



progress10

Publication of the World Christian Life Community



PHOTOS FRONT COVER

From up-left to right:

- *Cornel Okalo* (Kenya)
- CLC Cana Bucaramanga-Colombia with *Fr Jorge Caicedo, SJ* and *Sister Martha Ligia Mejia* celebrating 10 years of their apostolate: Spiritual Exercises accompanied by Lay people. November 2009
- *Rosa Pichardo* (CLC Dominican Republic), *Clara Keys* (CLC Mexico), *Denis Coronado* (CLC Venezuela), *Susel Moya* (CLC Cuba), *Raquel Aguilera* (CLC Paraguay) and *Margoth Paguay* (CLC Ecuador)
- *Alfonso Salgado* President CLC Spain
- EuroTeam *Saviour Borg* (Malta), *Evelyne Maloret* (England & Wales), *Inge Höpfl* (Germany) and *Marina Villa* (Italy)
- Group in formation, CLC Taiwan

PHOTOS BACK COVER

From up-left to right:

- First Central American CLC Meeting of July 2009. *Daniela Frank* and *Alberto Brito SJ* with CLC representatives of Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador
- *CLC Ivory Coast*
- *Members of CLC Argentina (groups of Corrientes, Rosario y Santafe)*
- *Members of the group "Gaudete" CLC Taiwan*
- *Antonio Matta* (CLC Spain) with *Sofia and Franklin*
- *Alison Vella* (Malta)
- Vietnamese Group with *Fr. Julian Elizalde SJ* and *Fr. Pham Thanh Liem SJ*
- National Assembly CLC Egypt

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progressio

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English, French and Spanish Editions
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ABOUT OUR LOGO

We did not go too far to find inspiration for the logo of the Christian Life Community (CLC). Countless books have been written about the Salvation history of CLC and its beginning in year 1563. From that came the Marian Congregations and its symbol (shown on the top right), having the "P" over the "X" (for the Greek Christos) and the inserted "M" illustrates that the Congregations were put under the patronage of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The blue curved line illustrates a movement forward to **one World Community in 1967**; hence the globe. From this new beginning came a new name: Communauté de Vie Chrétienne (CVX) in French; Comunidad de Vida Cristiana (CVX) in Spanish; Christian Life Community (CLC) in English.

PROLOGUE

1

T rue to its tradition, this issue of *Progressio* reflects the richness and diversity that nourishes the life of our world community. At the heart of this life is undoubtedly Discernment. More than a feature of our way of doing things, discernment is really our way of being. Therefore it is necessary to regularly renew ourselves by sharing with others and updating our knowledge of Ignatian discernment. Thus, Marita De Lorenzi of Argentina and Nug Théophile of Cameroon were sent by the ExCo to a training session on discernment in Rome organized by the Society of Jesus' Secretariat for Ignatian Spirituality. Nug has sent us some impressions of his experience. An attentive reading of the other articles will throw light on discernment as a common backdrop to these sharings: yet each is so different because of the nature of the activities and the contexts in which they were lived.

Our vision as a community is also apostolic, as evidenced by the decision of CLC Korea to open and run a multicultural center for children. In addition to giving an overview of the apostolic work of CLC Korea, Jinhui shares with us a good experience of being open to the changing needs of the social milieu in which the Lord has missioned the national community. Within this same apostolic perspective, Magdalena Palencia of Mexico talks about the involvement of CLC at the sixty second annual conference of the Department of Information - Non-Governmental Organizations of the United Nations. CLC, as we know, is in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. It is a privilege that four members of the CLC Mexico, along with a Jesuit, accepted the invitation to represent the global community at this meeting.

Two testimonies of the experience of Magis 2008, help us to remember this Ignatian event organized on the sidelines of the recent World Youth Day. It is not a mere nostalgic remembrance but rather an act rooted in practical experience, helping to focus our attention on the place we give to youth in our community. The national assembly of CLC Colombia, as related by Natalia Becerra, is also an example of the path followed by a community in the process of discernment. We give thanks along with Natalia who completes her service as President of CLC Colombia. She acknowledges the Lord's presence in the life of the community and those brothers and sisters that he placed in her path. We also note in passing her invitation to use the Internet to communicate and strengthen the bonds of unity among us.

The Colombia CLC, so to speak, is the "mother" of Sofia Montanez, wife of Franklin Ibanez, our new Executive Secretary. They introduce themselves in a joint article. As immediate predecessor of Franklin, my prayer is that our Lord enable him to always recognize His presence, especially when He appears under unusual and unexpected circumstances. May the support we owe to Franklin energize his activities and bring him peace when he is faced with difficulties. Thus,

when reading anew these experiences, we can rejoice for allowing God to be God in our personal and communitarian lives, particularly thanks to the service of Franklin. This then is what the experience of discernment is – *a way of being*.



Guy Maginzi



Guy Maginzi
CLC Canada - French

Common Apostolic Discernment:

Apprenticeship in the steps of Ignatius of Loyola in Rome



Thomas Théophile
Nug Bissohong

The Jesuit Secretariat for Ignatian Spirituality organised a course/workshop on Common Apostolic Discernment (CAD), from 19 January to 3 February, 2009. This international formation meeting took place in a retreat house run by the Sisters of Christ the King, located at Monte Cucco, a district in the south-west of 'the Eternal City'. There were 85 of us in total, from 31 countries and

every continent: Jesuits, religious sisters, and laity, all linked by Ignatian Spirituality and all engaged in apostolic leadership. The presence of four laymen of the Lutheran Church of Finland was much noted and enriching.

To facilitate the work of the course, which was held in English, the person in charge, Edward Mercieca, added three members of the ESDAC¹ team: two other Jesuits, Michel Bacq and Frank Janin, as well as a Religious Sister of the Sacred Heart Congregation, Chantal de Jonghe. It was from Edward too, that I initially received the invitation to take part in this meeting: he and I had the grace of collaborating in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia, in June 2007, afterwards in YaoundJ and Douala in Cameroon in May 2008, in the context of meetings in Africa for sharing experiences and reflection concerning spiritual accompaniment in the light of the **Spiritual Exercises**².

A further invitation was sent to me by Levi Mateshe and Guy Maginzi, in the name of the Executive Council of the Christian Life Community (CLC), which asked me to represent the World Community at this Ignatian assembly.

The double call stayed with me as a powerful sign that the Lord really wanted to mould me, at this moment of my life, for '*leadership and decision-making in common*', the other formulation used for the subject of the course-workshop. I have thus had the opportunity of going deeper in initiation from '*I*' to '*we*' in committing myself, on my journey, to the intercession of particular saints: Peter, Paul, Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier and Paula Frassinetti in Rome, Francis and Clare in Assisi; I discovered and contemplated actual traces of their life here on Earth.

Contemplating again the whole of this experience, I wrote down, at first just for myself, its fruits under four successive points of practical wisdom for living, which I am now trying to put into practice. As well, I find material for the prayer known as '*repetition*' in the expression of these points (SpEx 62). This allows me to return from time to time to where I felt spiritual consolation or desolation most strongly, in this exciting adventure with Jesus Christ in Italy.

Defining and taking on a challenge together

The objective of the formation proposed at Monte Cucco was as follows: to acquire tools suitable for a Common Apostolic Discernment, so that we can use them appropriately, each of us in our specific ministry. We were certainly entitled to conferences on theory, but the organisers opted for a teaching process which above all invited the participants '*to learn while doing*'. We thus, primarily, lived and/or relived experiences of discernment. These enabled us to discover specifically how the

¹ The Spiritual Exercises for Communal Apostolic Discernment. This is composed of individuals proposing '*to put the means of the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius at the service of groups wishing to communicate better and lead discernment together*'.

² For the references of the citations, the text is indicated here by the abbreviation SpEx followed by the corresponding number, in brackets.

interior movement of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola accompanies an apostolic group in its seeking.

The first point of interest that I retain from the course-workshop sends me back, in one sense, exactly to what Ignatius suggests when he speaks about *'putting before myself where I am going and before Whom'* (SpEx 131) or to wonder *'and for what?'* (SpEx73). The underlying dynamic here, applied to the Common Apostolic Discernment, of necessity invites us to clarify, for all those involved, the actual aim of the process that we are undertaking. Thus at Monte Cucco initially, during the first stage, programmed from Monday 19th till Friday 23rd January, 2009, we sought to agree on the subject of our discernment. For that, the lines of action and orientations of the 35th General Congregation of the Jesuits held one year earlier, from 7th January to 6th March, 2008, regularly served as reference material. This choice at times disturbed the climate of confidence and of communion already established amongst us from the first day, after the meetings of presentation in pairs, in plenary sessions or in small mixed groups of 5 or 6 people. Many participants, indeed, sometimes felt it to be improper, that before an audience whose Ignatian allegiance was sufficiently varied, the lecturers or exhibitors who followed one another on the podium were exclusively Jesuits, who were there, for the most part, to emphasise one or another fruit of their 35th General Congregation.

