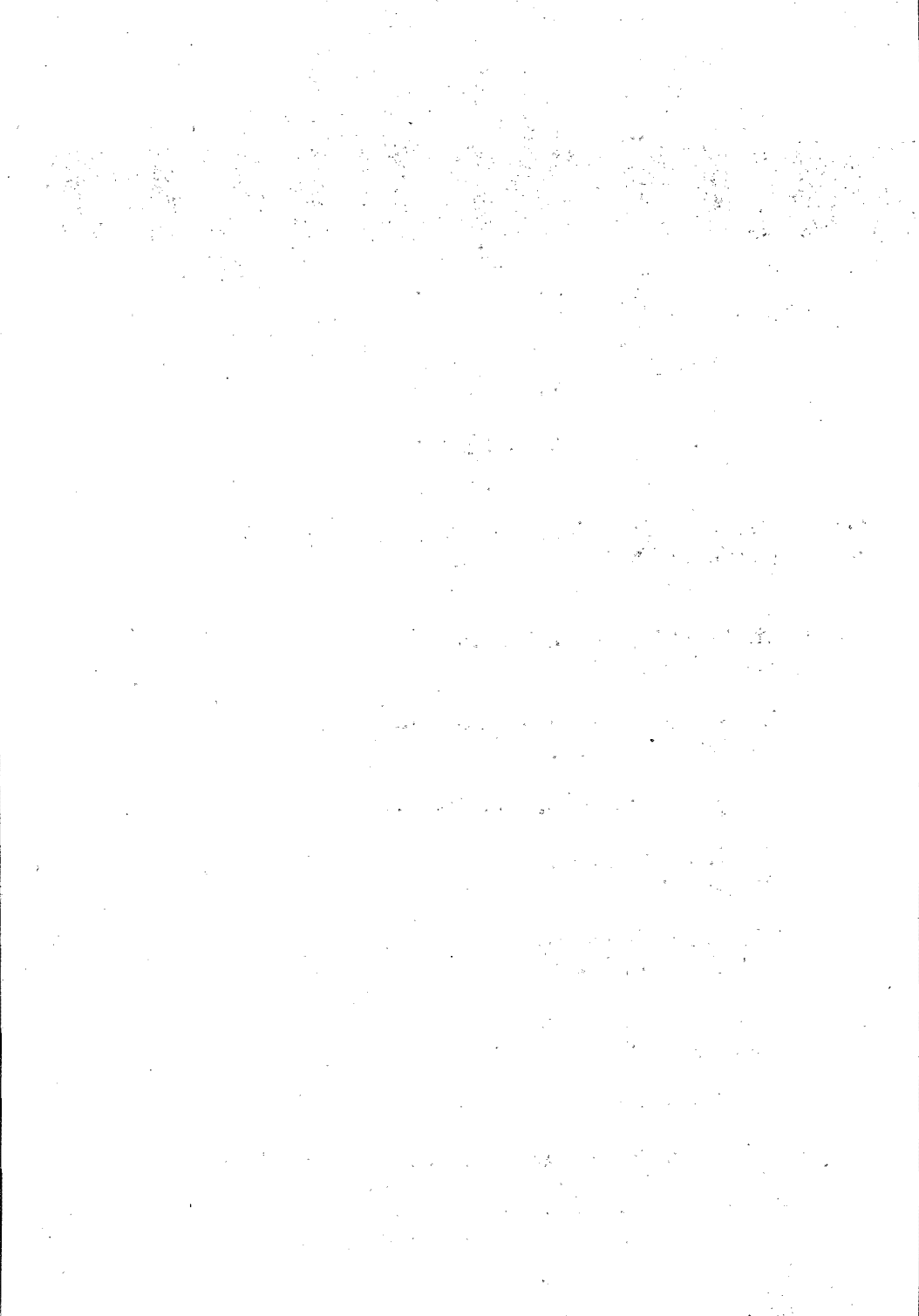


# PROGRESSIO

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### **GUIDELINES FOR A FRUITFUL READING OF THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND GENERAL NORMS**

Last year, the Executive Council of the Italian CLC asked all the local communities to devote some time to seeking a deeper understanding of the GPs and GNs. Given that the groups were at different levels of growth and maturity, the Council thought that the following guidelines might help each towards a reflection both prayerful and fruitful.

1. If CLC is in itself the response to a vocation, then the General Principles should not be seen as a rule book, but rather as the written expression of our allegiance to God. "The General Principles express the way we want to respond to Christ's call. They are our covenant with God, with the Church and with all people. They will help us to fulfil our deepest desires of service. We will use them as a focus for our prayer, as individuals and in community. They will be inspiration and guidance for us...." So spoke World CLC's Executive Secretary, as he addressed Cardinal Pironio, charged by the Pope with returning to CLC the text of the General Principles after its approval by the Holy See.
2. The importance of *putting it into practice*: The GPs are general guidelines valid in any part of the world, but which have to be lived out personally, here and now; "These principles are to be interpreted not so much by the letter of this text but rather by the spirit of the Gospel and the interior law of love. This law, which the Spirit inscribes in our hearts, expresses itself anew in each situation of daily life." (cf GP 2 and GN 6)
3. It is important to live out this reflection on the General Principles in the spirit of the Church, and to bear in mind those elements which come from the tradition of the Church or which link us today with this tradition.



b) Towards a particular lifestyle (centred on Jesus, guided by the Spirit):

GPs 5, 2, 12

c) What makes us friends in the Lord (called to live in community):

GPs 12c, 7; GNs 39, 40

d) Following Christ in poverty: simplicity of life, working for justice, preferential option for the poor, putting into practice, ... all of this following the example of Mary:

GPs 4, 9

e) Part of a church with a mission (not forgetting as well the Pope's persistent call to a New Evangelisation):

GPs 6, 3, 14

Being called to show this apostolic zeal both as individuals and as a community:

GPs 8, 1; GN 10

Of course, these are just a few illustrations of how to encounter the GPs in a way that can be fruitful; these examples don't need to be followed rigidly.

