



progressio

Publication of the World Christian Life Community

Discerning Paths of Hope

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



Borgo Santo Spirito, 4 – 00193 Rome-ITALY • Web site: www.cvx-clc.net E-mail: progressio@cvx-clc.net
English, French and Spanish Editions
Editors: Manuel Martínez Arteaga

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.

PHOTOS BACK COVER

The Amiens Assembly pictures

The following persons collaborated to this publication, Translators and Proof Readers:

*María C. Galli, Robert Hurd S.J.,
Dorothee Lagabriele, Rojean Macalalad,
Marie Pompei, Carmen Rico, Najat Sayegh and the General Assembly Translation Team*

Lay out: *Nguyen Thi Thu Van*

No part of this publication may be reproduced, or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior permission of the World CLC Secretariat.

Printed by: **Arti Grafiche La Moderna S.r.l.**
Via Enrico Fermi, 13/17 - 00012 Guidonia
Montecelio (RM) - Italy

Editorial	1
<i>Manuel Martínez Arteaga</i>	
Amiens	2
“La Providence”	3
Phileas	4
The Logo	6
Opening Mass	7
The discernment process used during the world Assembly	10
Facilitating a global community	15
<i>Flavio Bottaro S.J.</i>	
Pray with the Assembly	16
The Open Day	18
Treasures of the day	25
Our World Ecclesiastical Assistant in Amiens	26
The Assembly official photos	28
Bernard’s Art Works	32
Reflection on our incorporation into the World Community	36
The writers	39
Election of the World ExCo	41
The New World Executive Council 2023-2028	42
The Anchor of Our Hope	43
<i>José de Pablo SJ</i>	
Prayer for the CLC World Assembly Amiens 2023	47
Behind the Scene	48
Horizons 182	49
In Memory: Gilles and Leah Michaud	54
At the service of CLC: Interview	55

Editorial

Another General Assembly has concluded. Number 18. The World Community gathered in Amiens has written a new page in our rich history. The words of St. Ignatius in the book of the Spiritual Exercises resonate in me: “It is not much knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul, but rather the feeling and tasting of things internally” (Annotation 2, EE.SS.). With this aphorism, Ignatius invites us to a time of encounter, of “being” with the Lord, of knowing in order to discern. To feel and to taste, inner knowledge in order to become living witnesses, bearers of life, hope and faith. This is what the experience of the delegates in Amiens was all about.

This issue of *Progressio* presents a communal recollection of the days spent in Amiens during the XVIII General Assembly. We gathered there to take a break on the road, to “feel and taste” how God has been acting in CLC during the last years and what those discerned paths of hope are that allow us to continue moving forward. This issue of *Progressio* can replicate these memories as you look at so many faces, expressions, and images that build the day-to-day life of the Assembly.

Progressio Supplement #77 has compiled all the relevant documents of the Assembly in Amiens: messages, presentations, homilies, and the final document. But an Assembly, which brought together 185 delegates from seventy-five countries, is much more. It is the possibility to pray together in many different languages, to share a breakfast, to walk for a while during free time. Small stories that are woven into the great story of the Assembly. That is why we wanted to share here many photographs, iconic images of the Assembly. I invite you to stop and contemplate them. Imagine the dialogues, the sharing, and be grateful for our diversity and our unity. Feel your belonging within the Community. The Lord has a word about Amiens in store for you.

Transmitting the experience of an Assembly is not an easy task for the delegates. Much of the individual and community experience is diffi-

cult to express. As it was difficult for the first disciples, witnesses of the resurrection, to share their encounters. Images and texts are simple means that can help. We cannot but insist on the invitation to encourage you to enter Amiens through the pages in this *Progressio*. Let yourselves be touched by the images, read the document again and again, pray with it, share it in groups. Amiens as an Assembly has already happened. There are still many seeds to be sown so that, in due time, others may reap the fruits. This task is ours. It is up to us to embrace them, to make them our own, and to launch ourselves with hope. It depends on being welcoming, making it one's own, and launching out with hope and audacity to continue building the Kingdom. Life goes on. Remember Amiens to recognize where there is life and continue to give hope.

At the end of this publication, we include a copy of *Horizons* 182. A document that shares the horizons of hope that the World Executive Council, today a “Community of Leadership in Discernment”, dreams of and wants to put its energy into in the coming years. It is both an epilogue to Amiens and a prologue to the next General Assembly in 2028.

The last pages of this issue are dedicated to Gilles and Leah Michaud. In November 2023, we received the news of the passing of Gilles and Leah, just two days apart. They knew the world community very well. They served it at the Executive Secretariat in Rome in the late 1990s and early 2000s. May this issue on the General Assembly be a small tribute to Gilles and Leah who gave so much of their love, service, joy, and hope to our CLC. And may they be our intercessors so that the experience of Amiens bear abundant fruit throughout the world. I am convinced that they did know how to “feel and taste things internally.”



Manuel Martínez Arteaga

*Original in Spanish
Translated by Robert Hurd SJ*



Amiens

Amiens is a city in northern France, crossed by the Somme River. It is known for its Notre-Dame cathedral, a jewel of Gothic art and one of the largest cathedrals in the world, and its medieval bell tower.

Nicknamed the ‘Little Venice of the North’ because of the numerous canals that run through it and the “hortillonnages” (a series of floating gardens), Amiens has a rich heritage and picturesque quarters that bear witness to its two thousand years of history.

Since 1992, Amiens has held the title of ‘Ville d'art et d'histoire’ (City of Art and History) to protect and promote this heritage. The city's contemporary image is strongly linked to three activities that radiate beyond its borders: its status as the historic capital of Picardy, its university with more than 31,500, students and the vitality of its cultural life supported by infrastructures and events on a national scale.

The Museum of Picardy has displays of art and antiquities spanning several centuries. Not far away is the house museum of the poet, writer, and playwright Jules Verne.



“La Providence”

The College of the Society of Jesus, ‘La Providence’, founded in 1850, was the chosen venue, within the wonderful city of Amiens, to welcome 185 delegates to the 18th General Assembly of the Christian Life Community.



Phileas



Phileas was the name chosen by the preparation team set up by CLC in France for the World Assembly of the Christian Life Community.

The French writer Jules Verne lived in Amiens and is considered a real local celebrity. Phileas Fogg is the main character of his most famous book 'Around the World in 80 Days'.

For us, this name had meaning because:

- As a community, we are invited to follow a path 'around the world' and to show creativity in the means to achieve it. The logo designed for this World Assembly reflects this.

- As a preparation team, we are invited to show ingenuity and to finish our journey in a timely manner.
- In addition, and not least, the name Phileas comes from the Greek word that means Love.

Our team, composed of thirteen people from ten different regional communities, belonging to two countries (France and Belgium), met for sixteen months to think, to create, to prepare the ten days of the Assembly. We welcomed 185 delegates from seventy-five countries. At the open day there were 1000 people from thirty countries.



Volunteer badges

Many volunteers (180 individuals), the U-process, the clowns, the caricaturist, the mobile application as an innovative element, these were arranged for the delegates' experience. Members of the Som'Oise Community were also very helpful in letting us store all the assembly materials in their homes, ready to give to the delegates. They opened their gardens to the florists and decorators of the Assembly. They also opened their homes to host the volunteers who served during the ten days of the assembly. And on the Open Day they mobilised different communities to offer their testimonies to the delegates and visitors, and welcomed the delegates with a bookmark they designed themselves!

They were part of the 180 volunteers who were serving in Amiens in different areas: welcoming, organisation, setting up and taking down rooms, decoration, liturgy, interpretation and translation, communication, testimonies, medical team (which had to work hard), transfers, and sound. These services required, during the 10 days, adaptation, listening, and patience. They allowed us to meet companions from all over the world. It is true, these meetings had begun in February by email, when we started to help many with the visa process. Some were very difficult to obtain, others were not issued in

time, and many others approved without difficulty.

The volunteers also had their time for prayer. It allowed them to live and reread their service under the gaze of God.

The Phileas team started its work in April 2022, learning from the experience of previous General Assemblies. During all those months we were invited to focus on what was good for the world community. In other words, to love the community with the flexibility, adaptation, and openness (thanks to the Belgians!) that the task demanded. To make room for the unforeseen and to accept that what had been foreseen could be modified. We were called to work in a spirit of service and humility. Each of us lived it to the best of our ability...

Like Phileas, we were able to perceive the impact of the world dimension over time in our regional communities. We received families during the summer, testimonies during the regional days, spaces where the global dimension of the community was shared, exchanges in the Community Council, and exchanges in the formations.

We hope that this event has allowed each of us to feel that we are a Community bigger than ourselves.



Outgoing president Denis Dobbelstein leads the assembly in acknowledging the Volunteers of Amiens 2023



The Logo

The logo of the Amiens Assembly¹ is inspired by that of CLC in France, which shows three characters walking on a path, like the Emmaus companions in search of new hope.

In the CLC France logo background, we see the sun, of a characteristic yellow.

