Companions on the Journey 2006
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EDITORIAL FOREWORD

“We are companions on the journey, breaking bread and sharing life; and in the love we bear is the hope we share.... We have been gifted with each other; And we are called by the word of the Lord;... No longer strangers to each other; No longer strangers in God’s house... For we believe in the love of our God; We believe in the love of our God. “

So say the lyrics of Carey Landry’s upbeat hymn, Companions on the Journey.

This title encapsulates the theme of this issue of Harvest both as the theme of the Ignatian Spirituality Conference, which was held in Seattle this past Summer, and as the premise of our other articles. Our Ignatian ‘way of proceeding’ enables us to see ourselves as companions, whether we view ourselves as traveling along with Jesus, and/or placing ourselves in a Christ-like stance as we try to discern how we can best practice the magis, not only in relation to our fellow CLCers, but also with whomever God places in our paths as we travel our daily journeys.

Do we truly envision ourselves to be companions to all we encounter? Not only the pleasant people with whom we are in accord morally, politically or socially, but also those we meet who have very different views on those kinds of issues. An openness and search for understanding will permit them to no longer be strangers to us, but ‘neighbors’ of somewhat different beliefs.

Are we brave enough to take a stand when we know it will bring ridicule or consternation? Can we then have the courage to forge ahead so that human needs and desires, even if only for the basics for survival, in some instances, in near or far away places, can become realities?

To be true companions we need to step over the barriers of our own prejudices and pre-judgments and envision ourselves in those sometimes dire circumstances of life experienced by so many of our fellow inhabitants of Planet Earth. In that way, we can develop more than empathy, we can actually put our hopes and dreams for others into action, so that those less fortunate will be able to live with not only the basic necessities, but with dignity and hope for their own future lives. A fine example of this can be found in the recounting, within these pages, of the involvement of South Florida’s CLCers in their special mission—the St. John Bosco Clinic.

This issue’s articles will provide many points of reflection on how we might measure up, both individually and collectively as CLCers, with the call to be truly companions... the being with...as we travel along with Jesus as model and friend, as well as extending this vision of being with to all of our neighbors. Hopefully, the perception of neighbor includes those both near and far, of like mind and of those whose perceptions and values, even of the value of human life or the lack thereof, are difficult for us to understand.

You might wish to spend time with some of these points made by our authors...

“....real companionship in CLC can only be grounded in the action we share because we are all formed in the deep values of the Kingdom Meditation. ..

This CLC companionship, in all cases including Christ and Ignatius, is deeply human as we share vision and action....

In community, we are called to BE WITH our companions, to grow in friendship and intimacy, to find God incarnate in flesh and blood; it is our relationship with members of our particular community....

I am expanding my definition of “prayer” in my own life, incorporating more movement....

Our CLC character is an expression of the Ignatian charism as a lay vocation with a commitment to a discerned mission in the context of our daily lives, dedicated to love and service that goes beyond the temporal until it becomes part of us....

The contemplative also looks on reality, and lets God speak to him or her through that reality....

What is important is that I make the love of God visible in me, that I give the love of God credibility so that others may believe, hope and love and be happy to be themselves....

For all of us CLCers, to continue to desire to grow in generosity, to love and serve in all things (“en todo amar y servir”) as genuine companions, we first and only need to let go and allow God to companion us all the more in Jesus Christ (the starting point of any and all of our own attempts at the magis)."

We are also pausing to remember one of our very special members and dearly loved members of CLC-USA, Margaret Fox, who went home to God this year.

I well remember meeting her at our National Conventions and Regional Assemblies. She was regarded as a legend in CLC. She was always smiling and pleasant and contributed to our growth however she could, whether it be by counseling, recalling our graced history, or being willing to remind us of the times we might have gotten ‘off track’ in our search for and vision of the magis.

She is accurately described as “…a model of commitment to CLC. She lived CLC by the General Principles and urged and challenged her community to do the same.” What a legacy she has left us! Rest well, Margaret, you were with us “….breaking bread and sharing life...in the love of our God.” We are most grateful. ॐ
It is an honor and privilege for me to compile reflections on our beloved Margaret Fox. I am not the sole author. There are several. Kathy Hubbell obtained the factual information on Margaret by interviewing her sister. The names of the others are given below their reflections of Margaret. I shall conclude with a reflection.

Margaret R. Fox, a long-time CLC member, passed away quietly in Monroe, WI, on the weekend of Sept. 2nd. She was ninety years old.

Margaret was born in rural Wisconsin, where her parents had a dairy farm. After graduating from high school, she taught in a one-room schoolhouse. She went back to school for her bachelor’s degree, and completed the undergraduate program in three years.

In 1943, Margaret and one of her sisters joined the Navy, and Margaret was sent to the U.S. Navy Radar School at Harvard and MIT. She graduated from there as an engineer.

From 1943 until 1946, when she left the Navy, Margaret was stationed at the Naval Research Lab in Washington, D.C. Eventually, she found her way to the National Bureau of Standards, where she remained as a civil service engineer until her retirement in 1975.

While at the Bureau of Standards, Margaret helped design the first digital computer ever built in the world, and contributed to the development of the COBOL computer programming language.

As a world-traveler, Margaret attended the International Eucharistic Congress every four years, and had an audience with every pope during her lifetime (except the current one, Pope Benedict). She was a resident hostess for foreign college exchange students.

Most especially to us, she was a long-time member of the Anawim CLC in Washington, D.C., which was the first CLC to be formed in this area.

Margaret has donated her body to the medical school of the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Her family has planned a memorial mass for her in Monroe, WI, which will be held later this month. Funeral services will be held after the University of Wisconsin returns her ashes in about a year. Margaret will be buried in a small cemetery in southern Wisconsin beside her parents and both sets of grandparents.

In Monroe, WI, Margaret has a sister, two nieces, nine grand-nieces and nephews, and numerous great-grand nieces and nephews. She is remembered as an “icon” in the family — a loving, giving, fun person. Her other sister, Agnes, who lives in California, remembers Margaret as being her “best friend, as well as my sister.” She will be missed by all who knew her.

I am Helen Byrne’s daughter Mary Jo. My mother knew Margaret well and did so many things with her but it is difficult to remember specifics. She thinks they were in the first CPS class together at Trinity College in 1978-79… as well as all their CLC activities and their Anawim CLC together.

I have one story to share. In 1978, when Margaret was still living in Kensington, she heard about my community’s (Little Sisters of Jesus) desire to go on the road with circus folks (our community had been doing that in Europe since the 1960s as well as traveling with gypsy and carnival families), and that I and another Little Sister were searching for a trailer and van to be able to do so… with no funds for such a project. Without hesitating a minute, she offered us a trailer she had sitting in front of her house! She had had it for several years, hoping to be able to take it to the beach for vacations, but had discovered that her eyes were not good enough to drive it safely, since she had difficulty seeing the back end of it through the mirrors. She said that if we would use it for what we were planning she would give it to us! And she did! We used that trailer for about ten years, crisscrossing the country in it and then we retired it in Pennsylvania behind a little house our community has in Gallitzin, using it for at least ten more years as a hermitage for retreat. We still...
have some little plastic dishes Margaret had put in the trailer for us. Each winter when we were back in the D.C. area, we had a ritual with Margaret… lunch out on her.

Margaret came with my mother several times to visit us on the road. One time all the way out to Iowa or Illinois! She also put us in touch with her sister Agnes who visited us when we were with the circus in California one of the very first years we were on the road. And Agnes has faithfully written us every Christmas since. Margaret, too, would always have a Christmas card for us… with a donation enclosed.

Much love,
Helen and Mary Jo Byrne

When the World Federation of Sodalities made its change to the World Federation of Christian Life Communities, Margaret Fox was in the forefront of helping people to make this conversion. She sponsored retreats and programs in formation for people to be up-dated. She made her home available for meetings. She accepted the position as Representative for the Mid-Atlantic Region. And since the region had no money to start with, she paid for her own expenses for that job and asked for no recompense for those expenses.

When Bernie Owens, S.J. (the Ecclesial Assistant of the Nick Rieman Great Lakes Region), did a profile of a Christian Life Community® and read it here in the East, everyone laughed; we all felt that he was describing Margaret Fox. Margaret was so generous that her home was always open, especially for CLC meetings of leaders when we made the transition from Sodality to CLC. And whenever I called her on the phone, a foreign voice answered, because she was always giving a second home — a loving home — to needy people from around the world.

In our Lord,
Dom Totaro, S.J.

Remembering Margaret

When I searched my memory for my first contact with Margaret Fox, I was not able to pin down a particular event. I do remember her as one of the first members of CLC who represented the larger CLC community, beyond New York. When Ray and I attended National CLC Conventions/Assemblies, we were sure to look for the twinkling eyes and the warm smile of Margaret. Just a few years ago, Margaret came sporting a cane but with the same enthusiasm and pride and readiness as always.

Her home was always a place of hospitality to CLCers, friends and relatives of CLCers and others in need from so many parts of the world. Many a time we stayed when our daughter and son-in-law were living there. If the ‘quarters’ were full, Margaret couldn’t apologize enough for not being able to put us up. She would find other accommodations for us.

Along with Margaret are others from Washington, DC who attended the 7th Biennial Convention of the Sodality/CLC in 1969 in St. Louis. (from left to right) Anne Pendelton, Emma Brooks, Msgr. George L. Gingras (Sodality Union Moderator), Margaret and Helen Byrne.

More than any of the above, I remember Margaret as a model of commitment to CLC. She lived CLC by the General Principles and urged and challenged her community to do the same. Never would anyone look upon Margaret’s community as some ‘comfortable’ prayer group. She nudge her members on, even as they were aging and less able to get around. Their apostolic endeavors fit the stage of life they were experiencing.

Margaret was a single woman, but she had a large extended family that meant so very much to her. Family reunions, weddings and graduations kept Margaret on the move. Occasionally, Margaret would find herself on Long Island to visit. Then we would enjoy a happy meal together.

Margaret will be missed by Ray and me. She will be missed as part of CLC-USA.

Dorothy Zambito

I first met Margaret some twenty-one years ago as I was preparing to start dental school at Georgetown University. My parents, Dorothy and Ray Zambito, spoke of a friend of theirs from CLC who opened her home to those who needed a place to live for a while. This was agreeable to me, as I was leaving home for Washington, D.C., not knowing a soul there. All plans were set until a week before school started in August of 1985, when my then fiancé, John, was accepted into Georgetown Medical School! One call to Margaret from my dad asking if John could also bunk at 5040 Nebraska Avenue until he had a chance to find his own ‘digs’, and all was set; John would occupy a room upstairs until he could find a place of his own.

Two years later and after our first year of marriage, we did move to our own apartment closer to Georgetown, but while living with Margaret we experienced first hand her generosity towards others. We insisted on paying rent; she insisted on giving the money we gave her to the poor. Her door was always open to ‘friends of a friend’ who needed a place to call home for weeks, months and even years. Margaret cared for all of us as only a mother would; John and I were...
able to concentrate on our studies and when we arrived home from school, a hot, delicious home-cooked meal was waiting for us with shared stories at the dinner table. Margaret’s love of life and caring for others will certainly be missed; she certainly lived out her Christian Life Community® in her home for all to share!

