

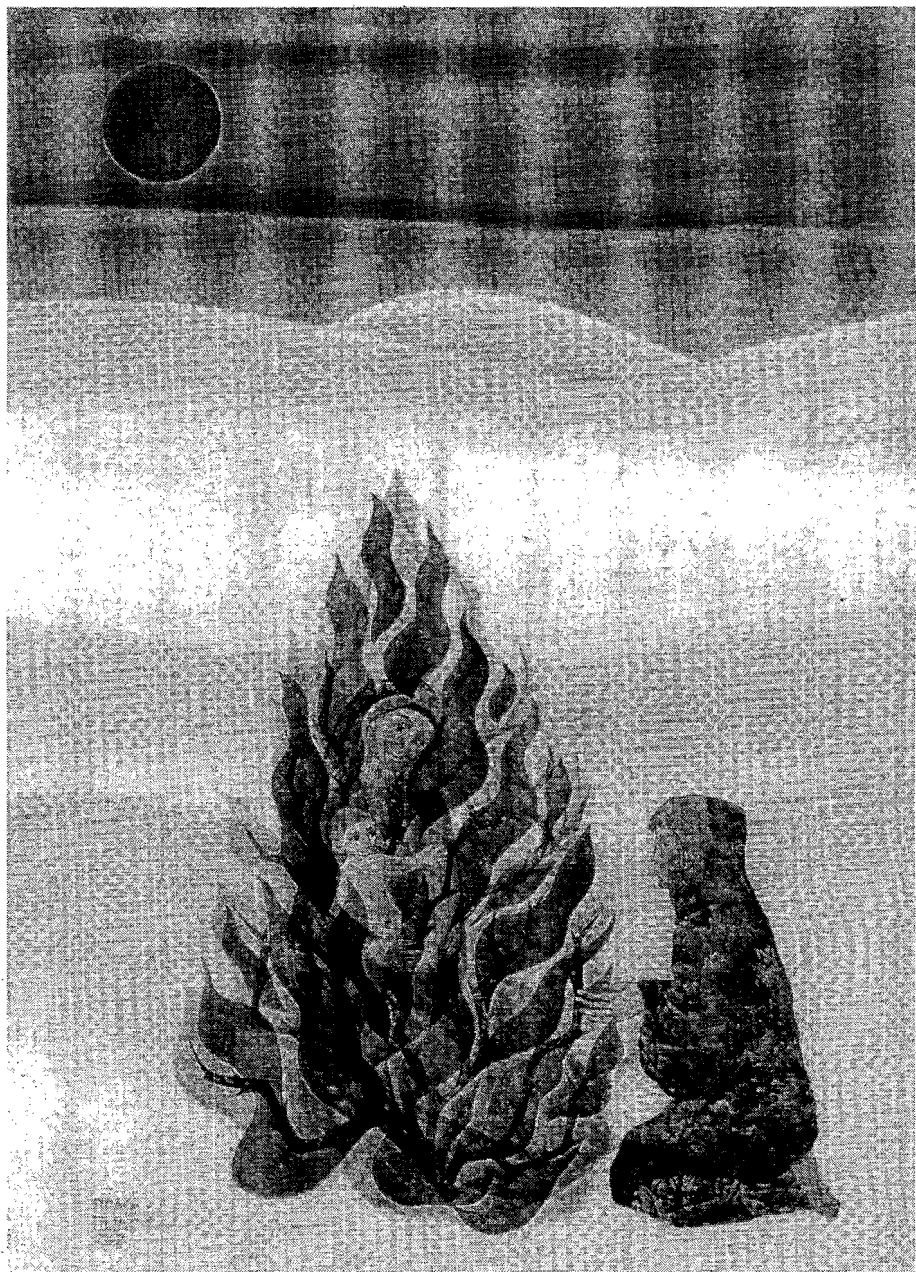


PROGRESSIO

CONTENTS

1994	Fire and Water	
N° 1	Willi Lambert, SJ	2
	Our Father, Who Art in Heaven....	
	Alvaro Diaz	7
	The Jesuit Refugee Service	
	Mark Raper, SJ	12
	All I want is Him....	
	Patrick O'Sullivan, SJ	16
	Malta, the World Forum of the Family	
	José María and Aurora Camps Riera	19
	A CLC Family	
	José María and Aurora Camps Riera	23
	Born to New Life in Jesus Christ	
	Joseph Grieboski and Louis Lau Kin Hei	25
	Echoes...Echoes...Echoes...	28

PUBLICATION OF THE WORLD CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY
C.P. 6139 - (Borgo Santo Spirito 8) - 00195 Rome-ITALY
English-Spanish-French Editions
Editor: Roswitha Cooper



Fire and water

Reflections on the theme for the World
Assembly – Hong Kong '94:

*“I have come to bring fire to the earth,
and how I wish it were blazing already!”*

Over the years, CLC in Germany unknowingly has been preparing for the World Assembly with a fitting song, which freely translated from the German means: “I came to set the earth on fire, and I only have one wish – that it may burn” (cf. Lk 12:49). We are glad that this Gospel verse has been chosen as the theme for the World Assembly in Hong Kong '94. During our National Executive Council meeting last September, we meditated with this Gospel passage and shared with one another our thoughts and reflections on it. I would now like to share some of these thoughts and reflections with you.

