



progressio

Publication of the World Christian Life Community

On approaching the Frontiers



Progressio is the official publication of the Christian Life Community (CLC). It seeks to build community, supplement formation, and promote apostolic works. By publishing stories, reflections, events and opinions, it endeavors to reinforce, challenge and deepen the community's understanding and living of the CLC Charism, Ignatian Spirituality and the gospel values

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Letter from the Editor

Alwin Macalalad



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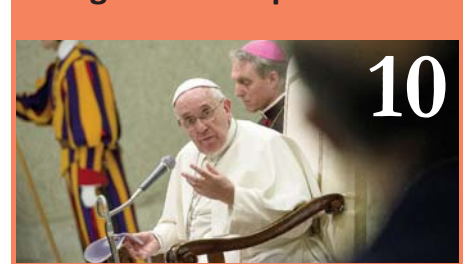
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ABOUT OUR LOGO

We did not go too far to find inspiration for the logo of the Christian Life Community (CLC). Countless books have been written about the Salvation history of CLC and its beginning in year 1563. From that came the Marian Congregations and its symbol (shown on the top right), having the "P" over the "X" (for the Greek Christus) and the inserted "M" illustrates that the Congregations were put under the patronage of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The blue curved line illustrates a movement forward to **one World Community in 1967**; hence the globe. From this new beginning came a new name: Communauté de Vie Chrétienne (CVX) in French; Comunidad de Vida Cristiana (CVX) in Spanish; Christian Life Community (CLC) in English.

Letter from the Editor

Alwin D. Macalalad

The title "Progressio" harkens to words like progress, advancement, promotion, development. In CLC, we've been at it for a very long time (even before I was born!). Counting our history as Marian Congregations, then, even before any of us were born. Where then is the development? Where is the progress? Have we succeeded?

How I wish I had the wisdom to answer that question. In CLC we have been witnesses and actors in a full spectrum of graced victories: the little smile that emerges from sadness, the conflict that is transformed, the child that is raised, the project that is accomplished, the inequalities that are lessened. And we have seen that for every victory, another challenge is raised. Another uphill path appears. It is our own struggles that produce the new challenges. Left foot, right foot. It is a journey of grace upon grace. We'll have to fight the good fight, with the eye to finish the course, and keep the faith (2 Timothy 4:7).

It is a rhetorical question, the one that Edel Churu, our Vice President raised once: "Is Progressio a pilgrims' publication or a triumphalist one?" Well, CLC, we are nearing 50 years in our renewed form. That would approximately be the age of Vatican II, 1/40th the age of the Church, 1/4,000th the estimated age of humanity. It defies my imagination to think that we really have very good final answers. We only have our moment in eternity- our life -to push things forward. To make progress, so to speak. This life is the window through which we peek through, to glimpse the greater scheme of things (which none of us hold, except in faith. And hope.).

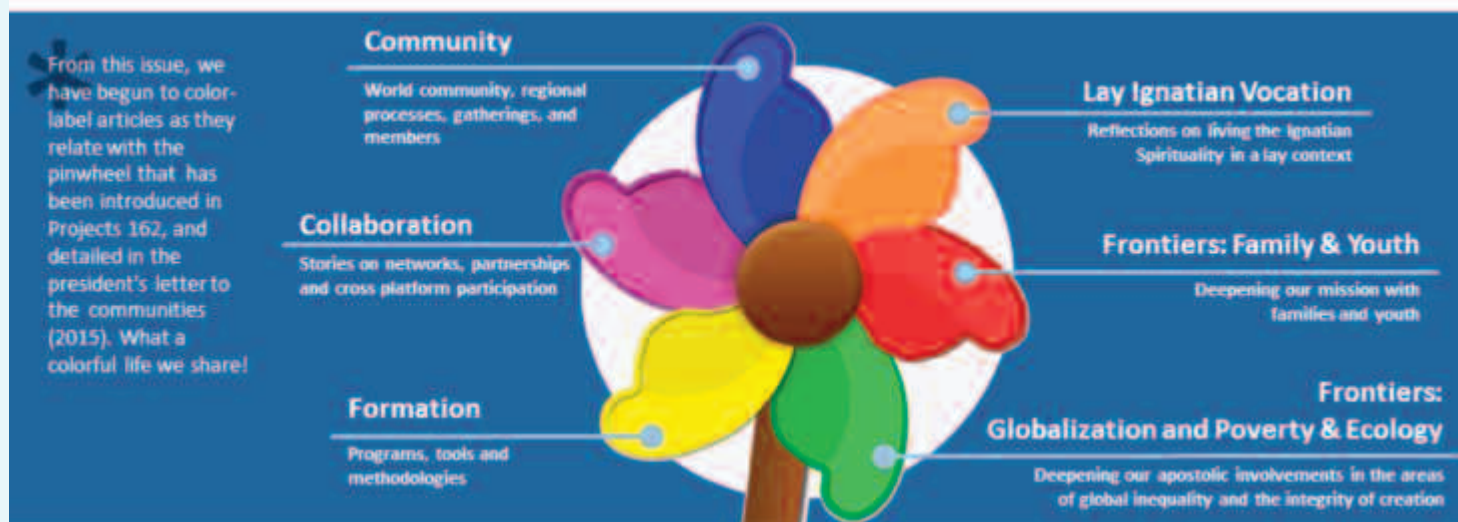
And so, Progressio is the little window that we have as we move through our graced history together as CLC. At times it feels like it is a roughly-strewn publication. But sometimes, it is also how our community is!

In this issue, we get a peek at the Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly and the new animating team for the region. There is a story of how generous and collaborative efforts resulted to the donation of more than a hundred boats for a Philippine fishing village severely affected by super typhoon Haiyan. Mauricio Lopez shares a reflection on the undeniable implications of the encyclical, *Laudato Si*. Some insights of the our members regarding the online invitation "Laudato Si: What Struck Me?" are also published in this issue- as we invite you to let the pope's message shift perspectives and action.

We have dedicated a significant space for sharing the Pope's dialogue with CLC in the occasion of the CVX-LMS (Comunita di Vita Cristiana-Lega Missionari Studenti) Assembly. He speaks candidly, and simply on various points about our mission and way of life. We are also publishing his undelivered message given to CLC on that day. We feel that the pope's words for the CVX Italy affirms and challenges the world community and our discerned mission in the frontiers!

As a final word, I am sorry that this publication comes much later than it should be. We are introducing several things with this issue, and we are working hard to deliver Progressio on time! One thing that I would like to ask from you, fellow CLC members, is to be part of the story. Write to us about what you think. Send us your challenges. Send us your victories. Send us your struggles. Tell us how the spirit is moving you through your frontiers (guidelines for content submission are on the last page). This is our community's-- our way of life's-- story after all. And nobody else is fit to deliver it but you.

Cheers!





Asia Youth! Arise, shine

Asia-Pacific Animating Team and Chris Hogan

“All the things in this world are gifts of God, created for us, to be the means by which we can come to know him better, love him more surely, and serve him more faithfully.

“As a result, we ought to appreciate and use these gifts of God insofar as they help us toward our goal of loving service and union with God. But insofar as any created things hinder our progress toward our goal, we ought to let them go.”

These words of Ignatius echo today and capture the major questions faced at CLC’s recent Asia-Pacific Assembly, held in Taipei from January 29th to February 1st. 40 Delegates from around the region discussed how we might engage with and provide formation for Asian youth today. New means of travel and communication have come along; should we embrace them? Or should we place more value on older forms of community, mission and formation that have served us well? The answers are not easy. The whole Church faces these same questions.

The Regional Assembly is an occasion, once every five years, to bring CLC Asia-Pacific national communities together to celebrate community as a region and to hear

stories (a review) about how the national communities are going. It is also an opportunity to further reflect on the mandate received from our World Assembly in Lebanon and to discern future possibilities as to where the Holy Spirit might be drawing us, as a region, over the next five years.

Eight national communities sent delegations and several observer communities also attended. The participating communities were Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Australia. Macau, Vietnam, Singapore and New Zealand attended as observers.

Collectively these CLC Asia-Pacific communities comprise about 9% of the total CLC global membership, yet the Asia-Pacific Region accounts for over half of the world’s population including 1.2 billion persons under 25, some rapidly urbanising economies, diverse cultures and religions, generally very low Catholic populations (except the Philippines) and an imbalance of wealth and opportunity in life. The region is a frontier in its own right, no less than it was in the days of Xavier and Ricci.

Preparations began about a year before the Assembly with region wide consultations with national communities. Taking all these matters into consideration, and also the Lebanon priorities, it was decided that the Asia-Pacific Assembly would focus on “youth”, and specifically on the challenge of engaging with young people, and formation for young people.

We were conscious that, in past CLC Assemblies, it is sometimes commented that there are too many inputs and insufficient time for prayer, reflection, small group discussion and so on. So we designed the program accordingly. Delegates, with plenty of time, engaged with energy, well considered

Below: the Asia-Pacific Animating Team: Daphne Ho (Hong Kong), Theresa Wang (Taiwan), Michael Walker (Australia) Caroline Chan (Philippines), Agnes Shin (Korea), and Chris Hogan from World ExCo.



thoughts, patience and resolve.