Mary Zambito Juliano

After I moved down to the Shenandoah Valley in 1988, Margaret’s “hospitality center” became my home away from home. Several times a year, I would make the ninety-minute drive into Washington for a wonderful weekend of R and R.

Yet the memory which most typifies Margaret for me comes from a year or so earlier. My husband Larry and I visited relatives here and on the way back to New York, we went to a MAR CLC weekend at the Jesuit vacation house at Blue Ridge Summit, PA, on the Maryland border. Several miles from the house, we stopped at a country store and found Margaret and her friend, Helen Byrne, picking up a few things. Casually, Margaret mentioned, “We had an accident on the way.”

Driving out of the District, they had collided with another car. All of the food for the weekend to feed thirty some people was in Margaret’s car and it was too badly damaged to be driven. With the police formalities over, Margaret persuaded the other driver to transfer the food to his relatively undamaged vehicle and take them to an agency where they rented a car, once again reloaded the food and resumed their journey.

As we got back into our car, my husband exclaimed, “That is one strong woman!” She was that, and a delightful and deeply spiritual woman as well. R.I.P. Margaret.

Edythe Westenhaver Darrow
Martinsburg, WV

When I had heard some years ago that Margaret moved to Wisconsin, her home, I thought it would be wonderful to go and visit her. Well, it never happened. How do I remember Margaret? I remember her as a direct person, a person of integrity. She was a very hospitable woman. Her house in Maryland was never empty because she always had an open door policy. If you needed a place to stay, you could stay with Margaret.

Margaret really wanted CLC to flourish in Washington. She began her lay vocation in Sodality and was ready to move into formation when we got back to our Ignatian roots in 1967. In CLC some of us speak of CLC formation as ongoing. Whenever there was a National Meeting for a Formation Course, Margaret was there. We had a guides course in the early 1990’s in Pennsylvania. I remember it was in the summer and very hot. But Margaret came ready to continue with formation of CLC.

She will be missed by those of us who have known her for years, but we can say that we have another CLC saint in heaven. I continue to remember all of them and know that by now there must be many CLCs flourishing in heaven. Their Mission? To ask our loving God to shower us with all the graces we need here to continue our CLC Mission and be committed to our lay vocation as CLCers.

Marie A. Schimelfening

Generous and challenging, as she lived her CLC Way of Life. This will describe Margaret in part. And she was feisty and beautiful, as Tom Bausch once described her. I was part of that. At Board meetings I could always count on her to challenge any proposal on which a budget was attached. Her usual reply was to state that the job could be done on less with a suggestion of a substantially lower figure. But sparring with her was a game and was fun for both of us.

I will never forget the time I phoned her for a contribution to an effort to pull National CLC out of a very serious debt. Well, did she light into me with such expressions as, “We wouldn’t be in this debt if the officers handled our finances properly.” After about ten minutes, I concluded with, “I think I’ll sign off. This is not getting us anywhere.” … I forgot the size check she sent me a few days later, but it was certainly $2000 or more.”

We love you and miss you, Margaret.

Fred Leone
The assignment I had was to write about companionship. I was going to write about the companionship of Dusty and Lefty, Garrison Keilor’s mythical cowboys; how women do not understand friendship and companionship among men; and how real companionship in CLC can only be grounded in the action we share because we are all formed in the deep values of the Kingdom Meditation. Instead I decided to be very Ignatian and write about how real companionship is also grounded in the reality of the financial – or how we express our priorities in deeds, setting priorities with financial implications, not words.

This is my fiftieth anniversary in Sodality/CLC and some things have not changed, such as – nobody likes to talk about money. But the need to do so is one of the results of our original sin that has imposed limits on us. It is also my fiftieth anniversary of my graduation from Notre Dame High School and at the reunion I asked my college roommate, who has lived for thirty years on the West Coast, what the downside is of that lifestyle. He responded, “You cannot discuss politics on the West Coast, they are all wimps who think that disagreeing is anti-social.” Well I am still a Midwesterner who thrives on conflict and disagreement. And so I will relate companionship to financial issues and reality. In the process, I hope to stir some productive response!

**COMPANIONSHIP IN ACTION: OUR SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN – THANKS FOR THE GENEROSITY**

On behalf of all of us on NCC, thanks for the great response to our 2005 Solidarity Campaign. We have raised about $10,000. Given all of the other demands on your resources, including our own appeals for Katrina and other purposes, we think the response is excellent. Thanks for sharing! Our strategy of keeping dues low for all and of asking those who have been materially blessed by the Lord to share will continue into the future. Yes, **CLC members express the companionship of solidarity in their actions. This is reality!**

**OUR FUTURE COMPANIONSHIP IN ACTION – OUR OPPORTUNITIES – OUR CHRIST IS CALLING US**

The Mission of Christ in the USA has a Church and that Church has a CLC marked by companionship. If CLC-USA is to do the work of companions in Christ that He has for us, we need more resources. There is no doubt in my mind, Christ has extensive work – opportunity – for those of us who are His companions. The potential with youth and young adults is immense, and I am convinced the Spirit is calling. The Church is rapidly losing Hispanic and Latino members. We in CLC have a spirituality, way of life and dynamic needed to reach out and serve these communities and help reverse the current trends. We have many other new cultural groups in our society that the Church should reach out to, and who can, in turn, enrich us as we reach out to them. Look at how we in CLC are being enriched by our cultural diversity that marks our companionship. It is a gift for which I thank God. On the other hand, we need to renew our efforts to achieve justice and a place in our Church for our African American and Native American brothers and sisters as well as other groups where progress has been painfully slow. The social issues requiring us to bring Christ and His message to the table, as we work for solutions, are many. All of you know them as well or better than I. Our society needs persons deeply grounded in the CLC way of life to serve in political office and the many professions. To attract, form and retain this type of person requires resources so that they can join our companionship in the Lord.

*Continued on page 8*
RESOURCES – WHAT DO WE GET FROM OUR DUES? FOR COMPANIONS THIS IS THE WRONG QUESTION.

“What do we get?” is the wrong question! The correct questions are: Do I have a passion for CLC? Do I have a passion that demands that I pass this great gift on to others? Do I want everybody to experience the CLC way of life and the Spiritual Exercises? If we answer yes to these questions, it takes resources to do the job. Those of us who are officers and members of NCC must be held accountable for how we use whatever resources we have in reaching out as well as in serving the needs of CLCers.

THE SOURCES OF THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO DO OUR LORD’S WORK AS COMPANIONS

Most of us in CLC are middle class Americans, blessed in many material ways by the Lord and so we, the membership, are the primary source of resources for CLC. Over time our mission mandates us to build the funding base we need to meet our call. I must emphasize that we must do this without raising dues or anything else to a point that anybody is eliminated from CLC because of cost. (A CLC weakness is that we do not attract enough of the materially poor to our membership.) Resolving the conflicting objectives of (1) having the resources to serve the call of the Lord to us and (2) our need to keep dues low so that we attract all to CLC is the reason for our strategy of using the annual appeal for contributions to the Solidarity Fund.

Making this strategy work is crucial and must be sustainable and build over time. It requires all of us, if at all possible, to build annual contributions to the Solidarity Fund into our budgets. By the time you receive this issue of Harvest, you will have received our annual appeal letter to contribute to the 2007 Solidarity Fund. It will explain new initiatives that we hope to implement as we answer the call of Our King.

A second strategy will be asking CLC members to build CLC into their estate planning. Sometime in late winter or early spring we will distribute information on methods available to each of us to do this. Please consider and pray over the possibility of building CLC – USA into your estate and end of life planning. Our Development Committee is working on the tools necessary to facilitate this kind of generosity.

ARE THERE NOT OTHER SOURCES OF RESOURCES – SUCH AS OUR COMPANIONS THE JESUITS?

The generosity of the Jesuits over the years has been enormous, deep and prayerful. We thank all of you Jesuits! We in CLC are grateful. But times have changed and there are fewer and fewer Jesuits available to serve CLC or to work in jobs with an income that the Order can use to support various causes. Growing numbers of elderly men who, like me, need more medical care and support of various kinds, is the name of the game for the Society. The cost of educating young men to serve the Call of the King continues to rise. Further, I will be honest. After seeing the great work their brothers are doing in Africa, my advice to the Jesuits is to use their discretionary funds to support their companions working with the poor in other countries as well as in the USA.

We in CLC are being asked to be companions with the Jesuits in many of their works and the current planning in the Assistancy will lead to more opportunities. This is a manifestation of the beautiful fullness of the Church envisioned by Vatican II and finally being realized. Financial support of each other is part of whatever this beautiful model will be in the future.

ARE THERE NOT OTHER SOURCES SUCH AS FOUNDATIONS TO SUPPORT OUR COMPANIONSHIP?

There are possibilities with foundations and other sources, and we have not done a good job seeking these resources. We must work harder! But these sources will not be available to cover the on-going expenses and to build the on-going infrastructure we need to do the Lord’s work and to evangelize for CLC. Special projects and initiatives in sync with a donor’s mission and vision can attract substantial and generous funding, but attracting these funds will be difficult without the needed support to seek funds in a professional and successful manner. Such activity is highly labor intensive, although the payoff can be
beautiful. I know from personal experience the time it takes to write a good proposal as well as the clerical help needed to make a proposal look good and be professional.

A NUTS AND BOLTS ISSUE OF COMPANIONSHIP THAT IMPACTS ALL OF US — STIPENDS TO THOSE WHO SERVE US!

All of us in our communities, clusters and regions, invite Jesuits, other religious, and lay persons to give days of recollection and make other presentations. Should we pay stipends (yes, a no-brainer) and, if so, how much? “How much?” is not an easy question to answer and the best response is probably “It depends!” On what?

1. If a speaker’s income depends on the work she he or is asked to do, or if the Order or Congregation needs income from its members to support itself and people in studies and retirement, then a just stipend should be paid.

2. Justice is the most important criterion — what is due to a professional in our society? Remember, if he or she is good at the work, then a lot of time has been and is being invested in preparation or to serve in some other way.

3. As Catholics we teach and should practice the option for the poor. Although our priests and religious never boast about it, all orders that I know invest heavily in their works in the Third World and serving the marginalized in our own country. I must remember that stipends paid to Jesuits in Milwaukee are often being used to support companions in Eastern Africa or a poor student at Marquette University High School. At many of our Jesuit and other Catholic universities the religious staff is paid the same as the lay staff and the money donated back to support disadvantaged and poor students. That is solidarity in action! This is companionship in action.

4. In today’s world both religious and lay should receive a stipend to take care of those they support. Consider the elderly and sick in most orders, as well as the process of educating new men and women. Just as we lay persons have children in college and elderly parents, so Father and Mother Superiors have similar responsibilities. Let us support companionship in the orders.

5. As to the amount of a stipend, it is hard to generalize for there are regional and other differences. Nevertheless, all of my inquiries seem to suggest that, at a minimum, we in CLC should be paying stipends of $300 per day plus expenses to the religious and lay who serve us.

A REAL ISSUE IN OUR FUTURE IN OUR COMPANIONSHIP WITH OUR JESUIT BROTHERS

As we plan for the future, I think we need to prepare to compensate the Jesuits who serve as our ecclesial assistants on the regional and national levels. We already do in the New York Region where the cost of living is so high. Obviously, if we are a mission territory, or live in an area where most of the work is evangelization or work with youth, the Order may desire to foster the activities of promoting CLC and not seek support. As we work harder and harder at cooperating in Jesuit ministries, the financial arrangements will become part of partnership.

