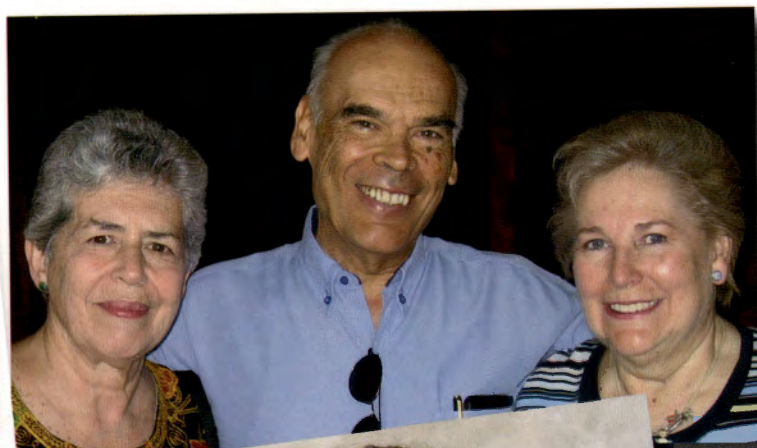




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Publication of the World Christian Life Community



N 2 • 2007

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English, French and Spanish Editions
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fátima²⁰⁰⁸
cvx-clc

New Birth

1

While these lines are being written, the Christmas wind is still blowing through our hearts. It is the wind of birth, breath of God who is born again among us; the Christ who is coming back into our human lives to fill them with his presence. He comes to invite us to new birth by his life in our story. The story he gives us to live in 2008 is filled with several new births; the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, the celebration on the 25th March of the approval of our General Principles by the Vatican, as well as our World Assembly at Fatima next August.

The 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus is an important time in the journey of our Jesuit brothers. But it also concerns us particularly, because of the reflections and orientations which will be taken concerning collaboration by the Society with lay people, especially the CLC.

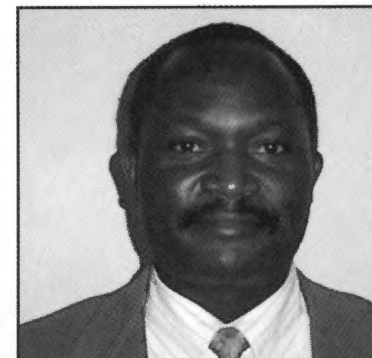
The Father General elected by the Society of Jesus is not automatically the World Ecclesiastical Assistant, so we will also have a new birth to experience on this level. Father Kolvenbach has agreed to accompany us on this journey until the Holy Father nominates his successor to the post of Ecclesiastical Assistant to the World CLC.

Rediscovering our vocation by means of the General Principles is a work of new birth. It is a return to the source to quench our thirst and

regain strength for the journey. In this spirit we are travelling step by step towards our next World Assembly.

Well lived, Fatima 2008 will also be an experience of new birth for the world community. The Assembly is not a task reserved only for the national ExCos, nor the national preparation teams that we are setting up, still less for the delegates alone. It is a mission in which we are all called to collaborate. As well, it is not limited to the time spent together from the 11th to 22nd August. It has already begun with the preparation and will continue when we put into practice the insights that the Lord will breathe into our hearts and that we decide to act on.

Forty years after a new birth that enabled us to take our present name and endowed us with new General Principles, it seems suitable to take a breathing space. This short pause is first of all a pause for thanksgiving to our Lord for his love and fidelity. But it is also a time for listening to what the Lord is telling us today. This pause is a time for deepening our identity as an apostolic, Ignatian, world-wide body of lay people, a pause for new birth that sends us out renewed on our journey.



Guy Maginzi

Guy Maginzi

World CLC Executive Secretary

Translated from French by Patricia Kane

CLC World General Assembly

Journeying as an apostolic body : our answer to this grace from God

August 11th to 22nd, 2008

For more information : www.fatima2008.org

A Christianity that affects the whole person¹



Alberto Hurtado

Upon comparing the Gospel with the lives of most of us, Christians feel an uneasiness. Most of us have forgotten that we are the salt of the earth, the light on the lampstand, the leaven in the dough. (cf. Mt 5:13_15). The breathe of the Spirit doesn't animate many Christians, rather a spirit of mediocrity consumes us. There are among us those who are active and those who are more than active, even agitated but the causes that consume us are not the causes of Christianity.

After looking at myself over and over again and what I see around me, I take the Gospel, I go to St. Paul and there I encounter a Christianity all on fire, completely alive, victorious, a true Christianity which affects the whole person, rectifies one's whole life, uses up all activity. It is like a burning river of lava: ardent, incandescent which flows up from the very source of religion.

Today religion has been made a mundane formality, a pious sentimentality good for women, a peaceful guardian: *"don't break anything; don't allow anyone to break anything!!"*. Thus we can express this Christianity in a nice way, a negative way, empty of passion, empty of substance, empty of Christ, empty of God: a Christianity without fire and without love, made up of calm people, of satisfied people, of fearful men, or of those who enjoy dictating to others and want to be obeyed. We do not need such a Christianity. Those who are comfortable within, who have abundance in their homes and honor in society have little need of God.

But, happily, everywhere there are groups of Christians who have understood the sense of the Gospel. Young people desirous of serving their brothers and sisters; priests who carry an open wound that doesn't stop bleeding upon seeing so much pain, so much injustice, so much poverty: priests like our Holy Father. Men and women who carry the presence of Christ among us, under a cassock, a pair of overalls or a party dress are luminous like Christ, and benefactors as he was. Christ is in them, and this is enough for us. We cannot do less than to love them. We receive from them, and through them we enter into that immense Body which is animated by the Spirit.

These are the true Christians, those in whom Christ has fully entered. He has taken everything; He has transformed their whole life. It is a Christianity that has transfigured them, one that they communicate, one that illuminates. They are the consolation of the world. They are the Good News permanently announced.

Everything preaches in them: the word without a doubt, but also the smile and the kindness, and the outstretched hand, the resignation, the total absence of ambition, the constant happiness. They always go forward, broken perhaps within but serenely embracing their difficulties, forgetting themselves, surrendering.... Nothing stops them, neither the contempt of the important, nor the systematic opposition of the powerful, neither poverty, illness, nor ridicule. They love and that is enough!!! They have faith, hope. Amid their pains, they are the happy people of the world. Their heart, expanding into the infinite, is nourished by God.

They are the Church emerging among us. They are Christ living among us and their nobility comes from him to whom they have

1. Taken from Alberto Hurtado SJ, *The Search for God*, PUC, 2005; p. 30_32

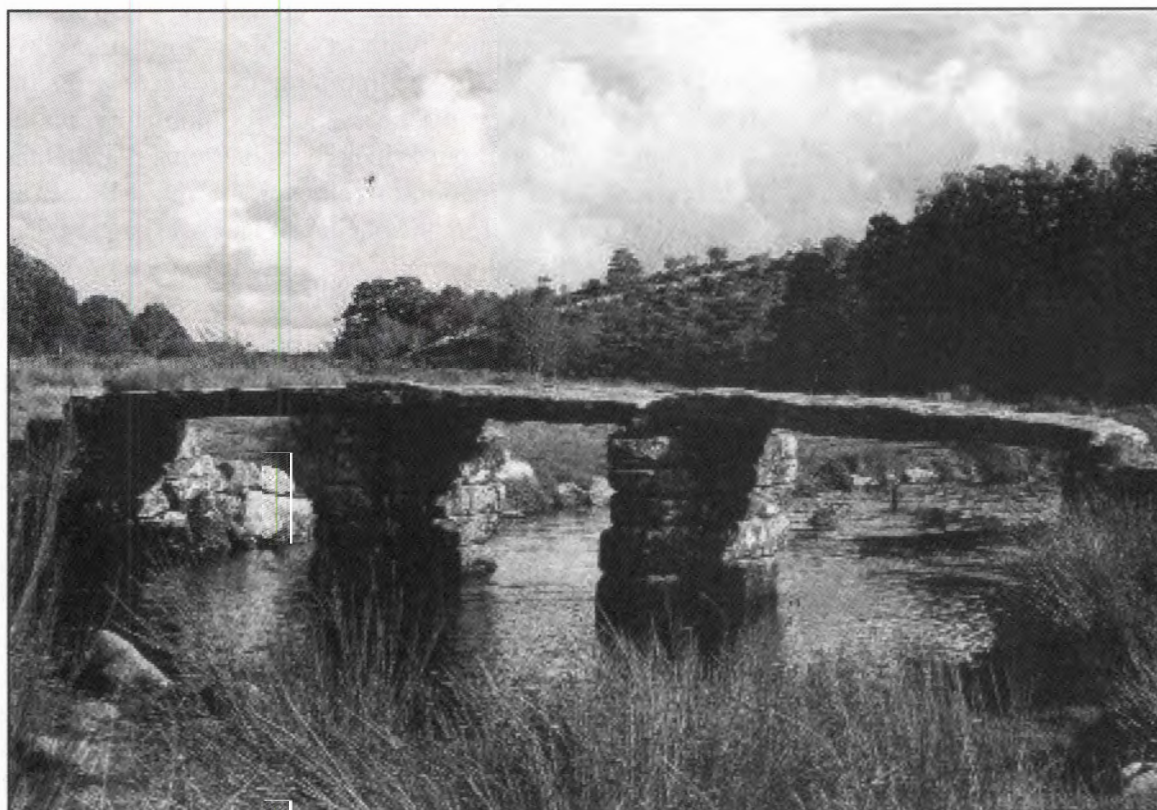
surrendered devoting themselves to their unfortunate brothers and sisters. They have understood that the others also are children of God, brothers and sisters of Christ who makes them grow. Among them — God, Christ and the other — there is now a definitive bond. They understand that their mission is to be the bridge to the Father, a bridge for all: all the children of the Father, raised up by the Son Jesus Christ through whom all arrive at the Father, by means of our actions, the actions of each of us. All humanity participates in this work, helped by the militants of yesterday², those who in

the evening of their efforts already received their recompense.

How is it possible that we don't live more in this perspective? Knowing that we are consecrated to God, we cannot continue living turned in upon ourselves, nor on our merits, not even on our sins but rather we should live in imitation of our Savior, energetic and gentle, "*who loved us to the end*" (Jn 13,1).