The outcomes of the Assembly are summarised in its final document which is available on the web. The major recommendations for the national communities are:

1. Youth pilgrimages and retreats: provide opportunities for young people to journey and gather together, sharing spiritual and/or immersion experiences, resources and fruits.
2. Social media: encourage web-based communication possibilities for young people and sense of Asia-Pacific wide CLC regional identity.
3. Web-based materials availability: build a data base in relation to formation – especially for youth, and for guides responsible for youth groups.

And also, if energies allow:

4. Bi-lateral programs: Promote visits, exchanges for young people between Asia-Pacific CLC national communities.
5. Inter-organizational collaboration: seek collaboration with other bodies on youth programs and engagement in social issues.

Near the conclusion of the Assembly we had an election for an 'Animating Team' who will keep the links active between now and the next Assembly. It was intended that we would vote for four positions but, since we only had five accepted nominations, the Delegates decided to accept all five by acclaim. Here we include some reflections on the Assembly outcome and some of the special moments during those four days.

- "I felt that the Taiwan AP Assembly was a moment to confirm that AP Region is growing into One Body through intimacy, affection and love for one another. We are really grateful to the host community, CLC Taiwan for its generosity and love. It was a precious opportunity to learn from other CLC Communities how to live out the CLC Way of Life."
- "It was really a pleasure of being part of CLC Asia Pacific Assembly which is a group of people who are very proud of



Cultural Party: Sri Lanka delegation
Below: Chinese Jesuit Provincial with Delegates from Japan and Philippines



I love the stories that each and every one brought with them, with each stories we have been brought closer to one another. We learn from each other's struggles and also success.

being CLCers, and everyone has a strong sense of identification. Though we are from different cultures, and the development of every national community is quite different from each other, some are strong, and some are facing struggles, by the charism of CLC, community, spirituality and mission, we share the same language. There is no boundary among us.

"While the assembly looking for a solution of youth formation, we noticed that the stereotype and prejudice toward the youth inevitably occurred. However, our reflections and truly sincere attitude

broke down those walls, and opened up our heart and mind. With genuine attitude, we decide to walk with the youth to encounter Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord."

- "My favourite memory was the 'Creation song' performed by the Hong Kong and Korean delegations during the variety night. It presents the 7 days of creation with gestures and actions. I was even more impressed when I learned that it was written by a group of young adult CLC members in Hong Kong who have formed a musical group called "AMDG". Very inspiring! Anyone interested can watch the song on AMDG's YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/en5cwuyReUg> (the song is in Cantonese but you can follow it even without subtitles)."
- "Attending the AP assembly was a very exciting experience for me and I am grateful for the generosity of Taiwan CLC

members for hosting all of us. They were all very accommodating and very helpful. I am happy to have the opportunity meet delegates from other AP communities.

"I love the morning prayers we had before the start of each the session. I love the stories that each and every one brought with them, with each stories we have been brought closer to one another. We learn from each other's struggles and also success. We all are from different cultures but in our differences we are brought to one common theme.

"I love the cultural night "socials" "talent night" the youth perform their award winning song and the not so young brought with them their "youth" full energies and creativity. Everyone became more relaxed, talkative and started to have fun. Friendships were formed.

"This is what it means to be part of CLC community I am so grateful of this experience."

- "It was a beautiful assembly. I really enjoyed the moment we prayed, the friendship and laughter we shared, the support we gave and took.

I am also glad that the Spirit has worked within us and brought us to work even closer together in the coming years. Following up our first participation in the Asian Youth Forum held in Seoul last summer, we discerned and decided that we would take part in the next AYD to be held in Indonesia to share our spirituality with more young people in the Church as our common ministry. This

Below: Group Photo after the EA Meeting Cultural Party





Above: Group Photo
Below: CLC Taiwan volunteers

We discerned and decided that we would take part in the next AYD to be held in Indonesia to share our spirituality with more young people in the church as our common ministry

3. Develop a web platform for youth formation materials to be shared between communities

We would like to extend our thanks to the host community for their hospitality throughout the four days and to the national community Delegates for their engaged participation. We look forward to seeing where the Spirit leads us.

will also be a great opportunity for our young CLC members to deepen our identity and share our spirituality in a lively way with the wisdom language. Please pray for us and we look forward to sharing more fruits with the community in the years ahead!"

The Animating Team has been entrusted with three focus areas for the next five years:

1. Facilitate CLC presence at the next Asian Youth Day in 2017
2. Encourage community building and communication with social media tools and virtual meetings raised as possible avenues



The Stella Maris Shines Brightly

Ma. Belen Sim, CLC Philippines



Ma. Belen (Bebs) Sim has been married to Jody Sim for 43 years, and blessed with 4 children and 4 grandchildren. She currently is a guide to CLC and Spiritual Exercises retreatants, and a member of the CLC Formation Institute

The song, *Stella Maris*, composed by Fr. Manoling Francisco, S.J. is sung like a serenade. It speaks of our Mother Mary's presence as the Star of Heaven and the Sea whose light shines without end. The song became the theme song of the project as experienced by the participants of the anniversary celebration. People came together to remember the day when super typhoon Yolanda (international name Haiyan) devastated lives and properties in the heart of the Visayas in the Philippines. It was a tragedy that became a grace – an outpouring of God's love.

On November 8, 2013, the Philippines was stunned by the ferocity of the wind and water. In the days and weeks that followed, both government and citizens sent relief to the victims of the calamity. There were others who decided to look farther than relief and see the needs of people and communities other than those in Tacloban, Leyte, that because of media exposure, already received attentive help.

This was the beginning of *Stella Maris and Friends*--a boat project. The April Fools CLC composed of 13 members decided to support the idea of Fr. Ben Sim, S. J. , the

Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Parish in Cebu City. We felt we had to do something more than donating relief goods. Thus we raised funds by encouraging our own family members to donate a boat. There were also personal friends, CLC friends, and relatives in the country and from abroad, the Rotary of Cebu, who readily donated money to build boats. Target beneficiaries were families of fishermen from Daanbantayan, a community in the northern tip of Cebu. Boats were needed for the families to survive. Our goal was to build 10 boats. We were happy to deliver 12 after a month. Today, the last count is that we were able to build and donate 107 boats. The CLC in Cebu plus the staff of the parish worked for the goal. Now one year after, November 2014, the *Stella Maris and Friends*, more specifically the April Fools CLC , the FMI CLC and Discreta Caritates Serviam CLC shook hands and exchanged smiles with the fishermen and their families, who a year ago had no means of livelihood but are now able to fish again.

The following are reflections of some members of the CLC Philippines about their experiences of the *Stella Maris and Friends--a boat project*.



Marge Llamas
April Fools CLC

*"Who is like you, Lord God Almighty?
You, Lord, are mighty,
and your faithfulness surrounds you.
You rule over the surging sea;
when its waves mount up, you still them.
The heavens are yours,
and yours also the earth;
you founded the world and all that is in it.*

(Ps. 89, 8-9,11)

Our constant companion during the entire trip was the beauty – and the power – of God’s creation. The calmness of the seas and the rivers almost lulled us into forgetting that only a year ago the waves dashed against the shore, the earth heaved up all that man had wrought and with their retreat, livelihoods, memories, hopes were no more.

I was struck by the vastness and freedom of the sea. It reminded me that God who owns the heavens and the earth and all that is in it gave human beings all of it – land and water – for our benefit. Now, land is not free. But, unlike land, the sea seems more like what God had originally intended, even allowing for international demarcation lines, licenses, permits, and taxes. People are free to bathe, sail, and fish. I felt joyfulness and lightness in watching the flotilla formed by bancas – at first, one or two, then many - coming from various villages without any worries about whose property line was being crossed. Would that we could share all of God’s creation more justly and equally...



Mary Grace Baylosis
Sacred Heart Parish Staff

It was great to see our volunteers, doctors and nurses extending their help to reach out to our people during the Medical Mission. This wouldn't have been possible without the help of everybody—the volunteers, benefactors and friends. The generosity they extended was a very big help for the families to be able to stand up and go on with their lives after the tragedy. A big thanks also to Fr. Ben Sim, S.J., truly an instrument of God for touching others' heart to serve the Lord and His people. The giving and sharing will not end here. I know many are still willing to share and help. As what St. Ignatius of Loyola said in his Prayer for Generosity: "to give and not to count the cost". Thank you for the memorable experience. For the greater glory of God!



Excerpts from an article written by April May Tutud-Ramos a Cebu City local newspaper

Huddled in the office of Fr. Benjamin Sim, S.J., parish priest of the Sacred Heart Parish in Cebu City was a group of friends – Ma. Belen A. Sim, Paul Sim, Jr., Adelina Artadi and Vitaliano Nañagas II. They were replete with stories of their recent experience at the convention of benefactors and beneficiaries of the Stella Maris and Friends—A Boat Project.

“We rode a big boat and sailed across the coast off of five villages of Daan Bantayan

Rey Albarin
Barkada ni Kristo CLC

I feel proud each time I imagine the joyful faces of the recipients of the medical help. Despite the fact I was not able to contribute financially to the program I was able to help and serve through my time, sweat and sleepless nights that brought the events to happen.

To find out that there was low tide that would not allow the boats to sail at a designated time for the fluvial parade made me think of the possibility of cancelling it. It also made me doubt my capability in fulfilling my responsibilities for the event. But we pushed through with it. Thanks to all those who believed in me and in the people who worked hard as a team. The joy that I saw on the faces of everyone resulted from the unity and generosity of everyone from Cebu and from Manila.

then other boats followed, cruising with us on either side waving and cheering with their families!”

