As the grain of wheat falls to the ground
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EDITORIAL FOREWORD

As the grain of wheat falls to the ground….

Bernadette Farrell’s hymn, Unless A Grain of Wheat, uses beautiful imagery that seems very appropriate for this issue of Harvest:

Unless A Grain of Wheat
Shall fall upon the ground and die
It remains but a single grain with no life...
If any one serves me, then they must follow me; wherever I am, my servants will be...
Make your home in me as I make mine in you, those who remain in me bear much fruit.
If you remain in me and my word lives in you, then you will be my disciples.

We are certainly all familiar with this beautiful image! How a simple seed must ‘die’ in order to bring forth new life. How individuals ‘die to self’ as they place the needs and comfort of others over their own desires. Of course, this is obvious in the sacrifices made among members of families, with and for friends and in communities with similar goals, such as religious life, as well as the many stories of martyrs or heroes/heroines of days long ago as well as the present. As members of Christian Life Community® we are, hopefully, living in a constant state of discernment. Always desiring that which disposes us to whatever God wishes in our daily lives. Which desires/parts of our lives must die/be sublimated in order to bring forth new life to self and others? Can we push aside ego and really ‘go for the gold’…the magis?

Even in our own small spheres of contact with others, our daily decisions have repercussions in the lives of so many others; whether it’s making a choice to buy something that might have been made at the cost of a person’s dignity or physical well-being, or not being afraid to ‘stand up and be counted’ or perhaps even ridiculed for having the courage to take up an unpopular but just stance. Our actions can certainly be the inspiration needed by others to help them to step forward and be agents of change.

Do we leave the seeds of magis standing alone while we simply ignore the chance to use our gifts and talents, perhaps in a different way? Or do we bravely bury the choice to not be afraid of commitment, of going outside of our comfort zones, to attempt something new? We have some wonderful new plans in/for CLC-USA…how many of us are willing to involve or challenge ourselves, to try something different?

Participating in growth opportunities, such as the recent Guides and Coordinators Course offered at the Griswold, Iowa campus of Creighton University, the JustFaith experience, conferences such as the recent Tri-Regional Conference, held in Connecticut, or with participation in Cura Personalis, are all ways by which we can help ourselves to grow and stretch into new areas of service to God and our fellow humans.

Our authors in this issue have gifted us with a number of statements to think and pray over, to assist us in the desire to grow…for the greater glory of God!

“Using the Ignatian tools and our CLC way of proceeding, we can discern with one another how God calls us to respond by dying to self and rising, trusting that God will provide all the graces we need to embrace these changes and to produce much fruit.”

“I am beginning to understand the Spiritual Exercises, not only through my own experience with them, but also in a way that shapes how I look at the needs of others.”

“…I was offered prayerful time to discern and discuss with my group how my JustFaith experience had impacted me. In a sense, the question to be answered was, ‘what now’?”

“We come together in order to grow together. We pray that God’s love would pour upon us like spring rain. …like onions, we want God to heat and warm us so that we can release the fragrance of Christ within us. We want people to taste the goodness of God that we have experienced.”

“…we have learned that God puts seeds of ‘desire’ in our hearts…Sometimes it is just a matter of time for those seeds to sprout. Somehow you just know when all the things are in place to fulfill your heart’s desire in God’s time.”

“We continue to revel in the prayer forms, songs and chants of others that are stretching my awareness and appreciation of the mystery of God and the wondrous ways that various traditions have fashioned to communicate with God.”

“Have we as members of CLC truly internalized this mission given to us as laity by the Church of our times?…Does my life in CLC help me to do….more for the greater honor and glory of God through service to others?”

Continued on page 5
On June 12, 2007 Helen Byrne went ‘Home to the Lord’, joining many CLC and Sodality members. Among them was Margaret Fox, who was perhaps her closest companion in both Sodality and Christian Life Community®. As a tribute to her, there were seven concelebrants at her Mass of Burial, celebrating Helen and all of her works in society, Church and community. The bounds of the United States were too narrow for Helen’s work, for her using the gifts that God had given her. Even as a child she was a world-wide traveler, as her father, Rear Admiral John Joseph Mahoney, USN, took his family from Annapolis, Maryland, to the Philippines, China, California, Virginia and the Washington, DC area.

Who was this grand lady who was a leader in so many spheres? She was a Red Cross Volunteer in Hawaii during World War II and very active in her Washington, DC and Potomac, Maryland, parishes. In the former she was President of the Mothers Club and in the latter she was President of the Parish Council.

Helen taught eighth grade religion classes for seven years, was a Brownie and Girl Scout Leader for fourteen years and a Member of the Board of Directors for the Girl Scout Council of the Nation’s Capital. In politics, she was active in the League of Women’s Voters. At Georgetown University Hospital she was a member of the Ladies Board (a volunteer for eight years). She served on the Washington Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women and was a Eucharistic Minister at the (National) Naval Bethesda Hospital for twenty-five years. Helen volunteered for Birthright, a telephone counseling service for pregnant women. She was also in the first Education for Parish Service class at Trinity College, along with Margaret Fox. This was a two year theology program which prepared laity for service in the Church. She also served on the very first Archdiocesan Pastoral Council under Cardinal Baum. Helen enjoyed making baby blankets for the Christ Child Society.

I mention all of the above to give you a prime example of a daughter of God using the gifts given to her by God in the service of others. Her outer and inner journeys were in complete harmony as her life was a song of praise to the Lord. The use of her gifts was evident in so many areas of human dignity.

I met Helen some time in the late 1960s, probably during some Assemblies of the National Federation of Sodalities. Then in 1972, my wife Betty and I were her guests when we spent a few days searching for housing in Washington, DC. We moved to Washington the following year.

Forty years ago, the National Federation of Sodalities became the National Federation of Christian Life Communities. I was National President at the time and Helen was on the Board of Directors. It was a pleasure working with her. I especially appreciated her calm participation in the discussion of various topics. She was humble and had a very pleasant smile as if to say, “Fred, right on! I’m with you.” I might add here that in the first few years of CLC, a mission of her Anawim CLC, of which she was a member, was to introduce CLC to many Sodalities in the Washington Archdiocesan Union. In many of these parishes, they gave Days of Recollection and offered an overview of, and welcome to, CLC. Some of their members prepared to guide the Spiritual Exercises. Helen, for example, guided a few Sodalists. As her daughter Mary Jo related, “Helen
loved her affiliation with Christian Life Community® so much and was so committed to it.”

Helen was ill for her last two and a half years of her life and so spent that time in an assisted living facility. Her daughter, Mary Jo, of the Little Sisters of Jesus, spent a year and three months with her there. Helen prepared her own funeral service, even the music. At that Mass, the primary celebrant, Ray Kemp of the Woodstock group (Preaching the Just Word) spoke of how she and an interracial group of women like her had worked together back in the days when Washington was still segregated and had helped form priests like him in the direction the Church needed to go. Theirs was not a battle of words, nor a physical battle. These Sodalities were fully integrated.

It has been a pleasure and an honor to write these few words in remembrance of Helen Byrne, truly a CLC pioneer who lived the Beatitudes in so many ways. ☪

(Growth, ‘the right way’…And all that is needed for the new life to happen is that the branch remain well-attached to the Tree…”

We are happy to send special greetings to Fr. John (Jack) Zuercher, S.J., Ecclesial Assistant for the North Central Region (aka circuit rider of the Plains) as he celebrates his Sixtieth Anniversary as a Jesuit. We wish Fr. Jack many blessings so he may continue to share his very special talents with CLC.

We are also pausing to remember a very special member of Christian Life Community®, Helen Byrne, regarded as a pioneer in CLC, who spent the gifts given to her in the service of others. Her involvement in CLC activities were many and she was truly an inspiration to all with whom she came into contact. God Bless you, Helen ☪.

(“Editorial Foreword” continued from page 3)

Helen Byrne (left) is being congratulated as past Sodality president by Cardinal O’Boyle along with Mrs. Emma Brooks, the newly installed president.
President’s Message

Ann Marie Brennan

This issue’s theme of death and resurrection has been a useful one for me in reflecting on the “state of community” as I begin my term as President of CLC-USA.

“Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.” John 12:24

On many levels our lives are fraught with the struggle of dying to self and rising with God’s grace…to produce much fruit.

On a personal level, we encounter people who offer us, as Fr. Dan Fitzpatrick once said, the “opportunity for sanctification.” This past summer, my family went on a lovely vacation to Chappaquiddick, Martha’s Vineyard. The landscape is pristine, beautiful, and truly God’s land. In the rural, seaside isolation of the place, being together 24/7 with my four children provided wonderful family memories as well as many opportunities for sanctification for all of us!

In our local communities, while we strive to encourage and support one another, there are also times when we challenge one another. Our receptivity to these challenges often presents the opportunity for dying and rising. Recently, I had such an opportunity in my own community. Several of our members had been working closely together on Parish and CLC committees, and a subtle tension arose such that one of my CLC sisters finally named this tension and called me to task to pause and be attentive to our interactions and communications with one another. Pausing in this way provided me with the chance to look deeper at my motivations and to practice loving kindness—to realize more fully what it means to be Christ-like and to love one’s neighbor as oneself. It is not easy to accept criticism; it is a gulping moment, a swallowing of one’s pride and sense of self. Yet, it is this kind of honesty that is needed to face one’s weaknesses and rise above them to be transformed in God’s love. So, I am much appreciative of the courage and honesty of my Christian Life Community®.

At the national level, CLC-USA is at a wonderful point in its history. There has been great progress in strengthening our formation and leadership programs. At the college and university level CLC has grown tremendously. The Hispanic, Korean and Vietnamese communities have been offering an amazing number of retreats as well as young adult programs in their respective languages. Our collaboration with the Jesuits has been very positive as we have begun exploring specific ways to share our Ignatian charism with others. There has also been greater movement toward apostolic action.

At the same time, we also face many challenges, too. Some of our CLC leaders including Ecclesial Assistants are near retirement. Some of our organizational structures inadequately address the needs of our community. We seek to find a structure that better facilitates and supports CLC among our cultural groups. We seek to establish a structure that supports our rapidly growing CLC in colleges and universities. We seek to organize and support outreach to young adults. We seek more guides and coordinators for new communities. We seek a way to facilitate engaging our membership in apostolic action.

In facing these challenges, we are called to have the courage to change, to think creatively, to take on more responsibility, to respond generously to God’s call – trusting as we do so that we will produce much fruit! I am enthusiastic at the prospect of...
Opening the Way

Ellen Delaney

The formation Institute for Coordinators and Guides was entitled “Opening the Way” and for me it was indeed an experience which opened up new ways of thinking about the possibilities of sharing the CLC way of life with others, and yet there was also the recognition that I was spending time with people who shared my CLC way of life. The promotional material for CLC from the New York Region featured the phrase “Where everybody KNOWS your name”. My experience of the Institute was not only that I was known by name, but I experienced a deep gratitude for the chance to spend time and learn with people who also knew the name of Jesus. This recognition of being with people who shared my CLC way of life was all the more remarkable when I considered the diverse backgrounds and groups represented at the Institute.

My community of Faber CLC was looking at the General Principles and General Norms for CLC around the time of the Institute, and I was struck about how much that was going on reminded me of a General Principle or Norm. Looking at what I have just written, I am reminded of the opening of GP 4: Missioned Communities. “Our Community is made up of Christians: men and woman, adults and youth, of all social conditions who want to follow Jesus Christ more closely and work with Him for the building of the Kingdom, who have recognized Christian Life Community® as their particular vocation with the Church.” Two other topics which are threaded through both the General Principles and Norms, formed a substantial part of the work in the Guides track, the Spiritual Exercises and discernment.

