



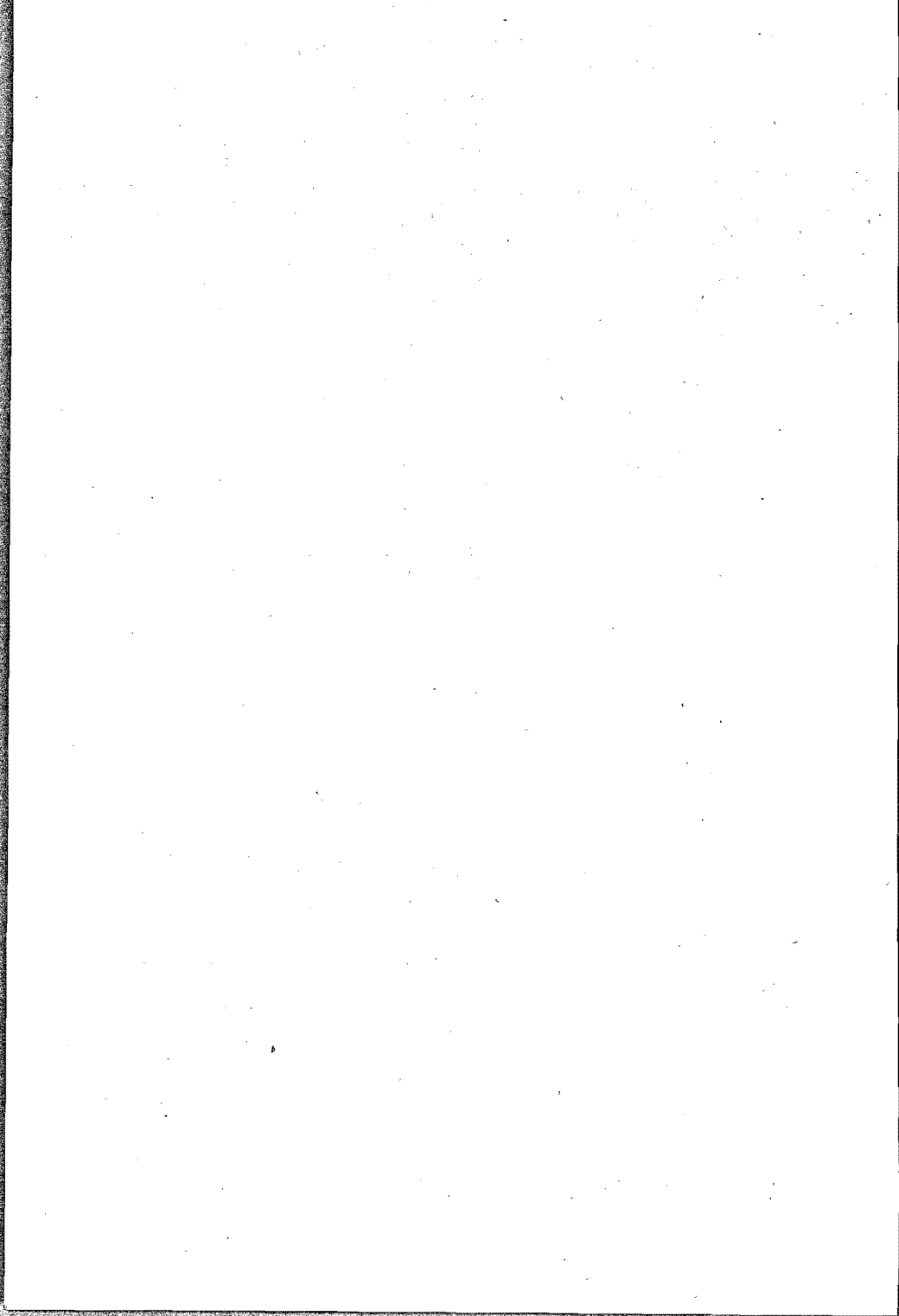
PROGRESSIO

Pondering and Thanksgiving



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Foreword

“From now on the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of all that I have told you” (John 14:26). We know that “no one can say ‘Jesus is the Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Co 12: 3).

“The Spirit is in fact present in the fullness of His power, visible in all things and found in the life which sustains the Church day after day. The Spirit’s field of action is the entire world, in a space that goes beyond the dimension of time. The Spirit is the breath of life, the soul which sustains the world, and which gives meaning to everything visible and concrete, retrieving it from the chaos and emptiness of purely mechanical activism. To reflect and ponder the work of the Spirit, as the Holy Father recommended on the path towards the Great Jubilee, means to look deep into our own soul and at the same time open our eyes to the realities around us since it is in these realities that we see the Spirit at work” (Card. Roger Etchegaray, *Tertium Millemium*, Feb 98).

In this issue of PROGRESSIO, we invite you to ponder the work of the Spirit among us. Members of the Christian Life Community, for years, have been reflecting on how to give a better response to the call received, and how to express the Spirit of Jesus in our times. We begin by presenting one of those reflections. The World Community received an answer when its delegates, assembled at Itaici in 1998, discerned Our Common Mission. We include the text in this issue.

After the Itaici General Assembly, many National Communities have asked for the grace of perceiving what the Spirit is doing, so as to be moved to respond, collaborating in His life-giving mission. We offer you a few of these responses, from all over the world, for pondering and thanksgiving. The straightforward experience of a young person will enrichen many lives while linking this issue of PROGRESSIO with our last issue of 1999 (“CLC Young People in Mission”).

We are well aware that justice and peace begin with our own personal conversion to the Lord, for which we must allow the Spirit to touch our hearts. Wishing to collaborate with Him, we present to you the lives of people we respect, both living and deceased, once again for pondering and thanksgiving.

Finally, we all feel called to listen and meditate on the words addressed by Pope John Paul II to the Christian Life Community. He addresses CLC as a world community of lay persons that wish to live fully the Ignatian spirituality in the Church. We include the whole text where the Holy Father encourages CLC to carry the teachings of the Church into the heart of human culture, in a quest for a more just and fraternal society, bringing the Gospel to bear on all human realities. With his words, we feel strengthened in the mission received at the Itaici 98 Assembly.

The Progressio Editorial Team wishes to renew its trust in the Blessed Virgin Mary. She fully collaborated with the work of the Spirit. Her example will lead us to ever-higher levels of generous service of the Church and society.

Expressing the Spirit of Jesus in Our Time

Monika K Hellwig, LL.B., Ph.D., is Executive Director of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities. She was formerly the Landegger Professor of Theology at Georgetown University where she taught for three decades. She has written and lectured extensively, nationally and internationally, both in scholarly and in popular contexts, in Catholic systematic theology and inter-faith studies, and is a past president of the Catholic Theological Society of America. This article was reprinted from Harvest-Summer'98.

If we of CLC are to express the spirit of Jesus in our own time, we have to consider two questions: what seem to be the most urgent demands of our time as they intersect with our ability to meet them? What is an appropriately Christ-like response to them? Perhaps the trickiest part of the discernment involved is in assessing where the point of intersection is between the urgent demands and our ability to meet them. Whether for individuals or for groups, this demands knowledge of the world about us, a fully Christian scale of values, the detachment to see matters aright, an unbiased self-assessment of aptitudes, and the courage and determination to move ahead, take risks and act.

Each individual needs to make a personal discernment and each group needs to make a communal discernment but each of us needs help and, because they are small, our groups need help. Most people are not aware of their gifts unless others in some way call them forth. That is one way in which the local Christian Life Community can be most fruitful. As we get to know one another well, including one another's self-assessment, we have the sensitive task of reflecting back to one another the truth about one another that we see. It has been my experience that the people who gravitate towards CLC tend to be people of generous inclinations. They meditate regularly on the gospels, live good lives and reach out readily and spontaneously to those in need, but tend to see their own potential for good only in terms of one to one immediate practical help.... serving in shelters or soup kitchens; tutoring immigrants in the local language or deprived children in their school work; giving love and attention to orphans in institutions; visiting and helping prisoners, and so forth.

All of these activities are obviously the work of Christ in the world and we should always maintain some face-to-face contact with the poor, the

abandoned, oppressed or marginalized, because they are in real and urgent need and because their gift to us is to keep us in touch with reality. But, with the resources we of CLC have individually, in our groups, in our regions, at the national level and at the international level, we may be capable of much more.... namely to influence systems that create poverty, bring pressure to bear on companies, persuade public decision makers, influence public opinion, bring issues to public attention and into public discourse, influence legislation, and so forth.

If we are not already doing these things, I believe that is not for lack of generosity or talent. It is more because we think of ourselves as private persons with no power to influence public affairs. Yet we, and most of our fellow CLC members in other countries, live in a democratic context where all can vote; where news media are free to publish both facts and criticism; where we have rights of assembly and association, and have access both to information and to influence in public matters. Some of us are politically and socially active in matters of social justice and peace, either through our parishes or through other associations professional or voluntary. This is obviously a good thing, particularly where these groups specialize in certain issues like human rights, famine relief, treatment of prisoners, peace activities. By specializing, such groups often acquire a great deal of factual and technical knowledge in matters pertaining to their case, so that they can act more effectively.

Yet, when all this is taken into account, it seems to me to leave a residual question. Ought we not use the collective good will, intelligence, generosity and professional skill that we possess together more effectively to make a difference in the way our local, national and international society treats its members, especially the weakest and those least able to present or defend their own cause? And we might well expand that to the further question of how our societies treat the natural resources and the ecology of our environment, especially where the impact and burden fall on the poorest parts of the globe and the most deprived populations. Some specific possibilities include: obtaining and using the information and analysis on social issues compiled for Bishops' committees on social development and peace; obtaining and using information compiled by some dioceses and parishes on state legislative and social needs issues; obtaining and using information and analysis compiled by "one issue" associations, Christian and others, that share our social conscience.

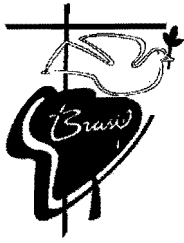
Often such material requires careful study and, occasionally, it requires specialized expertise but we have members who have time for the study and members who have the expertise. Once the issues are clear, the way to act on them or use the information may be; to lobby legislators or others; to organize a write-in campaign; to boycott; to write letters of support; perhaps to support someone running for local or national office; to make direct representations to decision makers; to do some community organizing to correct an abuse; to write letters of protest to embassies and others, and many other possibilities.

A single CLC could do much in the way of joint action on a local issue. As a region or as the national group, we could make a well-co-ordinated effort on issues selected as the most urgent that lie within our power to act or influence.

Internationally, we have great-untapped resources if we marshal our joint efforts and focus on a specific issue. Examples are... reconciliation efforts in countries where both sides of a conflict are Christian; major joint action on behalf of specific refugee populations; economic development efforts in a target area with high unemployment and poverty; international child sex tourism, targeting the two or three worst areas; starvation in areas where this is produced by market and exchange rate fluctuations, often manipulated, and much more.

It is necessary to be selective and target what seems to be at the intersection of the most urgent matters with our ability to respond to them. This is a matter for prayerful communal discernment. It is not enough to imitate what Jesus did in his time. It is rather a matter of trying to understand what Jesus wants us to do in our time with different and greatly expanded resources; with possibilities of joint action on a far larger scale than existed in his time; and with knowledge of what goes on in the world that was certainly not to be had in his time. Perhaps it is time for CLC to consider how we are called to move from individual commitments to works of charity and mercy to the "magis" of what we are empowered by nature and grace to do together.

"Change has never been made by people hoping and wishing. Change has come from people standing up and taking a stand." (Cf. Emily Moore)



OUR COMMON MISSION

This document is the outcome of the XIII General Assembly of the Christian Life Community in Itaici 98. It presents a common mission as it was discerned by the delegates, put into words by a mandated commission and received by the whole assembly. It is now offered to all national and local communities, all individual members and Ecclesiastical Assistants of CLC all over the world.

This XIII Assembly inscribes itself in the line of all - and especially of the last four - World Assemblies. In Loyola 86, it became clear that, as we were a World Community, we were community for mission. In Guadalajara 90, we felt ourselves sent to bear fruit as an apostolic body. In Hong Kong 94, we recognized and integrated the context from and into which we are sent. In Itaici, we defined our common mission in the context of our world.

The mission of CLC comes from Christ Himself who invites us to join Him in preparing the world to become the complete Kingdom of God. He calls us to be at the heart of the world experience and to receive God's gift in its fullness.

In the review of our graces over the past four years, we found the hand of Christ and His love. In gratitude for so much good that is accomplished in our lives in CLC, we offered ourselves to follow Him in pilgrimage and labour like Ignatius did.

We discerned the most urgent needs of the world today and tried to give flesh and blood to the desire of the Lord for us here and now.