On their boat they carried the image of Mama Mary. With them were several other benefactors from Metro Manila and Cebu City who gathered to celebrate blessings in observance of the first anniversary of Typhoon Yolanda. They sang the Stella Maris Hymn along the way.

Over 60 boats joined them at sea that fateful morning . Each boat was part of the 107 motorized boats, that cost between P 30,000 to P35,000 (around 573.48 - 668.87 euro) each These were assigned and distributed last February 10, 2014 as donated by the Stella Maris and Friends to fishermen affected by Typhoon Yolanda. There were over 230 boat beneficiaries, with two families benefitting per boat, receiving state of the art motorized fishing vessels to help them start over.

“We felt so blessed when the fishermen approached us to personally thank us. You see when we’re in Manila, we donate but we do not see the beneficiaries. But here it was different. We met the families. We saw how our efforts helped make things better. We



realized we really did help. It put a face to the project. It made things real.”

At the aftermath of the devastating storm, the volunteers of Stella Maris and Friends thought of helping by donating some five to ten boats to the victims. After the group turned over the first batch of boats, they already thought of an exit plan of how to turn over the boats and the project to local institutions. More people asked for help and more money kept on coming in.

But it was more than just boats that were offered by the volunteers of Stella Maris and Friends – it was a form of evangelization. Twice a month for the past year, the group held seminars with the fishermen and their families for values-formation, teaching them responsibility, diligence and cooperation. One of the volunteers from Sacred Heart Parish, related how one fisherman announced that he never went to mass before, but after the formation, he now hears mass every Sunday.

The *Bayanihan* (Cooperation) spirit was likewise encouraged with the provision of larger boats, thereby introducing them to the concept of having two to three families working together. *Sweat equity* was also required of the families, who contributed some of their time and effort towards the making of the boat, particularly in the finishing touches of painting, finishing and installing of the outrigger. The fishermen were guided on the responsibilities toward nature, especially the sea and are discouraged from doing any destructive illegal fishing.

Fr. Benjamin Sim. S.J. concluded that, “Beyond the pains and tragedies brought about by the super typhoon Yolanda, there was another force more powerful – the force of love and concern from all people all over the world that responded with heroic generosity, not only in material donations, but also in personal volunteer service.”



Dialogue with Pope Francis

On April 30 2015, Pope Francis held an audience with CLC Italy-League of Missionary Students on the occasion of their National Assembly. Some 5,000 people- CLC members (from Italy, Syria & Lebanon, and parts of Europe) and friends from the Ignatian family met with the pope in the Pope Paul VI Audience Hall. The following recounts the dialogue between representatives of CVX-LMS and the pope.

Paola

Your holiness—is not that the way to say it. I am Paola. I serve at the Arghilla prison in Reggio Calabria. I come across a lot of suffering and the contradictions of our world. We ask you for some light. Here, we find it easy to speak of hope; it's a word we are used to. But how can we use it in the context of a prison? With a man has been sentenced for life? How do we refine our conscience so that we can accompany someone who is suffering-- not just as an act of charity but to allow our heart to change profoundly and make us able to fight with courage for a more just world? Thank you, your Holiness, for making each one of us feel as a loved child in whatever context we find ourselves in

Pope Francis

Paola, I wrote down your two questions — there are two of them! You know that I like to say — it's just a saying but it is the truth of the Gospel — that we must go forth to the peripheries. To go forth and head for the periphery of divine transcendence in prayer, always to go forth. Prison is one of the harshest peripheries, one with the most pain. To go to a prison means first of all to say to

And the grace of the Lord sustains us. If you, if I, if each one of you does not have this awareness it's impossible to carry out Jesus' mandate, Jesus' mission: “Go to the ends of the earth, to all nations, to all margins” (cf. Mt 28:19).



yourself: “If I am not here, like this woman, like this man, it is only by the grace of God”. The pure grace of God. If we did not slip into making these mistakes, offences or crimes, some of them grave, it is because the Lord held us by the hand. You can't enter a prison with the spirit of “I come here to tell you about God, because, forgive me, you are an inferior class, you are a sinner...” No, no! I am a bigger sinner than you are, and this is the first step. In prison one can say it with great courage; and we must always say it. When we go to preach Jesus Christ to people who do not know him or who do not live a life that seems morally correct, think about how I sin more than he does, it is by the grace of God that I have not fallen in that situation. This is the indispensable condition. We cannot go out to the peripheries without this awareness. Paul.. Paul had this awareness. He says that he is the greatest of sinners. He also says something very ugly about himself: “I am un-

Pictures in these pages:
Our Lady of the Annunciation: A CLC devotion
Pope Francis with CVX-LMS
President Antonio Salvio
and EA Massimo Nevola SJ



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timely born” (cf. 1 Cor 15:8). But this is in the Bible, it is the Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit! It is not — as they say — putting on a holy face of the saints. The saints felt like sinners because they understood this! And the grace of the Lord sustains us. If you, if I, if each one of you does not have this awareness it’s impossible to carry out Jesus’ mandate, Jesus’ mission: “Go to the ends of the earth, to all nations, to all margins” (cf. Mt 28:19). And who are those who are incapable of receiving this? Closed people, doctors- those doctors of the law, those closed people who did not accept Jesus, did not accept his message to go forth. They seemed just, they seemed like people of the Church, but Jesus uses a word that is not very nice: “Hypocrites”. This is what Jesus calls them. And in order to help us understand what they are like, the image Jesus makes out of them is this: “You are like whitewashed tombs” (cf. Mt 23:27). The one who is closed cannot receive, he is



incapable of receiving the courage of the Holy Spirit, and remains closed and unable to go to the periphery. You ask the Lord to remain open to the voice of the Holy Spirit, to go to this periphery. Then tomorrow, maybe he will ask you to go to another, you don't know.... But it is always the Lord who sends us. And in prison always say this, even with the many people who are suffering: why is this person suffering and not me? Why doesn't this person know God? Why doesn't he hope in eternal life? He thinks everything ends here, and I do not. Why is this person accused in court, why is he corrupt... and not I? By the grace of the Lord! This is the most beautiful preparation for going out to the margins.

Then, you say: "What hope am I speaking about with these people in prison?" Many are condemned to death... No, in Italy, there is no death penalty, but there are life sentences.... A life sentence is a death sentence, because one knows that they will never be released. It's hard. What do I say to this man? What do I say to this woman? Maybe... say nothing. Take them by the

hand, embrace them, cry with him, cry with her... Thus, have the same feelings as Jesus Christ. Approach the heart that suffers. We can often say nothing, nothing, because a word would be an offence. Only gestures. Gestures that show love. "You are a lifer, here, but I share with you this piece of life in prison". That sharing with love, nothing more. This is sowing love.

And then you put your finger on it: "How to sharpen our consciences, so that being with the suffering is not mere charity for us, but that it converts our hearts and makes us capable of fighting courageously for a more just world?" Charity is a small step: Are you hungry? — Yes — I will give you something to eat today. Charity is the first step towards development. And this is not easy. How do we bring development to hungry children? How do we promote them... we are speaking about children now: how do we help advance children without education? How do we improve the lot of children who don't know how to laugh and who, if you caress them, will slap you because in their home they see the father slap their mother? How do we foster them? How do we bring development to people who have lost their jobs, how do we accompany and promote, helping them make their way? For without work a person feels like he or she has no dignity. Yes, it's good to bring them

Approach the heart that suffers. We can often say nothing, nothing, because a word would be an offence. Only gestures. Gestures that show love.





something to eat. But dignity lies in when he or she can bring food to their own home: this gives dignity! This is development — the president spoke about it [referring to the CVX-LMS’ president who spoke before]: you do so many things... One difference between habitual charity — I don’t mean the kind of charity that helps people out of very serious hardship — but habitual charity and development is that habitual charity eases one’s mind: “Today I gave people food, now I will go peacefully to sleep”. Wishing to promote progress makes your soul restless. “I must do more... and tomorrow this, and the day after that, and what I’ll do is...”. That healthy restlessness of the Holy Spirit.

This is what I would like to tell you. May it not be mere charity for us but that it convert our hearts. And this restlessness that the Holy Spirit gives you to find ways to help, promote your brothers and sisters, this unites you to Jesus Christ: this is penitence, this is the cross, and this is joy. A great, great, great joy that the Holy Spirit gives you when you give this. I don’t know if this helps you, what I said.... For, when they ask me these things, the risk — even for the Pope — is to believe that one has the answer to all things... But the only one who can answer every question is the Lord. My work is simply to listen and to say what comes from within. But it’s very little and not enough.

Tiziana

Your Holiness, I am Tiziana and I come from Cagliari. I feel excited and happy being in front of you and realising a dream



I had since I was a child. I belong to Christian Life Community and the Student Missionary League through which I have had the privilege to live beautiful experiences of communion and service. But, today, speaking with all sincerity, I admit to you that I lose hope sometimes. Sometimes my weakness is the same as that of other young people. Help me and all of us to understand that God never abandons us, that we young people can still dream despite those that want to take this away from us.

Pope Francis

To young people I like to say: Do not let yourselves be robbed of hope. But your question goes further: “What hope are you talking about, Father?” Some may think that hope is for a life of comfort, a tranquil life, obtaining something.... It is a controlled hope, a hope that fits nicely into a labora-

Above: Dialogue with CLC representatives.
The Pope meets representatives from Lebanon: (L-R) Michel Younan & Wissam Abdo

tory. But if you dwell in life and work in life, with its many problems, with the overwhelming skepticism that life offers you, with its many failures.

