



progressio

Publication of the World Christian Life Community



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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.

EDITORIAL

The present issue of *Progressio* fits within the experience of the fraternity lived in the course of this Ignatian jubilee year. Many activities were organized around the world to mark this jubilee. They reminded us of the reality and beauty of friendship in the Lord. The figures of St. Ignatius, Francis Xavier and blessed Pierre-Favre, while familiar to us, nonetheless haven't yet finished inspiring us in our experience as Ignatian laity. Why then don't we revisit once more our three friends in the Lord?

Why not listen to what the experiences of these three friends in the Lord tell us about our presence in the United Nations? The exercise starts with a simple question which Maggie Khudy asks us: what would Ignatius, Francis Xavier and Pierre Favre think of our mission at the United Nations?

The fraternity lived during the course of this jubilee year at times took the form of Ignatian meetings. The one in Lourdes was impressive for its size and for the diversity of the persons welcomed there. Almost at the same moment and conducted in the same spirit, another beautiful meeting took place for the members of the Ignatian family in Quebec and was another occasion to celebrate our friendship in

the Lord. Reading about these two events as they were reported to us, we easily recognize our spirit. He who calls us to follow him is the same everywhere and He gives us his life in different contexts.

The growing twinning between the communities of Switzerland and Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of Congo is a fraternal journey by which we can bring about a growth in our identity and in the way of being CLC. Among other things, this unity greatly enlarges the space of our tents, our local communities. At times we get into a rut and have difficulty changing.

Another fraternal encounter was that lived by the delegates at the CLC meeting in the regions of the Asian Pacific, held July 12 to 16 2006 in Manila. In a certain sense, it resembled the formation session on the promotion of governing in CLC held in Rome from November 25 to December 3, 2006, the same day on which the universal Church celebrated St. Francis Xavier.



Guy Maginzi

Guy Maginzi

WCLC Executive Secretary

Translated from French by: Theresa Cademartori



Ignatius of Loyola

Model for Lay Spirituality



Pat Carter

Pat Carter is a graphic designer, prayer companion and facilitator. She has held several positions in CLC at the local, regional and national level including President of CLC-USA. She is currently on the ExCo for the North American CLC Region. She has been apart of the Bridges Program (19th Annotation Retreat) for many years as prayer companion and is currently President of the Bridges Foundation Board. She is also on the Planning Committee for the 2008 Ignatian Spirituality Conference sponsored by the Missouri Province. She lives in St. Louis with her 21-year-old son, Josh, and their three dogs.

While Ignatius is most often thought of as the founder of the Jesuits, he spent a good part of his life as a lay person. It was as a lay person that he began developing the Spiritual Exercises and guiding others through them. During his recuperation in Loyola in 1522, the first pages of the Exercises were written and the bulk of the book was in place by 1524. He continued to refine his work until 1540, and the book was published in 1548. Ignatius was ordained in June of 1537 (although he didn't say his first Mass until Christmas of 1538) and took vows as a Jesuit along with others of the Company on April 22, 1541, the official beginning of the Jesuits.

Ignatius was a person of his time. He was born a year before Columbus arrived in the Americas in his attempt to prove that the world was round, not flat. In that same year, Muslims and Jews were expelled from Southern Spain after almost eight hundred years of Muslim rule. Spain conquered the Aztec Empire in Central America in 1521 and the Incan Empire in South America in 1533. In 1522 the first

ship, the only one of Ferdinand Magellan's expedition to survive, circumnavigates the globe under the command of a Basque captain, Juan Sebastián Elcano. The Protestant Reformation was taking hold in several countries in Northern Europe. In 1543 Copernicus published his theory that the Earth and other planets revolve around the Sun.

The Catholic Church itself was in crises. Its priests were often ignorant of the Gospels and Sacraments and some openly disregarded their vow of celibacy. One of Ignatius' own brothers

who was a priest lived with the mother of his three children. Another of his brothers who was married had a concubine who visited him regularly — another common practice of the time. The newly discovered facts that the earth was round and that it was not the center of the solar system challenged long-held theological beliefs and cosmic views. And in Spain, the Inquisition was in full swing.

Into this milieu, Ignatius was born: a Basque, a soldier, a person of a noble, but poor, family, a person of passion and loyalty, a romantic, a visionary and a mystic. He had the gift of tears, struggled with scruples and suffered from chronic illness. After his conversion the same passion that he had for romancing and fine clothes and being a great soldier was focused on Jesus and God's Kingdom. He fell in love with God and had a special devotion to the Trinity and Eucharist. His personality was not changed, but his whole being was so focused on doing great things for God.

So what can we, as lay people, learn from Ignatius? In my own reflection on Ignatius' life, several themes seemed to appear.

The Great Work

In 1522, Ignatius had a mystical experience along the Cardoner River outside of Manresa that was foundational to his spirituality and the development of the Exercises. He had a sense of being immersed in God. "He was given a deep sense of how all creatures emanate from God and, in Christ, return to God; how Jesus Christ completes human nature in taking our flesh; and how Christ is present in the Sacrament. He grasped that God's plan is really a project that each person on earth contributes to, and how what God hopes for us rises in our consciousness and, by God's grace, free enactment."¹ As he gazed at

¹ Tetlow Joseph A., S.J.; Ignatius Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, Cross-road, 1992, p. 22.

the river, Ignatius received the insight that a person can't step into the same river twice; that God's plan is continually unfolding and that all of creation, past, present, and future are one. And we are co-creators in this plan.

As other mystics before him and since his time had done, Ignatius experienced that sense of oneness, not of just the human race with each other, not even of all of creation as it now exists, but of all things from the beginning of time and into the future. In God they are all one. He knew what today's scientists are confirming: everything is relational. God's creative activity is present in all things.

This co-creative work (I use 'work' in this context to mean any activity, not just our jobs) is sacred. If all is an expression of the divine, then there is no longer a separation of the secular and sacred. It means all of our works — raising our families, earning a living, involvement in civic activities, participating in 'church' ministries, taking vacations, attending classes — are a participation in the Great Work. We are one of the drops in the mighty river that has its own part to play in the unfolding of God's desire for the world.

This sense of being part of the Great Work is especially evident in the bookends of the Exercises, the Principal and Foundation and the Contemplatio. In the former, he introduces us to the idea of being a uniquely gifted part of creation and in the latter he leads us through an exercise in both reviewing the experience of the Exercises that is now being completed as well as helping us transition to understanding how we are called to labor as God labors, to love as God loves. In [237], Ignatius says, "Just as I see the sun in its rays and the fountain in its waters, so God pours forth a sharing in divine life in all the gifts showered upon me."²

But even in the First Week, we are called to consider how the sin of one person pollutes the world and how even as sinful as we are, creation still sustains us. The sun still shines on us, the rain rains on us, and we are nourished by

the produce of the earth as well as relationships. (Spiritual Exercises [60]). Creation is the visible sign of God's loving activity.

So each person, religious, ordained or lay, has his/her role to play in this great work, their personal vocation. And what makes an individual's vocation holy is that it is an authentic response to God's desire for him/her. A personal vocation lived within the context of the lay vocation is as holy as vocations to ordained ministry or religious life.

Focused Passion — Helping Souls

A deep desire that arose in Ignatius from his spiritual experiences was to help souls. His primary method for doing this was spiritual



conversations with individual and small groups about the spiritual life: about virtues and vices, the Eucharist and one of his favorite topics, the Holy Trinity. The fact that Ignatius, a layman who had no theological training, dared to have these conversations and develop the Spiritual Exercises was a courageous activity during the Spanish Inquisition. He was often accused of being one of a group of heretics known as the *alumbrados* who practiced a mysticism that ignored dogmatic

² Fleming, David L, S.J.; Draw Me into Your Friendship: The Spiritual Exercises - A Literal Translation and a Contemporary Reading, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996, p. 181.

accuracy and theological precision. Ignatius was called before the Inquisition several times, but no errors were ever found in his teachings or in the Spiritual Exercises.

Helping souls became a passionate desire in him, one that was a central point in many of his discernments.

In 1527 Ignatius and some of his companions were brought before the Inquisition and imprisoned in Salamanca and questioned about his teachings and the Spiritual Exercises. After twenty-two days of imprisonment they received the judgment that no error could be found in their life or teaching, but they were told the one thing they could not do was to define things as

either venial or mortal sins until they had taken four years of further studies. Even though Ignatius knew this restriction was groundless, he agreed to refrain from teaching while in the inquisitors' jurisdiction. He took his dilemma to prayer and found that this impediment to his

work of helping souls was too great. This solidified for him a direction that he had been pondering — he would go to Paris to further his studies and, more importantly, be able to also freely continue his work of helping souls.

While in Paris, Ignatius had to deal with the realities that lay people have to face: how to balance study, his work of helping souls, and finding sufficient funds to support these activities. He was often distracted from his studies by his passion to help souls. He finally discerned that in order to serve souls, he needed an education, in part to distinguish himself from the *alumbrados*.

It was also in Paris that Ignatius shared a room with Francis Xavier and Peter Favre, the first of the companions. Gradually others joined

their company and Ignatius led them through the Exercises. As they continued to study and work together, the Spirit was leading them to a deeper commitment to each other. In 1534 they adopted a common way of life taking vows of poverty, chastity and to go to Jerusalem. But this common way of life was not an end in itself. It was a means of more effectively helping souls. When the journey to Jerusalem became impossible, they placed themselves at the disposal of the pope for mission assuming that he would have the best knowledge of where the greatest need would be. This same desire led to the ordination of those not already ordained (Ignatius being one of them) in 1537 and eventually in 1541 to commit themselves to each other within the context of a religious order, although a different type of order than those of the time. Its members would be active in the world, working with people — helping souls.

So Ignatius' passion became focused — one might even call it a personal vocation — that of helping souls. Even though the expression of this passion took many different forms during his life, it was the touchstone of his decision-making: what would be the best way to help souls.