COMPANIONSHIP CROSSES THE GLOBE — SUPPORT FOR ALOYSIUS GONZAGA HIGH SCHOOL

Many of you know that I spent three weeks working in Nairobi this past summer. The work of our CLC brothers and sisters building and operating Aloysius Gonzaga High School again inspired me and makes me ask what should be our role? Please consider it and commend it to others. Should we move to the model of some parishes with successful tithing programs? They give the first ten percent of parish income to charity. Should CLC-USA do the same? I do not know! What do all of you, the members of CLC-USA, desire?

COMPANIONSHIP — NOT THE WARM FUZZIES ALONE BUT TOUGH SETTING OF PRIORITIES

For each of us CLC is companionship in a way of life. It is companionship on mission, first with my wife and family and then in companionship with my local community. But CLC is not complete if it is not also companionship across the globe and across time. CLC is real time companionship with Ignatius, Francis and Peter and more than sixty other saints and blessed martyrs as well as with Betty Leone, Jean Horton, Nick Rieman, Jack Hissong, Len Zaller and all of the others living and dead in my CLC life. God, thanks for my companions across the USA as well as in Chile, Canada, Kenya, Germany, Italy, India and many other countries. This CLC companionship, in all cases including Christ and Ignatius, is deeply human as we share vision and action. It is deeply human also, like in my family, for we need to make choices in the use of the limited resources we have. As best we can, we need to support our highest values with our limited time, talent and money resources. Christ in His humanity and Ignatius did just that — make choices. We are human and cannot do it all — and for that we all review our choices and give thanks in our daily exam of consciousness, part of the way of life we all live and share. I know that my trust in God grows as daily I must say, “God I have done my best, I have done some misallocation, I am out of time and money, You are in charge!”
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Kim-Anh Vu is Vice-President of Dong-Hanh CLC. She and her husband Hung are members of Nazareth DH-CLC Community in Phoenix, Arizona. Both Kim and Hung are active in Family Ministry for Dong-Hanh and the Diocese of Phoenix. They are working to develop a formation program for the Dong-Hanh way of life in the context of the family.

God’s Gaze And The Journey Of “Being With”

Kim-Anh Vu

July 2006 marked exactly two years that Dong-Hanh CLC (previously known as Vietnamese Companions of Christ) became integrated into World CLC through CLC-USA. It is, therefore, fitting for us as we celebrate the Jubilee year of St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier and Blessed Peter Faber, to give thanks to God for our Ignatian roots that gave rise to the CLC way of life—a vocation that brings us to solidarity with all communities in the world, as well as with the universal Church.

At the Ignatian Conference in Seattle, Washington, Fr. Paul Coutinho, S.J., opened the conference with the question, “How Big Is Your God?”. This question invited me to contemplate not only the lives of Ignatius, Francis and Peter but also my own, and that of CLC. How big is God in my life and my family? How big is God in my local Dong-Hanh community? How big is God in CLC and the whole Church? I recognized that this is the same question we ask ourselves in the Principle and Foundation. Is God big enough to be first in my life so that all other created things are secondary? Is God the purpose of my life?

The expansiveness of the question takes me deeper into the Weeks of the Exercises and to contemplate the life of Jesus and who He is for me and the world. I was quite surprised that the original question of “How Big Is Your God?” took me deeper into the gaze of the Trinity as the Three contemplate the world. This gaze transcends through time and space, through all generations from the past to the present. This gaze now rests on me, my family, my CLC, and on the world. It poses a different question, “How big am I to God?” or rather how precious am I / or are we in God’s eyes that He would choose to be with us and love us so faithfully through all the ages, that He would send His only Son to be with us, in order for us to be with Him? Somehow, as I pondered these questions, I felt a certain sense of solidarity with Ignatius, Francis, and Peter. Their hearts and souls were set ablaze with fire for evangelization. They were indeed companions on mission, bearing the heart and mind of Jesus Christ for the world.

For those of us in CLC and particularly for Dong-Hanh, walking in the footsteps of these three saints, we are also companions on mission. As I contemplate the three dimensions of the CLC way of life: Vocation, Community and Mission, I see one unifying thread; it is a call toward BEING WITH. In vocation, we are called to be with God, and let God be with us; it is our relationship with God. In community, we are called to BE WITH our companions, to grow in friendship and intimacy, to find God incarnate in flesh and blood; it is our relationship with members of our particular community. In mission, we are called to BE WITH the poor, or those who are in need of God in their lives (our family, neighbor, parish, work place, the abandoned...). For CLC-USA, how are we being with God as His beloved and chosen? How are we being with each other in our different ethnic and spiritual realities? In what way are we moving toward becoming one apostolic community in Christ?

For Dong-Hanh, the lives of the three saints helped us appreciate our Ignatian heritage. Concretely, we feel more energized toward being with the Vietnamese youth/young adults as they search for God, with the families as they struggle with family issues, with the local parishes and their complex needs, etc.... Above all, we are in a mode of listening to the Spirit “where It blows.” We pray that our readiness will open new horizons to new possibilities.

The Trinity never stops gazing and contemplating the world. Christ is being continually sent out over and over to BE WITH us in the Eucharist and through the Church. Ignatius, Francis and Peter were blessed to enter into that loving gaze and they were never the same. We, too, are blessed to be invited into that awesome gaze. How big is our God? As big as we allow His gaze to take us to places we can never imagine.

Questions for Discussion

1. Can you honestly say that God is truly first in your life? Most of the time?
2. How well might you be considered a “companion on mission”?
3. Do you set aside specific times for “listening to the Spirit” or has it become a natural part of your daily living?
Reflections on the Ignatian Spirituality Institute

SEATTLE 2006

Provided by CLC members of the Northwest Region

This was my first experience of an Ignatian Spirituality Conference. I loved it all!!

The keynote speakers were very inspiring, each one focusing on one of the three Companions. The workshops, the prayer services and the Masses, were all occasions of grace for me.

I especially found the prayer service led by the Vietnamese SEEL team to be so special in its dignity and reverence. I used this format at our last CLC meeting, which I facilitated.

I also found it so inspiring to be in such a large group of people who were open to the Grace of God. It was fun to meet people from different areas and hear about their CLC projects, and to hear of all the wonderful work the Jesuits are doing. It gave me great hope for our Church and our world, in spite of all the difficult things happening now.

Virginia Fisher
On Eagles’ Wings CLC

This Ignatian Spirituality Institute was the second one that I have been blessed with being able to attend; last year, 2005, in St. Louis, MO, and now in Seattle, WA. What wonderful experiences these have been for me.

The most pleasing of all the experiences was being gathered together with the Jesuits and all other people involved in this wonderful journey of faith building.

All of the keynote speakers filled me with so much exciting knowledge. Learning more about the tremendous enthusiasm the “three companions.” exhibited; Xavier, Ignatius and Faber, inspires me to work as their companion at spreading the Good News of Christ among us by using the helpful Spiritual Exercises as a most powerful instrument.

The Morning Prayer presented by the Vietnamese Community touched me very deeply and is something that we will use occasionally at our gatherings.

All of the workshops I attended proved to be very meaningful and informative. However, I did find it somewhat disturbing when the sounds from adjoining classrooms bled over into our classroom.

Attending Mass in the beautiful Chapel of St. Ignatius was certainly a highlight of each day. The symbolic meaning of the entire facility was extremely moving.

Ruth Kier
On Eagles’ Wings CLC

The gathering of companions at the Ignatian Spirituality Institute was indeed impressive and moving. As a fairly new member of CLC, this was my first Ignatian Conference. I came away with heartfelt enthusiasm. The love given and received by so many Jesuits and lay companions was overwhelming. The
workshops I attended touched me greatly. Being present for one another was God’s gift to each individual. The desire to progress along my spiritual path and seeing Christ in everyone is my goal.

Thank you one and all for your generous support through our beloved Trinity and the Three Companions.

Kate Markham
On Eagles’ Wings CLC

The retreat in Seattle was a very moving experience. The speakers were inspiring, the participants joined in a common goal of spirituality. I felt love and God’s hands upon the retreat. The various workshops were well thought out, inspiring, moving along on the Ignatian way of life.

The retreat helped me better understand what CLC is all about and the mission of CLC. This helped my own commitment to the Ignatian way of life and CLC

When I left I was very excited and looking forward to my next CLC meeting and talking to our group about the marvelous meetings and sharing my experiences with them.

The Chapel was awesome and wonderful. I felt as though I was with St. Ignatius the whole time I was there.

Clarence Markham
On Eagles’ Wings CLC

Here are some ‘snapshots’ of the Institute—

• The exhilaration of celebrating the Eucharist and other prayers with a community of “full, active, and conscious” participants
• Expanding my prayer with “walking meditation” led by the Vietnamese family, so gently and beautifully incorporating our whole body in prayer/movement. God be in my head, my mouth, and my heart. God the Father, Son and Spirit. God in the individual, in unity, in diversity.
• The wonderful slides of Tom Lucas showing the relationship between Jesuits and the city and the sky
• Paul Coutinho, S.J., saying Francis Xavier was a “work in progress” who left Ignatius too soon, who nevertheless was combining Eastern and Western spiritual Traditions
• “Divine Majesty” is a boundless name for God
• There is no prayer of petition in the Exercises. The Divine Majesty already knows what we need, after all
• Graces of God are our rights—given to all
• Bad Sundays: basement and attic disposal, i.e., simplifying our lives of clutter
• Instead of our “finding God in all things,” a Western Jesuit thought, Ignatius said that “God finds us”
• Ignatius escaped the Inquisition because he was well connected
• In baptism we receive God’s unconditional love: God is pleased with us and takes delight in us
• Ignatius never intended for his followers to take themselves apart for private prayer. Like St. Paul, he wanted them to pray always and everywhere
• Age of the Laity
• Tim Malone suggested calling the Exercises “Spiritual Workouts” to broaden the appeal and to use film/movies for springboards for discussion and meditation
• A fabulous DVD on Ignatian Spirituality, including terms, the life of Ignatius, and other pertinent topics
• My first experience at Seattle University
• Meeting others who are dedicated to nurturing relationship with the Divine Majesty.

I am always happy to get a new idea or two from any conference. This one provided several. Our CLC groups are planning a retreat on “how to give a retreat” next Summer. I have begun my own BAD simplification. I plan to attend a Vietnamese Mass in Portland this Fall, in preparation for a trip to Vietnam in 2007, where the focus will be on liturgy.

I am expanding my definition of “prayer” in my own life, incorporating more movement. I connected with a college classmate, one of the musicians at the Institute, and I am using one of his compositions at our Eucharistic celebrations this month. But more than anything else, it gives me great hope for the future of the Church, to see and hear such thoughtful people and presentations.

Catherine Ryan
On Eagles’ Wings CLC

The Ignatian Spirituality institute was a long anticipated event for me. My almost six year life in Christian Life Community®, which led me to the Spiritual Exercises and a trans-
formed spiritual life, has taught me to expect the many layers of experience and learning that are in Ignatian Spirituality.

Speakers, liturgies, workshops, prayers—each of these brought enrichment to me.

Some highlights:

Tom Lucas, S.J., showed us the Holy Spirit guiding three medieval college roommates, who loved God, to be led by Ignatius in becoming the Society of Jesus. It continues still, five hundred years later, to seek out the poor and reach all the world with the good news.