The centrality of the Spiritual Exercises was brought home to me in many ways during the Institute. One of the most powerful was a chart presented on the second day which showed the Stages of Formation of new CLC members and their small communities in terms of the Spiritual Exercises. While I had seen similar charts before, this one really just clicked with me. I think it was not just the form of the presentation of the material, but also my own growth that made this chart so significant to me. I am beginning to understand the Spiritual Exercises, not only through my own experience with them, but also in a way that shapes how I look at the needs of others. In addition to this insight, I was also glad to be able to place myself in the stages of formation as shown in this chart.

Our consideration of the Spiritual Exercises was deepened and brought back to our own growth with a power point presentation on Day 3. The slide that really stimulated my reflection was the one after the 4th week place after the slide on “Take Lord, Receive”, entitled And After? It said:

One discovers that the Exercises are a pattern for a way of living human life that is essentially Christ centered, ordered to the good of all Creation, and best practiced in a community of others who share the same rich and challenging values.

I felt that this statement summed up my own challenge to growth and a way to think about helping others.

The work on discernment covered material on both personal discernment and communal discernment. Each type of discernment was covered in depth by printed material, power point presentations, lecture and discussion. There was much to think about in all this material. Here too discernment was anchored in the Spiritual Exercises. One aspect of this anchoring was “A schema of the Spiritual Exercises as a process of graced trans-

Ellen Delaney has been in CLC since 1998. She came into CLC after having been exposed to Ignatian Spirituality through the Charismatic prayer meetings at Fordham where Fr Elbert Rushmore, S.J., was the moderator. After making several eight-day retreats, another Jesuit told her about CLC. The rest, they say is history.

She is an early childhood educator on the faculty of Bank Street College of Education. Bank Street is a graduate school in the Progressive tradition.

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formation”. In many ways the schema can be viewed as a visual representation of the words quoted above, but this convergence seems to be a good example of my experience at the Institute; many strands of experiences meeting and enlarging and deepening my understanding of Ignatian Spirituality and CLC.

A text by Pierre Teilard de Chardin, S.J., “Patient Trust” or alternately titled “Trust in the Lord of the Journey” was used one morning for prayer. It touched me deeply. I will close this reflection with two sentences from the text, as they express for me the beginning and ending point of the work presented so well in the Institute.

Above all, trust in the slow work of God...
Give our Lord the benefit of believing that his hand is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete.

(Hearts on Fire; Praying with the Jesuits, p.58)

The upcoming work of the Diversity and Organization Committee, which will develop a process to engage our national community to address these issues and discern the changes to which God calls us.

Looking globally, as an Ignatian people, our CLC is called to read the signs of the times and to be attentive and responsive to the needs around us. On September 7 – 9th, CLC was one of two thousand NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) represented at the DPI Conference at the UN on Climate Change. Having had the opportunity to attend this, I am more aware than ever of the dire problems that face our global family and Planet Earth due to climate change and the water crisis—much of which is caused by the actions of us humans. Most impacted by these problems are those most vulnerable to poverty. We are going to have to face the reality that our Earth’s resources are being depleted and that it is time to accept our responsibility in this and change our behavior. For more information on this issue from UN resources, go to:

www.un.org/climatechange/

I encourage individuals and their families to find out their “carbon footprint” as an awareness exercise of how our actions—our housing, our vehicles, our diets, our water usage, our electrical usage, etc.—impact our environment. You can find several carbon footprint calculators by doing a search on the internet. I was appalled to learn that one calculation of my footprint came out to be over twelve tons of carbon dioxide emitted yearly. Clearly, we are being called to seriously reassess our every day behaviors. We are being called to attend to God’s creation with greater awareness and compassion. For some practical, simple ways of changing behaviors that can have a dramatic effect, go to: http://globalwarming-facts.info/50-tips.html

These are just a few of the changes we are called to face in our community. Using the Ignatian tools and our CLC way of proceeding, we can discern with one another how God calls us to respond by dying to self and rising, trusting that God will provide all the graces we need to embrace these changes and to produce much fruit.

Questions for Discussion

1. Can you cite a specific instance when your experience of the Spiritual Exercises helped you to deeply realize the needs of others?

2. Are you familiar with the Stages of Formation of CLC members?

3. How well does the term ‘vocation with the Church’ fit your CLCers?
Guides Course

Reflections from Members of Korean CLC

A MARVELOUS EXPERIENCE
Jahyang Christina Kim (NY Metro KCLC)

It was a marvelous experience to have an opportunity to spend an entire week with CLC members who have been living as CLCers for decades. This lived experience was totally different from the stories I read in a book or in the General Principles. They were living proof of “Life for Others.”

I was especially inspired and touched by Barbara Bedolla’s presence during the program-packed week. She did not stop living for others even when every part of her body hurt. And she was humble enough to allow others to help her.

Getting to know about the water shortage in the world was an eye-opening experience. It helped me to think more “globally” and step out of my “own” space to become more aware of social justice issues around the world.

Lastly, spending time with CLC family was good enough to forgive the rooster who woke me up at four every morning. Even the rooster taught me a valuable lesson: Wake up to life!

ABUNDANTLY FED IN OMAHA
Agnes (Jenny) Jun (KCLC, Western Region)

Even though it has been two months since I attended the course, I still remember one morning mass presided over by Fr. Dan Fitzpatrick, New York Region’s Ecclesial Assistant, surrounded by nature full of greenery and peace. Fireflies in the evening added beauty to the surroundings...God’s presence was truly felt through the people I met and the beauties of nature surrounding us. It was awesome to see how God acts in each of His creatures who are uniquely different in terms of personhood, movement and life’s pattern.

Since there were two tracks, Guides and Coordinators Courses, people were separated into two tracks. The program was packed with well-prepared lectures, small group sharing and recreational activities, which provided laughter and companionship, which allowed us to relax after a packed day of learning. Each person contributed his/her own natural talents and gifts, which shone through as we spent every minute with each other, except for when we were sleeping. There were friendships, old and new, that gave me hope that as long as we work together as a community, we could overcome any difficulties that might be facing us.

Through daily small group sharing, I was able to understand that each one of us has experienced relationship conflicts, loneliness and suffering. I felt supported and understood by our group members as we listened to each other and felt a tremendous gratitude for what I have. Instead of remaining in my own self-centered space, I was able to go outside of myself and see the world through diverse people accompanying me in my spiritual journey. I was once again affirmed that it was not I but God who invited...
me to attend the course and led me to look at my shadows; to re-examine and see anew my life from a different perspective. I was also inspired by other CLCers who have a history of twenty to thirty years of living the “way of life” and the members of the service team who showed love and humility in their willingness to share and give freely what they learned and experienced. I was particularly humbled by Barbara, who struggled to remain present to us even when she was suffering greatly. As I write this reflection essay, I remember the face of each person I met and feel so close to them even though it was only a week that we spent with each other. I was also very inspired by Jesuits who took the course, seeing the beauty in their simple humility and kindness as they fully participated in the program.

One thing that “shocked” me was seeing the seriousness of the lack of clean water in our world. Even though I tried to save water for financial reasons, I saw that it went beyond money. Since I returned home to Los Angeles, I have been trying to share the lack of clean water with family and everyone I meet in CLC and parish meetings. I hope to get a copy of the DVD soon so I can share the powerful presentation with people in my life.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the service team and pray that this will be the first step in advancing our CLC way of life.

A WAY OF LIFE!

Ignatius Park (NY Metro KCLC)

A phrase “a way of life! “ was imprinted in my mind and heart. After finishing the Nineteenth Annotation two or three years ago, I joined CLC wanting to deepen my prayer life. After two years of sharing in my community, I saw myself getting frustrated and feeling “stuck”, not fully understanding the CLC way of life. However, through attending the course in Omaha, it became very clear to me that our life is to live “a way of life” based on the Spiritual Exercises, that we are to live an apostolic life. Meeting and listening to other CLCers and their local community experiences, seeing active and passionate participation of Jesuits, these all challenged my formerly “narrow” vision of what CLC “was.” I returned home energized and dreaming of our wonderful CLC “way of life.”

A WONDERFUL DIVERSITY IN CLC!

Sung Ja Paulina Kim (Chicago KCLC)

During the last week of June, I participated in a formation course for the guides and coordinators. The course was a review of our principles and the “way of life.” I was inspired by how diverse, in both race and age, our community was. The course also emphasized our awareness of local and global needs and how we can respond to them. It also stressed communal goals which emphasized reaching out to others in our “mission.” We reviewed and practiced listening skills which highlighted cultural differences and diversities. It was good to see the respect and courtesy everyone showed to each other in our differences.

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The First National CLC Guides and Coordinators Course

Dennis Hamm, S.J.

I was one of some sixty-five CLCers attending the USA-CLC Formation Course for Guides and Coordinators held at the Creighton University Retreat Center, Griswold, Iowa, from the evening of June 24 through breakfast, June 30th. The presenting teams were veterans, most of them with national and international CLC experience. For the Guide Track they were Barbara Bedolla, Eun-Ae Christina Kim, John LeVecke, S.J. (National Ecclesial Assistant), Marie Schimelfening, and Maria Grimminger. The presenting team for the Coordinator Track: Dr. Eileen Burke-Sullivan, Simon Hyunkun Shin, Gilles Michaud, and Paul Macke, S.J. (the Secretary for Pastoral Ministry and Jesuit Life for the Jesuit Conference of the U.S.).


The daily order included three hearty meals in the dining room, a half hour of morning prayer led by a team from a different ethnic group each day, several well-prepared inputs-with-power-point by the teams, meetings with one’s small group (each composed with care to include ethnic, gender, and age diversity), and a spirited liturgy in the afternoon.

Highlights for me were

1. The revelation and experience of the diversity of U.S. CLC—i.e. brothers and sisters from Korean-speaking communities, from Spanish-speaking communities, from Vietnamese-speaking communities, and from Anglo communities (like the Midwest cluster)
2. The wealth of experience in my small group of five (a Cuban-American educator from Miami, a valley girl from California with a gift for youth ministry, a Korean-American musician and sculptor, a retired engineer from Detroit, and yours truly (a Jesuit Bible teacher from Omaha)
3. The vitality and creativity of a membership that ran from twenty-somethings to octogenarians
4. The importance of knowing 450 years of CLC history
5. The sense that it is extremely important that CLC is international at a time when globalization is a crucial dimension of the life of the Church
6. Learning that USA-CLC has NGO status with the UN and that we have chosen to focus on the issue of water (fresh water being an increasingly threatened element these days)
7. The conviction that new CLC groups need from the get-go some sense of the “whole picture” (General Principles, the Spiritual Exercises, CLC’s world-wide nature, etc.) The need to restore a public celebration of CLC commitment, temporary and permanent
8. The distinct roles of coordinator (external organizer) and guide (spiritual director of the group [not of the individuals in it] who, though not a decision-making member of the group, is still somehow a participant)—roles that I still have to clarify in my own thinking.

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Linda Hayek

I drove only a short distance from Plattsmouth, NE to Griswold, IA, but it provided a view of a larger world at the CLC Formation Institute held at the Creighton Retreat Center. We “locals” were in the minority because participants covered the continent including Alaska, Canada, and both coasts. The subgroups included Americans with Korean, Vietnamese and Hispanic perspectives. Ages ranged from the twenties through the eighties. We had a different celebrant for Mass every day! The experience was rich with diversity.

The intent of the training was to deepen our understanding of CLC and to develop leadership skills in individuals who could promote and support new CLC groups throughout our communities. The week was packed with ideas and the study was intense and exciting. It opened my eyes to look beyond my own community!