Each of us has a personal vocation. Herbert Alphonso, S.J., in his book, *Discovering your Personal Vocation: The Search for Meaning through the Spiritual Exercises*, states that the election of the Exercises is actually discovering your personal vocation and that it should then become the material for the examen. The examen then becomes, not a tool for examining our sins, but a tool of discernment. If in our examen the question becomes, "How fully have I lived out my personal vocation in this day's events?", then we become more attuned to how we are disposing ourselves to live out our unique spark of the Divine

Reverential Love in Community

Our personal vocations are not lived out in a vacuum. We are but a drop in the river of ongoing creation. The expressions of our personal vocations are shaped by the contexts of our lives: the point in history we are in, the country, religious tradition, ethnic origin,

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families of origin, gender, the events of our lives, food we eat, the care we take of our bodies and more. We are relational beings in relationship not only with other people but with the universe. On an organic level our bodies are in a constant exchange with air, water, nutrients — receiving and releasing. The same is true on psychological, emotional and spiritual levels. We are constantly exchanging energy, feelings, perceptions, ideas with the universe. Since we can't interact with all the universe at once, we are nurtured and formed in community — initially our family, but expanding in ever-widening circles. As we mature, we choose communities that resonate with us, where our personal vocations can be nurtured and expressed. We are both shaped by and shape the communities of which we are a part. Sometimes that is a joyful process, other times painful. In a healthy community there is a diversity of people and thought. And as much as we may try to reverence the expression of the divine in the others, we often fall short — both in our judgment of the other and the authentic expression of our own divine spark.

Those of us in CLC have felt called to express our personal vocation within this community. Many of us are also members of the Roman Catholic Community.

Ignatius' own experience within this community was a complex one. His spiritual conversations, public catechizing, and frequent reception of the Eucharist resulted in no fewer than eight legal processes being directed at him by church authorities between 1526 and 1538. In his role as General of the Society, Ignatius worked directly with various popes over issues related to the Jesuits both profitable and conflictual. "He did not hesitate to pray ceaselessly, convince politically powerful friends to intervene on his behalf, create a paper trail or visit the pope personally — Ignatius did whatever it took to hold off or reverse a papal decision he felt was wrong."³

In the Spiritual Exercises [352-370], Ignatius gives us what is commonly referred to as "Rules

for Thinking with the Church". While there is some discussion about whether this section was really considered a part of the Exercises by Ignatius since it was added much later, or that perhaps it was meant primarily for those involved in the public ministry of the Church, there are points that can be useful in a lay person's approach to the Church. Both Fleming and Dyckman, Garvin and Liebert give contemporary interpretations of these points that reflect four hundred fifty years of experience in the church (you can't step into the same river twice) and the ecclesiology of Vatican II.

The title, "Rules for Thinking with the Church", is a mistranslation of Ignatius' title for this section of the Exercises. The word that has been translated as "Rules" is better translated as "Guidelines". This is consistent with the other uses of the same word in the



Exercises. Also the word "Sentido" which has been translated as "Thinking" is a form of the verb *sentir* which Ignatius uses consistently throughout the Exercises to communicate not an intellectual activity but a felt-knowledge, a knowing with the heart, an affective activity. Within this context, these Guidelines then, become more of a way of living in a Church that is both divine and human with both affection and critical loyalty. "In the midst of the confusion and turmoil of the sixteenth-century church of his day, he knew the difficulty of maintaining a mature balance, a clearheaded judgment, and a loving reverence

³ Dyckman, Katherine, S.N.J.M.; Garvin, Mary, S.N.J.M.; Liebert, Elizabeth, S.N.J.M.; *The Spiritual Exercises Reclaimed: Uncovering Liberating Possibilities for Women*, Paulist Press, 2001, p. 315.

for both tradition and change. The guidelines which he proposed were meant to be internalized by the retreatant, just as the guidelines with regard to eating or the guidelines for the discernment of spirits.”⁴

Ignatius’ experience with the hierarchical Church led him to a deep appreciation for the fact that it is an incarnated authority structure, and that we need to deal with the reality of this concrete manifestation of power and authority. “Ignatius’s Church is always relational, and the relationships are human as well as divine.”⁵

Ignatius felt that the ironic and satirical writings of people such as Erasmus undermined the morale of the Church, the Community. So his Tenth Guideline [362] echoes [22] by advising the retreatant to be more inclined to praise than to blame and to deal

privately with those able to address the problem in the Community. In today’s world, this inclination to praise rather than blame and always assume the person is operating out of sincere motives, is sorely needed. It seems that not only in the Church, but in all of society, we are quick to find fault and blame. We hardly take the time to really listen to what a person is saying before we are already preparing rebuttals. We seem to have forgotten that we are all part of the Great Work, that all persons are an expression of God’s loving presence — even those whose opinions are totally different than ours. They are still expressing some truth. And we need to look for the truth and build together on that foundation rather than focus on differences and tear each other apart.

With this understanding of the Guidelines, the often quoted “*black appearing white*” statement in the Thirteenth Guideline [365] takes on a different interpretation. As would

have been understood in his time, Ignatius was simply reiterating the fact that there are some mysteries of the Church that go beyond human understanding, such as the presence of Christ’s Body and Blood in the Eucharist. It is not a call for blind obedience.

Within the Church Community there are also different functions. The function of the institutional aspect of the Church is to carry the tradition and provide a structure, like a skeleton, that supports the rest of the body. It is more rooted in the past. There is another

aspect of the Church Community which is also very necessary, the prophetic. This aspect is visionary. It reads the signs of the times and adapts the expression of the values and traditions to the contemporary life. It moves the Church forward into the future. Ideally there is a healthy

balance and respect between these two aspects, a creative tension. When either one dominates or disregards the contribution of the other, the community suffers.

The laity, and CLC in particular, I believe, belong more to the prophetic expression of the Church. We are the ones who are more in touch with the signs of the times. We are more aware of the paradigm shifts that take place. We can adapt more quickly to changes. But this also necessitates for us an on-going discernment in our communities, within the context of the Church, as to how the Spirit is calling us to an authentic but new expression of our faith. CLC’s praxis of discern — send — support — evaluate is our way of doing this. We are the ones called to create the new wineskins to hold the new wine.

This is what Ignatius did. And Jesus before him.

⁴ Fleming, p. 281.

⁵ Dyckman, et al; p. 315

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Questions for Discussion

1. *Have you ever tried to explain a Cardoner experience/an immersion in God to another person?*
2. *How has the strength of the Contemplatio helped you " ...to labor as God labors, to love as God loves" even under trying circumstances?*
3. *What is needed within your own CLC to help each of its members become more of a "prophetic expression of the Church"?*

Other Resources Besides Those Cited:

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Pat Carter

CLC-USA



Peter Faber Forgotten First Father

This article is part of a presentation on Ignatius, Xavier and Faber given at the NY Archdiocesan Center for Spirituality, Spring 2006.



Daniel J. Fitzpatrick, S.J.

Fr. Dan Fitzpatrick, S.J. has been a guide for CLC since 1964. Since 1983 he has been the EA for the NY Region. Fr. Dan attended the 2nd World Assembly in 1959 at Seton hall University, South Orange, NJ and the 13th World Assembly in 1998 in Itaici, Brazil. For 18 years Fr. Dan was the main representative of World CLC at UN headquarters in NY. Fr. Dan has held administrative positions in the NY Province of the Society of Jesus and has taught at Regis and Xavier High Schools in NYC. He holds a doctorate in Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. He is a Mets fan!

It all began in a college dorm room. Ignatius Loyola had been studying at the University of Paris for a year and a half when he moved into a new set of rooms at the College Ste. Barbe. The year was 1529. Ignatius was thirty-eight years old. It was almost by accident that Ignatius found himself lodging with two other students who were fifteen years his juniors. Their names, of course, were Peter Faber and Francis Xavier.

From our formation in CLC most of us know a lot about the life of Ignatius. Francis Xavier is one of the most renowned and venerated saints of the Catholic Church. The third member of those three schoolmates from Paris is a lot less known. It is on Faber, then, that this article will concentrate

Peter Faber was a Frenchman, a Savoyard who had spent a good deal of his youth tending his family's sheep in the foothills of the Alps. He was blond and good looking, simple and direct but quite shy. Before he had even met Ignatius, Faber had made a vow of chastity and was preparing for the priesthood.

Peter was a very good student, especially capable in Latin and Greek. Almost immediately he became Ignatius' tutor. During their study sessions together they both began to reveal to one another the secret workings of their minds and hearts. At the time when Faber first met Ignatius, his soul was in turmoil. In coming to Paris from the self-contained life of Savoy, Peter had to make some huge psychological adjustments. Paris was noisy, turbulent and free-thinking with a population of 300,000. Faber was filled with scruples, temptations and continual vacillation about what he was to do with his life. It was Ignatius who was able to help

Faber navigate through these ups and downs of his mind and heart. For Ignatius himself had learned about these temptations the hard way through his own experience.

During their study sessions together, Ignatius likewise began to reveal to Faber his vision of going to the Holy Land and putting himself in service to Our Lord and thus working for the Kingdom of God. After several years of these conversations, Peter Faber was the first to be guided by Ignatius in the Spiritual Exercises.

It was Faber's great joy to find other students at Paris who shared his lofty ideals and his desire to serve God generously. On the Feast of the Assumption in 1534, as the only priest among them, Faber said Mass for his friends in the Lord and all of them took private vows of celibacy, to travel to Jerusalem and on their return to place themselves at the service of the Roman Pontiff. Except for Ignatius, they never got to the Holy Land.

Even though he had a brief stay in the Holy Land, the Holy Land for Ignatius eventually turned out to be Rome. The Holy Land for Xavier became the Far East. For Faber the Holy Land turned out to be the continent of Europe. After finishing their studies the new companions went first to Venice, Italy, in the hope of finding a ship sailing for the Near East. When no ship materialized because of Turkish activity in the Mediterranean, Ignatius sent Faber and Diego Laynez to Rome to ask for the Pope's blessing. Their mission was successful and it was in Venice in 1537 that Ignatius was ordained a priest. At the end of Autumn Ignatius, Faber and Laynez again set out for Rome. Faber and Laynez were both appointed to teach theology at the Sapiientia University and to preach in the churches of Rome. It was in Rome that Faber first came into conflict with Lutheran doctrine and ran afoul of some very powerful people. This is the story of the Augustinian Friar, Agostino Mainardi.

In listening to Mainardi's preaching both Faber and Laynez detected the doctrines of Luther. They went quietly to the friar to try and show him what they meant. Mainardi rejected their suggestions so the two of them began to preach publicly against Mainardi's position. Mainardi had powerful allies in Rome and Ignatius and his companions came in for a campaign of slander against them. The storm came upon them furiously. Ignatius knew that not only was their reputation at stake but also that any hope of a future apostolate would be crushed. Ignatius went into action. He made visits to various powerful men of both civil and ecclesiastical rank. He sought and finally obtained an audience with the Pope in which he told the Pope his own story and that of his companions in minute detail. He left out nothing and included the details of every time he had been previously brought before a church court and had been vindicated. He demanded that the Pope set up an ecclesiastical trial that finally ended in vindication for the small band of companions. But, even against the advice of his allies and friends, Ignatius would not let the matter rest. He insisted that the whole process be written up and that the exoneration of any wrong teaching be published. Ignatius himself sent several copies of the document to various prelates and civil authorities. Four years later, in 1541, Mainardi publicly apostasized and became a Lutheran. End of story!