For the world assembly in Amiens, the sun in the background is replaced by the Earth, which the three characters are invited to roam. They just have to follow the path that winds freely around the globe.

Indeed, the hope of the Gospel promises more than a better future: it announces that the Kingdom is already here, living in and around us.

It is up to us to explore the world to find God in all things!

Therefore, just like the Magi who walked under the guidance of a star, the three characters in the logo advance towards the world

with their eyes fixed on the dove, which guides them along the way.

Trusting, they follow it: the texts in the Bible see the dove as a messenger of hope and a sign of the Holy Spirit.

The dove is also known to announce peace. It evokes so many men, women and children who are hoping for an end to war. They remind us that the discernment of paths for hope is not an abstract issue.

The yellow of the path is that of the sun that illuminates the CLC in France logo.

The tones of the colors have been chosen carefully; the blue-green tone harmonizes with the sunny, warm yellow. Blue suggests the spiritual dimension; green suggests hope.

The titles are handwritten and some elements are neither regular, centered nor precise, just as with the irregular stroke of the original CLC in France logo, just as with the spirit of Creation: Nothing is straight or square... but it is so beautiful!²

¹ Created by Bernard Debelle, member of CLC in France.

² This remark concerns Creation: for the logo, it remains a matter of taste ;-)



Opening Mass

We could have dreamed of another gospel for the 1st Mass of our Assembly. If he speaks to us about the Kingdom, he also speaks to us about sorting and that is much more difficult to hear. We are not gathered in Amiens for fear of perdition but in the name of the Love that comes, and the Alliance offered.





The 1st reading and the gospel speak to us first and foremost of the presence of God among men in the desert and in Capernaum as today in Amiens. Gathered here, we are a bit like the scribes of the end of the gospel, that is to say companions trained, committed, mobilized in the following of Christ. We carry a treasure, that of our experience of life and companionship with Christ. We seek to better reveal this treasure to make the most of it for the growth of CLC in the current context.





Let us be here in Amiens at the meeting of the Lord in order to open tomorrow paths of life in the Community, in the Church and in the world, paths of hope which free us from judgment.



The discernment process used during the World Assembly

The delegates gathered in Amiens were to contemplate the wonders of the Community and discern the calls and priorities for the CLC World Assembly. Béatrice, Sarah and Flavio, the three facilitators guided the journey with the “U process”. Here’s a look back at the discernment process at work over ten days...

The facilitators proposed the delegates to live “a journey in U” during the ten days. This journey goes from the opening to the realities and to every other companion; to the opening to God’s voice to achieve choices and decisions, not only for orientations but for very practical points such as the budget too. In order to do that, each day begins with a common prayer to be together under God’s gaze. At the end of the day, eucharist gathers the delegates and volunteers, for, it is Christ who gathers us and puts us all at each other’s service. Along the days, delegates have time in groups with long deep breathing periods, silence, as well as mutual blessings.

Day 1 enabled everyone, through various means, to meet and to identify the languages and continents, to open to oneself and to the others : be aware of the present moment

“who we are, how we feel, what are our expectations and concerns”.

The “U process” was presented, explaining what happens when we close to ourself and to the others (inverted U theory), suggesting to review such a situation with our neighbour. These different moments enabled everyone to feel how he/she arrived and therefore to open to himself/herself and to others. This attitude allows everyone to have a fresh mind.

Day 2 and 3 were the days to contemplate, with an open mind, how God is working in the community thanks to the apostolic initiatives from different countries. Delegations had sent these initiatives, they were linked to CLC priorities (youth, family, globalisation and poverty, ecology and spiritual ministries). They were posted in the



Community 3 official languages. Like Jesus during his 30 years of hidden life, the delegates contemplated the world; it enabled them to open to realities from countries very different from theirs and to rejoice to all that had been achieved. Invited by Ignatius, they contemplated God who incarnates today. In this way, they were able to see how His Spirit has been at work since the Beirut (2013) and Buenos Aires (2018) gatherings.

At the same time, the questions on the community life are presented, as part of the discernments to be made : the W. Exco report, the financial report, the budget and questions on the evolution of the General Principles and General Norms.

Day 4 was the “open day” : about 1000 people gathered from different countries to visit the members of the Assembly and support them. In groups of 20, they shared, walked and lived a fraternal time with the delegates. Nothing else than opening one’s heart to continue the contemplation of the Spirit’s work, to feel the Community support.

Day 5, the delegates listened to Father Sosa, General Superior of Society of Jesus and World Ecclesiastical Assistant of the Christian Life Community. He gave us keys to hope : hope starts when we feel in God’s



hands for our hope is in Him and not in created things. When Christ is our anchor, hope is the compass which guides our steps and invites us to live in tension between “the created things” and the Kingdom He announces. Hope makes it possible to accept humiliations to go on carrying the cross of the Lord, to serve Christ poor and humble.

When he left, the Assembly approved the membership of 4 new countries : Ethiopia, New Zealand, Slovakia and Sweden. Then they had a spiritual conversation in groups to go deep down with the question “where is your hope anchored in the community?”



and to describe this hope by a symbolic drawing.

In the evening, the delegates entered the silence for 24 hours, they were invited to ask God to enlighten them on the question: "what are we called to?" And now is the time to go to the desert with Christ.

Therefore **day 6** was a retreat day, a silent and prayerful day to listen to what God says to everyone in this assembly. The delegates let themselves be worked by the Spirit from all that they received: "like bread which has been prepared with patience", they are going to pass through the fire. It is time for them to listen deeply to God's call to the community. This is the lowest point of the U, the moment that corresponds to the death/resurrection of Jesus-Christ.

When the delegates gathered on day 7, they began "crystallizing", to make the diffuse take shape; in order to do that, they listened deeply to each other, first in pairs, then in groups of 4, then in groups of 8, to feel the essential calls of the Spirit for the community: what can CLC bring to the world? What is its mission if it wants to help to save the world today? The presence at the frontiers was reminded.

Day 8, the assembly was invited to open to the future, to open to God. To do this, it began to ask itself how to act to answer these calls: crystallization went on. Jesus call to Peter was said: "go forth and throw your nets" (Lc 5, 4). Jesus, the carpenter's son, invites Peter, the professional fisherman to go fishing even though he had fished nothing all the night! As Peter, the delegates have been called, from their discontents, to leave their toxic discontents to listen deeply their "saint discontents" that come from the good spirit, that set things in motion, to be creative, to give courage: that's how we can create a future where more life will come in. After sharing them in groups, they were shared in the assembly, as "manure" that will fertilize the soil and help hope to grow.

Day 9 begins with the votes on the amendments of General Principles and General Norms: "good news", they are to be revised. Then the vote for the budget, where we can feel more tensions between countries, where vote takes time. In the end, the budget voted by a majority has been significantly

increased to enable the world secretariat to be strengthened without affecting other items in particular the apostolic fund.

The writers presented to the assembly what they had already perceived. They underlined that the contemplation of the Incarnation had been fundamental for the Assembly; indeed, we do not speak anymore of the delegates gathered but of one Assembly gathered in one place: a sacrament, visible sign of what is CLC. CLC, a lay, apostolic community that wants to serve the frontiers of the world whatever the national or regional priorities. All of it becomes the mission.

Then the delegates left in groups, with the mission to give voice to the Spirit, to tell the writers the priorities they wish to see in the final report. We can feel peace and joy, a work guided by the facilitators, a childbirth which was painful some times. The baby is not here yet but they will be able to contemplate him soon.

Here we are! different discernments were done. **On day 10**, the Assembly elected the new World Executive Council, taking the time to bless the president, vice president and the 5 councilors. During the last afternoon, there was the presentation of a version of the final document which will be enriched by the writers thanks to the recommendations of the assembly. They were blessed and entrusted by the assembly to finalize the document in the next weeks.

The facilitators

The World Executive Council entrusted the running of the Assembly to three facilitators, Béatrice, Sarah and Flavio, members of the Discerning Leadership accompaniment network. Let's find out more about them and hear what they have to say about this experience and what they learned from it.

Who are they?

Béatrice Castaing de Longueville (France): General Delegate of the French association "Christian Entrepreneurs and Managers".

Sarah Broscombe (Great Britain): Formation and development consultant.

Flavio Bottaro S.J. (Italy): Jesuit.

All three are members of the *Discerning Leadership* accompaniment network. None of them belonged to CLC, but each of them already knew it more or less through the Ignatian family.

What is the “*Discerning Leadership*” accompaniment network?

The Program for Discerning Leadership is an answer to Pope Francis’ call for “a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything” and his request for the Society of Jesus to share the gift of discernment. Its purpose is to “build the capacity of senior Church leaders, including officials in Vatican Dicasteries, General Superiors of religious orders, bishops, and lay leaders, for this mission of discernment, reform, and renewal”.

Through courses and coaching, the Program facilitates and supports the participants in developing the attitudes, skills, and knowledge required to lead in a synodal manner, i.e., in a way of proceeding that is Spirit-led, process-oriented, collaborative, and co-creative.

For further information:

<https://discerningleadership.org/>

How were they called to this service?