Francis Xavier, one of the three companions, giving his life as a missionary in Asia, transforming others and being transformed himself, was illumined for us by Paul Coutinho, S.J., in “How Big is Your God?”

The third companion, Blessed Peter Faber, was described by Richard Ganz, S.J., as one who understood the vocation of lover. Peter, at one time a tutor to Ignatius, left us guidelines for how to win others, first into friendship and then for God; honoring the person whether perceived as good or bad; and praying for him or her; also, calling on their guardian angels to help.

On Monday morning, the whole community of the Institute was led in prayer by Monghang Nguyen, Kim Anh Vu and Le Xuan Hy and four beautiful children were immediately brought before our God in attention and reverence with music, gesture, praise and thanksgiving. How God blesses us with the presence and spirituality of our Vietnamese friends!

The liturgies, the music, and the workshops—it was all a gift and certainly felt like a JUBILEE to me.

**Sally Taylor**

*On Eagles’ Wings CLC*

*Amazing Grace CLC*

How blessed we are to have the opportunity to be companions with so many like-minded people. This gathering honoring St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier and Blessed Peter Favre provided an environment for learning, sharing, bonding and prayer.

Those of us in Christian Life Community®(CLC) were able to share our ministry with others. Several interested people from the Northwest and one from as far away as Chicago expressed an interest in getting more information. We hope to maintain these contacts and foster the formation of new communities.

The liturgies and music were wonderful. The opening “Prayer Walk” on Monday morning, led by the Vietnamese community, was especially moving and prayerful. The St. Ignatius Chapel, with its reflecting pools, offers an ever changing prayer environment without being distracting. The changing light inside and the reflecting pool outside mirror our changing moment by moment. The statue of Mary with the milk flowing from the bowl provides a focal point for the contemplation.

The workshop leaders were all well prepared. One of the sessions was not what I expected, but that was OK, too. Lots of things happen that one doesn’t expect. I also found that words have different meanings for different people. For example, the word retreat. To some, it means an experience of the Spiritual Exercises in some form. To others it could include that meaning as well as other gatherings involving prayer and contemplation around other issues and topics. We need to be sure that we say things in a way that the listener will understand what we intend to convey.

The journey through a bit of Jesuit history with Tom Lucas, S.J., provided new insights that I hadn’t known before. His use of visuals helped bring the history to life.

Paul Coutinho, S.J., took us on a journey with St. Francis Xavier. One marvels at the life of a missionary in those times. But that past is present for our missionaries today as well. Missionaries always go where the need is greatest.

Rick Ganz, S.J., reinforced for me the notion that we must be present for others. We have a duty to be Christ for others in all that we do. We must also find Christ in them. Conversions will follow based on our actions, not our words.

Cindy Reopelle and Steve Kuder, S.J., talked with us about mission. This was the key point of all of the Institute. *Putting it all into action*. The insecurity lies in wondering if I am doing what God is calling me to do. I’ll stay on the path I’m on, but I have the distinct feeling that God has more in mind for me.

The most memorable thing I took away from the Institute was Paul Coutinho’s question, “How Big is Your God?” Think about it and then think some more. How many answers do you have so far?

**Tom Taylor**

*On Eagles’ Wings CLC*

*Amazing Grace CLC*

“Learning to Love as God Loves”

Continued on page 14

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Presentation of the Fourth Week of the Spiritual Exercises by Gennyn Dennison, Steve Donaldson, Diane McQuiston.

I believe I was the only one who went to this class from our group.

The theme was contemplation. They opened with a song, played music and read meditative material to us. As were led with our eyes closed, the music played as the four points were covered—

1. Contemplate God’s gifts to me
2. Contemplate God’s gift of God’s self to me
3. Contemplate God’s laboring in me and in all creation
4. Contemplate God as both giver and gift.

A quote from Hildegard of Bingen was shared that I found to be a spiritual security blanket.

“Good people, most royal greening verdancy, rooted in the sun, you shine with radiant light. In this circle of earthly existence you shine so finely, it surpasses understanding. God hugs you. You are encircled by the arms of the mystery of God.”

This was a personal experience of peace where I sat quietly for an hour and focused on God’s voice within me.

_Evelyn Brookhyser_  
_On Eagles’ Wings_

On my journey through the Ignatian Spirituality Institute with my many companions, I was inspired to become a more active participant in Jesus’ mission. As a cradle Catholic, I have been one to let Father and Sister handle the important stuff while I “made the coffee and brought the snacks.”

More and more the Spirit moves me to leave the cradle behind and be a grown up Christian dealing with important things. The gift of CLC is helping me find the courage and inspiration to take action.

The gift of the Ignatian Spirituality Institute was an invitation to help in the amazing ministries that the Jesuits lead all over the world. I felt challenged to take the responsibility to discover just how big my God is, and to let God work through me to make the world more like He means it to be.

There were many inspiring presentations during our time in Seattle, but one I would like to tell you about was particularly important to me. Michael Kennedy, S.J., led us in a beautiful experience of Gospel contemplation. He is pastor of Dolores Mission in Los Angeles, spending much of his time working with incarcerated youth, adult prisoners and their families. He uses these Gospel contemplations in the retreats he conducts for them.

_Mary Minor_  
_On Eagles’ Wings CLC_

Questions for Discussion

1. Have you found that being present for others can sometimes be more difficult than “doing” for others? Why or why not?
2. Is there a particular place/natural vista that brings you to a ‘retreat’ frame of mind?
3. Can you recount a recent instance when CLC helped you “find the courage and inspiration to take action”?

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

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

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

In 1975 the United Nations approved World CLC’s request to contribute to the UN as a non-governmental organization (NGO). From then on, World CLC gave all CLC communities the very special charge to participate at the UN, a charge that has evolved to a specific assignment for the European Community and for the United States, each of which is now responsible for an NGO Working Group, one in Geneva and one in New York.

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

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

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

Faber would be looking to the UN as a great opportunity for CLC formation. He would be considering formation in terms of advocacy, but he would start at the beginning, from us as individuals and the need to reform our own lives through the Exercises and other types of prayer. He would see the UN as a formation opportunity that goes beyond those directly involved in the UN mission; this formation would extend to all CLCs and their members.
worldwide, especially to young CLCers, and would deal with subjects that concern us all in our daily lives as well as in the political spheres; themes such as peace, freedom of religious belief, the eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AMDG

Note:

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

Questions for Discussion

1. Do you think you/your CLC members perceived as delivering a message of love and service?
2. How involved are you in political spheres... peace, the eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights?
3. Does General Principle 8 serve as a guideline or help you find parameters for involvement in what you see as 'the signs of the times'?

Christ has sent us on mission as members of the pilgrim People of God to be His witnesses before all people by our attitudes, words and actions. We are to become identified with His mission of bringing the good news to the poor, proclaiming liberty to captives and to the blind, new sight, setting the downtrodden free and proclaiming the Lord’s year of favor. Our life is essentially apostolic. The field of CLC mission knows no limits: it extends both to the Church and the world, in order to bring the Gospel of salvation to all people and to serve individual persons and society by opening hearts to conversion and struggling to change oppressive structures. (General Principle #8)
The Prophet, the Contemplative, the CLCer = A Person Of Hope

Dom Totaro, S.J.

This article is being reprinted with permission from Community Life, the Newsletter of CLC-Nigeria.

I just began reading Walter Bruggemann’s, The Prophetic Imagination (Fortress Press, 1978). The prophet sees the dominant culture in a different way than others do; and so, he can both criticize and energize the culture. Moses saw that the regime in Egypt benefitted those in power but oppressed those who were making the bricks. He could speak against the dominant culture and lead the people to a new way of thinking. This new way also included a new way of dealing with God (a God of justice and compassion) and with one another (the relationships expressed in the Sinai Covenant).

What struck me about this prophetic imagination is that it is similar to what I call THE CONTEMPLATIVE STANCE. The contemplative visualizes a scene from the Scriptures, allows God to speak to him or her through that scene, often sees things in a new way, and, through this new way of seeing, recognizes that he or she must begin to act differently. The contemplative also looks on reality, and lets God speak to him or her through that reality. The contemplative then sees reality in a different way than others. (For example, as I write this on the ninth day of rocket burstings and air strikes in the Middle East, I think God must be weeping as God looks upon the violence which is taking place there. God will need level-headed people to persuade fanatics and hard-liners that violence only makes matters worse for both sides. In Africa there is a proverb: when two elephants fight, the grass suffers. While Hezbollah fire rockets and Israelis respond with air strikes and artillery fire, the people of Lebanon suffer, and the infrastructure of Lebanon is being destroyed.) (Thomas Merton was able to look upon the reality of U.S. culture with this contemplative stance in this book, Confessions of a Guilty Bystander.)

As I reflect upon these two stances of the prophet and the contemplative, I likewise see a parallel to what the Spiritual Exercises can do for the members of our Christian Life Communities. Our General Principle #5 states that these Exercises are the specific source of our formation and asks our CLC members to make these Exercises in their totality, or, at least as much as they can. These Exercises help us to see our need for God, Who loves us despite our sins, Who invites us to be companions of His Son, Who enables us to be with Jesus in His life, sufferings and resurrection, and Who empowers us to make Jesus known in our world. These Exercises give us a vision of God at work in our lives and in the lives of others; they give us the energy to live according to that vision and to make that vision practical.

This practicalness is finding a direction. After reading Progressio, Supplement #60, An International Presence: CLC at the UN, it strikes me that it is time to have one of the members of our National ExCo be a liaison with the Working Group of our Non-Governmental Organization in New York. It would also be good to have a Servant Community that would work with our liaison member so that the burden does not fall upon one person. It is interesting that the two Focus Areas of the Working Group are Water and Migration. These two areas are crucial in Nigeria and all of Africa. (It seems to me that Coca-Cola and Nestle are making more money on bottled water than on mineral/soda and other products; and this is while most of the population does not have access to clean water.) Can we in CLC help lo-
cal, state and national leaders to see that available clean water would be a help to the health and welfare of their citizens? It can be argued that trying to influence politicians and other leaders is a waste of time and energy. But we must be PEOPLE OF HOPE. We must believe that, even though we may never see the desired outcome, the desired outcome is something which is good and worth the effort. (We in CLC have done this in our efforts to help people be aware of the plight of widows. Our numbers are small, and our influence has been little; but it has been noticed, and the discrimination against widows has been changing.)

Perhaps, CLC members across the country can reflect upon these ideas and ask God for enlightenment; then in their communities they can discern, send, support and evaluate what they, as individuals and as communities, will choose to do.

Questions for Discussion

1. What recent changes/involvements have been made in your life as a result of the contemplative stance? Would you consider this prophetic action?

2. Have you ever realized that you might have allowed yourself to be a stumbling block to God’s desire to act through you?