In the spring of 1539 the companions, now eleven in number, decided not only to stay together as a group but also to form a new religious order with vows not only of chastity but also of poverty and obedience. Soon after this decision the Pope sent Faber and Laynez to Parma. Faber was not to return to Rome until 1546. It was then that he saw Ignatius for the last time and died two weeks after arriving back in the Eternal City. He was forty years old.

Over those seven years Faber travelled thousands of miles going back and forth across Western Europe. It was during this time that Faber wrote what is called the *Memoriale*, a

journal of spiritual reflections and graces in prayer that Peter received during this time. These reflections cover the period of 1542 - 43 and 1545-46. At various times he was in Italy, Germany, Belgium and Holland, Spain and Portugal. He preached, guided people in the Spiritual Exercises, heard innumerable confessions and fostered the growth of the newly formed Society of Jesus. It was a life of constant travel, incessant work and earnest charity. It was also a time of deep prayer and great spiritual growth. In the *Memoriale* he writes that it is his desire "to be with Jesus in order to serve." Peter sought how to find God not only in deep prayer but also in his work and surroundings. God was there in the whole of human life even down to the food we eat and the earth we walk on. Faber kept asking

**In the Memoriale he
writes that it is his
desire "to be with Jesus
in order to serve."**

the Holy Spirit to inflame his heart to self-giving and generosity. In his writing he speaks about an immediate knowledge of God, that he is drawn into his inner self and that at

certain times he felt the grace of God lifting him to the countenance of God. We hear language that borders on the edge of mystical prayer. It may be that he was already there.

Faber's work and reputation in Europe was attested by many. One such testimony was that of Gerard Kalckbrenner, Prior of the Carthusian Charterhouse in Cologne in a letter to the prior of Trier:

He (Faber) guides men of good will, who place themselves in his hands, through certain amazing exercises by means of which, within a few days, they attain to a true knowledge of themselves and their sins, the grace of tears, a courageous and real turning from creatures to God, progress in virtue, intimate familiarity with, love of and friendship with God. Would that the occasion would arise for my making a journey to Mainz! A man might very well go as far as the Indies in search of such a treasure. I hope that before I die God will grant me the blessing of seeing this man, his divine Majesty's wonderful friend, so that I

might receive his direction for my interior renovation and life of union with God.¹

It was Kalckbrenner who sent Peter Canisius to Faber. This is what Canisius wrote to a friend after making the Spiritual Exercises under Faber's direction:



Peter Faber

Never have I seen or heard a more learned and more profound theologian or a man of such striking and remarkable holiness. His paramount desire is to labour with Christ for the salvation of souls. Every word of his, be it in private conversation or in friendly greeting, or even while at table, is filled with God, and he never becomes wearisome or irksome to his listeners, so

eloquent is he. The respect that he enjoys is so great that many religious, bishops and doctors have placed themselves in his hands for guidance in their spiritual lives. In that number is Cochlaeus, who affirms that he shall never be capable of making a return for the direction he has received.²

Since it was in Germany that Luther had first called for reform in the Church, it was in Germany that Faber faced his greatest challenges. His travels brought him in contact with the Protestant Reformers. The Pope sent Faber to both the Diets of Worms and Regensburg, where fruitless dialogues took place between the Church and the Reformers. It was times like these that brought discouragement to Peter. Nevertheless, he

never gave up the hope that the Christian Church would once again be one. In this hope rather than confront the reformers head on in debate, Peter felt that the first priority was personal reform not polemics. When asked by Laynez how to deal with the separated brethren, Faber wrote this very modern and ecumenical advice to him:

If we would help the heretics of this age, we must be careful to regard them with love, to love them in deed and in truth, and to banish from our own souls any thought that might lessen our love and esteem for them. It is necessary to win their good will so that they will love us and readily confide in us. This can be done by speaking familiarly with them on subjects about which we agree and by avoiding points of discussion that may give rise to argument; for argument usually ends in one side lording it over the other. We must first seek to establish concord by dwelling on what unites us, rather than on matters which give rise to conflicting opinions.³

Faber's trips to Spain also bore amazing results. When he visited the court of Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, Faber so impressed the two priests who were the court chaplains that they later became novices in the new Society of Jesus. Also in Spain it was with Peter Faber that the Duke of Gandia, Francis Borgia, first came in contact with the Society of Jesus. While in Spain Faber founded two new Jesuit communities, one at Valladolid, the other at Alcala.

We find in Faber a combination of many spiritual and natural gifts. He was a man devoted to the Holy Spirit on whom he relied to guide him in discerning how God was leading him in his life and ministry. His often repeated prayer was: "*Father, in Jesus' name give me your Spirit.*" He had so completely absorbed the depth of the Spiritual Exercises which Ignatius had guided him through that it

¹ Quoted in Brian O'Leary, SJ., "The Discernment of Spirits in the *Memoriale* of Blessed Peter Favre", *The Way: Supplement* no. 35, 1979, p.19.

² O'Leary, p. 18.

³ O'Leary, p. 21.

was not surprising that Ignatius singled him out as the one who best was able to guide others through these same Exercises.

His holiness was complemented by a shy but winning personality. He seems to have been one of those people who everyone likes. He possessed a charm that was unselfconscious and natural; he was simple in the good sense of the word; and he was sensitive. Although neither a scholar nor an academic, he possessed a quick mind that was both deep and searching. Another of the early companions, Simon Rodriquez, a somewhat touchy and cantankerous person himself, wrote this about Peter Faber:

There was an especially rare and delightful sweetness and charm in his relations with other men which I must confess to this very day I have not discovered in any other. In some way or other, he so won the friendship of other men and gradually stole into their souls, that by his whole manner, and the gentleness of his words, he irresistibly drew them to a love of God.⁴

Father O'Leary remarks that this was, as it were, Faber's plan of campaign in the apostolate: friendship leading to conversion.

His kindness and care for others was especially shown in the way Faber approached hearing confessions. He wrote a small pamphlet in which he explains how he thinks a good confessor should receive a penitent:

Above all one must seek the unction of the Holy Spirit, which will easily be given to him who seeks diligently. When hearing confessions be mild and gentle. Never permit yourself to speak sharply or show repugnance, no matter how uncouth the penitent. Let us take care not to become bored with this sublime and sacred task, for we represent Christ taking away the sins of the world. Let us take care that no

sinner who comes to confession, that source of so much good, who kneels before us to be examined, exhorted and judged, faces an ordeal when he approaches us, the vicars of the gentle Christ. Let us beware of acting the haughty, disdainful pharisee, or the angry, impatient judge. In fine, let us do our utmost to ensure that every penitent leaving the confessional will gladly return there.⁵

Compassion was one of the most characteristic ways in which Faber's interest in people expressed itself. This was strengthened by his acute awareness of evil in the world (spiritual, moral, physical) and of the overall misery of the human condition. He writes in the *Memoriale* of "feelings of sympathy given me by God towards the whole world", and of his desire to remember and pray for the Pope, the Emperor, the King of England, Luther, the Turk, Bucer, and Philip Melancthon: not reflecting on their defects, but having "a holy compassion, coming with a good spirit",⁶ because they were being harshly judged by many. Faber was always looking for the goodness in people on which God could build because God is a God of mercy. So he was able to include in his prayers even those who were the sources of turmoil for the church of his day.

As part of his prayer Faber had a deep devotion to the angels. The spirit world was

very real for people in the sixteenth century. There were good spirits and bad spirits. Faber's understanding of the angels was quite traditional. The angels form the court of God where they worship the Almighty; they are

He had so completely absorbed the depth of the Spiritual Exercises which Ignatius had guided him through that it was not surprising that Ignatius singled him out as the one who best was able to guide others through these same Exercises

⁴ O'Leary, p. 20

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ O'Leary, p. 22

ambassadors of God and collaborators of divine Providence. Angels transmit God's orders and communicate his lights and graces to humans and sometimes execute his judgment. The angels were seen by Ignatius and his companions as perfect examples of what they were trying to be: contemplatives in action. The apostles and the angels were held as models of the Jesuit life of prayer and action.

Faber's devotion to the angels had both of these elements. In his prayer he called upon the angels not only for himself but also for those with whom he was working. He records how he discovered many new ways of praying on his journeys, "such as on approaching... a particular locality (or town), to ask God that the archangel guardians of that region and the angel guardians of the inhabitants be propitious to us."⁷ In this way he joined his

prayer to his work and begged that God would bless the people he was going to encounter.

From all of the above we see that Faber's inner life was complex and inward looking. Unlike Xavier whose spirit always seems to be looking outward, Faber's inner life seems more tortuous and filled with questions on how he could fulfill his great desires to be in union with God. Peter's openness to the Spirit was extraordinary. He was always looking to see where God was leading him in his life and work. Discernment was just part of who he was. For him discernment was both an art to help him and others find God. It was so much a part of him that we can say that discernment became his way of life. He was a great disciple of his father in God, Ignatius. He was a man who truly lived by seeking and finding God in all things.

Questions for Discussion

1. Recall how CLC has helped you to incorporate Peter Faber's desire "... to be with Jesus in order to serve."
2. An "...acute awareness of evil in the world (spiritual, moral, physical) and of the overall misery of the human condition" strengthened Faber's compassion. Can we say the same of ourselves?
3. "Faber kept asking the Holy Spirit to inflame his heart to self-giving and generosity. " Would others be able to see this quality in us?

P. Dan Fitzpatrick S.J.



⁷ O'Leary, p. 73

Francis Xavier

My Brother

The pious imagery and the sermons of St. Francis Xavier have perhaps given us a picture in our imaginations of an intrepid missionary leaving for the conquest of the Asian coasts at the head of a caravel of Portuguese colonizers, crucifix in hands and eyes fixed on heaven. Add to this the apostolic methods that would make the pastoral agents of today tremble because they are set in 16th century belief that baptism was the only door to salvation, and we no longer have a clear picture of what resonance this man's message could have. Yet, beyond this outdated theology, his correspondence introduces us to one passionately in love with Christ, a man of great humility, free and open to all humanity. He frequented the poorest pearl fishermen as well as the Portuguese or Japanese elite whom he attempted to awaken to their responsibilities. Father Kolvenbach writes: *"What strikes us the most in this evangelization accomplished by Francis is the urgency of announcing the good news which haunted him, and which instead leaves us too comfortable."* For me, it is also the importance of seeing how the Ignatian spirituality can fashion someone over the years.