The World Executive Council decided to entrust the running of the Amiens Assembly to the *Discerning leadership* accompaniment network. Béatrice, Sarah and Flavio were selected for this role and received their first call from the World Executive Secretary in November 2022.

How did they work?

Béatrice, Sarah and Flavio didn’t know each other well before the call. They had to learn to work together gradually from March onwards.

Before the Assembly, they had the opportunity to work once with the members of the World Executive Council, for four days in April. The rest of the work was done remotely. In Amiens, they were in daily contact with the World ExCo, the redactors, Phileas, communication and liturgy teams. Everybody had to fit together and work together to support the Assembly.

The “U process” is one of several tools proposed by *Discerning Leadership*. It is



particularly useful for going into depth and taking into account very different ideas and points of view. This methodology helps to make visible the invisible. The Body Prayer was also very valuable for this. However, it was a challenge because of the different perceptions of the body in different cultures around the world. Despite this, the delegates managed to express communion through it. It was very impressive, especially at the moment of election when each member of the newly elected World Executive Council was silently blessed by the Assembly.

The dynamics of the Assembly

Some delegates were surprised that *Discerning Leadership*, rather than ESDAC, had been entrusted with the facilitation. The proposed method was new for most, and at times confusing, but the Assembly trusted the facilitators and let themselves be carried along by the adventure.

The facilitators were met with a disciplined and polite assembly. The advantages and disadvantages of being a good student: it was both pleasant and a brake to daring to

propose new ideas. Sensing this resistance, the facilitators adjusted their support, particularly on Day 8, to suggest that the delegates look at their sacred discontents, to enable them to share “what they hadn’t dared say until then”. A shift in communal energy was apparent from the very next day. And something was released. The delegates’ contributions to the final document on the last day were very different from those of the previous days. We were no longer engaged in personal analysis, but in genuine co-creation.

A starting point

The *U process* did not end with the World Assembly in Amiens. A dynamic has taken shape and is giving the new World Executive Committee the keys to how it can support the dissemination of the World Assembly’s guidelines over the next five years. The image of a baby in its mother’s womb sums up the situation. How can we support it from now until birth?

There is sometimes a big gap between the official documents that define what CLC is and the reality of what the national communities are experiencing. The need for



training has become clear, as has the need to create synergies between the different levels of the Community, from local to global, and to increase the sense of belonging to a worldwide Community. The creation of a widely acclaimed technology platform reflects this. This will be one of the major challenges for the new World Executive Committee. The application that was available to delegates during the Assembly demonstrated that technology can be at the service of the relationship as a means of connecting and exchanging in concrete terms, a “living technology” and not just a tool.

Do you have a message for the delegates and for CLC worldwide?

Facilitating a global community: insights from the 18th CVX CLC General Assembly in Amiens

I am truly grateful to have been offered the opportunity to serve as a facilitator for the 18th CVX CLC General Assembly in Amiens. I was deeply impressed by the international dimension of the group. I could see, firsthand, what faith means on a global scale. It's a palpable force, a universal language through which we can explore the mystery of our shared humanity. In welcoming smiles, respectful exchanges, and prayerful gestures, I could feel the unspoken connection that binds us all. Amiens, first and foremost, felt like a profound exercise in tuning ourselves to breathe in unison and embrace the beauty of the mystery that defines us as human beings. It was a remarkable experience of being part of the body of Christ.

Being a facilitator for this process was both demanding and extraordinary. Our team consisted of three individuals: Sarah from an Anglo-Saxon background, Beatrice from a French background, and myself from an Italian background. The event in Amiens was, in fact, just the tip of the iceberg in a process that began long before. As facilitators, we were engaged six months prior to the event. We met several times to get to know each other and develop our own team dynamics, drawing upon our personal skills and experiences while unifying our diverse

Follow the life! Look back on what happened during the global Assembly. Be attentive to where the life is and from where the life comes. Forget generic hope: cultivate your own hope, electrify your hope! Don't buy your hope from someone else but follow the hope YOU have! Sarah

Don't be only worried to the World but also to the Church. Look at the Church as a mission. The Church needs to be provoked by people they trust. Go beyond your boundaries! Dare to propose a way of welcoming people, go beyond traditions, of thinking a Church for all of humanity and not only for Catholics. Flavio

sensibilities. Our friendship and trust grew, mirroring what we hoped to offer the entire Assembly. At that point, we began designing the event's process. We were clear in our minds that we wanted to convey an experience rather than impose specific content. Our goal was to assist the Assembly in understanding and reflecting on what was emerging from within, as a focal point for the years to come. Thank you very much, CLC, for letting me be part of this wonderful journey!

Flavio Bottaro, S.J.



Pray with the Assembly

Guiding thread of prayer and fraternity



Throughout the days of this World Assembly, prayer proposals led the delegates. Every morning, the song “*Mon Seigneur et Mon Dieu*” (My Lord and My God), chanted calmly and at length, became a breath of fresh air.

Day after day, as the assembly sang and listened to the Word of God, it grew into a body. Songs known to a national community become the “property” of an ardent community of prayer. The Word of God is heard several times a day in the languages of the delegates.

In this way, everyone can open their ears to the music of others: Tamil, Latvian, Slovak, Mandarin, Japanese... The same national community sometimes lives and shares with two or even three languages in use.

What an encouragement it is to keep large regional areas alive, where of course sometimes language is an obstacle, a source of difficulties in understanding each other.

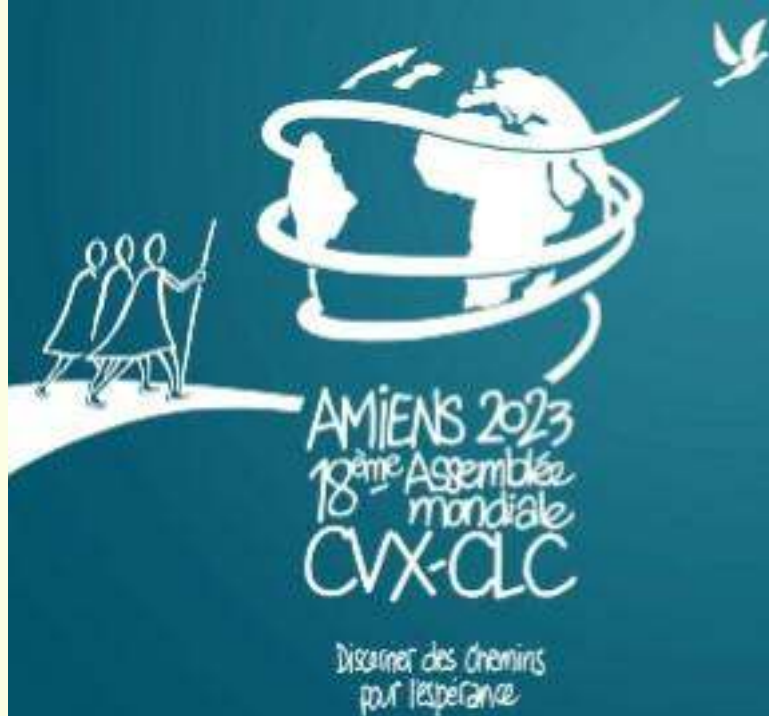


Prière du matin

Morning prayer

Oración de la mañana

05.08.2023



Mon Seigneur et mon Dieu

(Jn 20,28)

prier avec nos 5 sens/ **praying with our 5 senses**/ rezar con nuestros 5 sentidos:

Sentir/ **Feel**/Sentir



Demande de grâce / Praying for grace/ Petición de gracia

Seigneur, donne-nous d'entendre dans cette Parole de Dieu
et de sentir intérieurement
le mouvement de Vie vers lequel tu nous appelles

Lord, allow us to hear in the Word and feel inside the
movement of Life to which you call us

Señor, permítenos escuchar en esta Palabra de Dios y sentir
dentro el movimiento de Vida al que nos llamas



The Open Day



Sunday, August 6, 2023

Come and meet the
the global community !









**The community
in France
prepared many
workshops to
share with the
visitors in the
Open Day**







Mass in Amiens Cathedral





Treasures of the day

Among the many highlights... A late afternoon meeting with a companion from Zimbabwe...although words were limited for language reasons. She had brought a vase from her country, a clay vase that had arrived broken... Yes a clay vase that carried a treasure! During our exchange, which lasted a few minutes, she told me about the economic difficulties, visa problems... to come to France. Yes, her presence in Amiens was indeed a treasure in a clay vase!

Maguy, France

Treasures: meeting the witness of Oasis saint Ho; the image of Christ with a thousand faces; multilingual mass; meeting with various delegates; stands, dances from various countries; the common language that brings us together; reuniting with companions; World CLC as one big family; the clowns' proposals.

Robert, Michel, Christian, Marie-Christine, Elisabeth, Geneviève, Jean-Pierre, Cécile, Elisabeth, Thérèse and Marie-Élise (France)

I enjoyed principally

– meeting so many people again. I have travelled with in my World CLC Journey for more than 20 years; so many shared experiences, so many moments of reflection and sharing... and such a deep sense of unity in all our diversity – the Eucharist in the Cathedral – obviously touching also many visitors coming into this Church... a great Thanksgiving for our worldwide community rooted in Ignatian Spirituality.