In our review of needs, we faced our limitations, weaknesses, our lights and shadows and our sinfulness. But, we also found much that was wise and good, especially, the powerful and pervasive effort to pursue the struggle for mission.

We take on our mission with confidence that the Lord takes us, as He did with Ignatius, not because we are strong but because His "love and grace are sufficient for us".

In this process of discernment, which began in our National Communities, we went through four areas of our lives following the Ignatian charism:



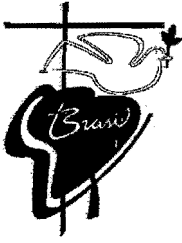
Christ and growth in Christian life;
Christ and culture;
Christ and social reality;
Christ and daily life.

The process resulted in discovering three areas of mission and a set of necessary means for this mission.

- *First, we want to bring the freeing power of Christ to our social reality.*
- *Secondly, we want to find Christ in all our varied cultures and to let His grace illuminate all that needs transformation.*
- *Thirdly, we want to live Christ so as to bring Him to every aspect of our daily life in the world.*
- *These three areas of mission were enlightened by the spiritual source, which nourishes and empowers us for mission: the Spiritual Exercises, which help us to grow in Christian life.*
- *In addition, we must attend to our own formation for mission, so that our community may ever become a more effective instrument of service.*

We suggest to everyone who receives this mission statement to read it, not from a merely intellectual viewpoint searching for information but, as a wording of the strong desire of the World Christian Life Community as gathered in the Assembly.

We invite the reader to join our pilgrimage so that Christ may gain His full stature. This is what we passionately yearn for and wholeheartedly commit ourselves to.



CHRIST AND SOCIAL REALITY

Side by side with the Poor

Our personal relationship with God, which arises from the Spiritual Exercises, is the inspiration, which fires us to participate in the struggle for a just world. We prize the church's prophetic stand against poverty itself and against all that causes poverty. Rooted in Christ and in His love for us, we want to put the option for the poor into action, by making serious analyses and adopting a responsible and effective attitude towards poverty and its causes. We are called, in our communal life, to encourage one another to look at the world and to work in it from the perspective of the poor, to grow in our capacity to meet them, to know where they are in our societies and what are the best forms to take part in their struggles. We are also called to examine our own lives from this perspective.

1. For a More Just World

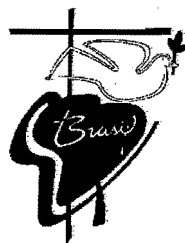
We need to work against the greed and the misuse of the power for evil in political and economic structures, often exercised so effectively by the multinationals.

Just as the causes of poverty and injustice are linked among themselves and support one another across national boundaries, we as CLC are called to witness to a world community that empowers its members to be prophets of justice and hope, able to take bold stances and positions in order to bring about more justice to this world. We are ready to establish networks, to undertake social action. We will become social entrepreneurs, with the same intensity that business entrepreneurs employ.

We want to participate in different forums at the national and international levels, bringing to them the voice of the poorest in issues such as the problem of international debt. In different ways, all of us are called to active participation in the economic, political and social structures, not only from a critical point of view but also through

providing solutions. In this, the community empowers us so that we truly believe that we can work to change sinful structures.

We care for the integrity of God's creation in all its manifold blessings. We appreciate sound relationships in every area of human life – family, work, public life and church – and hold in high esteem a culture of dialogue within the human family.



2. Witnessing to Our Way of Life

We recognize that our main contribution to our world is to live fully, as individuals and as a community, our vocation as it is expressed in our General Principles.

We feel particularly called to live in solidarity with all, in a simple life style, searching every day for our own conversion to God and sharing the actual experience and the pedagogy of the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius.

We believe that one of our great contributions to our world today, especially in resolving conflicts and taking good decisions at all levels of life, is the process of discernment and those listening and dialogue skills that we learn in our community.

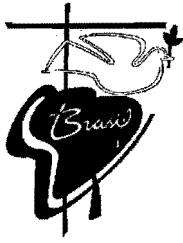
3. Standing as Prophets in Our World

We feel CLC is called to resist the growing consumerism and individualism and the resulting cultural erosion. Our spirituality forms us to be pro-active, and this will give us the confidence we need to be counter-cultural when necessary.

We do not want to be “burned out” prophets in the world, but to rejoice in Christ's presence in it and to return frequently to nourish our essential relationship with the Lord. We also need to learn how to serve as leaven in a silent and profound way, promoting and living out just relationships in the family, in the workplace, in public life and Church issues.

4. Formation through Experience and Action

CLC needs to act. It needs a formation/training programme to help it be active in the world. Many or all of the social needs that we want to address need formation to be dealt with. But action should not wait



for full formation. We need, from the very beginning, to learn to be contemplatives in action, to promote insertion experiences in deprived or oppressive situations, and to foster a model of experience-reflection-action in our formation programmes.

We want to develop an active, progressive, continuous and adaptive formation in the Spiritual Exercises, and find specific ways in which their richness can be shared with people in all circumstances of life.

5. Networking and Collaborating

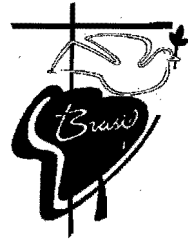
We feel that today there is a big opportunity to collaborate with others and find flexible and dynamic structures to ensure effectiveness in the service we want to bring to the world. We want to collaborate within CLC and beyond, and to humbly join others and help in their initiatives. We see a particular call to do this with the Society of Jesus in many different sectors (e.g. education, refugees, social concern, NGOs, etc) according to local realities and personal skills.

CHRIST AND CULTURE

We have encountered Christ in the Gospels and choose to follow Him. We are enriched not only by our own cultures which provide so much for the unique identity of each but, also, by what we receive through the cultures of one another: one of the profound blessings of our lives. Yet, we abhor the harm that the sinfulness of each culture can cause in breaking persons and in splitting community. Furthermore, in its drive towards uniformity, the emerging world culture seems to be having the negative effect of destroying the uniqueness of each culture more than the positive one of drawing peoples of different cultures together in one world: a world which respects the unique contribution of each culture. It is from these perspectives that we commit ourselves to the fuller realization of the presence of Christ in all cultures in the following ways:

1. Working in word and deed as prophets who foster the growth of all that is good and transforming all that is harmful in the cultures in the world where we live.

The various media and means of social communication, and especially the mass means, have tremendous potential for good and for evil. We commit ourselves to learning to use them effectively and to be critical of what is presented to the consumer. We must employ them extensively in our desire to communicate our Christian faith and the values for which we stand.



Regarding the dominant world culture

We oppose its individualism with the concern for dialogue found at a deeper level in this culture, its marginalization of the poor with its concern for human rights and for the dignity of all, and its consumerism with its more fundamental affirmation of life.

We affirm a simple life-style which never places the emphasis on things but always on who we are, on what we can share and on what will serve the human person. We commit ourselves to lives of witness emerging from our CLC form of community life, focused on receiving and giving, and our effort is to draw others into this way of living.

Regarding local and regional cultures

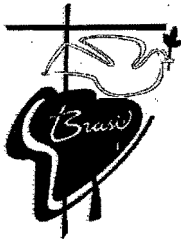
We support all that is unique in the realization that all humanity is finally enriched by every perspective. We support the concern for community, which often needs to be expanded beyond limited horizons, and the rich symbolic life, which enables us to dream and to create, even as we recognize that the symbolic can be used to demean and destroy.

2. Incarnating Gospel values in every situation so that every culture can realize its potential to bring humans fully alive

We shall incarnate ourselves in our own culture while still having the strength to be counter-cultural in our criticism and witness.

We attend, especially, to those who are searching that they may find meaning and to those who are hopeless that they may find a way.

We search for better forms of education so that true values may be appropriated and lived.



We recognize today that every stage of life has its crises and challenges and we support everyone on their journey, most especially young people who can face special difficulties because of the relativity of values presented to them.

We bring skills for dialogue and commitment to reconciliation in every situation.

3. We commit ourselves to becoming involved in finding a new way of being universal Church, drawing to it all that makes today's reality so rich in its diversity.

We promote dialogue in the Church and-between the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations, other religions, people who are searching, and all those of good will.

We work for authentic inculturation in local Churches, helping the Church in promoting what is positive in them and challenging their negative aspects. This applies to pastoral service, to catechetics, to liturgy and to theology.

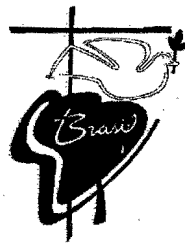
We work to integrate every aspect of our reality with our faith, including family, marriage and work.

We promote the values of authentic human relationships in the Church, which implies attention to healing our brokenness and working for the transformation of sinful structures.

CHRIST IN DAILY LIFE

As we want our belonging to CLC to run through everything we do in our daily life, we desire to live fully according to who we claim to be as an Ignatian Lay faith community on mission. This desire clearly has two important aspects that can both be connected with our commitment *to seek and to find God in all things*. On the one hand, we can miss God in the ordinary thereby missing the richness in God's

presence and many opportunities to serve. On the other hand, we can blind ourselves to God's presence in some aspect of our life, in this way, neglecting a challenge to grow and the potential to serve in this aspect. We discern the following four strong desires and make them our priorities in our mission today with regard to bringing the presence of Christ to our daily life.



1. We desire to nourish the absolute value of every human person and of authentic human relationships in the community of humankind.

Throughout our entire world, the forces of death are strongly at work and have an impact on all our daily activities. We want always to affirm the human person created in the image of God.

We want to live lives that are unafraid to be affectionate in our relationships and to appreciate this world as gift of God.

In the faith conviction that no one is expendable, we want to have a special care for the poor and to include this perspective in the decisions we make in every aspect of our daily lives.

We include a critical Christian understanding of globalization, environmental problems and militarization in our interpretation of the world

2. We desire to promote family life as a basic unit in building the world into the Kingdom of God.

Concern for the area of family, in its variety of manifestations, moves us very strongly since it is so threatened today even to the point of decay.

We will cultivate authentic relationships and affection in couples, between parents and children and between the generations.

We are committed to living marriage and family life in a discerning way in order to integrate them with our faith so as to live these dimensions fully as vocation of the Lord in the Church.

We give ourselves especially to care for families suffering from any kind of brokenness.

3. We desire to accompany young people on the way to meaningful life and to invite them into contact with the Lord who offers them fullness of life.



Young people are especially vulnerable to consumerism and other anti-values. Each young person stands at the crossroad of choosing a way of life, and we work to ensure that the way of Christ may be seen as attractive and challenging. We will listen to young people in their hopes, desires and generosity and foster their growth in every way we can.

We will offer young people an inculturated faith initiation, meeting them where they are, and going together the way towards a deeper encounter with Christ with the effective help of Ignatian pedagogy.

4. We desire to integrate professional and other working activities into a truly human life and into our Christian faith

The pressure of an overarching concern for profit must be resisted in all areas of professional life.

While affirming that work is not an end in itself, we want to value work and the dignity of the worker.

We want to overcome the distance often present between our faith commitment and our professional and working activities so as to live these activities as a part of our personal vocation.

We also want to find ways to deal with unemployment and underemployment, even in circumstances where we cannot solve this problem.

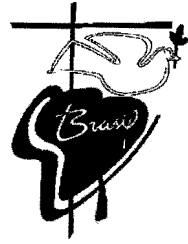
MEANS FOR MISSION

1. Spiritual Exercises

As a world community, CLC is to actively support all its members by providing the means and resources to fully experience the grace of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, in offering them models that are dynamic, progressive and continuous. Since Ignatian Sources are integral to our spirituality, we wish to read them all from a lay perspective. In this spirit, we support the attempts to adapt the Spiritual Exercises.

2. Formation

CLC will provide formation teams, at regional and world levels, who will develop and propose formation programs that, intellectually and affectively, integrate the spiritual, communitarian and apostolic dimensions of CLC life. Special assistance ought to be given to developing programmes that will enable our members to be pro-active and counter-cultural whenever needed.



CLC will offer its expertise in the development of persons, integrating faith and life, touching all dimensions of daily life with a special sensitivity to the poor and marginalized. We wish to provide formation and education programmes that will enable persons and/or communities to listen actively, to deal with conflict resolution, and promote sincere and open dialogue among our members and with other persons in society.

CLC will assist all its members in learning the process of personal and communal discernment, which will lead to more effective personal and communal apostolic activities. To achieve this, we will provide meaningful programmes and training for leaders, guides and coordinators in the spirit and method of Ignatian pedagogy. We also wish to provide the means and resources to all our members, at every stage of human development, so as to attain an awareness of personal vocation and the affirmation of their identity in the community.