Animated however by the spirit of favourable presupposition that Ignatius recommends us to adopt and develop, (SpEx 22), we were able to move on and to focus together on points of mutual interest. Many varied exchanges and prayerful reflections around the presentations of Father General Adolfo Nicolas, followed by Michael Holman, Lisbert d' Souza, Antoine Kerhuel and Daniel Patrick L. Huang allowed us to understand, first of all, the same need for Common Apostolic Discernment. This allows us, among other matters selected, to live a *'creative fidelity'* insofar as we take into account the new needs of those whom we

want to serve; to welcome the will of God who also expresses himself through the word of others... Our patient taking on of the exemplary way of proceeding of the Jesuits during the 35th Congregation finally led us to the open and dynamic formulation of a question to which we were to give one or more answers during the second stage of the course-workshop: *'How to collaborate better in a Common Mission?'*, understood as the mission of Christ.

To be each one and all with Jesus Christ

Also, from Monday 26th to Friday 30th January, as the object of the discernment was clearly posed in our assembly, each participant felt more involved in the unfolding of the process and more ready to own it. Starting from our own experience in a human community, and/or Ignatian in



Participants of the Common Apostolic Discernment Course
Rome, January 2009

origin, and respecting the experiences of others, we were more open to spiritual conversation. This exercise of methodical sharing and listening, practised in pairs, in small groups and in plenary sessions, *'invites us to meet God in the word and the face of others. It prolongs personal prayer. By the sharing of their personal experience of prayer and the benevolent listening of others, the members of the group place*

*themselves together under the guidance of the Spirit*³.

We can find the scriptural bases of this practice in, for example, the dialogue of Jesus with the Samaritan woman (Jn 4 :1-42) or with the disciples at Emmaus (Lk 24 :13-35)). For those familiar with the Spiritual Exercises, spiritual conversation draws its origin from the exchange among the three Divine Persons that Ignatius has us contemplate through his presentation of the mystery of the Incarnation (SpEx 107). I have found something there of what is already well expressed in our **General Principles**⁴ and in **Our CLC Charism**⁵, and which we try to live in our local communities at our regular meetings. In relation to the question of collaboration, my personal sharing was in accord with the profession of faith which we made at the

One of the major effects of our successive spiritual conversations is to have opened up to each of us some aspects of our life which need conversion, in order to be more open to the Ignatian call

General Assembly of Itaici in Brazil in 1998, and which the Assemblies of Nairobi in Kenya (2003) and of Fatima in Portugal (2008) have surely confirmed: *CLC feels a particular call to collaboration in mission with the Society of Jesus and other Ignatian family members. CLC is especially interested in the creation and actively supporting apostolic networks within the Church and with other international groups.*⁶

Like all the friends in the Lord who came to Monte Cucco, it was a matter, clearly, of speaking about the joys, the sorrows and the questions related to the desire of horizontal and vertical collaboration in the Mission of Christ, which afterwards left the echo of a

friendly, true and welcoming listening to resonate in us. Everyone started from the fruit of the re-reading of personal prayer made according to the process of the Spiritual Exercises; choosing biblical texts, presentation of preambles and points for prayer were all adapted to the nature of the consensus we were seeking concerning one aspect of our way of living in collaboration.

On this matter, precisely, it seems to me that one of the major effects of our successive spiritual conversations is to have opened up to each of us some aspects of our life which need conversion, in order to be more open to the Ignatian call which we are already responding to in the company of other people. As far as I am concerned, the experience of apostolic collaboration naturally referred to my family life as a confirmed bachelor and a teacher by profession, the commitment to formation to which my membership of the CLC and the Ignatian Groups of Cameroon leads me, my activities in my developing parish, St Frances of Assisi in Douala. What the Spirit has given me to deliver and to hear from members of my various groups is consonant in me in the form of a confirmation of this very clear invitation personally addressed to me: to be a collaborator of the Lord who must, in Him and around Him, 'tear out ... and plant' (Jer 1 :10), without being unaware of one or the other of the two aspects of the Paschal Mystery thus expressed, or then to reverse the logic of the dynamics, on my own initiative.

Beyond individual graces, the whole of our Ignatian body in discernment has strongly felt that at the heart of our diversity, our rediscovery of unity and communion were priceless gifts of the Lord. We joyously celebrated them during Eucharistic liturgies and festive evenings coloured by our origins and our respective talents. We could identify a certain number of fundamental human and Christian values whose practical

³ Michel Bacq, Jean Charlier and the ESDAC Team: *Practice of discernment in Common: Manual for Guides*. Namur/Paris, Editions FidelitJ, 2006. p.38.

⁴ N. 11-12

⁵ N. 115

⁶ Progressio: *Our Common Mission*, 2001. p. 7, on www.cvx-clc.net

adoption supports apostolic collaboration: faith in God, interior freedom, the favourable presupposition and love of differences, trust and mutual respect, the seeking and the valuing of consensus. As well, everything we rediscovered through the contemplation of two experiences used for reference: the discernment which led to the choice of Matthias to replace Judas in the group of the Apostles (Act 1:15-26) as well as the famous '*deliberations of the first Fathers*', of the Jesuits, in March-June 1539.

Of this essential part of the meeting I remember too that the members of the organising team did not leave the impression of having come provided with intangible truths to communicate, but rather with the desire to recognise, indicate and follow the breath of the Spirit in each and every one of us. It is thanks to such an attitude of accompaniment that we came to consider seriously, for every practice of Common Apostolic Discernment, the fundamental role of prayer, starting from the Word of God in the Bible and our own life, the place of interpersonal relationships and the direction of the Church. The desire to make use of the tools received during this time and to communicate something of our lived experience emerged naturally.

Living from a knowledge of the heart received and giving in return

The third and last stage, which took place from Monday 2nd to Wednesday 4th February 2009, allowed us to consider what it is possible to do in a concrete fashion within our respective apostolic milieu. In this ever-changing situation, we began by following the interesting and promising testimonies of two lay participants from France: George Durner of *Noah's Ark* and Jacques FrJmiot of the *Way of Emmaus*. These led many of us to feel that the animation of a process of Common Apostolic Discernment is not exclusively Jesuit or clerical.

Working groups of two types were then formed. The first grouped us by subjects of personal interest and was subdivided into 11 sub-groups: the animation of the parish, directing centres of Ignatian Spirituality, leadership in multifaith countries, initial formation, school administration, counseling, the setting-up of a website for the Ignatian network, dialogue with believers of other religions, social analysis, Ignatian formation, commitment to CLC.

I naturally joined about fifteen participants registered in the last sub-group mentioned. Maria del Carmen De Lorenzi of Argentina, with whom I officially represented CLC, gave each one of us the opportunity to share the fruit of our re-reading of the whole lived experience at Monte Cucco. Essentially, we were unanimously confirmed in the conviction that Common Apostolic Discernment is, for us, an invaluable instrument and capable of helping us enter into the grace of Fatima, which calls us '*to be a prophetic apostolic body*'; personal spiritual discernment rediscovered by us to be truly an inescapable prerequisite.

The second type of group was formed around workshops. The exercise in common consisted of constructing, over one weekend, a plan and a schedule, in response to a request for assistance in expressing discernment in common. Three case groups seeking the will of God were considered here, who would ask us for help in a more or less critical situation: parishioners; Christian teachers working among non-Christians or non-believers; a local CLC group, some of whose members' lukewarm commitment is a source of division and threatens the very survival of the group.

Cases thus evoked were certainly imaginary, but the effort made in each workshop to propose a framework for a model

Common Apostolic Discernment is, for us, an invaluable instrument and capable of helping us enter into the grace of Fatima, which calls us '*to be a prophetic apostolic body*';

discernment helps us, by the subject matter, approach more nearly, so to speak, the essential thread of discernment in common. This last, we felt, begins from the conviction according to which the agreement between the members of a group must be established on three levels corresponding to three basic questions, whose answers are authoritative for each and everyone of us: **Who** are we for Jesus Christ? **What** are we called to? **How** do we answer this call today? The framework assumes three integrated dimensions of the life of faith: identity, vocation and mission. It is an intelligent and permanent interiorisation of the underlying dynamics that really gives a communal and coherent dimension to apostolic life.



For CLC: Thomas Nug (on the left) and Marita De Lorenzi

On the list of the practical examples treated at Monte Cucco and which enabled my formation, I must also raise some of my anxieties linked to my stay in Italy, a country which I was visiting for the first time. It seems to me that the enlightenment and the support which were given to me on this subject are indeed the fruit of discernment in common, in which we all took part, in the corridors.