Experience not only at national but also at the world level, has shown that a group reading of the GPs, using these guidelines, can be very helpful.

## THE THIRD WEEK OF THE EXERCISES

One might well think that after the Choice, the Exercises are over. With the Second Week usually culminating in a Choice of a Way of Life, the goal of the Exercises would have been reached. But there are two more weeks to go. Why?

Some commentators would say: "For confirmation and consolidation of the choice". From the point of view of the Exercises as presented in the First Annotation, the choice is the end that is sought; from the point of view of the Kingdom, we have still to walk with Christ in his suffering in order to follow him in glory. It is with good reason, then, that the last two weeks are included: they help to confirm the choice and above all they allow a retreatant to explore the fulness of the paschal mystery.

The Third Week basically corresponds to the liturgies of Holy Thursday and Good Friday. Ignatius's text, like the Gospels and the liturgy itself, does not make a meal of the pain and suffering of the Passion. There is no "pathos". It does not submerge the retreatant in a Passion spirituality nor urge them to turn their life into one long Good Friday. Yet it is an encounter with a sorrowful, broken Christ, who has known long hours of desertion, mental and physical suffering, and agony. Christ truly suffered, and all along the Godhead was nowhere to be seen. It is not until the seventh day that the retreatant reencounters the light of the Almighty, shining forth in the resurrected Jesus.

## *Suffering*

For Christians, glorification and the cross go together; the need to accept suffering and to share in the suffering of Christ, to save the world and be glorified with Him, is one of our deep convictions, though it may not always be easy to explain. It is also a help and comfort for us: it makes sense of our suffering, gives it a meaning which is quite exceptional, a sublime meaning of serenity and peace. It is therefore beneficial for the retreatant to meditate on Christ's Passion, and all the more because it unites them with their Lord in a spirit of detachment and great generosity.

### *A possible danger*

It is advisable for the preacher or guide to be alert to the fact that for some retreatants, a prolonged contemplation of physical suffering, torture and open wounds can be harmful and serve to heighten existing problems. In such cases, these aspects of the Passion should not be dwelt upon, but it would still be appropriate to consider the topics of suffering and death to some degree.

### *Suffering: a few points*

It is worth reminding the retreatant that there are different kinds of suffering, and that many spiritual guides would insist on the fact that what hurt Christ most was not physical but "moral" suffering: the fact of being abandoned by his friends, of being betrayed, rejected by the people he loved, and a victim of lies and of hatred.

As far as bodily suffering is concerned, the retreatant must realise that, for people of today, protected from physical suffering with modern medicine, it is impossible to imagine what it would have been like. It is also important that they do not see the suffering of the Passion superficially, as unreal, or with the kind of blitheness one gets from watching violent films. At one, intimately, with the suffering Christ, they will join

in the suffering of a man in an age when life was hard, austere, and close to nature, when crucifixions were commonplace, and physical suffering was regarded less emotionally than today.

### *The death of Christ*

Viewed as the passing from life to Life, death can be seen as the condition for and the moment of fulfillment rather than as the end. Christ's death is the most outstanding and important moment of his life on Earth. Just as he was one with the Godhead for the whole of his life, so is he, indeed even more so, at the moment of his death. He is one with the Godhead, even if it is hidden, as St Ignatius says. It is the moment of the giving-back to the Father and of the complete fulfillment of the work of love: the total assumption of the human condition, taking on completely the ultimate state of human weakness.

The retreatant should be invited to see in the death of Christ the very pinnacle of his love and the most perfect manifestation of this that he could have given us. As a man, he had to die so that his life could take on its full, ultimate meaning. As a member of the human race, it was normal that he should die in weakness and brokenness, with no "deus ex machina" to save him at the last minute, otherwise the Incarnation would not have been complete, nor indeed the Redemption.

We must also remember that Christ's death was entirely of his own free will. The Gospel underlines it: Christ gave himself up because he wanted to. And he wanted to, solely through love.

### *Through the Third Week*

A presumption of the choice was that the retreatant concentrate on themselves, although in the sight of God and in terms of God. The Third Week will help them come out of themselves in order to identify themselves before Christ and be one with him more closely. The way of praying will



change. The retreatant has been seeking to give themselves; now they will principally be *receiving*, in deeper silence. In his advice and directions on the meditations, St Ignatius gets briefer and briefer, using fewer and fewer words, in fact suggesting more a contemplation than a meditation.