3. Collaboration in mission

CLC feels a particular call to collaboration in mission with the Society of Jesus and other Ignatian family members. CLC is especially interested in the creation of and in actively supporting apostolic networks within the Church and with other international groups.

4. Finances

CLC is especially concerned with the financial support given by all its National Communities in dealing with its expenses at the world level. Financial responsibility should always be discerned by each member in his/her small community, and is clearly seen as a sign of mature commitment to World CLC.

CLC CANADA

As a member of the World Community since 1982, CLC Canada consists of 46 groups with approximately 275 adult members. As well, 200 secondary school youth and approximately 30 university students are in formation. The following presents some highlights from CLC Canada's National Assembly and their way of proceeding in response to Our Common Mission Document.

The beautiful setting of the Anglican and Catholic colleges of the University of Manitoba campus was the location for this first National Assembly to be held in the western region of Canada in June 1999.

The Grace of the Assembly: We pray that we may better love and serve the Blessed Trinity in our world as the Canadian CLC

Our Ecclesiastical Assistant John English S.J. never missed an opportunity to teach us some of the finer points of Ignatian Spirituality and kept drawing our attention to the movements of the Spirit. "Did you notice what was just happening here?" was a much-heard query.

Outgoing presidents Shirley and Bob Gatchene summarized the growth they had seen in their four years of presidency. The issues of Group Guide training and Formation have received much attention during their presidency. They left us with the affirmation "CLC has a prophetic vision and many gifts to offer communities, the Church and the world" and challenged the membership to continue to grow in formation and action for justice, becoming responsible and visible in the larger Church.

Delegates from each of the four regions reported on their home communities. The diversity of their stories, the wealth of action for justice, their "gifts" held the attention of the Assembly because these are the threads that weave together the National Community.

As an honoured guest, Patrice Proulx S.J., Ecclesiastical Assistant for CVX Canada, reported on the action and growth of communities in Quebec.

Earl Smith SJ and Elaine Regan, delegates to the World Assembly in Itaici, Brazil, gave a brief introductory explanation of the calls to action of World Assemblies since 1982 (the year Canada was accepted as a National CLC). Through their slide presentation of the 1998 World Assembly and their reports of the ten-day gathering in Itaici, Brazil, the urgency of the "call to action" for CLC worldwide was felt. A strong recommendation arising from this presentation was that ***every CLC community in Canada have a Guide and an Action plan for Mission by the year 2,000.***

Through the entertaining and informative keynote speech given by Leah Michaud from the World Secretariat in Rome (formerly of P.E.I. Canada), we were given an opportunity to share in the work of CLC around the world.

Development of the Canadian Common Mission

The process began with local communities studying the Common Mission from Itaici that had been circulated across Canada. Secondly, their reflections on the Itaici document were gathered and given, by General Council, to a "working group" with the mandate to form a common action plan to move CLC Canada into the next millennium.

Using the Ignatian process of private reflection and small group sharing, participants at the National Assembly had the opportunity to pray over the proposed common mission for Canada. It was an historic moment when Fr. John English announced the unanimous acceptance by the National Assembly of our **Canadian Common Mission.**

THE CANADIAN COMMON MISSION



The whole is greater than the sum of parts. As Christians Life Community Canada we will act as communities, not as individual identities. We will develop leadership in CLC Canada that will move communities to action with special attention to youth/young adults. Through the apostolate of the Spiritual Exercises: Communication, Education, Social Justice in Action, we will strive to better love

and serve the Blessed Trinity in our world community as the Canadian CLC.

Later, each of the four regional groupings came up with concrete suggestions for ways to put into action the common mission in their area.

Some examples of the identified areas for action include:

- Working with Kosovo Refugees.
- Prison Ministry (inmates and families).
- Outreach to poor both locally and globally - direct service in needed areas and raising awareness of needs in larger community.
- Concerted effort in a number of regions to lobby the Canadian government to support the forgiveness of debt for Third World countries: raising public support and meeting with elected officials.
- Concerted effort in three regions for promotion of Youth CLC e.g. in Catholic High Schools.
- Ongoing promotion of Spiritual Exercises using CLCers as Directors.
- Establishment of Regional teams to provide training courses for Leaders.

Proposals and further Action:

- ① The value of communal action for justice as an integral component of all official CLC gatherings.
- ② That communal action for justice must become a constitutive element of our CLC way of Life from pre-community formation onwards.
- ③ In response to the Keynote Address at the Assembly, and a heightened awareness of the international (world) flavour of CLC, a National Disaster Fund was inaugurated with our first donation sent to the victims of the earthquake in Turkey through Development & Peace Organization in the name of CLC Canada.
- ④ In studying the Common Mission from Itaici, communities across Canada have responded by seeking to become financially responsible

both nationally and internationally. The delegates again revisited the financial question. The General Council unanimously decided to form a Working Group on Finances re World dues and our own financial situation.

- ⑤ Formation materials must include information on financial responsibilities.

National Assemblies are costly gatherings but they provide the only opportunity (now only every five years) for members from across Canada to become friends with each other, to share stories, hopes, dreams, ideas and actions for justice. The call to action, which emerged from the Winnipeg Assembly, sent all participants home with an eagerness to share with the members of their local communities and to commit themselves to action in their regions.

Presidents Fran Morrison and Elaine Regan value the opportunity to meet, pray and work with CLC from around the world. Their proposal, for an international meeting with CLC USA, the Vietnamese Companions of Christ (VCCt), CVX Canada and CLC Canada, has passed the preliminary stage. They eagerly look forward to this gathering as another opportunity to share how these National Communities have implemented the Common Mission received in Itaiçi.



EA John English SJ and delegates at the Assembly

CLC CHILE

Felipe Arteaga, the National President of CLC Chile reports on the work done in the post Itaici era. This National CLC consists of approximately 750 adult members, 320 young people and 3,100 high school students.

For CLC Chile the experience of Itaici and "Our Common Mission" document was a confirmation of what it had discerned in its National Assembly of 1997. At that Assembly, the National Community completed an important stage in its apostolic discernment process where mission priority guidelines were set for the coming years.

In addition to defining specific areas for the common mission, the process experienced by a large part of small communities, allowed both communities and individuals to turn themselves definitely to the Mission. After this process and following Itaici, we can say that the Chilean CLC, its communities and members, are "*marked by the mission*".

In October of 1998, a national guides' meeting was held where the guide's "*role as a mission driving force*" was examined. At this meeting, documents and other materials were presented with the purpose that would permit every CLC member to question his or her personal and communal mission within the framework of the national apostolic priorities and of "Our Common Mission" document.

Following these late 1998 experiences, challenges for 1999 were defined. These are:

Long-term personal growth path

Despite having a clear-cut orientation, (e.g. the General Principles, Our Charism, Adult Formation Plans) there is no growth plan that includes definite and concrete steps, movements and signs. It is important to provide signals to accompany personal and community processes of growth and maturing, so that every community member can assume the

responsibility of his or her formation and can rely on a clear orientation on the subjects, activities, demands and requirements faced at each stage.

During 1999 such a plan was formulated, at least its initiation phase, and the first two years actively participated in, considering the specific experiences of each region. During the National Assembly of 1999, this preliminary document was analysed and approved with a number of observations. For the year 2000, our proposal is to have a final document by mid-year to be distributed among community members and guides at the next guides' meeting.

Personal and Community Apostolic Discernment Consolidation and Follow-Up

Continuation with the discernment process in its materialization and evaluation stage was proposed. Participants approved the creation of structures and follow-up strategies. The creation of regional apostolic teams, the selection of apostolic fronts, project formulation, and the like, were important activities during 1999.

Mechanisms were proposed to promote permanent discernment of both the personal and the community mission. To that end, the "*That your mission becomes your work*" guidelines were useful tools that motivated communities to elaborate on the subject.

The community follow-up and motivation process regarding apostolic matters is a permanent task that must continue into the year 2000.

Working with guides

The guides' meeting of 1998 confirmed that guides play an important role in leading the community to grow and mature. However, it is crucial that all members assuming the service of guiding their small communities have the support necessary to make their work more effective and fruitful.

In this point, work at the National level during 1999 was not intense enough. It is still necessary to promote and work in co-ordination in: guide

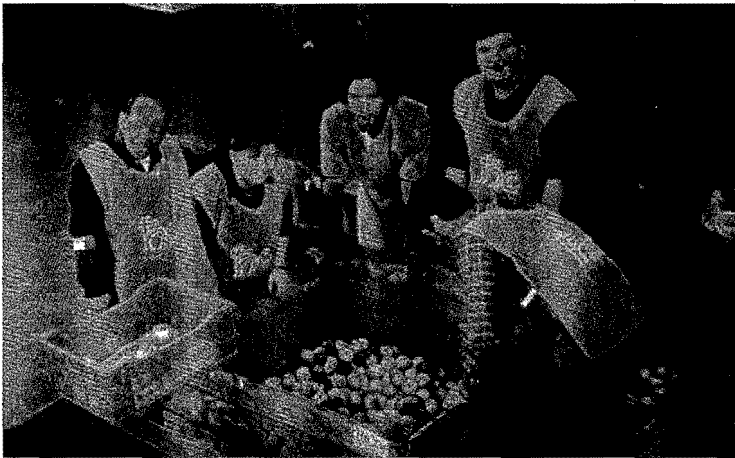
selection, training and accompanying; structuring guide units at the regional and national levels. This is one challenge still present in this year 2000.

In addition to continuity tasks that arise from the 1999 work evaluation, our National Council has defined the priorities for the following actions:

- *Pro-active*...participation of National and Regional CLCs in Jubilee activities.

- *Visibility*...despite our activities' dispersion and the diversity of charisms present in our communities, we must begin generating an image for the outside that permits us to give testimony of who we are and the many gifts that our Lord has given us. We feel that the time has come for CLC has to leave its private quarters and cross over to the public scene. We have something to say and a testimony to give.

- *Collaboration*...with Latin American CLC. We must assume the responsibility of collaborating with other Latin American CLCs, especially within the framework of our coming July meeting in Uruguay. There are several ways to collaborate, such as sharing material, supporting certain activities, and participating actively and creatively in the Latin American Service Team.



Working in a Santiago market collecting fruit for the Hogar de Cristo

CLC KENYA

CLC Kenya, with 21 groups of 219 persons mainly in the 18 to 35 age category, has been a member of the WCLC since 1994. Following is an edited portion of Levi Matsesbe Koyio's, past president of CLCK, address to the National Assembly of CLC Kenya in October 1999. As well, the National response to the Itaici Document is included.

THE EMERGING CHALLENGES FACING CLC KENYA

CLC: a community for the laity

Our church is revisiting the Second Vatican Council for inspiration about the role of the laity, and there is plenty. Do we as lay people in a lay organisation realise our role? There is an important shift in the thinking of our Church to empower the laity in order to partake adequately in evangelisation.

Many people in the Church are convinced that the new millennium is going to witness a Church for the laity. This is because the hope of the Church is in the laity, who witness to the presence of Christ in their own lives. Yet, if we look for the origin of the word laity, we notice that its connotation is not at all complementary! It was often associated with the *masses, uneducated, pitiful people whose only role is to fill the church on Sundays and other days of obligation*. This is not the kind of reputation that will empower us to take up our role. We must shake off this perception and take Christ to the world of our lives and be leaven.

We, in CLC, are privileged to have an organisation that forms and equips us with the necessary tools to take up our challenge. We shall do ourselves proud by taking seriously our vocation as CLC. The three-fold aspects of CLC, that is, our specific spirituality, community life and mission fit perfectly the new requirement for active participation in the church. This means that, more than ever, we are called to be faithful to the life we have chosen to express our Christianity. Choosing life and finding God in all things are not easily internalised unless we take formation seriously.

As a vocation, CLC prescribes a particular way of life unique to itself and surpassing the basic minimum of a Catholic and Christian life. If we fail to embrace, consistently, all the three aspects of CLC, we are losing out and doing our selves a disservice. The cliché that you cannot eat your cake and have it makes sense in this context. We cannot afford to be lukewarm, behaving as if we belong and as if we do not. Usually, good things in life do not come easy. We must make a choice. Either CLC is our chosen way through which we express our Christian faith and give it due priority, or it is not.

For example, if you decide that you want to belong to CLC but attend your group meetings only sometimes, you need to reconsider your commitment. A lot of our members are held behind in their spiritual growth because of lack of regular attendance in their CLC small groups. This is clearly not ideal. If we are not committed to our annual retreats, daily prayer of awareness, small groups and service to others then, fundamentally, we are wasting our chances. If, however, we find the CLC way of life demanding, as we should, it is because we have asked for the "*more*".