An ambitious man in love with life.

Francis Xavier is completely different from Pierre Favre. However, this does not stop them from being great friends. They were both born in April 1506, six days apart. Thus, both were 22 years old when they received their diplomas from what was then the great European University: the Sorbonne of Paris. Born at the chateau of Javier in Navarre, Francis was a young, ambitious nobleman, a champion in high jumping as well as a brilliant master in arts. All he sought in Paris were the diplomas which would permit him to *"make a career"* in the ecclesiastical world, the only way for the youngest child (and he was) at that time to obtain titles and revenue. He led an undisciplined life frequenting bars

and amusing himself but with prudence because he was afraid to catch some illness. He was interested in all experiences and new ideas notably those which were diffused throughout Europe by the pioneers of the Reform.

When he saw Inigo (Ignatius) arrive in the room in the Latin district which he shared with Pierre Favre, he was attentive and on guard and did not trust this late arrival, who was a little too devoted for his taste and had no proper stance because he limped. Inigo had been wounded at the siege of Pamplona while, in the enemy camp, the two older brothers of Francis attacked the city under the banner of Navarre. Perhaps Francis held in his heart a quiet resentment for this man whose side had dismantled his mother's chateau. In any case, he resisted his *"spiritual conversations"*. Later, Ignatius will say of Francis that he had never met any clay that was so hard to mold. He perceived, however, the profound desire of this brilliant roommate and he had great consideration for the high expectations of his ambition. Is there a more glorious enterprise than to distinguish oneself in the service of our Creator and Lord? *"What does it serve a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul?"* It was this phrase from the Gospel which ended up by overcoming the resistance of Francis. At least that's what tradition tells us. In any case, he ended up by accepting the propositions of Ignatius and he risked letting himself be guided by Ignatius in the Spiritual Exercises.

A Fool for God

Seized by the call of Christ the Lord in the meditation of the Kingdom, he will not cease following Him right up to his Passion. Thus, he was ready to accept all in the measure in which his "Creator and Savior" could be made better known and loved. With his six first



Thérèse de Villette
Xavière and CLC Guide

companions, he consecrated his life in the little chapel of the Martyrs at Montmartre (Paris), August 15, 1534.

With Pierre Favre, he belonged to the team which marched for 50 days from Paris to Venice through a country at war, traversing the Alps. Arriving in Italy, awaiting Ignatius who had gone to rest in his own country, he went about taking care of the poor and exercising humility. Learning that the king of Portugal was seeking companions for the evangelization of the colonies in India, a strange dream both troubled and excited Francis at the same time. He saw himself in a far-off country carrying a heavy man on his shoulders. He questioned him-self and spoke

When the solitude weighed on him the most and discouragement attempted to deflate his dynamism, Francis would take a piece of crumpled paper out of his pocket. On this paper he had written about the friendship that bound him to his companions

to Ignatius about it but the latter wanted to test this beautiful spiritual impulse. The profile of the post would fit Francis well but Ignatius wanted to keep him in Rome at his side as secretary of the little Society. Ignatius decided to send another companion.

Faced with such a decision, we can guess at the interior spiritual struggle of Francis to become "indifferent".

Suddenly this companion became ill and the boat was to leave the next day. Ignatius immediately nominated Francis who, in 24 hours, had to turn around and offer himself for this adventure. "I am your man." I believe that this "yes" of obedience was the launching pad and the reference for his whole future mission. Thus, in 1541, with both joy and sorrow, he left Ignatius and his first companions whom he will never see again. He went towards India, leaving his voting ballot for the election of the one who would direct this "little Society". His only compass would be seeking the will of God without much affective support because

communications were very slow and subject to the caprices of the ships which carried his mail. When the solitude weighed on him the most and discouragement attempted to deflate his dynamism, Francis would take a piece of crumpled paper out of his pocket. On this paper he had written about the friendship that bound him to his companions.

On May 15, 1546 he wrote to them: "*In order to never forget you, in order to keep a remembrance that is continual and special for my great consolation, know my beloved brothers that from the letters you sent to me I cut out your name written in your own hand and I put them all on the vows of my profession. For the consolation that I feel, I carry all of you with me...*"

In his correspondence of 137 letters, this man of fire constantly submitted his mission to prayer and the solid friendship of his companions and lay collaborators. He confided to them the marvels that the Lord did in him and by him, the intuitions that he had on such and such a situation, as well as his fears and his incredible trials.

"How peaceful to live by dying each day", he writes on September 20, 1542 to Ignatius, "because one goes against his own will not seeking things for oneself but for Jesus Christ."

In the first months of his trip going around the coast of Africa, the patience of this man of fire was put to a hard test by an interminable wait caused by the winds: the ship was blocked in the Gulf of Guinea, stagnating on a sea of oil for weeks and weeks in loathsome conditions of navigation.

L. Mendigal writes: *Instead of spending time in grandiose dreams and being drunk with mistaken enthusiasm, this descendent of a noble Spanish family, this professor of the Sorbonne whose youthful passion still cheered just yesterday, becomes a sailor to have the right to speak to his brother sailors once he has conquered their hearts. Here he was living their hard life, climbing the ladders, scraping his hands on the rough riggings, eating at the common bowl, manning the capstan like an*

experienced sailor, and during the calm moments playing cards. Thus, between two games or two gusts of wind, he could speak of Christ to these men whose confidence and esteem he had gained and who did not know — or had forgotten — that God loved them to the point of dying for them. (Dialogue, no. 62, p. 16)

He finally arrived at Goa, a Portuguese settlement on the coast of India. He preached tirelessly defending the Indians exploited by the Portuguese colonizers and brought to birth a Christian community. Then, learning that at Malacca (Moluccas Islands) people couldn't become Christian because no one had ever spoken to them of Jesus Christ, he accepted this call and spent a month discerning whether he should leave his first Christians. He received a light. *"God wanted to remember me by lavishing upon me an interior consolation so that I would feel and recognize that it was his will that I go to Malacca."* (20 September 1542)

Available to the surprises of the Spirit and open to the realistic means needed to put his inspirations into action, Francis departed towards the unknown. He went forward in this way until he reached Japan before he was able to risk going to China. Finally, he died on December 3, 1552 on the island of Sancian in front of the impregnable continent, while waiting, suffering hunger and fever, and deceived by a captain who took his money and then refused to risk the pirates who prowled around the coasts.

The poor who hoped.

Itinerant for the mission, Francis was persuaded that he was but an instrument in the hands of God. As J.M. Carrière, S.J. wrote: *"For Francis Xavier the grace seemed to be to see himself as nothing other than one by whom God could do something that he didn't understand and that went beyond him."* The key of his hope was humility. The obstacles were unimportant; the barrier of languages for a man who was avid to speak of Jesus Christ, the physical and spiritual austerities, the solitude from which he often suffered, the persecutions... he trusted the strength of He

who was leading him. Dispossessed of himself, he existed only in Christ who became more and more his companion *"ready to shoulder his burden"*: as the exercises call us to desire. He even rejoiced to be with Him in persecution.

Like St. Paul, Francis Xavier was inhabited by the passion for unity: *"assemble all the universe under one roof: Christ."* states J.M. Carrière S.J. in the website *Amis dans le Seigneur 2005*. At the same time, he constantly came up against the diversity of cultures, human conditions, languages. He sought to adapt himself to each country where he wanted to make Christ known. He was not afraid to build new Christian communities wherever he went, leaving to others the responsibility for developing what he had sowed and supporting them by letters of instructions both apostolic and logistic. A pastor attentive to context and the smallest calls for help, he kept watch over deviations and was not afraid to make decisions which he imposed - at times by exclusion - when his collaborators were not reliable and risked harming the young communities. He remained free in the midst of the numerous traps his enemies laid out for him. He denounced the hypocrisy of the Brahmins of

Dekkan and detected the subtle manipulations of the Japanese intellectuals. He knew how to make use of his relationships with the high authorities of the colonizers as well as to draw near to the misery of the persecuted Christians of the southern Coast who fled to the rocks in the midst of the sea and died of hunger there. To help them, he wanted to go to sea in the midst of a storm in fragile boats loaded with food. He was happy to discover the spiritual finesse of the Japanese but at the same times he sensed the Bonzes' resistance to his projects.



Ignatius sending Francis Xavier

"What we claim to do in these regions is to attract the people to the knowledge of their Creator, Redeemer and Savior Jesus Christ our Lord. We live in great trust and we hope in him sure that he will give us the strength, the grace, the assistance and the favor of pursuing this and forging ahead. It seems to me that the people here (Japan) do not contradict us or persecute us by their own desires, but rather because of the intervention of the Bonzes. We do not seek to oppose them but it is not because of fear of them that we will stop speaking of the glory of God and the salvation of souls. They will not be able to do more harm to us than God allows."

Francis Xavier considered this evil as a grace and was ready to go forward to the limits, even to death if necessary. *"We have the intention of explaining and manifesting the truth, no matter how many the contradictions which oppose us because God obliges us to*

love the salvation of our neighbor as much as our own bodily life... since he gives us sufficient strength to manifest it in the milieu of all these idolatries here in Japan."

Burning with the passion of Christ for the world, Francis draws near to everyone, rich and poor, and his humble way of acting speaks more strongly of the Gospel than the blunders of those who grope at the meeting of cultures which they barely understand. Centered on others, and moving realistically towards his true objective, he recognizes that apostolic intelligence is necessary but reduced to nothingness if it is not supported by an authentic humility. Like all missionaries today, faced with cultural discordance while dreaming of seeing everyone caught up in the joy of the Gospel, he seeks to understand where the breath of the Spirit comes from and how the Word can be made flesh there where he is sent. Certain that *"nothing is impossible to God"*, he dares hope.

*Thérèse de Villette
Xavière*

Translated from French by Theresa Cademartori



Ignatius, Francis Xavier and Faber at the UN

What would Ignatius, Francis Xavier and Faber think of the CLC's mission at the United Nations? Would they agree to take it on? If they did, how would they go about being effective, working as a small organization, and one of so many? How would they be able to convey the CLC charism through the UN?

CLC General Principle No. 8 states that *the field of the CLC mission has no limits: it extends both to the Church and the world... It includes bringing the good news to the poor, proclaiming liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, setting the downtrodden free... It also urges us to proclaim the Word of God and to work for the reform of structures in society, participating in efforts to liberate the victims from all sorts of discrimination and especially to abolish differences between rich and poor.*

This principle presents a very concrete and Ignatian call to mission. It's based on the promotion of justice with a preferential option for the poor; it's not theory but an undertaking to be experienced by all CLC members as part of our daily lives. It's an invitation to fulfill our apostolic vocations; we are being called by Christ, we are being called by the Church, we are being called by World CLC. And we are being called beyond our personal boundaries, beyond our comfort zones, to wherever and whenever there is a need for personal or structural conversion.

