



# PROGRESSIO

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## EDITORIAL

This issue of *Progressio* is dedicated to the CLC of the United States. The timing of this venture is not merely accidental: the idea was born when José Reyes, former Executive Secretary, attended the US CLC National Assembly last August, and soon it will be 25 years since the 1967 World Assembly in Rome decided on the new General Principles and a new name. It is very much to the credit of groups in the United States, amongst other communities in the world, that this was possible. Particular mention should be given to the Alumni Sodality and the Leunis Professional Sodality in Cleveland who, encouraged and inspired by the Apostolic Constitution *Bis Saeculari*, lived the renewal process, returning to their Ignatian roots - the continuation and the practical application in daily life of the Ignatian Exercises.

Fred Leone, whom many of you will know from his time of service on the World Executive Council, was a member of the Leunis Sodality. Our very special thanks go first to him for all the love and effort he has invested in coordinating the contributions, and then to the thirty other members of US CLC who were part of this collaborative effort.

With more than eighty pages received from our US friends, we had the very demanding task of reducing them to one *Progressio* volume. On Page 28 you will find a bibliography of the original articles, which will be forwarded on request to anyone wishing to read the full texts.

In *Hope for the Future*, Fred Leone writes: "...with complete trust in God, what else can happen but the flourishing of CLC in the United States? The exact form of this we do not know; the pains we do not know, but we do know that God in all glory and love will call on us to help build the Kingdom. But we cannot take this route alone. We need you fellow members across the world..."

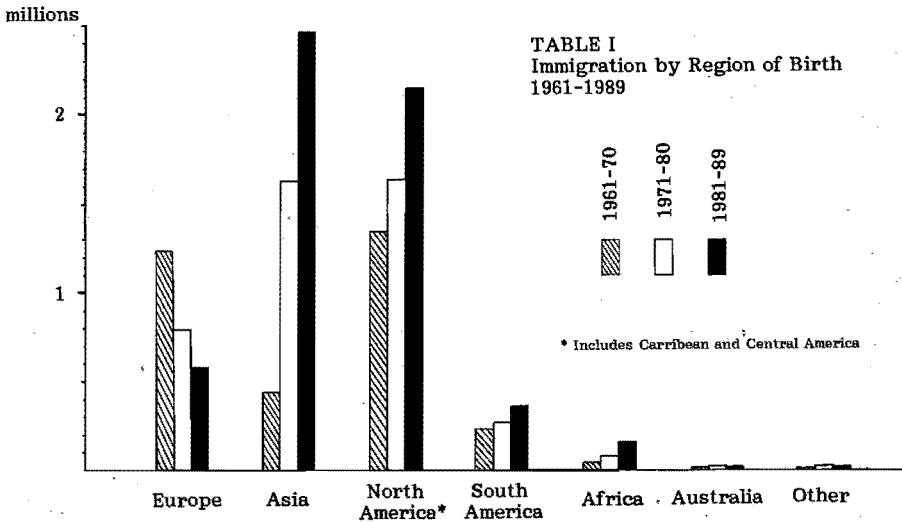
I think we need each other very much, which is why the Spirit has led us so far to be One World Community.

*Progressio* is waiting for your reactions, opinions, criticisms, encouragement. Please do write to us!

# SETTING THE SCENE - Background Information on the USA. The Population, The Church, Past - Present - Future

It is a most difficult task to speak of CLC in the United States without looking at the context within which it is placed. In this article we attempt to provide the setting. First we look at the overall population and some of its ethnic components, then the Catholic Church and the Christian Churches, and finally we review some questions about Catholics (provided by a scientific opinion poll by a nationally recognized polling organization).

In some articles in this issue the United States is described as a nation which is materialistic and narcissistic, a nation of individualism, greed and scandals. Perhaps a large subset of these same characteristics can be claimed by most first world nations. Perhaps the ruling powers of most third world states can also make such a claim to distinction. But who are the US people, where are their roots and how is the population changing?



For the past two centuries the population of the US has been primarily of European origin. But this is changing, slowly but surely. If we look at the table below we will note changes in immigration for 1961 through 1989. Add to this the higher population growth of these "minorities," and we can envision a shift of population proportions, eventually transforming the minority groups into a majority. Note in Table I the large increase in Asian and North American immigration in this period.

This table tells us that there is a sizeable influx from the third world countries. The obvious response might be "So what, the European cultural majority is so very large that it may take centuries before any change is noticeable." Not so!

Suppose we take a close look at Table II and note the changes in the past decade, say 1980 and 1990. The black, the Asian and the Hispanic population have substantially larger increases compared to the total and especially the white. The black, of course include not only the African Americans, but those of other cultures, i.e., Hispanic, French and others. So also, Hispanics include both white and blacks of Hispanic origin.

TABLE II Race and Hispanic Origin for the US 1980 and 1990  
(From US Bureau of the Census)

	1980 Census		1990 Census		Percent Change 1980-90
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
All	226,545,805	100.0	248,709,873	100.0	9.8
White	188,371,622	83.1	199,686,070	80.3	6.0
Black	26,495,025	11.7	29,986,060	12.1	13.2
Asian*	3,500,439	1.5	7,273,662	2.9	107.8
Other	8,178,719	3.6	11,764,081	4.7	43.8
Hispanic Origin	14,608,673	6.4	22,354,059	9.0	53.0
Not Hisp. Origin	211,937,132	93.6	226,355,814	91.0	6.8

\* Includes Pacific Islanders

Why look at these population changes, these numbers that are so inanimate? Because there is a wealth of information "hidden" here. Today,

we think of the Hispanics and the African Americans as the minority groups in the Catholic Church in the U.S; the Asians certainly make up a small percent of the Catholic Church here. But how long will this minority picture prevail? 10 years? 20 years? 30 years? ... Many of us (probably not this author) will see the Hispanic Catholics as the majority, and the African American Catholics as a an even stronger voice than today, and the Asians (pardon the grouping together) yet another strong voice.