'Where am I going to stay in Rome inexpensively, after the encounter?' Such, indeed, is one of the questions that I asked myself even before my departure from Douala. I was thus in search of a pied-à-terre from which I could travel to two other towns in Italy: initially to Brescia for some business

to conclude with Sister Gardonia Maria of the Sisters of St Dorothy of Cemmo, an Ignatian collaborator for years in Cameroon; afterwards to Turin, at the invitation of a university colleague, to speak to the students about the phenomenon of initiation in Cameroon, in particular through the autobiographical accounts of the French Jesuit, Eric de Rosny.

Undoubtedly encouraged by the practice of spiritual conversation around me, I freely shared my concern with other participants, who were always available during meals and the moments of relaxation. The Spirit, through Cathy Rebello of the Sisters of St Dorothy, finally directed us towards a Cameroonian priest, Emile Martin Dibongué, whom I had never met before nor even heard tell of. He and other members of the management team of the Pontifical Urban University generously and without charge lodged me with them, not far from the CLC World Secretariat, among nearly 150 seminarians and priests from the whole world come to finish their studies of Theology. Here, like elsewhere in Rome, I had the enormous joy of sharing, of communicating deeply with diocesan priests, obviously open to my identity, to my lay vocation and mission which I embodied; as a member of CLC, my spiritual joy was particularly nourished to find among them some of the people whom I had accompanied, in the context of Ignatian formation, in Cameroon.

To listen to the Pope, in spite of diversions of every sort

At the Pontifical Urban University, the window of my Roman room opened directly on that from which the Pope usually presides over the prayer of the Angelus, in Saint Peter's Square! The occasion was thus offered to me to pray directly with him, in a privileged proximity; far better than that which I had when our group from Monte Cucco attended the General Audience on Wednesday 21st January, or when I had the chance to be present, with Benedict XVI, at the concert

given to celebrate 80 years of the Vatican State, on Thursday 12th February, held in the Paul VI Room. In this way, it was from my room that I received in my heart the Sunday papal apostolic blessing, on me and on my close relatives; and also on the many objects of piety and souvenirs that I bought here and there for gifts, thanks to the money I had available because of profiting from the free lodging. I was not slow to see, in Rome, then later on in Cameroon, the effects of this blessing, in me and around me.

Another personal concern was fortuitously introduced as a matter of community discernment by the initiator of the formation encounter. On my arrival at Monte Cucco, Edward Mercieca indeed challenged me, with a surprising seriousness: *'Thomas, do you know why you are in Rome at this time? It is to prepare the imminent visit of the Pope to Cameroon!'*. These words echoed in me throughout our work. This all the more because, since Douala, I already cherished the desire to share, with the Pope himself or with those close to him whom I wanted to meet, a Cameroonian approach to this topic of the second Synod of the Bishops of the continent planned for October 2009, where the Successor of Peter was to give, in my country, its Working Instrument: *'the Church in Africa at the service of the Reconciliation of justice and peace'*. I asked myself, in the Ignatian way, the following question: *'What must I do?'*

It was at the end of the spiritual conversations that I took part in among individuals and the group, with Joséphine Shamwana-Lungu of Zambia, Maria del Carmen De Lorenzi of Argentina, Jiménez Rivera of Puerto Rico, Bareto Savio of India, and other CLC members and guides that I could finally take the decision to ask for an audience with the spokesman of the Vatican, with success. What I carried in me had been taken up by others, thus giving life to our DSSE dynamics recommended to the CLC General Assembly of Nairobi: *'Meetings may need to be refocused to better live out the call*

to be members of an apostolic body who practise personal and communal discerning, sending, supporting and evaluating'.⁷

So, with a remarkable simplicity, the eminent spokesman received me one Saturday afternoon, at the Vatican Radio, and listened to me at length. I was happy to relate to him, as I would have done with a questioner in a spiritual conversation aimed at a particular outcome, what other Cameroonians and myself have in our hearts. We had already spoken of this to the Catholic and political hierarchy of the country, who were obviously favoured by the enormous privilege of organising, for the third time in 14 years, the visit of a Pope to Cameroon.

Our local Christian community, I emphasised to Father Federico Lombardi, was going to welcome Benedict XVI in sumptuous surroundings or at places certainly refitted at great expense, as had already been the case for the two visits of the late lamented John Paul II. However, 119 years after the arrival of the first Catholic missionaries, Father Henri Vieter and his seven companions, we have not always made much effort to restore and develop Marienberg, the base for those Pallotines who arrived in 1890, at the time of the German *'Protectorate'* (1884-1915) preceding the Franco-British *'Supervision'* (1916-1960 and 1961). Paradoxically, the site of the Mother Parish remains inaccessible to the ordinary faithful and is almost forgotten. Ought it not, indeed, and on our initiative, become a place of national pilgrimage? What the psalmist says of the inhabitants of Sion is very appropriate to the inhabitants of Cameroon, who, at Marienberg, were all consecrated to God on December 8, 1890, through the intercession of Mary Queen of the Apostles: *'all were born in her'* (Ps 87:5)!

With my questioner, whose reaction appeared to me sympathetic and professional, I made a point of saying that with the neglect of such a symbolic place, it is obvious that we are living undeniably in destructive rupture with some fundamental and spiritual aspects of our

⁷ Progressio: Supplement No 58, 2003. p. 95

The experience of
Monte Cucco gave
me the essence of
what we must seek
and find together, in
our faith in one
God, 'who works
and labours for me
in all things'

collective identity. This rupture appears to me heavy with diverse consequences for our current socio-political life, which seems inspired rather by sectarian doctrines or dangerous occultism, of various origins. Their many followers seem to have taken the country hostage by deceit. But more than a simple affair of legitimate restoration of our foundational site, which none of the three visits of the Pope was able to honour; what is at stake is in fact our fidelity to the spiritual gifts that Christ offered to the entire national community at Marienberg. We Catholics, at least, would have to rediscover and revive the grace of the original call made to our country, and live it, in good times and bad. My deep desire, in any case, was, that the Pope, once arrived in Cameroon, would encourage

the Catholic and political hierarchy, whom he was going to meet, to validate an indisputable landmark.

Widening the field of the argument, I noted that the same requirement for historical and spiritual fidelity is also valuable for the majority of other African countries in search of 'reconciliation of justice and peace' today.

They have also been defined as modern political entities in the context of Western colonialism at the end of the 19th century, which also corresponds, thanks be to God, with the third phase of the formal evangelization of our continent. The experience of Monte Cucco gave me the opportunity to formulate in terms of 'historical lines' and in the 'name of grace' the essence of what we must seek and find together, in our faith in one God, 'who works and labours for me in all things' (SpEx 236). My expressed wish is that the Pan African meetings of the Church, in particular the CLC and Ignatian ones, would increasingly carry on this project of rediscovery and

of endogenous structuring of our identity, the heart of our vocation and mission.

From this point of view, as one who believes in the influential power of fundamental spiritual experiences, I felt confirmed indeed by Pope Benedict XVI arriving in Africa in March 2009, one month after our gathering in Rome. In his eyes, Jesus taking refuge with us, in Egypt (Mt 2:13-15), has already enlightened every step of communal discernment which we could initiate today to find our way, escape from our respective dead ends, and serve the will of God everywhere and in all things. Certain individuals, unfortunately, only increased their negative understanding of the remarks made by the Pope about abortion, and the distribution of condoms as a means of fighting against AIDS. However, the Successor of Peter offered us an invaluable plan, capable of inspiring consensus to a greater or lesser degree. I believe that these remedies will surely be effective, not only for various evils, but also for their primary causes, if we achieve them and live them in the light of the original grace that Benedict XVI opportunely recalled to our memory in Yaounde:

*'Your continent has been blessed by our Lord Jesus himself. At the dawn of his earthly life, sad circumstances led him to set foot on African soil.[...] From that time on, the seed of his presence was buried deep within the hearts of this dear continent, and it has blossomed gradually, beyond and within the vicissitudes of its human history.[...] Africa has received a particular vocation to know Christ. Let Africans be proud of this! In meditating upon, and in coming to a deeper spiritual and theological appreciation of this first stage of the kenosis, Africa will be able to find the strength needed to face its sometimes difficult daily existence, and thus it will be able to discover immense spaces of faith and hope which will help it to grow in God.'*⁸

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

⁸ Extract from the speech of Pope Benedict XVI to the Special Council of the Synod for Africa, 19th March, 2009, at the Apostolic Nunciature in Cameroon.

Marita De Lorenzi talks to us about Communal Discernment⁹

We talk a great deal about communal discernment in our [Christian] life communities; can we talk rightly of communal discernment at the group level when it is interior, personal movements that are discerned?

Indeed, we do talk a great deal about discernment. And in reality there is a great deal of 'untruth-discernment'.

In numerous situations, not knowing how to discern personally makes matters difficult. 'Deliberate' is what we usually do; it is very different from 'discerning'. When a member of the community brings something already discerned to the community, it is not about an authentic discernment.