The passing from the first two weeks to the third is also a move from the particular, from the personal, to the universal. The retreatant moves on from their examens, from reflecting on their own sins, from their choice, to the contemplation of the One who saves the world through his Passion and Resurrection. St Ignatius brings about this transition by meditating on the Eucharist. In the context of the Last Supper, he offers the retreatant a reflection on the sacrament where Jesus unites the particular and the universal: his body with divinity. The Eucharist, which represents Jesus's passing from this world to the Father is also for retreatants the passing from their world, with Jesus, to His world: St Ignatius, bit by bit, breaks away from his reflection to follow Jesus more closely in the Garden of Gethsemane, at the house of Anne, of Caiaphas, and of Herod, and on Calvary. The detachment attained in the course of the first two weeks allows retreatants to engage and sympathise in the sufferings of another: They come out of themselves to follow Jesus in pain and sorrow, which will also allow them to follow him in glory during the Fourth Week.

### *The passion and light of faith*

The retreatant's compassion for Christ's suffering must be accompanied by the conviction that this sorrow does not lead to despair. The Godhead, though hidden, is present and the resurrection has long been heralded. The suffering, required by love, is real, but Christ's Passion is a victory and a source of optimism in spite of appearances.

Christ's will to suffer throws a new light on the sins of humanity and of the retreatant. It is in union with the suffering Christ that they acquire a better awareness of their state of being a forgiven sinner. They

see clearly that they are loved. What is thrust upon them is not a slavish dread or a fear of hell, but the action of graces, already present in the First Week, in an overflowing of divine mercy and unlimited forgiveness.

### *Acceptance of the real*

The Exercises make one contemplate the whole Passion. It is normal, then, for flagellation, crowning with thorns, the Way of the Cross, crucifixion, death and burial to be the subjects of this contemplation, which presupposes, as we have recalled, that the retreatant is of normal sensitivity and healthy imagination. The Passion must be meditated and contemplated as Christ lived it, with clarity, freewill, reason and love being the predominant features.

In these conditions, the fruits of the Third Week are very important for the retreatant, who as well as being confirmed in peace and in the acceptance of himself, will be able also to admit their limitations, be aware of the hard realities of history, give full weight to the most humble, the most unsung, the most hidden and the most painful aspects of existence, realising that the greatest work of all time was brought about amidst humiliation and defeat.

On the spiritual level, the Passion also gives the opportunity for a deeper union with the Virgin Mary, present in all the Exercises, but in a special way - at the foot of the Cross.

### *In resumé*

The Third Week confirms the retreatant in faith and love; it shows them that God's love is infinitely greater than our faults. With regard to the choice, it sheds some light on the meaning of their existence. It takes them out of themselves and reaffirms their apostolic vocation: to work with and for Christ who suffered so much for us, and for them in

particular. It unites them with the Virgin Mary in acceptance and peace. It reminds them that the Godhead is always there, even when it does not show itself. Finally, it guides them directly towards the life of the resurrected: dying with Christ, they are resurrected with Him. The Fourth Week has begun.

Fr Charles Hallet SJ



## IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY AND THE LAYPERSON

The following text is the translation of a talk given by the author during the "Youth Conference on Ignatian Spirituality", which took place last September in Rome, at the church of St Ignatius. Participating in the conference were some 1500 young people from all over Italy, who had links of one kind or another with Ignatian Spirituality, amongst them many CLC members.

It has been some time now since, at the end of my studies at the Jesuit College in Santiago, Chile, I was asked to make an end-of-course speech on behalf of my fellow students. I don't remember much now of what I said, and I don't have the text to hand. One phrase, however, has stayed with me, engraved forever in my memory and in my heart. Towards the end, almost as a closing remark, I remember saying "We carry in our hearts this Ignatian fire, which we do not completely understand, but feel burning. We will know it better when, perhaps without looking for it, we have communicated it to others."

Ignatius has always been associated with the image of fire. His very name, by tradition, has the meaning of fire attached to it. In the liturgy, his feast day is linked with fire. There is really fire in the eyes of Ignatius, as one of my friends would say, and many laypeople whose hearts burn with it. It's not a question of a personal fire, feeding on himself, but the flame of Jesus Christ who, in Ignatius, has found a new way of setting the world ablaze.

I continue to feel the same fire burning in me and outside of me. Today, God wanted me to be asked to communicate something of this

fire, hoping that my words would not put out the flames by trying to make them ignite to order. In fact, in its freedom, the fire has been able to touch and inflame many different people. And so, I can talk to you today of the fire of Ignatius from my layperson's point of view, always bearing in mind, however, that the great fire is something nobody has on tap.

In the lives of the saints, I prefer to look at the way the person found to sainthood, and the Spirit of God which guides them, rather than the glorified saint. In this way, we don't just value the dazzling personality, already forged in the fulness of the fire, but concern ourselves rather with following their progression from one or two isolated sparks or a few glowing embers which are kindled by the gentle breath of the Spirit of God. That is the reason why I am not concerned here with developing the image of Ignatius as a man attached to or in love with Christ. Nor am I going to start by talking about Ignatius as a man of the Church. Rather, I shall quite simply be talking about Ignatius as a man of process, of freedom, of worldliness and sensitivity, who sought companions to give service to God. For laypeople of today, these five aspects of the Ignatian heritage are extremely precious, influencing, as they can, our family and professional life, our political choices and our day-to-day routine.

### 1. *Ignatius is a man of process:*

In Ignatius we see clearly a process of growth. And let us not think that it is a process planned with the objective of reaching certain predetermined goals. The definition of pilgrim which he gave himself at the end of his life included a fair bit of risk, and of unawareness of what there would be at the end. To be a pilgrim is to be free, to feel enjoyment or suffering at each of your steps and at every moment, never to be settled in a definite place, and to be ever open to new things. Right now we could say that all pilgrims are young, but not all young people are pilgrims.

