



progressio

Publication of the World **Christian Life Community**



PHOTOS: FRONT COVER

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- Pedro Bolaños (Spain)
- Rafik Salama (Canada F.) and Marita De Lorenzi (Argentina)
- Neyda Campos (Bolivia), Daniel De Ycaza SJ (Ecuador) and Sr. Elisabeth Blanche (Luxemburg)
- Enid Rodriguez Santos (Puerto Rico) and Bayardo Rocha (Nicaragua)
- Delegates Croatia and Slovenia: Andreja Schwarzbartl-Pevec (Slovenia), Bibic Zeljko (Croatia) Marjeta Hajsek (Slovenia) and Franjo Psenicnjak SJ (Croatia)
- Cynthia Chang (Taiwan) and Jesus María Muñoz Nieto SJ (Taiwan)
- Cheo Aponte SJ (Puerto Rico)

PHOTOS BACK COVER

From up-left to right:

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- Chris Hogan (Australia), Rosario Nañagas (Philippines) and Nancy Suhut (Indonesia)
- Alwin Macalalad (Philippines)
- Maryanne Agoya (Host Team) and Leonor Gomez (Mexico)
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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.

Five years after Itaici, we gathered in Nairobi for our General Assembly. Up until 1982, we held our General Assemblies every three years. At Providence 1982, the ExCo suggested that three years was too short an interval, and so the Assembly approved a resolution that the world General Assembly would be held every four years, resulting in Loyola 1986, Guadalajara 1990, Hong Kong 1994 and Itaici 1998. Then at Itaici, it was proposed that the interval should be 5 years, resulting in Nairobi 2003. Did the longer interval between Itaici and Nairobi have any effect on the climate of our General Assembly? For those who were new to world assemblies, perhaps not. For those who had attended any of the previous four Assemblies, there was a distinctly warm feeling of catching up with friends - friends in the Lord and in CLC.

One overall impression that comes through is that Nairobi was indeed a distinctly "warm" Assembly. The very fact that most of the non-African delegates tried to learn a few words of Swahili - *Asante sana, nzuri, karibu, kwaheri, nakupenda* - set a clear tone of friendship and reaching out. We all became quite expert at singing *Jambo Bwana*. The closing words of that song will probably resound long in our hearts: *Kenya yetu hakuna matata!* Our Kenya - no problem!

Nairobi was special also in that it marked the first time we held a world assembly in Africa. The special atmosphere that this brought forth can be read and relived, or experienced now in the contributions to this issue of *Progressio*.

Despite geographical distances, cultural and language differences, we came together in the Assembly, just as we come together in the World Community, as members of one body, sharing in the same Ignatian spirituality and guided by our General Principles and General Norms. Members of one body, we are sent by the same Christ to spread the good news and to build His Reign on earth. Perhaps, then, our shared



CLC XIV General Assembly

responsibility in mission is first of all a shared responsibility in the mission of Jesus.

The theme of the Assembly was an important one, as it tried to guide the CLC throughout the world on a further stage of its journey of maturation. That journey began with the first publication of the General Principles, where it was recognized that a sense of mission, being sent by the Lord, is an essential part of CLC life, grounded as it is in Ignatian Spirituality. That sense of mission was reaffirmed in the new General Principles at Guadalajara and then began entering into the consciousness of the General Assembly in a specific way at Loyola, Hong Kong and Itaici. One of the graces of Nairobi is the succinct and significant history of the CLC created by Veronica Villegas and CLC Philippines. The strong awareness of our history cultivated at Nairobi will be a light on our path towards the future.

For the last number of assemblies, sharing has been done in "world groups" ['listening' groups] as well as in national communities and in regional groups. It seems that at Nairobi, for the first time, sharing between "neighbouring countries" was a structural part of the Assembly. This enhanced the notion of shared responsibility. Other special features of sharing



Sandra, Sonya and Sean S.J.
Delegation - CLC Hong Kong

at Nairobi were the “market of hope” and the CLC-SJ forum.

The richness of our cultural diversity and different community experiences called up the question of sharing resources and at the same time encouraged us to see ourselves as an outreaching apostolic body. We were blessed by

being able to carry our discussions out into the Kenyan reality in our trips to different projects, and so to return from the projects to our Assembly with a renewed sense of the world into which we are sent. We were guided towards a sense of the need for greater openness, for more effective communication, and for a spirit of promptness and readiness to respond to the call of Christ. We need to evaluate our structures to ensure that they enhance our call to be one apostolic body.

The contributions to this issue of *Progressio* reveal the richness of our experience at Nairobi, the richness of our World Community. As we engage with each other in the years ahead in developing our community as an apostolic body, let us return frequently to these pages for inspiration. Here we have a veritable “*market of hope*” ■

NAIROBI '03 AS GRACE FOR CLC KENYA

Grace! One of the richest words in our Christian religious tradition. It has meant so many things over the centuries. Today, for me grace especially means God, the Trinity, reaching out and sharing Trinitarian life, which is true love, with humanity. It involves all the mediations which God uses to share this life, indeed, to enliven us by opening us up by love and transforming us by love into people who commit ourselves to lives of love.

I am asked in this article to describe the experience of the General Assembly from the perspective of CLC Kenya, the hosting national community. My response is to say that our experience is grace.

Being Host

As early as Hong Kong '94, this or that delegate came up to us and said, "The world assembly has never been in Africa. Do you think Kenya could ever host it?" That question got us thinking, looking at ourselves, searching for a suitable venue, listening to a possible call to offer ourselves; and this involved an attempt to assess the commitments of time, energy and sacrifice involved. We were graced to offer ourselves for the act of love that is hosting the General Assembly.

We were graced with the trust of the World ExCo to choose Nairobi for the 2003 General Assembly. I use "trust" because of the risk involved in choosing such a young community as the host and despite some of the hard truths about Africa and even some stereotypes about Africans. We were graced to receive this mission to host the General Assembly as mission, and mission is always a challenge to offer love.

Our National ExCo was challenged to discern the critical choices of the Coordinating Team for hosting the Assembly, and this team, in its turn,



Site of the XIV General Assembly

discerned the members of the Host Team. Certainly, there were so many graces of hosting: to welcome arriving delegates and ease their entry into a strange land, to loan a sweater in the Nairobi winter which many delegates just would not believe "in Africa and at the equator, no less!"

We were graced to learn how much we could accomplish through teamwork. This experience will keep challenging us to apply ourselves to ongoing mission in Kenya.

Being Apostolic Community

I move on now to reflect upon the central work of the Assembly which involved discerning whether to become apostolic community where Common Mission for CLC is to be expressed in shared responsibility for mission. Over a good number of years, now, in CLC we have recognized that as one World Community, we are being called to one common mission. At Itaiici '98, we formulated "Our Common Mission" in a graced discernment which



Members of Host Team

stretched back to much preparatory work in our national communities and bore fruit in this document which expressed our mission as response as CLC to the needs of our world and our Church today. The document spoke from a global perspective that needed to be made concrete through further discernment and implementation at the national and local levels.

“Our Common Mission” motivated us in Kenya at our National Assembly in October 1999, to choose three mission priorities: youth, civic education and constitutional reform, and sharing our Ignatian spirituality. “Our Common Mission” was the impetus for CLC Kenya to move forward in mission, and it seems that this document played a similar role for many national communities.

When we speak of common mission, however, there has always been a nervousness: to say “common mission” seems to imply “doing the same thing”. As adherents to Ignatian spirituality, we in CLC are rightly allergic to any thought that our mission is necessarily about doing the same thing. Ignatian spirituality emphasizes the uniqueness of each person and his or her gifts with the implication that God calls each unique person to a unique service. There is always the possibility of all the members of the same small group or many members of a national community involved in the same project, but it cannot be pre-programmed. It would have to emerge as the result of a process of discernment. Talk about common mission would seem to go against our

sense of charism involving discernment arising from Ignatian spirituality.

Based on a reflection of the lived experience of CLC around the world, World ExCo was able to discern a need to take a step toward realizing common mission by accepting shared responsibility for mission through an ongoing process of discernment, sending, support and evaluation. ExCo was able to lift this up and propose that God’s call to CLC is to grow in becoming an apostolic body through expressing common mission as shared responsibility. As our national leadership in Kenya looked at the experience of CLC here, we could see that we are involved in shared responsibility in how we go about mission. This has not been formalized in the four actions of discerning, sending, supporting and evaluating, but the beginnings are there. To share responsibility specifically in terms of the four actions would actually strengthen us on mission.

