



progressio

Publication of the World **Christian Life Community**



PHOTOS: FRONT COVER

From up-left to right:

- *Bebs and Jody Sim* (Philippines)
- *Sandra Chan*, co-opted World ExCo member (Hong Kong)
- *Carolina Barahona* (Ecuador) and *Mari Carmen Mora de Peña*, co-opted World ExCo member (Ecuador)
- CLC Italy – *Manresa group*
- *Fadi Hindi* and his wife (Lebanon)
- *Fr. Alberto Brito SJ* (incoming World Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant) and *Fr. Fernando Salas SJ* (outgoing World Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant)
- CLC members at the March 20th Peace Rally on PEI Canada
- *Maria Boxberg* (Germany)

PHOTOS BACK COVER

From up-left to right:

- CLC Belgium W. Delegates at Nairobi Assembly: *Corine Gauthier*, *Brigitte Jacquemin* and *Fr. André de l'Arbre SJ*
- CLC Zambia National ExCo
- CLC France: *Fr. Claude Charvet SJ* (EA), *Michel Lepercq* (Pres) and *Christine Regaud* (Sec)
- *Tobie Zakia*, former World CLC President (France-Lebanon)
- The newly elected Euroteam: *Leonardo Becchetti* (Italy), *Monika Sander* (France) and *Agnes Rausch* (Luxemburg). *Martina Zupanec* (Croatia), the IV member, is not in the picture
- CLC Taiwan Dads and children
- Paraguay Delegates at Nairobi Assembly: *Juan Ricardo Ruiz Diaz Santa Cruz*, *Jorge Daniel Moreno Irala* and *Fr. Carlos Ramon Canillas SJ*
- UN Geneva Working Group: *Goran Kuhner* (Croatia), *Roswitha Cooper* (Germany), *Anni Rickenbacher* (Switzerland), *Françoise Dubosson* (Switzerland), *Guy Maginzi* (World Ex.Sec) and *Daniela Frank* (World Pres)
- *Fr. Herminio Rico SJ*, New EA of Portugal
- *Huynh Tan Hiep* (Canada Fr)
- *Patricia Kane* and some members of Pre-CLC New Zealand
- *Fr. Pierre Faure SJ* (EA) and the Ivory Coast National ExCo
- *E.V. Joseph*, President of CLC India

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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.

Dear Friends,

As I write this editorial, the articles published in this number are still resounding within me and I hope that as you read them you too will feel the new life blossoming at the heart of our world community.

Yes, the General Assembly of Nairobi was and will remain in CLC history as a precious step on our journey towards Him and towards his own. The enthusiasm born from this first World Assembly held in Africa replaces the many fears expressed previously and is truly contagious. Everywhere delegates have taken the time to transmit their experiences and thus to generate in the whole community recognition and a lasting joy.

Certain articles show us how the preparation for Nairobi was already the occasion for a real community process, where each member found his or her place and role. The financial contributions of many to the Solidarity Fund as well as to the expenses of the national communities is a palpable sign of this.

Still, Nairobi doesn't give us ready-made answers to the old questions that are asked in our communities such as:

- ➔ *Harmony, given the rupture between the life of the local teams and the concerns lived by our national and world structures.* The outline presented by José Reyes can help us to go beyond this apparent rupture and to get a better view of the interrelationship between these two levels.
- ➔ *The implicit or explicit support given by the local team to the mission of its members.* The question posed in theory above all by Pat Fitzpatrick, finds a practical response in the article of CLC-

Spain about the way of living migration as a mission field.

- ➔ *The achievement of our option for the poor.* Is it not touching to hear our three delegates from the world Social Forum say that at Mumbai the poor were present and acknowledged in their dignity, in their cultural diversity and in their beauty!



Agnes Rausch

Certainly we can find many other pearls of hope during the reading of these testimonies and reflections shared with all of us.

Strengthened by the new breath coming from Nairobi and grateful for this light breeze blowing through many post-Nairobi experiences we are invited in our local teams to seek together a new vision of our life in the heart of CLC.

- ➔ With eyes wide open looking outward
- ➔ with a heart knowing how to welcome the challenges coming from without
- ➔ firmly rooted in "faith, hope, and charity"
- ➔ with a spirit of discernment...

we are invited to stretch out our arms and to advance towards the future.

Because God doesn't leave us alone: it is HE who awaits us at the cathedral of Westminster, in the airport of Amsterdam, in the Nyumbani village, in the shanty towns of Mumbai, in the Borgo Santo Spirito in Rome or simply in our own home. It would be a pity to miss this appointment with the Risen One ■

Agnes Rausch, April 28, 2004

PREPARING FOR NAIROBI

In recent *Projects*, it was mentioned that the process of an apostolic community is “discerning, sending, supporting, and evaluating”. For some CLC Taiwan members, this may appear as new information coming from the world ExCo and not something experienced in their own local community. Now, as we reflected back on the process of preparing for the Nairobi Assembly, we find that we have also undergone the same process.

Our National ExCo is responsible for circulating information from the world ExCo to our national community. Since some CLCers have difficulty understanding English, the Taiwan National ExCo invites capable members to translate world documents into Chinese and prints the articles in our publication *Between Friends*. About one year before the Nairobi Assembly, the Taiwan ExCo invited former world assembly delegates, ex-ExCo members, and the Apostolic Team members to form a Preparation Team, according to the suggestion of the world ExCo. This preparation group met monthly or bi-monthly. Its purpose was to help members of CLC Taiwan to prepare for the Nairobi Assembly.

characteristics - strengths and weaknesses - as possible delegates to the General Assembly.

2. Second, each one pointed out the characteristics of the members he/she recognized as suitable delegates.
3. In a third round, each one nominated the appropriate member(s) and gave his/her reasons in an encouraging atmosphere.
4. In a fourth round, we began to select the delegates. Each person wrote down the name of the member he/she thought was more suitable on a piece of paper.



Magdalena Chen and Cynthia Chang

In the first several meetings, former delegates shared their experiences of preparing and participating in a world General Assembly; other members shared what they sensed in reading *Projects 120* through *123*. During the meeting on March 15, following the criteria given by world ExCo, we discerned and selected the most suitable two members as our delegates to the Nairobi Assembly.

1. First, in an open and honest atmosphere, each member of the Preparation Team shared his/her own desires and personal

It turned out that Cynthia Chang received the highest number of votes. The Preparation Team selected Cynthia unanimously. Two other members got even in votes. Therefore we began another round. This time Magdalena Chen received the highest number of votes, and we selected her as our delegate with peace. The whole process of discernment was guided according to the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises.

One week later, Taiwan CLC celebrated the World CLC Day of Prayer. On March 22, the National ExCo having previously announced

who the delegates were, “sent” them as delegates during the Eucharist which was presided over by our National EA, Fr. Jesus M. Muñoz S.J. As one of the delegates to the Itaici Assembly, Fr Muñoz was once again going as a delegate to the Nairobi Assembly.

The Preparation Team continued their role of helping the National Community to support the delegates:

1. Sun Huei-Min, an active member of the Social Concern Team and on our publication editing team, invited Taiwan CLCers to reflect upon personal and communal changes during the five years since Itaici. She asked Taiwan CLCers to become aware of the needs in our society and think about our apostolic answer to the needs.
2. The Social Concern team made a report on “The Commitment of Taiwan CLC in Society, Politics, and Church Issues during the Five Years”.
3. The *Jump Jump* local group directly use English to share their background, path of growth, current missions and apostolic work and discussions about the “new ways of proceeding” (discerning, sending, supporting, and evaluating) and brought out some questions for the Delegates to the Assembly.
4. Fr. Jaime Valenciano S.J. wrote down his reflection on the World Assembly Preparation team.
5. Wei-Yun Yu shared his finding about some apostolic work teams within Taiwan CLC. These sharings enabled the “*members of one national body*” to not only better know each

other but also to share the responsibility with the three delegates.

On April 26 the preparation team met Fr. Fernando Salas S.J. and talked about the process of proceeding. During the meeting on June 29 Huei-min, Mei-lan, and Wei-yun shared what they noticed in reading the questionnaires answered by the 22 World ExCo candidates to this group.



Meeting with Fr. Fernando Salas SJ

After the delegates returned from Nairobi, the Preparation Team held a meeting on August 23. The Team attentively listened to the sharing of the three delegates. In September, the Team considered the implementation of the Assembly consensus. However, our Taiwan CLC ExCo was expecting an election in our National Assembly in October. Therefore, the Team handed the responsibility of implementing the world General Assembly Recommendations to the new ExCo. The Preparation Team still needs to carry out an evaluation ■

Teresa Mei-lan Li
CLC Taiwan

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF NAIROBI



Marc Lungu

A path was opened, part of the journey already completed: from 1967 to 2003, from Santo Domingo to Nairobi, from multiple doctrinal calls to a true awareness of its identity - CLC became completely transformed.

The calls launched in Augsburg, Germany in 1973 on liberation; in Manila, the Philippines in 1976 on poverty; in Rome, Italy in 1979 on a CLC world community; in Providence, USA in 1982 on a worldwide mission of justice; in Loyola, Spain in 1986 on a mission with and through Mary; in Guadalajara, Mexico in 1990 on CLC at the service of the kingdom; in Hong Kong, China in 1994 on a missionary CLC; in Itaiaci, Brazil in 1998 on a common mission/CLC in the world - all these calls led us to the one of Nairobi, Kenya in 2003 which established CLC as an "apostolic body" with a view to a common mission throughout the world.

Already present in this journey of CLC, initiated during the earlier and more expressive stages in Itaiaci, the Holy Spirit continued to blow during the meeting of Nairobi in 2003, where He brought our delegates to the 14th General Assembly to remind them of Christ's last testament expressed in these terms: "*As the Father has sent me, I also send you*" (Jn 20,21); "*Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of Father and of Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to carry out all that I have commanded*

you. And know that I am with you always even to the end of world." (Mt 28, 19-20)

These texts, which underlie the apostolic vision of the CLC mission in the world, are also a challenge to me. I would like to share with you what I retain of these directives of Christ.

1. Jesus reveals himself as "messenger" of God, His Father. He is the first "apostle" (the term "Apostle" means "messenger"): he that is sent.
2. Sending out the disciples of Jesus is but the extension of sending out Jesus Himself by the Father. So, all missionary work of the "messengers/apostles" is necessarily a divine event because it comes from the Father through the Son.
3. The apostle/ messenger is a real pilgrim. He is always there ready to leave with a view to the mission: "*Go...*," said Jesus.
4. The Apostle speaks and acts in the name of God: Jesus says "*...baptizing them in the name of Father and of Son and of Holy Spirit*".
5. The new disciples throughout the world become, in their turn apostles, of Jesus: "*...to make disciples of all the nations...*".