Our spiritual life - and we are priests — our catechism, our preaching, spiritual direction, are these too far from the Teacher, from his authentic Gospel?

Translated from Spanish by Theresa Cademartori



2. Allusion to the saints men and women who have militated in the Church and who are already in the glory of heaven.

Feeling like one single family

Celebrating 40 years of our General Principles and Norms in CLC Peru



Blanca Esquivel

In 2007, the Christian Life Community celebrated an important event in their history: the 40^a anniversary of the approbation of their Principles and General Norms. For the members of CLC throughout the world this fact is a reason for joy, as well as a special occasion to deepen the essence of CLC, our testimony of life. It is also the call to which our loving Father invites us in the world of today wherever

we are carrying out this service.

In this context the CLC Peru decided to live a special time of celebration and reflection. Motivated by the National Executive Council with the collaboration of a group of companions from several communities from Lima who formed a commission to coordinate the different initiatives, they organized a series of events.

I rejoice in being able to relate the experiences lived in those days; mainly because I believe it is important that all CLC members feel like a single family.

Although we don't know each other directly, we know that in the heart of each CLC member the spirit of the Lord beats forcefully wherever communities exist. Sharing what we are living in our own milieu, we strengthen the ties among all of us.

In Lima we planned two days of activities — Friday and Saturday, June 1-2 — at the University Antonio Ruiz of Montoya. On the first day, those from Lima enjoyed a night of healthy entertainment where each of the CLC core groups presented an artistic number for the members of the communities. It truly was amusing to observe how our companions demonstrated their talents in song, music and dance. Too often we lack moments like these for a time of laughter, song and dance

together. It is also a beautiful way of giving thanks to God for all that we have received during these years in CLC.

That night we lived moments that made us really feel that the disciple of Jesus is somebody who enjoys all the environments of their life with intensity, happiness and good humor. This was really a "*Wedding Feast of Cana*" for all, mainly because of the quality of the relationships among those who were present.

The following Saturday, very early, we continued with a day of formation. We dedicated the morning to reflecting on the journey of the National Community in the light of our Principles and Norms. We had the participation of companions who had been in CLC from the beginning and who had also had the opportunity to participate in some World Assemblies during those years. We also had the presence of the first National President: Carlos Lecaros, Ricardo Reyes, a member of the CLC Louis Paulussen and the current national president Guillermo Valera.

The topic of Community Mission was also deepened, and we spoke of what we want to achieve in this field in the coming years. We were greatly helped in our reflection on the topic by the experience of a companion: Franklin Ibáñez, who had the opportunity to travel to Africa this past February and who shared his experiences with all of us. Around noontime, Javier Uriarte SJ, National Assistant, celebrated the Eucharist of Thanksgiving. Together we prayed for an invigoration of the national and world communities and we gave thanks to the Lord for the gift of the CLC in Peru.

In the afternoon, after sharing lunch, we studied the topic of Leadership in CLC, with the participation of Jairo Rivas, former CLC national president, who had the grace of attending the course on Leadership held in

Rome last year. At the conclusion of the afternoon, Albert Simons SJ spoke to us about Jesus and leadership, focusing on the authority of Jesus, faith, and the way he had of relating to people.

I deeply feel that all these events allowed us to increase our spirit of community. I am sure that my brothers and sisters of the CLC here in Lima feel the same and although they were two short days of encounter and work, they were lived with much intensity. They were in continuity with what we experienced this past March, on the occasion of celebrating the

world day of CLC, during which we had the sending out of CLC apostolic teams¹, linked especially to formative aspects and to coordination with the wider initiatives of CLC.

I believe that it is a good moment for us and we will continue working to become stronger. Although we still have a long way to go, we know the Lord will accompany us and bring about our dreams.

A fraternal embrace in the Lord and my best wishes for all my brothers and sisters of the Christian Life Community.

Blanca Esquivel Aguilar

Responsible for the Service of Mission CEN CLC Peru²

Translated from Spanish by Theresa Cademartori



1. The apostolic teams are of an intercommunitary character. At the moment six of them exist dealing with the following topics: (1) CVR/Hope (pursuit of the conclusions of the Commission of Truth and Reconciliation and tasks of formation in forgiveness and reconciliation), Apostolic Ignatian Network (RAI), Leadership in CLC, Magis (the 5 participants from Peru in the Latin American course on the Magis), CEAL (participation in the Episcopal Conference on the Action of the Laity), Reproductions of the formation courses of the IFC (Institute of Faith and Culture).

2. Blanca Esquivel is a member of the Executive National Council of CLC Peru which is also made up of the following people:

- ❖ Vicky Paz, responsible for the Service of Communications
- ❖ Vilma Pinto, responsible for the Service of Methods for the Mission
- ❖ Armando Velazco, responsible for the Service of Formation
- ❖ Guillermo Valera, National President
- ❖ Javier Uriarte SJ, National Assistant

A special trip to Kenya



Franklin Ibáñez

Dear friends in community:

I want to tell you about a special trip I made to Kenya, Africa. As I am reaching my thirtieth birthday, (as the Bible teaches us) this is a good moment to deepen the sense of one's life and mission. So I decided to make a trip of about forty days.

The exact reason is still a mystery to me. I only know that a voice, a hunch, or simply a deep desire had called me for a long time. Once Ignatius was very confused because

he didn't have a clear idea of what God wanted of him, until he heard a voice that said: "*In Rome you will find favor.*" Something similar happened to me: I had an appointment with God in Africa. Ignatius suggested an approach to mission: to act where there is a greater urgency or necessity, to be where there are no others. In the Kingdom there are many missions, some pay well, we like them and are given honor before others. Some are exactly the opposite and very few want them. I believe that like other poor or difficult places, mainly in the third world, Africa is one of the places where many don't want to be.

This is not to belittle it, but AIDS, the poverty, the wars, the precarious conditions of health

are good reasons not to want to live there. I can tell you that during the whole trip St. Paul's discourse on love (1 Cor 13) accompanied me. So I summarize this adventure with some of the sentences of the text that most resonate with me and with some questions that you may help me to answer.

1) *If I speak all human languages*: Kenya has more than 40 ethnic communities or tribes with their own languages, but almost all also speak Swahili and English.

Also there are other foreign groups, since Kenya welcomed many immigrants from the many wars in Africa. I had never lived so intensely the phenomenon of inculturation. Unlike in Somalia (the neighboring country presently in conflict where numerous refugees are waiting to enter Kenya), the people live in peace. Do you have a key to human coexistence?

2) *If I give all my money to the poor*: there are people who are so poor and piteous that they wait for and prefer that death come soon for them.

When I first entered the house of a CLC companion in Kibera (the biggest, overcrowded human settlement of Africa), I made a great effort not to cry in front of him. His wife, their two children, and sometimes relatives who arrived for a visit (which is frequent in the Kenyan culture) live, cook and bathe in a miserable room smaller than mine in Peru. But they are happy! Do you know what we need in order to be happy?

3) *If I give my life in sacrifice*. Before the trip several of my friends told me that what I was doing was a sacrifice. Frankly until now I didn't see why it would be. I felt so useless in so many moments. If it weren't for the happiness that some demonstrated when they knew that someone had come so far to see them, I would have given up. I reaffirm a



belief in the human community: the only life is one that is offered. Then, can you explain to me why we are so concerned only about looking after our own lives?

4) *When was I child, I spoke like a child and acted like a child:*

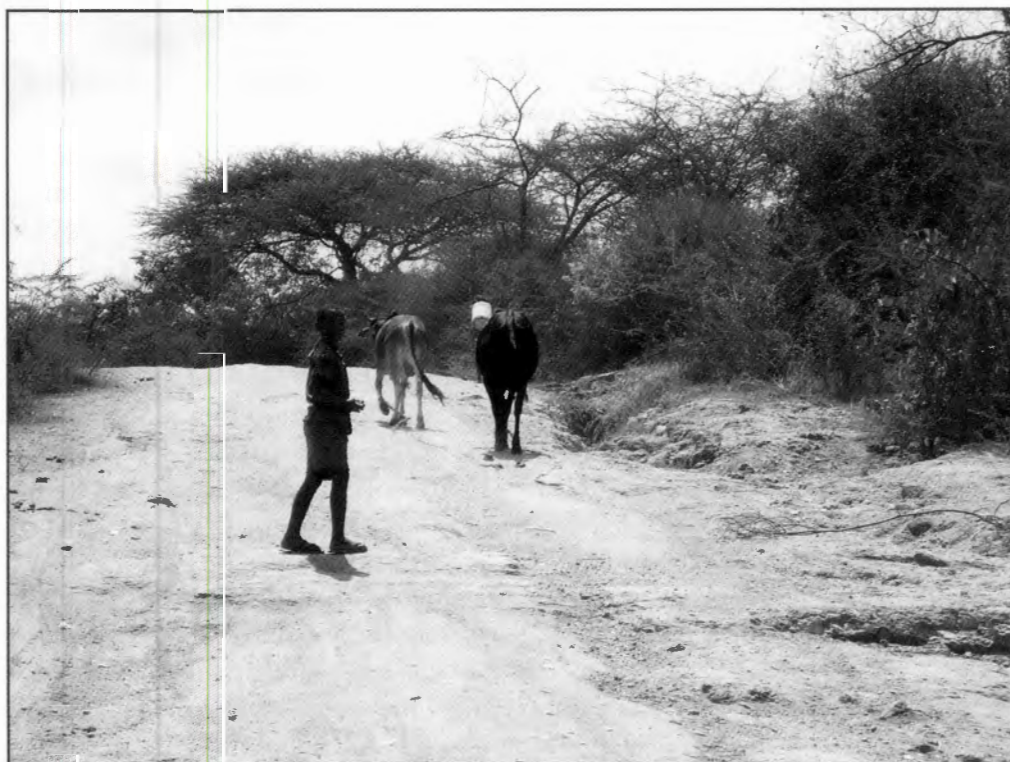
As I said in the beginning, I am almost thirty years old. I believe that the only way in which I can now correspond to life is by taking it more seriously every day. I hope never to lose the childlike side of myself, but at the same time I feel called to establish myself as an adult with all the commitments that implies. How can I integrate the idealism, the availability, the passion, the analysis and energy for the mission that characterize the young with the stability, equilibrium in life and judgements, complete formation and serious capacity of commitment that characterize the adult?