It is quite a journey that must be gone through on a personal and communal level, of 'indifference', interior freedom, openness, defending the proposal of the other, 'giving up' what does not help...in the end, it is a matter of attaining essential attitudes so that the community is able to reach a communal discernment.

Deliberate may be decided by a majority; discernment, by consensus.

How do you notice that in our communities, this important tool is used daily; are we prepared for 'discernment at the community level'?

I return to the preceding point. I have no experience of the way other national communities 'discern'. But in general, we must still make a journey through the process of interior personal and communal conversion

to bring about a real communal discernment. It is not an easy task, but it is important to know that IT IS POSSIBLE.

I have had very good experiences of discernment with teams for the Exercises, at some moments in the reunions of the National Council of Argentina and during some community reunions.

The most recent was our National Assembly from 23-24 May 2009. It was a true grace from the Lord to feel the maturity attained by the National Community with the passing of all these years, the atmosphere of freedom in the sharing – even in our differences, in the prayer, and, well...the result is a document which summarises the experience and which the incoming and outgoing National Executive Committees are in the process of putting on paper.

What are the decisions that the community needs to submit to a discernment of this sort?

For me, the decisions that the community needs to submit to a communal discernment are those which give a meaning to the life of the community and for which it is formed.

So, in the same way that an individual makes the Spiritual Exercises: to search, to find, and to live his/her life according to the will of God, the Community must be an authentic community in discernment by finding what the Lord wants for it, as a community on mission.

Obviously, by helping the other members discern their own apostolate, by taking it on as community, in the same way as other personal questions asked during the community

⁹ Excerpts from the interview given to Blog Compartir (<http://compartircvx.blogspot.com>) by CLC Ecuador, published 1 June 2009]

reunions.

How do you think communities and members need to form themselves in this way to ensure that the discernment is truly a tool used correctly?

Fundamentally, by making the Spiritual Exercises. Regularly. For us, for CLC, it is important to make the Exercises over 8 days every year. There is no better school for discernment than the Exercises.

In the same way, personal [spiritual] guidance is fundamental, as is a guide in each community.

The meetings of 'guides and coordinators' are also important, by way of supervision.

And of course, permanent formation in terms of spirituality, discernment, etc, cannot fail.

Marita De Lorenzi

CLC Argentina

Translated into English by Patricia Kane



During the last World Youth Day, a large number of members of CLC Australia had the opportunity to participate very actively. We gave two accounts of Magis08 Experience which show how, through our reflections and lived experience, we recognise the presence of the Spirit with us.

Pilgrimage to the Blue Mountains, NSW

Members of the Sydney region CLC gathered to celebrate World CLC Day in 2007, central to which was a presentation about the Magis 08 programme for World Youth Day pilgrims. Ideas were invited to lead experiments in the areas of: creativity, service and pilgrimage. Moved by the impetus of a big idea and the Holy Spirit, I offered to lead a 'Pilgrimage to the Blue Mountains'.

I have a cottage at Blackheath in the upper Blue Mountains where, for many years, I have led prayer and reflection days for parish groups and school teachers. I had many resources at my fingertips and I also knew the mountain landscapes and had walked many of the bush tracks.

My idea was to centre the experiment in an experience of the mountains and the bush, to include an introduction to indigenous culture and spirituality, a service activity in the local parish and several bush walks. This would offer an opportunity for the pilgrims to meet God in the countryside around them, to explore the nature of the Australian bush, mountains and canyons; to push out the boundaries and have an adventure with God.

The idea was accepted, and I invited people I knew and respected to join me on the leadership team. It was to become a great experience of Magis, 'the more'.

Looking back, there are four areas which stand out:

Prayer

There was great richness in the reflection periods, as we prayed with scripture and the events of each day. The pilgrims, from Singapore, the USA, N.Z. and Australia were open, generous and affectionate, and expressed their appreciation in words and deeds. At our community Eucharist each day, the prayer and scriptural reflections revealed a depth and maturity we had not expected in such young people. The Magis journals provided to each pilgrim assisted with their reflections.

Indigenous culture and spirituality

We spent most of one day with two indigenous rangers from the National Parks and Wildlife Discovery Service. Our day began with prayer overlooking the mountain canyons, with birdcalls and early morning mist.

They welcomed us to the land, and introduced our pilgrims to aboriginal culture, the diversity of tribal groups, the tools, the law and spirituality.

Central to this was



Margaret Cody



their respect for the land as sacred. During a 'bush tucker' (Australian slang for food) walk, the rangers pointed out edible roots, berries and flowers. We were reminded to *'take only what you need'*, and to

moved by this sign of recognition from their ancestors. It was a sacred moment which touched us all with its beauty and unexpectedness. Cockatoos usually fly in twos or threes.



'acknowledge the land' and its people wherever you are'. We drove to a sacred site, had a smoking ceremony in which gum leaves are burned to send away harmful spirits and to purify those present. We walked through the fragrant smoke and then climbed through the bush to Emu Cave. Deep engravings of emu footprints, hundreds of them, as well as kangaroo paws, scored the walls of the cave and stretched into the darkness: ancient marks of an ancient people who sat there and told stories

Parish Service

This was a community service which I had organized with the Dominican sister who is Pastoral Associate and leader of the Sacred Heart Parish in Blackheath (there is no resident priest). Our pilgrims worked in the parish for an afternoon, cleaning windows, digging and weeding gardens, and visiting frail, elderly parishioners. We then shared Eucharist with some of these parishioners and afterwards enjoyed a parish social evening with supper and a concert. One of our pilgrims from Denver, Colorado said, 'We came to offer service, but we received service. We were given so much.' Another commented that when they walked into the parish hall, they knew the faces and were greeted by people they had visited that afternoon. They were not strangers. The hall was decorated with streamers and balloons in the colours of each of the three national groups, as well as with wall hangings. Parishioners had cooked their specialties, and the pilgrims in turn prepared some of their dishes and served them. Later people said, 'That was one of the best parties I have ever been to!' It was also deeply sacramental.



The Grand Canyon walk

With an outside temperature of 3 degrees and sleet falling, I had some misgivings about taking 16 pilgrims on a fairly arduous walk into one of the Blue Mountains'

thousands of years ago. We then climbed higher through thick bush up a hill to a clearing where tribal elders used to meet and talk. As we looked out over the country, a large flock of black cockatoos flew over our heads. Our indigenous guides were very

most dramatic canyons. It is a steep walk of three hours with waterfalls and sharp drops into a deep canyon on one side of the path – potentially dangerous. At the bottom of the canyon, we would walk up a river bed crossing slippery, wet boulders before

ascending to the cliff tops again. There were no mishaps and, on the way up, we were enchanted by the call of lyrebirds and saw them crossing the track, displaying their plumage. We stopped and watched in awe and silence, blessed by the beauty of God's creation. I felt not only relief at the end of our walk, but delight in the pilgrims' wonder and in their discoveries: God in all things, including lyre birds and waterfalls.

Our week was filled with prayer, with laughter, with shared food and clothing, with shivering mountain cold, and blazing wood fires. The 'Tim Tam slam' competition – a race to dunk chocolate biscuits in tea, sip the

tea through the biscuit and get it to your mouth before it dissolved- had us all rejoicing in being children again on our final night.

Overwhelmingly there was love, blessing and a sense of grace received,

*The grace of joyful companionship
with one another and with Jesus;
the grace of deep spirituality,
'to grasp how wide and long,
how high and deep is the love of Christ';
the grace of loving service
(extract from Magis Prayer)*

We were filled with the fullness of God.

*Margaret Cody
Experiment Leader.*



Margaret Cody and the Magis young people

Magis'08 Reflection

During 2007 talk about the forthcoming World Youth Day to be held in 2008 did not touch me. I felt little interest in it. At our CLC World Day of Prayer gathering in March 2007, we had some input about the Magis'08 program that was to be part of WYD. Again I felt detached from the discussions that were held. I did not put my name on any of the papers circulating asking for interested people. My husband, Hans, was undergoing chemotherapy treatment, and this was my major concern.

Then as 2007 progressed, and I was part of discussions about Magis'08, I began to think about being involved in a Magis experiment. During the early part of 2008, I often prayed the Magis Prayer. It had touched me more than the official prayer for WYD. Attending regular meetings organised by the Magis'08 team, feelings of enthusiasm and commitment grew little by little. At the same time it was a journey in faith, because there was some uncertainty in how I would be involved.

Finally on the 5th July 2008, our leader, Richard Bryant [a teacher from Riverview], Ben Terrel [the young adult] Margaret Wiseman and I [members of CLC who were spiritual guides] began our Magis

Experiment with the pilgrims. Our Experiment was called "*Aboriginal Sydney*." Over the next 6 days we made connections with some of the Aboriginal community in Sydney. The week happened to be NAIDOC WEEK { National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee}. We were able to walk with some of Australia's indigenous people in a March celebrating the week. One of my treasured experiences was going to visit some Aboriginal sacred sites and listen to Denis Foley explain their significance.