“What hope are you speaking about, Father?” Yes, I can tell you: “we are all going to heaven”. Yes, it’s true. The Lord is good. “But I want a better world, and I am fragile, and I don’t see how this can be done. I want to ‘get involved,’ for example in politics or in medicine... but sometimes I find corruption there and jobs that were meant to serve become business. I want to ‘get involved’ in the Church, and there too the devil sows seeds of corruption and there frequently is....” I remember that Via Crucis of Pope Benedict XVI, when he invited us to drive out filth from the Church.... In the Church too there is corruption.

There is always something that disappoints.... But the real hope is a gift from God, it is a present, and it never disappoints. But how do we understand that God never

When we are undergoing hardship, when we see the brutality that occurs in the world, hope seems to fall away. But in the heart of the humble it remains. This is hard to understand because your question is very profound. How do we not leave the fight and live the good life?

abandons us, that God is with us, that he is walking with us? Today, at the start of Mass, the Psalm we recited was very beautiful, so beautiful: “O God, when thou didst go forth before thy people, when thou didst battle at our side, the earth quaked and the heavens poured” (cf. Ps 68:7-8). Yes. But this is not always evident. It is just something of which I am sure — I am sure of it, but I don’t always feel it, yet I am sure: God walks with his people. God never abandons his people. He is the shepherd of his people. But when I commit a sin, when I make a mistake, when I do something unjust, when I see many things, I ask: “Lord, where are you? Where are you?” Today, many innocents are dying: where are you, Lord? Can something be done?

Hope is one of the most difficult virtues to understand, and some great people — I think it was Péguy, one of those who said that it was the most humble of virtues, hope, because it is the virtue of the humble. One needs to lower himself so that the Lord may give it to him, so that the Lord will grant it. It is He who sustains us. But tell me: what kind of hope can you have from a natural point of view, let us think of a hospital: a sister spends 40 years of her life in the terminal illness ward, and every day one, then another and another and another [dies] ... Yes, I believe in God, but the love that woman gives always ends in another passing away.... and at a certain point that woman could say to God: “So this is this the world you made? Can something be hoped for from you?” The temptation... When we are undergoing hardship, when we see the brutality that occurs in the world, hope seems to fall away. But in the heart of the humble it remains. This is hard to understand because your question is very profound. How do we not leave the fight and live the good life? This [living the “good life”] without hope, is much easier... Service is the work of the humble, today we have heard it in the Gospel. Jesus came to serve, not to be served. And hope is the virtue of the humble. I believe that this could be the way. I tell you with sincerity: nothing else comes to my mind to say. Humility and service: these two things guard the little hope, the most humble virtue, but the one that life gives you.



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Bartolo:

Dear Holy Father, my name is Bartolo and I have been a priest for nine years. Currently I have been entrusted with the formation of seminarians and I teach at the inter-regional seminary for Campania in Naples, run by the Jesuits: a place where often things are taken for granted: formation in general ... For about ten years I have worked with Fr Massimo Nevola in the facilitating missionary camps, especially in Cuba, organised for the young adults in the Student Missionary League. Through these experiences I have touched the wounds of the Lord in the poverty of the people of our time, and experienced a crisis that has pushed me to seek more assiduously His face. This has strengthened my priestly vocation that I experience more as a gift for all humanity and the Church. I wanted to ask, what the CLC, a movement of Ignatian inspiration and present in many parishes, can provide by way of formation for the pastoral workers, and what the Student Missionary League could do to involve and educate the young in global awareness. Thank you.

Pope Francis:

The President [of CVX-LMS] mentioned an Ignatian motto: “Contemplative in action”. To be a contemplative in action is not to walk through life looking up at the sky, be-

The wounds of humanity, if you approach them, if you touch them — and this is Catholic teaching — you touch the wounded Lord. This precisely is Ignatius’ message, in spirituality: a spirituality where at the centre is Jesus Christ, not institutions, not people-- no. Jesus Christ. Christ Incarnate!

cause you will certainly fall in a hole [laughs]!... One needs to understand what contemplation means. You said something, a word that struck me: I touched with my hand the wounds of the Lord in the poverty of the people of our time. And that, I believe to be one of the best remedies for the malady that plagues us: indifference. As well as skepticism: to believe that nothing can be done. The patron of the indifferent and of skeptics is Thomas: Thomas had to touch the wounds. There is a beautiful discourse, a tremendously beautiful meditation, by St Bernard on the wounds of the Lord. You are a priest, you can find it in the Third Week of Lent, in the Office of Readings, I don’t remember which day. To enter into the wounds of the Lord: we serve a Lord wounded by love; the hands of our God are hands wounded by love. To be capable of entering them... And again Bernard continues: “Be trusting: enter into the wound at his



side and you will contemplate the love of that heart”. The wounds of humanity, if you approach them, if you touch them — and this is Catholic teaching — you touch the wounded Lord. This you will find in Matthew 25... so I’m not a heretic by saying this. When you touch the wounds of the Lord, you understand a little more about the mystery of Christ, of God Incarnate. This precisely is Ignatius’ message, in spirituality: a spirituality where at the centre is Jesus Christ, not institutions, not people-- no. Jesus Christ. Christ Incarnate! And when you do the Spiritual Exercises, he tells you that seeing the Lord who suffers, the wounds of the Lord, strains you to tears, to feel pain. And the Ignatian spirituality gives your Movement this path, offers you this road: to enter into the heart of God through the wounds of Jesus Christ. Christ wounded in the hungry, in the ignorant, in the discarded, in the elderly all alone, in the sick, in the imprisoned, in the insane... He is there.

And what is the biggest mistake any one of you could make? You might be speaking about God, finding God, encountering God... but what it is just a god, a “god-spray”, a common god, an ethereal god... Ignatius wanted you to encounter Jesus Christ, the Lord, who loves you and gave his life for you, wounded for your sin, for my sin, for all people... And the wounds of the Lord are everywhere. In exactly what you said lies the key. We can speak a lot about theology, a lot... good things, speak about God... but the way is being able to contemplate Jesus Christ, to read the Gospel, what Jesus Christ did: It is He, the

Lord! Fall in love with Jesus Christ and say to Jesus Christ that you choose to follow Him, to be like Him. And this is done through prayer and touching the wounds of the Lord. You will never know Jesus Christ if you don’t touch his injuries, his wounds. He was wounded for us. This is the way, it is the way which the Ignatian spirituality offers to all of us: the journey...

And I’ll go a little further still: you are a formator of future priests. Please, if you see an intelligent boy, good but lacking in the experience of touching, embracing and loving the wounded Lord, advise him to go take a nice vacation for a year or two... and you will do him good. “But, Father, we priests are so few: we need them...” Please, don’t let the illusion of quantity deceive us and cause us to lose sight of quality! We need priests who pray. And who pray to Jesus Christ, who challenge Jesus Christ for their people, as Moses who had the audacity to challenge God and save the very people God wanted to destroy, what bravery before God; priests who also have the courage to suffer, to bear the solitude and to give great love. Bernard’s discourse on the wounds of the Lord holds for them too. Do you understand? Thank you.

Gianni

Holy Father, I am Gianni, I come from CVX L’Aquila. We have been involved for over 30 years in volunteer work, in associations and in politics. So, in our commitment to the social work we would like everyone - especially the young among us - to understand that in addition to the private good, too often given priority, there is a common good which belongs to the entire community. Holy Father, which insight from Ignatian spirituality can help us keep alive the relationship between faith in Jesus Christ and the responsibility to always strive to build a more just and united society? Thank you.

Pope Francis

I believe Fr Bartolomeo Sorge would do a much better job at answering the question than I — I don’t know if he is here, no, I didn’t see him. He’s very good! He is a Jesuit who paved the way in this field of politics. One might say: “We ought to start a Catholic party!”. This is not the way. The

Church is a community of Christians who worship the Father, follow the path of the Son and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. It's not a political party. "No, let's not say party ... a party only for Catholics". It serves nothing, and won't have the ability to engage, because it will be doing what it was not called to do. "But can a Catholic engage in politics?" — "She must!" — "But can a Catholic make a difference in politics?" — "He must!" Blessed Paul VI, if I'm not mistaken, said that politics is one of the highest forms of charity, because it seeks the common good. "But Father, politics is not easy, because in this corrupt world... in the end you can't get anywhere...". What do you want to say- that engaging in politics is a little like martyrdom? Yes. It is a kind of martyrdom. But it is a daily martyrdom: seeking the common good without letting yourself be corrupted. Seek the common good by thinking of the most fitting ways for this, the most fitting means. Seek the common good

by working on little things, the small ones, of little effort... but doable. Politics is important: small politics and big politics. In the Church there are many Catholics who engaged in clean healthy politics; and those who have fostered peace

among nations. Think of the Catholics here, in Italy, after the war: think of De Gasperi. Think of France: Schumann, who has a cause for beatification. One can become a saint through politics. And I don't want to name more: two examples of those who pursued the common good are enough. Engaging in politics is martyrdom: truly a martyr's work, because one needs to go the whole day with that ideal, every day, with the ideal of building the common good. And always carrying the cross of many failures and carrying the cross of many sins. Because in the world it's difficult to do good in a society without getting your hands or your heart a little dirty; but that is why you go ask for forgiveness, you ask for pardon and continue to do it. Don't allow this discourage you. "No, Father, I don't do politics because I don't want to sin" — That's not good! Go forward, ask the Lord to help you not to sin, but if you do

“But can a Catholic engage in politics?” — “She must!” — “But can a Catholic make a difference in politics?” — “He must!”

get your hands dirty, ask forgiveness and go forward!". But do it, do it...