Sending

6. To accomplish a mission of God, as a messenger, is an order to be carried out and not a choice to be made at our discretion; Jesus said: "Go..." and "make...". These are imperatives.

7. When God sends in mission, He gives consequent guarantees. For the Apostle of yesterday and of today, His son Jesus is a permanent guarantee: "*I am with you always even to the end of the world,*" reassures Jesus who uses the present "*I am*" in order to also address us, His apostles of today: we, members of CLC of Africa, of America, of Asia, of Europe and of Oceania

Of course, after the meetings of Nairobi, we didn't go home, pack our luggage and go out across the seas and oceans to bring the message of Christ to the ends of the earth in the manner of traditional missionaries. Someone said that a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step! The world to evangelize is everywhere. It

begins at our doorstep. It is in us and around us. These too are the ends of the earth.

The first apostolic step of the Good New begins in ourselves insofar as we are concerned with our own salvation, calling ourselves constantly into question regarding the practice of the word of God, carrier of this salvation: "... *teaching them to carry out all that I have commanded you.*" Then, following the other steps of apostolic activities organized by the CLC and the local Church in the heart of the Church/Family, in our parishes, in the midst of our work, leisure, etc. We will be apostles there as much as anywhere else.

To do this, it is sufficient simply to say "yes" to the messenger of God, a responsible "yes", a committed and dedicated "yes" in answer to our local CLC communities when they call to us to: ***do this in memory of Nairobi 2003*** ■

Marc Lungu Bi'e-Ne
CLC D.R.Congo

ENCOUNTERS

Reprinted from "Revue Partage" (Magazine of CVX Canada F), Vol.6 N.1, Nov. 2003



CVX - Emmaus, Montreal

It is not easy to summarize an experience as rich as the world Assembly. The ten days passed in Nairobi were so intense that upon my return I had the impression of having spent a month there! Yet the time passed so quickly when we were there!

My trip began well before July 28, 2003. In November 2002 it was suggested that I attend; I hesitated a long while before accepting. The principle obstacle was my work, the summer period being the busiest time of the year. But little by little other obstacles and challenges were added thus: to go or not to go became the question.

The theme of the Assembly "*Sent by Christ, members of One Body*," invited me to a discernment that took a number of months. Am I really sent? By whom? Why? This "body" of which we speak so much, where is it? Does it really exist?

There were shadows and doubts: at work the situation became more complicated with the departure of some colleagues. In CLC, the pertinence of the trip was called into question: Why such a costly trip? Do we really need to

participate? Don't we have enough to do here, etc. These doubts expressed by certain members became mine as well. At certain moments I thought it would be easier to renounce everything, avoid the turmoil and simply remain at home continuing my life and my work. I had enough to do without going in search of other things!

Yet even if at times we are quick to say no and find reasonable justifications for protecting our tranquility of spirit, God does not allow us to remain tranquil. Slowly, other voices began to be heard. "No, you should go." "This Assembly is important to allow our CLC to grow." "We are counting on you."

The community had an important role to play in this process. Numerous members helped clarify my discernment: their words, their messages, their concrete actions repeated: "We are with you." Through them there was this call which was confirmed day by day: "Go, don't be afraid, I am with you," as if there were something or someone to discover there.

Our preparation for the Assembly was an enormous support, thanks to the contribution of the different communities which took the time to respond to the questions for our national day at Trois Rivières. There was also the work done by the Preparation Team, the efforts made by each one to respond to the questions of *Project 121* and a summarizing of what we were living as a national community for over two years. The fruit of this work was drawn together in a ten page report which we sent to the World ExCo and brought to Nairobi.

I was also deeply moved by the communities' response to the financial campaign for our CLC. Thanks to this participation, not only was the voyage made possible, but above all we realized together that to be "*sent as members of one body*" is more than a simple slogan or theoretic phrase. It is a reality which becomes tangible insofar as each of us believes it and puts

him/herself out for others, when we become aware that we each have a place and a role to play in this body.

In this way, the voyage becomes a mission received and sustained by the community. Even though I had not chosen this mission and though in the beginning doubt and uncertainty had seriously called into question this project, I received the confirmation that I had to go in all confidence. He, who sent me, would not leave me alone. I was "sent" as an "apostolic body" and this "body" progressively became an "experience of life." An experience lived in a national community which invited me to open myself to the world community.

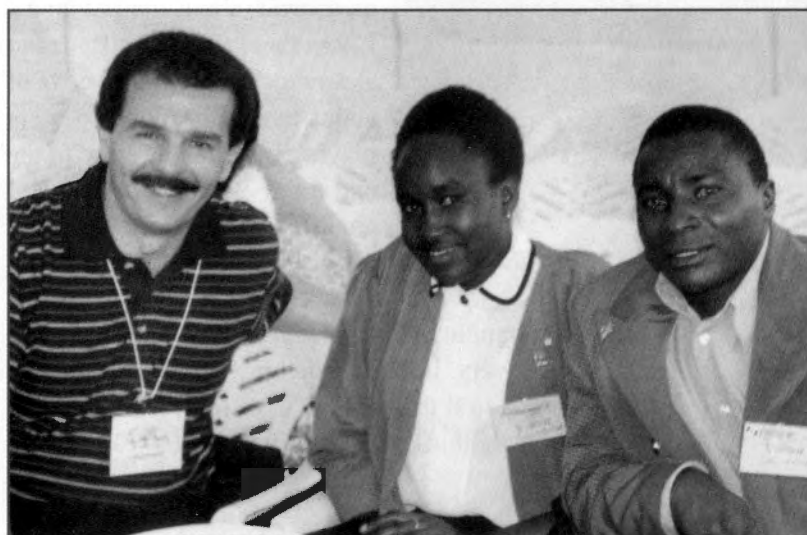
The trip had its own difficulties: cancelled flights, prolonged waits in the airports, etc. The ten hour stopover in the immense airport of Amsterdam allowed me to discover an extraordinary place of prayer, a haven of peace in the midst of a human anthill which was in a continual hustle and bustle. While I meditated in the little room, peacefully lighted, a man entered, took out a little rug and began to pray, prostrating himself next to me. There we were, Christian and Muslim, Jew or Buddhist, side by side, praying, and totally recollected in this really ecumenical place. What a marvelous idea! What grace!

I continued my journey and there a second grace: I met Father Louis Robert, a Jesuit from Montreal, invited as an interpreter for the Assembly. After two sleepless nights, we arrived together at Kenyatta Airport at 5:30 in the morning. It was cold and dark in Nairobi, we looked for the welcoming team who was supposed to meet us but found no one. After a moment of confusion a young woman recognized us and we were led to the Catholic University in the suburbs of Nairobi. We were given a friendly welcome by the members of CLC Kenya who showed us our rooms. At that moment, the bed seemed the most inviting thing in the whole world but we were informed that

the Assembly would begin in an hour: we had just enough time to have breakfast!

Sitting before a cup of Kenyan tea, I had my first encounter of the Assembly: Ines of Rwanda sat down in front of me, her sweet, peaceful face reflecting the beauty of Africa in an impressive simplicity and joy of life. She spoke to me of her country, of the war and of this peace which is constantly menaced by the instability of the neighboring countries. Forgetting my fatigue, I plunged into her world through her stories and tranquilly let myself be led into this "other world" which I came to discover in Nairobi.

So many things happened from this first meeting to the end of the Assembly, too many to describe in these few pages. The process of the Assembly, the plenary sessions, the workshops, the times of prayer, the Eucharistic celebrations - these were all intense moments. You will find a more detailed description in the other articles.



Rafik with members of CLC Kenya

But the richest of all was the encounter with the "other" which took place in the heart of the personal relationships, in the sharing, in the heart to heart, in the times of silence or of shared prayer, the little gestures of friendship, a

welcoming glance or an attentive listening. It is this encounter with Christ present in the heart of each one which gave the Assembly all its meaning. Our "apostolic body" is not built and cannot be built except by these moments of encounter.

I will end by sharing with you the experience of one of these encounters which took place during our visit to a village in Nyumbani for children affected with Aids. We left early in the morning in small groups in tiny buses called "matatou" to

go on a discovery of the Kenyan reality. I had cut my finger which had bled and had been counseled to keep my hand in my pocket during the visit. I asked myself how I would avoid shaking hands with people.

After a detailed explanation of the village, our guide allowed us to walk about the pavilions. It was there that I met Benedict and Francis, two young boys of about ten years old who were playing cards on the steps of the entrance. When I asked if I could join them, they invited

me to participate in their game. After I learned the game, we had fun as if we were old friends. I then taught them a new game and realized that it took very little to sow joy around us. I also discovered that we can have fun for a long time with the third of a pack of old cards.

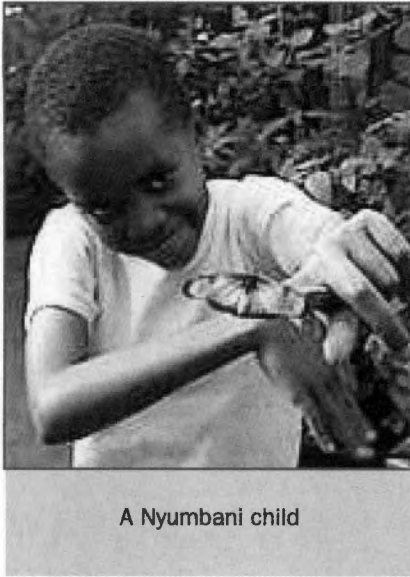
They asked me where I came from because my name was familiar to them. In Swahili it means "friend". When they found out I came from

Canada, they immediately said: But it is the country of Mother Monica. This mother Monica is a retired woman who one day decided to work as a volunteer in Nyumbani. She spent a year there before she had to return to Canada but in spite of the distance, she remained close to the children who considered her as their mother.

Suddenly they called me: it was time to leave! I left them, shaking vigorously their hands. I had completely forgotten the counsel of my neighbor in the bus but in any case, it was unimportant next to what we had lived together. In the space of twenty minutes, we had become such friends that it was difficult to leave them. I looked in their eyes, and this said much. We said we hoped to meet again one day... who knows? On leaving the village the guide brought me a sheet of paper on which they had written the address of Mother Monica. I discovered with surprise that she lived near me in Montreal!