Daniela, Germany

We came away nourished by the exchange with a delegate during this morning's prayer time,

which will continue to resonate over the coming days. We were given a card asking us to pray for a delegate. It's a wonderful show of support for all our companions, and a way for us to participate at our own level in the world assembly.

Cécile & Julien, France

For me, one of the “treasures” of August 6th in Amiens was the encounters, mostly short, as the day progressed (queuing to go to the toilet, sharing a picnic, taking a few steps with one or another). Accounters first with a Colombian, then a German, then a Luxembourgish, then an Austrian... Fraternal exchanges that brought me into contact with a bit of the political situation in Colombia, with the experience of a group of Germans, Luxembourgish, Belgians and Swiss, with the experience of a newly elected member of an Regional service team in Paris, etc... My heart has opened up more to the planet, and that's good.

Olivier, France

One of my treasures was the time spent in prayer with one delegate. There was one CLC member who was finishing her welcome journey, and one from outside France who had taken part in the World Assembly in 1967 (when the “Marian group” became CLC) as a delegate, and again as a delegate in 1990 for the general principles. This great diversity touched me. Then I broke down in tears in the arms of the Lithuanian delegate who asked me to pray for peace in Ukraine. We cried in each other's arms before singing and praying together.

Véronique, France



Our World Ecclesiastical Assistant in Amiens, Fr. Arturo Sosa S.J.

Some extracts from his message to the Assembly:

The "mode of hope", at the beginning of the life of Saint Ignatius, was a personal spiritual apprenticeship between God and himself. Later, it became a communal experience, a shared hope, communal and institutional.

The hope is a spiritual guarantee of the presence of God. It is at the same time the root and the fruit of the experience of God. But Saint Ignatius warns that the hope must be placed more in things "above" than in things "below", more in the Creator than in created things, or rather, not in them. And it is here that Ignatius asks us to deepen our spiritual life, because if the hope is the guarantee of the confidence, of the faith, in God, it is a hope that refers not only to the spiritual, but also to the material.

Upon the recognition of the spiritual consolation, prayed for and accompanied, hope is presented to us as a necessary driving force for discernment about the means we should use in the mission: on the frontiers, in community life and in our personal and family commitment in the world. What the Christian hope promotes and requests from a community is a correct intention in the use of means, with the Ignatian indifference, without trusting only in things, but without burying the talents and goods received.



In his letters, Saint Ignatius liked to speak of "setting the anchor of our hope in God" as a necessary attitude in difficult moments that required a discernment. To cast the anchor, it is to anchor ourselves in the depths of God, it is a call to the radicality of hope in the Christ, to attain the grace of being what He has called us to be. The more radical our hope will be, the more it is anchored in



Christ, the better we will find the paths that lead us to live out the plenitude of our call. It means, that if the CLC lives the grace of hope in Christ, it will be what it is called to be: a community of Ignatian and apostolic lay people.

God has not promised us an easy path, but he has promised us that he will always be with us. When the doubts hit us, when difficulties rock our boat, when it's harder to make a decision, that's when we need to pray the most, to put all our hope in God. Only in this way, by following the poor and humble Jesus, will you be able to discern the new institutional channels required by the international reality of CLC and weave together the networks required by the apostolic frontiers to which the world Community feels called in unity.



The Link to his interview: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_dOrdaQUdM

18th World Assembly of the

Discerning p

'You will be my witnesses... to t



CLC in Africa with Fr. Arturo Sosa, S.J.

The Christian Life Community

paths for hope

'to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8)



CLC in Asia with Fr. Arturo Sosa, S.J.



CLC in Europe with Fr. Arturo Sosa, S.J.



CLC in Middle East with Fr. Arturo Sosa, S.J.



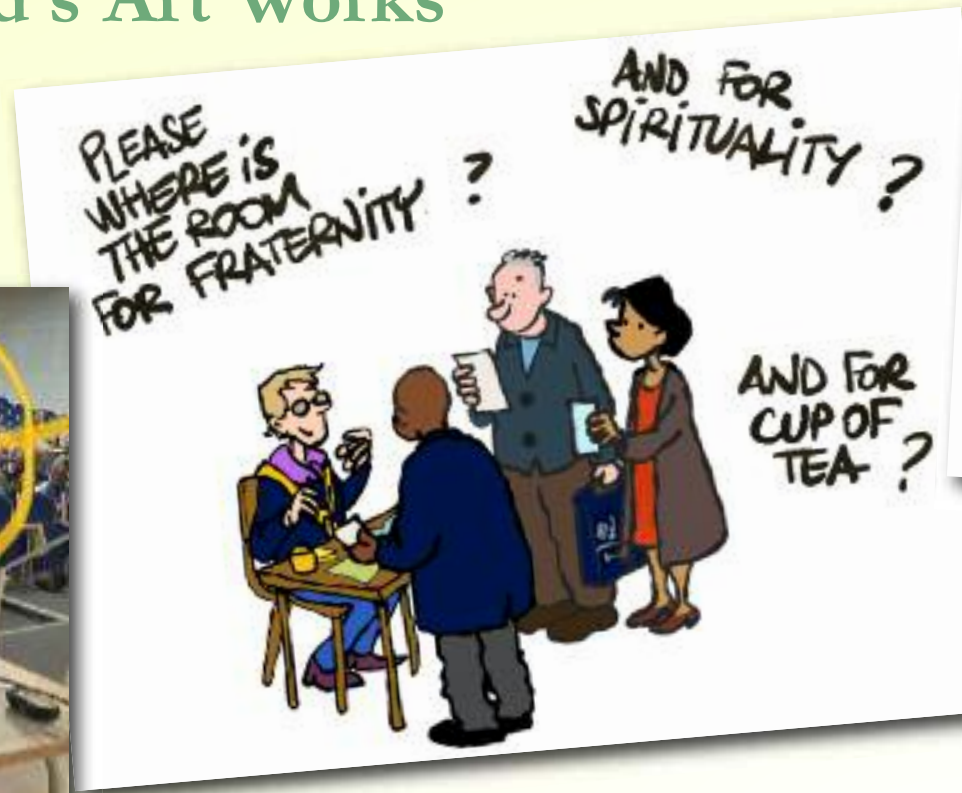
CLC in North America with Fr. Arturo Sosa, S.J.



CLC in Latin America with Fr. Arturo Sosa, S.J.

The author of all the above pictures is Bruno Cagnon

Bernard's Art Works



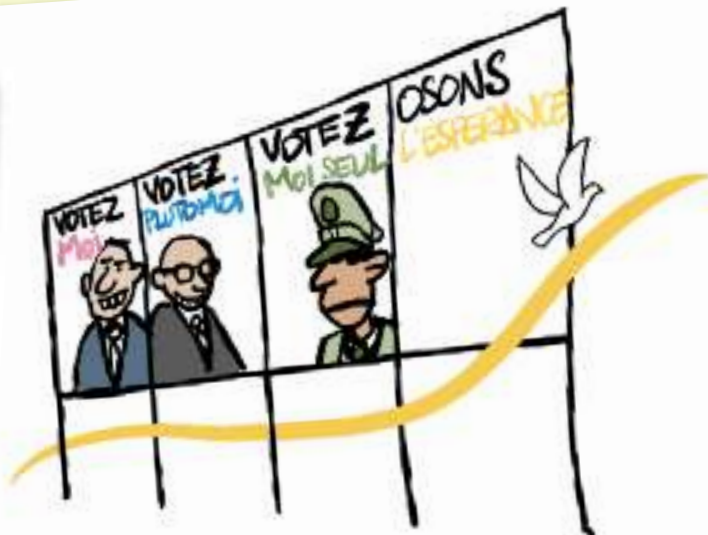
Howu Howu



LA TENSION
DES CORDES
AU SERVICE
DE
L'ESPERANCE
"



CA
MARCHÉ



CA NE
VEUT PAS
POUSSER







NEW COMMUNITIES VISION

	Italy	524		Sweden	102
	France	499		Serbia	102
	Switzerland	432		Cyprus	94
	Iceland	378		Israel	83
	Ukraine	364		Norway	75
	Finland	301		Belgium	74
	Malta	255		Azerbaijan	65
	Lithuania	220		Albania	57
	Russia	204		San Marino	50
	Greece	170		Netherlands	11
	Bulgaria	170		Spain	6
	Portugal	153		Germany	3
	Moldova	115		United Kingdom	0

SLOVAQUIE
ETHIOPIE
SUEDE &
NOUVELLE
ZELANDE

10
POINTS!



Reflection on our incorporation into the World Community

CLC in New Zealand



CLC in New Zealand representatives, Maureen McKillop and Sarah Dench

The acceptance by the Assembly of New Zealand's application for full membership was a very emotional moment for representatives Sarah Dench and

who prepared the way for our New Zealand community, and remembering Trisha Kane who introduced us to CLC. Seeing so many communities, we are not isolated but part of

Maureen McKillop. We were the last of the four new countries to be welcomed, and both ourselves and the god-parenting community, Australia, felt the warmth and goodwill of the Assembly as we made short introductions.