At this time I must ask, "Where are the Hispanics, the African Americans and the Asian Catholics in the CLC picture in the United States?" We see a glimmer, but not much in Miami; New Orleans; Washington, DC; California and a sprinkle (hardly noticeable) in other parts of the country. From personal experience I must add that it takes much more than good wishes and resolutions to be blessed with the participation of these cultures in the CLC communities in the United States.

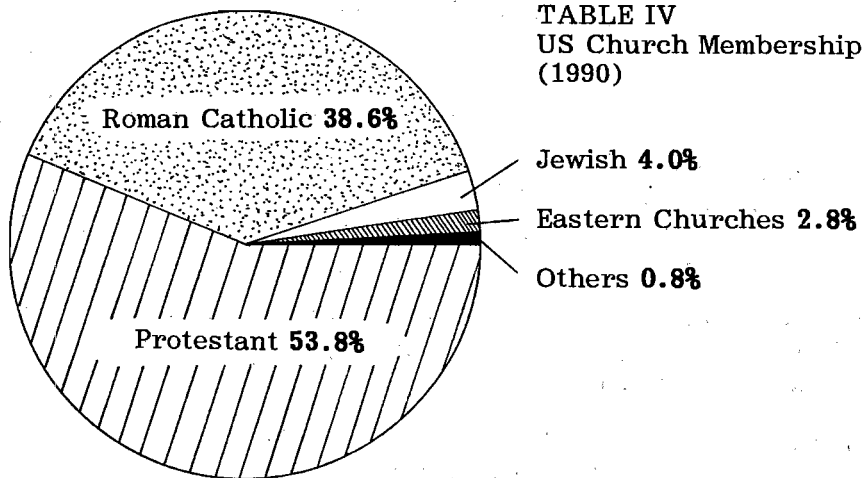
Let us turn now to the US Church membership. Again, let us recall that the Church in the United States has been a European Church. But what of the future? We look first at the religious affiliations by continents in mid-1990. This is given in Table III below, and is a framework for the US church membership in 1990 (Table IV).

TABLE III Adherents of All Religions by Continental Areas  
Mid - 1990 (in thousands)

	Africa	Asia	Europe	Latin Amer.	North Amer.	Oceania	%
Christians	310,600	252,800	411,300	419,078	225,500	22,000	33.3
<i>Rom. Cath</i>	116,670	118,900	261,080	390,050	95,600	7,980	18.8
<i>Protest.</i>	82,900	73,380	73,500	16,600	94,900	7,310	6.9
<i>Other</i>	110,030	60,520	76,720	12,428	35,000	6,710	7.6
Muslims	264,132	612,768	12,500	1,300	5,600	100	17.7
Nonrelig's	1,800	686,600	52,100	16,500	22,100	3,200	16.4
Hindus	1,400	700,448	700	850	1,250	350	13.3
Buddhists	20	301,215	270	520	550	25	4.4
Jews	320	5,375	1,460	1,050	6,900	95	0.3
Other	69,246	549,273	19,413	8,800	13,980	708	14.6
Total	647,518	3,108,479	487,743	448,098	275,800	26,478	100.0

From the above table (taken from "Britannica Book of the Year, 1991) we can obtain some sense of the religious affiliations by continent and by world total. If we were to combine some of this information with those demographic notations in *Progressio* (Volume 1991, No. 3-4, page 60) we would get a further picture of world populations and religions, and the use of world resources. This picture may be somewhat sketchy, but to have a really adequate picture, and then utilize this for any in-depth social action along these lines would certainly take more extensive study. This is to be encouraged for those CLCs who see themselves working seriously on social change on a national and global level.

In Table IV we present "US Church Membership (1990)", taken from the 1991 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches. Note that the table gives the Roman Catholic population as 38.6%. This figure is contrary to the one I have known for many, many years, that is, 25%, or slightly less. Why the discrepancy? This is explained in part by a footnote to this table stating that for the Catholic religion everyone is counted who has been baptized in the Roman Catholic Church. Another point is that the Church membership is listed as 147.6 million in an actual US population of 248.7 million at the 1990 census. This (and the 25% figure) is far higher than the actual situation if we look at church attendance.



Now we have a preliminary picture of the US — population, ancestry (and culture), religious affiliation, and even a comparison with other

continents. But, to better understand the picture, let us ask how US Catholics respond to Church authority, to divorce, birth control, homosexual behavior, etc. Again, we rely on a national opinion poll conducted by Gallup Corporation. All of the observations below are taken from "American Catholic Laity," by William D'Antonio et al, Sheed and Ward Publishing Co., 1989.

The researchers asked ten questions as illustrated in Table V. They ask the responders to determine what they think is necessary to be a good Catholic. The items are arranged in descending order of positive ("Yes") responses. Regarding this and other findings the authors say, "The ethos of American society seems to have combined with the teachings of Vatican II to encourage more personal autonomy. Traditional sacramental and liturgical practices no longer define who is a good Catholic for a majority of American Catholics. Nor are laity willing to allow hierarchy to define good Catholics by traditional standards of sexual-marital conduct."

TABLE V Can a Person Be a Good Catholic Without Performing These Actions (Percent Saying "Yes")

Without going to Church every Sunday	70
Without contributing money annually to the special collection for the Pope (Peter's Pence)	68
Without obeying the Church's teaching regarding birth control	66
Without going to private confession at least once a year	58
Without obeying the Church's teaching regarding divorce and remarriage	57
Without receiving communion during the Easter time	54
Without getting married in the Church	51
Without believing in the infallibility of the Pope	45
Without donating time and money to help the poor	44
Without obeying the Church's teaching regarding abortion	39

The next question, which seems to reflect the attitude of Catholics in this multi-cultural society of the US, concerns the authority of the Church. Again reflecting the encouragement given by Vatican II regarding individual conscience, as well as the "pioneer," individualistic spirit in this country, it is not surprising that the view toward Church authority, or any authority for that matter has changed drastically in the past 20 to 30 years. And so we have the responses of Table VI. The questions are listed in order based on the percentage of respondents choosing option A.