In Ignatius, an internal process took place which teaches us a great deal. I like to think that Ignatius was a man not afraid of himself, who was able to see himself in all his facets, to be aware of himself and to

evaluate where he stood. He was also capable of looking around him and realising what was going on. In time, he also acquired the capacity to see and recognise God's actions. He developed a remarkable ability to recognise and accept the circumstances of the present so that he could identify what was the next stage and get to grips with the task ahead. This principle, which is based on rationality, can be very determining, and when it works alongside God's actions, gets rid, purely and simply, of all our stubborn nature, and comes to us as a precious legacy.

We who follow in the Ignatian tradition do not therefore try to impose - on ourselves or anyone else - some goal, some rigid discipline. All we do is to look for the next step to be taken in an ever complex reality. In the course of our personal spiritual development, we will increase our capacity of self-awareness, our capacity to evaluate where we are without being afraid of coming face to face with unpleasant answers. It is only by starting, each of us, from our personal reality that we who are mortal and limited beings can grow as pilgrims, towards a point which will become clearer and clearer to us.

The legacy of Ignatius as a man of process is impressive: the discernment of spirits and the examen of consciousness, the progression of the Spiritual Exercises, the witness of his personal life and the freedom with which he subordinated intermediate goals to the one most important goal, the respect he had for the people he dealt with and the people he shaped - all of this encourages us today to adopt a similar attitude.

In a social and church environment in which it is ever more difficult to listen, to look at yourself without smugness, and to ready yourself humbly for the way ahead, the wisdom of Ignatius's teachings are useful for those who want to undertake a journey with self-respect and respect for others, on which they will never stop progressing and growing.

This also goes for married life, where it is always so important to be aware of the process of personal development and to have a language

that explains it and conveys it. Ignatius teaches us to pay attention to our interior movements, to recognise the signs of life and death in ourselves, to offer up to God the things we have already lived through and to ready ourselves to welcome with confidence what is to come. He does not see the world through rose-tinted spectacles, and is well aware that amidst the heat of the fire, some parts are cold. He knows that it is out of silence that words are given their being, that death is part of life, and that love brings both deep happiness and real sadness. Following the Ignatian path isn't going to solve all the problems of human life and love, but from it you acquire this sense of internal process and a language to express it which allows you to establish a gentler, more serene relationship with yourself, with God and with others.

## *2. Ignatius is a free man:*

It is true that Ignatius was stubborn, but he was also free. He could pursue a goal with tenacity, but always with a higher motivation which, in time, was to become the sole objective: "to praise, reverence and serve the Lord our God." Other things are "created for men and women in order to help them to pursue the end for which they were created." The classic principle of "in so far as" is a principle for free people, but also for impassioned people.

Ignatius constantly examines his freedom. What is my desire? What do I want? "to ask of our Lord what I want and desire" is a formula which comes up often in the Spiritual Exercises, and which speaks to us of a free person. A free person looks to the depths of their being, the place where personal desires come face to face with those of God, and where what God wants of me is not imposed on me but comes as an idea from the core of my being. Ignatius understood that God works through the medium of desires, provoking an attraction, stirring our freedom of choice. God is always present in our deepest desires, but the desires we identify and follow are not always the deepest ones. To increase our freedom is, in a sense, coming into contact with the depths of our being and recognising what we truly desire, so we can then seek it actively and ask it of God's grace.

So Ignatius was not afraid of choices or the active use of his freedom. His spiritual pedagogy always leads to choosing, be it to confirm or to change some state of affairs or your personal situation. There are no automatic decisions, since these deny freedom. "I wish and I desire, and that is my deliberate decision": who, if not a free person could show such clarity in their writing? Today, personal freedom seems to be hidden behind a kind of social fatalism in which the different stages are fixed in advance and the ways of going about things conventional. The free person following Ignatius never loses their capacity to ask themselves "but do I really want and desire this?" ... and this goes for the collective context too. In social, professional and political life, we can ask ourselves "Yes, it has always been like this, but do we really want and desire it?"

Ignatius's freedom was not only a freedom of reaction, for example to reject something bad or ill-advised. It is a creative freedom, capable of discernment, which also allows you (and at times requires you) to say "no" to options which are morally acceptable and socially recommended. This last "no" will be the expression of a freedom which looks further, which is not satisfied with conventional answers, but which ventures into far-flung territory and seeks to occupy new ground or to put itself at the service of enterprises which are less individualistic and more communitarian.

Certainly, all of this could also be a simple exercise of freewill. The mature Ignatius knew this, and would always consider his liberty in the light of God, and the most freely chosen of his deeds as "offerings of greater value and of more importance." Yes, what I want and desire ... "provided that it is for Your greater service and praise."

### 3. *Ignatius is worldly:*

Ignatius did not distance himself from the world to find God. He wanted to stay in the world, like the apostles did - that is, serving with



Jesus the Servant. For him, Jesus was not absent from the world, and he had to be seen "in all things." How difficult it is today to recognise and accept the presence of God in the world! And yet, for us who are trying to follow the Ignatian way, the world is not only the subject or the arena of our apostolate: it is just as much one of the sources of our spirituality, that is to say, a place in which to meet God and hear God's call.