Circumstances allowed me to discover this woman whom the children loved so much. She lived modestly in her little apartment and suffered health problems which she had developed during her time in Nyumbani. She passed her time between the hospital and the preparation of letters and gifts which she sent with much love to her children in Kenya. Her example is an inspiration for me. In spite of her age and her illness, she continues to be devoted and dreams of returning to Nyumbani to remain there, but this time she told me: I will probably be grandmother Monica by that time! What an extraordinary way to live her retirement! ■

*Rafik Salama
President CLC Canada*



A Nyumbani child

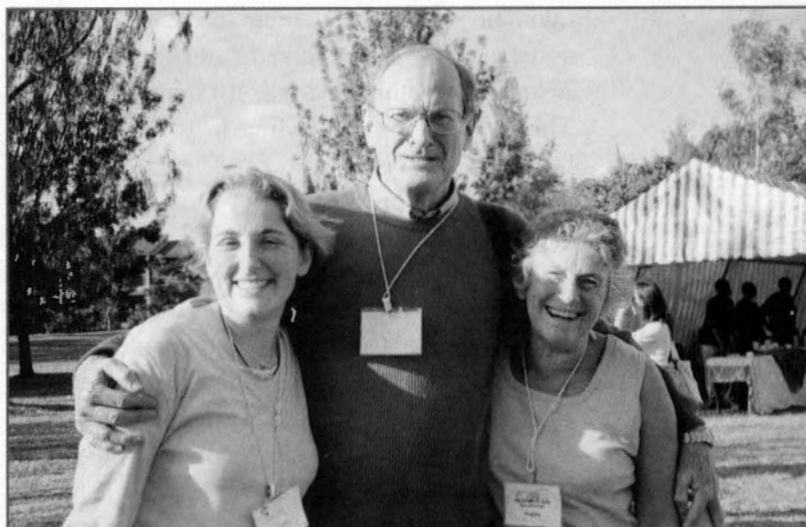
RESPONDING TO THE CALL

Sharing the joy of Nairobi

Our three delegates returned from Nairobi full of the joy and wonder of having been part of such a gathering of CLC members from so many countries and the delight of finding such an immediate sense of belonging to a family with common aims and ideals. They did not have long to wait before sharing the whole experience with the community as our National Assembly took place in September 2003.

The Assembly began with a music session when we sang "Jambo" with gusto. An enthusiastic sharing of the content of the Assembly followed, aided by a slide show presentation, using the many rich photographs of people, places and events. Our delegates also shared their impressions of the experience. They were impressed by the way moments of real crisis provided the springboard for growth and moments of grace – shared CLC background provided a strong foundation for friendship and working together in a constructive way. The most important expression, so often used, was 'shared responsibility'. For one of our delegates, an important reflection was that becoming an apostolic body with shared responsibility in mission is not about dictating to each other but about supporting each other. We were deeply moved to hear about one of the 'insertion' experiences. There was plenty of opportunity for questions and dialogue and although many of our community were present, the challenge remains **"How do we pass on this experience to the rest of the community?"**

Since our assembly, a Nairobi Implementation Team has been formed consisting of some who had helped to prepare for Nairobi, plus a member from each of our regions. It has so far reviewed our progression since Itaici and explored how we can build on to that the experience of Nairobi as we continue our journey to an apostolic community.



England & Wales Delegates

Our journey from Itaici to Nairobi

After the World Assembly in Itaici, we responded to the call to **"assist members in learning the process of personal and communal discernment"**. It seemed appropriate for our community - we could only respond fully to **"Our Common Mission"** once we had some experience of personal and communal discernment. A team of CLC members, consisting of representatives from each region with the National Chaplain (Ecclesiastical Assistant), became the Implementation Team and promptly set about writing four sets of meeting plans on discernment and mission. **"Discerning the Lord's desire for us"**, **"Understanding Mission"**, **"Delving Into Our Common Mission"**, and **"Contemplatives in Action"**, have become valuable resources and a natural follow-on to the series of meeting plans already in use. Two residential courses on Apostolic Discernment were also offered, with costs kept to a minimum to attract a wide audience.

Leadership

As a community, we have lived through some significant changes in the years since Itaici. We had to face the fact that we could not afford to

maintain a permanent employee, as the generous assistance we had received from the Society of Jesus to fund this post was no longer available. This resulted in us needing to review how we organise ourselves at every level, from the national to the local.

Our reflection started with the National Executive (Leadership Team) reflecting on their role, with the help of a facilitator recommended by the Society of Jesus, looking at how the team can best serve our national community. Among the topics addressed were how to reach out to young adults, how to nurture and sustain local groups, and how we increase the responsibility of the regional teams (who have taken on much of the work previously done by our paid Development Worker). Regions now have the responsibility of developing their own approach to Community, Spirituality and Loving Service. Dialogue at all levels thereby helps the National Executive to keep in touch with the needs and opinions of our members. This work is ongoing as our National Executive reflects with other groups who have responsibility for formation, supporting members, production of our monthly newsletter (*Focus*), etc.

Partnership with the Society of Jesus

Thanks to the Society of Jesus, our community has the support of a full-time National Chaplain (Ecclesiastical Assistant). We also have the support of regional chaplains and the use of Jesuit retreat houses for meetings.

Formation

Many other valuable initiatives have come from other groups within the community, including wider opportunities for members to experience individually guided retreats, (also retreats for beginners, for those taking their first steps into a retreat experience) with CLC members acting as guides. We have found ways of making the Spiritual Exercises more visible and accessible and taken steps to commission each other in undertaking specific projects.

The Formation Working Party (Formation Team) produced a resources pack for local groups, with information on a wide range of topics from how to attract new members and start new groups to how to deal with conflict in a group.

One of our more ambitious ventures was to present a series of talks at Westminster Cathedral in London, when more than 200 people came each week to listen to someone in public life talk of their work and experience, whilst an Ignatian 'expert' highlighted how they were in fact living out an aspect of the Exercises. This was a particularly high profile event for CLC and it has initiated growth in membership.

Mission

Because of the large-scale change we have been experiencing, we have yet to fully embrace the idea of a "National Project". However, our outreach to young adults has been very successful. Much work is being done by a team of young CLCers in formation, retreats, Mountain Spirituality (weekends of walking, praying and discussion), and the 'First Sunday' Masses for young adults in London. Last summer the young adults were also responsible for organising a holiday week, open to any CLC member, at Barmouth, a Jesuit house in Wales.

Our "*CLC Directory of Activities and Skills*" enables us to know more about the ministries our members are involved in and so work has gone into making this resource more 'user' friendly. Our holiday course this year will offer the opportunity to learn about each other's service.

Beyond Nairobi

So, what is our response to the call to be an apostolic community?

"An apostolic community is part of the development of CLC. It is a natural step, part of the evolution of the group and members".

This was a reflection by one of our local communities. For others in our community there is a concern about introducing dialogue/discussion into our meeting – fear of disrupting the way we listen to each other, which is a valued part of the meeting.

Membership of our community is growing at an encouraging rate and it is important to recognise and accept that local communities/lone members may be in different 'places' moving at different paces. As we try to respond to the call of the delegates of the General Assembly "*to become a lay body that shares responsibility for mission in the Church*", we recognise we are on the road but there are challenges ahead and the steps we take may sometimes be small.

First Steps

Where do we go from here? How do we share the grace of Nairobi in ways our members can make their own? Support in mission is implicit rather

discern, send, support and evaluate. Our objective now is to work through the regional teams, through our newsletter '*Focus*', and to make full use of our new web-site, highlighting these areas in 'bite-size pieces'.

One small step is an article in the May issue of '*Focus*', asking how members feel supported or would like to be supported. Once the dialogue begins, perhaps the next step is how responsibility is shared and so on. As our members have a sound structure and format for group meetings, we feel it is sufficient at the moment to ask groups to look at their meeting with 'new eyes' in order to find a place in the meeting to share on mission/loving service – "*how have I lived the Gospel?*" Choice of words can sometimes cause us difficulties, and we recognise the importance of language when communicating ways forward.

Some of the areas we have identified as requiring more reflection include: deepening our



World Assembly Implementation Team

than explicit in many groups, although some groups have already used part of their meeting to talk about the mission they are involved in, and then commissioned each other to go and do this work with the Lord. As the Nairobi Implementation Team, we have identified possible areas where we need to grow, that will take us forward in our understanding of what it means to

understanding of "*The CLC Charism*", promoting different ways of 'Review of the Day' (Examen), more training on Apostolic Discernment, initiatives to help our national community discern a 'National Project', making CLC more visible and confident, and building on the contacts we have made with neighbouring CLC national communities.

"And so we go forth to continue our journeys, in our separateness, we remain together, and in our togetherness we find strength" (prayer used by one of our CLC groups after reflecting on the preparation material for the World Assembly).

**World Assembly Implementation Team
(England and Wales)**

Janet Howard (North West region and Focus team member)

Jennifer Schooling (Delegate, member of World Assembly Preparation Team and National Secretary)

Teresa House (South region and Convenor WA

Preparation Team)

Rita McManus (Delegate, member of WA Preparation and Formation Working Party and CLC President)

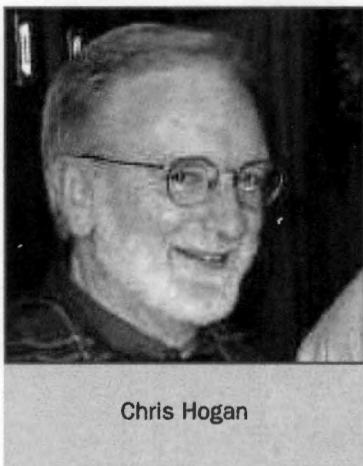
John Ruming (South region and member of WA Preparation Team)

Fr Robert Costello (Delegate, member of WA Preparation Team and Formation Working Party and National Ecclesiastical Assistant)

Pat Fitzpatrick (Midland region, member WA Preparation Team and Formation Working Party) ■

*Pat Fitzpatrick
CLC England and Wales*

"SHARED RESPONSABILITY"



Chris Hogan

Christian/Islam Dialogue

Recently, while reading 'Projects 125', I was struck by the clarity of insight and exposition of the inner processes of a CLC Small Group. But I was also struck by its relevance in interpreting some recent events in the life of my own CLC Group in South Australia, in particular, those relating to Christian/Islam dialogue. This article tells a story of Christian/Islam dialogue in the light

of *Projects No125*.