Maureen describes her feelings at the moment on incorporation. "My heart expanded, I felt my heart was enlarged, I was so proud that we Kiwis had finally joined the World Community and I was there representing our community. I was humbled to recall those

God's plan for our world".

Sarah felt such joy at the incorporation, and a huge sense of gratitude to all those who had helped the CLC in New Zealand community to achieve this moment. There has been so much support from CLC in Australia. They have not just been our god-parenting community, they have been our friends in the Lord and have walked this road alongside us. Sarah also remembered with love at that moment all those



who have been part of CLC in New Zealand and who accepted and supported the mission to become a member of World CLC, including those who are now with the Lord.

The prayer we offered describes our journey and our hopes for the future:

Lord, we in CLC in New Zealand offer gratitude for our graced history;

We ask your blessing on all those who have walked this journey with us and will continue at our side;

Be with us as we discern our path forward;

And may you bless all those here and throughout the world who are united in service to you through this charism.

Dearest Jesus, help us to find God in all things:

To be at home in God's world without attachments that keep us.

from serving You in others, to discern the paths that best lead to our growth in the Spirit and to God's greater glory. Amen.



The World EA, Fr Sosa was present to congratulate us. L:R James O'Brien, Fr Iain Radvan S.J., Noreen Nicholson, Anna Munari (CLC in Australia), Fr Sosa S.J., Maureen McKillop, Sarah Dench

Dare to go to the periphery

CLC in Sweden

Even before the trip, we felt how great it would be able to represent our national community at this World Assembly where we would be accepted as full members.

We were happy and a little nervous. What would becoming a full member mean, both for us as a national community and as individuals? And how would it turn out during so many intense days and with so many impressions, would we be able to cope?

We were really pleasantly surprised. After being a bit lost initially, we soon felt the relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, how well organized everything was, how we were not particularly tired at all, but instead happy and inspired. We were guided into a fine rhythm of gatherings, prayer and sharing and with the opportunity to get to know our brothers and sisters in the community. And it was all led in a fantastic way by the World ExCo, the amazing facilitators and translators, the app



Daniela Frank (CLC in Germany) presenting CLC in Sweden

and all the volunteers who tirelessly helped us.

The beautiful masses, the songs, the colours, the works of art and the flags, it was all such a rich experience!

We were amazed how we really felt that we were ONE community, that it could feel so easy and natural to share and talk with each other. It must be the presence of the Holy Spirit! All our languages were heard, all different countries and

cultures were given space. We got to be part of a large and warm community that was carried by the Holy Spirit.

When the day came for us to be received into the World CLC, it was with great happiness that we went on stage. The beautiful ceremony touched us deeply, as did being able to do this together with our

friends from our godparenting country Germany, who had helped us so tirelessly, and together with three other countries.

Just a few days later, we also got to feel concretely involved by participating in the election of a new World ExCo!

We also learned so much that we were able to take home, both inspiration, knowledge and a renewed understanding of CLC.

Here at home, it has meant that we continue building on what we have achieved, but also adjustments based on what we have learned and understood. An inspiring reminder was the listening - it is not we who should draw the map - we should follow Christ's roadmap - and to dare to go to the periphery, even if it can be uncomfortable and unsafe. Father Sosa's speech was so good!

But we realize that this work must be allowed to take time and that our community need to grow at its own pace. We are a young CLC community.

We are so grateful to be part of the World community, to have our hope anchored in Christ and our hands reached out to all of you and our neighbor. Thank you!



Fr Arturo Sosa S.J., Fr. José de Pablo S.J. (World Vice EA), Ann Marie Brennan (Vice President of World CLC) with the representatives of CLC in Germany and CLC in Sweden

The writers

In Amiens, four people were given the special task of drafting the final document. They were keen to listen and hear the Assembly's motions and intuitions, and to sense where the Spirit was blowing. The text was gradually co-constructed over the days by going back and forth with the delegates before the Assembly entrusted them with the task of finalising the document. Get to know the writers and find out how they worked.

Who are they?

- **Gabriel Fernández Gil** (Uruguay): President of the Uruguay ExCo.
- **Lucina Koyio** (Kenya): Member of the Kenya ExCo.
- **Marielle Mathee** (Netherlands): Eurolink Netherlands.
- **James O'Brien** (Australia): outgoing World ExCo member.

Two women, two men, from four different regions to embrace the different sensitivities of the Christian Life Community around the world. As a member of the outgoing world ExCo, James was more specifically responsible for ensuring the link with the preparation of the Assembly and the issues facing the worldwide Community.

How were they called to this service?

Only a few days before the start of the Assembly, they were contacted by the World Executive Secretary. They did not know each other before arriving in Amiens and had not had the opportunity to consult each other beforehand on how they were going to proceed. As the days went by, they got to know each other and worked together.

- When I received the call, I was both excited and joyful at the idea of serving in this specific way this Community that I love so much. **James**

How did they reconcile their roles as Assembly delegates and editors?

- There was no interference between the two roles. Being a writer just meant being part of an additional group within the Assembly. It was a role that enriched me also as a delegate. **Gabriel**
- I experienced this Assembly on three levels: personally, as a delegate and as an editor. I'm a lawyer, so it's normal for me to categorise the different roles. I didn't have any problems with that. **Marielle**



How did they work during the Assembly?

They met every evening for a meeting at 8.30pm starting on day 3, for two hours, except on the last night when they had to work until 2.30am. As the Assembly progressed, it became more and more interesting to take part in the process. They were convinced that choosing the writers from among the delegates was a good thing. This meant that they were not simply observers from outside the process, but directly involved. This enabled them to really get in touch with the spirit of the Assembly and to feel the movements that were running through it.

During the first few days, their daily exchanges were very open. They began their meeting by praying to the Holy Spirit and then revise the day and the exchanges to get a sense of where the Spirit had been blowing. They tried to capture as much as possible and compare their perception of what they had experienced during the day. In the final days, it was more difficult to synthesize and articulate all this and put it in writing.

They gradually got to know each other and each other's style. Each of them grasped details from his own unique cultural and geographical perspective.

What was their relationship with the facilitators during the Assembly?

The facilitators explained the method they were going to use to accompany the

Assembly's discernment, the "U process". They needed clarification as they went along to understand the proposed dynamic. From day 6 onwards, exchanges with the facilitators became a daily occurrence, to help them crystallize the information that the writers were gathering at the heart of the Assembly, and to see how they could relate to each other. The facilitators also drew their attention to points to which they should pay particular attention. On the last two days of the Assembly, the dynamic changed, and discussions with the facilitators became even more valuable in pinpointing what was going on.

And after the meeting?

The writers worked separately on a common file before a video meeting. The basis and general architecture of the final document had been approved by the Assembly. All that remained was to keep on being connected with the dynamics of the Assembly and to identify the comments and contributions made by the delegates on the last day that needed to be integrated. There were some 50 delegates' contributions that afternoon, and each person suggested 2 or 3 points. We had to discern what were individual expressions and what reflected deep-seated movements in the Assembly that needed to be taken into account.

On 2 October 2023, the final document was officially sent by the world secretariat to all the national communities. The challenge was met! Well done to the writers and many thanks to them!



Election of the World ExCo

Saturday 12 August, the tenth and final day of the World Assembly 2023. The morning was devoted to the election of the World Executive Council for the next five years, and the afternoon to work on drafting the final document.

After being proposed by the national communities, 32 people stood for election to the World Executive Council. The World Executive Council is made up of 7 elected members: President, Vice-President and 5 advisors.

The following persons also form part of the World Council:

- ♦ Arturo Sosa S.J. - World Ecclesiastical Assistant and Superior General of the Society of Jesus.
- ♦ José de Pablo S.J. - World Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant.
- ♦ Manuel Martínez Arteaga - World Executive Secretary.

James O'Brien (Australia), a member of the outgoing ExCo, was responsible for leading the elections.

To maintain a relaxed atmosphere, each ballot was interspersed with music and song. Each elected representative was invited to come up on stage as soon as the result of the vote was known to receive the blessing of the Assembly.



James O'Brien & Daphne Ho



The blessing of the Assembly



Cecilia Martínez

The World Executive Council 2023-2028

(World Leadership Community in Discernment)



The newly-elected ExCo

President: Chris Micallef (Malta)

Vice president: Daphne Ho (Hong Kong)

Consultors:

Franklin Ibañez (Peru)

Catherine Waiyaki (Kenya)

Inji Fayez (Egypt)

Catherine Kelly (Canada)

Cecilia Martínez (Spain)

Ecclesiastical Assistant: Fr. Arturo Sosa, S.J. (Venezuela)

Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant: Fr José de Pablo, S.J. (Spain)

Executive Secretary: Manuel Martínez (Uruguay)

The Anchor of Our Hope

Homily at the Closing Eucharist of the XVIII CLC World Assembly

Amiens, 12 August 2023

As we come to the end of our world assembly, I would like to put into images what we have experienced during these days, and so to look to the future with hope. I would like to thank Estela Cameirão, from the Portuguese delegation, for her help in drawing the pictures that will fill with images what we can feel today. A picture is always worth more than many words. Today we can express ourselves in this way so that the pictures speak to our hearts.