TABLE VI Who Should Have Final Say About Right Or Wrong?  
(Percents)

	A. Church Leaders	B. Indiv- iduals	C. Both	D. Don't Know
Sexual relations outside of marriage	34	42	21	4
A Catholic who engages in homosexual behavior	32	39	19	10
Test-tube babies	30	37	25	8
A Catholic advocating free choice regarding abortion	29	45	22	4
A divorced Catholic remarrying without getting an annulment	23	31	43	4
A Catholic practicing contraceptive birth control	12	62	23	3

Though there is not always a strong difference, it is noteworthy that the highest is almost always — the individual.

The final table (VII) concerns decision making within the Church. The question was stated in such a way because it was meant to be a general question about whether the respondents favored or opposed greater participation of the laity in church affairs involving moral and/or institutional issues (i.e., birth control, ordination of women, etc.). Table VII shows that a majority of the laity think that the Catholic Church should have more democratic decision-making at the local parish level, at the diocesan level, and at the level of the Vatican.

TABLE VII Should the Church Have More Democratic Decision-Making?  
(Percents)

	Favor	Oppose	Unsure
At the local parish level	60	27	13
At the diocesan level	55	28	17
At the Vatican level	51	30	19



We have now a picture of the population of the United States, its multi-cultural composition and its church composition. As we look at the Catholic Church we also see the general attitude of Catholics with regard to some "qualifications of a 'good' Catholic" and their opinion with respect to authority within the Church and the role of the laity in decision-making. It is within this context that we look at CLC in the United States.

But there is still one major ingredient missing, and this might be termed the quality of life. Better words might address the pace of the life in the United States, especially as reflected in the larger metropolitan areas. No longer do we talk about leisure time, but rather "where is the space just to be, to exist, to live, to love God and to praise God in all the almighty glory?" This especially affects the family. No longer do we see a preponderance of a single wage earner, but, of necessity, two wage earners (if in fact, it is a two parent family) just to "make ends meet" to keep up with wants rather than needs.

In all of this business when do people find the time for CLC? It is a horrible inheritance of the first world. To put it briefly: "Let's run, just to keep from falling behind." This does reflect upon the nature of many CLCs among the adults. Where the preponderance of mission was often devoted to one single apostolic project, now we see more often many apostolic programs, each individually, while the community supports in prayer, and less often does the community engage in one program involving all members.

More can be said about the cities of the US - the crime, the violence, the drug situation, racism, and so many other problems. But let us stop here and move on to the presentation of CLC - USA.

Fred C. Leone

## CLC IN THE UNITED STATES \*

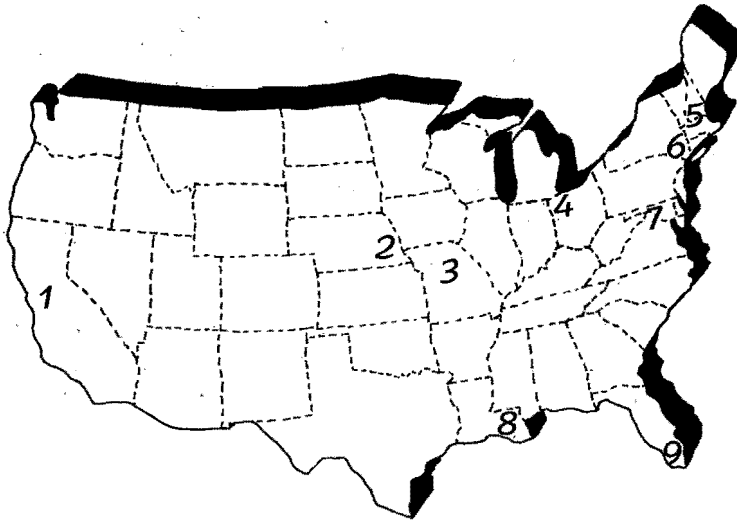
Here we attempt to give a composite view of CLC in the United States. Certainly this should be taken within the context of the vast areas in the States and the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic background of its inhabitants. Unfortunately, like many Catholic lay organizations in this country, the large majority of its membership is white and of European ancestry, and reaching out to minority cultures is a slow process, so that even now there has been hardly any noticeable change (with a few noteworthy exceptions, of course).

We begin by looking at some figures, then briefly at a selection of US CLCs, and more closely at some more recent developments.

The table below indicates the main areas of concentration (nos 1 through 9 on the US map that follows) along with the numbers of different types of affiliated CLCs in each of these areas:

map ref	area	Number of affiliated CLCs		
		parish/interparish	col/uni	highschl
(1)	California (primarily San Francisco Bay area)	5	-	3
(2)	Omaha, Nebraska	6	-	-
(3)	St Louis, Missouri	3	-	-
(4)	Ohio and Michigan (primarily Cleveland, Toledo, Detroit)	7	1	-
(5)	New England	4	-	-
(6)	New York Metropolitan area	7	-	-
(7)	Mid Atlantic Region (including Washington DC, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania)	8	1	1
(8)	New Orleans, Louisiana area	5	-	-
(9)	Miami, Florida area	2	2	-
	Other areas	5	-	-

(\* ) Articles are joint work where no author is indicated.