3. Do you think you/your fellow CLCers might be regarded as “People of Hope”?

HIGHLIGHTS OF CLC’S GRACED HISTORY

1540 Society of Jesus is founded by Ignatius of Loyola.
1563 A Jesuit teacher by the name of Jean Leunis gathers a group of students of the Roman College for spiritual advancement -- the Marian Congregation is born. This first group quickly becomes a model for other congregations throughout the world.
1578 The Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Claudio Aquaviva, approves the Common Rules for those who wish to follow Congregation life.
1584 Pope Gregory XIII with the papal Bull Omnipotens Dei entitles the first Congregation at the Roman College (the Primaria) to be the head of all the Congregations.
1587 Pope Sixtus V, following the request of the Society of Jesus, issues the Bull Superma Dispositione. This Bull states the right of the Superior General of the Society of Jesus to create aggregates of the first Congregation within other localities, even among persons who were not students of Jesuit schools.
1748 Pope Benedict XIV, with the Bull Praeclaris Romanorum, tries to renew the vigour of Congregation life. This Bull increases the advantages of membership by granting the members enlarged spiritual benefits and this perhaps has a reverse effect. At this time the Society of Jesus, a victim of political intrigues, is already struggling for its life.
1773 Pope Clement XIV signs a document to suppress the Jesuit Order. The Congregations, by the order of the same pope, become one of the normal works of the universal Church. The spiritual life of the members and the social concern for the rejected of society is reduced to pious practices and annual and symbolic events.
1922 Fr. Ledochowski, Superior General of the Society, convenes a meeting of Jesuits working with the Marian Congregations or Sodalities, as they are called in some countries. The central secretariat, a service centre, is founded. It is the first secretariat for Jesuit works.
1948 Pope Pius XII with his Apostolic Constitution Bis Saeculari, gives an important push towards renewal of the Marian Congregations. It was a clear, authoritative statement on the authentic identity of the Marian Congregations, a pressing call for reform, orientations towards the future and some declarations on lay apostolate in general.
1950 Seventy one Jesuits from forty countries follow the call of the Superior General Fr. Jansen and meet in Rome as a first answer to Bis Saeculari.
1951 The first world congress for the lay apostolate is held in Rome. Forty delegates from sixteen countries take the opportunity to meet and discuss the idea of a world federation.
1953 The World Federation of the Marian Congregations is approved by the same Pope.
1967 4th assembly and a new name and a new beginning: Christian Life Communities.
1970 5th assembly in Santo Domingo a crisis and a challenge (the General Principles are amended and approved in 1971 by the Holy See).
1998 13th General Assembly in Itaici (Brasil): Deepening our identity as an apostolic Community - clarifying our common mission. “CLC, a letter from Christ, written by the Spirit, sent to today’s world.”.
2003 14th General Assembly in Nairobi (Kenya): Sent by Christ, members of one body.

These highlights were taken from a more complete timeline on the World CLC web page. http://www.cvx-clc.net/history.html
The Apostolate of Being

Rodney Kissinger, S.J.

When we think of the apostolate we think of action, of going and of doing. Influenced by the achievement-oriented culture in which we live we think of the indefatigable labors of St. Paul and St. Francis Xavier. But strange as it may seem, the first, the last and perhaps the most effective apostolate we will ever exercise is the apostolate of being, of being me, of being happy to be me.

I had absolutely nothing to do with my existence. I did not choose to be, I did not choose to be me. How could I choose when I wasn’t? My parents didn’t choose me either. They may have wanted a child but they did not know who I would be. But God knew exactly who I would be. And God wanted me. “You have not chosen me; I have chosen you.”

God chose me out of an infinite number of possible beings, beings that possibly could be. The only logical conclusion from these facts of life is that the will of God for me, my mission, my apostolate is to be me, to be happy to be me.

Being me means first of all to accept the gift of existence, to accept life from the womb to the tomb. This is not easy. As we grow older the “intimations of mortality” become more frequent and much more impressive. “To be or not to be?” That is the question many people ask themselves every day. “Is it really worthwhile to go on?” Suicide and euthanasia are serious national problems today.

Being me also means to accept the human condition with its “transcendental neediness” and personal interdependence. To accept the fact that I am not absolutely self-autonomous. As an effect of original sin I do not have the gift of integrity. I do not have perfect control over all of my faculties. Each faculty goes out after its own proper object heedless of the other. What control I do have is gained only with a lot of discipline. And discipline is what I need most and want least. I have a free will which is my greatest dignity but also my most awesome responsibility. I must think for myself, take the initiative and assume responsibility for my personal actions. I must accept the fact that I am a sinner, actually in the past, potentially in the future and always carrying this treasure in a very fragile vessel.

Being me means to accept my particular, unique, unrepeatable edition of the human condition. There is not now, there never has been, and there never will be another me. (And everyone else is glad of it! I can make other people happy just by being me.)

Since I am one of a kind, I am not inferior or superior to anyone. I give God a praise, honor, love and service that no one else can give. Therefore, I am indispensable.

It is very important to have this positive self-image because psychologists tell us that the most vicious disease of normal people is a negative self-image, an inferiority complex. And it is one of the greatest obstacles of the apostolate.

It is not easy to be me because there are powerful forces, both interior and exterior, that are trying to make me someone else. The exterior forces are from the media that are beamed at us 24/7 telling us that if we wish to be accepted we should wear this type of clothing, drink this beverage, drive this car and act and believe as they do. They tempt us to buy what we don’t need, with money we don’t have to impress people we don’t like. Peer pressure is not just for the young; we all want to belong, to be accepted. It is not easy to be counter-cultural. If we depend on the acceptance and approval of others what happens if they do not give us their stamp of approval?

Then there are the interior forces within us; envy, jealousy, the desire to be popular, to be like someone else. We are social beings who live together in society so it is natural for us to compare ourselves with others. Unfortunately we compare our total self only to their
Questions for Discussion

1. Do you need to be reminded to be happy because God loves you...as you are?

2. Are your CLC members perceived as “receivers and transmitters of the love of God”?

3. Can you name two instances when your free will seemed a ‘most awesome responsibility’?

Finally, the apostolate of being means to be happy to be me. This is the will of God for me and there is nothing more perfect that I can do than the will of God. I am happy to be me because God loves me not as I could be or should be, but as I am with all of the physical warts, psychological quirks and spiritual infidelities. And he loves me unconditionally with a love I cannot earn or ever be worthy of.

I am happy to be me because I am a tabernacle of the Blessed Trinity, Who dwells within me as the ground of my being. “In him we live and move and have our being.” I am really We and We are mostly God. I am happy to be me because this is the greatest prescription ever given for physical, mental and spiritual happiness here as well as hereafter. I am happy to be me because this is the greatest way that I can express my gratitude to God for the gift of myself. I am happy to be me because, outside the Sacrifice of the Mass which has an infinite value, the greatest honor and praise I can give God is to be happy, to be happy to be me. “God loves a cheerful giver.”

There is only one love, the love of God. We are not creators we are only receivers and transmitters of the love of God. We simply accept this love of God poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us. We let this love permeate our being, radiate from us and overflow to others. This love of God working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine and, a fortiori, do.

Whether we live a long life or a short one, whether we are sickly or healthy, whether we are rich or poor, learned or uneducated, whether we accomplish much or little in this world, is only incidental. What is important is that I make the love of God visible in me, that I give the love of God credibility so that others may believe, hope and love and be happy to be themselves.

Finally, I am happy to be me because this is the greatest weapon I have in the apostolate. The apostolate of being happy to be me is the first apostolate I exercised, it is the last apostolate I will exercise and it is always the most effective apostolate I exercise. If I want to be an apostle I don’t have to go on the missions, I don’t have to build churches and schools, I don’t have to preach missions and give retreats or write books and edit magazines. All I have to do is to be me and to be happy to be me. And if I want to promote vocations to serve God in the priesthood or religious life all I have to do is to be happy, happy to be me.

Everyone is seeking happiness. This is confirmed by their statements that go right to the heart of the matter. “What you are shouts so loud I can’t hear what you are saying.” “Don’t tell me what Jesus can do for me you show me what Jesus has done for you.” “If you want us to believe in your redeemer, look a little more redeemed.” So when they do meet someone who is genuinely happy they want to know what makes him happy. And when they discover that it is Jesus they want to be a Christian, and perhaps even to be a priest or a religious.

Lord, it is good to be me. I am happy to be me. I accept myself, I love myself, I affirm myself and I celebrate myself because in so doing I am accepting, loving, affirming and celebrating You.

—-
Three CLC communities from the South Florida Region have adopted the St. John Bosco Clinic as a common mission. Its mission statement is as follows:

*In the manner of Jesus who healed those in need,*

*St. John Bosco Clinic provides basic primary medical care to disadvantaged children and adults in the Little Havana community who are not otherwise eligible for healthcare programs in Miami-Dade County.*

The Clinic is located in a low-income Hispanic neighborhood within the city of Miami. It mainly serves undocumented immigrants who either have no access to medical care or who are afraid to approach government-funded programs because they fear deportation. The Clinic functions through the generosity of volunteer physicians, nurses and lay people, and is funded by Mercy Hospital and numerous community individuals and corporations.

Some members of Magnificat CLC, Montserrat CLC and El Peregrino CLC work at, and for the Clinic, since its inception in 1992. Members (Ada Acevedo, Ady Viera, Madeline Nunez, Rosalia Gonzalez-Anleo, Teresita Fernandez., Yolanda Rojas) volunteer their time and work from one to several days per week, dealing directly with the patients in administration, dispensing medications in the pharmacy and assisting medical personnel. Other CLCs cooperate through fund-raising and other types of donations; four examining rooms, the pharmacy and the referral office were all funded through CLC, and purchase of medications is also made possible through this type of work.

CLC members from these three communities are regularly briefed on the Clinic’s requirements and progress, and when a specific need is noted they often come together to solve it as a one-time response. All CLC members provide constant support through prayer, including discernment and mission evaluation, even if they don’t physically participate in Clinic work.

When St John Bosco Clinic opened it had very limited facilities and was able to serve patients only one day per week. It currently is open in expanded, new facilities and serves adult patients three days per week and pediatric patients one afternoon per week. Patients may make appointments, a very important consideration for working immigrants, or they may just walk in.

*Continued on page 24*
The latest movie star is drunk in spite of rehab, two or three cities had extraordinary killings, and expensive homes are sliding off the hills or burning again. There’s an energy crisis on, and peace in the Middle East is close as ever.

In Wyoming, just below timberline, meteors and lightning storms keep us entertained at night. Last week, a squirrel wrecked the mountain bluebirds’ nest.

I swat handfuls of moths in the cabin and set them out each day, but the birds will not come back to feed.

It snowed last in June, four inches the day before the solstice. But summer is winding down—the grass was frosted this morning when we left the ranger station.

Yellow-bellied marmots are burrowing under the outhouse vault, and ravens have left the ridges to gorge on Mormon crickets in the meadows.

Flakes of obsidian and red flint knapped from arrowheads hundreds of years ago appear in the trails each day, and the big fish fossil in the limestone cliff dissolves a little more with every rain.

[“Morning News in the Bighorn Mountains” by William Notter, from More Space Than Anyone Can Stand.]

Loiola, Spain…is situated far, far away from all the stuff of the “real world” which bombards our senses in far too many news media communications…not unlike seemingly removed and idyllic Wyoming. During this Ignatian Jubilee Year celebrating companions Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier, and Peter Favre, I had the wonderful opportunity to share an inspiring moment in the heart of the five narrow valleys which break through the mountainous region of the Basque country’s Sub-Pyrenean Guipuzcoa province. In this beautiful corner of the world, Inigo de Loiola was born. Here in this place of divinely created Companionship, his spiritual conversion was born as well in a room simply preserved as the Chapel of Conversion.