In 1975 the United Nations approved World CLC's request to contribute to the UN as a non-governmental organization (NGO). From then on, World CLC gave all CLC communities the very special charge to participate at the UN, a charge that has evolved to the creation of two working groups respectively based in Geneva and in New York.

What would Ignatius, Xavier and Faber think of the CLC's mission at the UN?

Ignatius would approve of the discernment process that has led to our current CLC UN participation. CLC General Assemblies have consistently reflected on and discerned a world mission. Examples are Rome (1979), *One World Community at the service of one world*; Providence (1982), *One World Community on a mission to bring about justice*; Guadalajara (1990), *an international community "at the service of the kingdom to go out and bear fruit"*; Itaici (1998), *deepen our identity as an apostolic body and to discern a Common Mission*; and Nairobi, (2003), *Sent by Christ, Members of One Body*, with a special mention of support for the UN NGO in the field of *advocacy for social responsibility as effective means to promote social justice and to contribute to the public visibility of CLC.*

Francis Xavier traveled to many countries to proclaim the Word and learned difficult languages like Japanese in order to preach and convert. He would be amazed and delighted by the CLC presence at the UN. Here we find representatives from all over the world without having to go very far and even have the benefit of simultaneous translations to better understand and make ourselves understood. As CLC at the UN we are missionaries like Xavier, delivering Christ's message of love and service to many. With this message we fulfill our apostolic duty as Church and as CLC, and in the ecumenical spirit, reach out in dialogue and collaborate with other Christians and non-Christians.

Faber would be looking to the UN as a great opportunity for CLC formation. He would be considering formation in terms of advocacy, but he would start at the beginning, from us as



Maggie Khuly

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individuals and the need to reform our own lives through the Exercises and other types of prayer. He would see the UN as a formation opportunity that goes beyond those directly involved in the UN mission; this formation would extend to all CLCs and its members worldwide, especially to young CLCers, and would deal with subjects that concern us all in our daily lives as well as in the political spheres, themes such as peace, freedom of religious belief, the eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights.

Would Ignatius, Xavier and Faber agree to take on the CLC mission at the UN?

The three would be eager to take on the challenge of UN participation as one of working toward and promoting the preferential option for the poor. This challenge is framed by the Exercises and based on the poor Jesus of the Gospels, a Jesus who not only brings the news of the Kingdom to the poor but who promises this Kingdom to them. Ignatius, Xavier and Faber would emphasize the context of this option: finding God in all things and in particular in our sisters and brothers the poor, in solidarity with them.

Ignatius would view our CLC work at the UN as a commitment to social justice, part of our responsibility to act as voices for the poor and to try and reform the social structures

that prevent them from living the Kingdom of God here, in this life. Xavier would see the UN as fertile grounds for missionary work, with an understanding and compassion for the poor that would probably include the experience of poverty itself. Faber would focus on the difficulties presented by our own experience of poverty or lack thereof, and how best to obviate these difficulties. This is especially daunting for most of us, and for countries like ours with strong economies, in which most of its citizens lack a general and personal knowledge of poverty and its miseries.

How would Ignatius, Xavier and Faber go about being effective, working as a small organization and one of so many? How would they be able to convey the CLC charism through the UN?

The CLC's UN Working Groups (CLC NGO WG) in Geneva and New York currently form the basic structure that develops NGO (non-governmental organization) work at the UN. Both are made up of lay CLC members, and they serve as connection between the UN and World CLC. These groups support our CLC representatives at the UN, they offer CLC formation that aims at the integration of faith and justice according to GP 4 and GP 8 and the Exercises, and they work together with other NGOs, especially with Catholic ones such as the Jesuit Refugee Service, on the promotion of justice. Currently the main focuses for the groups are racism for the Geneva WG and water for the NY WG. CLC national contacts, one per country, form a world network that transmits information of local or national interest to the CLC NGO WG, and from the

WG back to national and local communities. These national contacts also initiate and/or support concrete actions, such as prayer requests, write-in campaigns, etc.

The CLC mission at the UN is very similar to the work of Ignatius, Xavier and Faber. It's similar in the

preferential option for the poor as a commitment with following Christ (SE [104], [116]). The first Jesuits were missionaries, internally (local charities, social work) and externally (travel to other lands to spread the Word). We at the UN are missionaries also, even though our mission takes on a different dimension through a world organization. Ignatius and his followers worked within the Church structure; the CLC NGO works inside the UN and in close collaboration with other Church organizations like the ICO (International Catholic Organization Center)

Ignatius, Xavier and Faber would emphasize the context of this option: finding God in all things and in particular in our sisters and brothers the poor, in solidarity with them.

and the Global Partnership for Justice. It is in this collaboration that we find our strength.

CLC is a particular vocation within the Church. Our CLC character is an expression of the Ignatian charism as a lay vocation with a commitment to a discerned mission in the context of our daily lives, dedicated to a love and service that goes beyond the temporal until it becomes a part of us. The CLC NGO WG members now working at the UN are lay people; they have accepted the call to a common mission with a preferential option for the poor. They are being sent by the Church, by World CLC, by their national CLCs and by their individual communities, following rigorous discernment. At the UN they are collaborating with many other groups, Catholic and non-Catholic, Christian and non-Christian, in *bonds of unity to the National and World CLC and to the Church communities... to the whole Church and to all people of good will* (GP 7).

CLC as NGO at the UN is, and functions, as a manifestation of CLC charism. Ignatius, Xavier and Faber would work in a similar fashion; they would consider the United Nations an organism that focuses on the preferential option for the poor, even if it does this in a limited and imperfect way and usually without any purity of intention. But our spirituality also asks us to be realists and to *read the signs of the times*.

Ignatius would encourage working with the system, the UN in this case, to promote structural reform from the inside. This would provide an avenue for social change, a way of keeping what works and of trying to eliminate or change what doesn't. Xavier would see it as an opportunity for friendship in Christ, especially because at the UN we are so often reaching out to non-Christians, an imperative in today's world. Faber would see the UN as an opportunity for CLC members to work with the poor and for the poor within the UN CLC framework of *multi-cultural respect, advocacy and dialogue*.

Ignatius, Xavier and Faber would remind us to always keep God's presence at the center of

UN work. If we lose sight of this we would end up with a humanism that doesn't transcend human and secular values and falls very short of our CLC mission. We need to concentrate on the three areas of mission as discerned during the General Assembly at Itaici: to bring the freeing power of Christ to our social reality, to find Christ in our varied cultures and to let His grace transform what needs to be changed.

CLC is committed to its mission at the United Nations at the World CLC and Working Group levels. This mission is a discerned expression of CLC charism, a manifestation of the preferential option for the poor that extends to the whole world. It reflects our commitment to the *magis*, following Christ's example of generosity and developing our God-given graces according to God's will. It's now up to us CLC members, within our regions and individual communities, to discern the nature of our own commitment and responses to the call to mission at the United Nations.

AMDG

Note:

Today's CLC presence at the UN is made possible first, by God's grace, and second, by the past commitment of many individuals and communities in CLC. These include delegations from various national CLCs designated by WCLC to represent it at meetings and conferences; Thomas Monahan, our first official representative; Betty Leone, who foresaw and worked towards a permanent UN CLC presence in New York; Father Daniel Fitzpatrick, SJ, who from 1985 through 2002 was the UN CLC representative in New York, Father Henry Volken, SJ, who served from 1991 to 2000 as the UN CLC representative in Geneva and many others. Please read Progressio Supplement # 60, *An International Presence: CLC at the UN* for a more complete list and for comprehensive information on CLC as NGO at the UN.

Maggie Alejandre Khuly
CLC USA

Freedom starts with Courage

On the road to twinning Congo Lubumbashi and Switzerland



Anke Jucker

It all started with a letter from CLC Congo in Lumumbashi. At the time of the World Assembly in Nairobi in the summer of 2003, this community had the courage to ask for help from better off communities to finance a school project. Christopher Albrecht SJ, Anni Rickenbacher and I took the opportunity to talk face to face with those who had sent the letter.

As residents of the "rich and stable" country of Switzerland we were struck by the commitment of the Congolese community in a country buffeted by war and chaos. The letter made the journey back with us to Switzerland

Switzerland enabling us to open to the world community and the needs of other countries: a gift of greater freedom!

Discerning and commissioning

Should we embark on a twinning with the Congo? Called and encouraged by the decisions taken in Nairobi to be more conscious of being a community on mission, we embarked for the first time on a process of discernment as a community. The idea of development aid itself also originated from the African assembly: we followed the discernment stages presented by the community in Kenya. The outcome of this process was that the twinning with Congo became a reality in the spring of 2005. It is with gratitude that we discovered a new dimension to our community: more readiness to engage in social issues and more interest in socio-political questions. And it was with joy that we received the answer from CLC Congo who was also involved in a discerning process. Like the Congo we commissioned a co-ordinating twinning team in the autumn of 2005.

Supporting each other in the mission

We had arrived at the critical point of the process. To discern and to commission: it is like travelling towards an unknown mountain peak with a vision in mind. Having come down from the mountain, it was a matter of living the "joys and difficulties of the plains".

So that the twinning of the communities could also be the experience of the individual members of the communities, we launched an appeal to our members to introduce themselves through letters. After all, it was in the shape of a letter that the whole process



CLC Switzerland sending its ExCo

and was with us during the meeting of the national team. We had the courage to respond by providing help for the project with a single donation. Some of us felt the desire, based on our shared spirituality, to "go beyond" and embark on a real exchange with this community faced by a completely different socio-political challenge to our own. In this way, the fire of Nairobi had arrived in

had started! For the New Year, we sent the first letters by courier to Jean Paul Biruru of the Congolese Twinning team and the first responses arrived for Easter 2006.

During our national meetings, we were able to welcome Fr Godez Bambi Kilunga SJ, Guy Maginzi's family as well as Josephine Mulumba. They gave us information on their country, answered our questions and presented a tangible image of the Congo. Currently, we are reading the newspaper articles about the Congo with "new eyes". We have become more aware of the political context, and we are worried about the forthcoming elections in the Congo. We

follow the commitment and work of our "friends in the Lord" in our prayers. The seed is starting to burst through and needs nourishment to grow. There are different things we can do, material things, such as finding practical solutions to be able to contact each other through computers. But above all spiritual things: remaining attentive to each other and supporting each other in the discerned mission and in the faith so that God can continue to accompany and help us on our journey.