And fight for a more just and supportive society. What is the solution for politics that this globalized world offers us today? Simple: money is the core. Not men and women, no. Money. The god of money. This is the core. Everyone is at the service of god of money. But that is why what doesn't serve the god of money is thrown away. And what the globalized world today offers us is a throw-away culture: what is useless is thrown away. Children are thrown away, because people are not having children or because they are killed before they are born. The elderly are thrown away, because... old people are useless... and now whoever doesn't have a job goes and looks for his grandparents because their pension might help! But they are useful momentarily. The elderly are thrown away, abandoned. And now, work must diminish because the god of money can't do everything, and so young

people are thrown away. Here in Italy 40-41% of young people 25 and under — I don't want to make a mistake, correct me — are unemployed. They are thrown away... But this is the path of destruction. "As a Catholic, do I watch from the

balcony?" You can't watch from the balcony! Get involved! Give it your best. If the Lord calls you to this vocation, get to it, engage in politics. It will make you suffer, it may be an occasion for sin, but the Lord is with you. Ask forgiveness and go forward. Let's not let this throw-away culture throw us all away! It throws away creation too, because creation is being destroyed more and more every day.

Do not forget what Blessed Paul VI said: politics is one of the highest forms of charity. I don't know if I answered [your question]...

I wrote an address... maybe it's boring, like all addresses; but I will hand it over, because I preferred this dialogue...

[Then the Pope recited with the whole Assembly a Prayer to Our Lady of the Way]

And please, do not forget to pray for me. Thank you.



Prepared Speech by the Holy Father

This address was originally intended to be read by Pope Francis during his audience with the Christian Life Community – League of Missionary Students (CVX-LMS Italia) in the occasion of its national assembly in the Paul VI Audience Hall, on April 30, 2015. He spent much time in dialogue with CLC representatives, and ran out time to deliver his prepared address. He ended the audience by saying: “I wrote an address... maybe it's boring, like all addresses; but I will consign it, because I preferred this dialogue...”

The following is the translated text of his address:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I greet all of you, representing the *Christian Life Community* in Italy, and the leaders of various groups of Ignatian spirituality, those close to your tradition of formation and committed to evangelization and human promotion. A special greeting goes to the students and former students of the “Massimo” Institute of Rome, as well as to representatives of other schools run by Jesuits in Italy.

I know your community well because I was a chaplain¹ in Argentina, at the end of the 70s. Your roots are found in the Marian Congregations, which date back to the first generation of the companions of St. Ignatius of Loyola. A long path has distinguished the Association throughout the world because of the intense spiritual life and apostolic zeal of its members, and it anticipated, in certain ways, the dictates of the Second Vatican Council concerning the role and service of the lay faithful in the Church. In line with this perspective, you chose as the theme of your gathering, which takes as its title “Beyond the walls”.

Today I would like to offer you some guidelines for your spiritual and communal journey.

First, commitment to spreading a *culture of justice and peace*. In the face of a culture of lawlessness, corruption and conflict, you are called to dedicate yourselves to the common good, [and service to the people through politics]. This, as Blessed Paul VI affirms, “is the highest and most effective form of

charity”. If Christians were to disengage in their direct involvement in politics, it would betray the mission of lay faithful, called to be salt and light in the world always in this kind of presence.

Second, the apostolic priority directs you towards *pastoral care* of the family, in the line of deepening upon the last Synod of Bishops. I encourage you to help diocesan communities in caring for the family, the vital cell of society, and in accompanying engaged couples toward marriage. At the same time, you can collaborate in welcoming those who are, so to speak, “distant”: among them there are many separated persons, suffering from the failure of their plan for married life, as well as other situations of family unrest, which can make even the journey of faith and the life of the Church tiresome.

The third line that I suggest to you is *missionary life*. I was pleased to learn that you have embarked on a common journey with the “Lega Missionaria Studenti”, which led you down the paths of the world to encounter with the poor and with the communities that are in the greatest need for pastoral workers. I encourage you to maintain this capacity to go forth and move toward the most needy frontiers of humanity. Today

¹ In the original Italian, Pope Francis uses the words: “assistente nazionale”. Fr. Jorge Mario Bergoglio, SJ used to be the National Ecclesiastical Assistant of CLC Argentina.

you have invited delegations of members of your communities present in your sister countries, especially Syria and Lebanon: people martyred by terrible wars. To them I renew my affection and my solidarity. These people are experiencing the hour of the cross, therefore, let us allow them to feel the love, the closeness and the support of the whole of the Church. May your bond of solidarity with them confirm your vocation to build bridges of peace everywhere.

May your style of brotherhood, which you are undertaking in projects of welcoming of migrants in Sicily, make you generous in educating the young, both within your association and in schools. St. Ignatius understood that it was essential to begin with youth in order to renew society and thus he encouraged the opening of schools. And from there the first Marian Congregations were born. In the wake of this bright and fruitful apostolic style, you too can be active in the various education institutions, Catholic and state, present in Italy, as you already do in many parts of the world. May there always be the joy of Gospel witness, together with a del-

icate approach and respect for others at the heart of your pastoral work.

May the Virgin Mary, who with her fiat inspired your founders, enable you to respond without hesitation to the vocation of being “the light and salt” in the fields where you live and work. May my heartfelt blessing that I impart to you and your families accompany you. Please, do not forget to pray for me.



Laudato Si: the inescapable call for Humanity

Mauricio Lopez Oropeza

“... if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs “

Encyclical of Pope Francisco, Laudato Si. No. 11

by the throw away dynamic or “use and throw” attitude that frames our relationships. This has an undeniable impact on our common home, our sister earth. It begs to ask: what is the future to which we aspire in the face of this serious situation?

The Encyclical “*Laudato Si*, on the care of our common home” embraces, welcomes and echoes the cries of our sister earth and our common home, stating in paragraph No. 2, “among the most abandoned and abused poor and oppressed is our devastated earth, “groaning in childbirth” (Rm. 8: 22). We forget that we ourselves are earth (cf. Gn. 2: 7)”. It also recognizes that those most affected and harmed by the current socio-environmental impacts, and model of throwaway society which we live in, are always the poorest, for whom the quality life is made even worse. This system, as it stands, even with its positive aspects of scientific and technological developments in various fields of life, is controlled by private interests with a main and overriding purpose: to accumulate more wealth no matter what. This does not work and it cannot go on any longer.

This guidance letter from Pope Francis also recognizes that what is at stake is not competing powers; what is in question is humanity itself and its future, and in it the most vulnerable, who are the poorest, are at risk, recognizing also how future generations are the most vulnerable because they have no voice in this situation. We need to take on board the fact that this encyclical is addressed to all humankind. It has been launched in a context conducive to a rethink of every aspect of our lives, our priorities, lifestyle, and where to focus our energies for a transformation of the unjust and sinful structure

The entire humanity groans with labour pains. This is not (just) a question, a concern or an intuition. It is a concrete, definite fact, one that is marking a watershed in the inescapable reality of the whole of humankind. This reality belongs to us, even though many want to avoid personal responsibility by talking about cyclical processes of nature or put forward other naive and irresponsible explanations. We are experiencing the consequences of a way of life, and of a supposed “development”, that has no future. One that operates in a system that has devastating consequences for people’s lives, including death.

The “throw away culture” denounced so vehemently and openly by Pope Francisco is the result of a way of life, called neoliberalism (now sometimes referred to as post-neoliberalism), where a good part of the human race has lost track of its relationship of belonging to the land itself and nature. Human beings have as a result lost touch with the roots of their inner self (including their spiritual self), and therefore live completely oblivious to the reality of the other, unless they have an interest to generate a transaction value, either monetary or emotional. This is what Pope Francisco meant

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Mauricio Lopez Oropeza resides in Quito, Ecuador. He is the current president of the World CLC and Executive Secretary of the Ecclesial Pan-Amazonian Network. He coordinates the Ecology commission of the CLC

res from whichever context we inhabit. This situation, and the call for change becomes a “universal ethical imperative” that leaves no doubt as to its utmost importance. For all of us who work in the defence of life, the environment, the rights, as we try to walk along with the poorest, and in many other places on the margins, *Laudato Si* becomes an indispensable paradigm on which we must reassess and re-invigorate our action and mission in the world.

I would invite everybody to read this Encyclical, regardless of their beliefs or areas of mission and life, from the perspective of three ‘lenses’ to help us to question how seriously we take this call:

1. The “**METANOIA**” perspective: This word, *metanoia*, means deep and radical transformation of the heart. That is, a serious and decisive change, which moves me to be and to act from a different perspective of myself. It includes a change of the essence of why I am willing to live and give life to. Embracing change in the care of our common home and all who live in it (especially the most vulnerable or excluded because they are not among us), means rethinking and redesigning our whole scheme of life, and to ask what is it that we so we want to give life to. Do we aspire to exist for ourselves and a superficial well-being represented by a passing ownership? Or do we aspire to the possibility of a fullness living our life for a higher aim, one that

is both deeper and more universal? Am I ready, am I at least willing to try and change in this way? And what does this change mean in practice?