Our leadership was concerned that members might be uncomfortable with the giving up of autonomy that is involved in shared responsibility. We tried to present the concept sensitively in a way that indicates a process of growth and is based in personal knowledge of each member by members of the small group and by others who are involved in the process. We were surprised that shared responsibility met little resistance; rather, there was much confirmation in a sense that this is according to our charism, and we need to grow in becoming apostolic community. Shared responsibility might involve

giving up some autonomy, but it really enhances our freedom to be available for mission.

We are glad that, after much examination and struggle, the world assembly embraced the commitment of CLC as an apostolic community, which operates in terms of shared responsibility. It is truly grace for the World Community, and certainly for CLC in Kenya. This grace is a challenge, and it will not be easy. But, we believe that it will enable us to move forward in implementing mission. Members will become stronger in actualizing their mission through the interaction of members of their small group in shared responsibility. As particular needs arise and CLC Kenya experiences the call to address them through presence or projects, there is a way of proceeding, through shared responsibility, which will enable us to respond in a discerning way. Over time, exercising shared responsibility will form CLC into an apostolic instrument which will become increasingly effective in following Christ in mission. It will also enable us to become an organized and effective body, which can move forward in fulfilling our call to collaborate successfully with the Society of Jesus.

Being Accompanied

One aspect of Nairobi '03 was the concern to share our situation in Kenya and particularly to focus on some of the social issues which confront us. This was done in order to help all the delegates to insert our reflections into the reality of today's world and to be able to bridge back to the situation in one's own country and to bring this into our reflection.

One aspect of sharing our reality was a presentation by Joseph Oganda, a CLC member who together with others is working in Kibera, the largest slum of Nairobi, to respond to the HIV-AIDS pandemic. There was sensitive outpouring of concern on the part of delegates and support for us in responding to this crisis. We were graced with a deep sense of the empowering love which is solidarity as CLC Kenya tries to address this pressing issue.

Our program also involved each delegate visiting one of eight projects around Nairobi which are responding to social problems. Most of these projects were in slums and were Church-related. We were gratified by the desire

of delegates to learn about more of our reality and to participate in it. I think that the most widespread reaction on the part of delegates was hope. There was hope that, despite tremendous problems, these projects were trying to address the situation in a way that improved the situation of those affected and, in many cases, enabled them to go on to a better life. This reflection of hope is tremendously empowering to us in CLC Kenya. It is a grace that encourages us to recognize that the problems are not insurmountable. We do have the potential to make a difference as we engage in a mission responsive to those at the margins of society.

My sense is that at the Assembly there was a general movement to focus in our mission on concerns of social justice and service of the poor and otherwise marginalized in society. Delegates were inspired by the projects shared by many national communities. I mention only two by way of example: Korea's work with migrant workers and the Ignatian Volunteer Service of Ecuador. This focus was enunciated in a couple of places in the Assembly's Mandate document where there are references to "advocacy for social responsibility as effective means to promote social justice". If my sense is correct that CLC worldwide is being impelled to express the concern for justice and for the poor more forcefully, then CLC Kenya is graced by the solidarity of the world community moved a similar direction to what we are experiencing in Kenya. Through sharing of ideas, successes and even failures, much support can be given as we attempt to move forward.

Conclusion

I hope my focus on how Nairobi '03 is grace for CLC Kenya can in some small way stimulate us all to reflect upon the graces of this Assembly, to appropriate them and to live them in our lives of mission. I am captivated by the image of Ezekiel 47. Like the life-giving waters flowing from the temple, can the world assembly keep being grace from our God that wells up as force for life, for love and for mission? ■



Terry Charlton S.J.
EA of CLC Kenya

*Terry Charlton, S.J.
Ecclesiastical Assistant - CLC Kenya*

"HAKUNA MATATA"



Veronica Villegas
Outgoing ExCo Member
CLC Philippines

Since the worldwide renewal into CLC began in 1967, three moments stand out as occasions when we took an inward look at the nature of CLC as a world community. The first and second moments were Rome '79 and Providence '82 – when we decided to BE a world community. The third moment was Nairobi '03 – when we considered the KIND of community we are called to be.

Before and after Rome '79 and Providence '82, we have been predominantly – not without passion – concerned with our mission and the formation that empowers us to be in mission with Christ in His Kingdom. At our General Assemblies our focus has been the world, the Church, the Kingdom, the people and their needs, pains, hopes and joys. We considered Christ identified in the “least of His brethren” and heeded Christ calling us to labour with Him. Through the years, we struggled – with Christ – to make graces received in Assemblies become deeds that incarnate our common mission.

In Nairobi, we looked again at our common mission. Plus we also looked at the doers of the mission and took the pulse of the BODY enfleshing the mission

Nairobi '03 made it clear. The World CLC is called to be more truly ONE Body. To be one body, we embraced the call to strive to become an apostolic community that shares responsibility in mission.

What made the call unambiguously clear was what we saw and heard and touched. We appraised the present state of the CLC Body in the past five years since Itaici '98. We looked back at more than four centuries of history replete with grace upon grace. We considered the signs of the times, one of which confronted us with searing proximity as the AIDS problem. We heard the voice of the Church echoed

through Fr. Kolvenbach. All these pointed out the next step forward for the World CLC – to close ranks by becoming more truly one apostolic body in the Church.

Our being an apostolic community means SHARING responsibility in mission. Nairobi '03 presented a definition of this sharing. It is not vague or fuzzy; it is not generic and unfocused; it is not wishy-washy or spineless.

The SHARING has a definite form that is as precise and clear-cut as four specific VERBS or action words that we are to do together in community. We are to **discern, send, support, evaluate**.

These four verbs now define unambiguously the RELATIONSHIPS of one CLC member to another, of one apostle to the other. They are the actions that make the community of apostles an *apostolic community*. These verbs will enable the apostolic community to be ONE BODY whose head or heart knows what the hands or feet are doing or how the lungs, stomach or kidney is faring.

Sharing responsibility in mission, while already happening in many national communities, began anew and gained momentum at the end of Nairobi '03. It began with our exchanged good-byes, au revoir, adios...

For sharing responsibility means that we continue the connection; that we purposefully and faithfully keep in touch with one another as eye, ear, hand, foot, bone, muscle or tissue of ONE BODY. With all the means at our disposal, we are to link up more vigorously – one with the other as individual members, as local communities, national communities and regions.

We need to do this in order to make CLC reach out further into the mainstream of where Christ dwells and labours in our social reality, in our different cultures, in our daily life. We must become truly ONE BODY in order to bring CLC

at the cutting edge of Christ's mission – now, more than ever when planet earth is so dangerously disintegrated and human society so bitterly fragmented.

Thus Nairobi '03 compels us to make the

words "*CLC-CVX: Sent by Christ, Members of One Body*" become flesh; become actions that proclaim the good news of "**Hakuna matata**" because the Trinity, contemplating humanity in all its sinful divisions (GP1), is still in charge... ■



Members of the World Community

A NEW EXPERIENCE!



Ann Sieuw
Delegate CLC Belgium Flanders

My first World Assembly! I felt well prepared, had my map, and plenty of answers about the reality of CLC Belgium (Flanders) gathered with those who are in the leadership of local groups. And I also had Nikolaas Sintobin S.J. as my 'help' in all circumstances, good or bad.

From the National Team, I carried some recommendations about the theme "*Sent by Christ, members of one body*". However, we didn't accomplish much on that point since our national reality is far from being in a comfortable situation. We had a lot of questions and anxieties such as: "*Are we ready for that theme?*" "*Do we really feel like one body and will we be able to experience being 'sent' in the way the General Assembly might decide?*" So the main task I was given: "*Start thinking from our reality as a secularized world in all the thoughts, steps and decisions you have to make.*" On the other hand, a lot of CLC friends expressed their hope that we would have an interesting and fertile assembly that could bear fruit in helping CLC Belgium (Flanders) to take a step forward.

One can imagine that I felt this as a great challenge! So, I left with a feeling of gratitude, openness and hope but also a feeling of fear of being disappointed in the answer I would be bringing back home.

Ten days of sharing in openness

That nobody could predict for certainty as to what kind of document the world General Assembly would produce is obvious. But the most impressive thing to me was that the process of sharing and experiencing movements during the ten long days with people from all over the world could be so successful. There is only one

explanation; we all shared the same Ignatian spirituality! We listened with our heart to our Lord and to the words of His son, Jesus Christ. We were one body! We felt one unity and knew that somehow it would bear fruit. Therefore, we needed openness (in all meanings of the word) toward all directions: openness toward other realities, openness towards cares and difficulties of other countries and continents, openness toward new thoughts and movements. Belief and trust was needed in a good progression of several steps: particularly, in an open atmosphere between Jesuits and lay people and respect for each other.