There may be some discrepancies here, since renewal of affiliations is now in progress. There are also many CLCs that are not, or not yet, affiliated, including 19 college/university and 40 High School groups in the California area, and 3 inter-parish groups each in the Northwest, St Louis and Omaha. These numbers are likely to be an underestimate as information is only now being gathered. We also have about 20 *Diaspora* members (those who have moved away from their CLCs, and who have not yet found a way to develop a new CLC in their new location).

Very few Youth and Young Adult CLCs are presently affiliated, though this is changing, since renewed formation programs were initiated in 1987, and there are approximately 10 adult groups in the process of pre-community and formation.

Let us now take a glimpse at some of the present adult communities.

#### *Women's Community of Leunis CLC*

This was begun by Fr Nick Rieman SJ in 1955. They assist in the establishment of new groups, have sponsored many retreats and engaged in college counseling; they have been guides for college CLC

and have helped establish a Montessori school. They support in each other's mission. Their most important activity has been with the Spiritual Exercises, their source of spirituality and community.

#### *Anawim CLC of Washington, DC*

In Washington there still exist over 50 parish-based Sodalities. Members of this community (though their average age is over 70) have trained to be guides of the Spiritual Exercises and present programs of retreats, days of recollection, etc, based on the Exercises. Individual missions include hospital ministry, community services, prison ministry, sacraments to shut-ins, and numerous parish and community support activities. Some have been hosts and provided live-in support to immigrant families.

#### *New Orleans Federation of CLCs*

With very few members under age 50, they support Jesuit missions, especially to Sri Lanka. They assist in a shelter program and provide financial support for inner city help institutions for the needy. They engage as leaders in many traditional programs of the liturgical year.

#### *Quest for Metanoia (QM) of Omaha*

This CLC has been in existence over twenty years and has developed seven other communities. It has sponsored two National Conventions, regional workshops and retreat days. Several members are actively engaged in spiritual direction and pastoral care. They have developed workbooks for CLC, and have supported each other's ministries. Its mission might be characterized as formation within the local and neighboring communities.

#### *Whisper of God CLC in Maryland*

This is a relatively new community (6 years) with ages ranging from 30 to above 70, though some members have been in CLC (and Sodality) for over 40 years. In the name of NCLC, they have produced responses for the US National Conference of Catholic Bishops, for the Synod on the Laity and the Synod on Priestly Ministry. The community has edited several issues of the CLC publication *Harvest*. A major support is given to individual ministries such as Haitian human rights, the domestic church, working with the homeless, development of a new national

network of Catholic lay organizations, commissions of the WCLC and links with first world CLC communities.

### *Shelby Disciples CLC, Michigan*

This CLC began as a prayer and spiritual renewal group, and met for six years before becoming a CLC in 1987. The members of this community support each other in their individual apostolic endeavors in parishes, prison ministry, visits to senior citizens in nursing homes and at home, recording tapes for the blind, charismatic prayer groups, business ethics programs and other projects. They have a letter writing campaign on justice issues and support two families with alcohol related problems. They have helped develop a new community and provide guides for it.

It could be questioned whether these six communities are typical. But what is a typical community? What they have in common is that all share the centrality of the Spiritual Exercises, all are working in parish and local community programs, all occasionally enter into a single apostolate, but more often in support of each other's individual expression of mission. Though not mentioned earlier, there is very deep and spiritual sharing which is an essential part of most adult CLC meetings.

### **New Frontiers:**

#### **Trailblazing in the Great Northwest (S Swanke RSM/L Gooley SJ)**

There is a new team blazing along the Oregon Coast and the Great Northwest: Sylvia Swanke RSM and Larry Gooley SJ, with always the Spirit of God leading the way. Relying on the movement of the Spirit, Sylvia and Larry move throughout the Northwest region bringing the good news of Christian Life Communities.

CLC Northwest began in the fall of 1987, initiated by the Oregon Province Jesuit Provincial, Fr Frank Case SJ.

The first steps were toward promotion of CLC throughout the Province. Sylvia and Larry travelled to the three major cities in the Northwest, namely Seattle and Spokane, Washington and Portland,

Oregon, to introduce CLC to laity and Jesuits alike. After this we began forming communities. The communities came out of evenings of information and personal contacts with people interested in faith community. We are now in our fourth year of developing communities here in the Northwest. There are currently twelve, with more waiting to begin.

In moving with this adventure, Sylvia and Larry have chosen to work as a team. When one is on the trail, it is easy to get lost or move on without noticing potential danger. It is our feeling that, by working as a team, we are able to discern more easily the movements of the Spirit in our work with the various folks in the communities.

Until recently we both attended each meeting. One acted as coordinator and the other as member-observer. Both before and after meetings we dialogue about the process, the movements within the community, and our roles as leaders. Because of the growth in the number of communities, however, as well as the growth that is happening within each community, we now find it necessary (and advisable) to hand over the leadership to a number of communities.

Our process is to offer five initial meetings in which we present the basic concepts of CLC and faith-sharing to a new group. At the sixth meeting we ask each person to share with the group if s/he wants to continue CLC as part of their faith journey. Those who wish to continue do so, and those who feel that it is not for them withdraw with a blessing.

Following the sixth meeting, we not only continue to develop the communities' experiences of CLC, but we also begin inviting members to lead different parts of the meetings. As soon as we can, usually within the first year, we prepare members to lead an entire meeting. We then review with them afterwards how that meeting went and prepare another member to lead the next meeting. This results in our attending every other meeting until the community is able to take over the leadership entirely. At that point we become its guide, attending occasionally. Members are also starting to begin new communities on their own.

Most members are Catholic, although there is one community from an Episcopal parish, with another Episcopal parish waiting to begin a community. It is our hope that out of the various community clusters, local CLC promoters will emerge with whom we will plan and offer a variety of support.

*What has made CLC get off to such a strong start is the strong commitment and support that the Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus has offered from the beginning.*

It is our experience that many folks are looking for a community of faith in which to share their spiritual journey, to be challenged and to challenge society to Gospel living. It is just such folks that we continue to look for in sharing the CLC way of life as we continue to blaze trails around the Pacific Northwest of the United States.