Context: Post September 11th Uncertainty in Australia

This story begins in South Australia 2001 immediately after the events of September 11th.

This event, shocking people in Australia as everywhere, resulted in a wave of media coverage and opinion, some of which was directed at the Islamic Faith and by implication, Australian Muslims.

Some of the media coverage was reasonably balanced but much, fuelled by political insinuation, encouraged lingering doubts, if not fear, in the minds of some of the Australian population. There was an element of popular politics and journalism encouraging us to be openly suspicious if not hostile to Muslim people and what they stood for. Muslim people in Australia reported experiences of uncomfortable encounters in the street, threatening mail, and in a few cases, open aggression.

One problem seemed to be that Australian people were having to rely on the media for its knowledge and impression of Islam. Why not hear from the people of Islam themselves?

A CLC response – Interfaith Dialogue

CLC (Australia), in a number of states, decided to open up dialogue with the Muslim community. This story is a brief account of the discernment of one Group, in South Australia, to hear the story of Islam direct from Muslim people themselves.

To achieve this, it was decided to explore the possibility of setting up a discussion forum at our local parish (St Ignatius, Norwood) to hear an informed contribution on the subject, to promote discussion and hopefully arrive at a more enlightened understanding of the essential truths of the Islamic faith. In this, we were inspired by the words of our own Church on the matter of relations with the Islamic community:

“The Sacred Council now pleads with all [Christians and Muslims] to forget the past, and urges that a sincere effort be made to achieve mutual understanding”. (VII Doc: “Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions”).

The events began somewhat tentatively with a knock on the door of the local mosque - until then unknown to us - tucked away in a side-street in the city of Adelaide, South Australia. At that meeting and at subsequent ones with Kieran Kelly (a fellow CLC Group member), we found ourselves engaged in earnest discussion and were extended the warmest hospitality and feelings of gratitude. We then took the matter to our CLC Group for discernment.

It was decided that we would hold a discussion evening with a number of speakers of diverse backgrounds to provide as comprehensive a coverage of the topic as possible. What followed in our CLC Group over the following weeks was some energetic discussion, reflection and prayer on the matter. Issues about which problems might arise (given wider community tensions at the time) were systematically dealt with. For us in our CLC Group, it was an experience not just of a

“free, intimate or spontaneous conversation, but of a dialogue that empowers the participants, that sustains and stimulates them in their mission”. (Project No 125: Para 3). In addition, we received enthusiastic support from the wider CLC.

On the evening of the event, well over 400 hundred people attended although we were only expecting 50-70. Collectively, the three Muslim speakers covered many aspects of Islamic faith including personal experience, the faith journey, conversion, the Koran, and the status of women. Another speaker, Fr Renato Zecin SJ (an Australian Jesuit from Pakistan) spoke of the variety of expressions of religious faith and religious tolerance. Kieran Kelly spoke of Islamic mysticism, art and literature and its significance in his own life journey as a Christian. The spirit of the evening was one of considerable friendship, mutual enlightenment and building relationship. As such, it proved to be the initiation of a now ongoing dialogue at our local level.

CLC Small Group Process – Its Importance

The success of this initial event was very much a function of the diverse gifts of the CLC members (and the support of our Parish priest Fr Celso Romanin SJ) - all brought to a fuller fruition by living our CLC process. From the initial conception of the idea to its being carried out, our CLC Group members shared responsibility for this mission. In doing so, we now realize more than ever “the necessity of journeying together, supporting each other in our weaknesses and benefiting from the strengths of others”. (Projects No 125: Para 6).

Through small Group process, clarity was brought where there was uncertainty, the fuller significance and possibilities of the project were discerned, special gifts of Group members were utilised, support and encouragement provided, affirmation to undertake the project given, practical tasks shared and the whole sequence of events evaluated. Small Group process helped us answer the question “What response would give a fuller meaning to my own life, to the lives of

others and of the community? (*Projects No 125: Para 10.2*). But matters did not stop there.

Unexpected Outcomes – A Visit to Turkey and Ongoing Dialogue

One of the more unexpected outcomes of that initial evening, was a subsequent invitation to the CLC (through myself and Kieran Kelly) to visit Turkey as guests of the Muslim community's Imam, Selim Sezgin, a good man, committed to interfaith dialogue. At that time, he was about to return from Australia to his home country, Turkey. Imam Selim's purpose in facilitating the visit was to encourage interfaith dialogue in his own country. Fifteen months later, the journey was undertaken.

Our confidence in undertaking such a mission was considerably increased by our now ongoing contact with the Muslim community over those intervening 15 months. As with the first event, this journey too was the subject of discernment and reflection although, to Kieran and I, the arguments in favour of the mission seemed overwhelmingly strong.

We visited Turkey over a period of two weeks or so during which Kieran and I were introduced to many Turkish Muslims including students (young and old), people in commerce and industry, other Imams, academics and Turkish families. Our journey took us to many places around central Turkey including to scenic mountains, plains and cities. The discussions we engaged in were simple spiritual conversations based on sharing and appreciating aspects of each other's faith. For us and as reported by others, it has been a very positive experience of friendship and spiritual companionship. In fact, an invitation remains for CLC to visit Turkey again.

At the conclusion of our visit, students of an Islamic seminary presented us with a gift for the Pope knowing that I was going to Rome as part of a CLC Ignatian Pilgrimage and presuming that I would be able to pass on the gift. This gift was a carved rosewood box containing rose scents (from the city of Isparta) and a set of Islamic beads made of a valuable stone. The gesture was in appreciation, they said, for a Pope who had prayed in a Mosque and had publicly questioned the war in Iraq which had just broken out. Kieran and I accepted the gift which we were subsequently able to pass it on through the Pontifical Commission for Interfaith Dialogue.

Concluding thoughts on CLC Process

Whatever has been achieved, the involvement of the CLC Group to which Kieran and I belong and its spirit and practice of 'shared responsibility' has been a determining factor. The idea and the extraordinary developments that followed (and are continuing) seem much bigger than what we could have imagined. More than ever, the words of *Projects No 125* take on a special personal meaning for us. In its own words:

"The small community meeting helps us to live in this discerning attitude; it also allows each of us to support the life in mission of the other members. In the process of understanding what the Lord wishes us to do, the community can actively participate in making the mission explicit and concrete. It can also share the responsibility for that mission and support its accomplishment. (*Projects No 125: Para 12*) ■

Chris Hogan
President CLC Australia

Delegates to the Nairobi General Assembly will remember the presentations on the social reality in Kenya. Joseph, a member of CLC Kenya, spoke about the work of the Hands of Love Society. The following is a further development in their mission as was reported in AGANews published by the African Jesuit AIDS Network.

George from Kibera slum in Nairobi was a student of excellent potential but not performing well; sometimes he was sent home from school for misbehaviour. Then we discovered that his father was deceased and his mother HIV+ was working as a prostitute; George was often chased from their one-room home without eating. George was one of 12 Form I students sponsored last year by Christian Life Community (CLC)/Hands of Love Society (HOLS). While trying to follow students like George, we were unhappy with the limitations and also faced a four-fold increase in school fees. We recognised the need to offer more support and reach more than just twelve students yearly. So in mid-December, we decided to step out in faith and begin our own secondary school for AIDS orphans.

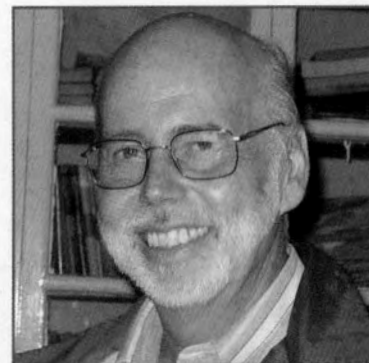
We targeted 20 students in Form II (including the 12 sponsored in 2003) and 30 in Form I. Having virtually no resources this first year, we decided to operate on a shoestring budget. In a burst of energy, we looked for rental space in the slum, wrote grant proposals, sought a principal and teachers, and prayed it would work.

CLC Kenya is member of an international lay movement following Ignatian spirituality. HOLs, a registered society in Kenya, was begun two years ago by CLC to support ministry to HIV/AIDS infected and affected, especially in Kibera, the largest Nairobi slum. HOLs began with visitations and has expanded to areas of education/awareness, food/rent support, self-help projects, bereavement care, and especially education support of affected youth.

Our 2004 school year began with a principal and five fully-qualified teachers who are volunteers, one a Sister missioned by her congregation. We were overwhelmed by over 200 applicants for places in Form I and decided to stretch our resources and accept 37 students along with 21 in Form II. In addition to the normal curriculum, we provide special resources in support groups and counselling along with social work resources and extra tuition for our students. We are applying for recognition under the Department of Social Services, whose qualifications we already meet, so that our students will be able officially to matriculate by the government examination at the end of Form IV.

Wanting the school to operate according to principles of Ignatian pedagogy, we invoke the patronage of a Jesuit saint whom we share with the African Jesuit AIDS Network. St Aloysius Gonzaga is patron of youth and students and now, because he died in serving plague victims, he is often taken as patron of AIDS sufferers and their caregivers.

The vision of St Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School is to provide a fine educational and life environment that can do much to compensate for the deficit of living caused by AIDS in a slum. We want the school to be hands of love and a place of hope for students and the surrounding community ■



Fr. Terry Charlton SJ

*Terry Charlton SJ
CLC Kenya Ecclesiastical Assistant*

"CLC AT THE SERVICE OF THE MALTESE CHURCH"

Discernment Process for the Maltese National Community



Malta Leadership Community

"CLC at the Service of the Maltese Church" is the title of the discernment process currently being undertaken by the Maltese National Community. The discernment process was launched during an Annual General Meeting held in February '04 and will be concluded in February '05.

The discernment process will help us understand the call for CLC Malta. Members have been asked to reflect on two fundamental questions: Where do we stand now as Christian Life Community?

How can we as CLCers share responsibility in mission within the Church in Malta?

Reflection is to be based on members' experience within CLC and within the church and is to be guided by two basic documents

which will help in the discernment process. These are the Nairobi *Recommendations* and the documents of the Diocesan Synod of the Maltese Church that has taken place in the past years (1999-2003). The aim of the Synod was to examine the pastoral life of the Church in Malta and to identify the direction of the Church for the years to come, in order to respond better to the needs of society. Since this was the first local Synod since Vatican Council II, it was the first Synod in Malta where the laity were invited and encouraged to participate and where the laity worked very closely with the religious at all stages of the process. A total of eight Synod documents have been published:

The Church as Communion
The Catholic Laity
Marriage and Family
Adolescents and Youth
... and Justice
Culture, Society and the Church
Liturgy and the Sacraments
Spreading the Word of God

Using the Nairobi *Recommendations* and at least one of the 8 Synod documents, the individual CLC groups have been asked to undertake a process of communal discernment in order to identify how CLC Malta can be of service to the Maltese Church. The communities have also been asked to identify how CLC Malta can grow in order for us to live our charism to the full and to be of better service.