Naturally, a network of friends and connections developed so it would be easy to contact any of the seventy-nine participants to share ideas or ask for support. Also, even though the training was directed at new groups, I predict that it will infuse new energy into the life of established communities which have been in existence for several decades! It will be exciting watch the spiritual growth take place in my own community (Siloam) and new communities throughout North America.

THANK YOU!

Mideok Irena Park (Atlanta KCLC)

First of all, I would like to thank all of the service team members for making this Guides Course so wonderful and educational for me. I appreciated the organized yet relaxed “format” of the program; how we gathered and began each morning with a prayer (led by different cultural groups) and ended with a group examen in the evening. The program clarified the guide’s roles and functions, and taught me that listening is the most important skill that a guide should have. As a member of a local community still in its “beginning stage,” I came home filled with ideas and a knowledge of content that will be extremely useful, if not vital, for the growth of our own community. I’ve also been inspired to introduce some national CLC issues into my somewhat “isolated” community, such as social justice, the clean water shortage and immigration issues.

I truly loved attending the Guides Course track program and meeting so many wonderful CLC companions!
“What does the Lord Require of you but to act justly and love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God?” — Micah 6:8

The mission statement of JustFaith Ministries states that the program “strives to provide faith formations, processes and resources that emphasize the Gospel message of peace and justice, Catholic social teaching and the intersection of spirituality and action. The aim of JustFaith Ministries is to enable people of faith to develop a passion for justice and to express this passion in concrete acts of social ministry.”

Whew. I am a busy mother of five, and this seemed a daunting task. Yet, I felt the call to answer this challenge and I committed myself to this thirty-week program. I wanted to educate myself about issues involving social justice and find some guidance in expressing my compassion towards others in a meaningful way.

The program’s selected books, DVDs and “field trips” as well as speakers, truly exposed me to aspects of society not visible to me on a day to day basis. Some topics included poverty, immigration, Fair Trade practices, affordable housing and factory farms. Many times I was moved to tears to see the extreme poverty and desolation that so many people in the world face. I was thankful to have a solid grounding in faith to offer me hope instead of desolation after witnessing such suffering.

A key component of the JustFaith program is the opportunity to build community in a prayerful environment. As a group, we were guided in prayer and offered retreat experiences. These retreats, combined with the supportive, thoughtful discussions incorporated into each session, helped me to discern more clearly how my social conscience was being affected by these experiences.

One of the most powerful experiences were the “field trips”. I was disappointed that due to family commitments I missed two of them. One was to the immigrant detention center in Elizabeth, NJ, and the other was a visit to a drug rehabilitation center in Paterson, NJ, called “Straight and Narrow”. I was able to attend a daylong seminar in Newark, NJ sponsored by the Archdiocese. The topic was affordable housing. Not only did I learn a great deal, I was able to participate in a bus tour through Paterson and Newark which highlighted areas that have benefited directly through community based organization and activism. Also during this day I bore witness to several undocumented workers who spoke about leaving their families to travel to the US, the hardships facing them along the way, and the discrimination they have to deal with regularly. I learned a great deal about the lengthy and confusing process necessary to go through to obtain proper papers.

In the concluding weeks of the program, I was offered prayerful time to discern and discuss with my group how my JustFaith experience had impacted me. In a sense, the question to be answered was “what now?” I had been presented with an education of a variety of social issues and was challenged to view them through the eyes of Christ. Our individual responses were not judged or coerced; we were merely encouraged to allow the Holy Spirit to guide us further.

My calling right now is to be a full-time mother to my children. My “what now” project is to talk with my children about our responsibility to the world’s poor and suffering and encourage them to take action in small ways to show their compassion and try to make a difference. I think the biggest change I have made which trickles
down to my family has been in my shopping habits. I buy organic milk, meat and vegetables and try to avoid overly processed foods which barely resemble their original food source. I also carry tote bags with me to keep from accumulating plastic bags for the landfills. I buy fairly traded coffee. I also try not to buy clothing made in countries that are notorious for using sweat shops. That is a very difficult endeavor because there are limited options.

We also regularly search through drawers for gently worn items we can donate and try to keep purchases down to a minimum. I have challenged myself to try and lead by example in that area. I also try to keep abreast of current events and discuss them periodically with my older children. I try to articulate for them a thought process that includes taking responsibility for those who are not able to speak for themselves. Perhaps in the future when my family responsibilities are less my call will change. Right now, my “what now” is continuing my own journey of faith-filled compassion and encouraging my children to develop their own.

Questions for Discussion

1. How well do your CLC members exhibit “…a passion for justice…in concrete acts of social ministry”?
2. Are there specific social justice ministries to which your CLCers seem to be drawn?
3. How have you reconciled/perhaps sublimated your “what now” with your hopes/dreams of active/’out there’ ministry?

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Update on our CLC NGO and UN Activity

‘Opening the Way’, June 2007, National Formation Course for Small Group Leaders: Presentations included CLC’s role at the UN and UN-produced films on water that examine water problems such as scarcity and what we can do about them; the CLC NY WG will try and get copies so they can be distributed throughout CLC-USA communities.

Global Forum on Migration, July 2007: This first meeting took place in Brussels and focused on migration and development; it hopefully marked the start of a new global process designed to enhance the positive impact of migration on development and vice versa.

International Youth Day – 12 August 2007: Theme was “Be seen, be heard: youth participation for development”, and was a great opportunity to create awareness of the importance of youth participation and inclusion in the societies in which they live.

South Florida Region Radio Programs, 4, 11 and 18 August 2007: Three programs on water (Spanish); the first dealt with water issues related to issues such as moral responsibility, world poverty, and so on, and emphasized CLC’s role at the UN; the second included a representative from Miami-Dade Water Department and highlighted the problems related to bottled water; the third illustrated water conservation through Scriptures.

UN DPI Conference on 5 – 8 September 2007: Climate Change: How it Impacts Us All.

NY Working Group Meeting: 7 – 8 September 2007: Roswitha Cooper of the Geneva WG will attend this meeting.

International Day of Peace – 21 September 2007: Established by a UN resolution in 1981 “to mark our individual and collective progress toward building Cultures of Peace, and to serve as a reminder of our permanent commitment to Peace, above all interests and differences of any kind”; local Christian Life Communities are to join in solidarity with people around the world in commemorating the ideals of peace both within and among nations.

Youth Mission Week, Spring 2008: This is still in the planning stages; more information will be forthcoming in the next CLC NGO Bulletin.


http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr2/table_contents.shtml

Resource for Water Issues at the UN


Resource on Bottled Water Published in the USA:


To contact our CLC NGO Working Groups, you can e-mail:
Geneva CLC UN WG: <genevawg@cvx-clc.net>,
CLC New York WG UN: <new-yorkwg@cvx-clc.net>
Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

My name is Levi Truong and I have been given the privilege to share my experience of Cura Personalis with you. I hope this letter finds you well and basking in the love of God! Blessings to all of you!

"THE VOICE OF GOD IN THE ONION FIELD"

I am a child of Dong-Hanh. Before I could understand what Dong-Hanh CLC is (Dong-Hanh for short), it was already in my blood! Cha Tha’nh (Fr. Julian Elizalde, SJ, previous World CLC EA) actually married my parents and I grew up seeing him as another member of my family. I remember going to meetings with my mom as a little boy, not really understanding what was going on, but knowing deep within myself that there was something special there. One of my favorite memories in Dong-Hanh was Dong-Hanh entertainment night. Even though I didn’t understand everything that I heard, the laughter was contagious and when I reminisce about it, I can’t remember a time that I had laughed harder! These people have a joy about them… but where did this joy come from? This very question seemed to be the question that led me to Cura Personalis.

In the past seven years of working as a youth leader, assistant pastor and hospital chaplain, I have seen and experienced many things. It has been an incredible journey to say the least! I have seen some of the most touching acts of love and also some of the most horrendous acts of evil. At times my journey has brought me to the highest mountain top, flying on the wings of an eagle; other times it has brought me to my knees and even to the very depths of hell. It has been the epitome of agony and the apex of ecstasy. All the while, I have dreamed of an “ideal ministry/community.” Although my ministry experience has been rather short, I feel as though I have lived and seen a lifetime of ministry. I have seen many things that enhance a ministry and I have also seen many things that hamper a ministry. I have taken so many notes and have asked myself dozens of times, “If I were to institute or devote myself to a ministry, what would that ministry have to look like?” To my amazement, it would look a lot like Dong-Hanh!

Here are some of the things my ideal ministry would have. I have dreamed of a community where everyone is equal. Regardless of age, everyone is regarded as a brother or sister. In this community everyone is a priest or minister because God has given everyone unique gifts and talents for the purpose of service. This ideal community is highly organized, with time-tested training that empowers its members, yet at the same time these members are so open and honest towards each other and God that it is not stagnant or dogmatic. It is living and dynamic because it moves and grows according to the Spirit of God. It is an organism, not an organization. It journeys and listens to people instead of brow beats and preaches down to them. Each member knows how to care for his/her individual self and, as a result, cares for others in the best way possible. It respects the arts as a creative mode of expression and connection with God; the list goes on…

Maybe I was too new to this community to understand it fully, but I was flabbergasted at what little I already saw! My vision of what I would call a “true ministry” was not just a daydream! Many of the ideas that I had in my mind had become realized in Dong-Hanh and I was actually participating in that reality! It was amazing to retrace the history of Dong-Hanh, even back as far as its conception as only a thought in one man’s mind and a dream in the heart of God. In looking at the history of Dong-Hanh, I began...
to see how deeply I was already connected with it. My mother was with Dong-Hanh since its inception, and now I was as old as Dong-Hanh was! It was as if Dong-Hanh was not an organization, but an actual person. Imagining Dong-Hanh as a person, I feel as if I am traveling a similar journey! I too have sought acceptance into a greater community of believers and I too have had a war-like experience that threatened to completely break my faith completely apart. The history of Dong-Hanh is a testimony to the goodness, faithfulness, and power of God—the dream of God becoming reality! I believe my story is the same. Like the Dong-Hanh story, my story is just beginning. We have experienced much in our twenty-six years, but we are still traveling the journey. We look forward to learning and experiencing new things, yet at the same time we earnestly pray for direction and seek counsel from our Father.

When I think of Vietnam I feel broken hearted. How can such a little S-shaped country be so divided? Vietnam seems so conquered and influenced by other countries. Where is the heart and soul of Vietnam? Where is its strength? What is its true identity? Perhaps God’s Spirit working through us can heal and empower the people? Vietnam needs to know who she is. It’s a radical thought, but if it is in the heart of God it would be unstoppable! New possibilities, endless possibilities, have started to formulate in my mind. I started to think, “Perhaps dreams really do come true!” When God says, “Nothing is impossible,” He’s not kidding! I still pinch myself when I think about Dong-Hanh and its future.

Well, back to reality! There’s only so far I can go in trying to describe something like Cura Personalis. The only way you will understand it, is if you experience it for yourself. When I reflect on my experience with Cura Personalis, there are just too many experiences to count. If one of the goals of Ignatian Spirituality is “to see God in all things,” at Cura Personalis, I definitely saw God! Every corner I turned, every sound I heard, every person I met, revealed another part of God to me! It was overwhelming! It is impossible to take it all in, let alone write about it! Nevertheless I will attempt to describe the awe of God to you through three experiences I had during the retreat.