2. The ‘**OTHERNESS**’ perspective: This word, otherness, means finding the meaning of life, including my own mystery, in the eyes and life of the other. My essence is strongly determined by the ability to recognize the mystery of life that fulfills me to the extent that I acknowledge what is beyond myself, and in the eyes of others. And for believers, with absolute clarity, that this otherness perspective should be especially sustained and built on the most vulnerable representing Christ’s own body, living and incarnate. To transform this world, while we have still time (though time is running out), is to call for a self-abandon to recognize that the only fullness is that in the other, even in sister earth. And St. Francis of Assisi has given us this otherness that transcends the human being and allows us to be truly brothers and sisters of all creation, because therein is revealed the God of life and hope. I can leave my own situation for a profound conversion, and to form another way to recognize myself in the other and with

This situation, and the call for change becomes a “universal ethical imperative” that leaves no doubt as to its utmost importance.



the other to unite our wills and embrace the mystery and beauty of life given by God himself?

3. The “**PARRHESIA**”. This word parrhesia means daring to surrender, to speak, and act with courage. It is about having the courage to make the necessary possible. We need to ask if we have the courage to move from an inner personal change, and the recognition of the other and the other, to reach a willingness to spend and live life driven by a desire to achieve a wider horizon, surpassing the narrow horizon of the predominant utilitarian model the world offers us today. It is an undertaking that empties us of everything, and given the urgency of caring for our common home, enables us to take the consequences and risks of going out of ourselves and doing the our part to bring about this transformation towards an integrated ecology and for the benefit of the most vulnerable. Parrhesia puts us in a different place with the other and our common home compared to the METANOIA and OTHERNESS. In this boldness is a confirmation of trust or not in God who became flesh and walked among us calling us to the radical action, with discernment through from community processes, but without any further delay because our attachments or the society around us.

Pope Francis, following the courageous tradition of Catholic social teaching, especially with and inspired by so many men and women who give their lives every day with

METANOIA, OTHERNESS and PARRHESIA, speaks to the heart, speaks openly without adornments or exhibitions. Are we going to be up to the call and present challenge or are we simply going to talk about it?

The Pope’s calls can remain as just inspiring words and beautiful proposals, unless each one of us takes the responsibility and takes care of our part in the project. This may end up a missed historic opportunity, unless we recognize that this transformation at all levels of life depends on ourselves. The future of humanity is in the hands of all of us and on a profound change that includes a process of solidarity with the excluded and among ourselves, and with a radicalism that will not break the social fabric necessary to nest another future world. As Christian Life Community -CLC- in the world, we feel strongly challenged by this Encyclical and the mission involved, and we clearly recognize it from what we gradually we are trying to weave from our call to respond and rise to the frontiers, one of which is that of Ecology, and under the mandate of the World Assembly of Lebanon continue to develop in the Amazon project by sending CLC volunteers on this, among others, important mission that the Pope calls us to and which we hope will continue.

May this call be a real possibility of praising life, beauty, sister earth and all of creation, to find everything that is involved in our particular mission, in this call made to us by God’s Spirit.

*Original in Spanish
Translated by David Formosa*

Meeting of REPAM at the
World CLC Secretariat in
Rome



Laudato Si: What struck me



Christian Ubilla
CVX Ecuador

[50] "... To blame the increase of population rather than the excessive and selective consumerism of some is a way of avoiding to confront the problems. It is a way of justifying the current distributive model, where a minority believes to have the right to consume at a certain rate that would be impossible to generalize to the whole population, because the planet may not even has the resources to meet the requirements of such a consumption."

I have integrated "Laudato Si" into my personal prayer. Every day I "chew on" a little of this Encyclical and it has been a source of many consolations. What strikes me is the clarity, the openness and the courage of Pope Francis in denouncing the injustices of our time choosing, as did Jesus, to place himself on the side of the weakest. God has given us a prophet, not only for the Church but for the world: with a comprehensive look he challenges all of us to assume our share of responsibility, He "strips naked" a model of development that generates poverty and destruction of the planet. That is not the Kingdom that God wants for us his children. He requires us to take immediate action and change course. Could this Encyclical be the first step of a new world order one that is fairer and more human?

Chris Gardner
CLC Australia

[19] Our goal is ... to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about



"I am inspired by Pope Francis to take personal steps and to work redemptively within a framework of integral ecology. One very small way I do this is by having a worm farm for our food scraps and the tailings go to our vegetable garden. In a suburban setting I feel good about this as our soil is largely sand"



Rebeca (Becky) Yarnold
CVX Peru

[5] The destruction of the world environment is something very serious, because God did not only entrust the world to the human race but life itself is a gift that must be pro-

tected from the various forms of damage. All claims to care for and improve the world implies profound changes in lifestyles, patterns of production and consumption, and power structures in existing governmental systems.

For me it is that we have reached a turning point in the history of the world. A heroic act is needed to be able to dream a change. It may be more heroic to change oneself. A profound change that goes beyond words or gestures. It affects the core of your thinking, your perspective, and motivations.

It requires humility, to admit that we have made bad mistakes. And this goes to a very high level. It is not only to turn off the lights, separate the garbage and to recycle. It is a true revolution. It is avoiding to exclude and marginalize, to pay fair wages, to reject consumerism, to learn to live with what is necessary, to welcome the 'different other', to respect all creatures that inhabit this world, anyone above, that all we can sit at the same table. Maybe they are too many dreams, too many utopias. But perhaps what we need most is to allow ourselves to dream, to let ourselves be outraged by what we see and live, perhaps that way we can decide to change.

Peter Nightingale
CLC Canada



[246] "...that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care for the world in which we live."

"Our CLC spirituality, our first pillar, empowers us to make a greater contribution to the paradigm shift required, as is clear by the last two sentences of paragraph 200. Our experience of CLC community, our second pillar, and the formats of our conversations in our meetings and the DSSE equip us to understand well the concept of 'communitarian salvation' (para. 149) and the use of dialogue in Chapter Four's outline of lines of approach and action at all levels from local to world. Our commitment to mission, our third pillar, will be inspired by para. 246 and its prayer '...that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care for the world in which we live.'"



David Escandón
CVX Ecuador

[128] not to seek that in each case technological progress replaces human labor, and by which human life is damaged just the same ... But current economic trends have led to a kind of technological progress which aims to reduce production costs through a reduction of jobs, which are replaced by machines... Investing in people to get a

greater immediate return is very bad business for society"

I bring to mind car factories in China, fully automated; large companies where the production lines are inhabited by machines, where its control rooms work around five people, possibly preventing the opening of thousands of job opportunities. On the other hand, bringing closer to home that reality and comparing it with mine: the two are not that different. As someone who works in the industrial sector, I have witnessed the need on the part of companies to reduce staff through the automation of their processes, in order to reduce their production costs of and therefore greater profitability.

In both cases there is social injustice. In the first for not creating jobs by avoiding hiring and put aside the social interaction that exists in a work environment. And in the second, in opting for the disposal culture to be more efficient, because if they do not they would not be profitable, leading to an even worse situation.

I am very concerned with these statements, I am confused, I have no clear answers. Looking at it from my principles, the answer can be simple, and results in hiring or taking care of the worker, not to dismiss him, and to continue to be part of a rewarding work environment; but when you are within a company or institution, and at the same time you know the market conditions, especially if it is in recession, any decision becomes very difficult.

Right now in Ecuador, in some factories I have been able to experience this second situation. The recession that we are beginning to see has forced companies, to avoid losing profitability or failure, to lay off thousands of people from one day to the other. This sort of news hurts me, I feel very much the pain of the other.

In my country, and most likely anywhere in the world, the first to be laid off are workers, technologists, peasants, cleaners, those in less prestigious jobs, jobs where Jesus would have been found today. Today, in under-developed countries, these posts have continued to be the most demanding and draining, have continued to be the poorly paid, and have continued to be the first to be disposed of in difficult times. Jesus becomes flesh in our brothers and sisters who do not find employment or who have have been made redundant for failure to be "useful" in an organization.

But technology is necessary and its development has brought about great progress for humanity. Its evolution has made great strides in medicine, provided more secure industrial jobs and has been able to make us a more efficient people. Denying it or accepting it in our lives or work depends on each one of us. Although in this excerpt from the Encyclical there is a call for us to incorporate technology in a balanced way, both in our personal and organizational life and to be aware of the

social and environmental consequences that entails. And especially, to grow in sensitivity, not only to focus on numbers, but to do everything possible to maintain human dignity to reflect vividly on reality, that is to say not only to look at someone for what he or she does, but for what they are or may become.

To understand that work is a necessity, which makes part of life on earth. To surmise that the duty of every person is to find the personal way of maturity and human development within it, i.e., ever increasing one's qualities, one's work continues to bear fruits, that one's role is as necessary as any other's. But that involves investment, processes, time and dedication on the part of the contracted and the contractor.

Managers of companies, both public and private, have the challenge to provide this growth, this maturity and inclusion within an organization, to create "ecosystems" within their structures and in the decision making process which depend not only on economic growth, but also the value and the dignity of the person. In other words, to change the perspective of doing business and this is for society itself. In turn, the purpose is to bring humanity within enterprise structures.

Theresa Wang
CLC Taiwan



[201] An open and respectful dialogue is also needed between the various ecological movements, among which ideological conflicts are not infrequently encountered. The gravity of the ecological crisis demands that we all look to the common good, embarking on a path of dialogue which demands patience, self-discipline and generosity, always keeping in mind that "realities are greater than ideas"

It is very difficult to keep dialoguing with people who have a different standpoint. It is very important to remain always open and respectful.