All those essential attitudes were actually there among us in the Assembly. I'm sure that this fact was responsible for the content of the Assembly document, which is a clear expression of *respect* for all realities and *service* at all levels from "top to bottom".

Sharing on all levels: some impressions

Nikolaas and I chose to arrive one day early so as to "acclimatize", whatever this word means. Acclimatizing to the weather was not a problem. It was very Belgian -like...even colder than we expected (we were well informed by a Jesuit who had lived in Nairobi for 25 years). By visiting the city of Nairobi and the wild park in the afternoon, we made our first steps of acquaintance with CLC delegations from Australia, Hong-Kong, Taiwan, USA - with whom, after some days, we would become real friends. The first questions we asked each other were the same ones that we would repeat the following days each time we met other people. At breakfast, dinner, supper and coffee break everyone made great efforts to meet new delegations, to know more about their CLC reality. These *informal moments* seemed to me to be very important in those first days. I overcame my "threshold fear" so quickly that I hardly had the time to realize it was there.

In the sharing in *small world groups*, several times we had to think about what was interesting and useful as a first confrontation with my own ideas. Concerning the sharing in the *plenary*, I would like to underline that I especially appreciated two movements in those sessions. First of all, the honesty and openness of the World CLC ExCo who listened with respect to the movement of the Spirit in the plenary. Without that, we would not have been able to grow towards each other. We would have gotten frustrated, which was a slight fear I had myself at a certain moment.

Secondly, I observed with amazement how so many individuals expressed and argued their opinion in order to enrich the discussion: yet always an equilibrium was restored in difficult moments, thanks to those who guided us in the right direction towards a conclusion. By expressing what they heard and reordering things in the right way, they sometimes saved us from missing our time for a coffee break!

An important part was also the sharing in national delegations, with neighbouring countries and with the continental group. I experienced it as a convergence of lots of concrete ideas brought together, identified and useful to be used in our own realities. We helped each other in the confirmation of our movements and in our process.

Sharing in faith

It has to be said... I was impressed and moved forwards mostly by Paul Vaz S.J., our Process Guide, who guided the Assembly from *Block A* to *Block F* during all of the ten days. He was always repeating and examining the previous steps in a clear easy understandable and slow spoken English (the translators must have been happy!). In a soft meditative way, he created the right atmosphere to keep all our minds focused forward in the same direction: "*Sent*

by Christ, members of one body" - what does it mean for us?

The same feeling of unity in spirit and faith, I felt, was shared in the daily Eucharist. There we shared our care, our thoughts and movements of the day: listening to and taking strength from the gospel, praying and singing to the Lord. African exuberance with dance and loud responses; Asian quiet with nice incense smells and a cosmic sounding Indian bell; Latin-American happiness and guitar playing; Coptic and Byzantine sounds reaching heaven! We all took part in those different cultural liturgies, even if it was not easy and very unusual particularly for someone such as myself as a "cool Western European" participant!

Sharing with Kenyan reality

It is quite impossible to write, in a few words, how my visit at the house of Mother Theresa has touched me; feelings of disapproval for the poverty in the slums and the social situation of abandoned and handicapped people. There was a feeling of gratitude for the sisters of Mother Theresa who give all their lives, with infinite patience, in extending hands in a world that is almost without future: Light and hope in darkness.

After having heard the input from Catherine, President of CLC Kenya and a Kenyan delegate, I knew that CLC Kenya was already realizing the program of Nairobi 2003. A real challenge to think about is our own mission as CLC Belgium – Flanders!

And finally...

I am a very happy person having had the opportunity to assist at the CLC World General Assembly. I realize that it is not easy to report about it back home to all the



Catherine Waiyaki
President of CLC Kenya

ones who didn't live the process we lived together in Nairobi. But I believe I've been sent by our National team to share with them what I've experienced, learned, heard. My first

mission is to encourage and to explain that the end document has been the result of sharing in Ignatian spirituality that can help us grow in unity with the World CLC ■

KENYAN REALITY: EXPOSURE SITES

MOTHER TERESA HOME: HURUMA **Mission, Vision & Intervention,**

This is a home in one of the poor areas of Nairobi. This home houses children and adults who no one wants to look after. Among those there are children who were born despite their mothers trying to abort them... children who are abandoned and others suffering from severe malnutrition. Their response to those in their care is as a response from Christ's cry on the cross "I thirst!" They usually care for those who ordinarily no one would want to look after.

Who supports the group: Sisters of Charity (Mother Teresa's congregation)

NYUMBANI: KAREN **Mission, Vision & Intervention**

The home is in Karen at the outskirts of Nairobi, very near CUEA. Nyumbani was founded in Nairobi, Kenya in 1992 by Fr. Angelo D'Agostino SJ, MD. The orphanage was inspired by the rising number of HIV-infected children born and too often abandoned in Africa. Because infants younger than a year

old carry many of their mothers' antibodies, many newborns with HIV-infected mothers give a "false positive" and never actually develop the virus themselves. In fact, a full 75% of babies who test positive at birth will eventually be found not to carry the virus. Tragically, these children are often abandoned at birth or shortly thereafter, and ostracized from traditional orphanages. In the public hospitals there are not enough resources to care for these babies, and most die from neglect within a few months.

Nyumbani— "home" in Swahili—provides a true home to these abandoned children until a correct determination of their HIV status can be made. Children who are eventually found not to be infected with HIV are then placed in appropriate settings to be adopted or cared for by traditional social services agencies. The children found to be truly HIV+ are given the best nutritional, medical, psychosocial, and spiritual care available and live the rest of their days at Nyumbani.

Who supports the group: This is collaboration between many people. They have a Kenyan, US, UK and also an Italian Board of directors. Some of them are Religious such as

the Jesuits, Loreto and also senators, ambassadors; those involved in the corporate world business people among the board are also doctors, psychiatrist, teachers and other people of different professions.

KIBERA MASHIMONI: KIBERA Mission, Vision & Intervention

Kibera is one of the largest slums in the World. This school tries to rehabilitate girls who have suffered abuse. Some have had to resort to prostitution as a means of trying to generate income. Others are orphaned and have suffered abuse in the hands of those who are their guardians. They are taught craft.

Who supports the group: Sisters of Mary Reparatrix

MUKURU PROMOTION CENTRE: MUKURU Mission, Vision & Intervention

Mukuru Promotion Centre is a home that is just at the outskirts of Mukuru, another slum in Kenya. The children are generally from there. This home is both preventative and rehabilitative. They strive to offer the children under their care the opportunity to become self respecting, self-reliant adults, capable of affecting change in society.

Who supports the group: The Sisters of Mercy.

KANGEMI

Mission, Vision & Intervention

This is a home in one of the poor areas of Nairobi. The home is called Upendo and is a day Centre ran under the St. Joseph Kangemi parish. It caters 6-13 year olds who have been abused, needy and/or neglected. The Small Christian Communities forward the children's names and then a social worker investigates each case. They are then given literacy skills that would enable them to join the Parish Private Primary School. This school is the one that would try to get the school fees for each of these children. There are about 25 children.

Who supports the group: The Society of Jesus and the Parish.

DAGORETI CHILDREN'S HOME Mission, Vision & Intervention

Dagoreti is at the outskirts of Nairobi. This is a home for the physically and mentally handicapped but also does take in children who have been abandoned. A few do have homes but for most this is home. They provide education, and also take care of the child. They give them skills to help them learn how to be independent. Those who do well academically proceed on to Secondary Schools, if anyone does not make it they are taught skills to earn a living.

Who supports the group: Feed the Child a Non-Governmental Organisation - CLC Kenya ■

CLC Kenya

A WORLD VIEW

Ever since my earliest days in Sodality/CLC I was convinced of the reality that CLC is a world community, a world association of committed Christians who desire to find God in all things; who share the charisms of Ignatian spirituality, community and mission; who share the experience of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. My initial convictions were reinforced by meeting CLCers from several parts of the world, many who were guests in my own home. Reading *Progressio* was another way of strengthening that belief. Given the decision and chance to attend the XIV



Dorothy M. Zambito
Delegate - CLC USA

General Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya, there was another unique opportunity to enhance a fact, which I had already accepted.

The theme of the Assembly, **Sent by Christ, Members of One Body**, came alive for me in ways I didn't expect. To be together with delegates from more than 50 countries was awesome and humbling, as well. To be in the company of people of different cultures, different languages and different races – and yet to feel so at home with all because of our common gift of CLC is almost too difficult to explain. The sense of **one body** was apparent

from the start. Even before the opening session of the assembly, the Spirit was working among us, helping us to share not only ourselves but also our CLC reality. We were of one purpose, and that was evident.