My Cura Personalis experience began with the spiritual exercise of washing hands. What needed to take place was that you would dip your hands into a bowl of water and another person would dry your hands. In drying your hands the other person would say to you, “You are God’s beloved son/daughter. He is well pleased with you,” a very simple gesture, to say the least. In turn, you would do the same for someone else. It is a retelling of Christ’s baptism and how God’s Spirit descended upon Jesus and said the same words to Him. When I saw such a portrayal of God’s love and approval I was awestruck! Could those very words that the Father said to Jesus apply to me? It would be impossible to completely describe to you how much I needed to hear these words! These words resonated with me on a myriad of levels and echoed to the deepest places of my heart. It was too much for me to handle. I was God’s beloved and he was pleased with me? He was proud of me?! Oh how I longed to hear these words just once in my life! But, I couldn’t go up there, I was unworthy of the grace. I was floored by the grace of God! I didn’t know how I was going to go up there. Then a girl who could be my older sister nudged me and said, “It’s your turn to go up there.” Time stood still as I slowly took my heavy heart, full of emotion, up to the front.

When I got to the front a gentleman who could be my uncle served me. What an image of God! If anything, I should be drying his hands. It was hard for me to hold back the tears as he said those words and embraced me. The person whose hands I ended up washing was a gentleman in his thirties. I felt that God gave me His eyes in that instance and I saw my very self in that man, several years into the future. I felt so much love for this person and realized how much love God had for me. I forced myself to put into words the love I felt and with voice cracking, I mumbled the words, “You are God’s beloved son in whom He is well pleased,” past the lump in my throat. Then I embraced him. He seemed to be taken aback by my gesture, I hope I didn’t scare him, but I couldn’t help myself. In that moment, I felt the love and longing of God for not only me, but for all of humanity.

In Taize prayer later that night I felt so deeply engulfed in the moment that my surroundings started to fade away. I felt connected to God individually, as if no one else was in the room. Yet at the same time I felt as though I were connected with everyone in the room because we were all gathered there for the same purpose. At times I felt like it was only me sitting in front of the altar of God, other times I felt like I was a part of something massive, perhaps the whole choir of angels in heaven, thousands upon thousands gathered to worship and come into the presence of God. As the Taize prayer continued, I was pulled closer and closer into the presence of God. I was compelled to kneel and open my hands in front of me. As we began to pray, “O Lord, hear my prayer when I call answer me,” tears...
began to fall from my eyes and into my hands. I didn’t have any specific request in my mind, I just felt as if a part of my soul was being poured out through my tears. I raised those tears to heaven as my sacrifice to God. As we sang the last verse, “my Lord, my God, my salvation,” the tears dried from my hands. It was as if God had accepted them and I raised my hands in complete bliss towards heaven, thanking and praising God. God heard and understood my desire.

In the last guided prayer exercise that we did, we had the opportunity to contemplate with God about self Cura Personalis. As I became more and more present to my own feelings, I came to a place of weariness within myself. In the past six years I had had many painful and heart wrenching experiences linked with ministry. I began to express to God through silent screams, “What do you want from me?!! What the hell do you want me to do? I have led small groups, preached sermons, organized and coordinated programs, played instruments in church, journeyed three thousand miles away from home to California in order to learn theology and minister to your people! What do you want me to do for your, Lord?!!” In the silence I felt God gently touch my shoulder and say in a whisper, “My dear Levi, I don’t want you to ‘do’ anything. Spend time with me. Be here with me. Stay with me.” At that moment I felt the love of God pour out over me, from head to toe, like an endless waterfall. I opened my hands to try to receive it, but truly like King David wrote, “My cup runneth over.” I couldn’t catch all of the overflow! Even as I had lifted my sacrifice of tears to God in Taize, God now responded with His own sacrifice of love to me. For the first time in my life, the tears I cried were not tears of sorrow or pain; they were tears of pure happiness! I am the beloved of God! I always have been and forever will be!

Coming to Cura Personalis was not only a dream come true for me, but many dreams coming true. So many connections had been made: connections with the past, connections with myself, connections with my family, connections with new friends, and of course most importantly, with God. When I was little, I could see why my mother would want to ‘hang out’ with the Dong-Hanh community. It was so much fun! However, I didn’t know or understand what the community did when they weren’t participating in entertainment night. Where did the joy come from? Now I knew! Now I understood! It is in connecting with God in the silence that joy is found! And that joy bursts through the silence and is given to all.

Before I left the retreat house that day a deeper connection had been established with my mother and in my mind’s eye I saw a vision of her. I can’t put into words the beauty that I saw! She was still my mother, but she wasn’t a motherly figure. She was a fellow sojourner with me. I saw her as a twenty-six year old young adult like me. She was wearing bell-bottoms, singing, laughing and praying before God. She had the same hopes, dreams and aspirations as I did and both mother and son (best friends rather) were walking the same journey, yearning with passion to have a closer and fuller relationship with God. It was if our souls were connected in that instant and she was interceding for me. I believe in that moment I was able to understand the prayers and dreams my mother has for me. I now understand why Dong-Hanh plays such an integral role in her life and now in mine.

So what is Dong-Hanh to me? When I was younger I remember asking my mom, “Why is your group called the ‘onion field’?” (Onion field is a play on words if we separate each word) Yet as I reflect on the meaning of Dong-Hanh more, in many ways it does resemble an onion field. I’m sure much better imagery could be found to describe Dong-Hanh, but I think this image makes the most sense to me and establishes the best connection, at least for me. In a sense, Dong-Hanh environment and atmosphere is a field. We come together in order to grow together. We pray that God’s love would pour out upon us like a spring rain. Especially as Asians, we know we cannot sauté vegetables without frying the onions. Like onions we want God to heat and warm us so that we can release the fragrance of Christ within us. We want people to taste the goodness of God that we have experienced. Like onions, Dong-Hanh might make you cry. But it’s a good type of crying and is an exquisite representation of having been touched and embraced by the infinite love of God.

So if you long to hear the voice of God, I invite you to come to the “Onion Field.” Come as you are; bring your heart and everything that is within it. Be yourself, open and honest before God. Listen. Not only will you hear the voice of God, you’ll find out that He has been waiting for you this whole time.

Questions for Discussion

1. What does your visioning of an “ideal ministry” include?

2. Can you recall some instances of being “floored by God”?

3. Is it a habit of yours to ask, “What do you want me to do for you Lord?”
Five CLCers attended the Spiritual Directors International (SDI) Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, this past April. Spiritual Directors International is a global learning community of people from many faiths and many nations who share a common concern, passion and commitment to the art and contemplative practice of spiritual direction. It began in 1989 and held its first formal gathering in 1990 with about ninety Christian spiritual directors from all parts of the US at Mercy Center in Burlingame, California. In the ensuing years, the community has become one of many nations and faiths with over 4,600 members from sixty-six countries around the world. They hold an annual conference for about 500 attendees in various parts of the US and Canada. This year’s theme was “Coming Home to the Cosmos” with Brian Swimme as the keynote speaker.

Below are reflections from three of this year’s CLC participants.

SDI 2007 was a great gift in a beautiful location! It was my first time in Vancouver — surrounded by water, mountains in the distance, flowering trees, multi-cultural and multi-faith. (Did you know that the second largest faith tradition in the area is Sikh?) Our convention hotel was located in the Richmond District — Asian shops and restaurants and languages, Tai Chi Chih by the lake in the park across the street.

Our keynote presenter, Brian Swimme, a mathematical cosmologist, expanded our horizons to “Coming Home to the Cosmos,” inviting us to a new understanding of “Who are we becoming?” in relation to the creativity and generosity of the Universe. He helped us to focus on the powers and processes of the ever expanding universe, including its homeostasis, synergy, transformation, interrelatedness and radiance. (See his book, The Hidden Heart of the Cosmos, Orbis Books).

We enjoyed multiple workshops! Mine included: “Self-Emptying Love in a Global Context: Ignatian Spiritual Exercises and the Environment”, presented by Bob Sears, S.J., of Chicago, which highlighted the importance of the earth and its fruitfulness as a sign of our human covenant with God; “Coming Home to the Songs of the Cosmos”, inviting us to learn and join in singing simple, lyrical chants drawn from many faith traditions, including Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim; and, “Dancing the Cosmic Dance: Accessing the Art of Movement in Spiritual Direction”, in which we explored simple movements and exercises to help us become more comfortable with the gift of the body as instrument of prayer, expression, discovery and discernment. Our instructor was Betsey Beckman of Seattle, a spirited dancer and spiritual director who had been at our St Louis Ignatian Spirituality Conference of 2005! I learned to dance a “one armed” dance!

At the beginning: At last, after several years of hearing about this gathering and belonging to Spiritual Directors International, I’m finally going to get to participate.
And I’m with two close CLC friends, and we’re going to Vancouver. I’ve always heard about the beauty of this city, especially the flowers.

Here we are and already I’ve fallen in love with the place. The hotel staff truly does treat us members of their family. And the diversity we see in the folks we encounter! This part of Vancouver was heavily settled by immigrants from China and their cultural influence is everywhere, in the faces of the people we meet on the street, in the cuisine of neighborhood restaurants, in signs on buildings. All terrific!

The first evening: a gathering with an invitation to folks in the area designed to acquaint attendees with “the art” of spiritual direction as practiced in a variety of faith traditions: First Nations (term used in Canada to identify indigenous persons); Jewish, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Islam! I guess we Catholics have less a corner on this market than I imagined.

Throughout the event: We continue to revel in the prayer forms, songs, and chants of others that are stretching my awareness and appreciation of the mystery of God and the wondrous ways that various traditions have fashioned to communicate with God. A glorious liturgical dance about creation to which we were invited to join in prayerful movement at our places; Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist chants that we learned so that we could enter into the prayer. My first opportunity to chant as Sufi ministers whirled, and I mean whirled!

Workshops experiences: praying as if in a sweat lodge with a leader who paused throughout the experience to teach about the significance and underlying meanings as well as tell stories. An opportunity to pray through the design of a mandala led by a woman who in addition to her art prayer is a licensed horse therapist, that is, using horses in the healing of human hurts.

Final note: With Brian Swimme as the keynoter for three days bringing to life the theme, “Coming Home to the Cosmos,” and all of the experiences mentioned above and well as others, I come home filled with the bounty of God’s Creation and Love.

Maryanne Rouse

‘Coming Home’ describes my experience of SDI Conferences. From the first one I attended in Toronto, then Miami, Chicago, and now Vancouver, I felt immediately at home even though most of the people there were friends I had never met and many with faith traditions that I had never experienced. What was ‘home’ was the common experience and way of being as spiritual directors, as ones who ‘tend the holy.’ Spiritual direction is not something we do, it is, ideally, how we interact with the world — with openness, listening hearts and a reverence and awe of the uniqueness of each other and our place in the unfolding universe. This creates a very feminine environment marked by a deep sense of community and inclusiveness. For me it is always an experience of being in sacred space.

This year’s theme of Coming Home to the Cosmos was especially attractive to me because of my passion of exploring the Universe Story especially through the lens of our Ignatian Spirituality. Brian Swimme’s clear and at times witty presentations deepened my understanding and commitment to engage in this “Great Work” as Thomas Berry calls it. The workshops I attended expanded these presentations — “Biblical Archetypes and Return to Essence” presented by Bishop Remi de Roo and Pearl Gervais, “Songs of the Universe,” the adaptation of the sweat lodge, “The Journey of Coming Home in our Inner Cities.” But the one that touched me most was “Animals in our Midst” which focused on the grief experienced by pet owners at the loss of their companions. I had lost one of my beloved dogs, BJ, suddenly in February and so this workshop was a healing experience for me.

But the glue that tied all of this together was the chance to share with the other CLCers present and other attendees at breaks and during meals. The sharing of perspectives from the different faith traditions deepens my understanding of my own faith tradition and Ignatian focus. And as usual the experience left me renewed and nourished.

Pat Carter

For more information about Spiritual Directors International, visit [http://www.sdiworld.org](http://www.sdiworld.org). There next conference will be in Washington, DC, March 26-31, 2008. The theme is Being Present, and the keynote speaker is Rose Mary Dougherty, SSND.