5) *Now we see as in a mirror:* our perspective of life and of ourselves is always limited. We need the viewpoint of the other to confront us and challenge us. The poor should always be the mirror where we discover our contradictions when comfort overcomes the “simple life style” (GP 4) that the CLC chooses as part of their option for the poor. Did Ignatius not say that they are the “*advisers of the Eternal King*”? How is it that so many times our apostolic actions and our style of life end up being so far from them?

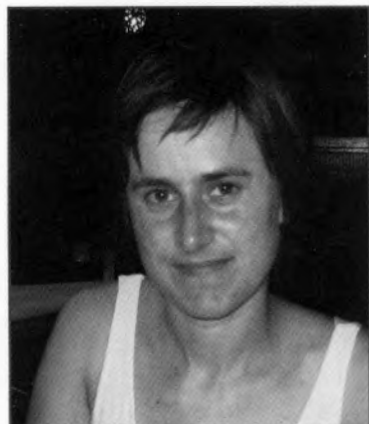
Franklin Ibáñez
CLC Peru

Translated from Spanish by Theresa Cademartori

This text has been written before post electoral confrontations took place in Kenya



Hot Holy Holidays



Irena Žnidar, Slovenia

In February I received the news about CLC holidays for young adults in Palermo, Italy. The information leaflet was so attractive that I soon decided to go. Now I can say that the organisers did their best and the programme was really excellent. There was time for praying, personal reflection, sharing groups, silence, and also for visiting cultural and natural heritage or having fun.

Usually we started a day with Holy Mass. Simultaneously, a small church team had been formed. It tried to involve all members in readings during the Mass, every day in different languages. Also singing was very vivid, from Slovak to Arabic songs. After breakfast we had a short introduction to a certain topic, then personal reflection/prayer and sharing in small groups.

The main topics were about our own history of faith, experience of being a member of a (CLC) group/community and our mission. Small groups were a space to deepen our relationship. The members of my group were Shola from England, Antonia from Germany and Katarina and Martina from Slovakia. We shared our lives and opinions and always the time was too short to tell everything. Other people's experience and their way of living enrich me and give me ideas about how to live my own life. In the small group I experienced the CLC as a world (or European) community.

I got an impression that London CLC is a very strong one, having two types of groups, for old and young adults. In Slovenia there is no such differentiation. I found out that the frequency and the structure of a group meeting is very similar in London and in Ljubljana. I was happy to hear that CLC is even ecumenical: some members of English groups are not

Catholics. Slovak girls told us that there is no CLC in their country, but the groups they attend are something very similar to CLC. German members of the holidays also do not belong to CLC, but they often attend the projects organised by Jesuits.

Many young people said they are volunteers in charity organisations. In Sicily, one of the major problems is a refugee problem. A lot of boats full of Africans or Asians escaping from unbearable conditions land here. They want to go north, but many of them stay on the island. We visited Centro Astalli, where volunteers offer medical care, legal aid, food and clothes. The centre is located in Ballarò, a poor and dirty part of Palermo, where the façades are severely damaged and the street names are written in Italian, Arabic and Hebrew languages.

It is not a good feeling walking there, especially in narrow streets. I think this visit made us quite disturbed. Facing such a big and complex social problem, I feel so small and weak. Not only the visit to the refugee centre, but also the movie Truman's Show,¹ which we saw afterwards, made us think a lot. Full of deep impressions we finally relaxed in a nice pizzeria and walked through the city by night. The silence next day was an opportunity to think about my mission, and to be alone with God.

In the afternoons, we usually went on short trips or just had fun. Of course, firstly we had a sightseeing tour of vivid Palermo centre. I found the architecture quite exotic. There is a mixture of Norman, Arabic, gothic and baroque elements and a single building could be admired for hours. Also admired was the Monreale cathedral. Its ceiling and walls are covered with golden mosaics, showing the stories from Old and New Testament. And above everything – a huge mosaic of Christ

Pantocrator. We also visited a nature reserve Capo Rama-Terrasini.

There was a guided tour on the geological history of Sicily. We saw carbonate cliffs of different colours and the hundred billion years old fossils of bivalve *Megalodon*. At nearly 40 °C not many animals could be seen; I noticed just some lizards and grasshoppers. We admired a typical Mediterranean flora (e.g. cactuses, prickly pear, agave, ephedra, sea lavender) and endemic dwarf fan palms which offered us no shadow. The sun is a symbol of Sicily and we experienced its power every single day. Wherever we had been, we also had a beautiful view of a big blue Tyrrhenian Sea. We were sunbathing on long sandy beaches and having fun in a warm sea. The programme also included a whole day excursion to a nice fishermen's town Cefalù. One of the Sicilian CLC members showed us town sights and the cathedral. The bus then took us then high above the sea, into a forest where we celebrated Mass and had a picnic. Some CLC families joined us, too.

During our ten-day holidays we met a lot of CLC members from Palermo, and even Leonardo Becchetti, the president of Italian CLC, visited us. The evenings were full of joy and happiness: presentation of nations, European quiz, dance, "Palermo by night" and a party in Nicoletta's garden. Last but not least, I should mention the delicious Sicilian food.

However, I will never forget these holidays, especially because of around 30 happy, active and optimistic young people, who were from Croatia, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. I am very grateful to the organisers who took great care of us: Fr. Oliver (Malta), Martina (Croatia), Giovanni, Gisela, Alessandra, Stefano (Palermo) and Roberta (Malta).

The fruits of the holidays are new friends, nice experience and mostly a new élan to live my own life at home.

Irena Žnidar
CLC Slovenia



Shola, Catherine and Una - CLC England and Wales

IIIrd Encounter 'Permanent Commitment of CLC-Spain'

ACTUAL EXPERIENCES, PROPOSALS AND EVALUATION

Synthesis

The methodology we followed for the IIIrd Encounter on Permanent Commitment (Malaga, Saturday 29 April to Monday 1st May) aimed to encourage CLC Spain to follow the Spirit without trying to run ahead.

To ensure this, the dynamic of the first day and a half consisted of: exposition, prayer, personal reflection and sharing the fruits of our prayer in small groups (there were also just listening sessions). This is also what happened on Sunday afternoon, after a plenary session giving an explanatory summary of the work of the groups, we had another period of personal prayer, followed by a second plenary of sharing in common, also intended as another listening session.

Each participant was asked, during the last prayer time on Sunday afternoon, to make a note of three *actual experiences* and three *proposals*. In addition, on Monday morning, after the concluding Eucharist of the encounter, we collected the personal *evaluation* of each participant.

The Synthesis here presented by the Executive of CLC Spain aims to collect the most often repeated elements, giving them form and order, with the only claim to being a faithful reflection¹ of the principal fruits of the Encounter on Permanent Commitment, and presenting them according to the following main points.

1. *The difference between Community and Apostolic Body*

2. *Authority-Leadership and its method within the Apostolic Body of the CLC*

3. *The experience of the 30 days of the Spiritual Exercises is what forms us as an Apostolic Body and leads us to union of souls and communion*

4. *Take care of the 'What' and the 'How' to act so that the CLC becomes an Apostolic Body*

1. Difference between Community and Apostolic Body

ACTUAL EXPERIENCES

The call to be an Apostolic Body is an extra qualitative stage which enables the community in the CLC not to be an end in itself

- ♦ Thanks to Adolfo Chércoles S.J. who, from outside the CLC, explains clearly the difference between apostolic body and community, since sometimes tension arises because the universal body is felt as an attack on my group. Even so, a paradox occurs; I require my group to be an emotional support, but when my group does not provide what I want, the community ceases to have any meaning for me. In these two examples, we go wrong. We are called to fulfil our mission.
- ♦ We have sinned [in this regard], all of us who felt a deeper need to commit ourselves to this way of life, given that we required something from the local community and life group that they could never give us. In

¹ The content of this Synthesis respects completely the notes of the 60 participants at the meeting. (actual experiences-proposals-evaluation). In addition, on several occasions, actual phrases from the two plenary assemblies and the listening sessions are incorporated in the Synthesis. This is because we believe that they represent the feelings of many participants.

the end, without our even realising it, we focussed our vocation on the communal experience and not on our being CLC, fundamental to the experience of the SpEx, which unites us with the others called to CLC, puts us in communion and sends us on mission.

The link with the apostolic body gives us a perspective that allows us to focus more and better on mission

- ♦ Clarification of the meaning of the Body as the most adequate response to the natural fragmentation of the layperson, places the community in its place as the means. CLC has found in the Apostolic Body the best way of being organised for mission. I believe that I have been able to appreciate what it means to be a member of a Body, by living in communion with other people and communities, beyond my own locality.
- ♦ Confirmation and hope faced with the call to be an Apostolic Body, surpasses the affectionate bond with the local Community for communion. I want to attain '*the union of souls*' because this is important for mission.
- ♦ I discovered Permanent Commitment with joy and tranquillity, not as a burden or obligation. I had been stuck in a 'perpetual' Temporary Commitment.

PROPOSALS

Vocational (component) link with the Apostolic Body of CLC

- ♦ Encourage the process of the discovery of CLC as a personal vocation leading to a vocational (component) link with CLC: World CLC 'forms' me as a person (*I am more myself when I am more CLC*).
- ♦ Persevere in deepening the idea of Body (different from that of Community) in the local communities.

Revision of the structures to adapt CLC to the 'new clothes' of the Apostolic Body.

- ♦ Given the resonance, the tuning, and the quantity of opinions generated by this encounter, the Executive could take on the proposals and continue analysing them more deeply during the presidential forums, the Regional Coordination and the Apostolic Teams' reunions.

- ♦ Revise the service structures, by adapting them to the reality of the CLC Apostolic Body. Reform of the CLC Spain Statutes. Reform the CLC General Principles or the General Norms.
- ♦ Can we revise the 'Assemblerist-federalist' schema of CLC Spain assemblies so as to work towards a model of Body with 'committed' CLC encounters. In this sense, the next Assembly, in 2009, could be the last according to the present model and the first of the Apostolic Body.
- ♦ We need to ensure that the representatives, those who are present at the CLC Spain Assemblies, where decisions are taken and documents approved, be persons with a Permanent Commitment. Why? Because what is decided, what is discerned and settled in this instance affects quite specifically the persons linked to the CLC Apostolic Body.