Our preparation meetings prior to coming to Nairobi helped us to see who we are as CLC-USA. The delegates, Lois, Ramon and myself, brought with us the fruits of those reports that came out of the regions. They were shared among individuals, in various small groups and in the plenary sessions. We 'compared notes', so to speak, informally (at teatime or breakfast or waiting in line, etc.) as well as in planned ways (small world groups, the North American delegates' group or in the plenary meetings). We were eager to hear how others were coming to grips with being called to be **apostolic communities with shared responsibilities** instead of **communities of apostles**. We wanted to hear the stories of how various nations worked on the meaning and practical steps of **common mission** as given to us in Itaiici in 1998.

There were some powerful examples of apostolic communities with shared responsibilities – our own in the health clinic in Miami, is one. The works done in Kenya among the poor, the HIV-Aids infected people and the refugees are others. My sense was that there were many communities who were stretching farther than we in the United States. There seemed to be more efforts of corporate mission experiences. There seemed to be more emphasis on seeing the more universal good and pursuing that. Individual apostolic works were not discouraged, but the sense I got was that we needed to be a more out reaching apostolic body, one that is recognized as such.

As the Assembly moved along, there was a growing consensus that we are apostolic communities that share responsibility for mission. Agreeing with this individually and in community (the USA delegation) we, along with the Assembly, moved on to how we would, as a

world body, effectively bring about this consideration. Two areas of focus that emerged were the need for stronger formation (including that of guides) and development of strong leaders. Our own USA reality confirmed these. Additionally, the Assembly looked closely at the relationship and collaboration of CLC and the Society of Jesus. The resulting document is an important and strong statement of the relevance of the CLC-Jesuit partnership. Sharing and implementation of the document will be an important step for all national communities.

One of the questions I got asked upon my return from Nairobi was, "Did you get to ride an elephant?" For non-CLCers, it was difficult to get across the fact that my memories of the visit were in the gift of the people I met, not the side trips I took. (By the way, I didn't ride an elephant!) For the first time in my life, I was in the minority! Somehow, coming from the USA, one gets the impression that we have the answers – we can show the way, etc. That surely wasn't the way it was. Over a dozen African nations had delegates. All the continents were represented. There was a vitality that was evidenced in the young age of many of the delegations. There was a knowledgeable expression of what it means to be CLC and what it means to live the Spiritual Exercises in daily life. Just to listen as several Kenyan CLCers shared what Ignatian spirituality meant in their lives was an eye opening experience.

There were moments when we needed to be sensitive to the words expressed around us – whether about a US attack on Iraq "for oil" not weapons of mass destruction; or on the anniversaries of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that such weapons never be used again. We were reminded of simple things that we take for granted, like drinking water, in a country where drinking water is scarce; no water in the taps at the beginning of the day because the pumps didn't go on; periodic blackouts, etc. Lois Campbell presented a beautiful 'prayer of the faithful' in which she recognized and expressed apology for some of the concerns that were expressed about our country.

The world of CLC came alive in the many expressions of liturgy that we participated in: African drums and hymns in Kiswahili; dancers leading the Entrance and Offertory

Processions; bells and chant from India; the solemnity of the Coptic Mass celebrated by Father Nader of Egypt; the multicultural Mass of the Asia Pacific region (complete with incense offerings and Aboriginal presentation of the Book of the Gospels); the Hispanic Mass whose enthusiasm and music rivaled that of the Africans. Even the more serene English and French liturgies could not be separated from the joyful singing of our Kenyan sisters and brothers. Such joy! Such celebration! The Masses celebrated by the Archbishop Ndingi of Kenya, or by the Jesuit Provincial, Fr. Masawe S.J. or by the Jesuit Superior General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach S.J. – each with a special message to the world of CLC – will long be remembered.

The general sessions were often long and tiring. Sometimes it felt as though we had lost our



African Mass

direction or as though an individual concern was clouding the greater good. The Assembly was fortunate indeed to have Father Paul Vaz, SJ of India as Assembly Guide. Paul would bring us back so that our focus was on Christ and where we were being called to be and to go.

Where do we go from here? Even after having been through the world General Assembly process, I need to return to the documents that came out of the Assembly and study and pray over them so that they can be applied to the USA reality. I want to bring the energy I received from the Assembly to others in the states. I think the USA is on the right path with regard to apostolic communities with shared responsibility, but I think we can dream bigger dreams in our desire to be Christ for others, in our quest to find God in all things ■

COMMON MISSION - APOSTOLIC BODY



CLC Dominican Republic Delegation

The community method - four steps

At the recent General Assembly of the Christian Life Community, which took place in Nairobi, Kenya, we established that the world CLC clearly feels called to be "*Sent by Christ, members of one body*". It seems that no difficulty exists for us to make this call a reality: we feel sent and we are members of the same body.

However, part of the discernment is to pass from the personal domain to the community domain, keeping in mind the small community, the national community, the regional and the world community, as well as the Holy Spirit who acts in them and in their processes. We need to consider the social and ecclesial contexts in which we move. There are also necessities, inspirations, calls and even answers. In this case the discernment, in order to be effective, must be a collective action: the reality should touch the community, which should discern together the will of God in relation to this reality.

The will of God is converted by the community into a "being sent on mission" which, as this resulted from a collective action of discernment, is also a shared responsibility. Thus it is necessary for each member of the community to be available and willing to support and accompany that sending.

At this point all we need is that the community evaluate the results of the Mission given in the sending.

With the evaluation, we conclude the cycle and immediately begin again with another discernment, in a dynamic and continuous process in which the community goes on perceiving the reality, finding the will of God, sending in mission and evaluating the results.

Organization and direction for mission

As we can see, as soon as we abandon the personal domain, the "being sent by Christ" becomes a common mission and the "members of a same body" become members of an apostolic body. Incarnating and making possible a common mission requires the existence of a structure, an organization for the mission, an apostolic body. It also requires that the said organization have direction.

The CLC has a structure, an organization. We are formed by a community that has given national direction and a world direction. At the moment we are moving toward regional direction.

As a managing process, the direction of an organization can be exercised with styles that embrace a whole spectrum of approaches: on the one end embracing participation and democracy, and on the other dictatorship. The democratic direction gains through the members' participation and through creativity, but loses in its capacity for quick answers and a sense of unity. On the other end, a dictatorial style wins in capacity for quick answers and a sense of unity, but kills creativity and the sense of participation of the members.

An appropriate direction must be able to move within the above mentioned spectrum respecting processes and rhythms, being attentive to situations and charisms, building channels of frank communication, of useful criticism for innovative proposals.

Here we can ask ourselves: What structure? What type of direction should we give ourselves?

The simile of the human body

The simile of the human body that we find in 1 Corinthians 12 is a good example. In the human body each organ carries out its function, each part has its mission, nonetheless all the parts, all the organs respond to the common mission of conforming to the human being.

The arm, the leg, the liver, the brain: none of those organs and parts of themselves are the human being; but all are part of him/her. I am not my brain, nor my lungs; both are part of me and I am interested that each one, for the good of all, remains well and does what it is called to do. There should be an individuality that is to the advantage of all, and a body that gives its place and its responsibility to each member.

In the human body, the parts or the organs can have a particular mission and at the same time respond to the common mission of the human being of which they form a part. An extraordinary network exists that links the parts and the organs to each other allowing communication to flow with freedom and speed. However, besides this - it is also to enable each part and each organ to maintain an intimate and deep relationship with the human being of which it forms a part.

From human body to apostolic body

If we want an organization to conform to the model of the human body, that is, if we want to become an apostolic body, we must strive to so. In each community, the communal method of the four steps needs to be implemented daily and continuously. At the same time, each community and each member of CLC makes the effort to deepen and intensify their union with Christ.

We say that the community method of four steps (discern, send, support and evaluate) is key for our organization and for the formation of an apostolic body, because it is an organic method which starts with the discerned seeking of the will of God. We mustn't forget that all discernment start with perceived necessities, with the richness of the Church's life and of the society in which we are called

to live. This discerned seeking will be so much more successful in the measure in which our union with Christ is deeper and more intimate.

At the same time, our leaders must facilitate communications and make them as open and measured as possible, attenuating the hierarchical, regional limitations, or limitations of any other type, and exercising their leadership trusting the support they have from an organization which goes forward by trying to follow the will of God.

What more can we do?