I have come to bring fire to the earth...

Traditionally, the gentle traits of Jesus prevail in the Gospels. In this way, Jesus is always kind, calm, merciful and tender. But is it not also true that he could be “hot-headed?” Doesn't he at times express anger? *He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart...* (Mk 3:5). Jesus was angry with the people for putting the law

above human beings. At another point, he is outraged at those who made the temple, the house of prayer, a den of robbers (cf. Mk 11:15-19).

Jesus demarcates himself distinctly by saying, “Truly I tell you...” (cf. Mt 5) as he announces the Beatitudes, but he also knows the “Woe to you....” Jesus proclaims the Gospel, the Good News, but, while preaching the Father's all-encompassing love, he also

speaks of final justice in the Last Judgment.

Jesus can be both gentle and "fiery." As he continues moving forward and spreading the Good News, he seems to have fire burning under his feet. Even when people ask him to stay, he says to them: *I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also...* (Lk 4:43).

St. Paul, also a "hot-headed" person with a fiery heart, knows about being motivated and enticed into action, for he writes: "The love of Christ impels us..." Love urges us, and it will grow because love desires to grow more and more. With this understanding, the "Magis" that was the driving force behind St. Ignatius now becomes clear.

Love is fire. Love desires to give itself away. Love cannot stand still and say: "I have loved enough for now." Love is universal, cosmic, infinite, and eternal.

For he is like a refiner's fire... (Mal 3:2)

Purification through fire is one of the great pictures of all religions and faiths. This is beautifully expressed by the prophet Malachi

in the following vivid picture: *But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver...* (Mal 3:2-3).

God is this way in our lives. God comes like fire to purify. This hurts. But isn't it true that love can sometimes hurt? Is love always to be yielding? Does it save us from pain, or does it burn like fire for the sake of the growth of love?

There is a beautiful interpretation of the above passage from Malachi which shows how purification through fire takes place and for which aim it occurs. The interpretation begins with a reader of the Bible, who was deeply touched by the imagery in Malachi. The reader was told by a gold and silversmith that the reality is precisely as Malachi describes it: The smith sits down, looks through a little opening to see whether it is time to take the gold out of the fire; this moment has come when the smith can recognize his face in the melting mass.

At once the reader began to understand: God, the "melter," sits down and looks upon creation

until he sees his countenance, the face of Jesus Christ, reflected therein. This means that one is purified through the fire of God. Intellect, soul and body should be in constant change until the countenance of divine love is molded in us more distinctively.

All of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit (2 Co 3:18).

Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven?

Fire is able to purify, but fire can also destroy. It is difficult to distinguish between the fire of the Holy Spirit and the fiery zeal of fanaticism. Jesus differentiates the two in one Gospel account when his disciples, who were looking for accommodations in a Samaritan village, looked in vain because the village refused to receive them. The disciples' reaction is recorded with the following words: "When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, 'Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them'" (Lk 9:54)? How does Jesus react, since he – thinking of the Good Samaritan – occasionally presents

the Samaritans as an example? Jesus' response is recorded as follows: "But he turned and rebuked them. Then they went on to another village" (Lk 9:55,56).

What some of the old text variants are adding to this Gospel text is very informative. Some text variants show the disciples referring to Elijah: "Shall we, like the prophet Elijah, let fire fall down on the idolaters to destroy them?" To this Jesus replies, according to some old text witnesses: "You do not know what kind of spirit speaks through you. The Son of Man did not come to destroy men, but to save them" (Lk 9:55).

It is dangerous when children play with matches, yet it is more dangerous when adults play with highly sophisticated and explosive materials. It is dangerous when believers and unbelievers, religious and political fanatics, play with fire. There are a lot of examples with which we can describe this danger. We can speak of those who burned books and heretics, the so-called "holy wars," the "fire and sword," "politics of the burnt earth," etc. These examples reveal how much impatient, fiery zeal has destroyed people in the name of God, idols, utopian ideas and rights.

“Do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven – You do not know what kind of spirit speaks through you.”

Impatience and overeagerness has been wearing and tiring out some of the Lord's disciples, especially the overzealous ones. The pastoral needs are great, but the laborers are few (cf. Mt 9:37)! Indeed, some are driven by the need to do this...to do that..., and at the end they become burned-out. Those who wanted to bring the fire of faith, hope and love are burned-out. How can disciples such as these set the world ablaze?

Burning Waters – Silent Fires

When we speak of opposites such as “fire and water,” we mean that some things do not go together or that people do not get along with one another (e.g. “like cats and dogs”). However, the biblical fire text of Jesus, who has fire in himself, uncovers an unbelievable surprise. Jesus brings fire and water together: *I have come to bring **fire** to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already! There is a **baptism** I must still receive, and how great is my distress till it is over* (Lk 12:49-50)!

The fire of life, the fire of love, which burns in Jesus must go through the baptism of death. At this point it becomes evident that death and “many waters” cannot quench love...(cf. Song 8:7). In Christ both fire and water are one. Jesus is the ardor of love and the source of life; in him gentleness and wrath, mercy and justice, strength and tenderness, water and fire are united.

Christ is the burning-bush of God: “though on fire it was not consumed” (cf. Ex 3:2). He is the new “Elijah,” in whom fire and water, prophetic word and silence of the heart are one. It is said in the Old Testament that, *Elijah arose, a prophet like fire, and his word burned like a torch* (Sir 48:1).