### **Stanford University as a Model of CLC on College and University Campuses** (Shane Martin SJ)

The CLC program at Stanford University at Palo Alto, California is a good example of what is going on in the Youth and Young Adult movement, particularly at the college and university level. There has been a strong college-age CLC in Miami, Florida, for many years, under the leadership of Fr Bill Kidwell SJ. While this excellent program has drawn students from a number of campuses, the program at Stanford is campus-based, responding to a great need for campus-based CLCs on the post-secondary level. It is interesting to note the qualities of the growing college movement, as exemplified by Stanford.

First, the program at Stanford is new and the members are enthusiastic. A year ago there were no CLC groups here; this year there are seven. Other campuses in California have also seen rapid growth.

Secondly, the groups at Stanford are very committed. They have decided to meet weekly, and members describe the CLC meeting as one of the highlights of their week.

Another characteristic of the program has been good, solid and on-going formation of members and leaders. The program started when Fr Russ Roide SJ, the Catholic Chaplain, and Bill Behrman, Campus Ministry Assistant, contacted Shane Martin SJ of the National Youth and Young Adult Formation Team, about starting CLC on campus. The Formation Team had been training to provide such on-going formation, and this was its opportunity. Students were invited to attend a three-meeting introductory cycle, given by Shane to introduce the CLC Way of Life, and to reflect on whether they were called to CLC. Four groups were formed from those who returned the following week.

The Formation Team has been able to provide on-going formation, and ten Stanford students attended the National Formation Meeting in November 1991. A second introductory cycle was held after a few months. This resulted in three additional groups. The leaders meet with Fr Russ, Bill and Shane regularly to discuss issues that arise in the group and to learn more about Ignatian Spirituality. *In evaluating the success at Stanford, it is clear that on-going Formation is key to an authentic CLC.*

A very significant aspect of the Stanford program is student leadership. Potential leaders were identified and given initial training to lead meetings. Each group has two or three who prepare the agenda and lead the meeting. These CLCs use the new Canadian Formation Guide - Phase I and Phase II, which has proven to be an excellent resource for college-age CLCs. The students claim ownership of this program at a deep level. Decision-making is done by a group discernment and not imposed by the Guide. The Guide and Formation Team are there to offer suggestions, to give advice when asked, and provide periodic instruction in Ignatian Spirituality. The students have responded positively to this type of structure. One student commented that being in CLC was the first time that she felt treated as an adult by the Church.

A final characteristic of the Stanford CLC program is that these groups are Ignatian — communities which are formed in Ignatian Spirituality for Mission. While the community aspect of the group is evident from their social gatherings, the hallmark of this program has been the students' desire for, understanding of, and use of Ignatian Spirituality. The Awareness Examen is a common group prayer.



Meetings consist of prayer, faith sharing and reflection on where God might be calling them in their daily lives as university students.

Stanford is a private school and the climate on campus is not overly supportive of religion. Many of the members have to explain to roommates and friends what they are doing in a CLC group, and some are teased for their involvement. All this is in the context of US society which has been described as materialistic and narcissistic. CLC helps these college students challenge the mainstream values in US society and their college campus which are often counter to Christian values, enabling them also to help each other process their experiences of God's call and activity in their daily living.

Numerous students find Ignatian Spirituality to be the answer to many years of searching for a spiritual practice that has meaning. As one student said, "I've tried *Campus Crusade for Christ*, and *Inter-Varsity Council*. They made me feel very bad about myself, that I wasn't good enough or holy enough. CLC accepts me as I am and tells me that I don't have to discard my personality and become someone else, because God works through my daily life. I really feel the support of my CLC group. I've been looking for something like this for a long time."

The Christian Life Communities at Stanford are a wonderful place to see the potential of CLC realized, and the program has made a significant impact in the Stanford Catholic community. As all members of CLC seek their various vocations, Stanford offers the hope and enthusiasm of youth. CLC makes a difference to young people and offers them – and all of us – a Way of Life.

### **Formation: St Louis Nicholas Owen CLC 'Bridges' Program**

This program was adapted from the International Formation Program first experienced in Manila, The Philippines in 1976. The Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life, basic elements of discernment, reflection time, faith sharing and insertion experiences were all part of *Bridges* during those first years of its development at the CLC National Center in St Louis.

With the closing of the Center the program was suspended for three years, but in 1988 Marie Schimelfening was hired by the Missouri Province of the Society of Jesus to work on promoting CLC. Though her term lasted less than a year, it became very clear to her and the leaders she convened that if CLC was to be developed and sustained in this area, the Spiritual Exercises must be an essential ingredient.

Thus the *Bridges* Program was reestablished and adapted to the time available to very busy people. While the insertion experience is no longer part of the program, the Spiritual Exercises and faith-sharing aspects are still intact. Retreatants meet weekly with their director, and all participants come together for input, prayer and sharing.

It was a grace that Joan and Jim Felling returned to St Louis upon retiring from their educational positions in Canada, having shared for some time in Bishop De Roo's vision of training laypeople for spiritual direction. Once in St Louis, they joined Marie Schimelfening and Bob Johnston SJ in the Nicholas Owen CLC and continued their dream.

In 1989-90 a total of seventeen people completed the Spiritual Exercises through *Bridges*. In 1990-91, there were thirty. Now in 1991-92, forty-four people are well on their way to completing the Exercises in May, and a possible three CLCs are emerging. This year a Phase II program was started to help people appreciate and assimilate the Exercises, and for some of these lay folks to begin training to direct the Exercises.

It is clear that there are fine programs available. What they need is a rediscovery, a modification perhaps, but especially the people who are capable and willing to devote much time in prayer and sacrifice and to pass on the good news.