- **Contacts with reality:** The communities must have a permanent contact with the reality that surrounds them. Dynamic communities permanently seek God in the expressions of daily reality.
- **Structures and processes:** The communities will evaluate their processes and structures and adapt them in order to enable the community method of the four steps to be used as a continuous process in the community.
- **Formation:** Union with Christ requires knowledge. We should direct our efforts toward a solid formation in the knowledge of Christ. A formation that qualifies us to perceive necessities and discern them in order to be responsible, together with the community, for sending, supporting, accompanying and evaluating.
- **Spiritual Exercises:** Our communities will draw up plans that foster the experience of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Motivating our members in this sense, making sure that every effort has been made to foster the Spiritual Exercises is an effort that increases union with Christ
- **Prayer:** Prayer is irreplaceable. Morning prayer or prayer at any opportune moment of the day: an attitude of prayer, praise during the day, the review of life upon concluding the day. Prayer maintains our union with Christ
- **Communication and contacts:** The communities should make an effort to remain actively in contact with each other, to be nourished by the experiences of the other and nourishing the other with their own experiences. We should take advantage of the opportunity to know what other communities are living in order to grow and help others grow so that we may love and serve in all things. On this topic of communications and

contacts, resources related to the Internet could be useful.

Being members of a same body is a gift that God gives us and at the same time a task that He commends to us.

Do you perceive yourself as a member of a same

body in your local community?

What would you have to change so that your community be a more apostolic community? ■

Mario Bergés

Delegate - CLC Dominican Republic

THE CHALLENGE OF NAIROBI

What was the Nairobi Assembly to me? This question came to my mind two weeks after coming back home. *An exercise to be an apostolic body*: That is my insight. What kind of exercise? Of course, in an Ignatian sense. Through this essay, I'd like to share my reflection on the challenge which the Nairobi Assembly gives to CLC Japan. This reflection is based on the insight to which I referred. First of all, I will explain my insight. Then I'll share my reflection.

Nairobi Assembly as an exercise to be an apostolic body

What are the characteristics of an Ignatian exercise?

➡ *Firstly - a searching process*: Searching for a concrete way in which Jesus guides. This experience of personally accompanying Jesus in daily life is the fundamental springboard of Ignatian spirituality. It is a process with a clear intention *to search*. At the beginning of a process, one knows only the direction and is open to the free guidance of the Spirit. At the end of the process, one knows Jesus' concrete way along which one can proceed.

➡ *Secondly - a formative process*: The important thing is that the formative aspect necessarily implies a communal dimension, because the historical Jesus formed his disciples as one community. Jesus invited them to accompany Him in a process of the oppressed". Those who had been once disappointed and isolated were filled with Jesus' love, resurrected and shared great joy with a surrounding people, a community to be. Jesus invited them (the disciples) to reflect on the accompanying experience. Only through such reflection can they understand who Jesus is and what they are called to be.

The same can be said of Ignatius... he led his companions through a process of the Spiritual Exercises, which consists of dual stages. The first stage is the contemplation of a scene of the Gospel. The second stage is the contemplation

of a scene of the reality of each person. In comparison with Jesus' formation of his disciples, the diversity of the reality among exercitants makes it difficult to fully realize the formative aspect of the communal dimension. Therefore, Ignatius' first companions, elected by communal discernment, trust the choice of their concrete reality to the Vicar of Christ and the superior of the religious order, namely, the Society of Jesus.

Four hundred and sixty years later since this communal discernment, the World Christian Life Community tries to fully appropriate the communal dimension of the formative aspect, respecting the diversity of the reality among its members.

➡ *Thirdly - an intentional process*: Two types of persons are engaged in a process. One is to intend a purpose for the process and to facilitate it. The other is to participate in the process and self-appropriate the purpose. Through the process, a person is gradually formed so far as to facilitate a formative process of others. This chain of formation enables a community to grow in a particular charisma.

The Nairobi Assembly refers to these three aspects of the process in the term "**to be an apostolic body**". How? This is the question for which we really asked the grace of enlightenment. In this sense, the Nairobi Assembly itself was an exercise to be an apostolic body. The starting point of this exercise is the contemplation of scenes of diverse realities, which is realized only through the deep sharing of one's own reality. At the Nairobi Assembly such sharing was offered in multiple ways; World ExCo members' reports, friendly presence and sharing severe experiences of walking with HIV persons by CLC Kenya, the insightful presentation of the history of CLC, our immersion in the reality of



Jerry Tajima
Delegate - CLC Japan

Kenya, inspiring sharing of experiences of being an apostolic body by several national communities, friendly and concrete exchanges in each regional group and so on. The contemplation of these scenes of diverse realities produced a clear spiritual movement among participants and pointed to a clear direction that implies a new style of leadership, communication and formation of CLC, which already began at this Assembly.

Integration of leadership, communication and formation are the key insights of the new style. Only leadership, which facilitates spiritual communication in the diverse realities among members, can make this formative process really communal. In other words, only leadership on communal formative processes can overcome the difficulty presented by the diversity of members' realities: namely, the limitation of a community of apostles whose formative process is individual. The leadership is crucial, needing to plan and facilitate an exercise which enables members to experience their diverse realities and to be formed to be an apostolic body. The Nairobi Assembly, as an exercise to be an apostolic body, let participants experience the new style of leadership, communication and formation of CLC and has sent them back to their national communities, which is never to be isolated from neighbouring communities and the World CLC. The dynamic potentiality of the Spiritual Exercises on communal formative process is now available to us!

The challenge for CLC Japan

Praise be to our Lord Jesus, for members of CLC Japan are well formed so far as to confront their

diverse realities and to discern their mission. They are walking with the poor, the local church and other NGO groups. Their testimony really consoles me. The weak point is the formation of the next generation. We have few new members, especially the young. CLC Japan has trusted its formation of members to Jesuits and Religious Sisters, even preferred their outreaching aspect to recruiting new CLC members. These Jesuits and Sisters know each CLC member spiritually but we do not know about ourselves. In short, we are a community of apostles. So the theme of the Nairobi Assembly itself is the very challenge to CLC Japan. I believe that we are now called to the stage where we attend to the formative aspect of our activities. In other words, the need is to focus on the next generation's formation. We are invited to search for a new way of gathering, of an ExCo that serves as a National guide, and renewal of the structure of the small community meeting.



Jinhui with Seiko (Deleg. Japan)
and Cecilia (Deleg. India)

This September, we had a national gathering inviting participants and the whole national community to discern a new way of formation with the cooperation of a Korean delegate (to Nairobi), Jinhui. She shared experiences of CLC Korea in educational programs in parishes where CLC members facilitate a sharing group of new

comers to the parish and find new candidates to CLC among them. Some members of CLC Japan shared about their similar ministries. **How can CLC Japan coordinate these personal ministries?** This is the main question of the national gathering. I hope that this gathering becomes the first step of integration among leadership, communication and formation. We need leadership that creates a formative process from our rich and diverse human resources. May the new wind from Korea blow and create a new dynamism of formation in CLC Japan! ■

MISSION AND CHALLENGE: THE JOY OF BEING PART OF CLC



The Egyptian delegation in Nairobi with Catherine Waiyaki (CLC Kenya)

CLC-Egypt is a privileged ecumenical place, an open space of true and simple relationships, and that's why many orthodox Christians are CLC members whilst remaining faithful to their own Church. CLC-Egypt is mainly made up of young adults aged between 20 and 35. Most of them participated in the *mouvement eucharistique des jeunes*, MEJ (eucharistic youth movement), during their education in religious schools and they continue their journey with Ignatian spirituality within CLC. A majority of CLC members have responsibilities in parishes, especially in catechesis, in youth activities, as MEJ, or in the movement of *Foi et Lumière* (faith and light). They show diligence and real commitment to what they do. For many, CLC has changed their life style in profession, family life and in social activities.

Nevertheless, for some of them, their involvement remains limited to a rendered service or to an activity that has to be accomplished, and one may ask oneself whether it is really the fruit of a personal discernment, of a shared responsibility in mission. Certainly,

in the person and supported by the community.

A certain number of young people act solely on the spur of great generosity, which can lead them to a lot of activities, at the risk of the dispersion of their energy. After a certain time, they get tired, may be weary and abandon everything. Other young people need to be encouraged to take on an apostolic activity. Their seniors must help them, show different fields of service and accompany them in these activities. This support should be boosted by an effort of evaluation so as to help young people to discern their mission and to come to a clear choice. In this sense, we feel the need for a better structuring of our meetings and for reviewing our way of sharing during our meetings.