The mystery of the incarnation has a key role in Ignatian Spirituality. God With Us, God made human, Jesus, the Son of God, born of a woman, comes into the world as one who serves. We bring about the redemption of this real world by living in it with Jesus. Such is the passion of Ignatius.

Many of the characteristics of the Ignatian style, including a sense of the Church, perhaps have their origin in Ignatius's "mundaneness" or realism. He was neither an idealist nor a spiritualist. Not for him, an unreal church. He did not lose himself in dreams about ideal people and ideal situations. His constant concern was to recognise God's concrete action in each person and in each situation, and to work alongside them. This does not mean at all that he ignored or was blind to the problems and the faults of the hierarchical Church, or those of any person or in any situation, but rather than allow these things to stand in his way, he never lost sight of God who continued in the midst of these failings to build the Church and to save all humanity. The respect which he showed to everyone, to which I have already referred, can also be seen to result from his realism: God is at work in every person, not in some ideal image they might have of themselves, or in expectations imposed on them by others. Accepting this leads a person along a joyful path, that of following Christ. There we find a great richness which is available to all, and particularly the young. This is one of the most unmistakable graces that you get from an experience of the Spiritual Exercises.

In this area of the "mundaneness" and realism of Ignatius, there is another aspect which I would like to touch on. At this moment, we are

in a world which offers, according to Einstein's words, "a great profusion of means and a great confusion of ends." According to the Ignatian school, it is here that we are called to spread God's Kingdom, working every day like companions of Jesus, passing by, seeing, speaking out, looking after, helping, transforming, multiplying human efforts. The end is clear: "God's kingdom and God's justice" (Mat 6:33). The way is plainly marked out: to make Jesus and his Gospel present in our lives. In this way, we can and we must employ all of the many legitimate means which are available to us today.

We should never reject the means of this world as if they were essentially sinful or led to sin, since going down this road, we could end up "withdrawing from the world", or even condemning the world as evil, and we know that Ignatius didn't fall into this trap. He was a man of his time, convinced that God acted in the world through us and through the means we had at our disposal. We, his disciples in the world of today, mustn't be afraid of some of the impressive means which science and technology put at our disposal. Rather we should prepare ourselves to use all legitimate means available, attaching a great value to perseverance and to excellence in the use we make of them. Study and programmes of formation are of vital importance in this - never neglected or underestimated by Ignatius, who was capable of undertaking a programme of studies at the age of thirty-four in order "better to help souls."

But, following in the footsteps of Ignatius, we will avoid attaching ourselves to the means to the extent of making them into ends in themselves, and so bringing to a premature end the pilgrimage of the free person who knows that there is still a long way to go. Ignatius was capable of abandoning ventures which were not leading to their objective, and knew how to persevere with those which it seemed to him *were* getting there. He saw his plans on the rocks, but he always knew how to overcome the disappointment, change his ideas and hatch new plans using other means to get the same result. He maintained a complete freedom, knowing how to use means "to the extent that" they helped him to reach his objective - and his freedom was made up of tenacity and of a good dose of healthy passion. More than this, what

mattered to Ignatius was to follow Christ poor and humble, and not to have the kind of power associated with human means. Ignatius had a *sense* of power and knowledge, but he was not a *man of power*, nor indeed did his life revolve around knowledge. Rather, for the sake of the resplendence of God's power, he was capable of asking for the grace of being chosen for the Third Kind of Humility: poverty with Christ poor, rather than riches; humiliation with Christ humiliated, rather than honour; to be regarded as foolish or mad for the sake of Christ, rather than wise and prudent in this world. All this, as ever, "provided that it be for the greater praise and service of the Divine Majesty." (cf SpEx 167,168)

It is this tenacity and this healthy passion; this excellence - not interested in, but capable of, great success and power - this sense of Christ, poor and humble, which we, his disciples, must strive to bring to this age, where there is such a great confusion of means and ends, in the world ... and in the Church.

#### 4. *Ignatius is a man of sensitivity:*

Sensitivity, now, is an absolute necessity. When causes are not followed by effects which are obvious and immediate, only sensitive men and women can keep a certain sense of purpose in their lives.

Ignatius suffered and shed tears of compassion when he realised the unintentional effects of his innocent, even generous gesture of giving his fine clothes to a beggar. It wasn't until afterwards, when something made him imagine the consequences of it, that he could see his action from the point of view of the poor man, and not in the light of his own young fervour; and the change of perspective made him cry. That is one of the aspects of his sensitivity: the capacity to become aware, and to be moved, to change perspective and to see things from a point of view other than one, such as that of fervour, which is conventional or traditionally accepted.