This is a personal challenge to each one of us. We cannot afford to be wishy-washy. It struck me that we may be forgetting the basics of our vocation. It is important that the membership of CLC should understand the CLC way of life in the same way and in the same sense. Although, as individual members, the specifics of our life will always be different, the basics of our vocation should not be.

Challenges for CLC

Let us look at the challenges we face as individual CLC members and as an organisation:

a) Individual Challenges

As a layperson and member of CLC, the desire for "more" (zaidi) is always inviting us to read the signs of the times and to discover opportunities and challenges facing us. Indeed, challenges that face us Kenyans are huge. As an ordinary person, one is tempted to feel that his or her role does not matter to the wider society. After all, I am a mere peasant, an employee, a student or jobless. Our sense of service for others, which should radiate from within, demands that we begin from where we are. Our families,

friends and associates, employers and teachers should all experience the warmth of CLC. We can draw inspiration from Jesus' response to the disciples of John the Baptist; "*Go and tell John what you have seen and heard, the blind can see, the sick are cured and the poor have the good news preached to them*" (Luke 7:22). Each one of us ought to evaluate constantly whether our lives bear testimony to what we claim to be.

Perhaps, we need to underscore the effectiveness of the quality of our lives and the contribution that CLC makes. Sometimes, we postpone our actions for what we consider big things. We fail to do small things because we suspect that our effect is insignificant. Perhaps we say, I can do so much when I become the National President of CLC or the chairperson of my parish or, for that matter, when I become the head of the family. But, which one of our apostolate is big or small in the eyes of God? The hope of humankind lies in the quality of individuals and their relationships. Kenya and, indeed, the world need honest and good-natured people. We believe that CLC's contribution to the wider society is the production of such people that the world longs for. We all can remember the kind of joy we feel to walk into an office and find a kind person ready to attend to our needs.

If we look at Christian history, we see that there is no value in distinguishing between big and small tasks. We learn this from Mary, the mother of Jesus and our mother. In her time, Mary was just a villager but the small "Yes" she said turned out to be extremely significant. Two thousand years later almost no one remembers the great Kings who were discharging big tasks. But thanks to Mary, because of her "Yes", millions of people in the world continue to change their lives. As a matter of fact, we are here today because of her "Yes".

If we have not yet understood that there is no difference between big and small tasks, Jesus came and worked as a carpenter. Although we know very well only the last three of his 33 years, Jesus must have redeemed humanity too by living the ordinary village life, playing with the children of his village, working in his father's workshop, leading a family life in a village community. He was apparently carrying out small tasks yet, through those tasks, he performed the greatest work that the human race has ever known.

But, in case we still did not get the message, when he recruited his disciples, he did so from the class of people considered devoted to small tasks. Why did Jesus not choose a more diverse team? Surely there must

have been lawyers, administrators, politicians and all! But no, it had to be such a team of "small" people so that nobody can be exempted.

Therefore, from our Christian point of view, mission or service to others is not a matter of choice. We cannot claim that my part does not matter. How to distinguish which are small or big tasks; they were blended as one task of salvation long ago! This is our challenge. Each one of us has to act after discerning what to do and live his or her task as an important one. If inspired by the Lord, it will be a large task even though it may appear small. Come and offer yourself in whatever it is that you can do. Do not wait until the ExCo makes requests of you.

b) Challenges for CLC as an Organisation

As an organisation we must ask, what is our strength? To begin with, our CLC way of proceeding can help us successfully perform the many activities, which make up our lives. Secondly, in CLC we have a commitment to a way of life that we can share with others from whatever field, which will enhance the reality that they are living. But to be effective, we must be clear and precise in our objectives. If we may borrow from the business world, a lot of companies are now asking themselves what their core competencies are and, accordingly, restructuring their organisations. It is because they realise that they cannot be all things to all customers. If you spread yourself too thin, you cannot be effective.

Our main challenge as an organisation is to maintain the clarity of our mission, to keep focused and not to be distracted. There are several organisations that are fulfilling different needs, but one of the areas that need attention is the problem of lack of meaning in life. Many people do not have a clear meaning in life. This is something that is central to the CLC way of life and something which we can share. It is our core competence. Anybody who is aware of the Spiritual Exercises will confirm this. We know that our mission is decisive for the relationship between people and the meaning of life. Therefore, we have a mission that is related to a principal need of our times. This is something we can share with the youth and, indeed, any group of people in a variety of ways.

A common mission is a focal point consolidating our organisational effort even though individual members may be engaged in different activities. When we come to considering our options this weekend, we should do so with an open mind as a community not as individuals.

When Fr. Fernando Salas SJ, the World CLC Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant, was here early in the year, he challenged us to be courageous and to consider an option for social justice and defence for human rights in our country. The few days he lived with us were long enough to brush up against the harsh reality of our country that we have become so much accustomed to. In his view, this is most urgent and he could not accept that a serious Christian would live in these circumstances and do nothing about it.

However, we must not lose sight of the enormity of the problem against our resources and capability. Yes, we have a serious social structural problem, but do we as CLC have adequate means of responding? As an organisation, we ought to be steadfast on what we commit ourselves to but constantly evaluate our ever-changing circumstances and ask God what else can we do. This is the challenge I wish to leave for the incoming ExCo.

In conclusion, we have reason to assert the importance of our tasks. As individuals, we need to return to the basics: the person with his or her values, the person with his or her mission, the person in harmony with other persons, the person who discovers, in a community, the profound sense of his or her existence. For all these dear brothers and sisters, we need formation and we need consistency.

Statement on Mission Priorities of CLC Kenya

"The Word, Who is Life, this is our theme.... We are declaring to you what we have seen and heard... that you too may share our life" (1 John 1:1-3).

Preface

At the end of 1999, on the dawn of a new millennium, our Kenya needs us. The signs of the times point to a situation of hardship, need and despair. As Christians who have chosen life in community, we seek to give hope to our social reality. To achieve this, we have decided to make the following three areas of concern our priorities for mission:

① Youth

Youth comprise more than 60% of the population. They are the future and energy of the nation. And yet, many youth are vulnerable and lack

direction. They feel neglected and ignored not only by society but also by the church.

The youth are the best evangelisers of their fellow youth. We in CLC, considering our relative youthfulness, therefore, seek to provide formation that can help youth cope and solve their problems, prepare themselves for future challenges and empower themselves to be witnesses of the Good News to their fellow youth and to the nation.

For this, we first need to train ourselves and then make ourselves available in an understanding and appreciative manner. We also seek to collaborate with the local churches and other groups already dealing with the youth.

② **Good Governance: Civic Education and Constitutional Reform**

Kenya is in the process of reviewing our basic law. The constitution is the backbone of our nation. Yet many of us do not know anything about it. There is a need to enlighten our selves and our fellow citizens, to empower us to participation in this awesome task that means a great deal to our future peace, justice and prosperity.

For this, we need to understand the constitution as it reads now, the issues involved and their implications. We can then go and share this with others. In doing this, we will continue the mission of Christ: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives,... to set the oppressed free"* (Luke 4:18).

③ **Sharing Our Ignatian Spirituality**

Ignatian spirituality has been a great gift to us. We want to share what we have received with others. This will have a multiplier effect through CLC's contributing in deepening Christian faith among the laity in Kenya. Therefore, we seek to witness by our lives and to make ourselves available to help in the formation of others, for example, through the Zaidi Centre.

Conclusion

The Family is the custodian of the values and norms of a culture, the fundamental building block of society and the basic unit of the church. A negative culture and an amoral society compromise the teaching of Christianity. A healthy family leads to a healthy society and church. CLC will seek to participate in church activities that build up the family leading to vigorous youth and a strong nation.

CLC LUXEMBOURG

Many months have gone by since our meeting at Itaiçi in 1998. I want to try to tell you about several important events that have since taken place in the life of our small CLC.

In May 1999, CLC Luxembourg celebrated its **25th birthday**. It was back in 1974 that a number of women teachers, long involved in the Sodalities of Mary, made the transition to CLC thanks to the invaluable help of CLC Germany. They constituted our first three groups. Twenty-five years on a process of continuous growth! We met in May to celebrate our anniversary, to take a break and spend the happy occasion in each other's company. There were moments of very deep encounter with people whom we had come to know in the course of many meetings and whom we now, suddenly, come across in a totally new way. There were encounters, as well, with those whom one has known only briefly and again with others whom one has just met. Such was my experience during these days.

We were also delighted to share this joyful moment with invited CLC guests from neighbouring countries. Some of them had helped us 'way back when' to 'get moving'. They came from every direction to celebrate this birthday with us. These two days gave us a chance to get in touch with other CLC members and to broaden our horizons. Two days that allowed us to have a strong sense of the CLC as a worldwide community that is rooted in small groups.

Today our community numbers nine groups of roughly sixty members overall. Two-thirds are women. Five guides accompany us: three Jesuits and two laywomen. By far the majority of our members are married and most of them take part as couples. Half of the community are between 40 and 50 years of age. Our community has expanded and got a new lease on life especially in the last 10 years. Our members' professional qualifications are generally at the post-secondary or university level. Most are wage earners in the social professions of health care and teaching. Certain groups are very spread out on the map. Two groups are French-speaking.

To keep in touch with the organisation of our community's life, the "National Team" (made up of 3 lay people and the ecclesiastical assistant)

meets with the "Discernment Team" once every trimester. The latter is made up of the treasurer of Euro-link plus the group co-ordinators and a representative of each of the 4 working-groups, namely Literature/archives, the periodical CVX-Intern, Promotion of CLC and Ignatian Spirituality, and Youth. The community, as a whole, gets together for the two national days, the Octave Mass, the annual general meeting and the summer outing.

One feature of Luxembourg CLC is its small size (in keeping with our small country). Members move straight from the local level to the national. We have no regional structures. As we are not always capable ourselves of providing the various aspects of formation required for the growth of our members, they find themselves often inclined to visit a neighbouring country to take part in courses, retreats and even for spiritual direction. This has real advantages: you discover the differences and the uniqueness among neighbouring National Communities and you get a first-hand notion of the World Community through the European region.

Responding to Our Common Mission

Upon our return from Itaici we gave an account of the World Assembly's work to the leaders of our community who were not in Itaici and to the preparatory team as well. We set aside the whole day for the Groups (a national get-together for all CLC members) on 25 October 1998 as a Day of Prayer and Reflection on the fruits that Itaici '98 brought forth. Here we singled out four key points:

- ⊙ Attention to the poor; keeping them before our minds in all our daily decisions.
- ⊙ Concern for the youth, listening to their questions and giving witness to what makes us live in hope.
- ⊙ The challenge to be prophets in this world through the witness of our hope.
- ⊙ Taking care to keep Ignatian pedagogy as our basic outlook, day in and day out, and to propose it to others.

We decided to make a dedicated effort in the coming months to put these four key points into tangible terms.

The elections helped the whole community to see clearly how necessary it is that the entire membership takes on responsibility for the whole community.

The Lengthy Election Process

For the past 11 years, Agnes Rausch has taken on, along with others, the leadership of Luxembourg CLC. This year we felt the need to choose other leaders: The process was a very long and hard one. The elections, initially planned for February 1999, had to be postponed to World Day, given the fact that there was only one person, among all those who had been nominated for the new 'National Team', who accepted the nomination.

The whole process was started over once again from the beginning, after a very important general meeting at which we became aware of the importance of putting into practise a way of becoming and remaining a community. We also put all our trust in the Lord's guidance in this difficult process.

The outgoing National Team, the National ExCo, made the decision to propose an expansion of the team to 3 members, given the obvious fact that the workload had become too heavy for 2 persons. Even if the community is small in numbers, a minimum of functions and services must be provided quite independent of the number. We took up, once again, the usual process of the groups nominating candidates. Two persons agreed to be candidates for the National Team. Since there were 3 posts to be filled, we went ahead on the 21st March 1999 with an 'open election' in which each and every member was a candidate, in order to choose that third National Team member. This all took place in an atmosphere of peaceful confidence in the Holy Spirit's influence.

Future Directions



The new National Team sat down to give shape to our community's future directions.

- ❖ We are presently trying to work out a response to the Euro-Team, which has submitted certain plans to all the European communities.
- ❖ At the same time, we are asking ourselves how to make concrete our 'art of living' in the Church and in the world (we mean here the issue of visibility).
- ❖ The Jubilee 2000 celebrations here in Luxembourg fit into the overall diocesan programme called "The Church of 2005". Our community is playing its part in various ways. One way of being present consists in sharing with others the treasure we have received. And so, working with others such as pastoral directors and Jesuits, we offer an Initiation to Prayer, or the Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life and so forth. We go out to encounter men and women where they live. We will see how to get these plans moving in concrete terms. A working group is looking into this at the present time.
- ❖ Another working group is getting underway in the whole area of Youth. This group came out of the election process in March 1999.