The first reading, Elijah's prayer on Mount Horeb, reminds us of how we came to this assembly. We wanted to meet God in the midst of the trembling and noise of our journey to Amiens. We come from all over the world, each with the noise and trembling of our own reality, our own community and our own country. As we gathered in Amiens, it seemed impossible to understand anything amidst the fires, earthquakes and hurricanes of the outside world. Inside we also felt the fatigue of the journey, the noise of the different languages, and we asked ourselves like Elijah "Where is God?"

The images of the earthquake, the hurricane and the fire reflect for us the initial noise of an assembly that wants to find paths of hope. An assembly that wanted to discern together from the reality of the world in which we are a community. Just as it was difficult for Elijah to reach the top of the mountain and find the cave where he could wait for God, we have travelled a path through recent world assemblies that confirmed for us that the encounter with God takes place on new paths, which call for personal and community discernment, going beyond the known frontiers, and entering into the terrain of the unknown.

God's response was not long in coming. Within the initial noise, the hopeless situations, the seemingly irreconcilable diversity of the fires, earthquakes and hurricanes of the world, once again God tells us: "Yo estoy contigo", "Je suis avec toi", "I am with you". In English, U = you, which is the method and process we have been following these days in Amiens. The gentle breeze of feeling and tasting the presence of God is the first step to discernment. We thank God for all the people who have made it possible.



Today's Gospel for the whole Church also gives us a profound reading of our experience at the CLC World Assembly in Amiens. The first image is that of Jesus praying on the mountain. First, he urges his disciples to embark quickly, then he bids farewell to the crowd who are already satisfied with the bread and the word of Jesus, and then he goes to the mountain to pray.

Jesus' prayer on the mountain is different from that of Elijah. For Jesus, prayer is again a dialogue of the Trinity, as in the Ignatian contemplation of the Incarnation. The Trinity is represented as a tree with three branches of which Jesus is also part and light. From the mountain, Jesus can see the disciples' boat in the middle of a stormy sea. That boat, small and fragile in the midst of a violent sea, is like our CLC world community. The storm that raises the sea with fury is the incessant swell of the cries of the world.

A sea where too many men and women drown in search of a better future. A sea of broken families, of wounded fraternity, of victims of exploitation, of abuse, of poverty, of the pain of a planet that does not find equal justice. A sea where war, senselessness and death are all around us. And Jesus contemplates that sea darkened by pain, shaken by suffering and tossed by injustice, a sea where too many people are already sinking. The Trinity, as in the Incarnation, continues to have in every human situation, in every moment of history, a response: "Let us redeem humanity".





Jesus comes to us in the midst of the storm of our troubled world. From our boat we can hardly recognise the Lord and we are afraid due to the swell of human situations around us. Jesus' first words are, "It is me, do not be afraid", the most repeated phrase following the Resurrection. It is an affirmation that God is present and close to us in the difficult situations of the world.

From the little boat of our community, it can happen to us like Peter, that we want to do things as God does them: walking on the water. We get caught up in the most miraculous things of the moment without realising how close God is to the problems of the world. We are even capable of challenging Jesus by saying, "If you are the Lord, make me walk on water". We do not only want evidence to prove to ourselves that God is present in the world, but we also want to do things as God does them; and we are not God. We want to save those suffering in the sea of injustice, as Jesus did; but we are not Jesus.



Jesus' response is still surprising: "Come". There is a certain irony in Jesus' gesture. It is as if he is inviting Peter to try to do things as he did, so that he might see his own reality in the attempt. And Peter, between courage and confidence, gets out of the boat and wants to reach Jesus; but soon the sea makes him feel the fear of human suffering. Peter gives his all, just as we as CLC give our all in our work on all apostolic frontiers. As an open hand towards Jesus, in these days, we have confirmed our five fields of apostolate. As a Christian Life Community, we want to work for the poor in a globalised world, we want to help families and be with the youth, we want justice that respects the Common Home we inhabit, and we seek the human and spiritual means to advance towards the Lord through this sea of darkness. But if, like Peter, we look only to ourselves as a reference point, then the sea will flood us, making us lose our hope.

And Jesus waits and allows Peter to come into contact as much as possible with the difficulties of the sea that is the world. Jesus allows him to get wet, to get soaked, to get involved, to feel the fear of so many painful situations in the sea of life. When Peter feels small in the face of the problems of the world and stops looking at himself, then he can cry out: Lord, save me!

It is the same process that takes place in the Spiritual Exercises and in personal and communal discernment. It is the way in which we cease to be our own point of reference and discover a God who is always new, who is always ready to reach out to us. We find our place before God when we have allowed ourselves to be touched by the problems of the world and have discovered that we can only walk if we go hand in hand with Jesus.



Jesus does not care that we have doubted - he knows that we are men and women of little faith - but he continues to invite us to walk with him, no longer alone but in community. Because Jesus gets into the boat with Peter, then the storm calms and it is the whole community of disciples who exclaim: "Truly, you are the Son of God". It is no longer the voice of one, but the voice of all those in the same boat.

In Peter's experience we discover that we want to walk in the storm, but we cannot do so if we put our trust only in ourselves. The anchor of our hope is Jesus. We, in these days at the World Assembly in Amiens, have lived the desire to anchor our life in Jesus. That is, to put one hand on Jesus, the other on the community that is the Church, and the heart in contact with the world. In this way we will be able to feel the sea in all its storm and calm, without floating miraculously and without sinking in difficulty. Always saying to the Lord, You are the anchor of our hope.

*Text: José de Pablo, S.J.
CLC World Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant
Artwork: Estela Cameirão
CLC in Portugal*

Prayer for the CLC World Assembly Amiens 2023

**Come Holy Spirit of God
to our CLC World Community**

**Make us your witnesses
to the ends of the earth.
Help us to go forth,
to deepen our experience,
to share the joy of Faith.
Show us your paths.**

**Attend to our discernment
that we may find paths of hope
to carry the Good News
throughout the world,
to families longing for unity,
to the poor who long for dignity,
to young people who seek You,
to the Common Home in which
You dwell.**

Show us your paths.

**Teach us to find You
and feel You in the Church
from the local community
to the world assembly,
may we be apostles and pilgrims,
walking in new ways.
Show us your paths.**

**Make us a loving community
of committed lay men and
women,
in the hands of Our Lady.
And as St. Ignatius asked,
Mother Mary lead us to your Son,
and accompany us on the journey.
Show us your paths.**





Behind the Scene

The Volunteers





N° 182, April 2024

Original: English

Discerning Paths for Hope *Seeking our horizons*

Dear friends,

As the “World Leadership Community in Discernment” (W-ExCo) we write to you after our first in-person meeting in Rome held between the 8th to the 14th January, 2024. As we worked through the week, we prayed for all of you and could feel your prayers for us. This meeting has been very energising for all of us and an important experience of lived community. We hope this letter will convey the same energy and hope for the future that the meeting instilled in us.

ONE Community in Creative Evolution

The feeling of ONE community is very strong, however another strong feeling is that our community is in movement, moving forward with the Lord. As the community moves forward, we need to be attentive to the signs that require us to change. We change not for the sake of change but as a visible sign of growth. Growth, by definition, is change.

The first obvious sign of change is in the title of this letter. Up until 2023 this communication was known as “Projects”. In our prayer and conversation during the week we felt that this no longer reflected our leadership team and what we want to convey to the community. So, with a lot of thanks to the people who went before us and had the vision to initiate this communication channel that was very much a project for them, today we can safely say that this evolved into an important means of communication and is no longer a project but our privileged means of communication with you, every member of CLC. With this new name “Horizons” we want to show that as a world community we are on a journey, a pilgrimage with Christ. We walk together towards different horizons. Horizons where the earth touches the heavens, the human touches the spiritual. This is the journey as an ExCo, a world leadership community sent in mission by the Holy Spirit working through the Assembly, to discern, send, support, and evaluate in common.



You will also notice that we carried on the numbering of this communication, now at 182, as a demonstration of this evolution. We do not start from 1, but we continue to walk together as one and evolve as one. We are at 182!

We are on a pilgrimage with the Church. This means that as our journey takes us forth, we will need to remain attentive to the quiet voice of God who leads the way. We will need to be courageous and creative as we journey towards our horizons. Always seeking the paths, the Holy Spirit invites us to travel, evolving as we travel and changing our horizons if necessary.

Our Community of Discerned Leadership



We spent the first day and a half of our meeting forming the leadership community called in Amiens to serve you. We too needed to move from the “I” to the “We” as one community sent on discerned leadership. We invested time to build the team as a community of service within CLC.