However, Elijah first had to learn that God is not only in fire, storm and flood, but also, and perhaps more so, God is present in the simplest whispering sound (cf. 1 K 19:11-12). Jesus, too, had to go through many fires and waters before he became the burning-bush and the silent fire of God. His silent, fiery love urges and entices us to continue to sing: “Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful; and kindle in them the fire of your love.”

- Willi Lambert, SJ

Our Father, Who Art In Heaven

The following article has been written by Alvaro Diaz. He is thirty-six years old and works as a medical doctor in his home town, Gijón, Spain. Alvaro is married to Maria Jesus Fanjul, who works as a social worker. They have two children, 10 and 7 years of age. Alvaro and Maria have been members of CLC for nine years. They belong to the "Vanguardia" group, which is well-known in their country, and they have been presidents of this group for four years. They also lead groups of young people.

The central theme of the World Assemblies in Loyola '86 and Guadalupe '90 was Mission. In Hong Kong '94, we will turn our attention to the field where this mission is carried out. This field "extends both to the Church and the world, in order to bring the gospel of salvation to all people" (GP 8).

You are invited to make this contemplation following the Lord's Prayer, by which we identify ourselves as Christ's disciples.

We call God **Our Father**, but fraternal love among human beings, is far from being a reality. The reason for this is that the

principle connection among people and nations is not so much fraternal love as it is business interest. Thus, instead of sharing the planet's limited resources, these become the objects of commerce, and only a few privileged ones have access to them.

Wars go on in the name of God. In recent months the conflict in the former Yugoslavia has, once again, shaken our consciences and given evidence to the cynicism and double talk of Europe and North America. Unfortunately, Bosnia is not the only country where **God's name**, instead of being **hallowed**, is utilized in the battle fields. In many countries terrorism, responsible for

hundreds of innocent victims, tries to justify itself in the name of religious fundamentalism and fanaticism.

Neither love nor peace, signs of the **coming of the Kingdom**, are fully present in today's world. Justice, for that matter, is not either. The fall of communist regimes, far from fostering a greater solidarity among nations, has left capitalism and the market economy as the predominant method and accelerated the widening of the distance between the rich and poor. The gap between north and south is increasing dramatically. Even within the so called "rich countries," the social inequalities are growing and many sectors of the population (i.e. the youth, unemployed, immigrants, etc.) are being marginalized. This shows the failure of a system based on competition and not solidarity.

The **earth**, the **heavens** and the sea, which were designed by the creative **will** of God, are being excessively exploited by humankind. The countries more keenly aware of the need to protect nature are precisely the ones whose environment is more deteriorated. Some countries look with mistrust at requests to limit

the exploitation of their natural resources, while no other alternatives are being offered to further their development.

What about our **daily bread**? Unfortunately, hunger only makes headlines when the number of people about to die are millions more than usual. There is also the hunger for education and freedom in countries whose governments are dictatorial, or where ethnic, religious or cultural minorities are marginalized.

Forgiving those who have wronged us is not a common practice in our society where the mass media, especially television, presents violence as the way to solve conflicts.

Many Christians who are aware of this situation have fallen into the temptation, often cleverly presented, of withdrawing within themselves and practicing their religion within the limited world of their private lives. By doing so, they neutralize the potential of the Good News to transform society.

While contemplating the situation of today's world, we cannot ignore some new evils that recently have come into being (i.e. drugs, terrorism, corruption and racism

among others), which we have been unable to get rid of.

Looking at the world from this perspective, there would be no room for optimism unless we could also see signs of God's active presence. God is at work around us not just through Christians but also through all men and women of good will who work for peace and development, justice and love, and freedom and dignity for all (GP 2).

The following are some of these signs:

- Progress is being made to find a peaceful solution to such conflicts as those in the Middle East and South Africa. Despite all the difficulties, a new light of hope shines in these regions which for decades have seen so much violence.
- The number of movements in favor of the marginalized (i.e. drug addicts, immigrants, refugees) and in favor of solidarity with exploited countries is increasing. The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), in which many CLC members are very involved, offer a significant contribution and

play an important role in awakening consciences and denouncing inequalities.

- A very valuable achievement of our times is the recognition of women's rights and their rightful access to all sectors of society, even though progress in this direction remains very slow in most countries.
- People are becoming increasingly aware of their own culture's value. To balance the expansionist drive of some cultures, fostered by the mass media, more and more movements for the protection of native cultures and traditions have come into being. The Church is making a greater effort to find authentic cultural expressions for Evangelization, questioning the cultural models used for centuries and trying to adopt the traditions and rites of each people in her pastoral work and liturgical expressions.
- The value for human rights is being recognized by an increasing number of people. However, this is precisely one of the most obvious areas in which we apply a double moral standard. We do this by



The Mount of the Beatitudes in the Holy Land

allowing permissive laws to exist that permit the death penalty, discrimination towards minorities, and those that do not sufficiently protect the right to life, especially in countries that are considered freedom advocates. Despite this fact, though, in the heart of every man and woman there is a growing desire for human dignity to be fully respected. In truth, few organizations enjoy as much international credibility as those who fight for human rights.