Francis Marchand
CVX France



[113] Let us refuse to resign ourselves to this, and continue to wonder about the purpose and meaning of everything.

This phrase particularly touched me because it reminds us of the need to stay vigilant. We can admit nothing that our leaders, media, advertising, and others say as a given without exercising our critical thinking, and discerning with an enlightened mind between what leads us towards life and what leads us to death

CLC and the experience of God in my life

Najat Sayegh, CVX Lebanon



It is not easy to speak about oneself. To speak about aspects of one's life is to witness to the presence of God in one's life. For this, I would like to begin by thanking him with the words of Mary: 'Magnificat anima mea Dominum'.

My life history

Since the beginning, God calls people to serve him in different ways, and in different circumstances. He calls you, He calls me, despite our limits and weaknesses.

I come from a modest family. My father was Greek Orthodox, and my mother Maronite (catholic oriental rite). My father was from where the disciples were called Christians for the first time, from Antioch in Turkey. He came at young age to Lebanon, during a period of Christians' persecution. He lived in Beirut with his family and cousins, they became Lebanese. They were then dispersed all around the world, but my father stayed in Lebanon. When he met my mother, he transferred his records to her village, because he had no more family in Beirut, so we grew up surrounded by my mother's family. My mother's village is half maronite, half orthodox, with two churches, one for maronites, one for orthodoxes, but there were many mixed marriages, and people participated in each others' religious celebrations without any fanaticism. I have two younger sisters who are married— one to a Maronite, and they have a boy born in 1999, and the other to an Orthodox, and they have girl born in 2003. Both my nephew and my niece are my godchildren. We studied in a religious Latin school. We had two big religious schools in the region: one for girls (Dominicaines de la Délivrante), one for boys (Notre-Dame de Jamhour for Jesuits); all schools became mixed since the civil war in Lebanon. So I lived in an ecumenical context, as almost everybody in Lebanon: I was baptized in the Orthodox Church, but I practiced in the Catholic Church, especially the Latin rite. I now live alone in my apartment after my mother's death in 2011; one of my sisters lives in the same building.

My father had some health problems and died from a heart attack when I was thirteen. Since then, I started to think about the meaning of the life; I realised that everything has an end; only God's love remains. Despite my young age, I felt responsible for my mother and my two sisters. As I was brilliant in my studies, I started giving particular lessons in the neighbourhood and one year later, I got my College diploma and I began teaching in the village school after intensive sessions in summer. I was less than fifteen but I was looking older (it is the contrary now!). In that year, the civil war in Lebanon broke out and lasted fifteen years. We had to leave the village, and to flee the bombs from one place to another. We were refugees in our own country. It was hard, we had many difficulties, but I was always feeling the presence of God and his Divine Providence. He was leading me, and still does. He led me in that period into an experience of religious life for ten years in a catholic congregation, and when He saw that it was not convenient for me anymore, he took me out, as He entered his people in Egypt for life and took them out to keep them in life.

I wanted to continue my studies, but I had to work, so I was teaching in the morning and going to the university in the afternoon. I got a B.A. degree in Philosophy and Theology, and another one in Liturgy, and recently, a Masters in school management. When the situation became calm, we returned to our region; I applied in the Jesuits' school, but there was no need. The next year, the Jesuit school contacted me to offer me a job. I have been called to join this school, that's why I saw in this God's will; I had not met any Jesuit before. I left the school where I was teaching and I accepted the offer. It was in 1989. I loved the spiritu-



Najat is the World ExCo Secretary and current coordinator of the CLC Youth Commission.

ality and the ignatian pedagogy that I discovered in the sessions and recollections. CLC did not exist in Lebanon yet. I still worked with the Jesuits; I am currently the general secretary of the school and the rector's assistant.

My history in CLC

Many years after joining the Jesuits' school, one day, a list of Jesuit activities in summer was displayed for the first time. I chose the date that suited me; it was a five day Bible session. There, I heard somebody saying 'CLC'. I asked about it, and the father who was guiding that session explained; he invited me to the 'open day', and I joined CLC. It was Fr. Louis Boisset, the founder of CLC in Lebanon.

In CLC, I grew in faith and hope through the annual ignatian retreats, the Community, and the formation on ignatian spirituality and on CLC. Then I had the desire to live the whole experience of the Spiritual Exercises: it was the culminating point, and an exceptional experience. I thank Father Bruno Sion, co-founder of CLC, who accompanied me and helped me to see the action of God in my life.

In CLC, I was called to serve the Community as coordinator of my local community, then as member of the national Exco for three successive mandates: two as coordinator and one as secretary; I refused the fourth mandate to give place to other people. I received formation for guiding groups



and guiding people in Spiritual Exercises, at the request of the ecclesiastical assistant, Father Oliver Borg Olivier, and I now guide retreats. I have been in the formation team, and when I was the national coordinator, I was the MET (Middle East Team) coordinator also for three years. I was a delegate to Fatima Assembly. Before the last World Assembly, I was nominated as candidate for the World Exco, I accepted the call after a long discernment, and I was chosen for a new service in the Community.

The relevance of CLC

CLC represents for me a place of commitment, a way to live my vocation as Christian first, then as member of CLC, thanks to the three pillars on which it rests and that we find in our General Principles, our 'identity document': the Spiritual Exercises, the Community and the Mission.

The Spiritual Exercises, foundation of our Ignatian spirituality, offer to everyone the opportunity to meet personally the Lord. This meeting can only lead to the desire to follow Him more closely and to serve Him better. There, I thank the Lord for Saint Ignatius and the richness of his experience that he left for us. By Spiritual Exercises, I mean the totality of the Exercises. In my opinion, this is essential. I would like to invite those who have not had this experience yet, to dare this adventure with the Lord. It

Najat with Mauricio Lopez, Franklin Ibañez and the little Sebastian





not necessary to withdraw for thirty days, the retreat in everyday life - proposed by Ignatius himself - is perfectly suited to our lay context.

To know how to serve Him, the Community seems to me an important aspect, because it brings together people who experienced a common and specific experience at a time, one of the Exercises. Therefore, it is a place for meeting and discernment of God's will. Motivated by the same desire, the members are not focused on themselves anymore, but on the living Christ who calls constantly, and they seek together to hear His voice and to answer the call. They "recognize Christian Life Community as their particular vocation within the Church" (GP4). However,

the community remains an abstract word in the absence of serious commitment of each of its members. The community makes me feel that I am not alone on the path, but with companions who have the same goal, all over the world, wherever we are: collaborate in the mission of Christ.

Christ Himself defines His mission: to build the Kingdom of God, Kingdom of justice and peace. It is the mission of the universal Church, to which each of us contributes as he can, beginning with the smallest details of our daily life, giving an apostolic dimension to our every action. In addition to our everyday, the Community's apostolic choices during World Assemblies guide our projects according to the needs of our time. All these points are very significant for me.

For this, I wish all of us, CLC members, realize that the existence of our Community is a grace, with its pillars and all that flows from them, as the simple lifestyle, the preferential option for the poor, and others... I hope that we be aware of the sense of commitment in CLC, because I think that our role as lay people living the Ignatian spirituality is important today in the Church and in the world.

"Don't be afraid", Jesus said. I count on His grace for all of us in our mission of love and service in everything, AMDG.

From left to right:

Picture 1:
Fr. Nabil Chehadé, Najat Sayegh, Rita Ramy, Fr. Bruno Sion in Bkerke, the Patriarcal residence

Picture 2:
In the back: the former Lebanon exco
In the front: the current exco

Picture 3:
Inviting the Patriarche to celebrate the opening mass of the World Assembly 2013

El Reloj de la Familia (the family clock)



Family Frontier Team- CVX Uruguay

The best is yet to come!

Pope Francis, Ecuador, 2015

During the weekend of June 26th to 29th, 2015, Twenty-six married couples from CVX Uruguay, Ecuador, Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Peru, as well as a married couple from the Cana movement (belonging to the Jesuit College Seminary) and others, participated together in El Reloj de la Familia (The Family Clock), an experience of encounter with Christ which we received as a couple and shared with other married couples of CVX.

El Reloj de la Familia is a proposal elaborated by CVX Spain, collected from lived and shared experiences by different couples over two years. During this time some documents were collected in a book which contains dynamics for working at the couple level, married couple and even from the entire family nucleus. Elaborated and delivered in a simple language which reflects the “language of wisdom,” mentioned by Father Adolfo Nicolas SJ during the Assembly in Lebanon, the dynamics were subdivided in 8 time periods. They set couples in a path of recollection marked by the experiences of



the Spiritual Exercises. It is not surprising that once again the emotions of the Holy Spirit surprise us in nearly the same way as the other times we made Exercises individually. This time, in a new dimension: the dimension of long married couples, new couples, parents of adolescents, parents of young children or with aging parents. We are not going to expand on specific descriptions about the content of the workshop, as we were indicated that it is better to conserve the novelty in order for other couples to discover it when they take part in *El Reloj* (The Clock).