[Photo from SDI website: http://www.sdiworld.org/2007-annual-events/photos2.html]
Being a Foster Family...

Our Ministry with the help of our
Christian Life Community®

The Dragas Family (Dario+ Clarivel+ Little Lucia)

In 2004, we watched a public television program on foster parenting. We were very interested and deeply touched. The images of the children stayed with us. Although we saw it as a calling from God, we discerned together that it was not the right time for us. Lucia, our own daughter, was only a few months old. As first time parents, we were really too busy with her. Nevertheless, we bookmarked the website as one of our favorite ones. We knew that God would tell us when it was the right time. As we were trying to organize our documents in our computer last year, we saw the website again. The thought came immediately to mind, “THIS IS THE RIGHT TIME,” we felt ready for it.

Since January of 2007 we have welcomed eight foster children into our home for different times and for different periods. We have a family ritual: When a child comes into our home, we pray together that we are able to offer him/her what he/she needs. When a child leaves our home, we also pray that he/she goes to a loving family. Having them at home enriches our life as a family and gives us an opportunity to grow.

Our Christian Life Community® has been a tremendous support for this particular endeavor from the very beginning. Their encouragement and practical help (as they even babysat for us during the required trainings) has been crucial. We share with our CLC the joys and challenges we face as a foster family. At times, our meetings have been rearranged to accommodate our new situation.

Dario: “So many people are involved in taking care of foster children: the foster parents, the social workers, the lawyers, the therapist, the judge. Each of them has a job to do. Ours, as foster parents, is to care for that child during the time he/she is with us. At the beginning I was very nervous about being a foster dad...many fears about this new responsibility came to mind. I feel much more comfortable now.”

Clarivel: “For ten years now, I have had a constant call to help children in need (on a face-to-face basis). I even remember wanting to work in an orphanage. Practical concerns showed me this wish to be unrealistic. I realized that by being a foster mother, God has granted me my wish in His own way and in His own time. He has created the right conditions to fulfill my heart’s desire. This was a discovery that I had during a CLC meeting. Isn’t it funny?”

Lucia: “I want baby here with me. Baby...diaper?....milk? Me do it.” Although it is sometimes hard for her to share her toys and our attention, she really has embraced each child. She is especially caring with babies.

Many times people ask us if it is heart-wrenching to let the foster child go. We always answer that it is hard, but it is not about “us”... it is about a child who really needs a home. It would be heart-wrenching not to welcome that child in the first place, knowing that we are able to offer him/her a home.

From this experience we have learned that God puts seeds of “desire” in our hearts. Sometimes the right conditions are not there. Nevertheless, from time to time, He sends certain signs to let us know that the seeds are still there...waiting to germinate. Sometimes it is just a matter of time for those seeds to sprout. When all the things are in place, somehow you just know you will fulfill your heart’s desire in God’s time.

For more information regarding foster parenting, please go to the DSS website of your state.

Questions for Discussion

1. Do you remember having to postpone something to which you were convinced God was calling you? What were your initial feelings?

2. Is there recognizable continuing support for your own ‘missioning’ from your own CLC?

3. Is your own ‘attitude of gratitude’ an ever-present entity when you are able to pursue what you deem to be God’s plan for your own mission actions?
Reflections On CLC Mission

Tom Bausch, Past President

As a result of our NCC meeting and many other stimuli this summer I have done much reflecting on Mission. I thank all of you who have directly and indirectly, knowingly and unknowingly, provided me with insights. On all levels of CLC, community mission is and will continue to be a major part of our faith sharing, discernment and other discussions and growing self-understanding in the next few years. This must be, for there is no such a thing as authentic CLC not focused on mission. Further, and of great concern to me, unless we individually and as a community understand CLC mission we will not have the freedom to react to the many opportunities and pressures we all face, whether from our Jesuit friends who want us as partners, the evil one appealing to us under the guise of the good, the passionate commitment of sister and brother CLC members, or our basic generosity as CLC members run amok.

The purpose of this article is to reflect on a few points concerning CLC mission as I understand it, with the hope of helping all of us to understand better the concept and our charism, especially as we prepare for the next World Assembly and our own CLC-USA meeting. Since I do not have all the answers, I hope these points stir extensive discussion and disagreement and move others to speak to the concept of mission.

STARTING POINT – JUSTICE: OUR OBLIGATION TO FELLOW CLC MEMBERS TO BE INFORMED

A few weeks ago I was astounded at the negative reaction on the part of many Catholics to the Vatican statement on the nature of the Catholic Church relative to other churches. I expected the media to be ill-informed and to write a lot of garbage. On the other hand, I have been befuddled by how Catholics can claim to be interested in ecumenism and inter-religious affairs, but who start with no recognition of just who we are as Catholics and what we believe and the many who apparently believe that all religions are equally good, therefore pick the one that feels good. I am intrigued by the number of persons who apparently do not think what we pray at Mass every Sunday in the Creed is really what we believe and who we are. Such persons are at best ignorant of what we believe. Worse, I think many are no better than the car salesperson who is not honest from the “get-go” of the negotiations. Discussions with four ecumenical/inter-religious experts, who are dedicating major portions of their lives to ecumenism, confirmed my thinking. We as Catholics must start by being informed about who we are and honest in all we say. Jesus certainly understood this when He said that He came to set the world on fire and if we were with Him, we should expect not peace but division. (Luke: 49-53)

So it is as we in CLC discuss our concept of mission with each of our brothers and sisters in CLC as well as with those who are not members of CLC. We will not set the world on fire with Him unless we are who He calls us to be. We must start by knowing our official documents, not just from a “head-trip” perspective, but also out of prayer, faith sharing and discussion with each other in our meetings. We in CLC have a very rich history, literature and body of thought available to us and this must be our starting point. We do not exist to do water issues, or the UN, or Jesuit apostolates, or refugee services, or soup kitchens. Our life is an apostolic way of life that finds God in all things and is open to whatever God calls us to do. CLC mission is usually not doing a “something” in common. And God be praised for all the charisms in the Church focused on doing a specific something or the Third Order lay groups existing to support the work of a specific religious order. They are good and from the Spirit. They are not us. We are a way of proceeding, a way of life, of doing the Lord’s mission. What does this mean, and how do we grow in understanding?
In particular, as we work to inform ourselves about what we mean by mission, I wish to commend an article entitled “Looking Ahead: The Christian Life Community’s Mission” by Guy Maginzi, our WCLC Executive Director, that appeared in Supplement 61 of Progressio. It is the best piece on CLC mission that I have read in a long time. (As an aside, Lois Campbell’s article in the same edition on leadership is also absolutely excellent.) Progressio is a wonderful publication and resource that should serve as the basis for our faith sharing on occasion. My major point, however, is broader. All of us have an obligation in justice to read and pray over Progressio, as well as Harvest, and all of our official documents, especially Charism. That is, we owe to each other the mutual respect of being informed about who we are so we can help each other grow in the CLC way of life and make decisions on all levels. (Discern, send, support and evaluate!)

Suggested actions in response to first point:

1. I will stop procrastinating and order a subscription to Progressio tomorrow morning. It is available on the WCLC website.
2. Our community will do faith-sharing focused on Guy’s article.
3. I will regularly read Harvest and Progressio and reread the GP’s and GN’s and Charism and spend some time in prayer on all of it.
4. Our community will devote a year of faith sharing based directly on Charism.

The Grounding for Our Mission — We are Laity

CLC is a world-wide community of faithful lay people living out the call to the laity of Vatican II. Listen to paragraph 31 of “The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church”.

By reason of their own vocation, it belongs to the laity to seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will. They live in the world, that is, they are engaged in each and every work and business of the earth and the ordinary circumstances of social and family life, which as it were, constitute their very existence. There they are called by God, that being led by the spirit to the Gospel, they may contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within like leaven, by fulfilling their own particular duties. Thus especially by the witness of their life, resplendent in faith, hope and charity they must manifest Christ to others.

Have we as members of CLC truly internalized this mission given to us as laity by the Church of our times? I do not think so. Are we victims of a terrible dualism that sees our involvement with the world as a dirty experience that we need to escape from so we have time to do the holy things of life? In far too many cases, I believe this to be true, including in me at times. If I, Tom Bausch, do not feel closer to God when sharing some intimate moments with my spouse, when spending time with my children, when celebrating with my grandchildren, or when thinking about my mission as a family person strengthened by my CLC experience? If CLC is a way of living the lay vocation, I think our mission must be focused as follows: (I am speaking here only of those who are married, my experience. A similar set of priorities can be stated for those called to the single state.)

1. Is my first priority in mission, my spouse and our union? Is this relationship strengthened by CLC?
2. Is my second priority, and only second after my spouse, my children and grandchildren? How is my mission as a family person strengthened by my CLC experience?
3. Is my third priority, only after the first two, my job, retirement, being a student, or wherever I am in life? What are my obligations in justice to those I serve as patients, students, customers, employees, clients, or whatever in the work God has called me to do?
4. Does life in my own Christian Life Community® help me to do each of the above more for the greater honor and glory of God through service to others?
5. In a manner supportive of the first three priorities, what else do I have time to do and is God asking me to do with His Son?

Suggested action on the second point:

1. Reflect in your prayer and faith share in your community on the above five points.
2. Share what you find and treasure with the rest of us in Harvest or elsewhere. What works in the real live world?
3. Change one small thing in your work to make it more mission oriented.

CLC Mission Is the Fruit of the Exercises

Skehan begins his reflections on the Third Week (Phase) in Place Me with Your Son with the following from the Documents of the 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (208-209; Appendix 17-1):

There is…(a) remarkable renewal taking place today in the giving and making of the Spiritual Exercises, whose vivifying influence extends beyond the limits of the formal retreat into the daily life of prayer.

Not only that, fidelity to the Exercises energizes our
apostolic action. It enlarges our inner freedom to respond readily to the demands which the service of the faith may make of us. It deepens in us the self-abnegation that unites us to Christ crucified, and thus to the poverty, humiliation and sufferings by which He saved the world.

Christ our Lord continues to labor in our world to save all men and women. I ask the Father to place me with Christ suffering in the world today.

Although these words were directed to Jesuits, it is clear in our General Principles and Charism, that they apply to those of us in CLC who are grounded in the Exercises. To use a very weak, I know full well, analogy, CLC is like the Trinity; we are Exercises, Community, and Mission. It is all one way of proceeding in love. And it is one at all times. If a person does not live the Exercises in daily life, in mission, he or she has not made the Exercises in their fullness. If we are not with Christ in mission, suffering with Him in each other in community, we are not CLC.

CLC mission is not possible without the freedom of the Exercises, without the “with Christ” of the Exercises, without the suffering and glorious joy of the Exercises, and without the intercession of Mary found in the Exercises. Possibly the most difficult concept of all for us is “with”. Is each of our specific apostolates done “with Christ”, “with Mary”, and “with each other” as CLC mission? Are our apostolates done “with the discernment” of Ignatian Spirituality? I know that the skill that I have honed most perfectly over the past sixty-nine years is that of self-deception and that without the discernment of the Exercises manifested through the Daily Examen, spiritual direction, and the faith sharing of my community, I will be very stunted in my growth.

1. How does my married life, family life, work life, civic life and other aspects of my daily life and mission flow out of my experience of the full Exercises?
2. How does all of this growth in my apostolate grow out of and then how is it supported by life in my Christian Life Community®?
3. What can our community do to ensure that mission, Ignatian Spirituality, and community are one? An integrated way of proceeding?

Suggested actions:
1. Pray over the above questions.
2. Make them part of faith-sharing for several meetings of your local community.