- The Church, increasingly committed to the poor and the

marginalized, raises her prophetic voice, even at the highest levels of hierarchy, against the dehumanization of society and all kinds of injustices. The Church's voice is becoming increasingly uncomfortable for the powerful in the world, and in doing so she is living up to the last of the Beatitudes.

It is in this context of "light" and "shadow" that we approach our World Assembly.

Thanks to the Lord's grace, we in CLC are allowed to contribute to the "light." However, shouldn't we also be mindful of our

responsibility for the "shadow" that exists? Many of the above mentioned sinful structures can most effectively be changed from political and economic platforms. The decisions, e.g. between an economy that mainly serves the powerful lobby behind it or one that serves humanity, are made on economic and political levels. The same is true for decisions to help developing or lesser-developed countries, when the choice is between helping them in a way that makes them even more dependent on developed countries or really helping them stand on their own feet. The fact that these decisions are made on political and economic platforms, however, does not free us from responsibility. If the future of humankind and of our planet is depending on such decisions, should we not seriously ask ourselves: what our mission is and where our presence is called

for in political and economic fields? Are we not ignoring a serious responsibility when we refuse to get involved in these complex and fundamental fields to build a world that is more just?

Here is a vocation for lay people! Even though not everyone can be a politician or a business leader, each of us must discern, participate and contribute to the common good according to their natural talents and education.

The structural sin in which we live is based on the desire to *covet riches, vain world honor and pride*. The situation of structural sin is also due to the omission of those who, although aware of the seriousness and difficulty of the task, chose to *hide the light under a jar, or to put it under a bed, instead of putting it on top of the lampstand* (cf. Lk 8:16).

The Jesuit Refugee Service

*I was a stranger and you
welcomed me....*

The refugee predicament has become a global problem that has marked this century. It will be one of the biggest challenges in the beginning of the third millennium, and the peace of the world will depend very much on how we solve it. Are we able to bear our Lord's voice in the outcry and suffering of the refugees? To efficiently meet the challenges of today's world, all people of good will have to work together. We, the CLC, obviously should give priority to collaboration with our Ignatian brothers, the Society of Jesus, wherever it is for the greater glory of the Kingdom of God. In this issue of Progressio we have invited our friends at the JRS to introduce themselves. Their introduction is an urgent appeal and a challenge to us all.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) was launched by Father Pedro Arrupe in 1980, his last initiative as Superior General of the Jesuits. The spirit of JRS owes much to the first members of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius of Loyola and his companions, who responded in practical ways to emergency situations in Rome and elsewhere.

The Jesuit Refugee Service is now operational in over 35 countries, an indication of the extent to which refugee needs have grown in twelve years. Currently, the world's refugees number over 18 million, with at least another 25 million persons displaced within their own countries.

The JRS is a worldwide network, through which Jesuits and their friends provide services of

advocacy, pastoral ministry, and practical care for refugees.

JRS field-workers include religious and lay persons, together with Jesuit priests, brothers and scholastics.

ACTIVITIES OF THE JRS WORLDWIDE

The Jesuit Refugee Service places volunteer workers in refugee camps, where the JRS has contact with at least 3 million refugees, or with asylum seekers in other locations. In 1994, JRS personnel number around 300. The aim is to seek out the best use for each person's expertise and skills in the service of our needy brothers and sisters.

The approach of JRS workers is to seek out skills already present in a refugee population, then to encourage and supplement them.

Our teams are currently active in Africa, Central America, South East Asia and in Bosnia and Croatia. JRS workers have specialized training in fields such as education, counselling and rehabilitation. JRS also arranges placements for a limited number of health workers. Now the asylum seeker question clearly

touches the very nature of all our societies. JRS is at work in Europe, the USA, Canada and Australia.

JRS co-operates with a number of other Catholic religious congregations that share an international perspective. Often projects are arranged in conjunction with local Church agencies or other non-government groups.

NEW PROJECTS

In the last twelve months, new projects have been established in Zambia with Angolan refugees, in Mozambique with returning refugees, in Somalia (reconstructing an education program), in Uganda and Kenya, in Nepal with Bhutanese, and in Peru with those displaced by the *sendero luminoso*.

Ongoing projects include:

- A reconciliation project, technical training for war-wounded and rural development in Cambodia
- Care offered in Suan Phlu prison, Bangkok
- Pastoral and practical assistance for asylum seekers in Hong Kong and other Viet-

name camps in Southeast Asia

- Relief for South Sudanese refugees
- Scholarships to refugees in Central America, Burkina Fasso, the Burma border and elsewhere
- An education program in Malawi
- Emergency support for Timorese refugees
- Emergency feeding for Liberian refugees
- Health and agricultural projects in Tigray
- Assistance in Mexico to Guatemalan refugees

*CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES
AND THE JRS*

Partnership between Christian Life Communities (CLC) and the JRS teams is obvious but needs creative work. CLC groups have been formed among some JRS teams, e.g. on the Thai-

Cambodian border, during the eighties. CLC offers a formation program for people wishing to serve others. JRS needs persons formed with a deep spirituality, able to see the needs of the uprooted and to sustain a faithful service of them. These two aspects seem to match one another.

*BECOMING A JRS FRIEND AND
SUPPORTER*

First inquiries (by a group or an individual) may be addressed to the Jesuit Refugee Service in one's home country. Please contact the Jesuit Provincial Office in your region for details.