I discovered Permanent Commitment with joy and tranquillity, not as a burden or obligation. I had been stuck in a 'perpetual' Temporary Commitment

2. Authority-Leadership and its method within the Apostolic Body of CLC

ACTUAL EXPERIENCES

- ♦ Is an authority necessary in the CLC? Yes, absolutely necessary, because it is a question of service for the common good (assuming that we are all at the service of specific good). Someone needs to be

concerned with the growth of the body as well as with communion.

- ♦ Being an Apostolic Body must not be founded only on authority and obedience. The Body of CLC is [made] for mission, and it is there that we must work. Good use of authority and obedience will help us to do that. In this sense, it is very important to begin from the 30 Days of the SpEx in order to understand the meaning that Ignatius gives to authority and obedience.



Understanding of the meaning of the word obedience for St Ignatius

- ♦ I have discovered all that is positive in the word obedience, so important to Ignatius. Yes, to obedience in this precise sense, starts with humility, reciprocal listening and mutual respect, never with submission or repudiation as a person. Obedience implies reaching the same feeling. How? Thanks to dialogue, negotiation, knowing how to work together as a team, acting gently, feeling with the person who makes a suggestion: *'if I trust in what God reveals to*
- me and trust in what He reveals to you, we will see what He is revealing to both of us'.*
- ♦ How do we receive the recommendations of our Assemblies in CLC: as regulations or norms to follow, or as counsels that question us in our own life, and from there facilitate the union of souls? Do we welcome them in this sense of listening-obedience?
- ♦ For all of us who have been present [at this Encounter], we have a responsibility to make known to the rest of CLC the meaning of obedience for Ignatius.

Understanding of the meaning of the word authority for St Ignatius

- ♦ I have discovered all the positive meaning in another word so important to Ignatius: authority. It begins from humility, helping development, by creating a body and opening it to the universal dimension, but never as an enslaving power.
- ♦ With thanks for the intuitions emerging from Ignatius' way of exercising authority: leads to stripping myself bare, asking for help, imagining and manifesting God. Also thanks for respect for authority and for a common frame of mind. Thinking of authority as service changes its perception as much for the recipient as for the one exercising it.

PROPOSALS

Work on the attitudes for taking on leadership in CLC (characteristics of the leader)

- ♦ Produce a document on the way of exercising authority as service, and work through it with those responsible in CLC at all levels.
- ♦ Apply the Principle of Subsidiarity in CLC: to those who know how to delegate and hand over, motivate others and trust in God.
- ♦ Three attitudes which will help develop this: individuals who encourage, know how to set limits, and are able to ask for help.

- ♦ Do not isolate the person exercising authority.
- ♦ Rather than being great organisers, the leaders must be people who are living CLC light-heartedly, because it arises from a link that forms them as people, a link they can pass on naturally to others.

Keys or criteria for choosing those who must serve by taking on the role of authority

- ♦ The Committees (national, regional, local...) must know how to be 'universal engines' and motivate others to become 'specific engines'.
- ♦ Authority must seek the common good, the good of the Body, but in order to exercise this mission, we members of CLC must allow this authority little by little, 'to intervene, to question...' the community life and our own.
- ♦ Revise our structures and our method of choosing positions: inform and enrich ourselves by the criteria and characteristics that we must take into consideration for choosing those who want to govern us. For example, could we give some 'rules' to communities on the method of choosing local committees and which personal characteristics to look for? Or produce a document on 'methods of governance in CLC' to pray on in order to illuminate the path that we are following?

Making decisions in the Apostolic Body

- ♦ That the positions at the regional and national levels be taken on by individuals with a Permanent Commitment (having had the complete experience of the 30 Days of the SpEx), and, as much as possible, that this become the reality in the local communities.
- ♦ That the decisions at national level be taken with the participation of individuals with a Permanent Commitment or in the process for this, given that it happens that

some people attend Assemblies because 'it is their turn to go' but who are not certain if CLC corresponds to their vocation in the Church.

3. The experience of the 30 days of the Spiritual Exercises is what forms us as an Apostolic Body and leads us to union of souls and communion

ACTUAL EXPERIENCES

- ♦ The complete experience of the 30 Days of the SpEx is the key and foundation of the Apostolic Body, but this still remains something far from our CLC reality. It is a desire which will make the Body possible, since without this experience, it is impossible to live properly the [process of] discernment, sending, support and evaluation [of mission]. I seek my personal conversion in order to overcome obstacles.

Rather than being great organisers, the leaders must be people who are living CLC light-heartedly, because it arises from a link that forms them as people, a link they can pass on naturally to others

- ♦ Apostolic efficacy is based on the union of souls, which can only come about through the joint experience of the SpEx by everyone.
- ♦ The link, for it to be vocational (forming), must be founded on the experience of the SpEx.

PROPOSALS

- ♦ Individuals show in writing their commitment to live the SpEx fully before pronouncing their Permanent Commitment.

- ♦ Emphasize the achievement and renewal of the complete experience of the SpEx (such as the Executive has proposed during several consecutive summers), while taking into account reality (children, work, financial cost), and demonstrating imagination, creativity... Encourage as well other ignatian means (the examen, [spiritual] companioning ...)

Although the Formation Plan may be a framework to refer to, if we do not unpack our experiences (among others, the way communities actually function), we will persist in reproducing 'the old way of acting'

- ♦ Motivating all the members of the community to undertake the SpEx and encourage those who have already experienced them to be engines of the communities. Because without a profound conversion, we cannot accomplish the Lord's will, which consists in CLC acting as an Apostolic Body on mission.

4. take care of the 'What' and the 'How' to act so that CLC becomes an Apostolic Body

ACTUAL EXPERIENCES

There was concern about, working and being careful of the ways we act. Beginning with the union of souls, and a common goal, there was awareness that decisions are taken by our way of acting. Working 'gently' produces abundant fruit.

There was a slight anxiety about the way we can carry out all this (if it is feasible) given the way we are at the moment in the local communities.

PROPOSALS

Some advice and information to help the holders of authority in the CLC to make wise decisions.

- ♦ The ways of acting are very important: you must be overflowing with love. It means handing over without imposing time limits, respecting each one's rhythms and reality while concentrating on the fact that it is possible to act in giving all of yourself. The important thing is not so much quickness, as not stopping.

Some advice to help display the Apostolic Body of CLC Spain:

- ♦ As much as possible display the body during times of celebrations, of missioning and taking on responsibilities (regional coordination, local committees, guides, presidents, assigning assistants ...) by means of the presence of the following persons: the Regional Coordinator with the Local Committees, the CLC Spain Executive with the Regional Coordinators, etc ...
- ♦ Support the processes which show clearly the CLC. These need more homogeneity. Perhaps by providing spaces where guides, at first from the regions and later at national level, can reach agreement on criteria and unity of spirit. Although the Formation Plan may be a framework to refer to, if we do not unpack our experiences (among others, the way communities actually function), we will persist in reproducing 'the old way of acting' and will continue to apply the formula 'each master (each community) uses its own technique'. We must be extremely scrupulous about the personal characteristics of those who take on the role of guides, since that seems to me the key person to pass on all that we are experiencing in our time.
- ♦ Encourage meeting spaces as above. In spite of all the inconveniences that may arise, it is well worth the trouble especially to nourish that awareness of Body that we cannot always experience in the communities.

I feel the necessity, as a young member of CLC, to hand this on. 'Attention! Do not

forget that you are in the middle of the process and that those who undertake this process are not at the same level as you. In this process of maturing of those who are starting out and advancing, it must be learned that those who have been in the process longer must educate the others. If we want the Body of CLC Spain to live and grow, do not forget that we must win over the beginners.'

Pay attention and particular care to handling information, for without that, the Apostolic Body will not be achieved:

- ♦ Transmitting information by email does not seem sufficient to me. It is a rapid, useful and voluminous, but does not involve the warmth so vital to a close encounter, a direct contact of person to person. In each local CLC, the voice of someone close to us, experienced and having made a particular journey in CLC is necessary to 'infect' the rest of the community, instead of expecting that one email among thousands of others will affect us personally.
- ♦ It is important to develop, to the maximum, channels of information and evaluation: visits, individuals representing a link, periodic reports: from communities, work teams, special subjects. Do not lower your guard (the web, magazines, chat rooms, other revues ...) and have patience. 'We cannot love what we do not know'! By

means of information, try to have a clear vision of the realities of our communities so as to be able to provide more efficacious support.

Sending on mission is very important for the Body and in CLC we are still at our beginnings:

- ♦ Work is needed with the meaning of sending on mission in CLC. Beginning with the deliberations of the First Companions, CLC can learn and deepen the process of Discerning, Sending, Supporting, Evaluating, [the 4 steps in our mission].

Other means and paths:

- ♦ Continue to go thoroughly into the meaning of this Encounter, by sending the resumé and conclusions to all the Communities for their information, with a view to eventually using the content for reflection. Consider ways, given that it is difficult.
- ♦ Facilitate and offer prayer to the local communities, in order to re-examine our structures around mission, to see if they are the best possible. Test ourselves, question ourselves.

*Sent by Teo Galache
CLC Spain*

Translated from the French version by P. Kane



First Permanent Commitments in the CLC Uruguay



Rafael Terra

Pentecost 2007

This past May 25th, on the Feast of Pentecost, for the first time in Uruguay, five CLC members expressed their permanent commitment.

We also celebrated several temporary commitments. That Sunday, the national community celebrated with great festivity. The symbol of light was chosen to transmit and live an event filled

with the grace of the Spirit.

Those who made their commitment lit candles and gave them to all those present symbolizing the desire that their lives reflect their commitment and their unwavering intent to bring that light to others, to bring hope and the love of God so that all may receive it.