This means that each community will identify one concrete, urgent and universal need (for the National Community) that will help CLC in its mission of service to the Maltese Church. Furthermore, each community will put forward one concrete, urgent and universal need (for the

local Church) where CLC's particular charism can serve the local Church. The discernment must take into account who we are today, our reality, our limitations and our call as CLC.

The fruit of the discernment within the local groups will be forwarded to the Leadership Community (April / May '04) who will then prepare a draft document based on all feedback received. This draft document will be presented to the National Community together with proposals from the Leadership Community (July '04). Together, as a National Community, we will then discern on the direction and vision for CLC Malta for the next few years. This will also serve as a mandate for the next Leadership Community to be elected in February '05. The new Leadership Community will be "sent on mission" to develop and implement the vision discerned by the whole national community.

The discernment process outlined above was well received by the National Community. It responded keenly to the idea of embarking on a discernment process with the aim of defining the mission for CLC Malta as well as electing a new leadership with a concrete mandate. However, it must be said that this process is not without difficulties, such as the diversity of communities, and the varied expectations of members. The experience of discernment on a national community level is not entirely new to CLC Malta, however previous experiences were few and limited.

As a conclusion I wish to say that since August '03, CLC Malta has given a lot of importance to the Nairobi *Recommendations*. Every opportunity was taken to present these *Recommendations* to the National Community. This was done both verbally during a national gathering in September '03 and the annual seminar in November '03, as well as in writing through regular, monthly letters from the President of CLC Malta to each Maltese CLC'er.



Malta World CLC Day 2004 Celebration

The *Recommendations* have also been addressed during supervision meetings for community guides. During these meetings the guides were encouraged to share the understanding of their community with respect to the Nairobi *Recommendations* so that they may become internalized within communities and not mere words on paper. Guides were then asked to identify steps taken by the community in their move towards becoming an Apostolic Community as well as any difficulties experienced.

It must be said that reactions and experiences varied from one community to another. Some groups were familiar with the Nairobi *Recommendations* and are striving to become an Apostolic Community in the everyday-ness of their lives. For other groups the image of an Apostolic Community was an ideal which was difficult to understand and even more difficult to reach. This is no reason for us to be disheartened: each member and each community grows at its own pace, a pace fostered by the understanding, love and formation offered by the National Community. What ultimately unites us and impels us is a personal willingness and commitment to respond to the call of Christ ■

CLC-Malta Leadership Community

THE APOSTOLIC POLYNOMIAL OF CLC

Discern - Send - Support - Evaluate



José Reyes,
WCLC Vice President

This polynomial of four words has arisen in the recent history of CLC and has great apostolic force. It is not 4 successive steps that should occur in each community meeting. Neither is it a series of four words with a vague content that can stop our spontaneity. It implies four functions that fulfill the community on its different levels

making it a true apostolic body.

I offer the following structure: it doesn't exhaust the topic but it has the merit of being synthetic. It will be completed and enriched by various contributions, and I believe that it is already necessary to add two more columns: one on means and another on the personal level ■

José Reyes
Vice-President World ExCo

Function	In the World Community National -Regional Group	In the local community or group
Discern	• Study the reality • Bring together the experiences • Formulate orientations and apostolic priorities • Guide the processes • Communicate with the Church • Identify places, works, milieu, relationships.	• Welcome the orientations and apostolic priorities • Share individual experiences about them • Listen to the Word of God • Contemplate Jesus in Action • Share the spiritual movements • Clarify what we have heard and experienced • Ask what we will do about it. • Take out personal or communities conclusions
Send	• Confirm (or not) initiatives and apostolic formal commitments. • Assure and organize a presence of CLC members in the different places or works identified • Cover the whole range of orientations and apostolic priorities • Establish bonds with the hierarchical Church and with the Society of Jesus regarding missions entrusted to some members.	• Confirm (or question) personal options in the ordinary environment • Connect the experiences of the members with the apostolic priorities (publish and print the apostolic commitment of each member).
Support	• Give spiritual, intellectual, apostolic and human formation • Connect efficiently to members apostolically authorized • Create structures of support • Contribute leadership, vision. • Disclose documents, possibilities for obtaining assistance, etc. • Go beyond CLC for apostolic collaboration with others	• Welcome and accompany concrete difficulties, personal necessities, depressions, questions. • Give members what they individually need: advice, encouragement, specific help, confirmation, etc. • Pray for each one and for their mission • Study and deepen some specific aspects according to the needs
Evaluate	• Promote and guide self-evaluation and self-criticism on apostolic efficacy within CLC • Gather and systematize successful or failed experiences • Study the criticisms coming from the Church, the Society of Jesus and other associations • Prepare and point out good examples of evaluation, discernment and projection • Set objective parameters for the apostolic commitment of CLC and its members.	• Practice giving advice and fraternal correction • Make known the background and give input to the leaders or commissions on the regional or national levels • Value the apostolic life of each member with a grateful attitude • Continuously refocus on our goals in function of the apostolic life of the members and of CLC

MEETINGS ON MIGRATION - CLC SPAIN

Introduction

On the first weekend of October 2003, members of CLC Spain coming from nine different local communities met in Madrid. The reason for this national encounter was to meet with those who are working with and for immigrants. We feel that immigration is a mission field. Although 22 persons participated in the encounter, more people showed interest in attending the meeting.

Events preceding the encounter

In 1999 at the European Assembly of Slovenia, because of the European reality, the Euroteam chose *migration* as one of their mission priorities. CLC Spain also assumed this mission field as its own.

A first European meeting was organized in Malta in June 2001 for the purpose of directing and encouraging the national communities to work in

A year and a half later we met again on the European level although this time in Zurich. The meeting revolved around a common European topic: prejudice toward immigrants. We also made use of the time to reconsider the objectives of Malta and to evaluate the work carried out since then.

We had the impression that little progress had been made between one meeting and the other and that there was still much to do. In Zurich, we also sensed that it was important to transmit what we had lived at that meeting and that any steps we take on migrations as a team from CLC Spain should be preceded by a "sending" conveyed through the members of CLC who work in this mission field.

Meetings on migration of CLC-Spain

After the meeting of Zurich, the CLC-Spain Migration Team was formally constituted. The first task proposed was to make contact with those in our local communities working in this field. Then later to have a meeting to ascertain the steps we should take as a national CLC in this field.

We also proposed the following as more specific objectives:

- To give content and tasks to the migrations team of CLC-Spain.
- To foster personal knowledge and the exchange of experiences, difficulties and ideas regarding immigration.
- To constitute a motivating force for the local communities in this mission field.
- To feel that each of us is an expression of this mission of the community.
- To increase or consolidate the migration team of CLC-Spain



"We were no longer alone"

this field. The main objective at that time was to create national networks that would stimulate their respective members to work in this mission field.

In order to reach our goal we divided the meeting into three parts: one personal and two community. The content of each part was: (Number responses)

1. Who we are and how we personally fit into the reality of immigration (objectives 2, 3, and 4).
2. What we do as a CLC community on the world, local and Spanish levels (objectives 3 and 4).
3. The directions we should take (objectives 1 and 5).

Here we do not intend to enter into details of the whole meeting, but rather to transmit to the national community the experience lived that weekend.

1.- Some of us hoped that among the participants we would meet people on different levels both regarding experience in CLC as well as in the field of migration. Nevertheless, the harmony among all was notable. On Saturday morning, a time dedicated to sharing our basic personal experiences in the migrations field and the possible feeling of being sent, a deep sense of being community was created. The Spirit was with us. There was a rich and nuanced sharing of experiences, the desire to follow Jesus poor and humiliated presently incarnated in the regular or irregular immigrant, prisoner or prostitute, Maghrebi or Latin American. There were also moments of desolation regarding the lack of sending and co-responsibility on the part of some local communities, although all was lived with the certainty and the confirmation that we are where we should be.

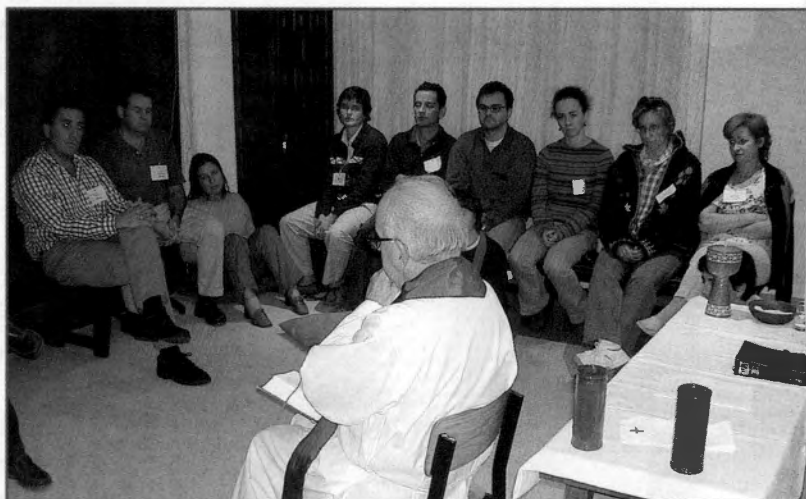
2.- Some of us also went to the meeting without hoping for results. However, it was a pleasant experience to see how, after an hour and a half of prayer during which we stood before the Lord showing him the reality of our CLC (needs, limitations, potentials, calls, etc), the Spirit showed us the way on which we should continue.

It was gratifying to confirm that each of us felt ourselves to be an expression of this mission of

the CLC and that the Lord had called us to be the motivating force of the local communities in this mission field. There was a change of sentiment from the first day to the second: "we were no longer alone." We were 22 people from all over Spain and we perceived ourselves as a community of service and sending. The possible misunderstanding, the absence of co-responsibility or estrangement of some members of our local communities in this mission field was no longer lived as a limitation.

We were able to see that when we listen to the Lord in order to carry out his will, all difficulties are transformed and minimized. It is in such situations that the universality of CLC is especially lived. It is here that the reality of moving forward in order to become the "apostolic body" we are meant to be becomes more palpable.