This day was spent with two members of the Discerning Leadership Accompaniment Network¹ who organised a day of community building. This was a great time to get to know each other. We are such a varied group of people with so many skills and different views. It was a real experience of unity in our diver-

sity clearly showing that in unity there is much more than the sum of the individual parts. Just to be clear, we are not talking about uniformity but unity.

The morning of the second day was spent deepening and sharing our experience of communal discernment and seeking to understand what a “discerned consensus” looks like in a community. Great support from Fr. Jose de Pablo S.J. (our Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant) who provided all the material for this half day. We really got ourselves knotted (even literally) but with careful thought and direction we managed to unknot ourselves.

These experiences and those of the rest of the week were a clear sign that our method of leadership in CLC is another area that needs to evolve. It needs to evolve into a discerned leadership right across our world community.

We need to deepen our discerned leadership seeking discerned consensus within the DSSE (Discern-Sent-Support-Evaluate) process as our way of proceeding as leaders at the service of our community.

Listening to our Community

An experiment in our meeting was to involve the community very directly. Rather than reading reports or listening to stories second hand from the members of the team who serve us as ExCo links, we decided to invite members of the past ExCo, the international apostolic teams and the regional teams into the meeting. We spent the next one and a half days



¹ Discerning Leadership: <https://discerningleadership.org/>

listening to the community. A good discernment requires very good listening skills, listening to the signs and voices, in this case, of the community.

We had three separate sessions with the three groups who all made an extraordinary effort to join us. We thank them for their effort and enthusiasm to join the meeting. You really injected more energy into us and we are truly graced to have so many generous and passionate people in our community!

Our Vision for the Community

A large part of our meeting was spent on absorbing all we had heard from the people we invited and the final document of Amiens. After some time in prayer, we presented all that we had heard to the Lord and asked for the grace to enlighten us so that we could plan our work for the next five years. The sharing that followed was a time of grace. We followed the practice of the three rounds of sharing and found 12 main areas of work that emerged. Of these 9 seemed to gravitate around the three pillars of CLC, our spirituality/formation; our apostolic response; our community. We therefore took more time to deepen these three areas.

Our Spirituality/Formation:

The World ExCo would like to empower the Formation Apostolic Team to continue the good work it has already done. We wish to remain in dialogue with them as they discern their tasks to identify needs and resources to continue to enliven the formation of our one world community. We encourage all members of the community but especially our leaders and prospective leaders to engage in personal development and experiment with the practice of leadership in communal discernment, using the DSSE process as the overall guiding process for their leadership.

To Support and Develop our Community's Apostolic Response:

As a world apostolic community, we approach the frontiers, with the collaboration and concrete efforts of our apostolic and regional teams to engage our members on different levels of mission.

From the first mission level, which is the regular day-to-day activities of daily living, to the subsequent mission levels, such as volunteering, various services, and institutional (retreat homes, schools, etc.), we reach the global level of mission, which aims to accomplish an internally felt apostolic life in addition to increasing our visibility as a community externally.

Much like an iceberg, our daily lives harbor hidden depths, unseen yet vital, supporting the visible tip. Often unacknowledged by ourselves and others, these submerged layers sustain our journey of being part of the apostolic community.

To intensify the apostolic aspect of everyday life, as lay people we need to deepen our faith, cultivate our spirituality, and engage in apostolic actions. We need to be attentive to the signs of the times and the needs of our brothers and sisters. We need to collaborate with other members of the Church in the common mission of the Lord. We need to be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit while being joyful and hopeful, as we share in the joys and sorrows of the world.

We would also like to try to act as one World Community and engage our members on a global level of mission. Thus, we are recommending the following actions:

- Encourage the Apostolic Teams² to clarify their roles and duties to better identify and meet the needs of the Frontiers.



² For now, we have four apostolic teams: The Youth Apostolic Team, The Ecology Apostolic Team, The UN Apostolic Team and the Formation Apostolic Team. We hope to encourage, engage and start new ones as we continue to walk our pilgrimage of faith and hope

- Create a FRAMEWORK that connects our missions at various levels of CLC mission.
- Equip the Apostolic Teams with this FRAMEWORK through formation.
- Take actions to implement at least two worldwide apostolic campaigns and create the necessary processes and resources for each one.

Building Our Community:

Our vision for our community can be described as “We are One Lay, Ignatian, Apostolic Community: The world community moved from the "I" to the "WE". We want to foster co-responsibility for our charism to enhance our sense of belonging and responsiveness to reality.”

In this vision we saw three lines of action (goals):

- Governance and Authority:* Clarification and development of CLC governance and authority to incorporate DSSE in the governing of the community (local, regional, and international) and its mission as one apostolic community.
- Support Communities and Individuals:* Support and walk with fragile communities and individuals.
- Embracing our Diversity:* Create safe spaces to discover, explore, understand, and embrace our diversity.

We also defined our long-term five-year action plan to achieve these goals. This will help us define the actual tasks we want to achieve each year and evaluate with you (the community) as we move forth with our tasks. We will evaluate whether the tasks are in fact helping us achieve our goals. For this year, 2024, we are tasking ourselves with:

- Undertake a community wide deliberation regarding the roles and responsibilities and the use of DSSE in our processes for appointing and developing the service of the World ExCo links, the regional and apostolic teams. These may need to be revised again as part of the work on the revision of the GPs and GNs.
- Support the international commission for the review of the General Principles and General Norms in the areas of governance of the community with the shared perspectives gained from (i) above.
- Walk with the community at all levels to support the use of DSSE as our core way of proceeding, especially in all levels of leadership within our community including our national leadership teams, the apostolic and regional teams.
- Explore and implement mechanisms to remain attentive to the calls of the community and members who may need us to accompany them on their journey.
- Create safe spaces within which our community can embrace and deepen our diversity giving grace to God for this diversity, learning to live with it and walking together as one.

The review process of our General Principles (GPs) and General Norms (GNs)

The review process of our GPs and GNs is a fourth area of work for the team that was given to us very clearly in Amiens. Rarely does an assembly give a “mandate” to the new leadership team. It is more likely that the assembly gives recommendations. However, in this case the message from the assembly was clear. We want to do our best in accomplishing this and we discerned to form a five-member team along with the World Leadership Community (W-ExCO). A lot of ideas have already been shared, so the commission does not start from scratch. We are also clear that we want this process to be a lived synodal process. This means that during the 4 years of consultations with you (the community) we want to involve as many people as possible. Today we have the technology to support this process and we intend to use it. All we can say for now is that the process has commenced, and please pray for the people whom we are approaching, that the Lord enlightens them and gives them the freedom and confidence to undertake this project together with us. We will certainly be communicating in more depth in a future letter in which we will describe the process and how the community will be invited to engage.



Other issues related to technology and communications, the creation of a common identity, finances, the upcoming World Assembly were also in our prayer and analysis, and we want to continue to take time for reflection so that we can share our perspectives with you in future communications.

The final document of our Assembly in Amiens invited us to better **CONNECT**, **COOPERATE** and **COLLABORATE** in **CREATIVE** ways. We hope the design of our first Exco meeting and the initial plan for our way forward have shown our determination in responding to this invitation. But this mission would not be successful without your participation and support. So, may we invite you to work with us on this journey by:

1. Sharing this letter with as many members around you as possible.
2. Spending one or two small group meetings to read, pray over and share your reflections about this document using the following tool.
 - i. **SEE**—Read the document carefully. What do you notice?
 - ii. **THINK**—What thoughts do you have about our work and the way forward?
 - iii. **ME**—What connections can you make between you and our work? Where can you see God’s invitation to **YOU**?
 - iv. **WE**—How might our work be connected to the bigger stories—about your local and/or regional community, apostolic teams, our Church, and the World?
3. Sharing your reflections with our global community via the following QR Code.



<https://padlet.com/it474/horizontes-182-horizons-182-qrh0j5t8vy7ixy77>

Once again, we are grateful to each and every one of you who have made every effort to live out our charism in our daily life. May the risen Christ continue to bless and guide us on this journey together towards our Horizons (old and new).

Chris MICALLEF • Daphne HO • Catherine WAIYAKI
Inji FAYEZ • Cecilia MARTÍNEZ • Catherine KELLY
Franklin IBAÑEZ • Manuel MARTÍNEZ • José DE PABLO S.J.

Rome, April 10th 2024

In Memory

Gilles and Leah Michaud



Gilles and Leah

On the 7th of November 2023, Gilles Michaud (CLC in Canada) passed away and on the 9th November 2023, at 10:23 PM (Canadian Atlantic Time) Leah Michaud joined her beloved Gilles in the house of the Lord. This is a last and very striking confirmation of the beautiful testimonies about their special marital bond.