Our future directions look something like this:

- I. CLC: 'an art of living' for us to discover and deepen and share with others in the service of God and people. Here we mean a personal commitment, in which each of us is invited to translate the fruits of Itaici into an art of living, both personally and in the local group.
- II. Experiencing this art of living, this treasure, in a way, which is externally visible and definite.
 - a. In the social area:
 - ◆ The question of refugees in Luxembourg (cf. 'Society and Politics Today' and the Euro-Team's project).
 - ◆ Setting up some evening discussions on a theme with and for CLC members and others who might be interested.
 - b. In the Luxembourg church:
 - ◆ In the context of the 'The Church of 2005' to take part in the various celebrations and feast days.
 - ◆ Offering the Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life.
 - ◆ The Youth Project (see the Euro-Team's proposal).

III. Care for the formation of CLC members:

- ◆ National get-togethers twice a year.
- ◆ Weekend Encounters for the formation of co-ordinators and guides.
- ◆ Discernment Team meetings.
- ◆ Evening Discussions on a Theme.
- ◆ Joining CLC Encounters in other countries.
- ◆ Individually directed Spiritually Exercises.
- ◆ Personal spiritual direction.

IV. Care for the CLC community as a whole:

- ◆ Organising a day of fun and relaxation.

Finances

As regards the financial role that Luxembourg CLC plays in the World Community, we are in a position to maintain our contribution at the same level as before. As a matter of fact, we have roughly the same number of paid-up members in the community. Concerning individual donations for the benefit of the World Community, this is left to the free decision of the members themselves. We are planning to come back to this question at the time of our next annual general meeting. We feel that the issue of finances is a very important one for the World Community and we welcome the clear-headed approach of the ExCo finance committee's letter in June of 1999.

Réne SCHMIT
Luxembourg CLC

CLC PHILIPPINES

Since 1967, CLC Philippines has been a member of the World Community. Currently, there are 33 groups with 500 members plus 44 pre-community groups with 1795 members. More than three quarters of those involved are under 35 years of age.

Responding to *Our Common Mission* - The Filipino Way

Itaici '98 was a moment of grace for the Christian Life Community of the Philippines (CLCP). We can truly appreciate this touch of God, and our response to it, only in the context of CLCP and Philippine history. May we invite you to scan with us our history of salvation?

CLC came to the Philippines in November 1967. It caught fire among the students of Catholic colleges and universities. Some words in the 1967 General Principles like *unity of life, signs of the times, most urgent and universal, Christ poor and humble, community life* leaped out like sparks and won enthusiastic following. A season of *aggiornamento* swept across the country. The receptive Sodalities underwent renewal. New CLC units were organized.

An intense burning stirred those who joined CLC. The fire urged them to help reform a country where the anomalous gap between rich and poor was brazenly propped up by unjust political-economic structures. The CLC response took shape during the national convention in December 1971 in Zamboanga City. In a document called the "**Zamboanga Stand**", the convention delegates declared that:

The Philippine National Federation of CLCs, feeling the urgency of the times, affirms along with other concerned groups, the task of liberating our people and helping toward the total development of the nation. We affirm, that as Christians, we are called to the work of liberation and development.

In view of this, we set for ourselves the following priorities as imperatives:

1. carry out a program of formation that incorporates Filipino life: its values, culture, problems.
2. work and fight for the equitable distribution of goods and resources and help set up structures that support this equitable distribution.
3. help carry out the task of liberation among the victims of oppression and the agents of oppression.
4. do what we can to help break the source of tyranny and injustice.
5. call for an educational system that truly forms social consciousness in us, Filipinos.

Our formation programs from then on were geared towards these imperatives.

The declaration of martial law on Sept. 21, 1972 intensified this thrust even more. In April 1979, at our General Assembly (GA), we stated our purpose of existence: **“To participate in the transformation of the Philippines into a just and humane society”**. We needed this guiding star to keep us on track through turbulent times.

Then, during the April 1982 GA another statement emerged: In the light of our Christian Faith and our Philippine history and in response to the call of the Church for the Poor, we shall carry out the following:

- improve formation program by giving emphasis on the political and economic aspects
- initiate livelihood programs
- formulate a working ideology in the light of the Gospel
- make a study concerning human rights and dignity
- link with groups involved in the promotion of human rights
- live the chosen alternative life style rooted in the Gospel
- be in solidarity with the poor

In August 1983, the cold-blooded assassination of Benigno Aquino (husband of former President Cory Aquino) further fuelled our conviction and struggles.

When the “people power revolution” of 1986 broke out, we joined...in fear and trembling.... the people who, with crucifixes, rosaries and flowers, faced armoured personnel carriers, machine guns and confused soldiers.

After the revolution, we thought that half of the battle was won. We turned inward to fix and fortify the CLCP body for greater apostolic fruitfulness. Over again we asked ourselves: *What really is CLCP's rationale for existence? If we vanish, would anybody ever miss us?*

Prayerfully, laboriously, not without tension and pain, we overhauled our organizational structures. We re-examined our reason for existence. We sorted out our non-negotiable core values. We sought and found our common national mission. We formulated a vivid description of what we want to be in the year 2000. At our GA in April 1994, the soul-searching efforts gelled into a vision-mission statement which captured, in a memory-friendly catch phrase, the mission of CLCP: **A SPREADING IGNATIAN FIRE!**

This rallying cry moved us to further questioning: *Just what does this mean in relation to the **persistent** problems of our country and of the Philippine Church?*

During our GA in April 1997, whose theme was “With Christ in His Public Life”, we reached another landmark. We saw, as a further response to God's call, that CLC FORMATION is our distinct offering to Church and Country. Following Christ, who went public at age thirty, we braced up for a full blast marketing of the charism we have received.

We moved mainly on two tracks: the further streamlining of organizational structures and formation programs.... and the establishment of the Formation Institute (FI) whose sole function was to offer formation services to other individuals, groups and institutions.

Alongside the focus on formation, the concept of a Social Development Institute (SDI) took shape gradually. While helping in “opening hearts to conversion”, we kept hearing the persistent call to offer a concrete share in

the mission “to change oppressive structures” (GP 8). The many years of groping search finally ended in May 1999 when a CLC member began her job as full time SDI coordinator.

In this thirty-two year history of CLC in the Philippines, where does Our Common Mission (OCM) fit in?

With deep joy and gratitude, we realized that OCM **confirmed** our three-decade journey of many steps, which were often slow, timid, fumbling and bungling. OCM also propelled us to move on. In particular, the statement “We, as CLC, are called to witness to a world community that empowers its members to be prophets of justice and hope” called our attention to the prophetic dimension of the CLC way of life. This inspired us to hold our April 1999 GA with the theme: **“With Christ - the Prophet of Justice and Hope.”**

Three days of grappling with the theme led us to “The Grace of GA’99”. At the GA, we gained an initial understanding of the prophetic dimension of CLC and an increased desire:

- To be like Christ who proclaimed the justice of God and the hoped-for coming of the Kingdom
- To be with Christ, the prophet of Justice and Hope
- To be PLACED WITH THE SON, the Father’s Beloved and Chosen One.

Itaici ‘98, thus, flowed to us through the Grace of GA’99. This grace spelled out these concrete mandates:

- To fine tune our formation programs in order to better empower members to discern, own and live out faithfully and pro-actively their corporate mission that incarnates a preferential option for the poor. A Commission on Mission was formed to focus on this task particularly during the Jubilee year.
- To develop more public-friendly, Ignatian formation programs and to pep up marketing strategies to reach more people who hunger for God and for a way to connect with Him. The FI spearheads this mission. It has developed a youth program. During the Jubilee year, it will step up

its efforts in polishing its program for the low-income sector. In response to particular needs, local communities will continue to offer Ignatian-flavoured recollections, retreats or values formation seminars to students and out of school youth, women, street children, parish workers, couples, and other interested groups.

- To develop programs that will help empower the CLCs to assist in the social development of their localities. This is the domain of the SDI. Its priorities within the next two years are to (1) help manage a CLC foundation that extends petty loans at low interest to small scale entrepreneurs, (2) set up an income generating project in the CLCP Formation Center and (3) conceptualise a Community Organizing Volunteer Program for CLC members.
- To nurture our partnership with the Jesuits which is blooming in the area of retreat work. Because of the swelling demand for retreats in daily life, we will increase our availability as collaborators in guiding retreats and in training future retreat guides.
- To strengthen linkage and collaboration with other NGOs, GOs, movements, institutions, parishes and with the Ignatian family and other religious denominations.

*We are aware that we are unworthy of what has been entrusted to us all these years. But the Lord of our history is far greater than our unworthiness, sins, limitations and fears. And so, onward to the third millennium we go. By the grace of this faithful God, and with a revitalizing go-signal from Itaici, we dare walk on with Christ, the prophet of justice, of hope and of a never ending JUBILEE. Aware of the shadows of doom and gloom that loom in our country and yet remaining in joyful hope and gratitude, we look forward to our national convention on April 7-9, 2000. At this moment of our history, we ask and pray for the Jubilee favour promised in our convention theme: **"With the Trinity - Celebrating Our Life in Mission."***

CLC POLAND

A member of the World CLC since 1986, CLC Poland has 260 members in 45 groups. 213 of these members have made either their Permanent or Temporary commitment. The following article reflects the response and ongoing discernment of CLC Poland in light of the call to a common mission.

The progress one makes in Ignatian spirituality immanently leads him/her to become more and more conscious of the call to participate in Christ's mission of salvation. The answer to this call finds expression in conversion of the heart, simple life style and various apostolic activities.

For several years, our members responsible for guiding the community meet for a retreat/seminar in August reflecting on the guidelines for the coming CLC year. In 1998, after Itaici, the seminar was devoted to Our Common Mission document. It came at the time when our community was coming to an end of clarifying its structures and ways of proceeding.

Common priorities of apostolic involvement of CLC Poland

An expression of a common mission of CLC Poland is the priority areas of apostolic service, constituting a framework for concrete projects and actions aimed at:

- ❖ supporting the families requiring material and spiritual aid, in order that they become true communities of love and integral growth,
- ❖ involvement in formation and education of young people, so that they can mature, being respectful of every form of life, open to challenges, competent and concerned with the common welfare,
- ❖ reviving the local Church and promotion of co-operation between the catholic movements, serving with guidance and sharing the gift of the Ignatian spirituality and the CLC way,

- ❖ involvement in public life, in order to convey the social teaching of the Church, with the desire that public life will become affected by the sense of justice and concern for the society as a whole,
- ❖ becoming involved in various charitable activities, helping those in need of material or spiritual support, the sick, disabled, elderly, lonely, the prisoners and their families, etc.,
- ❖ promoting competence, honesty and reliability through witness of life style in the work place,
- ❖ promotion of Ignatian spirituality and the CLC, through assistance in giving the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, organising retreats and seminars.

The priority areas of apostolic involvement were first defined by the National ExCo of CLC in Poland after the new General Principles and Norms of CLC were approved in Guadalajara. The National ExCo reviewed the priority areas each year, according to current challenges of our reality. The statement of common apostolic priorities in its present form was confirmed by the delegates to the National Assembly of CLC in Poland, which took place in April 1999.

The priority areas of our apostolic activity create the ground for a wide spectrum of concrete service and actions conducted by the particular communities and their members. In this general context of our mission, what is lacking is the sense of *common* projects, which would be regarded as *Our Common Mission*.

It is worthwhile to mention, that a common apostolic project does not mean that everyone participates in one programme of actions. A common project is the one that is being regarded as common, loved and cherished, for being an expression of our common participation in the mission of Christ. The implementation of a common project requires involvement, however, it can be expressed in different forms. Some will participate actively in the programme of actions, others will resort to prayers, some may offer their suffering, and yet the other can be supported materially. The most important is the consciousness, that it is the commitment of the whole community for the greater glory of God.

Becoming more conscious of our common mission

The ExCo of CLC in Poland, at its meeting in September 1999, defined two principal objectives for the coming year, namely reviving the means of formation and increasing the consciousness of our common mission. As means for achieving the second objective, the ExCo of CLC in Poland proposed the following lines of actions on three levels:

- ◆ a series of meetings in the basic communities
- ◆ a process of discernment in the local communities
- ◆ a process of discernment in the National Community

Our work in this respect ran on three levels:

1. CLC basic communities were asked to conduct a series of meetings for reflection and revision of their apostolic services in the light of eight apostolic tasks (areas) defined for lay Christians by the Pope in "Christifideles Laici", the areas of common mission described in "Our Common Mission" document and the apostolic priorities defined in the past years by the CLC in Poland.
2. In the local CLC (i.e. regional), the guiding team is asked to conduct the discernment/revision process aimed at defining the common apostolic projects, not saying that other activities are not important, but pointing to a few which are the most essential for that particular local community...its "raison d'etre".
3. A commission, headed by the Vice-president for Apostolic Service, is in the process of reviewing the existing projects and discerning the CLC answer to the "new call of the Lord" coming from our reality including, also, our answer to the common projects defined by the Euro-Team for CLC in Europe.