But more than this, convinced of the here-and-now relevance and nature of the Gospel, he often suggests to us the technique of "Application of the Senses". Tasting, touching, smelling, seeing, hearing, since "it is not much knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul, but the intimate understanding and relish of the truth." (SpEx 2) Recently, in an Ignatian formation course with participants from fifteen European countries, I suggested using this technique, with the conviction that Jesus is present in Europe today. I suggested they look at Europe and do a "representation of the place" by means of an "Application of the Senses." They should "see the different persons.." (106,114); "listen to what they say.." (107,115); "consider what they do.." (108,116) and "see in their imagination" (65). They should see sin and grace, recognise Jesus suffering and Jesus who cares for and transforms. They should be able to see the Child who grows and who passes through, and all this in the same Europe that is their home. We know that in Europe, and in the whole world, we can "hear the wailing, the howling, cries and blasphemies against Christ our Lord..." (67); "smell the smoke, the sulphur, the filth and corruption" (68); and "taste the bitterness of tears, sadness and remorse of conscience" (69). But we can also "smell the infinite fragrance and taste the infinite sweetness of the divinity, and likewise apply these senses to the soul and its virtues and to all..." (124); or yet "apply the sense of touch, for example, by embracing and kissing the place where the persons stand.." (i.e. the Holy Family). (125)

The language of the senses is the first concrete step we take, from the example of Ignatius, to make an apostolic response to the needs we perceive around us. But it is essential that we can "see them, smell them, and hear them." Lord, when did we see you hungry, thirsty or cold, naked or in prison ...? The apostolic application of the senses has already been suggested to us in the Gospel, and the life of Ignatius, at different moments, including his time as Superior General in Rome, is full of examples which show how he perceived needs and responded to them in one way or another.

## 5. *Ignatius seeks companions to give service:*

Jesus calling the apostles, and sending them on mission are two Gospel scenes which left a strong impression on Ignatius, and which one finds in the most typically Ignatian meditations: The Call of the King, the Two Standards, the Three Classes of Person... I have always had the feeling that Ignatius was called amongst others. It is not him, Ignatius, who calls others to join him in his enterprise. It is the Eternal Sovereign who calls each one, personally and, indeed, as working companions to labour for the coming of the Kingdom (cf SpEx 95). It is the Lord of the whole Universe who chooses so many people as apostles and sends them throughout the whole world. (SpEx 145) It is the Lord who speaks to these co-workers and friends and sends them on their mission. (SpEx 146)

Thus, Ignatius always sought companions and put himself to work alongside them. In order that they would really be companions of Jesus in his mission, "friends in the Lord" and not disciples of Ignatius himself, all the companions would seek to have a personal experience of God and to grow in intimacy with Jesus.

Personally, I have lived this experience in the Christian Life Community. It is an Association of the Faithful, the vast majority of them laypeople, who define themselves as a world community inspired by Ignatius. Their origins go right back to the time of Ignatius, and to the first groups of laypeople or "companies" which grew up around the apostolic spirituality of the Spiritual Exercises. The apostolic character, the tone of universality and the sense of church - so characteristic of the Ignatian tradition - require an expression in communitarian terms which, bearing in mind the principle of the incarnation in real and diverse situations, opens us to the complexity of the world's - and the Church's - problems, drives us to serve and makes us transcend geographical, sentimental, social and age-related constraints, and does not tie us to the charisma of a particular leader.

An Ignatian community is not an end in itself. Ignatius understood this and maintained a healthy attitude of detachment towards the Society of Jesus which he himself had founded. The Christian Life Community also wants to serve, and never to be an end in itself. It wants to be an apostolic community, to invite into service all those who, in the footsteps of Ignatius, want to join together to work with Jesus, following him closely as laypeople. There are also religious communities, equally rooted in the Ignatian tradition, and together we are developing the capacity to establish joint ventures and to cooperate to bring to the Church the grace which God gave Ignatius to work for the Kingdom.

## CONCLUSION

There is a great deal more that could be said about Ignatian Spirituality from the layperson's point of view, but rather than bring in other points, I would like to piece together what I have said.

Ignatius's sensitivity is capable of recognising God's actions and our own; of seeing, tasting and sensing how these two lines cross, separate, and seek each other before coming together to intermingle in a heart which no longer makes any distinction between spiritual life and life in the world, so that the whole of life is a life in the Spirit.

Life in the Spirit is *the whole of life* drawn towards, and transformed by God. The whole of life: action and prayer, formation and service, joy and pain, success and defeat, the wilderness and the promised land. This is what Ignatius lived, with great intensity: "to seek and find God in all things" he would say. This is the fire that we want to see burning in our lives and right across the world. For this, we the disciples of Ignatius seek today to experience God, to train our hearts with exercises, to find companions in our mission, following Christ poor and humble, so that the sensitivity of spirit we are able to develop is converted into apostolic action.

José Reyes

## AN APPROACH TO GENERAL PRINCIPLE No. 1

The following reflections first took shape at the final Eucharistic celebration of the German annual CLC delegates' meeting last June. We thought it worthwhile to share within our community the approach to the GPs of the celebrant, Fr Hans-Bernd Bollmann SJ.

### *The Introductory Rite*

Long before we look to God and gather as God's community, whenever we pray the Penitential Rite at the Eucharist, we have already been granted God's all-embracing mercy. With this knowledge in our hearts we begin to pray, and in the Introductory Rite this is confirmed:

*The Three Divine Persons, contemplating the whole of humanity in so many sinful divisions, decide to give themselves completely to all men and women and liberate them from all their chains.*

### *The Liturgy of the Word*

In the readings from the Scriptures, in preaching and explaining the Scriptures and in sharing within the community, gathered to listen to the Word, it becomes clearly evident, and is confessed in the Creed which follows, what is summed up by the GP:

*Out of love, the Word was incarnated and born from Mary, the poor Virgin of Nazareth.*