On the occasion of the Jubilee Year celebration, I joined the good company of an internationally diverse group of Jesuits, along with many lay and religious Ignatian partners for my annual eight-day retreat followed by a conference on the Spiritual Exercises. At this Sanctuary of Loyola, my company included CLC colleagues Alberto Brito, S.J., our World Vice Ecclesial Assistant; Paul Macke, S.J., our U.S. Jesuit Conference Secretary for Pastoral Ministries; Gene Merz, S.J., and Ecclesial Assistants from Lebanon, Mexico, and Australia; as well as our English-speaking director, Dave Fleming, S.J., a good friend and former superior from my days in St. Louis.

True and lasting Companionship indeed was the offspring of a summer retreatant’s momentary encounter with Grace and Love…
Of the fifty retreatants from all corners of the world, I did not know most. Since the retreat began without introductions or social gathering time, we journeyed forth into silence strangely connected by our common desire for an eternal moment of resting and renewing with the same God whom Inigo encountered under the same family roof. Our pilgrim group maintained a respectful silence throughout our days together and attentive care for one another at meals. But something so much “more” drew us ever closer in this blessed moment in time. As I now reflect on this experience most gratefully, I recall the words of Khalil Gibran, “It is wrong to think that love comes from long companionship and persevering courtship. Love is the offspring of spiritual affinity and unless that affinity is created in a moment, it will not be created for years or even generations.” Such a “spiritual affinity…created in a moment” was the heart and foundation of a retreat encounter which transformed strangers into companions without a spoken human word.

True and lasting Companionship indeed was the offspring of a summer retreatant’s momentary encounter with Grace and Love – undeserved, freely and lavishly given – regardless of my continuing sinfulness, my inability to ever come remotely close to really getting my act together, or my less than complete list of potential good works. And this divinely created and gifted spiritual affinity enabled me and the growing solidarity among all my retreat companions to more freely and gratefully turn to our prayer mantra each day as did Ignatius:

Lord, teach me to be generous.
Teach me to serve you as you deserve.
To give, and not to count the cost.
To fight, and not to heed the wounds.
To toil, and not to see for rest.
To labor, and not to ask for reward.
Save that of knowing that I am doing your will.

For all of us CLCers, to continue to desire to grow in generosity, to love and serve in all things (“en todo amar y servir”) as genuine companions, we first and only need to let go and allow God to companion us all the more in Jesus Christ (the starting point of any and all of our own attempts at the magis). And the really good news you won’t get from any media communication is that for us to have the opportunity for such a spiritual affinity created in a moment, we need not have to trek to the mountains or valleys of the Basque country (Although I do highly recommend the pilgrimage!) or even our own Wyoming…God keeps the promise of Covenant Company in the midst of the mountains and valleys not at all far, far away from all the stuff of our “real world” experiences each and every moment in time – which no amount of stormy rain can begin to dissolve.

God keeps the promise of Covenant Company in the midst of the mountains and valleys not at all far, far away from all the stuff of our “real world” experiences each and every moment in time.

Continued from 22

On average, ten physicians and nurses volunteer to staff the sessions each week. An additional eleven lay volunteers provide weekly clerical support, registering patients, stocking shelves and filing medical records. Average volunteer physician yearly hours are 1,700, supported by 1,130 hours of volunteer nursing service and 3,500 hours of additional support by lay workers. The average number of patients seen per year is 9,868.

The City of Miami was recently named the third poorest city in the United States, with undocumented immigrants accounting for the majority of its poor. The work at the St. John Bosco Clinic is indispensable to the health care of Miami’s poor. It’s no coincidence that CLC members were and are being placed in the Clinic’s path, and no coincidence that these CLC members have been blessed with the abilities to help with the Clinic’s work.

Our daily encounters with Christ through prayer and the Exercises, our commitment to love and service, to the preferential option for the poor, leaves us no choice but to continue this work, His way. Please pray for the Clinic and its workers.
Youth & Young Adult Report

Angelique Ruhi-Lopez & Carmen Santamaria

COMING SOON TO INBOXES EVERYWHERE…

Starting in September, the National CLC Youth, College & Young Adult Office will launch an e-mail newsletter twice yearly with news, photos, upcoming events, tips for CLC meetings, prayers and more.

These past few years have seen tremendous growth in youth, college and young adult CLCs throughout the nation. Of the approximately 2,000 CLC members in the United States, college students/young adults comprise about half of that. The newsletter is a way for CLC-USA to communicate to these young people and help them feel connected to the greater CLC apostolic body outside of their communities and campuses. It’s also a great way for long-established CLCs in the U.S. to see what young people are doing in CLC around the country.

Here’s a sampling of just some of what you’ll find in the upcoming newsletter:

“Membership has its privileges.” So says the now infamous slogan of American Express. So, too, should all CLC members say. Today, more than ever, our culture bombards us with too many choices, ranging from the different varieties of coffee at Starbucks to the new choices at fast food restaurants, and even the myriad of majors at a university.

Our membership in CLC affords us the gift of Ignatian Spirituality. Our charism is rich and bountiful, and it has a special plus for young people – discernment. We have to find ways to tune in to God and leave behind all that clogs our airways. Ignatian Spirituality answers our constant need for more. Magis, the counter-cultural Ignatian response to greed, channels our energy toward and helps us find the constant good we all seek. As we celebrate the Jubilee of Ignatius, Faber and Francis, let us revel in the spirituality that unites us and affords us so many privileges.

“I” TUNES

Want some song ideas for your CLC meetings? Or just want some new songs to download to your iPod? Here are some suggested pop songs and contemporary Christian songs classified by Ignatian themes:

PRAYER AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES (GENERAL)

“The Invitation” – Steven Curtis Chapman
“Just to Know You” – Mark Schultz
“The Noise” – Jessie Daniels

DISCERNMENT

“Word of God, Speak” – Mercy Me
“Hold it Up to the Light” – Smalltown Poets
“Voice of Truth” – Casting Crowns

PRINCIPLE & FOUNDATION

“Legacy” – Nichole Nordeman
“Declaration of Dependence” – Steven Curtis Chapman
“So Long Self” – Mercy Me

EXAMEN

“You Are All I Need” – Bethany Dillon
“How Is it Between Us” – Sara Groves
“Be Still And Know” – Steven Curtis Chapman

To sign up to receive the CLC Youth & Young Adult Newsletter, visit www.clcyya.org and click on CLC Newsletter.
WHAT DO YOUR NATIONAL CLC DUES SUPPORT?

Total operating expenses for CLC – USA for the eight months ended August 31, 2006, amounted to approximately $49,400. Here is a break out of what your National dues have been able to support so far this year:

- 26.0% Harvest publication costs
- 20.3% ExCo and NCC quarterly meetings
- 17.4% World CLC dues
- 12.8% National office support
- 8.1% World CLC initiatives
- 7.5% Youth & Young Adult initiatives
- 4.0% Culture & Diversity Committee
- 2.6% School for AIDS Orphans in Kenya
- 1.3% Formation Committee efforts

A complete review of CLC – USA’s financial results will be forthcoming in a future Harvest article. If you have any questions, regarding dues, finances, etc., please contact Kitty Gray, CLC-USA Treasurer or your regional representative.

Kitty Gray
Treasurer

FROM ExCo

SUMMARY OF NCC MEETING AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

The annual in-person meeting of National Coordinating Committee members (NCC) in July produced exciting initiatives. The twenty members of the group began by reporting on the status of their regions, then moved to “visioning” – imagining what could be done – and finally to “decisioning.” All discussions centered around the five strategic goals set forward in April: formation for mission, awareness of national and international community membership, recognition of CLC’s cultural diversity, focus on the youth and young adult communities as pivotal to CLC’s growth, and increased collaboration with the Society of Jesus.

Some of the decisions:

- The national formation committee is asked to have a guides’ course drafted by January 2007
- Each region is urged to select a foreign country as an area for “sister communities”
- The culture and diversity committee will present two Leadership Courses in 2007
- Each region agreed to form one young adult group by July 2007
- Job descriptions for regional ecclesial assistants will be finalized in October 2006
- Fatima, Portugal, will host the next World Assembly in 2008; the next US Assembly will be in 2009
- A sixth area of decisioning centered around the possible creation and development of one or more paid staff positions to do some of the important ongoing work of CLC-USA.

The Communications Committee meeting that followed the NCC meeting also produced several significant outcomes:

- The CLC-USA website is being revamped and expanded. Lots of new features
- A bi-monthly newsletter is in the works and will be emailed to all members
- Forums to encourage discussion among members will be added
- Medals and pins will be available soon for committed members through their regions
- Paula Burgan, Secretary, will be e-mailing group coordinators, asking for information about members’ ministries and talents
- Work will begin on a new DVD about adult membership

At the annual meeting Ann Marie Brennan was installed as the President-Elect for CLC-USA. She is a member of St. Catharine’s Community in Glen Rock, NJ

Paula Burgan
Secretary.
FROM THE REGIONS…

KOREAN CLC

The National Korean CLC ExCo meeting scheduled for September has been moved to December due to scheduling conflicts.

Metro NY Area

An eight-day Ignatian silent retreat was held from July 20-28, 2006 at St. Paul’s Abbey in Newton, NJ. The retreat was guided by Fr. Peter Choi, S.J., pastor of St. Agnes Church in Los Angeles, CA. He was assisted by three lay spiritual guides. Eighteen participants from four different states (CA, TX, NJ and NY.) felt the grace to be grateful for the opportunity for deep prayer and reflection on the dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises during this summer retreat.

We were so pleased to hear Fr. Peter Choi’s lecture on health on July 29th, at the Franciscan House in Queens. His lecture included both Chinese medicine and Yoga and its practice.

On July 30th, we held a commitment ceremony at the Fordham University Church. The ceremony was presided over by Fr. Daniel Fitzpatrick S.J., EA of CLC New York Region, Fr. Daniel Suh, EA of Korean CLC New York Region and Deacon Stephano Choi.

We celebrated the permanent commitment of seventeen members and the first commitment of fifteen members. The first permanent commitment of fifteen members was celebrated in 2004 after the inception of the Korean CLC in Metro New York Region in 1997.

During this ceremony, five young adult pre-CLC members who completed the 19th Annotation in July received an indulgence, and Stephano Yoon was installed as the new President of the Northern NJ District. About two hundred people, which included both family and friends, came to celebrate this ceremony. We thank Viviana Lee, President of the Korean National CLC; Anne Marie Brennan, President-elect of CLC-USA; and Mary Ann Cassidy, President of Metro NY CLC, for joining us for this event.

The candidates for the permanent and first commitments have prepared by taking the formation program provided by the Institute for the Christian Life Community® (ICL) (guest speaker was Gregory Lee, former President of Metro NY KCLC and Fr. Dan Fitzpatrick,) since last September and a special lecture given by Fr. Daniel Suh on July 13th.

We had a silent retreat for young adults at St. Paul’s Abbey in Newton, NJ, from August 24 through 27th. Fr. Denis Kim, S.J., from Loyola Marymount University, guided the retreat for twenty-three young adults. The theme of the retreat was “Vacation with the Lord” and everyone enjoyed the silent retreat very much. In particular, the majority of this year’s retreatants were twenty-five years of age or older and the retreat filled to capacity much earlier than usual, which may

reflect the growing spiritual thirst of young adults who have been somewhat marginalized in mainstream church activities. The service team, consisting of six CLC members in the Metro NY region, has been preparing for this retreat since early 2006.