This day arrived after a long process of personal and community discernment moved by the grace of God. One year before, on Pentecost 2006, the National Executive Council invited the community to journey through a systematic process of deepening our vocation to help us discern whether or not the

moment had arrived, as a body, to invite members to a permanent commitment. The process consisted of 6 days: Disciples in CLC, Spiritual Exercises, Apostolic Life, Style of Life, Members of a Body and a meeting of final synthesis. The material for the work and prayer was also available on the internet and was followed by various groups in their community meetings as a way of reviving their commitment and vocation even though they were not thinking of making their permanent commitment. The process was talked about in letters, in the assemblies and in celebrations, to which the National Community adapted the process so it would be lead to new depths. It was necessary to give us that leisurely and deep application in order to lead us, on the one hand, to a repeated restlessness for deepening our commitment, and on the other, to diverse tensions and insecurities that on occasion had slowed down the community in its journey. A fruit of this year's work was the formulation of criteria for discernment that arose from the prayer of the community which were perceived as useful to help those who wanted to make a decision on this invitation. The report of the process and all the materials were then compiled in a document that is available on our website (www.CLC_uruguay.org).



Alongside the process of the body, processes of discernment were carried out on a personal level some of which led to the commitments that were made on Pentecost. The process raised many questions which occur in other national communities when reaching this stage. Maybe the most basic is: What does the permanent commitment add to the life of a CLC member who has made the temporary commitment and has lived for years in that commitment? What does it contribute to the body of CLC? The objective of these questions is exactly to offer elements that help study these questions. Our answers come from the testimony of those who recently prayed about them from deep within.

One surprising wealth of the small group of five CLC members who made their permanent commitment is their diversity in ages, in gender and in histories of faith and community. Some of them began many years ago.

The internal process that led me to decide to make the permanent commitment in CLC began a long time ago. It started when in the school which I attended I was led to understand that God is love, the One who loves us infinitely, who looks after us, protects us and accompanies us always and that his greatest commandment is that of love: love him above all things and love our neighbor as He loves us. This constitutes an enormous responsibility and a perfect model to follow for those who trust God. Then, throughout my life, I experienced that love of God through the people He put on my path: my parents, those other people from whom I learned the love of God and who guided me in my journey, the person with whom I fell in love when I was 17 years old, who today is my husband and companion, and with whom I have already shared 48 years of life, 6 children, their marriages, the happiness of being able to give Him our daughter Maria Noel, when she decided to form the community of ADSIS, the birth of our 10 grandsons....

Also in the difficult moments of life I felt accompanied and looked after by God, as at the deaths of my father-in-law, my father and of our third son all in the same year, the moments of economic difficulties, of illnesses of our children, of the departure to the exterior of two of them, of a serious illness that I had. In all those moments, some happy and others sad, I felt accompanied and looked after by my Master, and I understood that I should accept all that happens.

Wanda Bender

Others are tied intimately into the birth and history of CLC in Uruguay:

My name is Pedro, I am 46 years old, I married Inés 22 years ago and we have two children, Cecilia and Juan.

I work in education. Inés and I joined a community (Serotsac) at the beginning of CLC in Uruguay in 1981. In 1982, I participated in a course of CLC Formation in Malta. At that time we felt the Lord's invitation to draw near to the poor and when we got married we opted to live in a poor district on the periphery of Montevideo. We became part of the Ecclesial Basic Community in a parish and we left CLC. We lived there for 12 years. During all that time, Federico, a faithful friend in the Lord, kept us in contact with CLC. In 1998, when we ended one stage in our life and moved, Federico invited us to join their community (Kerygma). During all those years, that were so fulfilling, we missed the experience of the Exercises and that "something" in the CLC way of living our faith. Little by little we reestablished our contacts with the National Community where we knew hardly anyone. We returned to the experience of the Exercises. In 2002 we made our temporary commitments. In the last few years we have felt the desire to accompany others in their process of community and a few weeks ago we began counseling a Community (Trafoguero). Personally I also felt the invitation to a deeper involvement with the National Community. That led me to be available to become part of the NEC.

Pedro Ravela

I am arriving at my 40th year of life and I see that more than half of my life has been deeply linked with CLC. For more than 20 years my experiences have taught me that, next to my family, the Ignatian Spirituality and community life are the best things that have happened in my life. I am convinced that I could not have asked for better and that they have been a gift from the Lord.

Rodrigo Goñi

I experienced that love of God through the people He put on my path... Also in the difficult moments of life I felt accompanied and looked after by God

I arrived at this commitment after 17 years of participating in CLC, of living many intense encounters with God and with my brothers and sisters of the national and Latin American communities. If I look at my history of faith, I realize that my journey in CLC helped me to grow as a Christian. I was formed, I discovered a new God, Father, Creator. Here I also received the grace of God through many people who helped me to understand the depth of God's love for me and my brothers and sisters. Among those people who revealed God's love to me were many faces of voiceless people, of marginalized



brothers and sisters who talked about a God that suffered and who asked me to do something for him. All these experiences, mediated by Ignatian Spirituality and the support of my community, accompanied my options, the difficult decisions along the way, my vocational election, the family that my husband and I formed, my apostolates and my commitment to CLC.

Mariana Pomiés

Still others consider more recent times lived "without haste but without pause":

My relationship with CLC began in the year 2000, the year in which the Latin American Encounter in

Montevideo took place and where I was invited to work as part of the Secretariat team. This is where I got to know the movement and I had the opportunity "and the gift" of witnessing the Latin American dimension of CLC, of a community that shared a same faith and a same charism in different realities but with a same goal: "to better love and serve" based upon a saying of Ignatius. This strong experience was framed likewise in a deep interior search, that in the last experience of the Exercises was summarized in a petition: the idea of finding a community in which I could live my faith with a greater commitment and devotion. Then various events took place: in the year 2001, through the Minimanila in Santiago, Chile, I came in contact with our Charism. On returning to Montevideo I felt the desire to participate actively in the national community and this is where, along with other companions, I began the process of discernment in order to enter as a community within CLC. I then participated in their apostolic work and I accepted the invitation to accompany a community of young people. I was formed as a spiritual guide in the School of the Sp.Ex etc. Each "yes" that I gave to CLC

was lived as an answer to a specific call of God, to a desire that He put in my heart to participate in and collaborate as a co-creator of the Kingdom, to which all are called, but within this particular vocation. Knowing the General Principles also gave sustenance and an answer to my interior search since, as I drew closer to their spirit, I felt that they were within me and not otherwise, that I wanted to live my being a lay woman, integrating all the areas of my life, social, professional, etc.

Isabel Larriera

As we said, one of the questions that most often emerged during the process referred to the difference between the temporary commitment and the permanent

commitment, questioning the necessity or meaning of this latter. We could go to the General Principles and to our Charism to clarify this point, but we wanted to approach it here with testimonials. From the numerous interviews with the candidates to the temporary and permanent commitments in the days previous to Pentecost many common elements arose: affection for the community, gratitude to the Lord for gifts received, a desire for the Ignatian spirituality, an apostolic sense, an apparent lay vocation and a conviction to orient their lives according to the deepest desires that the Spirit of the Lord awakened in their hearts:

Some of the characteristics that have most marked us in the CLC experience are:

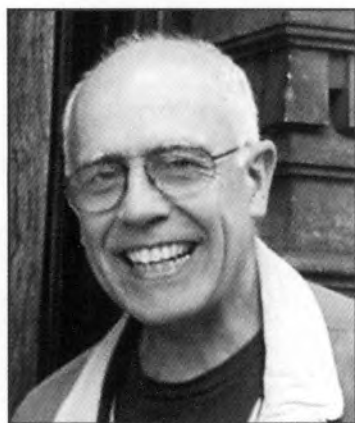
- ❖ *Confronting life as a mission, in our professional work and in our family, seeking and following the invitations and promises that the Lord has given us to work for the Kingdom.*
- ❖ *Sharing life in the community with much frankness, putting our decisions and interior processes of conflicts, joys, sufferings, and prayer before our companions.*
- ❖ *Always seeking to “save” a space for our encounters with the Lord — in prayer, in the Sacraments, in the gratuitous time for the couple, in the Exercises - and not allowing ourselves to be taken over by the intense activity that life imposes on us these days.*
- ❖ *Maintaining a simple style of life, avoiding excessive consumerism. That has given us much freedom to opt for those works in which we believe we collaborate better for the construction of the Kingdom, even when they are not the most convenient from the economical point of view. We have had the grace of working where we felt called and where we felt fulfilled.*

On the other hand there is also an obvious difference in the origin of the conviction that encourages one to make the temporary and permanent commitments. In the first case a clear sense of election: *“I want to continue this road in CLC. I want to respond yes to the Lord in CLC.”* They enter into an experience to which they feel invited and for which they already have a taste. But only God knows the fruit of the journey that they are undertaking, which can well lead to different calls that force them to shift their election. There we have the temporary commitment. The impression that we get listening to those who express the permanent commitment is very different. They recognize that CLC is already their road and they express it thus:

I could say that the permanent commitment with CLC was a natural step for me and the last stage of a road traveled without haste, but without pause. Although my history within CLC has been short, it has been an intense, profound experience, an answer to a call from the Lord who invited me each time and in each new experience of the Exercises, to continue along this road. For this reason, the process of preparation for the Permanent Commitment carried out in 2006 in the national community, meant considering this brief history and giving a new yes to each one of the situations, in order to summarize it and make it public in the face of the national and world community, on the day of Pentecost.

Always seeking to “save” a space for our encounters with the Lord — in prayer, in the Sacraments, in the gratuitous time for the couple, in the Exercises - and not allowing ourselves to be taken over by the intense activity that life imposes on us these days

Last year when the NEC proposed a process to discern the possibility of making the permanent commitments, my first reaction was rejection. It was something instinctive. For what reason? I felt as if it were something different. The "permanent commitment" sounded like something solemn, complicated. However, after some prayer and listening to the companions of the NEC, I immediately changed my perception. Why not?



Juan José Mosca S.J.

All my personal history and our history as a couple is interwoven with community life, with the Ignatian Spirituality, with the experience of the exercises, discernment and the search for the mission. I could not imagine another way of being Christian that wasn't being part of CLC. Quickly, from the first organized encounter for this process, I felt the interior conviction that I wanted to make the commitment. I thought that in fact it was not

intended to do something new, but to recognize and confirm something that had already taken root in my life. My interior feeling became: I find no reasons not to make this commitment. So I confirmed it in the Exercises at the end of 2006.