### **The Transition to CLC - Attempts to Develop a Sound Formation Program** (Marie Schimelfening)

**1967 - Transition from Sodality to Christian Life Community.** It was difficult for many members to let go of the old structure. In order to

take care of both the old and the new, we chose initially to keep the old name and insert the new, which then read Sodality/CLC. In retrospect, we did not take the time nor allow the creativity needed to initiate a solid formation period.

**1968** - While our country is very large, our CLC Movement is not. Most of our communities then and now are located in the east, mid-west and west. The distances in between are vast. It makes it very difficult for all of our membership to gather even biannually. During this year a form of regionalization was adopted; this was a great help in communications in the next ten-year period.

The country was divided into 13 regions. Each region selected one representative on the Board of Directors (later called the Leadership Community). With this representation came a good focus on the needs of each area. At that time Formation was first and foremost on the list of regional needs.

**1975-1978** - A new formation program was written by a team of six members. This program covered the main aspects of the CLC Way of Life, namely, Spirituality, Community and Mission. Once the program was written and tested by communities at various levels, it was further realized that the team needed to develop a leadership training program. This would offer the opportunity of introducing the formation process to leaders around the country. Indeed, this was no small task. The program was developed so as to reach each of the 13 regions three times a year, and to observe their progress. The most important part of this development was the evaluation process that became a part of the program.

**1976** - While the Formation Program was being developed, it was not until the International Assembly and Formation Programs in Manila that we had a better understanding of Community for Mission. This part of the overall program was rewritten and incorporated into our entire formation program. It was not an addendum, nor a new section, but a major part. On the National level, 1976 was truly a turning point in growth and maturity. More significantly, it was the time for our leadership to bring the reality of an International Movement to the membership in the United States.

**The early 1980s** - these years saw our movement growing and in need of a new structure that would reflect who we were, but also challenge us to spiritual and numerical growth. This new structure was called "Our Way of Being Together." Our Leadership Community of seventeen members was reduced to seven and designated the Executive Council (ExCo), consistent with the designation at the world level. This new structure would allow the entire membership more input toward the growth of the USA movement. So there was formed a Delegate Assembly which would meet once a year with focus on Vision, Mission and Values of the CLC Movement.

Many goals were established and methods for implementation were put into motion in this "Way of Being Together." However, too few goals were met because of the continual rotation of delegates who were not well versed in the purpose of the new structure, nor aware of its necessity. During this time of focusing on a new structure, CLC Formation was somehow lost or not well understood - that formation as described in the *General Principles*.

**1982** - We had the privilege of a visit from Ms José Gsell, Executive Secretary and Patrick O'Sullivan SJ, Vice-Ecclesial Assistant from the World CLC Office. They presented to forty leaders from the US and Canada the International Guides Course, which was developed by the International Movement after many months of work and reflection on what was needed for the growth of the Movement. This was another turning point for future development in the US. From this experience five leaders were asked to become a National Formation Team and begin to bring the Guides Course to leaders in the US Movement. Over the next five years the Guides Course was presented to about 100 leaders.

The Guides Course gave us the start we needed in getting back to the roots of our Way of Life, and awakened again the need for solid formation of the membership. This also gave us an insight into two other areas of need, namely, (1) the involvement of the entire membership in a deeper understanding and reflection of our Ignatian roots and (2) the necessity of focusing on the many aspects of building a CLC by providing some leadership skills for each community. The two

new programs to focus on these areas were *Shared Reflections* and *Leadership Training*.

We had the talent and the visionaries to help us focus on our growth in the CLC Way of Life. But we did not focus long enough on any particular program to really make it work well. There was always something new and different that we wanted to try. Our diverse cultures also impacted upon our efforts.

Today what is truly lacking is a National Formation Team whose responsibility would be twofold: first, to oversee the continuing formation of CLC guides throughout the country and second, to help in the initiation of CLC in new areas of the country. Though this is happening in a few areas, it has yet to be coordinated at a national level. The question and challenge for us collectively, as leaders, is to see this aspect of our development and growth, CLC formation, as of primary importance.

## HOPE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE U.S. CLC

The 1991 US National Convention seems to have been a major event, full of promise for the US CLC. From an article by Lois Campbell and Dan LeBrun, we have selected this analysis of the US CLC at the eve of the convention:

### **“ The Movement Towards Convention ‘91**

It is difficult to talk about the 1991 US National CLC Convention except in the context of our entire history of renewal since 1967. Full explanation of that context would be a nearly overwhelming task and go far beyond the scope of this article. Still, we do want to draw a few broad strokes. For it is this history which led us to a critical Delegate Assembly (a meeting of delegates from each CLC community) in July of 1990, with the mandate to bring its message to the national CLC movement at our 1991 National Convention.

Renewal in the US Federation of Christian Life Communities had all the excitement and pain of renewal in the wider church. We found great diversity in our experience of Sodality and CLC. Many long term, committed Sodality members had little knowledge and experience of the Exercises and the threefold charism of CLC. In the transition from Sodality to CLC, our membership diminished sharply. Over the years, we:

- developed formation programs;
- devised ways to encourage the experience of the spirituality;
- worked to bring the vision and decisions of the world movement to our national membership;
- struggled - and continue struggling to this day - to answer a call to mission and work for the poor in one of the world's most affluent societies;

- changed our structure and style of decision-making to better reflect our charism;
- battled to establish a viable national federation against the odds of little money and a smaller, though very committed, membership spread across a huge country. Change was dramatic and rapid. National and regional leaders gave great time, energy, and money to further the movement, encourage formation, and promote the growth of CLCs. For years a relatively small number of very committed CLC leaders and members worked to support a national structure and formation programs. While our geographical size made it costly to meet, our diverse CLC experience made understanding each other a "challenge."