More detailed information about current needs and projects in Africa, Central America, Southeast Asia or other regions, may be obtained from the JRS Regional Directors, or from the International Director.

Their addresses are as follows:

International Director:

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- Mark Raper, SJ

All I want is Him....

Sometimes when I'm giving a retreat, I suggest that the people try the following imagination/prayer exercise (which I've borrowed from a Dominican nun): I imagine myself in the most marvellous and extensive emporium ever made; it has anything a person could possibly desire – ranging from material possessions (e.g. money, motor cars, etc.), physical gifts (e.g. good looks, good health, etc.), to spiritual gifts (e.g. love, forgiveness, peace, etc.). I look around, taking my time, till I find what I really want. Once I'm sure that I've found what I really want, I begin to leave the emporium with it. Just before I exit, I have to pass a man at the door and ask – "This is what I want, what is the cost?" And I listen to what he tells me.

On one occasion I gave this exercise to a group of priests, and

the next day one of them came to see me – an elderly priest who'd been on his mission more than forty years. He began, "I did as you suggested last night...but all I want is Him. What else is there?" As these words came slowly, hesitantly out, his eyes filled with tears – and I began to feel the same way myself. Friendship with Jesus shows and catches.

The friendship with Jesus that shows and catches is at the heart of our CLC way of life...

The friendship with Jesus that shows and catches is at the heart of our CLC way of life, and we learn and are formed into the CLC way of life in our small group communities. Our small group communities are not an end in themselves; rather, their whole purpose is to form us to be

prayerful, listening, reflective and discerning people, so that our way of being and relating in the small group becomes our normal way of being and relating in our families, among our friends and in the market place. Our formation is essentially missionary because the process that forms us continually moves us beyond the group, into daily living. Let me give an example.

For our CLC process is essentially missionary – it brings the Spirit of Jesus into the market place....

A friend of mine – let us call him Jim – in CLC is in charge of the Lost Property Office for one of our major airlines in Australia.

Recently, he told me about one of his many experiences in his job: a top-line business executive discovered that a very important piece of equipment had not arrived with his luggage. He made his complaint so persistently and effectively that none of the staff could quite handle him; so, with great relief, they passed the irate business man onto Jim. Jim asked the man for details and quietly listened as the man told his story.

Jim let him tell it all and then assured him that the matter would be thoroughly followed up, though he was rather confident the package would be delivered. The executive was not at all impressed with this last remark! The next day Jim rang him up, and just as he dialled the man's number, he saw on his computer that the package had been delivered. Then the following conversation took place:

Executive – “Well, I suppose you've rung me up to say you were right after all; the package has been delivered.”

Jim – “Not really; I just wanted to make sure everything was OK.”

Executive (long pause and then...) – “Yesterday I tried to get angry with you, but I couldn't. Do you know why?”

Jim – “No sir, I don't.”

Executive – “Because you really listened to me.”

Jim's final remark to me was, “This CLC process – it works all the time!” For our CLC process is essentially missionary – it brings the Spirit of Jesus into the market place, changing the way that

people relate: *Your Spirit is at work when understanding puts an end to strife* (Second Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation).

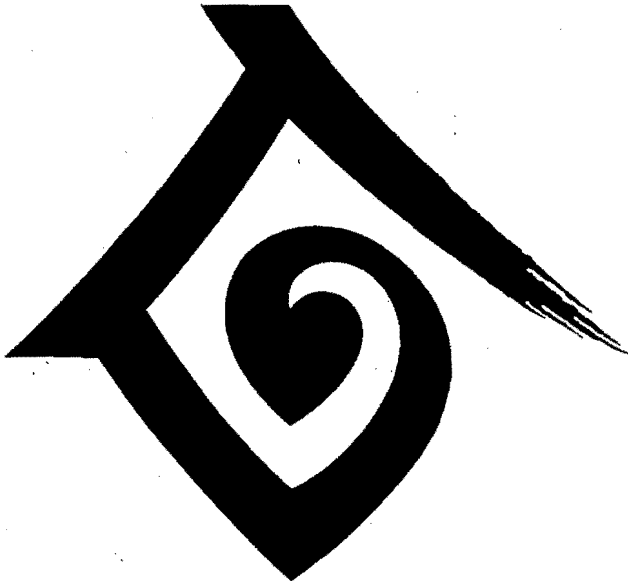
I am quite convinced that there is little point, in CLC, of talking of Mission, unless our small groups are the focus of, and the inspiration for a prayerful, listening, reflective and discerning way of life. Or, in other words, if we truly follow the CLC process in our small groups, and allow it to seep into our bones, we will carry this process with us, wherever we are, whatever we do. It may lead some individuals to undertaking new tasks; it may lead some communities to investing in a common project. And very often, in the market place, our CLC process will have to be modified – like my friend Jim. He didn't say to the Executive – "Well, sir, what about a reading from Scripture, some quiet time, and then tell me how you feel?" Not quite! – but Jim was, effectively, a *contemplative in action*; he gave a 'loving' attention to the other, that allowed the

other to be fully and freely present.

Our CLC way – our Ignatian way – is an extremely rich heritage that we have been given, to carry on Christ's mission – His presence, through friendship with Him – in the world.