On the other hand, one has the right to ask sometimes if mission requires a personal and a communal dimension. Those in charge of new groups and the ecclesiastical assistants, particularly in pre-communities, do not always make it clear to the members of their groups what CLC identity actually involves. Of course, one needs to foster personal spiritual growth and

there is generosity and readiness to respond to calls from parishes or movements, a will to take an active part in society and thus to participate in the transformation for the best. But sometimes this commitment is not reflected enough, not integrated in personal prayer and discussed with the local CLC group members. Yet, these three aspects transform a call into a real mission received from the Lord, rooted

create an atmosphere of confidence, but without forgetting the apostolic dimension that nourishes the prayer life and gives sense to our being together. The transition from the stage of constructing the group to the stage of an apostolic community is not evident for everybody. We must help each other to look for means and tools that allow this necessary passage. An effort at the formation of group leaders and guides has to be undertaken at new costs. In particular, they have to teach people how to work together while accepting different points of view and sensitivities.

If the apostolic dimension of CLC is an essential point, it is nevertheless easier to realize it on an individual level than on a collective one. On a collective level, it requires a hard time of reflection and communal discernment, an openness and attention to the needs of the society and the courage to undertake projects and to stick to them on a regular basis. A sign of hope to reinforce and to promote: up to now, CLC-Egypt has been able to realize a mission in High-Egypt and to organize an annual exhibition for NGOs and development associations.

Mission is an obvious and privileged place of co-operation with the Society of Jesus. Jesuits

and CLC need to support each other mutually to engage themselves on unknown paths and to invent new forms of presence and service. It is important to welcome the intuition of pioneers in a group. They have to open new ways of action and to show new perspectives for service. Their contribution will be accepted, completed and supported by the other CLC members.

Besides these "internal" challenges of community life, CLC members, in a country like Egypt, have to do more than one job to attend to the needs of their family. The university system is overloaded with courses and exams and doesn't leave much free time to students. This overstrain due to either work or studies dominates most people's lives and constitutes a real challenge for the apostolic dimension of CLC. That is why a communal activity, requiring a regular commitment and an institutional responsibility, would be rather difficult to put into practice. As far as parishes are concerned, the co-operation with the priests is not always easy and the members of CLC need to establish better contacts with them and to present to them the vocation of CLC ■

*Ramez Ghazal, Viviane Sarkis, Nader Michel SJ
Delegates – CLC Egypt*

POINTS FOR CONTINUOUS WORK REGARDING OUR EXPERIENCE IN NAIROBI

The experience of the XIV World Assembly of CLC had deep meaning for our growth as an apostolic body, beginning with the fact that it took place in Africa as if to affirm that we wanted to build hope starting with the so-called "continent without hope". We wanted to grow in our testimony of love starting with where things are more complicated or could face greater difficulties: the reality of AIDS made this very clear.

We were in the midst of a diversity of cultural expressions, countries and continents but were inspired by the same testimony of Christ, by faith in a same God and by sharing a style of life marked by Ignatian spirituality. This diversity, we could perceive from the beginning with the presentation of each delegation and in the Eucharistic celebrations. Certainly the many languages and different physical features also made this evident.

The exchange of experiences among the participants was already an enriching experience. We felt part of a whole while feeling our own uniqueness; knowing that we advanced together united in our differences, moved by that common desire of building the Kingdom for all, with much humility and with the whole energy of our faith. We rely on the support of the Society of Jesus, which gives us strength without supplanting our own responsibility in the building up of our lay community and are stimulated to build the Church in the world. This means simply helping to build relationships of love in the reality that we are called to live.

In this sense, there are a number of points on which we wanted to focus greater attention, seeking to go forward. Some of them would be the following:

1. *To grow as Church.* We felt the challenge of living as Church aiming to give a faithful

testimony of Christ's invitation to us, continuing in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, that is, assuming the vocation of a Church that is experienced as the city of God. One that is made known especially through service and communal relationships. We want also to be conscientious and avoid risks such as excluding those who don't share our spirituality or our way of thinking, or idealizing our experience of faith. What is important is generating networks that unite us and



CLC Peru Delegation

open us to the world, facilitating inculturation in the Church and respect for others.

2. *To deepen our Ignatian spirituality.* This is the source of our unique way of living in the Church, which inspires us to walk as a discerning, praying community in mission. Is this fundamental experience properly ingrained in each one of our communities? Does it impel us to constant human and Christian growth? Toward whom do we draw nearer?

3. *To communicate better.* To draw nearer to one another and to have a better knowledge of what we have and how we live will bring about more co-responsibility as a community for the life of CLC members and of the people and activities which surround us. We want this to be the source

of inspiration of community life, both at the local level as well as in the national, regional and world milieux. Good communications will enable us to go beyond ourselves and will turn the community outward toward an apostolic sense.

4. *To grow as an apostolic body.* This has been the connecting thread of the World Assembly. We want to live it in agreement with our specific reality. At least theoretically, every community is an apostolic body; the point is whether we really live that community perspective. That's why we are invited to take a step forward to grow in this sense, generating greater visibility for what we are in the Church and in society. They made very important points: among other things, where to carry it out (with the less favored or those that suffer more, as in the case of those sick with Aids); the importance of an appropriate formation for a more effective action (spiritual, theological and specifically in the matter of work), and the necessity of agreeing on structures for the actions that are taken.

5. *To focus on what the Assembly requested of us.* Growing as an apostolic body does not imply more activity. It is a matter of living mission as a shared responsibility within the concrete community to which we belong. That's why the simple process of discerning, sending, accompanying and evaluating the life of each member of CLC was proposed, especially regarding the actions that the community decides to prioritize, involving some or all of their members. Clearly, it is not only a matter of

methodology, but of feeling, context, desires and motivations, growth and maturation. Thus we expressed how we want to locate our Christian and civic life in the Church and the world.

6. *To live our apostolate and mission with a sense of being sent by the community.* This is a fundamental challenge for the growth of the community calling us to leave behind our individualisms. It is a matter of incorporating other community habits, those that should question the way we organize our own meetings and help us to reform our own lives. This will lead us to a greater coherence between faith and life and will help us to live a deeper contemplation leading to love, and translating more faithfully our experience of God and of the community in our whole life.

7. *To commit ourselves on the world level to the less favored.* In the world of globalization in which we live, we are called to look at and give special attention to Africa (and its problems and difficulties), without this alienating us from our respective realities. But we need gestures that will help us to advance and to feel part of a same body. Therefore, it would be good to discover those mediations that, as the Assembly pointed out, could profit from the place that CLC holds in the United Nations, to influence proposals that foster greater attention on topics like AIDS, immigration, etc ■

Guillermo Valera
Delegate - CLC Peru

A DELEGATION REFLECTS

What impressed me during the sharing about world reality?

Asking myself this question, I remember standing by a grave in the cemetery of the home for Kenyan Aids-children hand in hand with a little girl who wanted to play and be with us. Seeing the world reality is for me looking at the deaths and the shadows of the world and, at the same time, feeling the hope and joys of individuals, and then feeling the call to respond to the needs of people.

I was also impressed by the many things that are already being done by CLC: projects that are realized to respond to the social reality. We also saw different types of richness and poorness in the diverse countries of our Community. In some - often in European countries - we are confronted by a material richness, but thirsting for a sense of life, for spirituality, for real values. In countries confronted by large social and political difficulties, there are a lot of creative and concrete acts based on a deep faith, and on an Ignatian spirituality, which impressed me. There is a lot to learn from each other as well as lots to share with one another.

While sharing, I was very happy to see, that we all have, from wherever we came from, the same manner to look at the world reality. We are speaking the same language, but in different mother tongues.

Anke Junker
Delegate - CLC Switzerland

What impressed me during the sharing on world reality?

The deep commitment to CLC of all the delegates impressed me and I see it as a sign of growth in communal identity. The sharing on world reality was very honest; it is a privilege to contemplate our world by listening to CLCers from all continents, sharing the concerns of the people of their respective countries.

We have CLC deeply rooted in Ignatian Spirituality. They have gone through discernment processes, which have deepened



CLC Switzerland Delegation

their relation to Christ and given them the strength to be of service for and with the poor and marginalised.

With joy and hope I look at the steps taken by CLC Kenya and by many other Communities. We can also learn a lot from the shared responsibility in the service of Migrant Workers by CLC Korea.

I am very thankful for the CLC World Community with so many credible CLCers from all over the world - being inserted in the conditions of familial, professional and political reality, sharing their experiences, and discerning their desire to respond to the call of Christ. CLCers are being shaped through reality - and invited to live the *Good News* in this reality. Great things - often hidden - are happening. God's ongoing creative love is at work!