Pedro

For me that day was a mixture of feelings. It was a normal day, because I publicly expressed something that I had lived for many years: my commitment with CLC and the conviction that this has been and will be the privileged place of my meeting with God, of the discovery of my mission and of my being sent. It has expressed and committed me to continue giving testimony that our life has a sense and a mission: collaborating with Christ in the construction of a just world, a more human world. But it was a joyful day exactly because I expressed this commitment openly, I gave the "reason of my faith" and I committed myself to this road that I have traveled until now blessed by grace; it is permanent and contributes to others. Permanent is a word that seems to have lost its value in this world.

What is permanent has become transitory and what is transitory has become accustomed to remaining permanent. Expressing my will for this permanence filled me with pride, not because something had been attained but because I expressed my desire to work for this day by day, every day of my life. It is a difficult road where at times I may feel lost, but where I have learned that I am not alone. I can appeal to the support and concern of my community. Working for a movement that has been a light in my life, in which my faith was strengthened, in which I discovered the infinite wealth of the Ignatian Spirituality. Thanks to this, it has been the place where I met God and discovered his will for my life and his infinite love.

Mariana

Regarding the sense that I give to my permanent commitment: it is in fact not that of a culmination, but rather it implies the principle of a greater availability and responsibility before what God calls me to within CLC. It is a greater application on my part to my current mission and to whatever God provides for me in the future. Finally, I understand that making the permanent commitment publicly on the day of Pentecost, reading it aloud to all, was for me and all my companions making the promise, a gift, a totally gratuitous grace from our God. Having received it I prayed that God would help me to be faithful to the commitment that I had assumed, so that presenting myself before him I could repeat the words of St. Ignatius: "Give me your love and your grace, that's enough for me," as the last sentence of the text of our Permanent Commitment states.

Wanda

What could I do when faced with the proposal made to us by the National Community to make the Permanent Commitment? It was clear that I could not say no. Neither could I say "not yet." I could not hide the fact that I was called into question by other members of the National Community who already live the General Principles more radically, didn't say "Yes" at the first opportunity. I don't doubt

that, having evaluated the question, a few who qualified long before me still have not made the Permanent Commitment. Still, in my case, at least in some matters, maybe I would not have accepted. Even so, I could not say no. I should point out that between the "I could not say no" and the saying "yes" to the Permanent Commitment, there was a distance that only now I have begun to travel. Where I feel this more clearly is in the responsibility assumed with the National Community. I have accepted the requirement of making the maximum effort by completing each assumed commitment. Taking on much more seriously and forever the commitments assumed temporarily many years ago.

Something similar to giving up excuses, of risking everything. Making up one's mind to putting together all one's means to respond to the Lord's call more closely according to our particular vocation. Having confidence that to be faithful to this commitment I can count on His Promise.

Rodrigo

The will seems to have played a secondary role. The commitment arises more from a recognition of what we are already than from an option for what we want to be. Of course there were, are and will be highs and lows, but there is already a proven apprenticeship of permanence. Sometimes the will plays a role in

making up one's mind to manifest it publicly, but on Pentecost I didn't think of the beginning of a commitment but the celebration of what already was. Yes it was the beginning of a step in which we openly manifested to the community our recognition that CLC is a definitive vocation for us, one that generates new freedom and new life. Because just as freedom of spirit is the true foundation of commitment, it is also one of its fruits.

In this year in which we commemorated 40 years of the first dreams sketched in our General Principles, CLC Uruguay received the grace of celebrating the first permanent commitments. The day of Pentecost the Lord blew on the candidates and on the whole community, giving us his love, his light and putting his Hope in us, his children, so that we can continue his work. All new grace contains a promise and an invitation. This is a new gift which is still wrapped up; it will be necessary to open it to see what is inside. What did the Lord mean by giving us this Grace? In order to receive the graces of God fully, we need to receive them, to become aware of them, to recognize and name them, appreciate them and discover how they invite us to look at and build the future: we are doing that.

Rafael Terra

Juan José Mosca S.J.

Translated from Spanish by Theresa Cademartori



CLC Participates in UN Conference on Climate Change



Sylvia Schmitt

More than 1,700 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society organizations from more than 60 countries gathered in New York for the sixtieth Annual UN Department of Public Information/NGO Conference. The three-day event, entitled "*Climate Change: How It Impacts Us All*", took place at UN Headquarters from 5 to 7 September 2007.

The Conference reviewed the scientific evidence on climate change, including its consequences on indigenous peoples, water security, land use and the politics of energy.

This year's Conference continued the mission of curbing global warming started over a decade ago, when the majority of UN member states passed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Presentations and discussions focused on the growing concerns associated with climate change and its profound and decisive impact on human well-being. Participants reviewed the latest scientific evidence from a wide variety of experts and also heard about the experiences of indigenous peoples. Both offered a better understanding of climate change, its threats and how NGO's like CLC can broaden the base for knowledge and action to reduce those threats.

Religious communities of many denominations were a visible presence, as always, among the NGO's. This year's conference brought a particularly strong articulation of the faith community's commitment to protecting our planet and also their concern for the ways that climate change will impact those already suffering from poverty and marginalization.

At the end of the conference on Climate Change, the working group members offered these reflections:

Leah Michaud:

*Spending hours listening to varied speakers at the UN DPI Conference, one eventually learns to pay particular attention to those who seem to reflect a more expert, more objective, more global, more independent, more compassionate outlook. The stories I heard lead me to conclude that we, civil society, including CLC, must be engaged **now** in the matter of climate change as the most critical issue facing the world today. Granted other issues such as poverty, human rights etc. are not to be put on some back burner and forgotten; CLC must continue to be vigilant and involved. But, unchecked climate change could result in water shortages for 1 in 6 people, the extinction of up to 40% of earth's species and up to 200 million environmental refugees. The*



Photo : <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/conference/Gallery.htm>

impacts are already extreme with the shrinking polar ice, melting permafrost and glaciers resulting in warmer and rising ocean levels. Animals, such as polar bears, and humans living on islands or low-lying coastal shores are at risk of extinction. We have less than 50 years to stabilize greenhouse gases and if we act now, we still have time to make a difference.

Jose Lim:

Global warming is unequivocal. This was the ringing warning during the conference, supported by solid scientific findings by IPCC (Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change). Through greenhouse gas emissions, human activity is directly responsible for climate change. Unless mitigated, climate change will lead to dire consequences for the entire world population and all living plants and animals:

- ♦ A temperature increase of only 1.5 –2.5 degrees centigrade will put 20-30% of plants and animals at the risk of extinction. Not only will many species be threatened, but vulnerable systems such as coral reefs, mangroves, marshes, low-lying coast, and water resources in mid-tropics will be at risk.
- ♦ There will be further reduction in water availability particularly in the tropics and sub-Saharan region where millions are already suffering from lack of access to clean water.
- ♦ A 1-2 degree centigrade rise in global temperature will lead to a reduction in agricultural production — particularly of climate sensitive products such as wheat. This will affect global food security.
- ♦ The impact of climate change that has led to extreme weather conditions, such as heat waves and typhoons, will be catastrophic on human health. The 2003 heat wave in France killed over 30,000 people and the recent floods in Europe and China are other examples of extreme weather.

The window of opportunity to stabilize global temperature is only 7-8 years if we are to avoid the disastrous consequences of global warming. By 2015, greenhouse gas emissions must begin to come down from their current level.

Mars Custodio:

My impressions are best summed in short phrases and thoughts:

- ♦ The Kenyan saying: The earth is on loan to us for our children.

- ♦ As participants in the global carbon-based economy, all of us are part of the problem and must as a nation, as a corporation, as a family, as an individual, search for solutions to reverse the alarming trend.

There were numerous workshops by experts on various solutions: new technology, nuclear energy with its new safety technology, conservation, carbon trading and auctioning, forestry renewal, thoughtful urban planning

- ♦ The most vulnerable developing countries who, ironically, contribute the least to warming, remain the most at risk from its effects, i.e. drought and food insecurity. They need assistance in their capacity to adapt.
- ♦ The spectacular success of the Montreal Protocol on the incremental reconstitution of the ozone layer could be a model for the implementation of the Kyoto protocol, which by political design lacks the support of the United States, China, and India - countries with the largest greenhouse gas emissions.

The most vulnerable developing countries who, ironically, contribute the least to warming, remain the most at risk from its effects, i.e. drought and food insecurity. They need assistance in their capacity to adapt

- ♦ *Incentives and ways to decrease carbon emission, e.g. carbon trading and auctioning, and adaptation maneuvers will be a huge, multi-billion dollar industry.*
- ♦ *Business and Industry must have mandatory limits on greenhouse gas emission - period.*

In an informal raise-your-hand survey in a large assembly hall, almost all responded positively to the question whether they thought they had a pretty good life at present. Almost none raised their hands when asked if they thought their children and grand-children will have as good a life.



Photo : <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/conference/Gallery.htm>

Ann Marie Brennan:

"We are responsible to pray and meditate, but also to have a personal relationship with, as well as be responsible for the institutions that we are part of — the organizations and structures that reflect a higher consciousness. We have a responsibility to change the world inside and outside, to find structures that reflect a higher consciousness: check media to discern the right information; look at the roots of the problems, e.g. the role of corporation and military; vote our values; protest

injustice; look at the beauty of nature; have gratitude; love the earth." (Quote from a conference workshop.)

Marie Schimelfening:

The climate change is affecting all of us around the world and through it we see how connected we really are in this day and age. We were encouraged and challenged as participants to engage one another and our membership in seeking ways to cope with the climate change and to use the best practices available to us to make a difference. It is very easy to say, "But I am only one person and what would it matter." I was struck in one of the sessions that one way of helping our earth is to plant a tree. And further, with the carbon dioxide we breathe out each day, each one of us would have to plant 11 trees to compensate! That is overwhelming, but workable. The United Nations has designated that the year 2011 will be the Year of Forests.

As we look at the Development Goals of the United Nations, we have to set goals to help save our environment. It is written that, "Global warming is a dramatically urgent and serious problem. We don't need to wait for governments to solve this problem: each one of us can begin to help by adopting a more responsible lifestyle starting from little,

everyday things. It's the only reasonable way to save our planet, before it is too late.