To write about each and every moment of grace during the Magis Experiment would take too long. However, now that it is over, I find as I share with others my experience of what happened during the experiment, I discover deeper riches. I realise I am able to MORE and MORE;

'grasp how wide and long, how high and deep is the love of Christ'

The generosity of our team, the faith and prayerfulness of the pilgrims from Kenya, Malaysia and France, our connections with some of the Aboriginal people of Sydney are still touching me very deeply. At the last Magis Circle, I wanted to end with the Magis Prayer. I could not read it. Margaret Wiseman had to take over. I was so overwhelmed with the realisation that the Lord had answered my prayer in a powerful way.

"You will receive Power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses"
[Acts 1:8]

Marlene Beck
CLC Australia



CLC Multicultural Children Center in South Korea

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In Busan, the second largest city in Korea, there is a very beautiful beach, Haeundae, where tens of thousands of Koreans visit for their summer vacations. It is full of expensive and luxurious hotels, resorts and apartment buildings. Just next to the place, in the same Haeundae district, is Bansong where the poor live, driven from their houses in the name of development and modernization. The unemployment rate is higher here than in other parts of Korea and many people have irregular jobs. And here is where our CLC Multicultural Children Center is situated.

The center is a fruit of the aspiration and dedication of CLC Korea for several years to respond to the call from the church and society. Since the first commitment in 1989, CLC Korea has focused on two apostolic concerns: Lay formation and the option for the poor. It started several education programs for the laity and social apostolic works, opening a center for poor people in Seoul. Gradually, it expanded to other regions but mostly in places around the metropolitan Seoul area.

Then in 2004, a Sister in Busan asked CLC to carry out an education program for lay people. Leaders got together to decide how to respond to the request. It wasn't clear what would happen and how many people would come to our program. Members would be sent from Seoul every week, a 6 hour journey. To save time, we needed to use the KTX (express train), which caused our transportation expense to grow dramatically. It also meant that if there were to be formed initiation groups, guides would have to go there every week for two years. Considering all of these, we accepted it as an invitation from our Lord to go and serve people across Korea.

When we humbly responded, our Lord did all the rest. More than 200 people participated in our program and were deeply moved by it. Their enthusiasm and thirst were far more than we expected. Many people started the

advanced course which includes the preparation week and the first week of the Spiritual Exercises. Many others joined in as CLC Friends, becoming our supporters. Two initiation communities were formed and finally in 2006, nine members made their first commitment.

From its beginning, the new community clearly understood the call they were receiving as the first committed CLC group in Busan. All members participated in carrying out education programs for lay people and talks began to initiate a social apostolate. In 2007, communities in Seoul opened a center for poor children as their common apostolate. It was both an encouragement and a challenge. There were a lot of inner movements among members:

"We can do that. Look at the people in Seoul."

"What does our Lord want us to do?"

"We can't. We are just nine."

"Do we really have to open a center? We are already doing many things. Look those people coming to our education programs. Shouldn't it be the priority to respond to the calls from them?"

"We don't have any social worker. We are just housewives."

The more new members thought about the center, the more fear and difficulties seemed to grow. Members had different opinions about what kind of center they should have. With the help of a guide, they started a discerning process. They contemplated our Lord in action, deeply tasting His love toward them, CLC and the world. They realized it was not about "their" doing something. It was about His endless saving love, His invitation to work with Him and their response to it.



Jinhui Kim

Multicultural families have a lot of difficulties due to cultural differences, language barriers and different purposes of marriage

The communal discernment process continued. They contemplated the calls from Korean society which has more and more internationally married couples. They also considered apostolic activities of CLC Korea – the center for migrants and the center for poor children. After a month-long discernment process which included visiting several centers such as a day care institute for infants of multi-cultural families, the “Root” community members discerned to open a center for poor multi-cultural children in Bansong.

And as He always does, our Lord did the rest.

The national community sent a director and the common apostolic fund provided for its operation for one year. CLC Friends in Busan actively participated in the opening preparation. They became volunteer workers in everything from cleaning, cooking to recruiting children. Every day, our Lord sent them “angels” whom they’d had no relations with before. When they moved just one step to respond to His invitation, He really did the rest. It was really an experience of His love and grace. In the opening ceremony on February 7, 2009 each local CLC group sent at

least one representative, communally rejoicing at the happy event.

The word, “*multi-cultural*” has become popular in Korea only recently. It reflects a social change due to changes in the labor market and marriage. The changing marriage culture is in line with globalization and poverty. Many Korean men who want to find a foreign spouse are poor and fail to find a Korean woman to get married. Many Asian women who come to Korea for marriage also make such a decision in hope of living an economically better life. Now the number is growing dramatically and more than 10 percent of newly married couples are multi-cultural couples.

Multicultural families have a lot of difficulties due to cultural differences, language barriers and different purposes of marriage. Some Korean men treat their spouse as their property as they “pay” money to brokers. Others don’t let their spouse go outside for fear of their escaping. Many women are a lot younger than the men and there is no dialogue between spouses. These women can’t pay that much attention to their babies as they themselves have to adjust to the new life. When they are accustomed and turn their attention to their children, it’s too late in many cases. The children experience a lot of hard time in kindergarten, at school. Many of them experience discrimination and school bullying. More than 20 percent of the children

do not go to middle school or drop out of school. Still there is no law or policy supporting them yet.

The CLC Multi-Cultural Children’s Center dreams to support those children from multi-cultural families in various ways. It is a center for children under the age of 12 and their families. It is to help them handle difficulties in culture, language, education, to provide emotional and psychology



Kids of the Intercultural Center in Korea

support, and to help prevent any possible problems in this regards. Now, children, whose mothers come from different countries, come to use the center. Their ages are diverse from 18 month old to primary school students. Young children come to the center with their mothers in the morning. Mothers learn Korean while their children are taken care of by volunteers. Lunch time is when people share their lives, difficulties and also happiness. In the afternoon, school children come to the center after school.

The center wants to create a society which does not discriminate between people just because they are different. In our centers,

CLC Korea wants to help people to realize how precious they are and to love themselves. It's a way for us to work with Him in bringing His Kingdom in the world. Our journey to respond to His call continues with more centers expected to open in the near future. We are sure when we just put ourselves on His hands, He does everything. What we have to do is to humbly say, "Take Lord, and receive."

The center wants to create a society which does not discriminate between people just because they are different

Jinhui Kim
CLC Korea



National Assembly: an opportunity to grow as the same body



Natalia Becerra Rodríguez

From the 15th to the 17th of August, we gathered, as the national CLC of Colombia, in the city of Bucaramanga to celebrate our XI National Assembly. With happiness and joy around, 80 members of the 5 different country regions (Bogotá, Bucaramanga, Cali, Cartagena and Medellín) congregated. This is a first aspect that we recognize as hopeful, since our National Community has grown, as of our

IX National Assembly in 2005, in the responsibility it has of being part of the Assemblies and participating in the decisions taken there.

Another sign of maturity and spiritual growth, from my point of view, is the discernment exercise that took place several months before the Assembly. The National Executive Council led three phases where each member of the National Community could discern his/her personal call to serve the National Community as a member of the National ExCo and also to propose those members they felt could be the leaders during the next two years.

During the Assembly, we benefited of diary prayers and Eucharist the latter presided by our Jesuit friends, collaborators of CLC. Also, we had the chance to evaluate ourselves as a National Community, placing before our Lord and our community our successes and aspects to improve. For this matter, the National ExCo presented its Management Report and the regional coordinators presented their SWOT analysis.

One of the most inspiring moments was the speech from the Provincial Father of the Society of Jesus in Colombia, Francisco de Roux S.J., who, with a very respectful attitude, wanted to listen to our experiences and concerns. He then invited us to dream about the apostolic work in our country and communicate with the Society of Jesus. His words imprinted on us a great desire of going out of ourselves in the encounter of others, understanding that certain aspects of the CLC's governing structure are means that should propel us to apostolic action. His words allowed us to perceive his big fidelity towards CLC and invited us to think of ourselves as CLC with a particular lay charism that does not resemble the Society of Jesus. Our Jesuit friends are an inspiring example, one more reference but not our *north*. Our common *north* is Jesus and with Him, the face of those who suffer in a nation where the crisis is based on the lack of Faith and Values.

The invitation of the Provincial echoed the speech of the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Father Adolfo Nicolás S.J., at the XV World General Assembly held in Fatima, 2008. This speech had been presented at the different national visits that we, the national delegates to the Assembly, made after the World Assembly. Since the speech of Fr. de Roux was so inspiring, the Assembly asked to extend the time programmed in the agenda for this activity which made us cancel a workshop, designed by one of our oldest communities, related to the Discerning,



Fr. Provincial Francisco De Roux SJ with Leonor and Karen Sofia (CLC Cartagena de Indias)

Sending, Supporting and Evaluating dynamic which had already been done with the communities of Bogotá.