As the 1990 Delegate Assembly (DA) approached, several realities became clear. On one hand, the understanding and experience of the CLC charism was growing; many local communities were strong and some new communities were forming around the country. But on the other hand we held a national movement still poor; one unable to support the national structure and formation experiences which the DA believed would further the growth of CLC in the USA. Commitment to the national movement was weakening and some strong former leaders were less involved or gone altogether."

How was the Convention? The theme was "*Discerning Hearts for Servant Hands*". The following is some of what Mary Ann Connor reported on the National Convention:

"Rereading the major addresses of the August convention, reviewing the excellent workshops, seriously contemplating the proposals accepted by the Delegate Assembly, (voting delegates from each affiliated community) six months later, I was truly filled again. NCLC has matured to the fine point of understanding better who we are, what we are about with all our blemishes and beauty. In August we affirmed support of CLC Youth as we see high school graduates going into college asking for CLC; and college graduates entering the "real world" looking for communities where they may share their struggle and discern how to serve the Lord.

The NCLC Executive Council accepted the mandate to formulate a realistic, workable 5-year plan for Formation. I believe that NCLC faced the reality of our diversity, geographical distances and fiscal responsibility. We saw our need to rebuild from the bottom up and to renew enthusiasm in our geographical regions (clusters of communities in the same area). We decided to hold one-to-two day Formation Conferences in each cluster or region, rather than a single, national Delegate Assembly as in the past.

US NCLC's Winter 1992 issue of *Harvest* (our quarterly journal) reprinted the 1991 convention keynote addresses plus reviews of some of the workshops. What a gift! I was urged again by Lois Campbell to "name and accept our reality and move toward mission, to learn from each other, to realize *Now is the Kingdom. Now is the Day.*" She invited us to understand the world as "shot through with the presence of God!" We listened in August, and I heard with greater clarity Jim Borbeley SJ's address "Consolation and Desolation: Its Impact on Mission". He reminded us of our first mission in life: *Let God love us and simply witness to this truth; work with God, don't get in the way! To me he said, Sit still, be still; let God love you, be filled, then spill out in loving service.*

José Reyes' plenary address remains a high-light for all of us. He reflected on recent developments in WCLC as well as the good level of development of the three classic elements of our identity - Spirituality, Community and Mission - always giving primacy to Mission. He spoke eloquently of our dream to plant, and water the seeds of charism everywhere; the call of Christ from within the world; response to the revelation of God's will through the events of our times: building up community even in the midst of difficulties and failures. Quoting the *General Principles*, he reminded us of who we are - Christians working with Jesus in "building the kingdom", announcers of the Good News, speakers of the "things of God" with *all* people - always being especially sensitive and responsive to the poor - all this our mission ... and beyond! In one workshop Betty Leone described our social analysis plus Ignatian discernment as resulting in apostolic action - and this determines the *beyond.*"

Looking to the future of US CLC in the light of these exchanges and insights, Dan and Lois offer us the following evaluation:



“Defining the convention result or learning is most difficult. While it is tempting to say that much was accomplished and the convention aims were met, only time will tell. It is safe to say that most who were there found vital nourishment and brought home a renewed optimism about the CLC movement in the US.

As for the US National Christian Life Community, we can reflect on the gains made or graces received, and pray they will be lasting. Written comments about it, in the Winter 1991 issue of the US quarterly *Harvest*, may give an initial indication of the '91 Convention's long-term influence.

The President-Elect couple observe:

“We found CLC on the brink of a real maturity, aware of our realities, yet willing to work through our problems and stand with each other. CLC has grown up and come of age. But now the work of adults begins. José Reyes said it all: we need to *struggle to build a missionary community from our sources.*”

A similar note is sounded by the new US Ecclesial Assistant:

“We are indeed all sinners and we will continue to be so. We also need healing, but we cannot wait for that ideal moment when all differences are resolved and all healing is completed before we move toward mission. It is valuable, as Lois (Campbell) suggested, to name the reality and not get stuck there. It is far more important for CLC to move on to mission.”

Yet the *Harvest* issue editor poses a critical question as we travel into the future:

“I feel we are on the right road; but - and there is a but - I wonder if we have all agreed yet on whether to make this particular journey... The theme of the convention was discernment for mission; yet some US CLCers are not yet comfortable with a mission-oriented spirituality.”

After giving evidence of the latter, he goes on to site the havoc caused by an expanding global population, a bloody war over oil reserves, the massive leveling of tropical forests, the extinction of living species, and the continued diminishing capacity of our planet to support its remaining varieties of life in ways not reversible in our lifetime. He then asks: *What have we discerning, Ignatian-based Christians and builders of the Kingdom had to say about it?*

It is a compelling question. Did Convention '91 provide a new or improved basis for the kind of discernment that enables us to answer and spurs us to mission? Once we *see*, will we *do*? Can we, must we, let go and let God?

We have repeatedly experienced in national and local CLC a quite fragile capacity to carry forward what we decide. We have so much energy and dream power; then, as we return to our far-flung cities, these are hard to regain and bring forward. How well did we bring home Convention '91? Indeed, only time will tell."

We give the last word to Fred Leone, editor of *Harvest*, who has given CLC a lifetime of service:

"The past 25 years have always been a time of hope, but not free of many disappointments. During this time we have suffered two traumatic, almost totally disabling financial crises. But we survived. Perhaps these were in God's plan; perhaps we have been too fractured to perceive this. We have our visionaries, we have our workers - all committed to Christ and to spreading his Good News.

The future has much potential - in emerging communities, in a resurgence of youth; but, not without pain. If we are willing to help carry His burden, if we are willing to get up after a fall, if we are willing to accept God's love, CLC in the United States will be here long after most of us are gone to the Great Beyond.