THE FOUR NONNEGOTIABLE ESSENTIALS TO CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY, INCLUDING MISSION

The specific calling of CLC mission is from Ignatian Spirituality, but we are Christian and Father Ronald Rolheiser notes that there are four nonnegotiables in any Christian Spirituality. (NCR, August 17, 2007, p. 7) They are all in the CLC concept of mission. There must be an essential honesty in our individual lives. This is certainly a fruit of the Exercises. Second, we must all have what he calls a “mellowness of spirit.” He notes, “Gustavo Gutierrez talks of doing justice not out of neurosis and anger but out of gratitude, out of a mellow heart.” Is not this for us the fruit of the “Contemplation”? The other two points Rolheiser makes go to the heart of mission. A concern for the poor is an absolute nonnegotiable for any Christian and is at the heart of Ignatian Spirituality and the General Principles. Does this mean selling all and joining Mother Theresa’s order? Of course not! But it does mean that when I buy a new car I ask, “And what will be the impact on the poor?” And so with all decisions in my life and in our community. As a business person makes a plant location decision, the question must always be asked, “And what will be the impact on the poor?” I am often fascinated by how the option for the poor can be manifested. I find the multi-million dollar cathedral in Los Angeles a wonderful statement of our Catholic love for and dedication to the poor.

Rolheiser’s fourth point is the one, however, that is most pertinent to mission. Community is nonnegotiable. “In Christianity and Judaism, unlike in Buddhism or Islam, God calls a people, not individuals.” No matter how varied and on the surface unrelated our personal apostolates may be, we are called as community to one mission.

Suggested action:
Spend a CLC meeting doing our faith-sharing on the Rolheiser article. “He is one of those who is reimagining and reformulating Catholic doctrine and spirituality for a younger generation.”

CLC MISSION IS SELDOM A COMMON ACTIVITY

In the article referred to above Guy Maginizi writes:

*It would be rare for a group to discern and undertake as a mission a common activity for all its members. More likely, the community becomes the privileged place for the discernment of the “personal” mission of its members. What is true for the discernment is also true for the apostolic sending, support and evaluation.*

(Page 24)
This way of proceeding attracted me to CLC fifty years ago and the longer I have been in CLC, the more it resonates with me and the more I become convinced that any attempt to take on some common activity at the local, cluster, regional, national or world level is usually the work of the evil one under the guise of being the good spirit. (I wish to emphasize that there are cases where CLC faith communities have taken on common activities and have had a powerful impact for Christ.) As Maginizi points out, our common mission is developed in more than only the discernment part of mission.

In Nairobi we understood that the apostolic body the Lord invites us to build is one in which apostolic discernment, sending, support and evaluation are vital and integral. In CLC it is the interaction of these four dimensions of the mission that makes it common.

(Page 24)

Our approach in CLC is grounded in the profound truth that we are a community of laity working in the world and not committed to a specific activity or religious order. In a religious order a superior will send and, in accordance with the charism of the order, the person will go. We discern and decide with our brother or sister in the context of Christ’s common mission, because we are laity, not religious. Our brother or sister makes the decision and then we, the community, send, in many cases with some sort of ceremony. A point that we often forget is that sending should include, when a person changes location, sending out of the local community to another local community in the context of our being a world community. I say “should” for it is my observation that we have not learned to do this very well. Yet mobility is a reality of our modern world and one we share with Christ in aspects of His life.

Supporting and evaluation must also reflect our lay reality and the freedoms and obligations involved. Yes, supporting will at times be material or the giving of time, and that can be very good. It is always support in prayer. Most often, however, it is also the supporting of presence and everything implied by that beautiful word, especially prayerful listening. It is important that there be a certain level of homogeneity in a small community, not just in formation in the Exercises and CLC, but also in terms of interests, occupations, age, marriage or non-marriage, and so on. The needs of members of the group will vary, but the community needs a common ground to enable the sensitivities and knowledge necessary to be supportive in a meaningful matter. But our common mission across the world also means that we need strong clusters and regions so that a member can turn to a person in another group for meaningful help. Or, on occasion, so we can support our brothers and sisters in another country.

Suggested action
Spend some meeting time evaluating how well your community does in discerning, sending, supporting and evaluating with each other as you form a common mission out of your diverse activities.

CLC Mission is Calmness and Peace or Learning to Say “No”

Do I, do you the reader, really believe that when you say “yes” to one thing you are saying “no” to something else? All the members of most CLCs should also be members of “No Anonymous” and your community should be a chapter of “No Anonymous”. A disclaimer—I only preach this, I do not live it. The powerful laser beam is only focused light, but it can cut steel. Maybe the greatest penance in the world today is that of staying on task in the complicated and demanding work the Lord has called us to do. As community we help each other to do that. Do you have enough detachment to take a request to do something to your community? You might hear them say, “In our opinion, you should not do that!”

You cannot be part of CLC Mission if you cannot pass the unsolicited rosaries and Christmas cards test. That is, you must be able to toss both as junk mail without looking at them and without a guilty conscience. We must avoid clutter to have calmness and peace. And this principle applies to how we treat each other. We should not tempt each other with a lot of opportunities to do good and to become involved, develop clutter, especially if we do it through imposing a guilt trip.

We do not say no for the sake of saying no, and we do not tempt others with activities as ends in themselves. Rather, CLC mission manifests itself in a humble recognition of our finiteness and the need for each of us to be calm and at peace as we do the work God calls us to do.

Suggested action.
Have each person in your community track the number of opportunities they have had since the last meeting to do something, how they did or did not say no, and how your group, in its own set of circumstances can help each other say no.

CLC Mission – To Work “With Christ” to Save Souls

John 12:20 suggests much about our Mission as CLC. The Greek members of the crowd welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem approach Philip and Andrew with the words, “We would like to see Jesus.” Why approach Philip and Andrew? The commentator I read said because they had Greek names and the Greeks identified with them. Ignatius is very clear; our mission is to save souls. We have been chosen to join Jesus in our times and places, where, since...
He was incarnated, He cannot be. We are the doorway, the entry to Him. Yes, we are called to join with Him to do His mission of saving souls. Wow!

When I was praying over this point it hit me that in my Examen I am always asking where did I find God today in my life? However, maybe the more important question is, “How did others find Jesus because of me, through some aspect of who I am, just as Philip and Andrew through their Greek names made it possible for the Greeks in the crowd to approach Christ?” Did my wife become closer to God today because of how I loved her? Did my son develop a deeper appreciation of life because of a remark I made? Was a student attracted to me by my competence and concern and then get an inkling that my faith in Christ has something to do with it? A secretary of a friend of mine began the process of becoming a Catholic after she watched him advise a client to go to another company that had a better product for his specific needs. She knew that Jack’s honesty was a manifestation of his love for the Lord.

CLC mission is a way of proceeding grounded in competence in what we are doing and our belief that the doing of it is to serve. I recently had a salesperson say to me that he did not understand how he could attract others to Christ through selling steel. Why do people feel this way? If we have internalized CLC mission, we cannot feel this way. How do I use my gifts and competencies in a humble manner to serve others, as well as all circumstances in my life, to attract others to Him?

**Suggested action:**

If you are not keeping on top of your profession, or if you are overweight enough to be concerned about its impact on your health and your ability to do what God calls you to do, put a plan of action in place to tack in the correct direction, maybe even at the expense of prayer or CLC activity.

**CLC Mission – To Live in the Reality of Our Time and Place**

“The heavens and the earth and all their array were completed. Since on the seventh day God was finished with the work he had been doing, he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had undertaken.” Genesis: 2:1-3. I am a firm believer in keeping holy the Lord’s Day and the needs for rhythm in life, rest and prayer and true leisure. Nevertheless, even the Lord did not rest until His work was completed! Our CLC mission requires that we live in the rhythm of the world to which we have been called. If we are called to serve this world, and we are, we must live within the technological and other constraints imposed on us. We cannot live according to a daily, weekly, monthly or yearly schedule that made great sense for an agricultural society from previous centuries. Christ himself tells us that the Sabbath is for the person, not the person for the Sabbath.

Every one of us who is a parent knows that our children do not have their problems and sicknesses that need our special attention when it is convenient. We fit our CLC meetings around our children’s special events, not the other way around. If we work for an electric utility we know that when an ice storm comes, we work to restore service. If our company is preparing to launch a new product, there will be months of concentrated activity, if we are to serve our employees and customers as well as stockholders in the manner they deserve. My grandparents and uncles milked cows on Christmas Day as well as Easter Sunday morning. A good defense attorney is completely focused on the case of his client during the trial. These examples of the reality of work, justice, obligation and duty are many and are characteristic of most apostolates in our overall CLC mission. It is the reality of disponability and availability. CLC mission is serving in this context and, as a result, our CLC way of proceeding means adapting to it. There will be tensions between these realities and the discipline needed to make a community work, but they can be resolved in prayer and discernment. Ignatian Spiritual- ity called the Jesuits to say no to the structured life of praying the office and hours of the Church, something of great importance to other orders. A major part of the common mission of CLC is the loving discernment and adaptation we must do to be supportive and considerate of each other in the reality of our specific calls as we work to build community.

I have often had former members of CLC tell me that they left CLC because they were unable to make the time commitment. My experience is that no matter how tired I am when I leave for a CLC meeting, no matter the concerns that I am dealing with, no matter the percentage of the meeting I sleep through, I am renewed and recharged at the end of the meeting and I find myself praying harder than ever for my brothers and sisters as I know they are praying harder for me. As St. Theresa of Avila said, “If you are too busy to pray thirty minutes a day, that is a sure sign

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Growth Magisly Pushed…

John LeVecke, S.J.
National Ecclesial Assistant

It seems that lately I have been more concerned about growing “the wrong way.” That in the midst of moving office and residence, as well as the traveling that the job demands, I have not been as faithful to my physical health and have let bodily growth get the best of me. This is especially noticed as I add yet another belt hole to an aging and increasing waistline that needs to be addressed … and tomorrow I will!

Meanwhile, I have been able to reflect on a wonderful insight posted by Larry Baden, who contemplates this way:

We have all seen trees in summer, green and covered with leaves. They provide us with those wonderfully cool shady places on hot summer days. And we have seen those same trees in winter, as bare skeletons, with little sign of life. We have also seen the dead leaves fall off the trees in autumn, as the tree transitions between the two seasons. You know how it works: First the leaves turn brown and die, then a little wind comes along, and down they go, right into the yard we just finished raking. The problem with this statement, however, is that it isn’t true. Leaves don’t just “fall off” of trees.

Now, I can hear the objections: “Of course they fall. We’ve seen it thousands of times.”

Sorry. They don’t. Consider a branch torn from a tree in mid-summer, perhaps by a storm. It’s covered with leaves, it fell, it died, and the leaves died with it. After both the branch and the leaves were dead, did the leaves fall off? No. Though dead, they remained as firmly attached as ever. Leaves don’t fall off.

They are pushed. And the force that pushes the old, dead leaf from the tree in autumn is the growth of the bud of the new leaf, getting ready for the next spring. The development of the new life pushes off the remains of the old. And all that is needed for the new life to happen is that the branch remain well-attached to the tree. Period.

Larry Baden; How we grow: Lessons from a tree Theology Website.com

I think this consideration says a lot about our recent growth in relationship with CLC-USA and the Society of Jesus, as Fr. Tom Smolich, S.J, addresses in his letter of June 5, 2007 (see attached letter).

We are at a time of crucial growth right now in CLC—as World, National, Regional, and local communities. In my capacity as both the Western Region and the CLC-USA Ecclesial Assistant, I often see the need to be pushed more toward sustained, solid growth within our formation processes in CLC. One way of nurturing that growth-push is through our lay-Jesuit collaboration. The call for “good Jesuits” comes as a generous awareness on the part of our own senior E.A.s, who have served our greater community so well for many years. At our meetings this past year, they have been pushing us all the more for new and younger Jesuits to assume new E.A. duties in their own Regions of responsibility. The Provincials have heard their call and are responding!