Sylvia Schmitt:

On top of all else that has been said, it's important to note that after the end of the conference, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded jointly to Al Gore, a climate activist and the UN's IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). This is no longer an issue for those on the fringe, but it has been recognized as a serious and looming threat to our well-being. Every major religious

tradition calls for believers to honor and care for the earth. We in CLC certainly hear that call, and must respond. What will YOU do today to make a difference?

You might begin by visiting one of these websites for further information:

www.un.org/climatechange (UN's work on climate change)

www.stopglobalwarming.org (A coalition of environmental organizations)

www.panda.org/climate (World Wildlife Federation)

www.carbonfootprint.com (Assess and reduce your carbon footprint).

Sylvia Schmitt
Chairperson of NY CLC WG

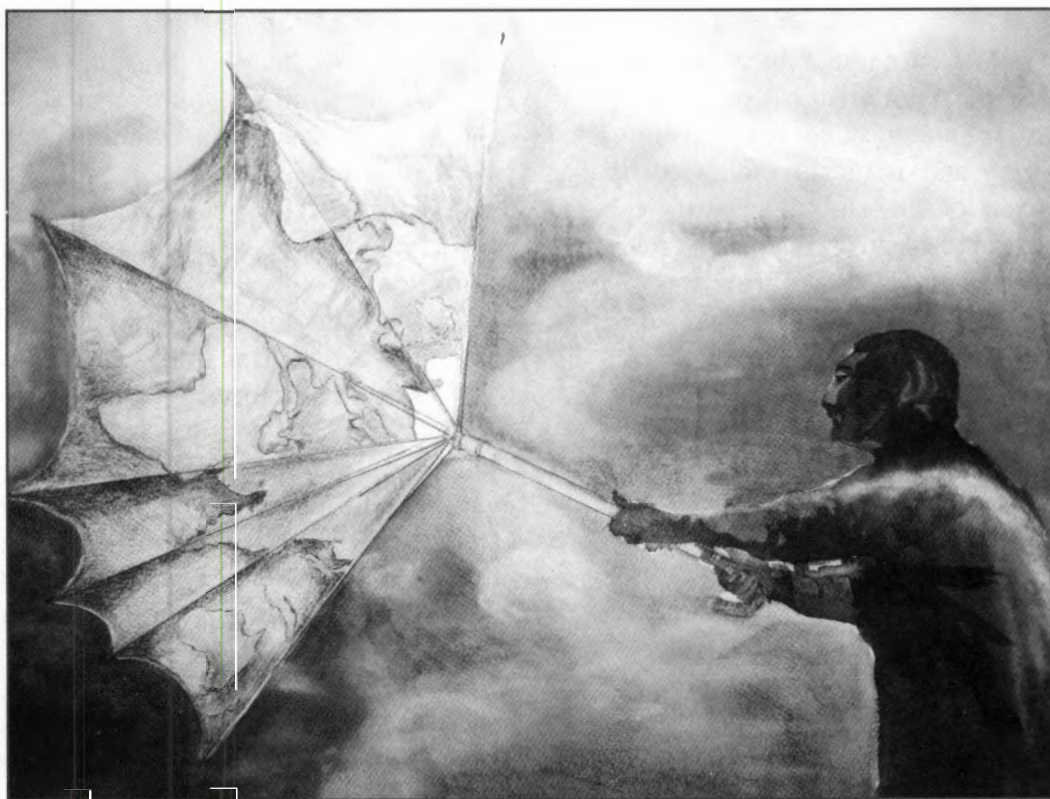


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CLC Prince of Peace-Young Adults share their experience



Margarita Maria Theye

Our CLC Prince of Peace Young Adults group from Miami, Florida USA has been led by Fr. William Kidwell S.J. for the past 20 years. The group is drawn from a wide area in Miami Dade County, from several different parishes, with a diversity of ethnic backgrounds. Prince of Peace Community is composed of an average of 12-15 members – a mix of young professionals and university students. We meet once a month on Sundays, in a

hall graciously offered by the Knights of Columbus. Each meeting begins with a brief welcoming and is quickly followed by the celebration of the Holy Eucharist with Fr. Kidwell as Presider. Afterwards, the study and discussion portion of the meeting is shared. This year, our group has agreed upon volunteered individual presentations on the different chapters of *"Jesus, A Historical Portrait"* by the St. Anthony Messenger Press.

Seasonal and yearly activities that our community participates in include; the Thanksgiving Basket for a poor family as well as the Christmas caroling for the elderly living in Carol Manor an assisted adult living facility near Mercy hospital. Sometimes, the elderly residents enjoy our singing and others humorously find us a nuisance. We have also recently started to attend the Magis Retreats given by a CLC sister group *"Alas de Cristo"*. Perhaps the most important activities for Prince of Peace is the participation in the yearly Life Chain held on highway US1 in Miami in the month of October as well as the Annual March for Life held in Washington D.C. every January on the anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade case. Our Miami March for Life gathering is composed of about an average of 90-100 people from different parishes, Respect Life Volunteer Counselors, University organizations from FIU, Barry, University of Miami as well as some of us from Prince of Peace and other CLC sister communities.

This Miami group is met by an average of over 200,000 other Pro-Life Marchers from across the Nation that is mostly comprised of youth, young adults, and families with their very young children, clergymen and Religious from different cultures and ethnicities. Marchers march peacefully with signs while praying or singing church or popular contemporary Christian songs while walking the several miles from the Obelisk to the Supreme Court Justice Building.

There are usually a handful of just 20 or so Pro-Abortion protesters awaiting the hundreds of thousands of Pro-Lifers to make their way up the mall in usually very cold temperatures. For me, this trip has been one of the most impacting pilgrimages that I have ever made and it was most uplifting to see that we are not alone and the majority still rules in favor of Life. Our Miami travel group, led and



Fr. Kidwell and Margarita Theye with the stole she painted for him

completely organized by Fr. Kidwell, also has the special honor and privilege to be the only group in the country to officially represent the March for Life organization by personally visiting every Congressman and Representative on Capital Hill with a message on behalf of their respective constituents to vote Pro-Life in upcoming legislations. Unfortunately, since last year, we were not allowed to bring in a single live long-stemmed rose to each Representative as a symbol of Life due to increasing security since September 11th.

All in all, during this fiscal year for our community, Prince of Peace has been one of prayer, study, sharing and activities that

promote Pro-Life awareness in our expansive Miami Dade county. We look forward to the next session and collaboration with all the other extraordinary CLC groups in our South Florida Region in the coming months ahead and hope to continue with our own current great attendance as this has been the best year thus far.

I would like to extend thanks and gratitude to Fr. William Kidwell S.J for his outstanding leadership and tireless devotion to CLC, our Young Communities and his Pro-Life missions during his entire 50 years Jubilee as a Jesuit!

Margarita Maria Theye



CLC Prince of Peace Young Adults at Fr. Kidwell's Farewell Gathering

Being CLC with other Ignatian people in Africa

A personal response to the experience of Debre Zeit



Thomas Théophile
Nug Bissohong

For several years I have been part of a team in Cameroon that provides formation for practising Christians who have the desire and are judged suitable in spiritual accompaniment, both theoretical and practical. This formation is based on the pedagogy of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, and the team is composed of a core of about a dozen – Jesuits, other religious and lay people from the Christian Life Community (CLC) of which I am a member.

The Jesuit Secretariat for the Promotion of Ignatian Spirituality, based in Rome, invited our 'Yaoundé Ignatian Group' to an important encounter organised for 21 – 29 June 2007 in the Ethiopian town of Debre Zeit, situated about fifty kilometres from the capital, Addis Ababa. In the beginning, this encounter, the first of its kind, was to bring together those running Retreat Houses or Jesuit Centres in Africa. In the end, it was open to other representatives of apostolic organisations or groups on the continent that offer the Spiritual Exercises as the characteristic instrument for evangelisation. That is how I was able to take part in the assembly at Debre Zeit, having been elected by my Group. I retain the unfailing savour of the experience. I am still finding it excellent and even foundational, both in the level of preparation for the encounter and its progress, as well as in the timely integration of the greater apostolic perspective in the light of the signs of the times given by God.

The collegial choice of the missionary

In the lay and/or religious circles where I normally move the practices linked to the collective process of electing those

responsible for different positions is very often a source of tension and division. In this context, I remember the very consoling experience of the dialogue session at the end of which the organisers of our Ignatian Group chose the person to represent us in Ethiopia, in an atmosphere of friendship and peace.

After the reading out of the invitation from the Jesuit Secretariat in Rome, we began by asking the Lord to enlighten us and put us in the right disposition for the subject we were going to tackle, so that *'all our intentions, actions and operations may be directed purely to the service and praise of His Divine Majesty'* (Spiritual Exercises # 46). We quickly agreed to accept the invitation, given that we were particularly interested in a number of the aims of the encounter: getting to know one another as we share apostolic joys and difficulties; the proposals for retreats and formation offered in different places; comparing the Exercises with African spirituality and traditional values; imagining the future together. In line with these aims, we defined the profile of the delegate, and each person present was able to speak out and then nominate freely another person.

This way of proceeding puts into practice and is inspired of course, to my mind, by what Ignatius advises *'for making a sound and good election'* (SpEx # 175, 178, 184). It led to my being elected as a delegate by the Group to go to the encounter at Debre Zeit, a choice that I welcomed straightaway as an exceptional divine favour, but also as a more far-reaching responsibility. Of course I must represent our Group but also represent the CLC, which, in certain Jesuit or even Catholic circles in Africa as elsewhere, tends still to be considered less as an authentic way in the Church than as a rather troublesome curiosity... This is where my first misgivings came from, the idea of being among Jesuits whom I did not know and whose friendship in the Lord was scarcely a guarantee. These misgivings began to vanish

when I received an encouraging letter from Fr. Eddie Mercieca in Rome, the initiator of the encounter. As soon as he was informed that I would be going to Debre Zeit, he wrote to me: *'Dear Thomas, I am very glad to have you in the meeting [...] in Ethiopia [...] Anne Marie Campbell, a lay woman from South Africa will also be there. Your presence as lay persons is a sign of the times I appreciate a lot. Thank you for participating'*.