Thus two points emerge on which to dedicate our efforts.



Prayer and Sharing at the meeting

The first within our CLC community, where we proposed:

- keeping in contact through a list for electronic distribution, which in turn will be used to send out information about social and political events taking place regarding this

field of mission. (This list is already in operation)

- sharing more diligently our experiences in migration with our local communities
- contacting other local communities who are working well in this mission field; this was missing in this meeting
- communicating to other national communities the experiences which can be useful to them that were lived in this meeting
- suggesting that the local communities think about opting for this mission field in their Apostolic Projects.
- we named Yeni (CLC Paraguay) who attended the encounter, as our American contact. Thus we hope to create a bridge of collaboration with Latin America, although we also remain in contact with the CLC from Peru, who in turn are working with the Parish of S. Francisco Xavier in Madrid, etc.

The second step is outside of our own community; this in turn divides into two:

- a) toward the rest of the diocesan community. It was considered opportune and viable to write an article on migration from a Christian point of view which we hope will be published in *Christianity and Justice*. (I am certain that Carlos of CLC Valencia has already sent an outline to Manolo of CLC Málaga). Also, to send the conclusions of our meeting and our availability to the nearest diocese as a start as well as to contact Anna Gallagher who has formed a Christian and immigration network in Spain, etc.
- b) towards society, by means of public reports, uniting ourselves to campaigns which proclaim the rights of the immigrants, working in intercultural education in schools where we work or have our children etc.

Some of these tasks are personal commitments and others are mandates for the Migration Teams of CLC Spain.

3.- We feel that we in CLC move very slowly and are concerned to think that everything could end with this meeting. For this reason, the Team proposed as its main task to continue nourishing the desires with which we left the meeting. We know that there are many things to do but we will try to carry them out in an order of priorities, paying attention to the real necessities and to our possibilities.

The distribution of this summary is an expressed commitment of the CLC Migration Team of Spain to work in the direction spelled out in our national encounter, a team that presently continues to be made up of Belén of Salamanca, Amparo of Alicante and Elisa of Málaga. In fact we have already begun to carry out several of the recommendations that were promulgated ■

With infinite gratitude to the Lord for all the opportunities He offers us daily,

The Migration Team of CLC Spain



The Migration Team of CLC Spain

ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE

A sign of hope for the world
a challenge for CLC

Three CLC delegates were sent to participate in the World Social Forum (WSF), in Mumbai, India from the 16 to 21 Jan. 2004. The three CLC delegates accepted this mission and took on the mandate given by the ExCo to be the CLC Delegation to the WSF in Mumbai. They were joined by 10 members of CLC India.

Shirin Ebadi, 2003 Nobel peace laureate from Iran, in her opening speech in the evening of 16th January, called the WSF: 'A sign of hope for the world'. Together with over 100 thousand participants from 132 countries, she told us that the vicious circle of capitalism and neo-liberalism, making the deprived poorer and the wealthy even richer, was the cause of wars and terrorism, and that it **must be and can be fought in a peaceful way**. There, at the Mumbai NESCO Grounds (exhibition centre), the venue of the WSF, for five days, we lived in a world as it could be and should be. After security checks and

passing smiling police (some being heavily armed), we entered a colourful world, a garden of beautiful people of all races and cultures. The atmosphere of peace, harmony, beauty and above all joy was overwhelming. The poor and underprivileged where there; they could speak and were listened to; they where recognized in their dignity, cultural diversity and beauty. For many of them, this was a new experience: at the NESCO grounds, the poor felt free to speak for themselves and without fear. One person, who participated in the former WSFs in Brazil, said that this was the big achievement of the Mumbai WSF. In Brazil, the participants where mainly members of social movements, human rights activists, NGOs, etc. talking on behalf of the victims of injustice and exploitation; here in Mumbai they where present in huge numbers themselves.

Our participation on behalf of WCLC:

We, Leah, Gilles and Roswitha, had some discussion about how we should arrange our participation at the WSF. The time was too short for us to organize CLC activities and register as such. After meeting with Fr. Fernando Franco S.J., the Secretary for Social Justice, we decided to participate under the umbrella of the Jesuits. In this way, we were part of the ¹*International Delegation of twenty-six*: Jesuits from all



Members of the Foreign Delegation
Jesuits and collaborators including CLC at the WSF

¹ **INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION** Fr. Alfredo Zepeda Gonzales sj (Mexico), Fr. Areliano Yanguas Javier sj (Spain), Fr. Berilengard Antoine sj (Tchad), Fr. Bernard Lestienne sj (Brazil), Fr. Biron Jean Marc sj (Canada), Mrs Cooper Roswitha (Italy), Miss Eizaguirre Marlen (Spain), Mr. Femminis Stefano (Italy), Fr. Fernandez Franco Fernando sj (Italy), Frigeri Daniele sj (Italy), Miss Furst Anne (France), Fr. Holcroft Davide sj (Australia), Fr. Fr. Jojo M. Fung sj (Malaysia), Miss Manzanedo Cristina (Spain), Fr. Martinot-Lagard Pierre sj (France), Fr. Matias Martinho Lenz sj (Brazil), Mr. Michaud Gilles (Canada), Mrs Michaud Leah (Canada), Mr. Nguyen Minh (Australia), Fr. Pete Henriot sj (Zambia), Fr. Remon Marcel sj (Belgium), Fr. Ricardo Falla sj (Guatemala), Fr. Sauvage Patrice sj (France), Mr. Sealey John (USA) Fr. Stormes Jim sj (USA), Fr. Vaillant Paulo Sergio sj (Brazil).

continents, laypersons from Australia, France Italy, Spain, USA and Zambia - all of them working in one way or the other with the Society of Jesus - and the three of us on behalf of CLC. All together we were registered at the WSF under SAPI: the *South Asian Peoples Initiative*, organized by an ad-hoc Indian Jesuit working group.

The call of SAPI is to look for secular space / platform to join and build up networks with individuals, groups, NGOs, and peoples' movements in the struggle with the poor. From September 2003, we were in touch with the SAPI organizing committee as they initiated a newsletter named "SAPI". As the preparations for the Forum progressed, the e-newsletter communicated the latest details. For ongoing information on SAPI, contact: *Joe Xavier S.J.*, *JESA Secretary at jesa@jesuits.net*.



Fr Tony D'Souza SJ EA of CLC India, Roswitha Cooper CLC Italy, Gilles and Leah Michaud CLC Canada

To better link the CLC mission project with the national CLC, it had also been decided that CLC India should be contacted and invited to participate in the WSF. In October, Roswitha Cooper contacted Cecilia Edwards, the current past President of CLC India, and Fr. Tony D'Souza S.J., National Ecclesiastical Assistant to inform them of our participation in the WSF and inviting them to join with us, as one world body at the WSF. The challenge was met with an enthusiastic affirmative reply giving us the names of ²10 CLC members that would be registered to

attend the Forum. They too would be included under the umbrella of SAPI.

We three were glad to be part of this *International Delegation*, to have the opportunity of celebrating Eucharist together in the early mornings and to meet every evening to share our experiences. We were also grateful to have, at our disposal, an apartment belonging to the sister of Cecilia Pinto, a committed CLC member from Mumbai. Our sharing as a mini-CLC group was completed, late at night, with a bottle of Kingfisher beer to wash down the incredible dust and dirt of a much polluted city. Mumbai indeed is a shocking example of the devastating effects of a globalized neo-liberal economy, a mega polis of 16 million people with luxury hotels, huge slums, incredibly crowded streets, traffic jams as a rule and a level of pollution that pains

the throat and makes eye water. In the morning when taking a Rickshaw (a three-wheeled, 3 passenger, open vehicle that operates on air polluting kerosene) to the NESCO Ground, we would pass by the highway bridges. Under these bridges, and in similar unsuitable places, many thousands of people 'live' in the dust and in this indescribable polluted air. These horror pictures - more than poverty - are an absolute assault to human dignity that will never be forgotten. It was a painful tension we had

to live through. Us... passing by to go to a meeting about changing sinful structures, knowing that in the evening a meal would be waiting: there... the misery of the nameless poor without drinking water and not even the basic means for living. We struggled with feelings of powerlessness, of not being able to do something for them right away.

Early in the morning, we would arrive at the venue to have some time before the beginning of the official programs. ³ *The conferences we*

² **CLC INDIA MEMBERS** Mrs. Cecelia Edwards, Past National President, Mr. E.V. Joseph, National President, Mr. Dilip Gomes Vice-President, Miss. Magdalene Gomes, National ExCo, Mr. K.H. John Age, Mr. Ignatius D'Souza, Secretary, Mr. Jasmine Anthony, Youth Vice-President at the National level, Fr. L. Selvaraj ExCo, Fr. Shanly Chirapanath, Diocesan EA, Fr. Tony D'Souza S.J., National EA.

³ **WSF CONFERENCES** Eight Conferences with space for 15,000-20,000 people: Land, Water and Food Sovereignty; Militarism, War and Peace; Globalisation, Economic and Social Security; Wars against Women, Women against Wars; Media, Culture, and Knowledge; Exclusions and Oppression: Racism and Casteism; Labour and the World of Work; Religious, Ethnic & Linguistic Exclusion & Oppression. 4 Round Tables and panel discussions for ca. 4,000 people: Globalisation, Global Governance and the Nation State; Political Parties and Social Movements; Globalisation and its Alternatives; Future of the WSF.

attended were interesting and informative. Some of the key speakers of the WSF were: Joseph Stiglitz (Nobel economic laureate from USA), Shirin Ebadi, (Nobel peace laureate from Iran), Chico Whitaker (Brazil, one of the founders of the WSF), Mary Robinson, Maude Barlow (Canadian activist and writer), Alejandro Bendana (Representative of the former Sandinista Government of Nicaragua), Fausto Bertinotti (Italian Rifondazione Comunista and member of the European Parliament), Bernard Cassen (France, founder of ATTAC), Captain Laksmi Sehgal (90 year old energetic woman and freedom fighter on the side of M. Gandhi), Walden Bello (from the Philippines, now serving at the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development in Geneva), Gustavo Coudas (economist from Brazil), Asma Jehaangir (impressive human rights activist from Pakistan), Trevor Ngwane (human rights activist from South Africa), Bonaventura Santos (professor of Sociology in Portugal), Juan Somavia (ILO Representative from Chile).