*Anke Jucker
CLC Switzerland*

Translated from French by David Formosa



Anke and Jean-Paul Biruru

The Asia-Pacific Assembly



Fr. Gregory Hyde SJ

This past July, from the 12th-16th, delegates from the various CLC nationals of the Asia-Pacific region gathered together at the Angels' Hills Retreat and Formation Center in Tagaytay City, The Philippines, to share with one another the realities of their own national communities, to reflect on the various dimensions of our CLC Identity, and to develop a

suitable structure for the Asia-Pacific Region to help facilitate the development and deepening of our shared way of life as members of the CLC world body living together in Asia.

Members of the Philippine CLC served as the host team, providing logistical support and their hallmark hospitality, both of which made the meeting such a success and such a



Participants of the EAs Meeting

pleasure for all who attended. Teams from Australia, The Philippines, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and Indonesia were present, as well as representatives from India and the emerging community in New Zealand. The Assembly was also happy to welcome Sandra Chan, Leah Michaud, and Alberto Brito, S.J. of the World ExCo. They not only helped plan the gathering in

consultation with members of the various national CLCs, but offered keynote presentations on the CLC way of life, and guided the group through the five days of our meetings.

The first day was set aside for the EAs of the participating Asia-Pacific Communities to share their experiences and discuss the role of the Ecclesiastical Assistant. It was a welcome opportunity to reflect on the ways in which the role has evolved within the different contexts of Asia, and within the specific history of each national community. Recognizing all those factors that contribute to the necessarily individual character of the EA's role, it was nevertheless agreed that an EA should be a pastor, friend, and spiritual companion to the national CLC, as well as provide the "*lovely critical voice*", in the words of Fr. Brito, that is so necessary to challenge and encourage a community to live out the CLC charism. At the end of the meeting, a draft of a document was circulated by Fr. Brito outlining the role of the EA in relationship to the National ExCo and the CLC, in relationship to the Local Church and other Christian groups, and finally in relationship to the Society of Jesus and the Jesuit Provincial.

On the following day, the Assembly officially began with a warm welcome by the hosting Filipino community, after which a member of each national team gave a short presentation on the situation in their own communities and the progress that has been made in deepening their CLC identity since the Nairobi World Assembly. The overall impression was that the Christian Life Community in Asia is alive and well and becoming more confident in its identity and mission, in spite of the variety of challenges which groups face in their respective countries. Following an introduction to the purpose of the meeting, we heard three presentations offered by Leah, Lanny Nañagas of The Philippines, and Fr. Alberto on the three pillars of CLC-Spiritual

Exercises, Community, and Mission, which set the tone and agenda of the Assembly for the rest of the gathering. Each presentation emphasized the interrelationship among the three components and challenged the national communities to commit themselves to living out more faithfully the three constitutive dimensions of the CLC way of life.

Saturday was devoted to a discussion of the Asia-Pacific region as a whole and to deciding upon a suitable structure to help the region advance and grow into a real community of communities. Jody Sim of the Philippine Community was elected as the new Coordinator of the Asia-Pacific Region and will work together with representatives of each national community to forge a closer relationship among the members of the region by sharing information, resources, and experience in the areas of Ignatian spirituality, Community, and Mission.

Sunday was a day to wrap things up and draw some fruit from the previous days of meetings. There was a general sense that our gathering represented an important step forward for the region, drawing us into closer relationship with one another and opening our eyes to the possibilities of a deeper cooperation among the various national communities. Participants left the Assembly with a deeper appreciation for the values and way of life that bind the members of the Asia-Pacific region together, and a deeper commitment to work together to promote them.

Reflection on the Gathering

As we reflect upon our world today, it is no longer possible to ignore the reality of globalization. This phenomenon is the force driving developments in every region of our world today, particularly where economics and politics are involved, but perhaps more immediately felt in the cultural domain. The phenomenon confronts us with many challenges, even dangers, but as we have grown more familiar with this reality, we have recognized the opportunities that globalization presents us as well. Globalization has

implications for all of us, including the Christian Life Community, and requires our response. The meeting of Christian Life Community of the Asia-Pacific region is significant in that regard, but at the same time should be seen as an extension of what has been happening in CLC elsewhere in the world. In Ignatian terms, we have seen the possibility of achieving "*the greater good*" by joining ourselves together into regional groups and looking for ways we might cooperate with one another across national boundaries to share the graces and gifts we



Sending Jody Sim

have been given, and also to support one another as we are able. Such an approach is very much expressive of our identity as a world body and consistent with the value we place upon community. The meeting of the Asia-Pacific Assembly was thus both timely and an expression of Christian Life Community's own global identity.

Nevertheless, regional cooperation is by no means a simple matter—particularly here in Asia, divided as it is by cultural, linguistic, and historical barriers. While the term Asia would seem to suggest some kind of unity, a closer inspection of the realities of the region puts the term itself in question. Asia is made up of many distinct cultures that until relatively recently have not felt themselves in any real sense a region, except perhaps by accident of geography. Times are changing, however, and Asian countries are beginning to appreciate the importance of expanding regional cooperation and integration as it grows in importance, both economically and

politically, as Asia becomes a major player on the world stage.

The Church has also recognized the importance of regional cooperation, and for many years now has drawn together Church leaders from around Asia for discussions on those issues which have significance for them all. Apart from in The Philippines, Christians represent a very small minority in various countries of Asia. The need for mutual support is evident, especially in light of the discrimination and persecution which Christian populations sometimes face in certain countries. Regional Church publications have kept Asian Catholics informed on events in neighboring countries that affect the Church, but also have served to forge what could be called an emerging "Asian Church."



Participants of the Asia-Pacific Assembly

The recent meeting in Tagaytay, then, represents a natural development for the Christian Life Community within the global, regional, and ecclesial realities of today. It was recognized that the time has come for the individual national communities to begin moving outward to forge closer links with the surrounding national CLCs, both for the good

of the region, but also to strengthen the national communities. The problems and challenges that are faced in one country are very often the same as those faced by communities in other countries of the region. Clearly it makes good sense to take an inventory of the region's resources to see whether it might not be advantageous to share programs, materials, resource people, and experience. An example of this would be in the promotion of the Spiritual Exercises and Ignatian Spirituality. In a region where economic migration is common, are there not ways the various CLC nationals could work together more effectively to serve the needs of migrants? In a region where many countries do not yet know of the Christian Life Community, could not more be done together to help promote our way of life in countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, East Timor, and Myanmar?

There are already many close relationships among CLC members of various national groups, and so a personal basis for cooperation already exists. Still, it will take time and some hard work to begin developing the structures which were set in place this past meeting. Local concerns will, of course, dominate our attention and may distract us from the task of weaving closer ties with surrounding communities, but a beginning has been made—a regional newsletter is promised for the Fall, a website is being developed for the region, teams have begun working on gathering materials to share with other communities concerning the topics of spirituality, community, and mission, and there is greater awareness now than before of one another. With the help of the Spirit, we are hopeful that from the seeds planted this past July we will one day be able to enjoy a rich harvest of blessings, both for the Christian Life Community of the Asia-Pacific, as well as the people of the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.

*Gregory J. Hyde, S.J.
CLC Hong Kong*

The story of a pilgrimage

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We were about 265 people who participated, in whole or in part in the Ignatian pilgrimage 2006, from 18-20 August in Quebec. This pilgrimage invited us to walk in the footsteps of the first three companions: Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier and Peter Favre, whose anniversaries we are celebrating during this jubilee year. Our aim was "to gather all the different movements of the Ignatian family and their friends, young and mature, in order to live the experience of a pilgrimage to Quebec..."

Friends and Pilgrims, let us walk in the footsteps of the first companions, was our slogan to launch the invitation to the pilgrimage. It all began with the dream of a few members of the Christian Life Community (CVX) formation committee. We wanted to organise a special activity for the Ignatian anniversaries: an Ignatian retreat?... a hiking-retreat?... why not: an Ignatian pilgrimage! Little by little, the dreamers succeeded in persuading others to form an organising committee....and gradually the dream became reality. What began as a vague idea, born of a deep communal desire to celebrate the life of the first three companions, became a team plan, a collaboration among several Ignatian families (CVX, Xavier Sisters, Jesuits, and the Eucharistic Youth Movement, EYM), and ended in a partnership with the Quebec Diocese.

Preparation under the guidance of the Spirit

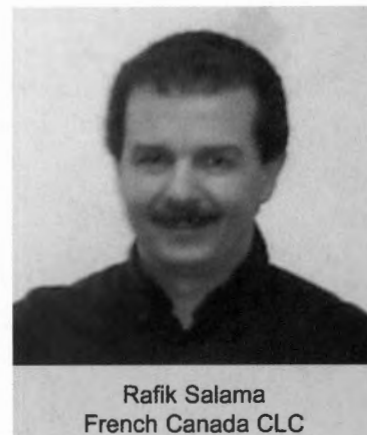
The organising committee met for several months to pray, reflect, share and discern together what God was inviting us to experience in this plan. During this time of gestation, like a foetus that grows gently in the womb of its mother, the plan for the pilgrimage developed, grew, and its details became clearer.

With the many graces we were receiving, we felt confirmed in our decisions and moved to go further! Faced with the challenges which came up, we achieved to our limits; with our doubts and uncertainties, we found only one answer: put out into the deep and trust!

Thanks to this journey, we experienced intense moments together which increased our friendship and our communion with Christ who walked with us.

Our preparatory work had allowed us to go thoroughly into the friendship of the three companions and discover the riches in their lives that could nourish our own today. We worked on three levels, allowing all the participants to be nourished spiritually, whether they did one day or the three days. We proposed different itineraries, with time for walking, for prayer, for contemplation, and for sharing, adapted to the different ages and physical capacity for walking, which allowed the greatest number to find their own strengths, to open up to others and to set off again with new energy and fresh hope.

This venture would not have been possible without the dedication of everyone, particularly the members of the organising committee: Monique Larochelle (CVX), Lucille Madore (CVX-Manresa Centre), Thérèse de Villette (Xavier-CVX), Wim Dombret SJ (Jesuits), and Rafik Salama (CVX), their helpers: Anne Laure Gomas (Xavier-CVX), Josée Therien (EYM), Jean-Bernard Rousseau (Quebec Diocese), and the logistics team: Pierre Bélanger SJ, Marc Rizzo SJ, and Roch Lapalme SJ. Without forgetting the many artists, technicians, suppliers of equipment, caterers, those in charge of transport and accommodation, etc. Support from the Jesuit community was the catalyst for the success of the pilgrimage. I stress here our gratitude for the invaluable support and friendship of the Provincial,



Rafik Salama
French Canada CLC

Daniel LeBlond SJ. In addition, we must thank the numerous communities and organisations which have supported our plan morally and financially. Finally, the partnership and collaboration with the Diocese of Quebec, facilitated by the support of Father Jean Tailleur, and the coordination by Jean-Bernard Rousseau with the Pastoral Youth team of the Diocese, have made this pilgrimage a powerful experience in our story as part of the Church of Quebec.