Mid Atlantic Area

A five-day Ignatian silent retreat was held from August 9-13th, at Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, Maryland. The retreat was guided by Fr. Byung Kwan Park, S.J. He was assisted by other Jesuits and lay spiritual guides. Fifty-five participants came from nine different States (MD, VA, TX, GA, ND, AL, NC, PA and NY).

There was a cluster meeting of three CLC groups in Virginia (Hesed, Vine, and Mustard-Seed) on August 25th with Fr. Benedict Jung, SJ. All members had a wonderful time with good food and good company.

The silent retreat for young adults (6/29 – 7/2) was led by Fr. Seoung Young (Joseph) at the Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner. There were twelve young men and women participating. The theme was “The Road to Emmaus.”

We have two new lay guides, EunSook Lee and HaeJin Kang, who finished the guide training program recently. They participated in the young adult retreat and adult retreat as lay guides.

Philadelphia Area

A two-day Ignatian silent retreat was held from July 29-30th, at St. Raphaela Center. The retreat was guided by Fr. HyunDuk Kim, S.J. There were twenty-six participants. After the retreat Fr. Kim, who stayed in Philadelphia for a year, left for Berkley University to continue studying. We miss him very much.

Western Area

On July 31th, we gathered and celebrated St. Ignatius’ Feastday.

On August 15th, there was a first commitment ceremony in St. Isidore Church, Las Nutrias, New Mexico, for Sr. Bo Kyoung Kim (Antonia) who is in the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity.

On August 26th, we celebrated the first commitment of four members and the renewal commitment of twenty-four members, along with the inauguration of a new Korean CLC representative of Western Region.

We have a new pre-CLC group in the Torrence area. The members of this group attend the Church of One Hundred Three Martyrs.
MISSOURI REGION

The summer of 2006 has been very busy and grace-filled for the Missouri Region. From May 31—June 4th, thirteen students and two staff members from St. Louis U., Regis and Rockhurst attended the Cura Personalis at Loyola Marymount University. This is the CLC leadership training retreat/program for young adults.

Early in June, the Bridges Program offered a Day of Discernment to the graduates of Bridges (The 19th Annotation), Bridges II and Prayer Guides (a two year formation program in which persons learn how to become prayer companions for individuals making the Spiritual Exercises.) The leaders of the day were Pat Carter, Joan Felling and Dr. Mary Mondello.

The purpose of the day was to create a space in which the forty attendees could look at the various options for deepening their Ignatian experience, one of which was CLC.

On June 10th, we held our quarterly Regional meeting in St. Louis. The Group Guides Committee, chaired by Yvonne de Hart and Jan Nimer, continues to meet and discern the best way for training new guides and developing new groups.

Pat Carter and Mary Ann Mennemeyer attended the Seattle Spirituality Institute: Companions in Mission. Congratulations and much gratitude to Joyceann Hagen and her very capable staff for an inspiring program. Thanks also to the Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus, the Seattle University Community and the CLC of the Northwest Region for their marvelous hospitality. Pat Carter attended the Communications Committee meeting. Mary Ann presented a workshop on the Nigerian Model as a formation tool for new and/or ongoing CLC groups. Later that week, from July 19—22nd, Kitty Gray and Mary Ann attended the NCC meeting also held at Seattle University.

On August 12th, several of us gave a “Day of Discernment” to approximately eighty-six people in Oklahoma City. Those of us who went to Oklahoma City were: Carmen Castagno (Convener for the New Orleans CLC Region), Fr. Robert Costello, S.J., Kitty Gray, Pat Carter and Mary Ann Mennemeyer. To learn more about this awesome day, go to www.clc-usa.mo.org. Pat Carter has posted pictures and the highlights of the day. The people in attendance have experienced the Spiritual Exercises and a great many of them are trained spiritual directors. Since the time we have met with them, they have already taken the next steps in preparing to form CLC groups. The presence of the Holy Spirit on that day was truly palpable. Mary Ann still gets misty-eyed when she speaks of the day. We want to especially thank Mary Diane Steltenkamp, her focus team and the pastor of St. Eugene’s Parish and Father Jacobi for all their energy, planning and wonderful hospitality. Please keep this marvelous growth-potential in the Missouri Region in your prayers. Thank you in advance.

Fr. Robert Costello, S.J., our EA, has arranged for our Missouri Region EXCO to meet with Fr. Tim McMahon the Provincial for the Missouri Jesuit Province. The meeting is set for October 4th.

Many of us are planning to attend a retreat hosted by the John XXIII CLC group during the weekend of Oct. 6—8th. Our very own EA, Father Robert Costello (Cos) will be our retreat master.

NEW ENGLAND REGION

Pursuing Our “Dreams and Desires”

As you may recall from our last installment, during our annual regional retreat in May, we identified a small group of concrete ways in which we might reach toward our several most important dreams and desires for ourselves, each CLC, and the region. These goals included growing in membership, more sharing of our personal experiences of God’s Spirit in our lives, and experiencing the Spiritual Exercises together as a region. We have particularly taken steps toward the second of these, continuing more frequent (roughly bi-monthly) regional meetings, beginning a brief biannual regional newsletter, and sharing both spiritual “bios” and our personal spiritual responses to each of our regional meetings, through our website ("bios" in particular through a “members only” section).

The most ambitious of these is Sparks, our brief newsletter that includes four parts. First is a “regional journal” detailing each of our regional events (regional meetings, group activities in which several members participated, social justice action) through the commentary of one or several of the participants. The second part of the newsletter is a “community journal” that briefly summarizes the activities of each of our CLCs during the six-month period covered by that issue of Sparks. Third is an “individual journal” consisting of sequential entries spaced out over the six months. Each of these details a significant event or two in the life of one of our region’s CLC members at the time of that entry. There is a final section briefly announcing any major issues for the region as a whole, and any upcoming events.

Under Clarivel Marin de Dragas’ usual creativity and dedication, as we begin September, the inaugural issue of Sparks is just about to be released (with a preliminary version already available on our website: [http://www.clcnewengland.net]). We hope you all can take a moment to have a look at this representation of our CLC experience here in New England.

Another means of sharing more closely each other's spiritual journeys is through the brief “bios” that are due to be posted shortly in a “members only” section of our website. Each CLC member has the opportunity to share in this a part of his/her story of spiritual growth through life, as well as his/her fundamental experience of CLC. Although we often
get to share bits and pieces of our spiritual journey with each other (especially recent ones), this will give us the chance to know more of the broader, long-term context of each other’s spiritual growth through various periods of our lives.

**Regional Meetings**

We will begin our Fall with a regional meeting Sept. 9th that draws together members of both the original NE-CLC and our companions in Vietnamese CLC (Đồng Hành) hailing from near Worcester, MA. Although a very conscious purpose of this gathering is simply to enjoy each other’s company and learn about each other through socializing, we also will take up the theme of Peace for personal and group reflection. The most recent joint meeting between our groups (in March) was a tremendous success, and we look forward to continuing to strengthen our mutual sharing in faith. One highlight promises to be a circle dance that we will all learn!

The following regional meeting, in October, will offer us two new opportunities to interface with other potential CLC resources in New England. The objective of the meeting will be to learn more about the offerings of the brand-new Tri-Provincial Jesuit Resource Center located in Watertown, MA. One of the center’s directors, Claire Walsh, will speak on Ignatian Spirituality in daily life. We hope that this will promote our interactions with the local Jesuit communities (of which there are plenty!). It will also help us move toward another of our expressed “dreams and desires”: to share the Spiritual Exercises in some form as a regional community. Our meeting will be held at Boston College, offering us an opportunity to meet members of BC student communities, and perhaps thus attract some of their members to continue the CLC experience as they graduate from college life into adult community life.

As a reminder, our website [http://www.clcnewengland.net](http://www.clcnewengland.net) remains a very active and frequently updated venue for others to share in our photos, further details, and quotations of participating members in all of these events.

**Regional Apostolic Mission**

A few special events were held recently to support the two regional housing-related social justice organizations that form our primary outreach in regional discernment. The Waltham Alliance to Create Housing (WATCH) held its annual meeting in late April (see Sparks on our website for commentary by Barbara Saulnier, who attended the meeting). Two recent fundraising events were held to benefit Mustard Seed Communities in Zimbabwe, Africa and in Kingston, Jamaica. The former was a dinner in April, the latter a booth present at the Lowell Folk Festival (one of the largest of its kind in New England!) to raise both awareness and funds for the mission. We also have begun an annual collection for the benefit of these two organizations, which will be complete in October.

**Connection to the Jesuits**

We continue to hold periodic meetings of our Regional CLC-Jesuit Advisory Board, which includes guidance from our Regional Ecclesial Assistant (REA), Paul Kenney, S.J., and our other Jesuit Board member, Skip Conlan, SJ. We hope that together with our contact with the leadership of the new Tri-Provincial Jesuit Resource Center, this will promote growth in our interactions with the local Jesuit community. A local meeting of REAs from across the country was originally scheduled to be held here in Boston, but will likely move to Detroit to provide an opportunity for its membership to hear and hopefully meet personally with Father General of the Society of Jesus, Peter Hans Kolvenbach, S.J. We look forward to participating with the National Formation Team and National Ecclesial Assistant, John LeVecke, S.J., in a new initiative he has spearheaded to introduce/familiarize more Jesuits with CLC. This will involve helping to plan the first of periodic informational visits to the Weston School of Theology (one of only two Jesuit theologates in the nation) right here in Cambridge, MA. (This well-funded program will also visit each of the nation’s Jesuit novitiate, first studies communities [“philosophates”], and theologates.)

Cambridge CLC also looks forward to the return of Mark Mossa, S.J., (our newest member, and a student at Weston School of Theology), from his summer mission and travels.

**Connection to CLC-USA**

We hope you all saw and enjoyed the Dragas family’s contribution to the previous issue of Harvest. We look forward to being part of future initiatives of CLC-USA such as the Jesuit familiarization program just mentioned, the creation of a new logo for CLC-USA, the various electronic means that the Communications Committee is developing for sharing our growth as Christian communities, and developing our youth/young adult membership and our cross-cultural/multi-lingual awareness.

May God continue to bless us in our mission together as CLC-USA.

**NEW YORK REGION**

We begin our new CLC year without the usual presence of Fr. Dan Fitzpatrick. Where is he? He is currently enjoying a two-month sabbatical—spent partly on a pilgrimage in Spain, following in the footsteps of St. Ignatius. However, we will all be fine as he is praying for us. And we are delighted to welcome aboard Fr. Ray Sweitzer, S.J., as he will assist Fr. Dan Fitzpatrick in his duties as EA for the foreseeable future.

Our region has just developed a first draft of our next five-year plan which provides a prioritized framework for understanding what the NY Metro Council of CLC will seek to accomplish over the next five years. Some of those priorities include managing the growth of CLC in the region, broadening the presence of CLC in the wider community, and collaboration with the Jesuits.
Our Apostolic Action Teams have begun to do some work. The “Lay Spirituality” Team is organizing our Advent Day of Prayer which will focus on the Awareness Examen. The “Social Justice” Team held a meeting over the summer to discern how to engage our regional CLC in social justice. The group identified several potential directions under the categories of education, advocacy and action. Some of the ideas generated include: providing a bibliography of resources on Catholic Social Justice Teaching, using a forum to discuss social justice issues, generating a network to advocate on issues such as water, poverty and immigration, and working one-on-one with people directly affected by poverty and immigration problems. They hope to put those ideas into action over the next year.