## *The Preparation of the Gifts*

God does not want mere bloodless things, "Not sacrifice or burnt offerings" (Mt 9:13). God looks for people with hearts that are warm, feeling and alive, hearts like the heart of His Son, with a capacity for love, willing to share all they have, for all they have has been given to them (cf. SpEx 230). Out of this love, comes naturally our gift in Mass and in the whole of our life. In sharing also our poverty amongst us - and Christ is with the poor - we will be more and more enabled to be poor in the Lord and share with the human family:

*Among the poor and sharing with them their condition, Jesus invites all of us to give ourselves continuously to God and to bring about unity within our human family.*

## *Rite of Communion*

Jesus himself in his human life has experienced a process of continuous growing into the will of the father in the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who consecrates the bread, the wine and also those who notice him "standing at the door, knocking" and are willing to open their door for him "to come in to share a meal side by side with them" (Apoc/Rev 3:20). This is give and take on both sides; the communication of Love and Peace (cf. SpEx 231,234). Nothing will be as it was before, when we say our very own "Amen" to this gift of Communion, and allow it to grow in us and change us gradually.

*This gift of God to us, and our response, continues to this day through the influence of the Holy Spirit in all our particular circumstances.*

## *Concluding Rite*

"Gifted ones", we could call ourselves, at the end of the Eucharistic celebration, in faith and hope. To what extent the Eucharistic reality will bear fruit in us depends on our willingness for love, a love which



prepares for the call to individual service and mission in daily life. To save the human race (cf. SpEx 102) God becomes man and sends those who have been reached by Him to spread throughout the world His message of love and salvation (cf. SpEx 145). The Christian community, strengthened through the Eucharistic celebration with the Word and Christ Himself, is now ready to receive the final blessing and dismissal:

“ Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. ”

Perhaps it is at the threshold of leaving the Eucharistic community to step into the ups and downs of daily life, looking back to what has been and looking forward to what will be, that the General Principles have come into existence, oriented towards God and the streets and marketplaces of God's world.

*Therefore we, members of the Christian Life Community, have composed these General Principles to aid us in making our own the options of Jesus Christ and taking part through Him, with Him and in Him in this loving initiative which expresses God's promise of faithfulness forever.*

## ANNUAL DPI CONFERENCE

At the beginning of each new session of the United Nations General Assembly, the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) sponsors a conference for all affiliated Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). This year's conference was held from September 11th to 13th at the UN Headquarters in New York. There were about 1,200 people in attendance. The topic of the conference was:

“Peace, Justice and Development:  
Ingredients for a New World Order.”

There were several common themes struck by the main speakers of the conference. The first is one that is familiar to us Catholics, for the speakers emphasized a theme long present in Papal social teaching, namely that if you want peace you must look to and work for justice.

A second theme that arose was the need for us all to realize that in the aftermath of the changes within the USSR and eastern Europe we have embarked upon a new world order. The UN is to play a key role in this new world design, both to reflect and to galvanize world opinion. The original charter of the UN was a design for a free world. With the passing of “cold war” it will now be even more the role of the UN to help all nations and people to rework their priorities. “there is a need for peace- building rather than just peace-keeping”, said Ricardo Luna, the permanent UN Representative from Peru. He went on to add that security is now going beyond the military sphere to that of social and economic issues.

A third theme that was stressed was the need for a process for the redistribution of economic resources and a concern for the environ-

ment. This need for redistribution is one of the main causes of the tension that exists among developed and developing countries. As Mahbub Ul Haq of Pakistan pointed out, there are still a billion people in the world without safe drinking water, a billion who are illiterate, and many hundreds of thousands of homeless or malnourished. Military spending in some countries is three times the budget for health and education! The need for development automatically puts a strain on the environment. The new world order will have to be the new environmental order. This will be the theme of a worldwide conference to be held on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from June 1st - 12th, 1992.

As we move rapidly toward the 21st century and as our world continues to change rapidly as well, the United Nations is attempting to face new challenges with a renewed vigor and hope. As an affiliated NGO, CLC has to attempt to help support these renewed efforts of the UN in whatever way we can.

Dan Fitzpatrick SJ.  
World CLC Representative at the UN

## WITH GRATITUDE AND HOPE:

A page from our history ...

Twenty years ago, on 15th January 1972, Pope Paul VI addressed the Executive Council of what was then the World Federation of Christian Life Communities at their meeting in Rome.

Two years before, in August 1970, at the World Assembly in Santo Domingo, the General Principles had been amended and were approved in May 1971 by Pope Paul VI. His message of that time has not lost its actuality, as is always the case when something is said through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Now, twenty years later, we have again a situation where the revised General Principles have to grow into the minds and hearts of our community, now *one world community*. Gratefully we look back to our past where the work of God can be so clearly seen, and continue every day, step by step, hoping to bear fruit, for we are in God, and God is with us.

With thankfulness, then, for our past, and that we may remember this great Pope, we reprint his message:

“Yes, we encourage you with all our heart to keep on with what is, in our eyes, a top-priority goal in the Church of today: the forming of solid Christian personalities, who integrate the fulness of their human life and their varied responsibilities with a continually deepening spiritual life.

The means you use to do this seem to us simple, sure and effective, like the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius from which you draw your inspiration; meditation on the word of God, on the doctrine and faith set forth by the Church; prayer, personal and communitarian; the search for

God's will in the events which are God's signs to us, done with the help of spiritual direction and of that brotherly exchange that you make use of in your Christian Life Communities; frequent participation in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist; an organic bond with your assistants; and, in line with the origin of your movement, your eyes turned always towards Mary, our example of open-hearted readiness in her cooperation with the work of the Saviour.