Anni Rickenbacher
Delegate - CLC Switzerland

What impressed me during the sharing on world reality?

From July 29th to August 9th of this year, the CLC held its XIVth General Assembly. Along with Anke Jucker and Anni Rickenbacher, I had the privilege of representing the Swiss CLC. At first, there was an important question to be considered: justifying such a trip. For the Swiss CLC this question could well have seemed secondary being that the ideas received had a scope. On the whole,

it seems to me that our participation benefited the world group because, as people coming from a rich country, we could by our presence demonstrate a sign of solidarity towards the committed communities of the southern countries. The enrichment was reciprocal not only because of individual contact with delegates of countries such as Ecuador, the Congo, Kenya, Korea, Bolivia and Lesotho but also because of our community discernment on the goal to be reached as an apostolic body in a secularized world.

The General Assembly focused precisely on this question. For some years already, the CLC has reached out as an entity of Christian groups who help individuals recognize the apostolic dimension in their daily life. Obviously, it was a matter of discovering how CLC could become an apostolic body and how this principle could be actualized in each group and in each country.

On the one hand, this process is a matter of conscience and on the other it is supposed to have an effect on the structures of the world community, especially those established between CLC and the Society of Jesus. Well beyond the differences of the lay and ecclesial communities, a collaboration between the two reflects the will of the majority of CLC groups. The two organizations work in different ways, according to the level of the CLC groups in each country. In particular, the well-organized groups such as those of Ecuador, Chile, the United States and France should be able to work in an autonomous way with their fellow groups of the Society of Jesus.

Father Kolvenbach, superior general of the Society of Jesus, pointed out the favorable circumstances which mutual development between CLC and the Society of Jesus could provide. Nonetheless, he also observed that the Society of Jesus must be at the service of CLC's mission. Father Willi Lambert S.J. emphasized that it is necessary to eliminate the prejudice according to which CLC simply has a mission complementary to that of the Society of Jesus. In particular I appreciated the experience of

sharing with the men and women of such different countries as Taiwan, Chile, Indonesia and Canada. It was possible to consider social and community matters and to live the Eucharist through lively, and creatively different rituals. The very process of the Assembly seduced me and though there were some lethargic moments, all the same, I feel the need to praise the Assembly for its constructive spirit when faced with impasses which could have blocked communications. The gratitude and hope was generated in me by the delegates' understanding and the socio-political questioning in wanting to recognize the divine vocation in the signs of the times.

Thus the final document explicitly motivated CLC to make use of their status as a Non-Governmental Organization recognized by the UN to defend social justice. On the national level, we should willingly support this action. Here the Kenyan process could be an example. Many groups have succeeded in living new solidarity and allowing themselves to be involved in the planning of projects which focused on the needs of the most impoverished. The Kenyan realities challenge us with the epidemic dimensions of AIDS, the misery of the children struck by illness and/or becoming orphans, the gap between the rich and the poor. Finally, on campus, this concern of the adolescent guardians for their little brothers and sisters and the separation between the private and public sectors with, on the one hand, the estates, parks and sites well cared for belonging to individuals where one can remain insofar as one is employed there; on the other hand, the public sites, spaces ecologically infected and dead which are littered with the homeless and the forsaken who must improvise their survival. CLC and the Society of Jesus of every country and of every province are responding to such tendencies of society when they oppose the mechanisms of accumulated capital ■

*Christoph Albrecht S.J.
Delegate - Ecclesiastical Assistant CLC
Switzerland*

THE MOST URGENT PRIORITIES

The experience of a World Assembly obviously presents the grace of being a single world community while at the same time having a great diversity of cultures, languages, moments and processes.

It is extremely enriching to feel how our Christ-centeredness and the Ignatian Spirituality unites us in that great diversity, as well as in the desire to be an apostolic community capable of building the Reign of God. Other factors that unite us as one community are the aspirations and real steps of cooperation and collaboration with the Society of Jesus in each of our national communities.

In spite of this widespread unity in the CLC world, we cannot deny the diversity of times and processes among the different national communities with all their richness, and also the complexity that this implies. In this sense it is not easy to define priorities for mission at the world level. It will be the task of each national community to discern their priorities within this process, always within the framework of the world community and what it proposes as a challenge, which at this time is to be an Apostolic Community.

Each national community should live a serious process of discernment, of making choices and of ongoing evaluation of their priorities. Obviously these will be presented to the world community in order to be confirmed, enriched and strengthened by other sister communities.

The mission priorities in each country will be defined on the basis of several factors such as:

- The stage in their process of maturation and CLC consolidation.
- The signs of the specific times in each reality.
- The specific call of each national community shaped by their common mission. On the basis of these factors and of the level of maturation of the community there are two feasible levels:

1. Consolidating the community and its auto-conception as a world apostolic Community: a single body standing on behalf of the more impoverished. A world body working from the local level, so that under the standard of Christ and based on Ignatian Spirituality, it announces, denounces and works effectively for a just society and solidarity on the world level.



Julio César Benítez
Delegate CLC - Ecuador

2. Our identity and our dreams, which are the dreams of Christ, have already been basically confirmed. To prioritize our organization as an apostolic body is to speak of the structures and processes which will make us more and more efficient in our mission as a community. Within this is the consolidation and structuring of apostolic works that are efficiently carried out by CLC members. Also, according to the needs of each community, the need is to find the best way of generating mutual collaboration with the Society of Jesus. To create networks between apostolic national works on the regional or the world level which provide greater efficacy and strength.

Learning to "Share the responsibility of the Mission" within a dynamic community in which each member has a different role, where only a few will have the call to live directly and permanently the contact with the more impoverished is the direction. This means finding the processes and structures to give a real accompaniment to our members who "have been sent".

Whatever our moment, in each national community the priorities which unite us must be:

- Having and living with Christ as the center of our lives through our Ignatian Spirituality. Experiencing deeply our unity

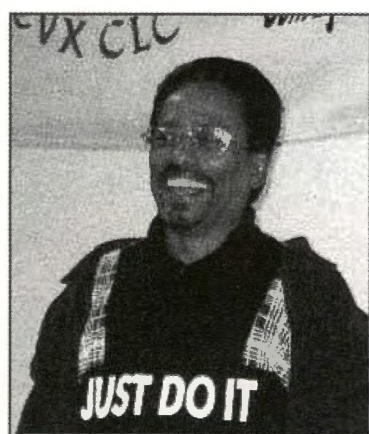
in Him by means of annual Spiritual Exercises, the practice of prayer and the use of Ignatian aids, permanent formation and the experience of the community.

- Understanding ourselves as a community not closed in itself but rather one that feels sent to work for the poorest of our world because of our personal vocation.
- Continuing a permanent discernment that facilitates finding the best mediation for working "with and for the poorest of our world," not only assisting the inhuman consequences of poverty, but also attacking its causes in our local realities but with a universal vision.
- Living an austere and radical style of life, relating it to the witnesses that we can be to the Good News in our family, work and environment. Being faithful to what we

believe and living in a way that is coherent with what we dream of as a world community, i.e., a just society, a solidarity that has as its priority those who have the least.

As in all processes lived in freedom, this process requires immense fidelity at each given step and an exhaustive personal and community work in order to continue discovering the call to mission and to discern the most effective mediation for this task. It is a work that definitely asks much of us if we try to do it alone, but that in the company of Christ is not only possible but rather necessary and urgent. As our Holy Father John Paul II tells us: "The poor cannot wait!" This thought should be present when we define our rhythm in community, always with peace and happiness but without losing sight of this reality ■

A LAST WORD



Paul Vaz S.J.
Assembly Process Guide
Nairobi '03

As I returned to my Jesuit Community, the first question they asked me was, "How concrete was the outcome of your Assembly?"

I saw five outcomes as first steps towards becoming an "Outreaching Apostolic Body."

1. The "Leadership takes hold of the Leadership" at the World ExCo and at the National ExCos-levels. Shared Responsibility means giving quality time and being at the service of the CLC Body. The way of exercising

this leadership is not authoritarian, but servant-leadership, empowering-leadership. How can we move towards having more 'full timers' serving CLC at the World level, besides the Executive Secretary and Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant?

2. How can CLC be financially capable of handling its ideals? "Financial co-responsibility is a sign of a mature commitment of the community." Start budgeting now for the next assembly. "The Budget helps to convert our apostolic priorities into financial terms."
3. Shared Responsibility including Discerning, Sending, Supporting,

Evaluating, requires a “**Formation for and in Mission**” right from the initial CLC stage. Let it not be said any further, that CLCers enter the Formation or Retreat House and never come out.