As special comments, full of gratitude, we mention the generous dedication of Fer-



nando Vidal and Menchu Oliveros, who left aside their family and work and began a journey to our countries, full of uncertainties but with the sending of CVX Spain, the communities of their region and the little communities of which they are members. In one of his many reflections from Spain, Fernando Vidal says “we have come to conquer you and ended up discovering you”. It really reflects what was lived in those four days full of discoveries and conquests. In the preparation of the “points” as a way of introduction of the themes, the propounded materials as compositions of place and dynamics to perform were getting more attention for implementing them and then share them in an open, sincere and generous way. It is incredible how we could live the experience of CVX in an almost global dimension, as well as Latin American. We all speak the same spiritual language; we all have emotions, and we all discover the way the Holy Spirit acts within us. We all have discovered our Principle and Foundation, and it is difficult for all to keep it in mind at all times and it becomes harder when we try to live this “counter-cultural” experience of being a family.

We want to especially thank Yolo Mosca, SJ who worked with us all Saturday and filled the Mass with well-thought symbols and ge-

Echoes and Testimonials on *El Reloj*

- ❖ It provided the couple with fresh air, looking at each other and understanding our reality, what our dreams were and where we were going, to get back on track... It updated the project to our reality today.
- ❖ We feel that news brought to us by *El Reloj* was that the relationship is always under construction, we can not "sleep in the stability"; we always must review our life as a couple.
- ❖ It has been a time of calm re-encounter for us to be able to continue deepening the issues we have already been working on. The testimony of the other couples nurtured us much.
- ❖ We could “name” a lot of aspects of our family life which were implicit in us as a couple but that we did not know how to show. Understanding how each one lives the different topics allows us to generate empathy and approach, just putting himself oneself in the place of another.
- ❖ It was also constructive reviewing the gifts received as a family, remembering the importance of freedom of each member of the family and how to take care of those vital spaces which feed the family balance.
- ❖ To internalize the Spiritual Exercises during the workshop was so interesting and new.
- ❖ Understanding the internal process of growth of each other gave us a greater openness of heart. The importance of preambles to tackle the difficult conversations.
- ❖ The rediscovery of our values and limitations.



stures. We also want to thank Jorge Crovara, SJ who gave us a remembered Mass with great warmth. Finally, we would like to thank Paco Arrondo, SJ who was always looking for new projects for as since he finished his closing Mass on Monday. The three were lauded by the CVX members of other lands.

On the 7th of April 1541, when he was 35 years old, St. Francis Xavier was undertaking his journey to India with the explicit desire to reach Japan and then China. Since then, the evangelization in the frontiers has

There is no doubt that we actually find ourselves facing a vast, diverse and challenging Frontier, but at the same time this Frontier is being promoted in the center of the attention of the Christian and Non-Christian World

become a mark of the Society of Jesus and Francis Xavier, the precursor of missionary work. During the farewell dinner we had with Menchu and Fernando and the Family team on Tuesday after finishing the Reloj, we greeted each other and we said: “Now, China”. The Family Frontier invites us to this, to areas where others do not go, to many places difficult to reach or where there is nobody else, metaphorically speaking: Xavier’s China.

The CVX Spain elaborated a formidable tool like the Reloj de la Familia and it is working very strongly in the accompaniment of divorced and separated persons. In CVX Chile a process of preparation for marriage of future spouses has been developed. It is recognized by the parish churches as the preparation for marriage and it was shared with us to develop in Uruguay. CVX Chile is also making progress with the PADIS (the acronym for Pastoral de la Diversidad Sexual). This theme is very important both in the Synod on the Family as well as the speech of Pope Francis. There is no doubt that we actually find ourselves facing a vast, diverse and challenging Frontier, but at the same time this Frontier is being promoted in the center of the attention of the Christian and non-Christian World. The CLC as a global lay movement has accepted the challenge and it has launched to address the issue from the CLC communities both in the national and Latin American level. It has gained strength and particular motivation, but always with the desire to go out, to the encounter with the other.

We would like to encourage you to come with us. We want you to join our work team, to make a regional and global team network in CLC which work in the Family Frontier as a way of supporting us, share material and ideas, generate bonds and continuing strengthening our feeling of a team. We assure the greater availability to cover all topics and with freedom and confidence we'll support each other. We'll be an impulse for each other in diverse destinations and endeavors for the near future, always committed that “The best is yet to come!”





In the other page:
Giving communion
to each other.

Left: During one
session of the
Encounter

Below: Participants
of *El Reloj*

Thanks to everybody for participating! CVX Uruguay is very grateful for the opportunity to organize and receive all of you in this particular instance of training and exchange. Special and deep thanks to CVX Spain for its generous support and making it possible for Fernando and Menchu to travel to our country, as facilitators of this workshop. We also want to thank our colleagues from CVX Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru for joining us as they added a very meaningful and valuable Latin-American dimension.

With this article are some echoes and testimonies from participants about the meaning of the workshop *El Reloj de la Familia* in their lives.

*Original in Spanish
Translated by Jennifer Fox*

- ❖ It gave us moments of greater openness to communication.
- ❖ It made us feel co-responsible with the strengthening of the union of the couples.
- ❖ It allowed us to look with hope at the new challenges that arise with family life - in our case with the departure of children. It also allows us to renovate our life projects.
- ❖ It gave us time to have an open dialogue from heart to heart.
- ❖ The dynamic simplicity and creativity gave a meeting climate very conducive, dynamic and reflective. It helped us to reconfirm the common project and set us more specific horizons for medium and long term, especially from being a project of two persons to the inclusion/complicity with the entire family, as our children grow.
- ❖ The greatest surprise was to teach us to value each other more, to live with more gratitude, thanking giving thanks for the simplest daily things. It also allows us to incorporate some tools to overcome the daily difficulties.



Readers' voice

While Progressio is rich, clear, and meaningful to the community in terms of content, it looks rather pale and atonic and needs a genuine facelift. Our review should thus be redesigned to make it more attractive and more dynamic.

It is my belief that a revamp is essential. Should we think up a slogan that reflects our charisma and that we would display on the front page ? Articles would have less "density" if they were enriched with images, infographics, or a simple drawing to illustrate the article's core issue. A more captivating and colorful layout with well-spaced texts, areas to breathe, quotation blocks, beautiful craftsmanship...all that would help reading and would make it smoother.

Combining modernity and spirituality, elegance and creativity is necessary for our publications to be well-rooted in today's world.

Wissam Abdo, CVX Lebanon

Dear Wissam,

Thank you for your feedback !

As you can see in this issue, we've already had some work done, and I hope this has improved your reading experience. Through the efforts of Van and the other members of the Secretariat, we have been attempting to improve the design and layout of the magazine. We will continue to enhance the magazine both in content and form, so we urge you and all the other readers to communicate what you'd like to see and get from our community publication. We want to keep on being relevant. This also means I will be getting in touch with you more for suggestions, especially in this area.

Cheers,

Alwin

On the article "Fears and hopes as a Catholic mother of a gay son - A parent's perspective"

I was drawn to the above mentioned article. Maybe because, until now, I struggle with my seeming prejudice related to LGBTs. "Seeming" because I don't let my opinion of them get in the way of loving them; "seeming" because I do, in fact, carry-out close acquaintances with those with a different-from-normal sexual orientation; "seeming" because, as one disciplined in the sciences, my simplistic and logical bases for "normal" are genitals (there are only 2 kinds). And yet, there is a desire to understand more.

I thank Joseanne for sharing her experience, and laud her son for his doggedness, perhaps because he knows he is loved.

It is, however, more interesting to know, what goes on in the mind and spirit of an LGBT --- of Joseanne's son (raised amidst a loving Catholic family...my acquaintances are not [raised amidst a loving Catholic family]... [they have] no belief system). [We can] benefit much in both understanding and love from an awareness of his prayer... Hmm, looks quite intrusive already. And yet, community --- oneness, in fact, comes from this. Not just sympathy, not just empathy (no, not at all), but more an owning of "something" as our own. Forgive my lack of articulation. This is because I don't know enough. Much said for now, I think.

But again, thank you for disturbing me with your article, Joseanne :)

Alex Medina - CLC Philippines

Hi Alex,

Thank you for allowing us a glimpse of how you strive to love more and deeply the LGBT. Indeed, it is grace that has brought our community to this kind of dialogue. And we thank Joseanne for her generosity of sharing her family journey with us.

It is our hope that through the stories we share, we continue to be inspired and to be challenged, individually and as one community – to open up to those on the margins. It is truly important that we hear and respond to these stories with openness, compassion, and prayer. Together with our Pope Francis, we go to the peripheries!

All the best,

Rojean

Survey on the

Four Frontiers

Last May 2015, in the president's letter to the national communities, Mauricio Lopez requested all national communities to "put all your energies" into responding to a survey regarding their endeavors in the four frontiers so that "we end up with a clear picture of who we are and what we are doing at the frontiers."

This is one of the foundations of how we can connect our apostolic efforts and learn from each others' challenges. Let's do this and submit by November 30, 2015. The survey on our work on the four frontiers can still be downloaded in the World CLC Website: www.cvx-clc.net. For any questions or need for support, please contact the World Secretariat: exsec@cvx-clc.net.

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If you feel that you, your local group, or your national community has something you would like to share with the world community readership, let us know. We are open to original contributions or reprinting articles from your CLC publications. We accept stories, reflections, formation guides, artwork, poetry, prayers especially in the following areas of our CLC life: apostolic and formation endeavors in the four frontiers, wisdom language, collaboration, and lay Ignatian identity. Send your contributions or intent to: progressio@cvx-clc.net, Subject: Contributions