**NORTH CENTRAL REGION**

**From the Regional Assistant, Jack Zuercher, S.J.,...**

Our Regional Executive Council, made up of members from the Region’s Clusters, has now “met” three times by teleconference. I have found the consultation with these folks very useful.

My notes from these meetings are sent to them, and they, in turn, should forward them to the contact person in each community, who then should forward them to community members by e-mail or pass out a hard copy at meetings.

The October 27-29 Regional Retreat and meeting at American Martyrs Retreat Center in Cedar Falls, Iowa, will welcome members from all corners of the North Central Region. The object is to select a central location, and American Martyrs is about equidistant from Milwaukee, Omaha and the Twin Cities. The Regional gatherings have been held there several times before, and it’s been a popular site.

Father John LeVecke, S.J., National CLC Ecclesial Assistant, will be the presenter. The four sessions will follow the Four Weeks of the Exercises. Each presentation will be followed by Private Reflection and small group faith sharing. The weekend will conclude with a business meeting – “Going Forward,” discussion of CLC Regional, National and International.

The Retreat will run from Friday evening to mid morning Sunday.

The Retreat in Daily Life or Nineteenth Annotation Retreat will be offered in the Omaha Cluster beginning in mid-September and continuing through May.

This requires at least half an hour of daily prayer and regular visits with a guide over nine months. This format, with minor modifications, will be available for up to ten members of CLC in the Omaha area.

Each participant will be asked to:
- Attend an information meeting.
- Commit to the nine-month schedule.

- Meet twice monthly at a mutually convenient time with the guide.
- Attend a faith sharing group meeting monthly.

These CLC members are designing the program. Mickey Dodson, Renee O’Brien, Maryanne Rouse, Fr. Jack Zuercher, S.J.

**RIEMAN GREAT LAKES REGION**

A grand celebration in Detroit! A special event of the Jesuit Jubilee!

The Very Reverend Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., Superior General of the Society of Jesus, will visit our region in October. While on his visit from the Jesuit Curia in Rome, Italy, Father Kolvenbach’s schedule is as follows:

**Thursday, October 5th—a visit to the University of Cleveland**
Friday, October 6th —Fr. Kolvenbach will visit the University of Detroit Mercy
6:00PM—President’s Cabinet Reception—by special invitation Lansing-Reilly Hall, McNichols Campus
7:30PM—Address by Fr. Kolvenbach in Gesu Church
8:30PM—Reception to follow, Lansing Hall

**Saturday, October 7th—Noon—Liturgy celebrating the Jesuit works of the Detroit Province, Sts. Peter and Paul Church**
1:00PM—Reception, Atrium, UDM School of Law, Riverfront Campus.

The ExCo and EA meetings will take place in the Detroit area October 6—8th, so that board members and local CLCs can meet with Fr. Kolvenbach, Father General of the Society of Jesus.

The Midwest Regional Meeting will take place at St. John’s High School in Toledo, Ohio, on Saturday, October 28th, from 10:00AM to 5:00PM. The theme will be immigration issues along the Southern border.

**WESTERN REGION REPORT**

The Western Region Coordinating Council (RCC) began 2006 with new leaders committed to the journey on which we are all embarked — serving as companions in the 21st century as surely as Ignatius of Loyola, Peter Favre and Francis Xavier companioned one another four hundred and fifty years ago. The RCC is merely a mirror reflecting our local reality of widely diverse peoples. As the first “Companions” differed and yet served in their common service to church and God, we hope to serve well BECAUSE of the national, language, age and racial “variety” within the Western Region. The formal groupings of the Vietnamese and Korean CLCs are representative of CLC as a world-wide community and we are now moving forward to seek companions within the large Hispanic populations within our Region. Many of us represent the aging of CLC just as surely as the Society is facing the ‘aging’ of its members. We now see the beginnings of CLC again at the high school, collegiate and young adult
levels that gives us growth, but even better – new life in the Spirit.

As Francis Xavier served while separated by such distances from his beloved companions, many of us in this country also serve and support our companions while at great distances from the next community, the closest member, or the ‘distance’ we may artificially create when members must become less active in the community due to age, health or other circumstances. The Internet allows many of us to be connected but to still be separated physically. We must continue to be real companions for those whose lives are changing and who may truly be asking the Lord to “Take – all I have is yours,” when the meaning is take my life, memory, spirit and soul as I prepare to come and stay with you for eternity.

We continue to deal with the challenge of evangelization within CLC in the Western Region. Companions in all areas of life may choose to turn inward and allow no others to share their lives or activities and they become a closed group, content with life as it has been. Some companions may grow, choosing carefully from those who most resemble what they see in the mirror so that the group stays as it has been. Others may seek to add companions to their band who share what they see in others – Christ. Sharing the path we are embarked upon with others we have yet to meet makes for an exciting journey and one on which we know by our faith that many are awaiting our hands to grip theirs and let them add to our merry band of Companions in Christ.

Fresno/Central Valley

Once more, we are beginning to spark CLC interest in our area(Diocease of Fresno). Since Beti and Rene Cisneros attended the CLC National Assembly in Miami, in 2004, they have had a different yet related experience with the 19th Annotation of the Spiritual Exercises. This Summer, Beti spread the word to various parishes and in late July, in anticipation of the Feast of St. Ignatius, there was an informational meeting about CLC at the Office of Ministries, Diocese of Fresno, guided by Fr. Mike Lastiri, who has agreed to be a consultant to the group.

At Fr. Lastiri’s recommendation, Beti visited the St. Paul Newman Center and spoke with Fr. Perry, who was immediately supportive of announcing CLC in his church bulletin, beginning in mid-August. Since then, Beti has been invited to speak to the Catholic Singles Group at Newman Center, a group drawing from several parishes in Fresno. At the same time, she and her husband have been meeting with a small pre-CLC group in the area of Mt. Carmel—St. Alphonsus parishes in southwest Fresno.

Other parishes that seem interested are in Clovis and North Fresno, and we would not be surprised if groups might form in different languages, including bi-lingual groups, depending on the conversations with Fr. Lastiri as well as Fr. Jim Gallas, S.J.

It seems that we are indeed blessed at this time in Fresno, when it comes to CLC finally sprouting! We do not as yet have a name for our little group, but will have one soon.

Que Dios les bendiga a todos que nos han apoyado!

God bless all who have supported us!

Korean Martyrs Day Celebration In La Canada

A very special celebration of Korean Martyrs Day is planned for Sept. 17th at St. Bede Catholic Church in La Canada, CA. It is associated with the inter-cultural CLC(Bahng Joo) and sponsored by the Korean Martyrs Spirituality Center and St. Bede Parish.

A special Mass is planned for 5:30PM at the Church, followed by music, Korean food treats and a play and exhibition. The play will be performed by the Korean Martyrs Spirituality Center’s troupe, “The Road.”

South Florida Region

The Ignatian Spirituality Center of Miami dressed on its “Sunday’s best” on July 31st, to celebrate the feast of St Ignatius of Loyola and the commitments with the World CLC of fourteen members of the South Florida Region.

Those pronouncing their permanent commitment were:
Rosita de la Torre, Bertha Arias and Ligia Morales--all of them from CVX Casa Manresa
Temporary commitment:
José-Luis Pérez, Nancy Alfonso, Manuel Alfonso, Manuel Prieto, Rosa María Prieto and Miguel Duconger, all from CVX Pascua
Rosiata Masó, from CVX “Mensajeros de la Luz”
Aleida Castellanos, Rosario Bergouignan, Miriam Larrea, Ana Sandra López from CVX Casa Manresa.

The Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life are now part of the programs of several parishes from the Archdiocese of Miami. They are being offered in five different parishes, as well as at Belen Jesuit Preparatory School (for adults) both in English and in Spanish.

On the weekend of September 8-10th, the first of a series of four workshops for Companions for Spiritual Exercises was held at Casa Manresa, with the participation of thirty persons, most of them members of the Region’s CVXs.

Our FIRST! Regional Assembly will take place on November 11th at Belen Jesuit Prep.
FROM THE WORLD…

MYANMAR

Fr. Brian Frain, S.J., formerly of Metro NY CLC/Manresa CLC on Staten Island, writes…

Dear Christian Life Community® members,

Greetings from Rangoon, Burma(also known as Myanmar). I have been here for the last year and a half, working full-time at the Catholic Major Seminary. The seminary is over-filled, functioning beyond capacity.

This small, impoverished population of Catholics has one hundred forty-six seminarians preparing to serve the Church as priests. It’s a real honor to help them out in their formation. Of course, because of the discrimination against Christians here, it has been difficult for the Church to form its seminarians. It is currently illegal to have foreign missionaries, like myself, here. This has made it particularly difficult for the bishops to find professors and spiritual directors.

The Society of Jesus is growing slowly here and is still quite young. We have been here since 1998. But we have sixteen scholastics in studies in Manila and ten novices in the novitiate. Pray that we may grow stronger so that we can begin introducing CLC to the Burmese Church.

Any volunteers to come and visit? You are always welcome to come if you want to observe the work of the Church here and the chances of starting a Christian Life Community®. Currently, there are sanctions against Burma, but since you would not be coming to spend large amounts of money on tourism, you would be welcome. Here’s an invitation for another missionary activity for CLC!

NEW RESOURCES AT www.clc-usa.org

The Relationship between the Christian Life Community® and the Society of Jesus in the Church — A document from WCLC.

A Meditation On Our Response to the Call of Christ — From the Provincials of the US Assistancy.

Deus Caritas Est — Encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI

Survey — Formation Document from WCLC (1981)

Pictures from Ignatian Spirituality Institute in Seattle and from the NCC evening out.

FOR MEMBERS ONLY

A members-only section is being developed on the CLC-USA web site. This section currently includes the CLC Directory, a Calendar of Events, a summary of the minutes of the NCC Meeting in July and more!

The Communication Committee would love to hear any suggestions that you would have for this section. E-mail the Committee chair, Ann Marie Brennan (annmariebrennan@yahoo.com), with any thoughts you might have.

If you would like an event added to the Calendar, please e-mail them to Paula Burgan (ppb@alaska.net).

This section is password protected. Contact your regional rep for access to this section.

PILGRIMAGE FOR OUR CHILDREN’S FUTURE

In August, Chris Lowney began a 500 mile walking pilgrimage to raise funds for St. Aloysius Gonzaga School, which serves AIDS orphans, and is sponsored by CLC Kenya.

Unfortunately, after about 225 miles he had to stop, felled by a bronchial infection that required a course of antibiotics. For all the details, see the blog at www.pocf.org which includes photos from the trek.

If you have not already done so, you may send a tax deductible contribution (indicating CLC in memo line) to:

Chris Lowney
2621 Palisade Ave. #15A
Riverdale, New York 10463

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

IGNATIAN JUBILEE YEAR
December 3, 2005- December 2, 2006

WORLD LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM
November 25-December 2, 2006
Rome, Italy

EXCO MEETING
January 12-13, 2007

NCC TELECONFERENCE
January 13, 2007

NEXT ISSUE

You have given all to me
...now I return it.

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