The election of the new National ExCo was held on the second day of the Assembly and the elected members were: Francisco Serna (President), Zulma Castañeda (Vice-president), Laura Rodríguez (Secretary) and Pilar Sáenz (Treasurer). They will all be accompanied by our National Ecclesiastical Assistant, Fr. Victor Herrera S.J..

I would like to use this opportunity to thank God for all the lessons learned during this period as President of CLC Colombia. I thank those who I got to know and that always supported me; my mission companions Flor Alicia Moncaleano and Elvia Teresa García, and my husband Dani, who is also my partner in Faith. I offer God the fruits of a period of two years in which we managed to participate again in a World Assembly, and confirmed the National Training Committee which is working on the specific training needs for the National Community without losing track of our origins and founding documents. We managed to grow both in the numbers of national members making temporary commitments

and of communities. The performance of the regional councils was strengthened, the communication channels (among them the creation of a periodical bulletin) were energized and widened, the bonds with CLC Latin America were deepened and there was more growth in economical responsibility, among other things.



The new ExCo of Colombia

Lastly, I invite you to visit our internet site: www.cvxcol.org, our Facebook group: CVX Colombia and to email us at cvx-col@jesuitas.org.co.

Sending you all a fraternal salute from Bogotá, Colombia

*Natalia Becerra Rodríguez
CLC Colombia*



Apostolic Visibility

62nd Annual United Nations NGO/DPI Conference

Work for peace and development

Disarm now!

This was the theme of the 62nd Annual United Nations NGO/DPI Conference, held from 9-11 September, 2009, in Mexico City.

There were about 1300 participants, belonging to over 340 organisations from more than 55 countries at the Conference.

"From the very beginning then of the history of Christian Life Community there has been an international dimension..."

Among the various ways that CLC has of continuing to be a worldwide community is by our presence as an NGO at the United Nations.

...CLC members around the world should become more aware of the CLC presence at the UN. The more deeply CLC has plunged itself into Ignatian Spirituality, the more we have seen the appropriateness of our presence at the UN. We are coming to understand more clearly that what fired the hearts of Ignatius and Xavier was their Trinitarian view of the world as seen in the Contemplation on the Incarnation in the Second Week of the Spiritual

Exercises. CLC reflects and embraces that vision in the very first article of our General Principles:

«The Three Divine Persons, contemplating the whole of humanity in so many sinful divisions, decide to give themselves completely to all men and women and liberate them from all their chains. » (GP #1)

It is to the whole world that CLC is to be a witness to the Good News.

«The field of CLC Mission knows no limits: it extends both to the Church and the world. » (GP #8)

And in a very real sense the whole world is found under one roof at the United Nations!"

From the Supplement to Progressio # 60 "An International Presence: CLC at the UN"

The conference

The opening and closing ceremonies and the creation of round tables, shared sessions and workshops comprised the programme.

Different speakers from several nationalities and different professions, workers for peace, defenders of human rights, victims of war or massacres and other personalities participated as panellists at the round tables where the themes were as follows:

ZERO NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ZERO WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION, FOR WHAT, HOW AND WHEN?

ELIMINATION OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF ARMED VIOLENCE

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT EQUALS WORLD SECURITY

NEW CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY IN THE XXIST CENTURY



The Shared Sessions followed the same format, but they were led by different NGOs who presented their points of view on the central theme, based on their own activities. The subjects discussed were the following:

A STRONG AND EFFECTIVE TREATY FOR THE ARMS TRADE, AS A TOOL FOR IMPROVING HUMAN RIGHTS AND PREVENTING ORGANISED CRIME

ZERO NUCLEAR WEAPONS: HOW TO GET THERE

The workshops open to the delegates, with content mostly of great diversity and fruitfulness, were coordinated by their sponsors who allowed interaction of greater or less importance by the participants, depending on the number present.

Conclusions and final declaration

The Final Declaration took into consideration many of the conclusions – *but not all* – and *some* of the contributions of the Conference. The complete text [of 50 resolutions] may be consulted on the internet, at: www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/conference/

We emphasise the following points:

Require from Governments and International Organisations reaffirmation of and strengthened commitments to a world free of nuclear weapons.

Urge strongly the prohibiting and eliminating of nuclear weapons globally, with a fixed time limit.

Regulate and restrict the use and trade in arms, especially small arms, by law enforcement agencies and the military.

Prevent the proliferation of small arms in the civilian population.

Censure the scandalous expenses of armaments by redirecting them towards more productive and socially responsible

alternatives that could help reduce economic inequalities.

That the United Nations encourage, in forums on peace and disarmament, greater participation of the civilian population of developing countries.

Encourage strategic world networks, as key elements for promoting education for peace, the prevention of violence, conflict resolution and development.

The importance of the relationship of NGOs with civil society and the development of international networks to promote peace, security, disarmament and development; human rights (civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental) and gender equality, as essential to improved human security and a just peace.

Message to Churches and Religions:
(*contribution for the Final Declaration which was not included in it*)

Spirituality is a force which unites us and moves us to commit ourselves to the development of others. The strength of love sustains us in giving to men and women with whom we work and are willing to give new life.

We demand to surpass ideological differences so we may live a shared service for human, communal and social development.

CLC Presence

Several members of CLC Mexico were sent to the Conference by the World Community.

The Delegation was composed of four members – three women and one man – plus a Jesuit, all living in different towns of the country: Dulce María Santiago from Oaxaca; Mayela Díaz Garza from Torreón; María Magdalena Palencia from Mexico City; José de Jesús Rodríguez and José Luis Gómez Gallegos s.j. from Monterrey. Valentina

Méndez also participated in some events, representing the House of Iñigo of Oaxaca.

The number of delegates allowed us to cover the plenary sessions fully, and also most of the workshops held simultaneously at different sites, all of them close to the headquarters of the Secretariat for External Relations. In all, we were able to participate in sixteen of them, all related to the central theme.

Other Events:

We also participated in the meeting organised by some Christian groups who wanted to share their concerns and listen to our experiences: all of us, based on our faith, are working in a spirit of love for the elimination of violence, which implies the building of a world of justice and peace.



CLC Delegation: José de Jesús Rodríguez, Ma. Magdalena Palencia, Mayela Díaz, Valentina Méndez, Dulce Ma. Santiago, José Luis Gómez, SJ.

During this meeting, together with Guillermo Woo, from Guadalajara, we gave a commentary on the different ways of working for peace and justice, and on the role and possibilities of NGOs at national and world level; and we expressed our dissent on learning that the Final Declaration is prepared in advance, without taking into account the participants. In fact, we were informed that it was impossible to include any of our contributions, nor to accept modifications, even in the Spanish translation, which in certain aspects did not seem to us to be right.

Some Reflections and Doubts

Before the opening ceremony, we were able to share our feelings and hopes: gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this event as members and representatives of the World Community; enthusiasm for working together, as far as possible, in the service of peace; interest in learning the possibilities of NGOs and discovering the elements of the organisation and its world dimension...hope, trust and identifying with our CLC vocation.

Throughout the Conference, in many exchanges, we expressed our enthusiasm for this experience; we were struck by the value and vision of the 'international apostolate': we debated the urgency of keeping alert at the national level, of being available, of keeping ourselves informed about world events and to plan in anticipation something worthwhile, so that in similar circumstances, CLC may show itself in a more effective way and so have an authentic APOSTOLIC VISIBILITY.

By giving our evaluation to the organisers, we have also completed our own one, and we have again been grateful for this opportunity to live 'the community' and the 'CLC process'. In our hearts, with echoes of the General Principles:

«The Three Divine Persons, contemplating the whole of humanity in so many sinful divisions, decide to give themselves completely to all men and women and liberate them from all their chains. Out of love, the Word was incarnated and born from Mary, the poor Virgin of Nazareth.

Inserted among the poor and sharing with them their condition, Jesus invites all of us to give ourselves continuously to God and to bring about unity within our human family. This gift of God to us, and our response, continues to this day through the influence of the Holy Spirit in all our particular circumstances. » (GP# 1)

The invitation is renewed and the commitment is made.

«Therefore... we want to make our own the options of Jesus Christ and take part through Him, with Him and in Him in this loving initiative which expresses God's promise of faithfulness forever. » (ibid)

*Reported by
María Magdalena Palencia*

COMMENTARY by JOSÉ LUIS GOMEZ GALLEGOS s.j.

The fact of taking part in the 62nd Assembly of the UN for *"Disarmament and the Development of Peoples"* has given me a deep interest in its significance for this period that I am experiencing at Monterrey.