In addition to the conferences and round tables, about two hundred different seminars were presented each day with a seating capacity ranging from 50 to 1,000 people. SAPI was responsible for a total of ⁴17 events. There were also many interesting cultural activities offered throughout the day: More than 1,500 artists, poets, playwrights, writers and film directors took an active part. There were 150 street theatre plays and a film festival with 85 different titles about WSF themes. Then there were marches, demonstrations and interesting exhibitions. It was never easy to make a choice as to where to participate. Some of the round tables, where interaction was possible, were inspiring.

What mattered most, however, was **the encounter with people from around the world**. It is one thing to read about injustice, neo-liberalism, the negative impact of a neo-liberal globalisation on developing countries, or listening to conferences of eloquent people, but meeting those who suffer, who are the victims of an unjust world order, goes right to one's heart and brings about changes in one's attitude to the issues. In meeting the victims, conversion happens.

The issue of the Dalits and Adivasi (so-called 'Untouchable' and tribal people) was something we had heard about, now they are brothers and sisters that we have met, who suffer and need our solidarity and help. Large numbers are illiterate and their way of expression was through their dancing and their drums. Many left their villages for the first time and travelled for weeks, sometimes on foot, to arrive in Mumbai. To speak to Burmese refugees who escaped from prison, to listen to the suffering of Bhutanese who had lost family and friends killed by a cruel dictator, to listen to the stories of the many women who are denied basic human rights, to hear the desire of the people from Tibet to live in their country with their traditions and their own culture, to hear about the genocide of 20,000 Moslems as a consequence of Hindu fundamentalists, to learn of Gujarat where 2000 Muslims were killed, 1,150 wounded, 5,300 houses burned down and 100,000 Muslim refugees living mostly in ghettos (Gujarat was Gandhi's home state)... all this suffering has become a human face with a name and a **challenge which has to be shared with as many in CLC as possible**.

The fruits of the WSF?

Critical voices can be heard about the outcome of this huge event. Some want more action and concrete resolutions. This became clear as early as in the opening speech. Although all speakers share a similar critique of the global political and economic system, the approach as to how to work for change varies. The differences are best shown in the following two approaches: the approach taken by Chico Whitaker stresses the importance of the Forum as an open space where debates, analysis, common sharing of experiences and searching for alternatives is possible. According to him, our challenge today is how to educate civil society and create networks so that in the long run they will be able to have an impact on global economic policies. He warns of premature actions and resolutions that would not be carried through by the vast variety of social movements and NGOs. In such a case, the process and momentum of the WSF

⁴ **SAPI SEMINARS**1. Tribals and Indigenous People: Victims of Systemic Violence 2. Impact of Land Alienation on the Tribals and the Indigenous Peoples of Jharkhand 3. Non-Tribal Governance in the Land of Tribals: A Case of Injustice in Jharkhand 4. Onslaught on Democracy – Challenges for Nation Building 5. Impact of Globalisation on Asian Poor 6. Young, Socially active, politically powerless? **SAPI WORKSHOPS**1. Refugees in South Asia and Asia Pacific 2. Plantation workers in Sri Lanka and Housing Rights 3. Impact of Globalisation – Challenges for Gender Justice 4. Status of Women Education in India 5. Marketisation and Saffronisation of Education in India 6. Livelihood Struggles of the Marginalised in South Asia 7. Unorganised Sector Workers in Globalised World 8. Trade, Finance and Marginalisation of the Poor 9. Good Governance: The Role of the Civil Society.

would be endangered. The approach presented by Arundhati Roy, a dynamic and charismatic Indian writer, film-maker and human rights activist, was a strong plea for the Forum to act as a movement. She even had concrete suggestions: to publish a list worldwide with the names and addresses of the multinational corporations that will benefit from the reconstruction of Iraq and call for a global boycott against them.

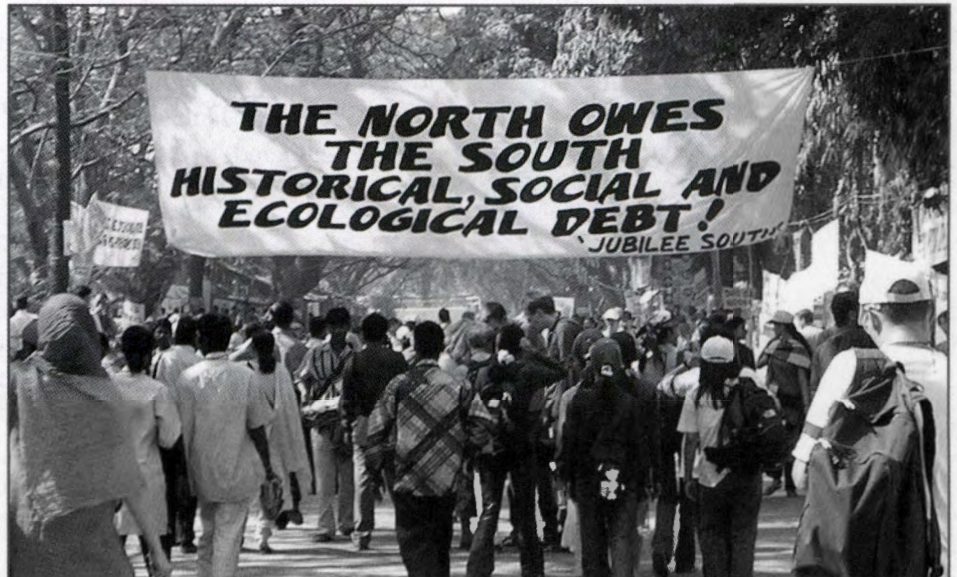
It is too early for a final judgement but some fruits of the WSF can already be seen:

- Within the Forum, social movements have started a global networking with the focus to influence the WTO (World Trade Organisations) to change the multinational trade agreements such as: ALCA, NAFTA, CAFTA, AFTA that have had such devastating influence in the developing countries.
- As well, some movements linked together, worked out, and signed a proposal on reforming the UN and have given it to Koffi Anan. The goal is the democratization of structures so that developing countries can participate in and influence decisions.
- The environmental organisations have joined forces to fight against the privatization of water and to actively defend the basic human right of free drinking water for all.
- All participants at the Forum approved of the plan to gather worldwide on the 20th of March of this year for a "Peace March" against war, the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and, as well, calling for the demolition of the wall in Israel.
- SAPI, the ad-hoc Indian Jesuit working group, has decided to become permanent. They will discuss further plans with representatives of all organisations at a four days meeting at the beginning of April.

We three, who had the privilege and grace of participating in this big event, will never forget what we experienced at the WSF but this is not

enough. As we were sent by the World ExCo on behalf of the world community, we feel committed to share our experiences with you and all in CLC.

Next year the 5th World Social Forum will be held once again in Porto Alegre, Brazil. In 2006, there is talk of having the WSF in Africa. Preparation should start soon. How best can we



One of many banners at WSF

involve WCLC? For this we would need ExCo's recommendation and help to bring this one step further.

We conclude with the words expressed at the CLC 13th world CLC General Assembly in the document, *Our Common Mission*, "Rooted in Christ and in his love for us, we want to make the option for the poor, not as an idea, but by making serious analysis and adopting a responsible and effective attitude towards poverty and its causes. We are called in our communal life to encourage one another to look at the world and to work in it from the perspective of the poor, and to grow in our capacity to meet them, to know where they are in our societies and which are the best forms to take part in their struggles. We are also called to examine our own lives from this perspective." ■

Roswitha Cooper CLC Italy/Germany
Gilles Michaud CLC Canada
Leah Michaud World ExCo

WORLD SOCIAL FORUM AND CLC INDIA

The World Social Forum 2004, a symbol of unity where people from all fields of life met was held at the NESCO ground in Goregaon, Mumbai from 16th to 21st January 2004. About 130,000 people gathered to say **"ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE"**.

We, the members of CLC India and World CLC were fortunate to be a part of this historic event. There were hundreds of workshops, seminars, panel discussions, testimonies etc. every single day. The issues spoken on were as varied as the gathering itself – rights of children, violence, trafficking, globalization, ecology, domination over women and many more. One most striking thing about this event was that this World Social Forum was a gathering of real people with real problems. And in this NESCO ground we, the CLC members faced the suffering Christ in many forms.

So, after the Forum, we the delegates that represented CLC India at the WSF 2004, recommend to our communities the following **"CLC Mission"**:

- 1 Going beyond the boundaries of the present Church groups to join hands with peoples of

all faith in building **basic human communities** in our dioceses.

- 2 Joining hands with "alternate" groups (N.G.O's) to promote alternative medicines, products etc.
- 3 Creating awareness among the marginalized groups of why they are poor through social analysis.
- 4 Giving information about our marginalized groups which need a backing to the World CLC NGO and getting information from World CLC NGO documentation centre to support the struggles of the marginalized.
- 5 Using **Ignatian Spirituality as a powerful tool for social change** (*Principal and Foundation*)
- 6 Joint the march or arrange a peaceful demonstration to protest against war on 20th March 2004 ■

Dilip Gomes (National vice-President)

Magdalene Gomes (Consultor)

CLC India



CLC India ExCo and WSF Delegates

SERVING THE WORD COMMUNITY: SERVING CLC AT THE UN

Since I've begun serving as one of CLC's representatives at the UN in New York, I've been asked many times how I came into that role. The short answer is that Dan Fitzpatrick, SJ, CLC's liaison at the UN in NY for many years, decided to give up that job. Most often the short answer suffices. Sometimes, though, people want to know just what CLC does as an NGO at the UN, and just what led me to respond to Father Dan's invitation. I admit that I had a very limited sense of what it meant to be an NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) representative at the time. I suspect that few people understand what NGO's at the UN are all about. For me, personally, serving as CLC's NGO representative provides an opportunity to combine the roles of student, educator and activist – all very important to me. For us as World Christian Life Community, being at the UN fits right into our charism; as an apostolic community we are called to engage the world community in our work for justice. It is work we undertake together and as a global community, our role as an NGO at the UN is one that we must develop together.

Why me? When I first heard Father Dan discuss the UN position, I had recently finished graduate school, so I had the time to give to CLC at the UN. After earning an M.A. in Systematic Theology, I contemplated going on for my Ph.D., but two things stopped me. Being a graduate student, even part-time, required lots of time and energy. My husband, Jack, and our four children had been very supportive, but we were all tired by the time I was finished, and I wanted some time to be available to them before committing to the work a Ph.D. would require. I also knew that I wanted to find a way to combine my academic interest in theology with a focus on social justice, and just how or where I could best do that was not clear at the time.