Drinking from such springs and faithful to such demands, you are ready to grow in the life of faith and to become authentic witnesses of the Gospel in today's world by a concrete, well-adapted and effective commitment, in line with what the recent Council called for.

As the programme of your current meeting makes clear, you want to contribute, on your part, to the development of the whole person and of all people, and you show a concern for the young which we are glad to see. May their generosity find in the call of Christ the living water which quenches their thirst and the fire of love which sets aflame their action.

In this immense field of action which is the Church, you feel a sense of solidarity with those who devote themselves to the apostolate according to other methods in their social milieu, so as to penetrate its mentality and structures with the Gospel yeast of justice and peace.

We urge you to put into practice that preoccupation which we notice with joy in your General Principles: "sense of the Church." Dear sons and daughters, keep this deep affection and fidelity to the Church, this openness to her pastoral projects, this role in the ecclesial communities of which you are a part. Bring to this what is perhaps most characteristic of you: a continual resort to the wellsprings of Christ and His paschal mystery, following in the path of Mary."

## LET US PRAY TOGETHER WITH THE CHURCH ACROSS THE WORLD IN 1992

**JANUARY:** That Christian communities have a deeper understanding of themselves as church, in and through the Eucharist. For the many Christians who suffer for Christ and his church, that their testimony may open the hearts of others to the love of Christ.

**FEBRUARY:** That Muslims and Christians strive through dialogue to increase mutual understanding and respect. That the Synod of African Bishops contribute to revitalising the zeal of African churches for evangelisation.

**MARCH:** That the church's pastors be wise teachers of prayer to the faithful. That increasing numbers of lay catechists be adequately formed for a new effort to spread the Gospel.

**APRIL:** For an increase in the modern world of priestly and religious vocations to consecrated and apostolic life. That Christians be inspired by the paschal mystery to search for unity and foster dialogue and collaboration among all religions.

**MAY:** For harmony and dialogue in the world through the intercession of Mary, Queen of Peace. That families be transformed into true centres of prayer, Christian life and missionary solidarity through devotion to Mary, Mother of the Church.

**JUNE:** That the love of the heart of Jesus open human hearts to love for those in need. For the church in China, that it may enjoy more perfect liberty of action in full communion with Peter's successor.

**JULY:** That concern for the environment based on respect for creation be integrated into Christian spirituality. For travellers and tourists, that they be assisted pastorally to deepen the bonds of social and Christian Solidarity.

**AUGUST:** That Europe rediscover its Christian roots and be open to the world's problems everywhere. That traditionally Christian countries once again feel the fire of missionary enthusiasm.

**SEPTEMBER:** For those suffering from AIDS and for their families. That the sick, by offering their suffering, render the activity of missionaries more fruitful.

**OCTOBER:** That the men and women of Latin America through a new evangelisation enjoy abundantly the benefits of redemption effected by Christ. For the Missionary Union on its 75th anniversary and a rediscovery of the importance of evangelisation in mission areas.

**NOVEMBER:** For those in prison and for their families and prison personnel. For the Christian communities of southeast Asia and Oceania as they collaborate to intensify their efforts to preach the Gospel.

**DECEMBER:** For children who live in the difficult situation of broken homes. For children, that their rights be respected, especially the right to an authentically human and religious education.

*SLOVENIA:* Father Marko Mohoric SJ, a young Jesuit who had recently been appointed as Ecclesiastical Assistant to the Slovenian CLC community has been missing since the end of October. He was camping with a group of scouts in a mountain area and did not return from a walk. In spite of an extensive search there has not been the slightest trace of him. Let us unite in prayer and hope, that his family and friends will not have to bear this uncertainty for much longer.

The Slovenian community is also very much affected by the brutality of the war around them. They are in contact with their brothers and sisters in Croatia. Any kind of help, be it material or spiritual, should preferably be sent through them.

*UNITED NATIONS:* Whilst he was visiting Canada and the USA, Fr Julian Elizalde SJ, World Vice-Assistant, also had the opportunity to visit the UNO headquarters in New York and was very impressed by the commitment of our representatives. You will remember their report of the 45th session in Progressio no.5, 1991. We will keep you informed about developments in subsequent issues of Progressio.

*WORLD SECRETARIAT:* José Reyes, after six years of commitment and hard work for the World Community, has left with Cecilia, his wife, and their four children: Nicolás (10), Maria Loreto (8), Ignacio (6) and Gabriel (3) to return to Chile, where José will work as Principal in a high school. Those of you who know José will realise how much he has given to our community and what a competent and efficient worker he is. We thank you, José, for all you have given and Cecilia, for the part of the burden you carried. Our prayers and good wishes go with you, and we try to be happy with the Chilean community who are getting you back.

The newcomer, Roswitha Cooper, depends very much on your prayer. She is looking forward to hearing from all the local communities worldwide. She would like to share your sorrows and needs, hopes and dreams, activities and plans.

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Father Nick Rieman SJ died of a massive stroke on 24th December, eighteen days after his 74th birthday. All who have met him will realise what a great loss his death is for our community. He was the World CLC Vice-Assistant from 1971-1977 and the Chairperson of the ad-hoc commission for the review of our General Principles. A testimony to his life and work will follow in one of the next issues. Across the world, let us join in the celebration of the Eucharist to thank the Lord for this great man and priest.