A return to the source

It was not by chance that we decided to organise the pilgrimage to Quebec. If this town is seen as the cradle of the Catholic Church in New France, it is partly thanks to the first Jesuit adventurers who dared to leave their country, sacrificing their comfort and security to evangelise the North American continent. The Jesuit house at Sillery remains a living witness of the time when the Church was founded here.



The arrival

The heritage value of the house at Sillery lies as much in its historical and archeological status as in the fact that it is the birthplace of the first Christian community for the original inhabitants of North America. As a member of the CVX, this symbol is particularly moving. So this is where the decision was made to begin the pilgrimage on the Friday in the little garden behind the house at Sillery.

So, there we were together to rediscover its history and our own, the history of the Church of today. There were about 150 of us, of all ages,

origins, cultures, and we represented about forty movements and communities from Montreal and Quebec. Some friends, passing through Quebec, came from France and Egypt, others came especially from Toronto and the United States!

Thanks to our performers, Suzy Tremblay and Christian Grondin, we were immersed in the story of the St Joseph mission at Sillery. A moving story, starring two individuals: Anya, a young American Indian, lively and energetic, Paul Lejeune, Jesuit missionary and director of the mission at Sillery more than 350 years ago! An encounter between two cultures which mutually challenge and enrich each other, thanks to the openness and exchanges. The dramatic presentation was heightened with songs and dances by the talented Suzy Tremblay.

The film *'AMDG: one world is not enough'*, presented by the co-producer, Pierre Bélanger SJ, took us back to the origins of the Society of Jesus with the meeting of the three friends: Ignatius, Peter and Francis Xavier. The Society of Jesus was born from their friendship, and its charism shaped and continues to shape a great part of society and the Church throughout the world, to some extent.

The evening was enhanced by the singing of the young people from the Eucharistic Youth Movement (EYM), who were accompanied by a group of Congolese performers under the direction of Louis Martin Lanthier, the EYM facilitator and performer. Faced with the enthusiasm of the young people, who sang and danced with joyfulness, the audience could not stay unmoved. In a very short time, the crowd were singing, dancing, praying with them. Barriers of age and culture quickly fell away. We will be affected for a long time by the energy these young people passed on to us, witnessing to their commitment to an Ignatian movement, present and active in the Church of Quebec.

The evening finished with the Examen led by the Provincial of the French Canadian Jesuits, Daniel Leblond SJ, and Thérèse de Villette, a Xavier Sister, responsible for formation in the CVX. This Ignatian prayer allows us to look back on our day in three parts: from You to me *'thanks'*, from me to You *'pardon'*, and together *'tomorrow'*.

[This triple invocation was used as the theme for the French CVX pilgrimage to Lourdes at the same time]

A day of walking with the first companions

The day of walking on the Saturday began with meeting together at the church of St Michel at Sillery, under a blue sky, beside the magnificent St Lawrence river and the statues of the Canadian Martyrs, shining under a dazzling sun. In the church, we had the pleasure of welcoming Cardinal Marc Ouellet, who came to join us and send us on our way. After a few words of welcome, we set off in 24 groups. Each group was composed of members of different movements and communities from Quebec, Montreal and elsewhere, people of all ages, origins and cultures.

We walked along the paths of Cape Charlevoix or Cape Tourmente, surrounded by the marvels of nature and captivating scenery, in the company of the three friends: Ignatius, Francis and Peter. Each one of them offered us a particular facet of the charism that underpinned their friendship, a friendship embedded in the Spiritual Exercises. While Ignatius invited us to find God in all things and be looked at and loved by God, Peter invited us to find the Friend who befriends us and makes us aware of the way we regard others; and, finally, Francis asks us: how does our love in Christ help us to participate in building a world of love, truth, justice and peace?

The booklet for the walk offered pointers for reflection with biblical texts and questions. The walk itself was punctuated by pauses, by moments of silence, contemplation, sharing and prayer. Gradually, our hearts opened and we began to weave bonds of friendship. A helping hand, sharing our bread, our moments of fatigue, expressing our joy and feelings of companionship, gave this long day a flavour and colour that marked each one of us.

The celebratory evening held in the marquee erected in the garden of the College of Jesus and Mary was a lovely way to end the day! After our

long walk, the barbecue was a real treat appreciated by everyone! Cardinal Ouellet's speech and a brief sharing led by Marc Rizetto SJ, gave us the opportunity to go back over the fruits of the day. The sharing was profound and diverse. Everyone emphasised their appreciation of the experience of stimulation, openness to others and friendship in Christ.

The evening continued in an atmosphere of a family festival, thanks to the family Dion/Roberge, and their musician friends, who had us dancing and singing in joyful rhythm. This family of parents and four daughters, all musicians, impressed us not only with their outstanding talent, but also moved us deeply with their lively and energetic witness to the love of Christ passed on from one generation to the next in joy and harmony.



The walk

To end the evening, Marc Rizetto SJ, led us in a recollection of our day while watching a slide show of photos of the walk, projected on the ceiling of the marquee. The size and sharpness of the images and the beauty of the music accompanying them transported us back to the happenings of the day. We were thus enabled to give thanks for them during the time of silence and prayer, led by the Dion/Roberge family.

Celebration of the Ignatian family and sending on mission

On the Sunday morning, we met again in the marquee in the garden of the College of Jesus and Mary for the Ignatian fair. It was an

opportunity to find out about the different faces of the great Ignatian family present in Quebec today. After presentations by different movements, charitable groups and communities, we made the rounds of the stalls set up around the walls of the tent. It was a learning experience full of new discoveries. Each movement and community had set up panels, posters, magazines and leaflets to show its activities. We discovered the abundant richness which these movements contribute to the building up of society and the Church today.



Eucharistic celebration

The morning concluded with the Eucharistic celebration, presided over by the Provincial, Daniel Leblond SJ, and concelebrated by Monsignor Pierre-André Fournier, Auxiliary Bishop of Quebec, and several other priests and Jesuits. Almost 200 people, including invited guests, visitors as well as the pilgrims joined in the celebration of joy and thanksgiving. The celebration began with a procession of delegates from the different Ignatian movements and communities carrying their own symbols. During Mass, representatives of the different walking groups brought up their offerings from the fruits of their journey, in the form of objects, words or songs. These witnesses were of great diversity and originality, reflecting the authenticity of each one's experience. The contribution of the young people especially moved us. Daniel Leblond's sermon, the depth of the prayer and recollection, the beauty of the singing by the Epiphany Vocal Ensemble of Montreal, all contributed to make this celebration extraordinarily rich and profound.

After the Mass, we continued in this atmosphere of joy and friendship with a picnic

lunch and a mini concert by the Epiphany Vocal Ensemble. Our pilgrimage finished with a guided tour of the Jesuit House at Sillery and the Dauphine House, two places marking the Jesuit presence in Quebec. The House at Sillery marked the beginning of the Jesuit mission, Dauphine is the witness to the continuation of the mission in our society now. In fact, Michel Boisvert SJ, with a team of others, in 1992 launched the reassignment of the historic Dauphine building as a centre for street kids. It was a courageous project, which did not fail to incite controversy, some opposed to the idea of making this place, right in the heart of the historic and touristic town, a centre for reforming young delinquents, whom they would rather get rid of.

When we visited the Dauphine house we were impressed by the fantastic work done at the centre. We were welcomed by the young people into a 'punk'

style basement, then were shown the services provided by social workers, nurses, doctors and lawyers, and finally the street school with classes well organised to help the young dropouts get their school diplomas.

Michel Boisvert SJ left us some time before the pilgrimage. We had hoped that he would be there to show us the centre, but in spite of his death, the work he began continues to rescue dozens of young people by giving them a new chance to succeed in life.

We ended our pilgrimage with a new impetus, a desire by each one of us to continue on our own mission with a stronger awareness of not being alone on our journey: we are part of a great family in the Church of today, a family where it is good to live, but above all a family which opens us to the world, inviting us to walk together as true friends in the Lord.

*Rafik Salama
Organising committee*

Translated from French by Patricia Kane

An experience of friends in the Lord at Lourdes

Having been lucky enough to participate in the Congress of CVX France, from 27th July to the 2nd August 2006, I would like to describe this encounter by a sort of 'news flash':

- ♦ A setting with an unusual flavour
- ♦ The presence of Bernadette
- ♦ Heartfelt moments
- ♦ A community of remembering, friendship and hope.

1. On the train for Lourdes, while passing Bordeaux, as I read the latest issue of CVX Info¹, I was surprised by my neighbour saying to me: '*You have chosen some good reading!*' So we started talking about the CVX Congress at Lourdes, where we were both going, savouring already a feeling of being '*friends in the Lord*'!

2. Obviously, the Congress could not take place without **Bernadette Soubirous** ...At the opening session, on the Sunday, we were being given necessary practical information about the different times for prayer, celebrations, sharing, discussion, debate and festival... and there was Bernadette herself², without a trace of embarrassment, crossing the stage and '*gathering kindling*'... When asked why she was there, she replied that she was doing what she did every day. But when she heard talk of the *Marian Congregations*, she showed interest in what we were doing. She even wanted to participate in the CVX Assembly at Lourdes! All right, but not without some tests in the 'Ignatian' school. Has she made the Spiritual Exercises? Has she a spiritual guide? Does she know how to make the examen of the day, sharing in small groups

(the three rounds!), apostolic discernment as an individual, and in the small group? Has she filled in the application form (abridged version of 3 pages)? Bernadette did not understand a thing of all that..., but she remained steadfast in believing that the Christian life needs only 'to acknowledge the love of Jesus Christ, to love Him and follow Him'. There was obviously no problem with her participation in the Congress!