The results of the discernment process, both on the local and national level, will be subject for reflection and decision-making at the next General Council meeting in June 2000.

Since CLC Poland's acceptance in the World CLC, a strong emphasis in our formation has been given to the apostolic involvement of CLC members. Each CLC group was asked to discern and then, periodically, review its apostolic program. The ExCo (now the General Council) is discerning and reviewing the priority areas for CLC apostolic activity. There are a number of different apostolic projects conducted by different CLC members and groups.

The project, which made CLC visible in the Polish Church, was the involvement in the formation of the Council for the Catholic Movements in Poland, a form initiated from the "grass roots" of the Catholic movements, approved by the Polish Episcopate and assisted by the bishops. In June 1994, CLC, in close collaboration with the Society of Jesus, hosted the First Congress of Catholic Movements, which was a sign of a new image of the Church in Poland. In 1998, CLC and its members, in cooperation with other Catholic movements, were involved in the organization of the Diocesan Congress of Catholic Movements.

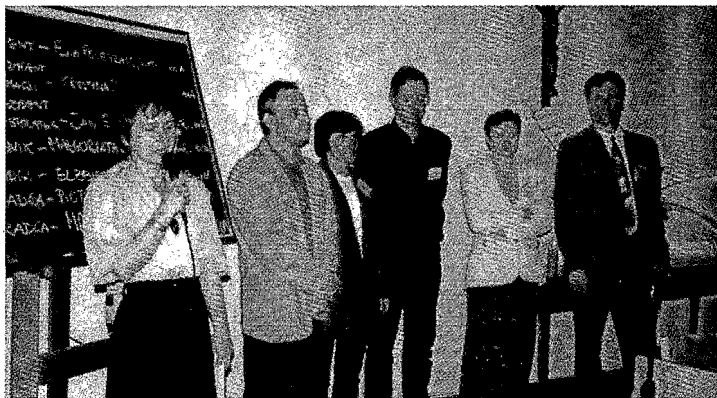
In November 2000, as a sign of a common celebration of the Great Jubilee Year, a second Congress of Catholic Movements in Poland will be held. Again, the CLC is involved in its organization. This time, CLC will be responsible for the preparation and conduct of the meetings of the working group on *local government and the growth of social and public involvement* scheduled for the second day of the Congress.

Projects which are subject to discernment:

- ◆ *Orientations* - Do we regard this bulletin as a common apostolic project, should it be continued, in which form, for whom, for what purpose?
- ◆ *Council for Catholic Movements* - What should be the form and extent of our involvement? What is the objective for the future? Is it still urgent and neglected?
- ◆ *Formation Centre on social and public involvement in Falenica*; Possible co-operation with the Society Jesus; preparing the concept paper. What should be the scope of our responsibility?

- ◆ *Education and formation* - There are a number of teachers, school directors and people working in the field of education. On that basis, do we attempt to create a forum, able to enter into partner-like relations with the Ministry and local structures with regard to the reform of the educational system in Poland?
- ◆ Discernment of the *forms and ways of participation* in the common projects of CLC in Europe
- ◆ Concept for the *Programme for CLC Youth*, pre-community in Bytom - co-operation with the high school run by the Society of Jesus in Gdynia. Are these the responsibility of a National or local community?
- ◆ Expanding the *project of Vacation with God* - Should we invite the participants from Eastern Europe or should we go there?

Proposals regarding the scope and form of the common apostolic projects of the CLC in Poland will be prepared subject to the final decision of the General Council at the meeting in June 2000.



ExCo CLC Poland



THE EURO-TEAM

INTRODUCTION

In our growth as a World Christian Life Community, new challenges arise as we try to deepen the CLC sense of Community and Mission from our respective countries. Co-operation among the CLC in Europe led to the feeling of the need for a stable structure to enable National Communities to face common problems and situations using our common European reality.

According to General Norm #38, National Communities in Europe wish to feel and act as a community within the wider World CLC Community. They wish to create a structure to be used as the framework for greater co-operation and growth as a European CLC.

I. EUROPEAN CLC

1. The National Communities of Europe, as recognized by the World CLC Assembly, in the understanding of the common needs in their development of the CLC path, constitute a European structure to help them in such a goal.
2. This European structure by no means constitutes any sort of federation of CLC National Communities, but is merely a working tool to help them and their members give a true expression of the World Community, thus giving an answer to the shared feeling of a single World Community.

II. EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY

1. The European National Communities shall meet in the European Assembly organized by the Euro-team one year after every CLC World Assembly.
2. Participants at the European Assembly shall be the European National Communities recognized by the CLC World ExCo. CLC from other countries may be invited as observers by the Euro-team to attend the meeting.

3. Normally the delegates from each European National Community attending the European Assembly shall be: the President, the Euro-link (if the President or Euro-link is unavailable then another member of the National ExCo can attend) and the National Ecclesiastical Assistant.
4. The European Assembly shall consist of two different sections. The *reflective section* shall deal with any specific matter to be decided by the organizer (the Euro-team). This is the part of the meeting that will launch the European CLC on another step in its growth process. The *statutory section* shall deal with matters related to internal aspects such as elections, report of activities and accounts, evaluations, discussion of new guidelines, etc.
5. The CLC World ExCo shall be invited to all European Assemblies and be kept duly informed about their activities and conclusions.
6. The reflective section of the European Assembly will amongst others serve as a tool that will ensure a continuous growth process within the special context of the European CLC situation. It shall deal with matters related to internal and external aspects of European CLC, including any decision and/or definition of European CLC common activities and/or apostolic projects.

III. EURO-TEAM

1. The Euro-team is a service team of the CLC European structure. It shall act as a discernment and service community called to assist the European National Communities, in close co-operation with the CLC World ExCo.
2. The work of the Euro-team shall not interfere with the statutory tasks and roles of the CLC World ExCo or of the CLC National Communities. For this purpose, the Euro-team shall do its best to keep these entities and bodies duly informed about the activities carried out and to co-ordinate with them any relevant matters.
3. The tasks of the Euro-team shall be the following:

At a European Level:

- co-ordination and identification of challenges in co-operation with the National Communities and the World ExCo.
- organization of the European Assembly.
- communication, information and support of CLC activities in Europe.
- organization of activities of interest to European CLC members.

- organization and co-ordination, with the respective CLC National Communities, of European related activities in specific countries.
- establishment of contacts with other institutions.

At a World Level;

- assistance and help in the implementation of a European dimension for CLC World guidelines as laid down by the CLC World ExCo and World Assembly.

Following the European Assembly last June 1999 in Celji, Slovenia, the newly elected Euro-team (ET) and the National Communities were given a mandate to propose, implement and support European projects based on the areas of Common Mission as defined in the Assembly. One of the objectives of our work this summer, and of the meeting, was to prepare concrete action proposals for CLC Europe. We developed two concrete action proposals for members: one, for a possible immediate implementation and the other, for a preliminary informative and prospective stage. A third one was to be discussed by the ET at our February meeting for further clarification before sending it out.

These projects are within the areas of common mission as described in the mandate and their action can be very concrete. Both projects have a lot of scope for co-operation with the Jesuits and other professional organisations. These projects are the beginning of an experiment, as was said in Slovenia, of *learning to walk before trying to run*.

The two projects will address:

- I. **Forced migrants**- a special group of marginalized people in Europe, those who have been forced to move out of their country and those who have been forced to move from their home but stay inside their country;
- II. **Youth of Europe.**

Once the projects start to function in our countries, the ET will start and support a network of people who are actively involved in the projects. The role of the ET will be to listen to the network and see where and how to be of help and of further service.

A question that may be raised: What is so new about these projects, we may have been working in this field for so many years? The answer is simple. ***The European CLC has grown up to collectively realise that this is a priority area.***

Reactions to the project proposals

A great number of the European National Communities reacted to the propositions, many by writing, some orally. The answers weren't always concrete though. Three communities told us that they are still in a consultation period with their members while two others wrote that they are in line with our proposals, but without telling us more.

In addition to the two proposed areas of youth and forced migration, a relevant number of communities mentioned two different fields of concern:

- the promotion of the Spiritual Exercises by the CLC
- the ongoing community building process of CLC itself

The decision was made to move ahead as follows:

1. The Maltese community is be asked to be the lead agency in building up a network of CLC members from Malta, Luxembourg, Spain, France, Germany, Belgium (Flemish) and Switzerland, who are active in the field of forced migration.
2. As many communities are concerned by the "youth" (but not necessary in contact with the Jesuit Volunteer Service), we decided to widen the "youth-project" and to re-discuss the issue in October in Poland with all the Euro-links, in order to come to a common project, more in line with what the National Communities are already living or trying to live out.

III. The Vocational Project

A long discussion was held on the project proposed by the World Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant, Fernando Salas SJ. The heart of the project is to see marriage vocation, professional vocation, vocation as parents and grandparents or vocation after retirement as all-important aspects of the same question. It is not only seeing vocations as the decision to choose lay or religious life but "*how to live life in dialogue with God*". This is a deep concern of CLC in Europe. The concern is not only to help members, in search of their own vocation through the various offers of the Spiritual Exercises, but to find ways to reach out to people, young and others, who are no longer in our groups or even not in the Church, to rediscover their relation to God.

Three National Communities with a large formation program (Germany, France and Spain) will be asked to share their experiences and reflections in this field.

MAKING CONNECTIONS



Goran Kubner, an "under 30" CLC member from Zagreb, Croatia, is in his first year of Biblical Science studies at the Pontificium Institutum Biblicum in Rome, Italy. The influence of the Jesuit presence, in his home parish, resulted in the formation of CLC and his own participation in CLC.

I was asked to write an article for *Progressio* about CLC vocation as a young person in relation to *Our Common Mission*. Referring to my Brazilian experience, which included both the General Assembly and the post-assembly one of visiting a missionary community, I decided to give it a try. It is a bit difficult for me to write it down. I have spoken about it so many times but oral expression, as a kind of dialogue, is much more dynamic, interesting and, in a way, easier to do. So this is what eventually came out of my reflections and, hopefully, it will be a readable attempt.

There are innumerable events and thoughts that came to me because my memory of this unforgettable experience is still so vivid. It happened almost two years ago and, still, when I start thinking about it, it seems as if it was only yesterday.

We all, as Christians, as pilgrims on the earth, are invited to follow Jesus as His disciples did and to be His witnesses. Easier said, than done; anyway, sometimes we get lucky as I did.

Looking back on all the events that happened in Itaici, one can tell that the Assembly was really a thrilling experience; but where we stopped at the Assembly I somehow continued. The Assembly was filled with great thoughts and ideas and CLC, as a World Community, came up with quite a useful document. I could clearly see God's hand at work at this Assembly.

At the beginning, we started with plenty of confusion not really knowing (as far as I was concerned) what we were doing; tapping in the darkness and, at the end, a really great document saw daylight. Still, without the deeds it would mean nothing; it is too abstract without concrete action. For if we and what came of our reflections, even though the Assembly was led by the Spirit, do not rely on God in practice and in action.... this can become a delusion, not

lifting us up but degrading us, in a way. A series of events occurring after the Assembly helped me to overcome this problem, at least for a while.

I have a very good contact with the Taizé Community. When I spoke with Brother Richard, one of the brothers in the community, mentioning that I would be going to the CLC World Assembly in Brazil, he suggested that I take this opportunity to visit their community in Brazil. From my present point of view, I can clearly see that this was a brilliant idea. So, after the Assembly ended.... those wonderful ten days.... I travelled to Alagoinhas, a "little" town-village according to Brazilian standards. It is a town of about 250,000 inhabitants some 100 km from Salvador in the north of Brazil just below the Amazon.

The northern part of Brazil is far poorer than the southern one and this is quite visible at first sight. But, as I had spent quite a lot of time in the community in Taizé, France, I thought I knew, more or less, what to expect. However, I was considerably surprised with what I discovered.

The brothers living there (seven of them) had, obviously, the same spirituality as the ones living in France and, somehow, their lifestyle is similar. But, in no way can the two communities be compared. The community in Brazil is a much smaller one and it is more concentrated on the local community while the community in France is more centered on pastoral work with young people coming from every part of Europe and beyond.