I also consider the new ways our relationship has pushed us into regular meetings with Fr. Paul Macke, S.J., and the Jesuit Conference Office. Fr. Paul has been able to assist this growth process by being available for regular consultation. This past July, we were delighted to welcome him as a keynote speaker and presider of liturgy at our Guides and Coordinators Course in Griswold, Iowa. I gratefully consider the new ways
that our National community desires to grow with the Society by providing sound Ignatian formation and community life for more Ignatian lay partners.

Yes, the leaf does not “fall”…Rather, the kindred relationship of CLC-USA with the Society of Jesus is increasingly being “pushed” into an ever deeper collaborative Spirit. … Growth, “the right way”… And all that is needed for the new life to happen is that the branch remain well-attached to the Tree…” In that hope and anticipation, I look forward to continued growth—communally and personally—as we open ourselves to the graced and challenging push to meet the ever-evolving needs of CLC, our greater Church, and world, as one living apostolic body, all-ways intimately united in our companionship with Jesus, our source of pushing through Autumn’s necessary dying to each new promise of Spring for God’s greater glory.

Note: A letter from Thomas A. Smolich, S.J., President of the U.S. Jesuit Conference to John LeVecke, S.J., is on page 28.

“Reflections on CLC Mission” continued from page 25

you should pray sixty minutes a day”. As we all know, prayer can be very dry, as the occasional faith-community meeting can be, but if over a period of months the general outcome of the CLC small community meetings is not increased energy for mission, that is probably a good sign that something needs to change. It is time for a guide.

The concepts of discern, send, support and evaluate come together as community mission as members of a faith community help each other to deal with these real details of time, demands of job, unreasonable bosses, exhausting travel, crises with the children and with health and so on. Each of us needs help in discerning how we will deal with pressures, what the evil one is doing to us, how each of us will react to support. “Manny, we know that the rest of us desire to meet on Thursday, but you are not deceiving yourself, you job demands you and needs you on Thursday and we will meet on the second choice, Friday. It is the least we can do to support you!” Common mission is found in these details.

Suggested action:

Every six months or so the community might spend an hour asking, have we been energized or de-energized over the past several months because of our faith sharing and other common time? Why? What do we learn? How do we change? In dealing with this the role of the guide is vitally important.

CONCLUSION

A friend of mine had an “aha” moment when he cussed at his kids because they interrupted his mental prayer in order to ask some questions that needed asking so they could go forward with their day. The tail of prayer was wagging the dog of parental responsibilities. And so it is with our common mission in CLC – it is the end if it is with Christ. Mission is end, not means. Mission requires community. Mission is common as all of us as community discern, send, support and evaluate the specific apostolates God has called each of us to do with Him, using our gifts in the times and circumstances to which He has called us. Because of the pain and suffering as well as joy we are privileged to share with Him – Wow!

Questions for Discussion

1. Do your members regularly share material found in Progressio and Harvest?
2. Has your Community become “…the privileged place for the discernment of the ‘personal mission’ of its members”?
3. “…our common mission in CLC—it is the end if it is with Christ. Mission is end, not means.” How well does this ring true in your own daily life?
June 5, 2007

Reverend John R. LeVecke, S.J.
National Ecclesial Assistant for CLC
One LMU Drive
Xavier Hall, Suite 120
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Dear John, P.C.,

The Provincials of the United States wanted me to thank you for all your excellent work for CLC and for the excellent presentation that you, Alberto de Brito, S.J., Dr. Thomas Bausch, Ann Marie Brennan, and Lois Campbell made at the JC meeting in Milwaukee on May 21, 2007. Please make sure that the others know of our gratitude.

We are also grateful that you could spend some additional time with the pastoral committee of the JC on Sunday, May 20, 2007.

The provincials will make a special effort to appoint qualified regional ecclesial assistants with your recommendations and help. We are also happy to fund your full budget request for this coming year as you move towards self-sufficiency similar to the New York Province in the future. CLC can certainly help the mission of the Society of Jesus in the United States by cooperation in the formation of partners in the Spiritual Exercises and providing Ignatian communities for those who share in our Jesuit ministry.

You and the mission of CLC around the world will be remembered in our prayers.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Thomas H. Smolich, S.J.
President of the Jesuit Conference
From ExCo

A very productive Annual In-Person meeting of the National Coordinating Council (NCC) took place at Creighton University in Omaha July 2-5th, 2007. Besides installing our new President, Ann Marie Brennan, new regional representatives from the New England, Mid-Atlantic, North Central, Missouri, and Western regions, and Korean and Dong Hanh representatives, three initiatives were approved.

The “Opening the Way”: Small Community Guide and Coordinator Formation Course presented by the National Formation Committee near Omaha June 24-30th was a huge success. Attended by seventy-two members and eight presenters, the course featured many opportunities for learning, spiritual growth, exchanges of information and experiences, and intercultural understanding. At the NCC meeting, representatives discussed whether to present another national course next year or move to a regional model. The consensus was to keep the course at the national level for another year; this will allow the team to further refine the presentations and also to keep the intercultural flavor of the event. However, a more accessible location will be chosen.

The Culture and Diversity Committee, which has been meeting since the last National Assembly, presented its report detailing plans to gather a cross-section of members for conferences in 2008 and 2009 that would implement a process to restructure CLC-USA around a more integrated model. This process would be grass-roots based, prayerful, open to the Spirit, and inclusive of all ages and cultural groups. A long weekend in Spring, 2008 would focus on modules from the Leadership Course so that delegates would have a common language for further discussion. The second long weekend in Spring, 2009 would focus on the restructuring process and would be followed several months later by the National Assembly. Each region is asked to decide on three or four delegates with additional delegates coming from the Youth & Young Adult, Hispanic, Korean and Dong Hanh groups.

The NCC approved the formation of an Apostolic Action ad hoc committee to address the need for more emphasis on mission. Some of the initial suggestions for apostolic action are:

- Prepare a ritual for sending on mission to be used at local World CLC Day gatherings
- Plan retreats focusing on mission
- Prepare group lessons on social analysis
- Create a list of immersion experiences, especially some geared to families

Discuss possible mission workshops for the National Assembly
Promote the Spiritual Exercises for motivation and grounding
Check out websites such as Network.com, Justice For Immigrants, Center For Concern
Collect ministry stories for Harvest and other venues

In addition further efforts on the Youth and Young Adult Cura Personalis program, CLC-USA website, annual appeal, and National and International Assemblies were discussed and planned.

Youth and Young Adult Updates

“Betania: Friends in the Lord” took place July 27 to 29th in Northampton, PA. This national gathering of Đồng Hành Vietnamese CLC’s youth and young adults centered around the themes of friendship, faith and mission. Approximately one hundred thirty young people from age sixteen and above attended the event, which featured presentations, small group discussions, large group games and activities, personal prayer time, one-on-one appointments and a bonfire. The goal was to create a youth coordinating council with representatives from each of their regions. We will continue to be in touch with them to follow the progress of this council and to share resources.

The Ignatian Solidarity Network will host its annual Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice November 16 to 18th in Columbus, GA, to commemorate the Jesuits and laywomen who were martyred in 1989, to call for an end to unjust institutions, and to reflect on the Jesuit commitment to justice. Each year, thousands of high school and college students, clergy and lay people gather for the event. Speakers, ranging from high school students to bishops, reflect on a range of justice issues. CLC members will be in attendance. For more information and/or to attend the event, contact info@ignatiansolidarity.net or call (415) 422-2408 between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM PST.

We have begun a national campaign to collect $20 in dues per college student at the eighteen Jesuit universities where CLC is present in campus ministry. Of these dues, $10 will go toward NCLC initiatives geared toward the promotion of youth and young adult programs and the development of formation materials (among other things); $5 will go toward the region and $5 will go to the school. We are asking for dues to be collected from students after they have experienced the introductory meetings and have decided to commit to participating regularly in a CLC.
The weekend meeting of the Culture and Diversity (CD) Committee* for CLC-USA convened in Miami Florida on June 15, 2007. The committee worked to accomplish two major tasks:

1. Our primary goal was to propose a process for CLC-USA to re-examine its structure in light of our recent gifts of diversity in cultural and age groups. The presence of the Dong Hanh, South Florida, Korean, and Youth and Young Adult communities are distinct gifts to CLC-USA that are, along with other factors, leading us to redefine our traditional structure and way of proceeding.

2. Secondly, the committee had previously taken on the work of organizing and implementing a leadership conference for CLC-USA as planned by an international committee of CLC leadership in Rome last November-December 2006.

We came to Miami with the ambitious agenda of making significantly defined progress toward reaching both of these goals. We were joined by Pat Carter as our guide to assist us in ordering our direction and listening to the work of the Spirit within the group as we progressed. We began with a social evening with the South Florida Region and spiritual calling together and prayer by Pat on Friday night. On Saturday morning we took a historical look at the committee and then moved into planning for the leadership conference. Saturday afternoon was spent reflecting on the current CLC-USA reality in various age and cultural groups and in the “Historic English speaking” CLC-USA. Saturday evening and Sunday morning we reflected on the things we felt needed to be preserved and enhanced in our current CLC-USA realities along with our challenges related to structural change. These reflections lead us to focus on a means to have ALL of CLC-USA involved in the work of re-structuring. The committee felt a “grass-roots” process was vital to our ultimate success in developing a total structure that reflects our strengths and overcomes our challenges.

What is currently planned is a comprehensive two-year process to do shared leadership development that strengthens our shared language and experience with each other. And to engage a process with each other that clarifies vision and direction and proposes a structure for CLC-USA, its regions and cultural groups.

At the end of the weekend the committee felt it had made significant progress on both charges.

The committee membership includes:

- Chairperson Peggy Edwards, Missouri Region and African American;
- Co-chair Mong Hang Nguyen, Houston, Dong Hanh Midwest Region;
- Tom Bausch, Milwaukee, North Central Region and CLC-USA Past President;
- Katerina Kim, New York Region representing the Korean Communities;
- Trung Pham, Orange County, CA and Southwest Dong Hanh Region;
- Ady Viera, Miami, South Florida Region representing Spanish Speaking CLC;
- Claudia Rodriguez, Miami, South Florida Region, representing Young Adult CLC;
- Lois Campbell, Pittsburgh, Mid Atlantic Region and World CLC.

* This is the summary given to NCC in July. At the July meeting, NCC changed the name of this committee to Diversity and Organization, in order to better reflect its charges.

Members of the Diversity and Organization Committee from left to right: Claudia Rodriguez, Tom Bausch, Peggy Edwards, Katerina Kim, Lois Campbell, Ady Viera, Trung Pham, and Mong Hang Nguyen
FROM THE REGIONS…

KOREAN CLC

Atlanta Area

There was a seven week retreat program for the members who were making their first commitment and the renewal of their commitment to CLC between June 31 and August 17th.

The ceremony for commitment was held by Fr. Seogchil Seo, S.J., after a one-day retreat at Korean Martyrs Catholic Church on Saturday, August 18th.

Three members made their first commitment and fifteen members made their renewals.

A celebration followed the ceremony.

On St. Ignatius Day we celebrated the memory of St. Ignatius. Thirty members gathered and watched a movie about the life of a college CLC group. We also had lecture time about “How Atlanta CLC has been viewed by outsiders,” from Fr. Choi, S.J.

CLC members have participated in one of the colorful events of transcribing the Bible for the celebration our church’s thirtieth anniversary,

There will be a one-day silent retreat at the Conyers Monastery on October 6th for all church members.