Pierre Meyers SJ

3. In the evening of Saint Ignatius' feast day, we had a moving session led by the Jubilee team with original scenery, testimonies and the three jubilee celebrants in person:

♦ A **clown** ran across the stage waving a sign with the words 'Bearers of fire'³ As he was not on the programme, he was asked to leave; but he insisted on staying, so the 'ignatiometer'⁴ was run over him: he registered the maximum on the scale: the clown was 'crammed' with Ignatian spirituality! Would he have a testimony to give, then? He spoke to Christ on the cross, imploring him to work a miracle⁵; there was no reply! He then asked Christ what he should say to the Assembly... embarrassed, the clown returned with only these simple words from Christ: '*I love you!*'

♦ Another testimony touched me that evening: **Isabelle Le Bourgeois is a Sister of the Auxiliaries of Mary** who has been visiting the Fresne prison (to the south of Paris) for 20 years.⁶ Why has she remained faithful for so long to this place of damnation, violence and

¹ Bulletin sent out to CVX members in France

² A member of CVX playing the role

³ In the sense of 'those who pass on the fire' echoing the words of Christ: 'I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already!' (Lk 12:49)

⁴ A sophisticated aerial concocted by the organisers to 'measure' the amount of someone's Ignatian spirituality

⁵ 'Wouldn't it be wonderful to canonise Blessed Peter Favre!'

⁶ She has just published a book (in dialogue with Yves de Gentil-Baichis): God behind bars.

hate? Because she understands that in this place 'where you cannot tell lies for very long', where the boundary between good and evil, 'sin and grace' is very shifting, that it is important for her to say to the person in front of her (not knowing in advance what words to use) that God has hope in this person, that He will not let anyone go: 'He is waiting for you even in this place of enforced solitude and calls you to new birth!'

4. The CVX Congress was in the tradition of **the great Ignatian gathering**, 'offering CVX the opportunity to become aware of all the Ignatian families in France and elsewhere, to observe in wonder how God is working today with audacity in such different places and with such diverse people'.⁷

How best to describe this gathering, where everything was organised but without pressure, where the facilitating was professional – never without good humour, where I felt welcome (as a Jesuit) – never restricted to a role, questioned – never trapped, where recollection, friendliness, sharing, moments of festivity alternated happily so that we could experience the same 'Ignatian kinship', one I have not chosen, but have been given? Here is part of the speech given by the Jesuit Provincial in France, François-Xavier Dumortier,⁸ at the beginning of the CVX Congress:

During these few days, we are going to become a community of remembering, a community of friendship, a community of hope.

1. a community of remembering: *a keen remembrance of what existed for God and Ignatius, Francis-Xavier and Peter Favre, as men of their time. What they were remains to inspire us: they delineate in some way the 'Ignatian' face of today, a face that the logo intends to express: flames, a fire, echoing the words of the Lord: 'I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already' (Lk 12:49)*

2. A community of friendship: *friendship is not an optional extra, an unreliable supplement to what we are enabled to live as community. As members of the Ignatian family, we know how great an apostolic value trust, respect, friendship have, because they are all passed on unceasingly by Him who is the Principle and Foundation of what unites us: it is our being implanted in Christ that guarantees the depth of this friendship.*

3. a community of hope: *we are not managing a spiritual inheritance, we are not heirs who constantly make lists of what they have received and of which they are the guardians. Ignatian spirituality leads us towards a world to love, without naivety or fear, to a future we welcome and find at the same time in men and women of hope.*

A big thank you to the CVX of France!

May this '*friendship in the Lord*' help us to bear lasting fruit!

9 August 2006

Pierre Meyers SJ
Ecclesiastical Assistant
CLC Luxembourg

Translated from French by Patricia Kane

⁷ On the 27th of July, there were 7631 individuals registered for the Ignatian Jubilee, 3749 of whom were registered for the CVX Pilgrimage-Congress. Some figures: 950 children under the age of 13; 1000 Sisters; 350 Jesuits; 200 individuals who made a retreat in the days before the Congress (cf. www.cvxfrance.com).

⁸ The whole speech may be found on www.cvxfrance.com: Pèlerinage-Lourdes 2006 - interventions

The Leadership Course

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Rome 25th November - 3rd December 2007

I feel that the essence of what I experienced at the International Training Program in Rome transcends what I am able to put down in words. It is added to the course's own richness the experience to have lived and worked for eight days with a sample of the World Community. Personally, I only knew one of the attendants and José Reyes, who was in Rome during that week and spent a day with us. From the very first day, I was surprised and moved by the deep sense of communion among participants and facilitators, which reached beyond the immense diversity in nationalities, age and languages. This communion, born of grace, continued to deepen with the hours of work, the meals shared, the small group meetings, the daily Exam and the Eucharist celebrations; it will no doubt pervade in the hearts of all those who attended the course.

The great effort made by the team of organizers who prepared the course materials and the schedule of the event was apparent from the very beginning. The first exercise also revealed what each attendant had left behind, offering tangible stories that reflected the availability and willingness to overcome challenges and other urgent matters in order to be there – we had been called by the Lord and sent by our own national communities. Soon, everybody's dedication to the course was also clear, a happy and unconditional commitment to the work involved, which was intense and increasingly took over all free time. Such was the course's intensity that, after planning to draft this report based on a daily journal, I find myself in front of a blank page on my flight back to Uruguay.

The work at hand was ambitious: each one of the course's modules was to be presented, experimented, analyzed, assessed and re-elaborated. The stages kept rolling and overlapping, the work plan for each day was under ongoing review. Only the group's dedication and Lois' generous willingness to

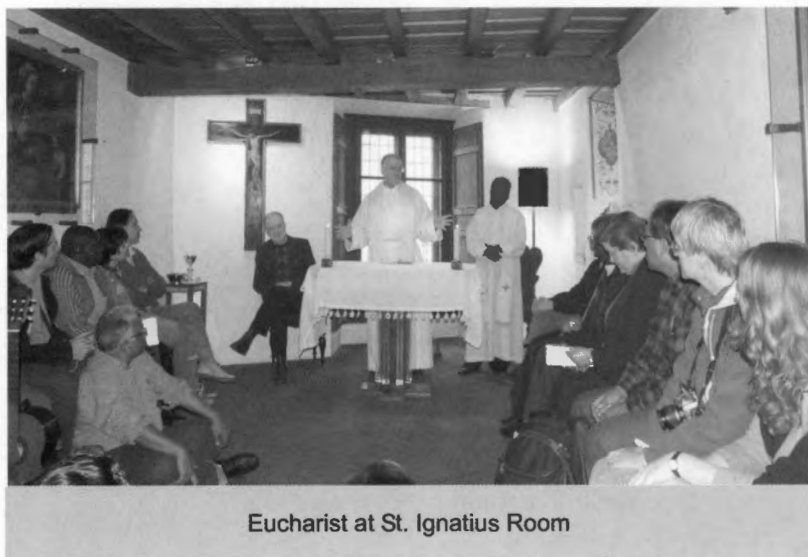
add the role of "watchdog" to her many other responsibilities, made it possible to set the necessary pace to get the job done. Our stay in Rome produced the expected results: we developed final versions and reference materials for the modules. During the last day there was a feeling of accomplishment for a job well done. In a deeper level, there was a general sense of willingness to take a path that we knew it was only at its initial steps. Attending the course in Rome already implied our commitment to act as multipliers in our National and Regional Communities. As a result of a communal discernment that took place the next to last day in Rome, we received the Lord's confirmation and a sense of renewal of our commitment. We all accepted the responsibility for adjusting the modules to our different contexts and languages, as well as offering workshops and keeping a collaborative relationship between the regions and the ExCo, so the Executive Council could follow-up the process and report to the World Community, as mandated by the Nairobi Assembly.

In addition to the content of the course, the opportunity to meet fellow CLCers from every corner of the world deepened my sense of belonging to the World Community, strengthening my point of view and vision of this international body. Eight days were barely enough to share among each other our contexts, successes and challenges in our respective National Communities. I was deeply touched by the different situations, challenges and solutions faced by the National Communities and how, amidst such diversity, a common and shared vocation was always present. The richness found in these exchanges was invaluable to me and gave me a broader context and perspective from where to think of CLC Uruguay.



Rafael Terra
President CLC Uruguay

Another enriching dimension to the course was the close spiritual communion experienced with the Society of Jesus. At all times Alberto Brito, S.J., our World Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant, offered his warmth and caring presence to the group. Also, Paul Vaz, S.J., contributed his insight and support, joining and working with the World Community once again at another relevant event. We also had the pleasure to meet Fernando Franco, S.J., Director of the Secretary for Social Justice of the Society of Jesus; Eddie Mercieca, S.J., Director of the Secretary of Ignatian Spirituality, and Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., Superior General of the Society of Jesus. We had candid and open exchanges with all of them, and it was an opportunity to share our sources of concern and joy. I always had the feeling we were collaborating with a common Mission.



Eucharist at St. Ignatius Room

On Wednesday, November 29th, we shared a very special moment by celebrating the Eucharist at Saint Ignatius' room. Alberto brought to mind the many thousands of letters Ignatius wrote there, the many visitors he received, and his careful dedication to the drafting of the Constitutions. Those words and that place had a very special meaning to the bunch of CLCers from all over the world that had gathered there with the hope of deepening their leadership skills.

The Eucharist shared the very last day reflected the intense sense of one Body and one common Mission that had developed and grown among us during the course. This celebration and sharing extended for 3 hours, as needed to give closure and a wider scope to

the days we spent working and living together. We first did an Exam of the week that helped us to surface and put into words the motions found in our hearts and in the group. We then sent every member of the group and encouraged each other to continue with the work, and most importantly, to renew the spirit of what we lived in Rome and share it with our own National and Regional Communities. We arrived at the international training course with the goal of promoting leadership, following the mandate given in Nairobi. However, as we return home, our mission has become broader as the result of our time together; we now feel the urge of passing on the grace received in Rome. I face the challenge in this very moment, as I try to put down in words my thoughts and reflections from the course and I am not able to find adequate words to describe the experience lived in Rome. Memories from our last Eucharist together come to mind, when the ExCo team in charge of the course shared how they felt a few months back when they faced the uncertainty of being able to carry out what they had been entrusted with. I now understand it will be by the Spirit, working in the midst of our Community, that will do almost all the work, and that is my biggest consolation and strength to continue the journey.

A few days after returning to my country and my routines, I go over my own feelings after re-reading these lines and confirm the experience in Rome will become a milestone in my story of personal salvation. It was also a very special moment for my marriage, since I had the great joy of sharing these days in Rome with my wife, Maria, whom today I celebrate 11 years of marriage. The e-mails received from all of the attendants upon their return to their countries and activities, each one expressing in his/her own way the recollection of our gathering in Rome and the initial fruits of our work, confirm that we all share the same feelings. It is an initial confirmation of the mutual support in the Mission that we entrusted ourselves at Via di Monte Cucco 25, on the outskirts of Rome.

Montevideo - December 21, 2006

*Rafael Terra
CLC Uruguay*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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