More than three quarters of my life and thus the most productive half has passed in a predictable way, and I have had the opportunity to discover a fourth part of the reality of the world, not so much by my presence in their countries, but rather by knowing individuals and the circumstances and stories of their lives.

I am concerned particularly by my country and continent ever since my studies and the exercise of my priestly ministry.

Every demonstration of the reality of poverty, of injustice and violence pierces my heart, and with the help of my Jesuit companions and many friends and collaborators, both men and women, who have shared my life, I have responded somehow or other by action in face of tensions and difficulties, but also with joy and hope.

Now I am taking part in the process of the Christian Life Community by representing it at this Assembly. I was surprised not to meet more Jesuits; although there were more Religious Sisters than priests, the Catholic presence was not significant.

During this Assembly I met older and great promoters of peace and development who were unknown to me, who were committed

to supporting the most vulnerable sectors of society: indigenous people, migrants, women, children, the handicapped, prisoners, families affected by the violence of war, by the oppression of armies of the entire world, by confrontations with gangs of drug dealers.

During these three days, the authoritative accounts, the round tables, the debates, the workshops and meetings gave me food for thought about my activities and what I will do.

One of the most interesting workshops that I attended one afternoon was on 'The Architecture of Development', during which the speaker from the Centre for Studies of the Third World, presented a very good analysis of the 'Crisis' experienced at world level, and the possibilities for development if resources were dedicated more to education than to armaments.



For me, the paths of personal formation and the formation of others – with whom and for whom I want to work – were confirmed. Personal and community development were strengthened as a priority to help social development and create relationships and social networks for participation of all, and commitment to the struggle for justice and spreading the faith.

Spirituality is the force which unites us and will keep us on the path, uniting us in the same struggle with other men and women of all religions and churches.

I feel reassured, challenged, encouraged, but also limited, weakened, marked in some way by past experiences and what I am living in the present, but, above all, invited by the Lord to continue building the Kingdom.

REFLECTIONS by PEPE CHUY

When I received the invitation from COSEN to be part of the CLC delegation to the Conference, I immediately registered, since I have wanted to take part in this sort of event of world scope for a long time. I want to understand how to contribute on that scale to the making of a friendlier world, where justice reigns so that we may all live in a world of Peace, sustainable development and greater equality. All these ideas have concerned me since my preparatory studies and still do today.

level, on this area of armaments, which have caused and still cause so many deaths, wounded, lifelong handicaps, etc. Optimistic, because at the NGO level, there seems to be a clear perception that there must be a greater organised participation of people for the prophetic tasks of annunciation and denunciation, a task that includes proposing solutions. It is also a matter of being aware that Mercy and compassion, associated with Forgiveness and reconciliation, have a special significance in the process intended to reach disarmament for Peace and development. Two presentations along these lines seemed of great importance to me, and aroused deep emotion in the audience. They examined the necessity of finding some means of achieving the Conference's proposals.

During the inaugural ceremony, the first of these presentations was made by Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, and

founder of the international campaign to ban land mines which remain after a conflict and cause many deaths. She told us that in the United States, school-aged children were terrified by the threat of nuclear attack and the advice on what to do in that eventuality, and while growing up, one of her goals was to build a fortress in her house, in which she and her family could survive. Later on, she reflected: in case of an attack, who would still be alive after such an event? Probably no one or very few people. This reflection motivated her work for disarmament and the creation of supporting campaigns,

such as that for the banning of land mines. I must say that she introduced herself as the daughter of a worker and a lower middle class housewife, but who had lived through a process of profound human compassion which led her to take on leadership in these causes for disarmament. The fear that had been inculcated in her about a nuclear attack seems



Ceremonia Inaugural

As a whole, this experience made me optimistic, on the one hand, because it is clear that organisations like the UN are necessary to generate accords aimed at resolving world problems. On the other hand, I remain pessimistic, because it seems hardly likely that the UN will come to an agreement, at world

to me to be of fundamental importance, since apparently it would seem that there exists a tacit agreement throughout the world that nuclear weapons must not be used because of the terrible consequences that their use would have, not only for the countries in conflict, but also for the rest of the world.

Awareness of this last point is leading to negotiations for disarmament which are going very well following President Obama's appeal on 24 September for the limitation of these weapons and their use. The conclusions of this conference of NGOs will be presented there.

The second presentation was by Anaya Rosée, during the round table on the subject 'Human development is world security'. She is the general coordinator of the Herbert Anaya Salvador Group for the Defence of Human Rights. Another painful situation; she is a survivor of torture almost since her conception. While still in her mother's womb, she suffered attacks which put their lives in danger; her father was assassinated for his work in defence of human rights and for justice in El Salvador. Her husband was assassinated for the same reasons – that brought to mind the Jesuits assassinated in the same country and for the same reasons – and she wears a prosthetic arm as a result of an attack by armed men.

But, and this was the most moving moment for all of us, in spite of everything, she speaks of pardoning all those who have injured her and her family, and is able to keep her fighting spirit on behalf of the marginalised and excluded and all those imprisoned for their gang membership. She spoke of a prison where 21000 gang members are crammed together in a space designed for 8000. She also mentioned that they demand, with their families, respect for their rights and the opportunity

to be reintegrated into society and become useful. She reminded me of the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Muhammad Yunus: *"the poor and excluded want opportunities"*, and that is exactly what he and his organisations provide, like Rosa of El Salvador, who says: *"let the people become protagonists of change...let reconstruction begin with the realities of those who are excluded from their own rights... in the current structure of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer, let victims and aggressors become protagonists of real change. Up until now, responding in other ways has solved nothing – let's try something different"*.

Our CLC delegation sat together during meals, both to discuss the most important of the round tables and sessions and to clarify among ourselves the objectives of our presence as delegates of the World Community. Magdalena Palencia explained many details on the aims and the reasons why World CLC belongs to the UN, with the consultative category of Roster: that is NGOs that may make occasional contributions to the work of the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC), and provide a specific technical perspective.



See Supplement to Progressio # 60 "An International Presence: CLC at the UN"

The basis is in our *General Principles* and in the Document "Our Common Mission": «*Christian Life Community, rooted in Ignatian Spirituality, is a particular vocational call and way of life for laity that is engaged in the building of the reign of God in the world.* » (After GPs 2, 4, 12).

«*We want to participate in different forums at the national and international levels, bringing to them the voice of the poorest... In different ways all of us are called to active participation in the economic,*

political and social structures, not only from a critical point of view but also through providing solutions. » (OCM) By this presence at the UN, the Spirit has given CLC the opportunity to have a positive effect on the World order.

We had the opportunity to meet a young woman member of CLC Paraguay, Yeny Villalva, who was reporting on one of the Conference's round tables. We shared a meal with her and talked with her – although very briefly – about life and the development of CLC in this country which is so close to us, in spite of the great geographical distance that separates us.

Translated into English by Patricia Kane



The Apostleship of Prayer

An apostolic way of life

*"I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God,
to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice,
holy, and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship."*

(Romans 12:1)

The Apostleship of Prayer (AP) offers us a practical way to live the ecclesial, missionary and Eucharistic dimensions of our Ignatian spirituality. The daily offering of the AP is a great way to start the day with a prompt response to the call of the Eternal King, offering your life to the Lord in line with the *Suscipe* (*Take Lord, and receive...*), the final prayer of the Spiritual Exercises [234].

Born in 1844 in an Ignatian milieu among young Jesuits in Southern France, the AP comes as a spiritual answer to the missionary thrust of those young men at a time when they had to stay at home studying. How could they help the Church and those far-away missionaries right now, not only in the future? How could their simple study-focused lives be useful to the work of spreading the Gospel in those frontiers of faith? The AP taught them to become apostles through prayer and through the daily offering of their lives. Their everyday chores, their prayers, their desires, even their sufferings and limitations, were all useful to the Church when connected to Jesus. They learned that their whole life, down to its smallest details, was in itself a mission. If it was all done for God, with God and in God's way, that would be their best contribution to the mission of the whole Church. As simple as that. And as great as that. All for God. Sanctify the whole day. *Love and serve in all things* [Sp Ex 233].

Apostleship of Prayer as such is not defined as a Church movement among other movements or as one spirituality among other spiritualities. It does not replace our community, be it CLC or any other. It is rather a *spirit* we are invited to live, or a *spiritual way*, useful to all Christians, of all movements and of all spiritualities, especially those who

are inspired by the Ignatian Exercises. It teaches a simple and yet profound way for all the faithful of any age, culture or social condition, to put the whole day and all they do in God's

hands and to the service of the Church. The AP is a practical way to be *contemplative in action*.

The AP counts on an estimated 40 million followers around the world, in more than 70 countries, in all the continents.

How does this work?

The basic practice of the AP is the daily offering of your life to the Father, to be a collaborator in Christ's mission.

How do I offer myself?