Our CLC way – our Ignatian way – is an extremely rich heritage that we have been given, to carry on Christ's mission – His presence, through friendship with Him – in the world. Once personally and communally assimilated, this way is immeasurably flexible, because it is infinitely graced. And, like all grace, it upsets our 'normalities', for it continuously provokes the question: "In a world where the many have so little precisely because the few have so much, where do my energies go? Am I keeping the world the way it is, or am I trying to change it?"

- Patrick O'Sullivan, SJ



1994 International Year of the Family
Année internationale de la famille
Año Internacional de la Familia
Международный год семьи
السنة الدولية للأسرة
国际家庭年

“Promoting Families for the Well-being of Individuals and Societies”

The World NGO Forum launching IYF was held in La Valetta, Malta between November 28th and December 2nd 1993. It was organized by the Vienna NGO Committee of the family in cooperation with the United Nations' Secretariat of the IYF, the Government of Malta, and other NGO committees on the Family (the NGO Committee on the Family from New York and the NGO-UNESCO Group on the Family from Paris). The World CLC was represented by José María and Aurora Camps Riera, who are introducing themselves in this Progressio issue with their article: "A CLC Family." The following is José María and Aurora's report of the Forum:

The Mediterranean Conference Centre, where the Forum was held, is an old hospital of the Order of the Knights of Malta built approximately 400 years ago. This conference center at the seashore, with its impressive architecture, welcomed the multicultural presence of one-thousand participants from nearly a hundred countries around the world. The Forum welcomed participants from all sectors and levels of non-governmental organizations and governments alike in order to dialogue, share and compare experiences. In short, the Forum was a place to reflect

together on the reality and expectations of the family today.

The objective of the Forum was to sensitize public opinion and to mobilize specific actions at regional, local and state levels in favor of the family in the different parts of the world, during the IYF '94 which was proclaimed by the General Assembly of the UN.

The heart of the Forum was made up of a total of 40 workshops and 54 Forum presentations on a whole gamut full of family-related issues and IYF action plans. Amidst the great plurality of the Forum, several

common themes emerged, among these themes were:

- The need to strike a balance between the important rights of the individual and the concept of the family as a community emerged. Special attention was paid to the role, rights and well-being of women and children and also to the importance of the man's part and his sharing of responsibility in the family.
- Despite the economic poverty in developing countries and the spiritual poverty in developed countries, the instinct for a social community is so strong and the family so resilient that creative and diverse forms of coping with problems have emerged organically.
- In solidarity with families suffering the most, especially those who are victims of poverty, war, AIDS, drug abuse, violence and terrorism, special attention must be given to families at risk as well as to the most vulnerable groups: the disabled, the elderly, the victims of domestic and social violence, and children.

We arrived at La Valetta asking ourselves: what are we able to contribute, specifically from CLC, to realities so diverse in length and breadth in our world? (During the Forum, a definition of family was

avoided, given the diversity of ways of living and understanding it throughout the world.)

We knew when we arrived that CLC members from Malta would be waiting to welcome and accompany us during our stay. This is not just an anecdote or due to circumstances, but it shows the universality of our charism and the CLC reality. We simply had the personal conviction that "someone's house" would take us in, as we have experienced in many other places in the world and as we do in our home for those who pass by.

In a way, we were some participants that, instead of staying in a hotel, were among our own. We felt the joy of being welcomed from the moment of our arrival at the airport. We will remember the stay in the house that the Jesuits have in Mont Sant Joseph, where we had the opportunity of sharing at great length with the National Assistant, Godwin Preca; the little walk on the island we had with Steve; or the simple but enriching supper that we shared in the house of Jos and Josseanne Peregrin, during which we shared with various members of the local CLC the same spirit that gives us life....

This hospitality predisposes us towards really feeling ourselves as

delegates – sent by the World Community to share the situations and hopes on the world of the family.

We also had the chance to meet Asun and Joaquin. They are the married-couple president of the Círculo de Madrid, a Marian Congregation who is taking a growing interest in CLC; they were representing another NGO at the Forum. We spoke a great deal about the style of our communities and future possibilities. We became very close to each other at the Forum.

During the Forum, we divided our participation into different workshops. In this way, we always had different approaches to the themes being discussed; this enriched the contributions. We participated actively in four main areas:

- Family and Values of the Society
- Family and Poverty
- Housing and Family
- Women and Family

We realize the need to support all efforts from Governmental or Non-

Governmental Organizations that are trying to offer better services to people in need, seeing not only the individuals in themselves but taking into consideration the potential of the family. We realize that in several parts of the world there are, only tentative at times, programs in which the human person in any situation or age (a child, the young, a pregnant woman, the aged, a worker, the ill, the handicapped, etc...) is considered a person-in-relation, a member of a family structure. Furthermore, many people are becoming aware of the fact that it is worthwhile, and even more effective, to take into consideration the family as the basic support and the final goal of such programs as housing, drug rehabilitation, youth activities and the promotion of women, etc. This was unthinkable only ten years ago, when a radical individualism had pervaded all areas of human life.

Thus, we want from these areas to encourage the support of initiatives for the benefit of the family and empower all the richness of our faith and spirituality so that we might be the seed of new actions in this field.

A CLC family



José María and Aurora Camps Riera,
Ignasi of 8 years, María Aurora of 6 years and Jeppe (José María, Jr) of 3 years.