Gilles and Leah lived in Ontario where they met and married 64 years ago. Gilles served with the Royal Canadian Armed Forces for 29 years. His last posting was in Summerside, where they decided to make Prince Edward Island their permanent home. As they began their

retirement years, Gilles had an interest in community based non-profit organizations and driven by his cooperative development philosophy, he was invited to manage island companies: Mahemigew Inc. Lennox Island, Culture Craft Co-op, Richmond Centre, and was a founding member of East Prince Funeral Home. Leah returned to university to obtain a degree in Sociology and Religious Studies. Their commitment to humanity manifested itself in many different ways. Both Leah and Gilles were active in the various cultural, political, economic and religious communities they lived in. They were among the first to engage with Fr. (later Bishop) Faber MacDonald in the 1980s in fostering Ignatius spirituality, which also included the establishment of retreats. They would also be among the founders of Christian Life Community (CLC) in the diocese of Charlottetown, in concert with the Jesuits of Canada. Ixthus CLC was their place for faith sharing and discerning missions to change unjust structures. Their involvement with the CLC led them to Rome in the late 1990s when they accepted an invitation to serve separate terms as President of CLC Canada and also as Executive Secretaries at the CLC Secretariat. As world leaders of the CLC, it was a privileged time that allowed them to visit and advocate for groups throughout all the continental regions of the world.

As members of the Atlantic Association of Spiritual Director's Apostolate, they assumed leadership roles and collaborated in developing programs that would make formation in Spiritual Accompaniment more accessible to lay people. Gilles felt a great desire to explore how men journeyed in their spirituality and started the first Men's Spirituality Group on PEI.

Gilles and Leah were indispensable on the leadership team at the Martha Spiritual Center in Charlottetown, and the Marquerite Bourgeois Center in Summerside. They have served at the parish level and diocesan level in marvellous ways such as Liturgy, Adult Faith Formation, Development and Peace, Social Justice as well as being presenters for the Diocesan Pastoral Associates Program. Leah's final lasting gift to CLC Canada was to help write their Leaders Manual and the Group Guide Resource Manual that will be used worldwide.

In the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, they gave the world their love, their service, their healing, and they also gave the world their joy.

We include, below, an interview with Gilles which is an extract of the article "At the Service of CLC" published in Progressio n. 2-2010.

At the service of CLC

Interview

20 years ago were approved the new GP of CLC. We have interviewed three ex-Executive Secretaries who told us their personal experiences while there were in Rome at the service of World CLC, through their answers we also can identify the Spirit that encourage our community.

How were you elected to this position?

Gilles: When the World CLC ExCo began its search for an Executive Secretary CLC Canada ExCo asked me to consider serving in this capacity. When I accepted to be a candidate for this position, my name was sent to the World ExCo. What followed was a request by the CLC World President, Jose Maria Riera, to come to Rome to experience working at the World CLC Secretariat. After a month of walking in these new shoes I felt that this was do-able and accepted to be the Executive Secretary.

Included in my acceptance and after an agreement with Jose Maria I had indicated that my preference would be to share the responsibilities of Executive Secretary with my wife, Leah. It was understood that my name was to be shown as the juridical person of the CLC World Secretariat. A few months later, when we gathered at the General Assembly (1998) held in Itaici, Leah and I were appointed by the delegates at the Assembly to be part of the World ExCo as Co-Executive Secretaries.

What were the main challenges in your time as CLC Executive Secretary?

Gilles: One of our biggest challenges was to overcome the unexpected and sudden death of our eldest daughter, Diane, during that first year of our tenure at the Secretariat. In the days following our daughter's funeral, Leah and I felt that we had to be more available to our grandsons; Diane's two young boys, Parker and Evan. Because of this incident in our family, we felt that our initial commitment had to be reconsidered. It was with much prayers and assurance of support from our CLC group in PEI that we could leave for Rome once again, to take on the responsibilities of the Executive Secretary.

Another challenge was the learning of a new language, Italian. In addition to that was the adapting to a Mediterranean way of doing a number of things that would impact on our daily work at the Secretariat. As for learning

Italian, Leah became much more fluent than I because of her Italian roots. I always have considered this to be an asset because whenever there was a need for serious conversation in Italian I had to rely heavily on her fluency in that language and, on other occasions, my fluency in French was beneficial. But, I must say, that I never had any trouble expressing myself in Italian when ordering my favorite dishes and wine.

It quickly became apparent to me that the Roman way of doing business was quite different than what I had been accustomed to in Canada. There was an accepted attitude that things can be done but the time of delivery was not a consideration. Although frustrating but, as time went on, I simply had to become more patient and accept the obvious that... in Rome learn to do as the Romans.

Another critical issue at the Secretariat was the many changes that had to be made regarding our method of communication. The I.T. revolution had not been fully initiated into our daily work environment when we had arrived in 1998. The habitual method of communicating continued to be by telephone and facsimile. It was obvious that this problem had to be addressed so that we could become more efficient in communicating between members of the ExCo and the National CLCs. The high cost of financing such a project was a major problem. To overcome this drain on our budget, we attempted to recycle old computers. As time went on, we found this to be not acceptable because much time was lost at repairing the old computers. This became problematic, especially when it came time for Leah and Van to prepare and publish the publication Progressio. Eventually, I had to purchase workable computers for all of us.

Another challenge that I was faced with was that the internal phone lines had to be upgraded to accommodate internet communication. The Italian telephone system was inefficient and unreliable consequently the task of renovating the office telephone

system became painfully slow. Over time and with great determination, although demanding more patience than I ever thought possible, the transition into the 20th century was accomplished. With this new innovation, the CLC World Web site could now be established. The majority of the work in creating the CLC Web Site was accomplished through the generosity of Goran Kuhner, a CLC member from Croatia who had been studying in Rome.

Do you have some memory or anecdote about your time in Rome?

Gilles: I have come to believe that being in Rome for five years was a great privilege for us. As often as we could, especially on long week-ends, we would visit the many historical sites that we had only read about while in Canada. Our many travel experiences also brought us to several other famous cities rich with history and its unique culture. We also visited other regions in Italy along with the occasional visit to other parts of Europe during our five year stay.

But, I must say that what will always remain carved in my memory are the persons that we came to know and those who have become very good friends. There was Van, not only an exceptional and knowledgeable secretary at the Secretariat but also a very caring and generous person who would often invite us to share special events with her family at her home in Morlupo. There was Roswitha, who had been Executive Secretary before us and knew full well the pressures of working at the Secretariat. She had remained in Rome after completing seven years of serving at the Secretariat. Her presence was certainly a valuable gift for us because of her availability. Roswitha always found the time to help and support us whenever we felt overwhelmed with the work at the Secretariat. Her remedy was to find the best restaurant in Rome to wine and dine us with the best of Italian foods.

what do you consider was your main contribution as Executive Secretary to WCLC?

Gilles: I think the main contribution that Leah and I may have made was that a husband and wife team can more easily take on the rigorous challenges and demanding responsibilities of working at the World CLC Secretariat.

How has your vision changed after your experience as CLC Executive Secretary? (briefly explain)

Gilles: To answer this question adequately, I must go back to the time when I was a CLC

Canada delegate at the General Assembly in 1990 in Guadalajara, Mexico. During our days of deliberation on the revision of General Principles, I found that this moment had become, for me, a touchstone. The vision that was being articulated in the General Principles represented an affirmation of my “lay Vocation”. In addition, it was a confirmation that it was not only a vocation being lived out by myself but also by so many other persons in a very unique and distinguishing CLC way. It was especially the words found in GP No.4 that struck me as a personal invitation to follow Christ and to work for peace and justice and most importantly within the context of a discerning community.

In the five years while at the Secretariat, I became aware of how challenging this can be, to be called to be a “discerning World Community” in a culture that has become individualistic. It was becoming clear that we, as a world body grounded in the realities of the life of the Church and the World, were being asked to clarify this illusive discerning aspect of our charism. What did this really mean for us as individuals and as a world body? It would seem to me that when we accepted to become a “World Community” (1969) and in the following years, especially in our most recent General Assemblies, we were being led by the Spirit to move forward while very often encountering Jesus on the cross. This is where Ignatius, in the Spiritual Exercises, poses three questions: What have I (we) done for Christ? What am I (we) doing for Christ? What must I (we) do for Christ?

It was during my time at the Secretariat and through the experiences of Itaiaci and Nairobi General Assemblies that I can say that the horizons of my vision had been expanded by having me/us focus on the third question (What must I (we) do for Christ?). I must also add that as I reflected on the recommendations from the latest Assembly in Fatima, we are being moved more deeply into the call of “Christ the King”. The “Fatima call” is truly a significant one in that it is a call to be “PROPHETIC” at a time where, in the church and the world, we can sense and feel an urging by the Trinity to ponder on, in a discerning manner, those many signs that are challenging us to contemplate more deeply the Incarnation and seek the grace of “an intimate knowledge of our Lord, who has become man for me (us), that I (we) may love Him more and follow Him more closely (SE 104).



New World Executive Secretary for CLC

Over the past months, the Leadership Community in Discernment (World-ExCo) undertook a communal discernment process for selecting the next head of the Secretariat in Rome.

With great joy, we wish to share with you that Elena Yeyati, from the CLC in Argentina, has been chosen to be the next Executive Secretary of the Christian Life Community.

Elena has been a member of CLC since 1996.

She will assume her position as an appointed member of the Leadership Community in Discernment (World-ExCo) and as Executive Secretary in January 2025.

We ask you to please hold us in your prayers.