At the local level, as well as the prayer of sending prayed over me with our pre CLC group, the Yaoundé Ignatian Group sought and found the money to finance the trip. I also felt encouraged and supported in various ways by members of my family, work colleagues, members of my national CLC, religious sisters, priests and Christians from the Church in Cameroon, a Church in which I realised I was becoming a missionary, in the light of the information given on this topic to the participants. I must also mention in passing, the fact, that, like the other participants actually present at the encounter, I was disagreeably surprised to learn that our friends from Chad and Madagascar were not able to be with us, because they were refused entry visas at the Addis Ababa airport, without any valid reason given – and this in the country that houses the headquarters of the African Union.

Another dynamic of collaboration in the Church

In relation to the development of the actual working [of the encounter] I felt joyfully confirmed in my support for a way of acting and an atmosphere which more and more promotes in Africa a concrete and appealing image of a Church-Family of God that we hope *'puts the accent on attention to the other, solidarity, warmth of relationships, dialogue and trust'* (John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation to the Church in Africa, 63). As in the Yaoundé Ignatian Group, which brings together men and women from all continents, young and less young, diocesan and religious priests, clerics and lay people, we tried to live in Ethiopia a friendship almost without borders through the organising and conduct of

the activities. This seemed to me to be founded ultimately on a favourable presupposition [SpEx #22] shared by all 24 participants, who came from 17 countries: two lay persons, two religious sisters, a diocesan priest and 19 Jesuits, brought together by the Lord himself. They were all, each and everyone, apostolic workers called to labour together in His Ignatian Vineyard.

In Cameroon, I had already benefited from open collaboration with the other members of our Yaoundé Group. When we had to develop the report of activities to present in Ethiopia, we began, as was our custom, both individually and afterwards collectively, by taking time to pray, reflect and answer the preparatory questionnaire, and that had facilitated the final writing [of the report]. I found a similar dynamic at Debre Zeit. In line with the topics variously tackled within the framework of the aims of the encounter and following the steps of listening, reflection and discernment, each one of us was enabled to express, in total freedom and trust, from our cultural context, our own experience or that of the organisation that we represented. The evaluation session planned for the end of each stage allowed for the sharing in common of the fruits and proposals so as to smooth the unfolding of the following stage.

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Indeed, and through experience, I know that particularly in Church circles the principal of collaboration which inspires the sharing of responsibilities sets great store by the known charisms and abilities of different individuals. Even so, I did not expect to glimpse this reality through experience: after all, that I, a layman, more of a French speaker than an English speaker, could be asked to produce the final report of our encounter. The assembly was very largely composed of English speaking religious men and women, available and more suitable than I am in several respects, yet I was told with great confidence

that the report would only be changed if there were need. It was the active and kindly support of the other participants that dissipated my anxiety and doubts in the accomplishment of the important and delicate task of secretary entrusted to me after one of our evening Masses. At Debre Zeit, in short, it was good to live in the midst of a clerical but never clericalist assembly, because it was clear that we were always seeking the greater glory of God. This is not always the case everywhere where I have been called to work in the Church.

Thanks be to God and everyone, we finally produced a kind of Common Declaration. We acknowledge in it that it is more among the religious men and women that our proposals for retreats and Ignatian formation find a favourable and fruitful response; the

important and strategic field of the diocesan priests is still to be harvested; the immense and promising land of the laity must be approached with creativity, as is already being done so well in South Africa, for example, '*the Spiritual Exercises have to be adapted to the dispositions of the persons who wish to receive them, that is, to their age, their[culture] education or their [intelligence] ability [...]*' (Eighteenth annotation, adapted). Everywhere the formation of prayer guides, spiritual companions and givers of the Exercises is being promoted, rediscovered as an authentic initiation experience that even recalls certain aspects of initiation in Africa.

We felt that all these challenges oblige us to a global and an up-to-date reflection on publicity or marketing of the specific Christian charism that the Lord has given us to offer in a traditional and modern African context, where different values and identified models are everywhere. This is where the importance of the second encounter of the same kind comes from. It is planned for the month of June, 2009 at the Manresa Spiritual Centre in Kinshasa. This time the prayerful reflection will focus on *The Spiritual Exercises as an instrument for evangelisation in Africa today*.

In the track of the next Synod

The relevance of this theme seems to me acknowledged. A number of pastoral challenges emphasised by the Metropolitan Archbishop of Addis Ababa, when he came to the Galilee Centre at Debre Zeit to speak to us one morning about the realities of his country and the '*Horn of Africa*', are in fact common to our local Churches on the continent: the spiritual, moral and/or material wretchedness of a large part of the population, even of the elite, which opens the door to a greater influence by Islam as well as Christian fundamentalism and Gnosticism; the desire for immigration by young people; the ethnic and sectarian



tyranny insidiously established as a system of government and even as final objective, in place of cultural, economic and social development desired by national communities... To confront these questions and many others which no doubt time did not allow Monsignor Brahana Yesus to touch on, there remains the common faith in our Saviour, proclaimed again today in the preparatory document for the next and second Synod of Bishops of the continent: *'Without allowing ourselves to be seduced by the naïve attitude that there exists an easy solution for every problem, the Church-Family of God in Africa proclaims that the solution is a Person: Jesus Christ!'* (Lineamenta, 31)

In this regard, it seems obvious to me that our Christian offer to souls, the Spiritual Exercises and the pedagogy of life that follows from it, finds its place fittingly in the development after the renewed profession of faith. Some expressions that please me to emphasise are familiar as well: *'By focussing her thoughts and actions on Christ, by making him known and loved, by introducing the imitation of Christ through an experience of a personal and communal encounter with him, the Church-Family of God in Africa wants to shine forth the life of the Trinity and transform, with Christ, through him, in him and for him, the story of African societies.'* (Lineamenta, 31).

I can see, in these lines, a relevant apostolic plan, that is already at the heart of my ministry with the Spiritual Exercises: to help each person sent to me by the Spirit, to come, by and for themselves, to the *'interior knowledge of the Lord, who for me has become man, that I may more love and follow him.'* (SpEx # 104). By introducing me several years ago to the Yaoundé Ignatian Group, who sent me to Debre Zeit, the CLC showed me the road of this service in the Church and supports me in it. In the aim planned for the African Synod, making Jesus Christ better known and personally loved, I feel the touch of a prophetic wind that precedes, goes through and accompanies our Ignatian encounter in Ethiopia. I find in that wind the sign of the anticipating love of God for the local churches

of the continent, at the heart of which CLC can and must take the place that belongs to it; by means of the serious commitment of its members and ecclesiastical assistants, even in the face of contrary or favourable winds.

Actor with the God of surprises

On this topic, I wholeheartedly give thanks to the Lord: on my first visit to Ethiopia, outside the setting of the encounter for which I had gone, he made me a blessed and active witness to the coming to birth of the CLC in that country, one of the African cradles of humanity. This birth is taking place in the heart of a Catholic Church totalling scarcely 1% of the 75 million inhabitants. The apostolic workers, from the figure of the Archbishop of Addis Ababa to the religious sisters of the diocesan Community of Bethany, whom I spoke with for a long time, are all taking to heart

the adult formation of lay people, who have to live their Catholic faith in an environment of orthodox Christian obedience or one tending more and more towards a conquering Islam. The CLC planted by God here is a sign of hope. For me who providentially watered the seed thus planted, I am savouring the grace of the pioneer.

This all began when I noticed the English version of a copy of the latest CLC *Progressio Supplement*, # 61, entitled **'In the Service of the Community: some reflections'**. The copy in question was on one of the tables in

The apostolic workers, from the figure of the Archbishop of Addis Ababa to the religious sisters of the diocesan Community of Bethany, are all taking to heart the adult formation of lay people, who have to live their Catholic faith in an environment of orthodox Christian obedience or one tending more and more towards a conquering Islam

the salon of the Jesuit house in Addis Ababa, where we were warmly welcomed before our departure for Debre Zeit, the place of the encounter. Having opened it to have a look, I realised that there was an article in it that I had sent to the editorial team a long time ago, '*Criteria for choosing leaders*'. And I found it published in Ethiopia! I shared my overflowing joy with the household straightaway.

That was when Father Groum Tesfaye realised with pleasure that I was a member of the CLC, and thought of inviting me to meet the members of the local precommunity in Addis Ababa, that had been gradually growing for a fairly short time, with his support in all areas. I made use, then, of a period of leisure one afternoon, to meet the seven young Christian professionals, who make up the little group at the present time. I remember as I spoke to them, at their request, about the apostolate of CLC Cameroon; I noticed that they were particularly surprised to learn that some of our experienced members offered Ignatian retreats. More generally, we shared on the CLC as a Community of Discernment for Mission in the Church, with emphasis on several particular aspects that interested my audience: the fundamental and personal experience of the love of Jesus through the

Spiritual Exercises; regular spiritual direction; the dynamics of the small group meeting.

At the moment of parting on the well-lit and tar sealed roads of Addis Ababa, the attitudes of my guests on this Sunday 24 June 2007 gave me the feeling that they had just received a little bit of what they were expecting at this time from a representative of the World CLC, whose visit of encouragement they were hoping for soon. The Executive Secretary, Guy Maginzi, to whom I reported later, wrote to me from Rome on this subject: '*My dear Nug, [...] I am happy to learn that the group in Addis Ababa is taking root. Father Groum spoke to me about it last January, and we were considering the possibility of letting this group have contact with the World CLC. At the time, I was thinking more of organising a visit to Addis by several members from Kenya. And instead it was from Cameroon that the first contact came...!*' I too am very happy to have been a committed actor with the God of surprises; and in many other instances that are profoundly marking the African Ignatian scene today, ensuring a great destiny for our Church-Family of God, in gestation.

Thomas Théophile NUG BISSOHONG
CLC Douala/Cameroon
Translated from French by Patricia Kane





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Fr. Adolfo Nicolás SJ, the new General Superior of the Society of Jesus and Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ, who continue to be the Ecclesiastical Assistant of the World CLC until the Holy See nominate the next one

The General of the Society of Jesus is not automatically the Ecclesiastical Assistant of the WCLC

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