In Itaici, we talked about mission, about Christ and Social Reality, Christ and Culture, Christ and Daily Life and about Ignatian means adequate for the appropriate situation. Now, here I was, standing in front of "the mission" quite confused, asking myself, "*What can I give to these people?*" Or, to be even more honest, asking myself, "*What can I do at all? What am I doing here?*" I discovered that I could only be myself and really try to live with them.

Once, Brother Roger, founder of the Taizé Community said: "The more we share what we have, in a spirit of great simplicity, the more life becomes welcoming for those who have been entrusted to us". This is what happened in reality. I didn't do anything special. I couldn't pull some "Ignatian means" out of a bag because there was no such thing. The only means (Ignatian ones) I had were the ones that God has entrusted to me in my "up to this date" spiritual journey that was streaked with Ignatian spirituality. I didn't have a manual that would tell me what to do. In all, this was not anything special but, afterwards, it became very special to me, and the people that I met there. It is something precious that I'll always carry with me.

At that point, I wasn't really aware of the things that were happening. I was not thinking in concepts such as the "Lord's call" nor my answer. I didn't have a perception of familiarity with some "means" but I was truly open to God, to the people in the area and committed in what I was doing. I was only aware of my limits. Yet, as small as the means are that we have, they are always enough if we are open to God and if we are not doing something for our own glory, but for His. At least, I'm aware of this now. All that I was doing was done spontaneously and not the fruit of some great thinking!

There, in Alagoinhas, I found many marginalized people. Feeling compassion towards them seemed, to me, as a kind of "under evaluation" so, the only thing that was left to me was openness and humbleness (or whatever you want to call it) of living their lifestyle, of living with them and of sharing with them. That is what people in the Taizé Community do: providing means for them to live, bringing them closer to God, making them feel accepted and welcomed, giving them joy of life and, all this, just by living with them.

For someone used to a European lifestyle, these new surroundings were something completely different! Everything was undiscovered territory for me: the climate, the food, habits, manners, dress etc. even though this was not my first contact with a different culture. The most complicated thing was the language. I arrived there, knowing only a couple of phrases learned during my stay in Itaici. No one in the town knew any other language, except the brothers and the group of fourteen young people who had come to help in the community during their vacation period. *How do I communicate? How do I "illuminate"?* I was asking myself all this questions and then I ended up learning their language so quickly and found that I was "illuminated" by them.

All these answers come from trying to be open. Hence, during this time, I was not only bearing the situation and enduring the difficulties, but I was really accepting everything.

When you look at this from a distance it may look very difficult but, in reality, it wasn't so. As I have already stated, I didn't do anything special... communicating with sign language (because of not knowing the language, but also because of the many deaf people), a smile here and there, visiting schools, listening to people, helping them to renew and build parts of the community etc. In times and situations like this, you learn and understand more clearly that God is everywhere and that a little bit of sacrifice (sleeping under a mosquito net in a room of some two square meters that is "very airy" or, better yet, quite open and inviting to all kinds of animals eating all kind of things) and self-denying, with plenty of God's grace and love, can work "small"

wonders. In every day life, the same things can be done or there are opportunities to do the same things. If only we would realize that, we would be working "small" wonders.

In a so short essay, it is difficult to describe all kinds of particular events. What I'm trying to accomplish is making the link between our common mission and things I discovered, or the truths that were revealed to me, during my stay in Brazil. One of the great discoveries in life is realizing that our richness comes from our freedom and our poverty. We are not supposed to be captured with our possessions no matter what they are. All the means, whether material or spiritual, in our lives can be useful if they are concentrated on the greater glory of God. We have to realize that there are ladders that we use to climb but in no way are we to cling to them. For me, the most important was seeing that I was able to leave behind all of my "possessions" and to answer His call with simplicity.

There is a nice story about a house on fire and the Spiritual Exercises. When there is a house on fire, many people do not take any initiative; many don't even see the fire and others do not have strength or perseverance to extinguish the fire. Then, you also have people who would go to the Spiritual Exercises while the house is on fire. Now, this could look like escaping, and a foolish thing to do, but out of this fleeing, they become more determined to do something about it.

If we make the parallel, the Spiritual Exercises would be our means and the fire is our mission. The fire is everywhere around us but sometimes we don't see it unless we are standing directly in the fire as I was doing in Brazil. Often, we tend to forget many good things and experiences that God gives us in our life.

We do not have to worry too much about mission because there are so many things to do. Our whole life is mission and every second an opportunity. Unfortunately, many times we are trapped into thinking of "the mission" as something very visible and great because we like to do great things. If we are posing the question to ourselves, it should be: *how do we prepare ourselves to be more aware and, consequently, more and more ready for doing something?*

I conclude this story by saying that the time spent in Brazil was one of the happiest times in my life and I feel that I fulfilled "my mission" at that time (I wasn't intentionally really trying to fulfil anything). The same thing happens to us every time we "fulfil our mission" as a community or as a person. There are plenty of opportunities for action. We just have to be aware of it. So what are we waiting for?

MEET THE EXCO

In His Hands...



I was born on a March afternoon at the farmhouse near Santiago where my parents lived, surrounded by grandparents, uncles, aunts and friends. I grew up and lived there until I was fifteen. As I remember, the house was always pleasant during the summer, somewhat cold and gloomy in the winter, with its clay-brick walls, its inner patios and its clay-tiled roof. It was open to everyone, from having friends over on weekends to providing a warm dish for anyone in need.

I remember my Mother, on her knees with all of us around her, saying the prayers dedicated for the month of Mary, prayers to the Sacred Heart, or the daily rosary with my Father. My memories take me back to when we would all go to visit elderly people, as both parents were members of the Saint Vincent de Paul's Society. I remember, with a warm heart, my long conversations about God with my Grandmother, who would pray and do spiritual readings on a daily basis following the spirituality of Saint Francis de Sales. She marked my spiritual life very deeply and taught me to want to know more about Jesus and Mary. I feel that she was an instrument the Lord made use of to bring me closer to Him.

I am the eldest of five children. All of us are married and with quite a number of children and grandchildren, except one sister who is a consecrated Opus Dei member. My mother died young from cancer. My father died only five years ago a few months short of his ninetieth birthday. Both of them taught us to be always there for the needy, with love and care. They lived simply, even though my father was a well-to-do lawyer. For twenty years, he was the national chairman of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. This close family, so open to the Lord's call with rock-solid faith and a spirit of service, was the foundation of my undying desire to know and love God.

My school, operated by the Ursuline Sisters, also left indelible marks in my personality. There I learned the sense of duty, dependability, punctuality and the value of friendship. To this day, some of my best friends are my schoolmates. One of them is a member of my CLC community.

In my junior and senior high-school years, I participated in a group, named after Saint Manuel, that accompanied extremely poor families who wished to get themselves a home through the build-it-yourself system. The group held frequent praying and formation meetings, which allowed us to bring the word of God, together, with our help and companionship.

When the time came to go to a Catholic University to become a Spanish teacher, I looked for a group where I could channel my social and religious yearning. I became a member of the University Catholic Action (AUC), which, for many years, was a very significant group in the university. We worked in small groups organizing retreats, formation camps, work with the poor, and the like. Our main task was to become good professionals in order to put our professions at the service of our neighbors when we graduated. For a time, I was the national president and, as such, I had to attend meetings in Peru, Ecuador, Brazil and Uruguay. These opportunities opened up my isolated little Chilean world and made me curious about things happening beyond our borders. AUC was a school of social, human and religious formation to me and brought me together with charming friends, some of who are, or have been, in important government jobs during the democratic years in Chile.

Upon graduating, I went to live with relatives in Madrid with the intention of studying something interesting, but truth be told, I didn't study so much as I partied and toured. It was a wonderful experience and I returned with great enthusiasm to begin teaching and sharing what I had received.

I received an invitation from old AUC friends to participate in groups of professionals in formation. There I met my future husband, Luciano Tomassini. He was a leader in a Marian Movement. Our long conversations on our differences made us friends first, then fiancées.

We were married in December 1963 and, in 1965, our first daughter Ana María was born. She had a complex endocrine problem and we were advised to take her to the U.S for medical attention. We both had jobs.

Luciano was an attorney with the Land Ministry and a college professor while I was teaching in two schools. Even with our combined wages, we could not afford to make such a trip.

In that moment of confusion, we felt the hand of the Lord. Luciano was called to apply for a job in the Inter-American Development Bank based in Washington D.C. and was accepted. So, in December of 1965, we moved to Washington where we stayed for six years. Those were very stimulating and interesting years, although very hard ones. Our daughter spent over a year going in and out of hospitals and, when our second daughter Pía was born with the same problem, our ordeal began all over again.

Meanwhile, my husband was discovering a fascinating field of work with his job at the Bank. He took graduate courses at Georgetown University and travelled frequently around the world. However, I managed to work teaching Spanish at the Foreign Service Institute and at the World Bank.

We never stopped feeling the need for others with whom to share our faith. In this sense, we felt lonely with no priest friends, enduring the pain of our sick girls, and far from our loved ones. This situation continued for one year in London and six more in Buenos Aires until we finally returned to Chile in 1978.

That same year, cancer took the life of my mother. That was particularly difficult for me, not having been there for her the way I would have wanted to over the three years of her disease. I felt like an orphan, not only of her but of God as well.

In those very moments of solitude in my own land, that felt almost as hard as the ones lived far away, my dearest cousin Josefina Errázuriz invited me to visit her community. From that moment on, I began approaching Saint Ignatius and his walk in life and my path took a fundamental turn. Little by little, I became aware of the gifts I had received that sometimes went unrecognized. Community life felt good and I began making new kinds of friends: friends in the Lord. The Exercises frightened me and it took me several years to make an eight-day retreat and discover the riches and freedom that sprouted from them.

I found a job with the Catholic University as an editor of economic journals, that I hold to this day. I like the editorial world and am a

voracious reader. I feel comfortable dealing with authors, proofreading and handling the press.

Back in Chile, my husband began working with the United Nations and continued travelling more than ever. Our daughters had some difficulties adapting at school. Having spent so many of their young years away from their roots left deep traces: they grew more mature, more curious about world affairs, more solitary and very close to us.

In CLC, I took the guides course and began guiding the community of Encarnación. It was an enriching, though hard experience, because the community was ultimately disbanded. Anyway, from that community came two of the founders of the Ignatian School, San Luis Beltrán, located in one of the poorest districts of Santiago. For the past couple of years, I have worked there as a member of the Board of Directors as well as guiding a prayer group.

In 1993, I was elected National President of CLC and re-elected two years later. I had accepted the nomination convinced that I wouldn't be elected, since not many people knew me and I was ignorant about many things in CLC. The Lord was with me very closely during those years as I learned about my limitations and capacities. I learned to expand my heart to love and be loved by people of every age group and origin. I confronted difficult problems and had the grace to have very good Jesuit friends, especially the two national advisors I worked with, Juan Ochagavía and Fernando Salas. They taught me, trusted me with love and patience, and made friends with my family. Those were four strenuous years of long hours dedicated to CLC with evening and weekend meetings. My family, most especially my husband, accepted this generously and supportively.

When my job on the National Council ended, a series of illnesses hit my family in an uninterrupted and frightening chain. My daughter Pía was very ill for several months, until she had to undergo surgery that uncovered a severe ulcer. This caused me to cancel my trip to the Itaici Assembly. A few months later, my husband was in a car accident and spent a month at death's door in the Intensive Care Unit. The prayers of so many friends and the will of God made him live but he spent long months recovering. Today, he is actively working at the University of Chile helping design public policies as well as being a graduate course professor. The accident left him physically limited with a hip problem.

The girls have also found their own paths. After healing, Pía quit her long-time job at a recording studio and enrolled in an international cuisine school. She has a gift for cooking and will, also, be learning Business Administration. She is happy and animated. Ana María works at the University of Chile in the mornings and dedicates the afternoons to the foundation called *La Promesa*. This is a home for underprivileged girls that she established as a teenager. She is in charge of raising funds and providing a family-like environment for the girls with the help of specialized staff.

The trials of the past two years taught me wonderful things but, most of all, we felt the infinite love of the Father for us as a family. Something changed in our lives for good, and we feel it every day as a precious gift.

When I was elected as a Consultor on the World ExCo at Itaici in spite of my absence (between Pía's operation and Luciano's accident), I spent many months without understanding why I had been elected or what my role would be. During the first ExCo meeting we had in Rome in February 1999, where I went in spite of my stress and the fact that my husband was still unwell, I began to realize the meaning of such a service to the World Community. However, it wasn't until mid-year that I began to feel the energy and strength to tackle the job. Finally, during the meeting in February of this year, I felt the breath of the Spirit that gave me the wish to work and co-operate with all my capacity so that *Our Common Mission* will become the goal of the World Christian Life Community.