As you begin your day, you make a prayer of offering from your heart. You tell the Lord that you want to do everything in him and with him. This can be in your own words or by means of a standard Daily Offering prayer. The important thing is to do it from your own heart, in union with Jesus' Heart. With this prayer you offer yourself to the Father and ask that every moment be united to the perfect offering of Jesus that is celebrated in the Mass. You are thus making yourself available to respond to his call in every little thing and in all dimensions of your life, with the same inner freedom Jesus lived in his own Heart. The Offering is a daily expression of our desire *not to be deaf to his call, but prompt and diligent to accomplish his most holy will* [Sp Ex 91].



How will I be able to live out this radical offering?

The Daily Offering prayer is mainly a *desire*, an act of the will. We are expressing what we want to live during that day, *desiring and choosing only what is more conducive to the end for which we are created* [Sp Ex 23]. Since we are always susceptible to our weaknesses, we cannot guarantee the results. Yet through this prayer of offering we can consciously express our *desire* to unite our lives with Jesus' life, to place our hearts into his Heart. Remember, the Kingdom of God comes to us as a gift, not as a fruit of our personal efforts. We are asking for this gift, may the Holy Spirit give us the grace to live out this offering.

Why is this a Eucharist way?



The receiving and the offering that goes on in our hearts, just as it goes on in Jesus' Heart, is a Eucharistic dynamic. It is a way of living the Eucharist, making it a program for daily life, more than just "going to mass". Christ's presence for us is above all and in the first place a gift, capable of transforming our weakness. We respond by offering our humble lives in union with the life Jesus offered to his Father. We put ourselves in his hands, for him to do the miracle. Just as a piece of bread and a sip of wine can become God's living presence for us, so are we transformed into his presence for others. That is why we are invited to "Do this in memory of me." Do what? Give out your life to others. Live your whole life in a Eucharistic way.

How about the ecclesial dimension, our *Sentire cum Ecclesia*?

We live out this offering as apostles living out their Church mission, apostles though prayer and service in all we do, regardless of where we are. Our whole life of everyday chores is

the field for our collaboration with Christ. To express our union and support to the worldwide mission of the Church, the AP invites us to pray for the Pope's intentions. Each month he proposes two of his main concerns, asking people to join him in prayer. They help us put in practice the Ignatian principle of service to the Church in a simple and concrete way. We also grow in our sense of universality, looking with the Holy Trinity at "the great capacity and circuit of the world, in which are so many and such different people", as in the Exercise's contemplation of the Incarnation [103]. (In many places the AP prays especially for these intentions, also called *challenges*, the First Friday of each month, in a global spiritual network.)

This is basically what the AP is all about. As you see, living the AP does not replace or hinder any of our Ignatian community's spiritual practices, rather it stems from them and invites us to open a worldwide window for Church service, in spiritual communion with millions of others. It is also a daily reminder to help us keep up the spirit of the Exercises and put Jesus into everything we do.

So, how can I be part of the AP?

No registration, no groups, no fees, no special meetings are required. To follow this AP way of life in your own personal spirituality is enough, basically through the Daily Offering. That already makes you part of the huge AP family in the world. Keeping in touch with the people in charge of the AP in your country, receiving their news, publications or invitations will help you stay tuned.

Claudio Barriga, S.J.
Director Delegate of the Apostleship of Prayer

For more information consult the web site:
<http://www.apostleshipofprayer.net>

The new World Executive Secretary and his wife: Franklin y Sofia

THE WAYS OF GOD ...

(Ignatian Spirituality and early in CVX)

FRANKLIN: I was active in a Jesuit parish for 14 years in Lima, Peru. From the second year when I was seventeen, I was invited to a retreat. I went to the Parish without knowing or understanding what I was looking for. Now I can say it was God whom I was looking for. I just had to find him. The retreat showed me that. Continue to frequently do retreats and exercises. In August 2001 I had the whole experience at a retreat. God won. He found me.

SOFIA: Today I can say that if it was not for Ignatian spirituality I would not be Catholic. When I started University my family (parents and siblings) converted to a Protestant church, there was much pressure for me to do so too but as I reflected I had this feeling that the best thing was to make a conscious decision, praying very simply I asked the Lord to help me in this process. As I was in Jesuit University in Bogota I took part in one of the retreats and I knew then that was the path God had chosen for me.

FRANKLIN: During the fourth year in my parish I participated in many activities but did not have a group to deepen my friendship with God. A Jesuit brought together the young people and suggested we start the first CLC in the parish. At first we did not understand the difference between a parish youth group and a CLC. Before CLC we were a group of young and very active youths. CLC helped us to integrate Ignatian spirituality in our activities. Getting to know and love her took a few more years.



Franklin and Sofia

SOFIA: I'm a psychologist and during my studies I had a very active participation in pastoral groups. I had taken some courses in theology and had definitely developed as person. In December 2003 I participated in a Christmas Mission. After the experience the group of young people involved were so filled with the spirit of God that we decided to form a CLC. My community is the rock upon which I build my own house, in the CLC I found the space to integrate the dimensions of my life and grow with others.

Gifts offered in service

FRANKLIN: My first training was in computer science. I worked several years developing software for banks. I enjoyed it and it gave me a lot of money, but I was not completely satisfied. I was always questioning everything. I discovered that philosophy gave me the possibility to dream possible worlds. I studied it and I have taught it in various

universities, especially in the areas of ethics and politics.

SOFIA: In addition to my professional training, I've been learning about Ignatian Spirituality and the issues related to the Christian faith because most of my work has been in the pastoral of the Javeriana University in Bogota. I try to be creative in the tasks I am in charge, I like challenges and I believe that team work helps us make the best of ourselves.

A love story

FRANKLIN: In the time that I met Sofia, I was pretty clear what I wanted to do with my life and she lived in another country far 3,000 km from my home so it seemed a very difficult relationship to develop. However, we fell in love. We risked a lot and we won. I liked her way of life, her relationship with God and CLC, the passion that she puts in things, the attention she gave to those whom she served. And as I am "philosopher" ("filosofo" in Spanish) I think it was part of my natural vocation to marry a "Sofia".

SOFIA: I met Franklin during the *Magis* course. I think he first started coming to my

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great humility

notice when I read an article by him on a trip to Kenya, which made me want to know him more. He has a genuine interest in poverty and injustice in the world, he follows his dreams, he is intelligent and is not pretentious, has a deep spirituality and is

thanks to his perseverance that I decided to bet on a relationship that had too much distance and lacked of time. Then everything became easier and I knew Franklin was the person I wanted to share my life with and grow together.

Searching for *MAGIS*

FRANKLIN: The mission of the World Executive Secretariat is challenging and full of blessings. However, it is not easy to find people to do it because of family or work commitments, and other difficulties for the required availability. We were just beginning our married life and at the suggestions of some friends we asked ourselves "why not?". Above all: "We have many dreams for the Community", "we want to help it grow", "thanks to CLC we are together." In this new phase we are learning to read God's will jointly and respond as one. Since the family is a "small community" believe that this new mission can help us grow as a couple as much as CLCers.

SOFIA: I accept this mission out of love, of course for Franklin, but also for CLC. I think as never before in my life I was an instrument in the hands of God and the least I could do was to answer "YES" and try to give the best of myself with great humility. It will not be an easy task but from the first moment I felt the need to put my trust in God and his infinite love.

From a same PASSION to a same MISSION

WE: From our own experience with local and world CLC, we have always felt that CLC is a grace. It is the sign of the presence of the Spirit in our midst, that fills us with faith and hope to build justice and brotherhood in the midst of diversity, cultural, geographic, etc. We are a happy couple of different countries (Colombia and Peru), our relationship itself symbolizes the World Community. Our relationship is the result of vibrant life of the Community, in that order of ideas meaning love, fellowship, service and following Jesus.

WE: CLC is a great community that God has filled with gifts and wonderful people entrusted with a great mission, "without frontiers," making the world the place that God dreamed.

We dream of a community that is a sign to a world creating and transforming itself. A World Community greatly aware of the communal dimension of Christian faith and, therefore, much more integrated with the

challenges and needs of the world of today. We believe that CLC can grow in organic and financial co-responsibility and also in a sense of belonging and identity.

Translated from Spanish by David Formosa



Franklin and Sofia on their wedding day

ANNOUNCEMENTS



We thank Guy Maginzi for his generous service to the World Community as Executive Secretary for the past several years.
We extend our best wishes to Guy and the whole Maginzi family for prosperity in their new life.
We will always remember you
God bless you

We also thank Fr Alberto Brito sj for all his dedication as Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant of the World CLC. He has been appointed as pastoral director of "Foyer catholique Européen" in Brussels. Fr. Luke Rodrigues SJ, from Mumbai, India took over as the new Vice EA.
Good Luck Alberto, we will miss you!!!
Welcome Fr. Luke!

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