Theology and justice, faith and advocacy, go hand in hand in my mind, and educating others about issues related to justice is something I've always felt called to do. When my children were young, that meant bringing hunger issues and

environmental concerns into their classrooms, and incorporating service to others into school and parish programs. My two oldest children, now college students, became involved in other campaigns for justice, and they taught me about specific issues like unfair labor practices, and refugee and immigration policy. They taught me even more about political activism. My daughter, Emily, invited me to work on my first political campaign, and later joined me in making public statements against the US going to war in Iraq. Social justice, so integral to my faith, will have to factor into my doctoral studies, whenever that time comes.

In the meantime, I have been teaching in a lay ministry formation program for my archdiocese called Christian Foundations for Ministry. This is a course of study designed for candidates for the permanent diaconate and for other adults who seek a broader understanding of Catholic theology and a deepening of their own spirituality, as well as preparation for specific ministries within the Church. An emphasis on social justice runs through every segment of the program, so I am able to draw on my education in theology as well as my commitment to justice. Those students hear quite a bit about Ignatian spirituality and the gift that CLC has been in my life. Lately, I have also been bringing insights and information from the UN briefings for NGO's into my CFM classes, encouraging them to engage in the global pursuit of peace and justice.

At the UN, though, I am a student again. I have so much to learn about the workings of the UN and the possibilities for CLC as an NGO, not to mention the myriad issues that are brought to the attention of NGO's in the weekly briefings. Each week, representatives from a number of NGO's gather at the UN headquarters in NY to hear a presentation on a different topic of concern. In recent weeks, topics have ranged from advances



Sylvia Schmitt



José Lim and Patricia Mwangi, members of UN Working Group in NY

in rice production that might help alleviate world hunger, to the issue of child soldiers, to holding multinational corporations to higher standards on human rights, labor rights and environmental impact. Speakers usually include government representatives from an area of the globe affected by this issue, officials from the appropriate UN agency and individuals from organizations (NGO's) working to address this issue at the ground level. Following these briefings, NGO representatives (like me) can ask questions or dialogue on the problem presented and on appropriate responses from governments, NGO's and ordinary citizens (like you).

As one of CLC's NGO representatives, I am grateful to be working with other CLC members deeply committed to Ignatian spirituality and its call to work for justice. At the UN in New York there are several other CLC representatives who attend the weekly briefings and participate in the work of various committees that support the NGO community's work at the UN. As CLC representatives, we also meet periodically with a CLC/UN Working Group – a larger group comprised of men and women of different nationalities and backgrounds. Together we explore the CLC charism as it relates to our

presence at the UN and ways we can best work for the coming of the kingdom as an NGO at the UN. As a group, we also share the responsibility for communicating to CLC worldwide about important issues coming before the UN NGO community, and about specific actions CLC can take to support the work for justice that these organizations are engaged in around the world.

There is another UN Working Group focused on CLC's role at the UN in Geneva. It is our hope that CLC's presence at the UN, both in NY and in Geneva, along with our work at the grassroots level to address the needs of our human family, will raise the level of visibility of CLC around the world

Communication and collaboration between the UN Working Groups in NY and in Geneva is very important. Together we hope to utilize our CLC network not only to disseminate information from the UN out to CLC's worldwide, but also to allow the voices of CLC's around the world to be heard at the UN. Our communities in different countries are experiencing first-hand the issues brought to the UN, issues like hunger, access to clean water, and environmental degradation. As a worldwide community we support each other, not only in prayer and solidarity, but in a common effort to address the problems that plague our societies. As our general principles state, our commitment is to "bear witness to those human and Gospel values within the church and society which affect the dignity of the person, the welfare of the family and the integrity of creation" (GP 4). We are taking the first steps in what we hope is a truly global effort, as World Christian Life Community, joining our voices in the cry for justice for all of God's creation, and working together to advance the reign of God on earth. It is your voice, your concern, and your commitment to justice that I bring to the UN ■

Sylvia Picard Schmitt
CLC USA

I am Sister Winifred T. Schofield SCO born in the Republic of South Africa. I worked in Lesotho for many years in different fields when, one day, I was asked by my Congregation to take responsibility for CLC.

As CLC was a new organization, I had to learn about it. In 1970, I went to Manila, Philippines and to the Republic of South Africa. In 1973 a first group was started in our High School. From there the movement continued to other High and Secondary Schools and to the University level.

I worked as a coordinator until the year 2001

when I retired and left for Canada. I am now 83 years of age and living at the Mother House in Ottawa (the capital of Canada).

At the time I joined CLC, there were no easy means of travel and in order to see priests, women religious, teachers, University lecturers and students as well as other people, I often had to walk, go cycling or travel on horseback. Later I had a scooter and, finally, a van (picture) that was very very difficult to start.

Seeing people fully involved in CLC is very encouraging.



Sister Schofield and her van

GOOD-BYE FERNANDO!

For me, Father Fernando Salas, S.J. has been a model and an inspiration of what an Ecclesiastical Assistant should be for CLC: a man of deep faith in the Lord, living thoroughly his vocation as a Jesuit, sowing life and truth along his path, giving a generous and honest response to what the Lord requested especially in regard to the underprivileged.

Besides his total dedication and his enormous capacity for work, his service to the world CLC in Rome as Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant in these past years has meant that by means of countless (and exhausting) trips he has visited many local communities around the world, taken part in numerous meetings, and given sundry courses. All this was accompanied by frequent, open and pedagogic communications with his Jesuit companions of the provinces that he has visited. In other words, he has been a missionary at the service of the world community.

His deep vision of CLC, his capacity to listen and communicate and his availability have

A gift he gave to people in all parts of the world, together with his clarity of concepts and his experience of Ignatian Spirituality, has been the sound of his laughter and his good humor! (When they were small, my children who have a special affection for him referred to him as "the Jesuit who laughs").

This pairing of faith and humanity also allowed him to have a good relationship with his Jesuit companions and therefore he has been very valuable as world Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant.

As for me, as former president of the world CLC, my relationship with Fernando could be the paradigm of the relationship between the Society of Jesus and CLC: working side by side, carrying on a dialogue based on the knowledge and respect of our individual vocations, focused on mission and the search to serve as best as possible in the Church and in the world. If possible, these relationships have been enriched even more by the deep existing harmony between our until now Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant and our World Ecclesiastical Assistant (Fr. P.H. Kolvenbach S. J.) which resulted in frequent and fruitful contact.

We have been and are friends in the Lord, seeking the best together through CLC and trying to listen to His Voice, attempting to begin the journey of the Apostolic Body of the CLC for the mission.

CLC offers its heartfelt thanks to Fr. Fernando Salas for all his generous and valuable dedication. I thank him personally for his enriching and nourishing friendship, his support for and proximity to all the people of the ExCo, helping us and encouraging us to be faithful to the Lord's inspiration and to what CLC expected of us.

Good-bye, Fernando. We are united in prayer and in the mission,

José María Riera
Former President, World CLC



Fernando, Aurora and José María Riera

always been lived through his great humanity, his contagious happiness and his nearness: all the members of the previous ExCo have experienced this in moments of joy as well as in the most difficult or dark moments.

TO SERVE CHRIST

I offer this presentation to our Lord, who has guided me all along on my journey. Let me introduce myself to you, members of the world community:

I am Rita Ramy, of Lebanese nationality, a barrister by profession and member of CLC Lebanon. I live in Beirut, the capital of Lebanon together with my family, which consists of my parents and two single sisters, my third sister is married and mother of two boys: Charles and Christian, who are my happiness.

My relation to God began at a very early age. My school and my family presented Christ to me and initiated me into the service for others.

Indeed, through my father, a civil servant in the ministry of public health, I discovered suffering and illness. Through my mother, president of a branch of the Lebanese Red Cross, I tasted service. My school was directed by religious missionaries and there I became aware of the misery of various peoples in this world.

Without being entirely conscious of it, I chose my profession in order to be able to promote justice and truth. Looking back on my life today, I realise that nothing happened by coincidence, but that every incident, every circumstance fits into a way traced by God.

In 1985, my father was hospitalised due to cardiac infarction and this was the first drama of my life. I prayed for his recovery, I begged the Holy Virgin to help me, my father was saved and in gratitude, I promised Jesus to follow him. To follow him – yes, but where and how?? I had no answers but God, who had called me, knew how to take care of his sheep.

I decided to join a group of the Marian Congregation (still active in Lebanon) to pray the rosary with the women. It was the only way to pray that I knew. It was a first step towards my new "Way". Yet, soon, praying the rosary did not

fulfil me any more; I wanted a bit more in my relationship to God.

My parish asked me to teach Religious Education in lay schools. Initially a sister helped me. She also invited me to join a burgeoning group, whose members had started to talk together about the meaning of life in the midst of a Christian region divided and set ablaze by a raging civil war. This invitation changed my life. The Jesuit priest who accompanied the group introduced us to CLC. For two years we experimented and tried and thus CLC Lebanon was born.

Right from the start I realised very clearly that CLC was definitely the way God had chosen for me. CLC has shaped me, it has changed me and helped me grow in my faith. It has given a meaning and purpose to my every day life. The Spiritual Exercises have become the source of my life. Personal rereading at the end of the day has helped me to move towards a union of faith and life. The meetings of my group have helped me to discover my own personal mission. The Ignatian means proposed by CLC have allowed me to discover the love of Christ and incited me to build a personal relationship with Him. In a nutshell: CLC shapes me and makes me grow in my faith.

After the discovery of the life of Christ, I began to ask the Lord to send me.

My first mission took me to prisons to help the most marginalized of Lebanese society. Thus I was able to put my job as a barrister at the service of those prisoners who were abandoned by their families, by society and even by the Lebanese state. In the world of the prison, I saw the Palms before living the Cross.

After discernment with my personal spiritual guide, I left the prison after seven years of dedication to continue my service through social organisations.



Rita Ramy

My second mission was to serve CLC Lebanon as national co-ordinator for two consecutive mandates. During my mandates, CLC Lebanon was affiliated to the world community at the General Assembly in Itaici and the revised version of our statutes was accepted by the World Assembly.

I left my responsibility to become a member of

the Formation Commission and of the Commission for the admission of new members. I was also nominated as the person in charge of the admission of a group.

At the moment, my election to the world ExCo confirms what I have always felt in my prayers:

That *CLC is MY WAY to serve Christ*

World CLC ExCo at the Pontifical Council for the Laity



H. E. Mons. Stanislaw Rylko, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity received, on the 23rd of February in Rome, ExCo members during their annual meeting (21st to 28th).

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