4. **Public Visibility of CLC:** How can CLC be seen, as a true *Outreaching Apostolic Body*? Not mere activism or projects but ‘**systemic interventions**’ as a Body. Wherever CLC shows great vitality and is involved in mission, there are close links with the Society of Jesus, as was seen in the “Marche d’Esperance” (Market of Hope) and in the “Panel of Jesuit-Lay Collaboration”.

5. **Universality:** How to find a balance between Regional Groups and World Community? An underlying principle could be, “**Large enough to be meaningful, small enough to be manageable**”.

Through the dynamism of the Spiritual Exercises...

May “*the Rhythm of the Body
the Melody of the Mind
the Harmony of the Soul
bring about the Symphony of Life.*”

“I have come to bring Life, Life in all its fullness” (Jn10/10)

WHAT NOW LORD?

In my reflective time before writing this article for *PROGRESSIO*, I found myself wondering how other persons, after serving as Executive Secretary for a number of years at the CLC Secretariat in Rome, felt or even dealt with the uncertainties facing them when their term ended. I am aware that, for all of us, this challenge is always there at different intervals in our spiritual journey, begging to be answered, as one faces the mystery of life.

This ambiguity is before me once more, but I am grateful knowing that God has loved me, as He does now and invites me, once more, to enter into the mystery of His love. As I say this, I recall how my faith journey in the CLC has been marked with instances of this awareness; my own growth and development in CLC Canada, participating in the world General Assemblies of Guadalajara, Hong Kong, Itaiici, and now the Assembly in Nairobi that marks the end of my 5 year term as

Executive Secretary. Recalling the richness of these events, I am reminded of the encounters with many persons who have shared the richness of their own lives and have helped me to remember, clarify and

deepen God’s love for me and affirm me in my Lay vocation: “*Remember your kindness, Yahweh, your love, that you showed long ago. Do not remember the sins of my youth, but rather, with your love remember me.*”(Ps 25: 6-14)

The most recent graced moment has been the



Gilles with Anthony (Deleg. Nigeria) and Jinhui (Deleg. Korea)

Assembly in Nairobi, Africa: still very fresh in my mind and affectivity for me, so to speak, the *icing on the cake*. The Nairobi Assembly, historically unique from others, signified a giant leap taken by our world community. Consequently, I feel that it will help me/us to move into the future by having a clearer vision of how we are to be an Apostolic Community. I would go so far as to call it a communal conversion. We have come to realize, once again but in a deeper way, that we must always live in a process of renewal and reform so as to be the living voice of God in every age so as to be radically present in every period of history.

At the Assembly, we heard and were shown the long and rich historical evolution of CLC. How there have been many seeds planted along the way that brought about the flowering of a community from the early lay Christians in the Marian Congregations to where we are now as CLC. I would like to mention a few events in our history that I believe were some of those seeds:

- Following an international meeting of Jesuits in Rome from the 15 to 22 April 1950, the General of the Society of Jesus, Fr Janssens, decided to establish a central Secretariat of the Marian Congregations in Rome.
- Fr Paulussen SJ arrives in Rome on Feb. 19, 1951 to establish the MC Secretariat. The question is raised, "*When will the lay representatives take responsibility of this Secretariat?*" (cf *Progressio Supplement* June 14, 1979)
- In a meeting of MC members in Barcelona, the Secretariat is asked to prepare statutes that are later approved in a letter from Pope XII on July 2, 1952. His letter begins with: "*All that know the modern apostolate, know too, how dear the MC is to us and how concerned we are for its continual growth*".
- With this letter, the World Federation of the MC is officially founded.
- A worldwide Congress is held at the Gregorian University in Rome in 1954.

(The Roman College is where Jean Leunis S.J. began his work in forming groups of students over 400 years ago).

- In the statutes of 1962, it is stated that the World Federation (WF) has its seat in Rome and the person in charge of the Jesuit Secretariat should be vice-assistant of the WF.

What followed was a series of consultative meetings that inspired and helped in bringing about a renewal of the Community. Closely related to this rebirth was the decision to establish the Central Secretariat at 8 Borgo Santo Spirito in Rome. In 1962 Fr. Janssens, General of the Society of Jesus, after making the decision remarked, "This is for the World Federation...". With the Central Secretariat, now firmly established, we are told that the WF had become a beehive of activity with many friends helping to renovate the office space. It soon became a place to receive visitors and provide all types of services for the Community.

Along with this new life, laypersons came to Rome to assist in the daily work of the Secretariat. The first laywomen to serve at the Secretariat from 1965 to 1970 was Edyth Westenhaver from the USA.

The first official Executive Secretary was Josée Gsell who came from France. She arrived in Rome and shared her spiritual gifts and qualities up until 1986. In March of 1986, José Reyes from Chile arrived as the newly appointed Executive Secretary. Along with him came his wife, Cecilia, and three children. While serving in Rome, they received a special gift - another child was added to their family. They departed Rome returning to Chile in 1991.

At the ExCo meeting in Rome, March 1991, Roswitha Cooper from Germany was appointed as Executive Secretary. She served the Community with great enthusiasm until 1998 when she was forced to take time to regain her health. Early in 1998, Leah and I were asked by

our national CLC leaders to consider coming to Rome to serve as Executive Secretary. We accepted but with the provision that we would take on this role at the Secretariat together. We had the privilege of attending our first ExCo meeting prior to the beginning of the General Assembly in Itaici, Brazil. At the conclusion of the Assembly, we arrived in Rome on Oct. 3, 1998 to begin a 5 year mandate at the CLC Secretariat.

The 13th General Assembly in Itaici was a significant time for us. The Spirit worked powerfully through the Assembly and resulted in a document called, *"Our Common Mission"*. It was a very comprehensive document that launched us into an era of searching, revisiting and asking, *"What do these words and statements really mean to us?"*

In the years that followed, our constant probing seemed to bring more questions than answers. But soon, the Spirit would help us to find answers and it would come from the synergy of delegates at the Nairobi Assembly.

After Itaici, as members of a new ExCo, we were also searching for a better way of clarifying and consolidating our roles to be more effective as an executive body missioned by the world community to implement *Our Common Mission*. At the world Secretariat, we were also moving into the newness of how to cooperate with each other: vice EA, Fernando Salas SJ (Chilean), and a married couple (Canadian) as co-Executive Secretary. With these challenges before us there was always that determination to work effectively as a team, struggling to communicate our diverse viewpoints, dealing positively and constructively with those tense moments. Throughout these years of being together at the Secretariat, I am convinced that the words from the letter of James to his community became our logo and our grace: *"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits without any trace and partiality or hypocrisy"*. (James 3:17)

During several of our trips to various national and regional events and/or meetings, it was encouraging to hear others say to us how meaningful it was for them to have Leah and I, a married couple, at the Secretariat. These kind words affirmed us in our vocation as a married couple in CLC. On other occasions, we were asked: *"How do you cope with working so closely together throughout the entire day?"* Our answer was, although flippant, that we had arranged to have our office space separated by 2 other offices (approximately 12 meters distance). This allowed us the freedom to work quietly in our space but meet with each other during the time of tea-coffee breaks or at our inter office Mass (whenever possible, once a week).

After the Assembly in Nairobi, Leah and I flew to our home in Prince Edward Island, Canada. During one of our conversations, our son Richard asked me, *"Now that your time in Rome has ended what will be your next occupation?"* There was no answer given to his question and I don't think that he expected one, at least not immediately!

As I move into this indecisive stage of my spiritual journey, I recall the words of a good friend, John English S.J., *"No human person exists without making decisions, and the making of decisions determines whether a person is less fully or more fully human."*

History is an extraordinary teacher in helping us to make decisions, so Richard will have to wait as I take time to answer his question. I am grateful for my CLC group and other persons in my life that will be there to help me in this period of discernment and seeking to see myself as Jesus sees me as I ask, **"What now Lord?"** for He is the Lord of my whole life, past, present, and future. Adieu

Gilles Michaud
Outgoing CLC Executive Secretary



The New World CLC ExCo 2003 - 2008



**World CLC Ecclesiastical Assistant
Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ**



From left to right: Guy Maginzi (Ex. Sec.), Levi Matseshe (Cons.), Chris Micallef (Cons.), Leah Michaud (Sec.) Daniela Frank (Pres.), José Reyes (Vice-Pres.), Lois Campbell (Cons.), Rita El Ramy (Cons.) & Fernando Salas SJ (Vice-EA)

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14th CLC General Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya july 30 - august 8, 2003

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