As I was writing this little history of my life, I realized that the Lord never failed to hold me in His hands. I only pray for the grace of remaining in Him until He wants to call me to His side.

Ana María Aguirre

In Memory

Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere

No twentieth-century politician has manifested better a living Catholicism for the Third World and, for that matter, for the Second and the First Worlds. Julius Nyerere, who died in London, where he had been receiving treatment for leukemia, was President of Tanzania from 1964 to 1985. He never ceased to be a teacher by temperament, mission and title: he was always Mwalimu. He combined an exceptional intelligence with a moral seriousness, which never faltered.

A REMEMBRANCE

By David Martin

“We, the people of Tanganyika, would like to light a candle and put it on top of Mount Kilimanjaro which would shine beyond our borders giving hope where there was despair, love where there was hate and dignity where before there was only humiliation. We cannot, unlike other countries, send rockets to the moon. But we can send rockets of love and hope to all our fellow [humans] wherever they may be.”

That statement, over two years before Tanganyika's independence, was made by Julius Kambarage Nyerere to the Legislative Assembly in October 1959. It expressed the essence of his beliefs: hope, love and dignity.

While those in the developed world walked, his brisk and sprightly stride implied, as he repeatedly said, that Africa had to run to catch up. Once political freedom was attained, unity and development, coupled with hard work, were essential pre-requisites in nation building.

Nyerere was the champion of the liberation of southern Africa, becoming the first chairman of the Frontline states. In Tanzania, Africa and the world, he was regarded almost with awe.

Apart from his simplicity and piercing intellect, one of Nyerere's most endearing traits was his honesty. Today it is no longer fashionable among journalists (and much of the public) to take politicians at their word or even imagine in advance what those words might be.

He evolved a uniquely African electoral system for his people in the days when Tanzania was a one-party state well before pluralism became the buzzword. Two candidates from the ruling party ran against each other. They had to both speak in Swahili from their shared platform so use of the local language by one did not disadvantage the other, and they could not make promises that they would do such and such if elected.

Reference to the other candidate's gender, religion, race or tribe was forbidden, the aspirants had to travel together at all times and even eat from the same plate in case of poisoning. In the country's first post-independence election the electorate voted out two ministers, seven junior ministers and over 60 backbench Members of Parliament. It was an outcome that would have stunned western political parties and while some aspects of this unique electoral system may have been undesirable, it is a sad reflection on the developed nations that they forced its entire abandonment in 1995 in favour of the "western model of democracy".

It was a year after my arrival in Dar es Salaam that I met Nyerere for an interview and when I did so it was strictly on his terms. The West Germans had just given him an ultimatum: if he allowed the East Germans to open a consulate in Dar es Salaam they would withdraw their support for his fledgling air force. His response was immediate. The West German ambassador was shown the door and the Canadians took over. Now Nyerere wanted the story in the British media.

Therein, in the view of many non-Tanzanians, lies Nyerere's greatest contribution. All of the countries of the continent, with the exception of Spanish Sahara, are now fully independent. When Nyerere had spoken to the Legislative Assembly in 1959 only nine countries were independent; today the number is 54.

Almost all Tanzanians hold him in special esteem. They are stunned by his death gathering in silent groups beneath the official photograph which in Swahili proclaims him as *Baba wa Taifa* meaning Father of the Nation. To

Tanzanians he remains, *Mwalimu*, the teacher, the title they gave him. Tanzanians, despite the conspicuous pride they retain in their country's role in the liberation of southern Africa, have several very different reasons to remember the man who shaped their lives.

One of his most lasting legacies is the union of the sovereign states of Tanganyika and Zanzibar into the single country now called Tanzania.

"Ujamaa", the concept of togetherness often erroneously referred to as African socialism, is another of Nyerere's enduring legacies. There can be no doubt of the logic of bringing scattered communities together into centers where goods and services can reach them. Nyerere had the vision to do this but the implementation of others was found wanting.

But, domestically, Nyerere's most enduring legacy must be Tanzania's unity and stability. From over 120 ethnic groups, Nyerere forged a united nation bonded by a single language, Swahili.

Another reason to remember Nyerere is the way in which he stood up to the international donors and said "No" when he believed that the course they proposed was not in his people's best interests. One wishes that today there were more leaders with his courage and mettle.

Nyerere was a charmingly forthright and visionary leader, the most forward looking politician Africa has yet seen. He also had his share of warts. But it is the man's vision and purpose which will live on: Tanzania, which in some ways will be a more difficult place to rule without him, Africa and the world is a very much poorer place today.

Reprinted from SARDC

In Memory

Ary De Freitas Penalber

Ary Penalber was a very active member of the Brazilian CLC. He died recently after a long struggle with cancer. A close friend, Maria Clara Bingemer, wrote the following funeral prayer.

Ary passed peacefully away into the Father's arms, surrounded by the love and the prayers of his wife Anna and of his children, Anna Elisa, Anna Teresa, Pedro Américo, Anna Beatriz and Anna Carolina and, also, of his grandchildren Juliana, Carolina and Ary Neto. Those of us, his friends, who were also present and who were able to participate in that moment of faith and hope, a moment of true happiness in the midst of deep sadness and grief, will always have our spiritual lives marked by the wonderful witness of faith offered by that family.

Ary's death is a great loss for CLC, for the Apostolic network, for the Loyola Centre of Rio de Janeiro and for all the Ignatian family. I had the great honour of knowing him well since we had belonged to the same community for many years, from 1985, in fact. When Ary and Anna joined our Community of Our Lady of Sailors (Nossa Senhora dos Navegantes), they came with a great experience of active service for Christ. They had already taken part in many short courses, Marriage Encounter, Prison Work and Family Encounter. Ignatian Spirituality was like the good soil, which made all the seeds that had been well planted, grow and give forth their best fruits.

Ary was a tireless and fruitful apostle, a former of persons and enthusiastic about the Spiritual Exercises in which he directed so very many people with great skill and dedication. Ary gave the best of his life to the Church and to the building up of the Kingdom of God. He was always available and ready to serve. He set up various communities, participated in many projects and was involved in the establishing of very successful apostolic initiatives.

When I was the National Coordinator, in the early days of CLC Brazil, I had the good fortune of knowing him and having him on the Council as Treasurer and as vice-coordinator where he was my right arm. He was like a force of equilibrium and he was able to keep us steady in the midst of too much enthusiasm, which could sometimes lack a sense of proportion.

He gave of himself in a way that few people do. He returned to the Council some years later where he continued to work for CLC with force and vigour. I believe that there are few people to whom the Brazilian National CLC owes so much, as to Ary.

When the idea of the Loyola Centre of Faith and Culture arose, his help was enormous. He was a learned and friendly discussant, a willing and tireless collaborator. Right from the start, he took an active part in retreats, theology courses and he always gave support to Anna's administrative work. When the Ignatian Network was set up in 1996, Ary and Anna were there among the first to make a commitment. Here again a pioneer, he was among those who gave greatest support to the ever-growing network, giving suggestions, inspiration, hope and firm commitment.

He had many outstanding qualities but I would like to highlight two in particular, namely his fidelity and his goodness. Ary was an extremely faithful person. In this, he took after his master, St. Ignatius, who praised this quality greatly and encouraged his followers to develop it themselves and to value it highly. Ary's life was marked by this "royal" virtue, a virtue of temporal and eternal monarchs, a noble virtue and one that clearly indicates nobility. Ary was faithful to his God, to his Church, to his wife, to his family, to his friends, to his commitments, to his work and to his mission. He took his loyalty to extremes. Those of us who had the honour of being among his closest and dearest friends know exactly how deeply this loyalty ran and it was a loyalty which he showed us right up to the very end.

Ary was also a very good and kind man. He had a warm and passionate nature and spoke his mind clearly and openly. Many times he was wrongly interpreted and his ardour was at times taken for aggressiveness. Only those of us who knew him well were aware that he was a deeply sensitive man, tender and good with an extremely soft heart which could be moved by kind words and by compassion. He was simply unable to act out of malice or vengeance. As the years passed, this goodness became more apparent, more visible and it was offered even more generously to all who

asked for it. In recent times, when he was already worn down by the illness which would finally kill him, Ary was a constant and shining witness of this goodness which warms the hearts of all who come near and which brings light and peace to the souls of those who come for advice or comfort.

For a long time, I believed that he would beat his illness. He had a fighting spirit and a great will to live. His un-shaking courage made me think that he would conquer the disease. One day, however, when I was praying, just a few months ago, I seemed to see him in my contemplation. I received the certainty that he was ready for whatever the Lord had prepared for him for eternity. I saw him dressed in a white uniform, as in former times when he was a sailor; he was walking with head held high, with firm step and his eyes shining. When I saw him in this way, I also clearly heard a choir of strong and beautiful voices, which were singing as follow:

*Like a white swan which moves over a blue sea on a moonlight night
My ship also floats across these waters from north to south.
It is a beautiful vessel, which in that peaceful night,
Slides through the boundless ocean
And makes us long for our beloved home
That home which fills our thoughts.¹*

When I was praying at the time of his death, I remembered that moment and I heard again the song of the white swan. I was quite certain that Ary was already sailing through that blue, boundless sea of life that never ends. I was sure that he had arrived at the home for which he longed so much and that he was already surrounded by the Light of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He is one of the persons to whom I owe so much in my spiritual life... one of the most important. I have to say, that because of him, I will now long more for heaven than to be here on earth.

May he pray for us and make our Ignatian family grow; this is what I ask for tonight as we keep watch by his body and this is what I will ask for tomorrow as we celebrate his Requiem Mass at noon, here in the Loyola Centre of Faith and Culture.

¹ The Brazilian Navy Hymn



To the Leaders of the World Christian Life Community

With great pleasure I welcome to the Vatican the leaders of the World Christian Life Community, and in particular I greet your President, Mr José Maria Riera, the members of the Community's Executive Committee and your Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant, representing the Superior General of the Society of Jesus. You have wished to come here today so that during this Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 you might publicly proclaim your intention that Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary, should be the very centre of the apostolic life of your entire Community.

Yours is the long and rich tradition of the Marian Congregations, which trace their origins back to the sixteenth century, to the initiative of Saint Ignatius of Loyola and his companions. Down the centuries, Popes have supported and encouraged the apostolate of the Congregations, also through the publication of pontifical documents. In 1968, the Marian Congregations, united in a World Federation, asked Pope Paul VI to approve the new *General Principles and Statutes of the Federation*, and in 1971 the name of the Congregations was changed to "World Federation of Christian Life Communities". More recently, in 1990, with the Apostolic See's approval of the revised *General Principles and Norms*, you became the "World Christian Life Community". Despite these changes in name and structure, the Community remains faithful to the common spiritual roots it shares with the Society of Jesus, and faithful to the Ignatian tradition which it has inherited.

You are now present in fifty-eight countries throughout the world as a united community of lay men and women bearing witness to Jesus Christ

and working to build up his Kingdom. You draw inspiration and strength for this task from the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius. The emphasis which you place on a thorough and complete Christian formation is of particular benefit in helping you to fulfil your apostolate. As members of the laity, you are called to be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ in all spheres of life: in your families, in your professional lives, in the worlds of politics and culture, in the local Church communities to which each of you belongs. And I am pleased to learn that, as leaders of the Christian Life Community, you have asked your individual groups to cooperate more closely during this Jubilee Year with their local Pastors and to strengthen the bonds of union with the Diocesan Bishops.

In obedience to the “power of God for salvation” (*Rom* 1:16), you endeavour to carry into the heart of human culture the teachings of the Church which enlighten and guide the quest for a more just and fraternal society. You are particularly sensitive to the need to bring the Gospel to bear on all human realities, for “the Good News of Christ constantly renews the life and culture of fallen man . . . never ceasing to purify and elevate the morality of peoples” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 58). The ability to fulfil this challenging apostolate comes from your daily efforts to be conformed to Christ, living in his grace and having in yourselves the same attitudes as Christ (cf. *Phil* 2:5). Through faithful adherence to these lofty goals your own lives of faith will be enriched and your witness to Jesus Christ in modern society will bear abundant fruit in the life of the Church.

I invite you to keep before your eyes your history and tradition, especially as embodied in the former Marian Congregations from which the present World Christian Life Community draws its spiritual inspiration. Renew your trust in the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Mother. Her example of faith and prayer will lead you to ever-higher levels of generous service of the Church and society. She is the most eloquent example of obedience to the Lord and acceptance of his will; with her as your model, Jesus will most certainly be at the centre of your lives and apostolate. Invoking upon all the members of the World Christian Life Community the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 21 February 2000.
(L'Osservatore Romano, 02/22/2000)