A key to growth, as stated in several of the articles, is an on-going formation program, a formation program for mission and the training of

guides and coordinators. Essential is the faithful adherence to the revised *General Principles*, accepted by the World Assembly in 1990.

But we cannot take this route alone. We need you fellow CLC members across the world. We need you to be our critics, our supporters, our teachers, our guides. In the final accounting what we do affects not only ourselves in our nation but so many others, even if in a remote way. For you are our sisters and brothers in CLC and we want to learn from you.”

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16. My "Grand" Father *Barbara Bedolla*
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**INDIA:** For the first time a course was conducted for CLC Guides in the Diocese of *Raiganj*. The participants came from 11 parishes.

The CLC in *Hyderabad* was very happy to have a visit from Fr Alwyn Fernandes SJ, the Indian CLC Vice-Eccl. Assistant. They have been starting quite a few new groups there lately.

In the Diocese of *Bihar*, CLC members have organised a peaceful campaign against the Government's plans to build a dam without regard for the effect on the local people. They are prepared for a struggle, and ask for support in prayer.

In the Diocese of *Ranchi* a very successful rally was organised on the theme "Evangelisation 2000".

In *Sambalpur* Diocese the traditional CLC Rally was held on 21st and 22nd March 1992 with great success. The theme was "Christian Life 2000". The main purposes of organising such a rally are: to foster unity amongst the Catholics of various parishes; to enable the people to deepen their knowledge of the Bible; to enrich and renew their faith in the Gospel; to develop sound attitudes towards community-building; to provide opportunities for public speaking and thereby to develop lay leaders; to create awareness among the people about what is going on in the church today.

**BRAZIL:** The Latin American CLC Meeting is to be held in Rio de Janeiro from 5th to 12th July 1992. Countries having already announced their participation are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. Other countries invited are: Chile, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico and Venezuela. Currently *Progressio* has no information as to whether they will be able to attend.

**ENGLAND and WALES:** met for their National Assembly from 8th to 19th May in Liverpool. It took as its theme "A Faith That Does Justice"

with the aim of focusing on their own life experiences, looking at what lies behind those experiences and asking what their faith has to say about the situation they find themselves in. Fr Julian Elizalde SJ was invited and took part in the meeting.

*FRANCE:* We hear that CLC-France experienced a 70% growth between 1987 and 1991 and today has 3000 members. This has also led to a marked rejuvenation, the average age having shifted from 45 to 38, and the under-thirties now representing a third of the community. Youth CLC has been constantly growing since 1985. In a spirit of unity, it has become fully a part of the National Community, thus its members are now just "young people in CLC". Responsibility will be given to a "Youth Commission" so that regard for individual differences be maintained.

*GERMANY:* held their National Assembly from 30th April to 3rd May at the CLC Hostel in Waldkirch. The theme of the meeting was "CLC Germany - World CLC: Reality and Prospects" and the spiritual theme "living stones making a spiritual house" (cf Pet 2:3). This biblical picture characterises very well the main emphasis of this year's meeting.

*ITALY:* held their National Assembly this year in Assisi from 30th April to 3rd May. The theme was "The Ethics of Work". About 500 CLCers were present, amongst them as guests Julian Elizalde SJ and Roswitha Cooper from the World Secretariat, who were very much impressed by the vitality and good spirit of Italian CLC and the participation of many young people.

*PORTUGAL:* held their third National Assembly from 27th to 29th March in Fatima. The theme was Vocation and Mission in CLC. 110 participants, including José Maria Riera Mas from the World ExCo, were reflecting on the following three main issues: CLC Spirituality and Mission; Challenges of Portuguese Society Today; Commitment in CLC. They were aware of being still very much on the beginning of the road, but they are listening to the Lord and they are full of hope.

*WORLD SECRETARIAT:* We have been happy to receive the following visitors over the last few months:

- \* A group of 20 friends from Slovenia, who gave us a very lively picture of their life and of the Slovenian Church;
- \* Josefina Errázuriz from Chile, whom many of you know from her service on the World Executive Council, and also through several articles in *Progressio*. Josefina was in Rome for the Plenary Assembly of the Council for the Laity of which she is a member;
- \* Maria Clara Lucchetti Bingemer, Vice-President of our community, who came from Rio de Janeiro, for a meeting of SEDOS in Villa Cavalletti;
- \* Paul and Michèle Schmid, joint Presidents of CLC Switzerland, who came for a few days' holiday in Rome, and told us a lot about CLC life in their country;
- \* Marie and Graham Willington from the CLC Community of England and Wales, with whom we were able to celebrate the Eucharist and pray for the rest of our World Community;
- \* Fr A.X.J. Bosco SJ, Provincial of Andhra Jesuit Province, who gave us a very lively picture of the new groups starting in his Province;
- \* Fr Desmond D'Monte SJ, Eccl. Assistant for CLC in Bombay Diocese, whose vivid conversation made us feel we had actually visited CLC groups there;
- \* Fr P Schineller SJ, Mission Superior of Nigeria and Ghana, who is interested in having CLC groups there;
- \* Fr Michael Buckley SJ of Boston College, USA, who has a great interest in the promotion of CLC, especially in the universities of his country.

A Meeting of the Pontifical Council for the Laity with the Associations of the Faithful was held in Rocca di Papa, near Rome, from 10th to 14th May. Roswitha Cooper, the Executive Secretary, attended as World CLC delegate. There will be more about this meeting and also about the Pontifical Council for the Laity, this precious gift of the Holy See to the Laity after Vatican II, in the next *Progressio*, which will be a double issue.

Because you are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt mercy, with kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you. Over all these virtues put on love, which binds the rest together, and makes them perfect. Christ's peace must reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace. Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness. Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. In wisdom made perfect, instruct and admonish one another. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns and inspired songs. Whatever you do, whether in speech or in action, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through him.

Col 3:12-17

From the readings for Thanksgiving Day