This story begins eighteen years ago, when we – José María and Aurora – met and started our personal journey of faith in Jesus together. It has been a journey as a couple, as a family, and also in CLC.

This threefold way is closely interconnected in our lives, inseparable and even interde-

pendent. We try to live our personal call in intimacy with Jesus; this has affected our marriage by enriching and shaping it. Throughout the years, our community (La Vinya, which came to life through the Forum Vergès of Barcelona) has been a place where we can meet God through others. It is also a place where we are confronted with the question:

“What does God want from us?”

The desire of following Christ more closely – asking always: “Lord, what do you want us to do?” – and also accompanying others on this path, is our logical answer to the free gift of his love, his presence in our lives and his mercy; it is the fruit of the *Spiritual Exercises* where the deep and decisive experience of a personal and close relationship with Christ begins.

The universality of Ignatian Spirituality, has seized and overwhelmed us as a gift of the Lord's grace, and it has subsequently led us into the vocation of serving the World Community. The first contact with CLC on a more international level goes back to 1980, where we joined a CLC formation course for youth (in Manresa at the European level). This event marks the beginning of a journey that gradually has led me, José María, into participating at three World Assemblies (Providence, Loyola, and Guadalajara) and

different national and European encounters and courses.

The experience of this universality has influenced our family life very much. We and our children experience with joy the enriching experiences of personal relationships all over the world, being welcomed by others, and also welcoming others to our home. Already our children understand that our friends are friends in the Lord.

For us, this call to universality means a voyage of discovery to where the Lord wants us to be and what he wants us to do. This journey as a married couple, each one according to one's own specific charism, has placed our years of service to the Spanish community, the European team and, presently, the World Community.

On this pilgrimage we ask ourselves over and over again what our role and witness has to be in this society that, at the end of the second millennium, has to look for the key to it's future.

Born to New Life in Jesus Christ

The theme of the Fourth International Youth Forum in Denver in August 1993 was "Born to New Life in Jesus Christ." There, the World Christian Life Community was represented by Kristi Gonsalves and Joseph Grieboski. Joseph has been a member of CLC since 1988. He is currently a student at Georgetown University and youth editor for HARVEST, the National CLC magazine of the United States. As a delegate for his National Community, he will be present at the World Assembly in Hong Kong '94. He now shares with us his reflections, as an official World Community delegate for this big event.

My life was very deeply and spiritually touched last August when, along with several million other Catholics, I witnessed the arrival of His Holiness, Pope John Paul II in Denver, Colorado. The Holy Father's grand entrance into Mile High Stadium fulfilled a lifetime dream and answered a spiritual and emotional call.

Yet my metanoiac experience began some days before the advent of the Holy Father. It began at Regis University where I participated in the Fourth International Youth Forum as one of the two representatives of the World Christian Life Community. I did not attend the entire Forum, as I arrived in Denver a few days late having attended the Delegate Assembly of the National Christian

Life Community of the United States. However, I have the wonderful opportunity to describe the excitement and apprehension of the Forum participants, and Catholics in general, awaiting the arrival of the Holy Father.

I was taken somewhat aback upon my arrival in Denver by the numbers of people who made their way on a pilgrimage to this mid-western city. As one man described it, the Stapleton airport was alive as never before. Hordes of youth and their guides and spiritual directors swarmed the airport as I expect disciples of Jesus had when awaiting Our Lord. This is the image that first came to my mind in Denver, and it was rather symbolic. The media and many others were proclaiming how Catholics no longer follow the teachings of the

Pope or how they no longer see him as the consummate moral leader. To me it seemed as if the media was not saying this about John Paul II, but instead about Christ. The scene at the airport gladly disproved this. As a matter of fact, Christ was clearly and obviously alive. Hundreds of members of the Knights of Columbus volunteered their time in order to make life easier for the arriving Catholic populations from around the world. One was even so kind as to drive out of his way in order to take me to Regis University when I had no other means of transportation. It is little things such as this that prove least of all the existence, but most importantly the manifest work of Christ and His Spirit in our lives.

I did not have the opportunity to meet a large number of people at the Forum due to my late arrival. However, the people I did meet will be friends for life. I had the opportunity to meet people from Ghana, Malta, Liechtenstein, and even some CLC members from

Hong Kong. These people and the experiences we shared are the real meaning behind the arrival of the Holy Father and the World Youth Day. I believe that the purpose of the World Youth Day is not to see our spiritual leader; that instead is an exceptionally positive externality.

Instead, the purpose of the World Youth Day and the Youth Forum is for young people from around the world to meet one another and to become friends. I see life as love, without which life has no meaning. St. Paul tells us that someone may have the faith to move mountains, but without love, the person is nothing. Love and friendship, which are truly coterminous, are life. These two things, love and friendship, are the greatest results of this year's World Youth Day. The theme this year was the biblical verse, "I came so that they might have life." Just as Jesus came so that we may have life, so too did John Paul come so that we, the young people of the world, may have life and live it to the fullest.

Louis Lau Kin Hei, a CLC member from Hong Kong, also happened to be present at the Fourth International Youth Forum. He shares with us his experience:

I was staying with a Brazilian observer who, as I discovered with admiration, has used his earnings from building houses to

acquire places to live for needy families and abandoned children; they all live and work together as one big family. Little by little,

the project has extended to other cities. At this point, I stopped to ask myself: Am I choosing to live a simple lifestyle? Do I have a preferential option for the poor?

To opt for Christ is to opt for life, and to opt for life is to opt for love – the greatest commandment. To opt for Christ means living poor and following him, loving our brothers and sisters and giving our life for them. To live is to establish communion with others, to break our loneliness and abandon our pride. To live is to enter into communion with the Church, the parish, the diocese and other groups and movements, while fully assuming our place in the Church. To live is to get ourselves involved in forming communities that will help to bring one's faith to maturity. A new life in the world is a new life in truth, justice and love.



This was the message that Cardinal Pironio gave us, which impressed me very much.

On August 10th, speaking on behalf of the youth in Hong Kong, I gave testimony before the youth from countries all over the world. Alleluia! The main thing for me was not to be close to the Pope, but it was the message and the gift that a new life in Jesus Christ was born within me.

PERU:

Beginning on July 27th through the 30th of last year the first National CLC formation encounter took place at the "Villa Kostka" retreat house in Huachipa, Peru. Among the hundred and ten people who took part in the encounter were members and guides of the Community and invited lay and religious who were interested in CLC. They came from all parts of Peru: from Piura and Jaén; from the Agustino, Breña and Villa El Salvador; from the Inmaculada, Fátima, Siempre, Fe and Alegría; and also from Urcos, Andahuaylillas, Cusco and Tacna. Amongst us were students, young professionals, teachers, married couples, parish leaders, Jesuits and other religious men and women. Also joining us were Juan Ochagavía, SJ, the National Assistant of Chile, and María Clara Luchetti, the World CLC Vice-President.

During these three, unforgettable days we listened to personal testimonies from Juan and María Clara, some Assistants from the Society of Jesus and various members from the CLC in Peru. We meditated in silence with the General Principles and Norms, making space for the Lord so that he may reveal to us his word. Then afterwards, we shared with one another in small working groups our experiences and what was presented to us in prayer. Each night we celebrated the Eucharist together, and we took some time to get to know one another better.

To describe the atmosphere of the encounter, it would be sufficient to recall some of the shared Eucharists or to listen once again to William of the Ayacucho Community tell all about what he has learned about God through other people, to José Luis from the Desamparados Community

admit that he now understood better what it means to live the CLC way of life as a vocation, and to Javier of the Inmaculada Community ask the Lord to help us invest all of our efforts in the formation of lay people who choose to live their faith the way Ignatius proposes. We could also recall the words of Bobby, on the last day, inviting us to continue along the way – without haste – building a true National Community and committing ourselves to this particular way of living the Ignatian Spirituality amongst the laity: the Christian Life Community.

Thus, from different geographic origins, social conditions, ages and professions we experienced a sort of “Pentecost,” which gave us a common language so that we could know and be aware of one another throughout Peru, but it has also enabled us to say simply who we are and what we want. What will come out of this will take shape on a solid basis if we all prepare ourselves for God’s action and know how to welcome it.

- Miguel Cruzado, Raul Montoya,
Sandra Rojas
Organizing Commission
for the National Formation
Encounter

INTERNATIONAL FORMATION ENCOUNTERS:

The first International Formation Encounters (IFE) took place in Yaounde, Cameroon from the 3rd to 11th of September 1993 for French-Speaking Africa, and in Quito, Ecuador from the 4th to 12th of January 1994 for Latin America. Around thirty participants were at each of these Encounters.

The purpose of these Encounters is to foster the awareness of being a *World Community*, to promote the exchange of experiences of mission among the National Communities and to apply a methodology for planning and evaluating our mission.

It seems, thanks to God, that these objectives are being achieved. The methodology that we are applying, according to the guidelines agreed upon at the Cavalletti meeting in October 1992, is the one developed at the Seminario de Planificación Pastoral in Bogotá, Colombia.

The five members of the Yaounde’s guiding team had great pastoral experience, but they were less acquainted with the methodology. At the Quito Encounter, there were only three



Participants of the IFE in Quito

members in the guiding team, and, since all of them were from Bogotá, they were real experts in the method. In any case, at both of the encounters, the participants clearly thought very highly of the methodology used. We realize that this methodology is still quite new for many, but we hope that with time and practice we will familiarize ourselves with it.

In Yaounde we offered three workshops: Formation of Group Guides, Socio-Political Reflection and Family Pastoral Approaches. These workshops provided many moving experiences for the

evaluations and planning exercises. From the methodological point of view, however, these exercises were less thorough. In the Quito encounter there were no workshops. Instead, the lifestyle and mission of the National Communities provided the materials necessary for the evaluation and planning exercises. The participants valued the quality of the work and the mutual knowledge gained as a result of the exchanges, but they wished that more time could have been given to the urgent problems affecting their countries.

As a result of the Yaounde Encounter, a stronger sense of community among the participating African communities developed, and each National Community set up some lines of action. As for the Quito Encounter, the "Mesa de Servicio" (Coordinating Team) was reinforced with members from Brazil, Chile and Nicaragua.

Three more Encounters will take place:

- In Bombay (India), from the 6th to the 13th February 1994
- In Rome (Italy), from the 3rd to the 9th April 1994
- In Harare (Zimbabwe), from the 6th to the 15th April 1994