Thank you.

Chicago Area

Our yearly retreat was held at Marytown Retreat Center, Libertyville, IL, from July 25—29th. Fr. Hwang Jung-yi, S.J., and twenty-eight retreatants had a very special experience with Jesus. We also celebrated the first commitment of two members and the permanent commitment of five members at the last day’s Sending Mass. Tom Bausch, NCLC’s Past President was present with us.

On July 31st, St. Ignatius’ Day, we held a follow-up conference after our retreat. This occurred at St. Paul Chong-Ha-Sang Church, with twenty in attendance. Fr. Bang and Fr. Ko congratulated all of the CLCers.

Two new Christian Life Community® groups began regularly meeting this September 9th. The CLCs’ names will be chosen at a later date.

Three CLCers will begin the Nineteenth Annotation Retreat the first week of September.

Please keep them in your prayers.

Mid Atlantic Area

From June 15 through 17th, the three members (Hae Ja Rhee, Kyung Hee Rhee, Young Sook Kim) attended the Ignatian Spirituality and Introducing the Jesuit Collaborative Seminar, having acquired broader vision about individuals who had experienced the Spiritual Exercises.

From June 25 through 29th, two members, Hae Ja Rhee and Chung Nyu Shim, participated in the National Coordinators and Guides training course; they continue to put in order how to apply what they have learned with eight other MAR participants.

There were thirty-one retreatants for the nine-day and eight-night retreat sponsored by Mid Atlantic KCLC from August 9 through 17th. The retreatants started the retreat with the words from Jesus shared by the retreat director. This retreat became a truly spiritual experience to meet oneself growing fruitful in God’s love and mercy. And through daily talks, the retreat brought more joy and growth for the retreatants, understanding the contents of the Spiritual Exercise in what seemed to be a fresher approach.

The retreat director, a Jesuit priest, Jae Chun Chung, received a Doctoral Degree in Spiritual Exercises in Spain. He is currently a theology professor in a Catholic University located in Kwang Joo, Korea. Father Kang Yup Jung served in the capacity of spiritual direction along with three other CLC guides.

The eleven members preparing for their renewal of commitment started the eight week Retreat in Daily Life in the beginning of July, due to not being able to participate in the retreat at the retreat house.

The cluster meetings with the three communities were held on August 24 and 26th.

The KCLC chairperson, Teresa Young Sook Kim, announced that the use of a Korean Church for the meeting for the past seven years has ceased, guiding the six communities in how to properly choose a meeting place and encouraged the members who are matured in Spiritual Exercises.

New York Area

Both young adult and adult silent retreats took place at Loyola Retreat House in New Jersey, from August 16 to 22nd and August 22 to 26th, respectively. We want to offer our sincere thanks to Fr. Se-il Oh, S.J., and Br. Dominic Kim for the service they have given to make both retreats very successful. Thank you Fr. Oh and Br. Kim. We hope to see you again soon.

We are planning a Fall semester at the ICL (Institute for Christian Life) with “Growth as CLC” as a topic. This
will be a leadership course led by those who have attended the National Formation course held during June 24 to 31st in Omaha, Nebraska. This leadership course is open to all KCLC members. Attendance for this leadership course is also highly recommended for those members who are preparing for their First Temporary Commitment and Permanent Commitment in 2008.

Group Spiritual Exercise (19th Annotation) will be available from September 2007 in Queens, Manhattan and NJ areas. CLC will begin a registration system for new retreatants.

Metro NY KCLC is planning a Sunday picnic on October 7th at the Marian Shrine in New York. There will be a time to renew Temporary Commitment during the Mass. We hope many KCLC members and families can attend.

Lastly, Metro NY KCLC is also planning a one-day retreat on November 11th at Mount Manresa Retreat House in Staten Island, NY. We will have more detailed information in the near future.

**Mid Atlantic Region**

Fr. Jim O’Brien, S.J., reports that there were ten CLC members from our Mid Atlantic Region in attendance at the Guides and Coordinators Courses. Three ethnic groups were represented—Korean, Vietnamese and Anglo. The Region was able to provide financial support, covering registration fees for five members (thanks to Fred Leone and the Betty Leone Development Fund), and travel expenses for others. Nestor Ymeli provided informal “on site” technical and computer support for everyone, which was greatly appreciated.

We are looking forward to our Fall Regional Meeting at the end of September, when those attending the Guides and Coordinators Courses will be sharing with us.

**New England Region**

We had a wonderful World CLC Day in March, held at the Dragas’ residence in Lowell, MA. This is the second year that we have shared this day with the families of the Vietnamese Community. Children bring so much life, hope and joy to our events. We hope to continue with this tradition in the years to come.

Our Annual Retreat was held in April 2007 at Fairfield University, Connecticut. Many thanks to Skip Conlan, S.J., for his hospitality! The beautiful grounds of the Jesuit Residence gave us the perfect setting for meditation and inspiration. Fr. Paul Kenney, S.J., our former Ecclesial Assistant, directed the retreat, which was centered on Ignatian Spirituality. Even Lucia, our two year old member, had her very own moments of meditation. Of course, that was in between running and playing.

**Missouri Region**

The busy summer is over, and fall activities are beginning in our various CLCs throughout the Missouri Region.

A highlight of the summer was the Formation Institute held at Creighton University Retreat Center. Katie and Joseph Vu, members of the Vietnamese CLC from Denver and Mary Wescovich from St. Louis were in attendance. It was a wonderful experience, rich in Ignatian prayer and learning given by the NCLC team. Kitty Gray attended the annual meeting of the Executive Council at Creighton University, held from July 2 – 5th. Peggy Edwards and Pat Carter were in attendance at the meeting of the newly named Diversity and Organization Committee in Miami.

The **College Students in CLC** at Regis, Rockhurst and Saint Louis Universities have begun meeting and holding their first events. In particular, the Regis students from Denver who attended Cura Personalis at Boston College in June wrote reflection papers to be published throughout the school year in the CLC newsletter, *Emmaus*. Rockhurst University also sent students to Cura Personalis. The new pre-CLC students will be led by the young people who attended Cura Personalis. Rockhurst’s CLC program is overseen by the new Campus Minister, Cindy Schmersal. At Saint Louis University, information and invitation to CLC...
was included in Orientation Week while more experienced members met over the September 8th weekend to prepare for the year. Campus Ministers Steve Fowler and Angela Batie will work together this year on CLC.

**Nicholas Owen CLC** in St. Louis has resumed meetings after a summer hiatus. Two members, Pauline Blandina, OP, and Brother Joseph, a Christian Brother, celebrated Fiftieth Jubilees with their respective communities. The Nimers, Jan and Ron, took the opportunity to attend *Canticle to Sister Water*; a retreat held in Wisconsin.

**Discipleship CLC** of St. Louis has taken a General Principle of CLC for reflection between meetings to offer discussion at the meetings along with Joan Chittister’s book, *How Shall We Live? because there is a monk in all of us.*

**Sacred Circle CLC**, also in St. Louis, continued its gatherings during the Summer and included a day at White Jesuit Retreat Center’s Jesuit Spirituality Day. They also hosted the Missouri Region summer Potluck and Group Meeting. It was held at Linda Leib’s newly formed Holy Spirit parish.

**John the XXIII CLC** in St. Louis set aside time over the summer to hold an evaluation of the previous year’s activities and spiritual work. Then, another meeting was devoted to planning the next year’s programs, which includes sponsoring an annual Mass to pray for peace on the First Friday in September.

**Pilgrim CLC** of St. Louis had the summer off and will meet again starting in September to set up the coming year’s schedule. We’re keeping the Guignons, Sally and John, in prayer as they recover from recent medical interventions.

**The People of St. Paul** from St. Louis had a send off for Esther LeDuc IHM, who is moving to Detroit. Group study included reading *Moment by Moment* by Carol Ann Smith, SHCJ and Eugene Merz, S.J.

The **Vietnamese CLCs** annual meeting is coming up towards the end of September in Carthage, Missouri.

**Oklahoma** has grown to seven pre-CLC groups since Fr. Robert Costello, S.J., presented the day of reflection to Oklahoma City participants in June. New Retreat in Daily Life groups will form this fall.

**New York Region**

Frs. Dan Fitzpatrick, S.J., and Ray Sweitzer, S.J., joined the other US Ecclesial Assistants for a meeting with Fr. Brito (World Vice-Ecclesial Assistant) in Hales Corners, WI, which took place after Fr. Brito’s visit to New York and his meeting with our Metro NY CLCers.

Several members from Metro NY attended the over-subscribed Jesuit Collaborative at Fairfield University, Fairfield, Connecticut over the weekend of June 15 to 17th. The weekend was a gift, since it sparked ideas for those in attendance who benefited from the sharing of others in attendance, both formally and informally. Among the famous presenters were William Barry, S.J., and Margaret Silf.

Awakening to the rooster’s song in the wooded Retreat Center of Creighton University, many from the NY Metro area participated in the CLC-USA Guide and Coordinator Formation Course from June 23—30th. Eating, praying and sharing with CLCers whose cultural heritage was Canadian, Vietnamese, Korean, Hispanic and French, was a joyful song. The fruit of this week will be shared with Metro CLC Leaders in October.

Over the Summer, Faber CLC met twice for all day workshops and prayer on the CLC General Principles.

Fr. Ray Sweitzer, S.J., has begun a second Christian Life Community® with the faculty at Fordham Prep. Since they meet early in the morning before classes start, they have named themselves the “Matins CLC”.

**North Central Region**

The North Central Region has been blessed with several important events this Spring and Summer.

In late May, Fr. Alberto Brito, S.J., the World Vice Ecclesial Assistant for CLC attended the two-day meeting of Ecclesial Assistants from all over the country in Milwaukee. Fr. Brito is from Portugal but is stationed in Rome. Thanks to the arranging of Jeanne Sieger, some members of the Milwaukee CLC Cluster hosted a dinner for Fr. Brito, Fr. John LeVecke, S.J., National Ecclesial Assistant, and Fr. John Zuercher, S.J., North Central Region Ecclesial Assistant.

**Fr. Brito, S.J., (third from left kneeling) and others attending the meeting of the Ecclesial Assistants.**
On June 6th the Wisconsin Province of the Jesuits held its annual Province Days in Milwaukee. Eight lay CLCers from our Region attended. One of the highlights was a meeting of CLCers after lunch one day to discuss the Region and some of the opportunities and challenges it faces.

Our own Regional Assistant, Fr. Jack Zuercher, was honored at Province Days, celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of his entering the Jesuits. On June 8th, members of the Milwaukee CLC Cluster surprised Jack with a picnic in his honor at the home of Tom and Bernie Bausch. Jack’s comment on this: “One of the memorable events in my life these past several months is the wonderful surprise picnic recognizing my sixty years as a Jesuit.” Jack was also featured in the CLC Spotlight Column of our Regional Newsletter.

The National Formation Team sponsored the formation program, “Opening the Way” at the Creighton Retreat Center June 21 to July 1st. Omaha and Des Moines CLC were invited to join the participants at the closing Mass and commitment ceremony. They all enjoyed a picnic and social hour immediately following.

ExCo and Regional Representatives met July 2 to 5th at Creighton University for discernment of national organizational priorities and decision making. On July 4th, they were guests of Fr. Jack Zuercher and some Omaha CLCers at a picnic at the Jesuit Gardens on the Creighton Campus. They were then treated to a spectacular view of fireworks in Omaha from a top floor campus site.

Omaha CLC Cluster members are looking forward to their Regional Retreat and Meeting, Oct. 12 to 14th at the Creighton University Retreat Center in Griswold, Iowa. Presenters will be Sr. Marie Schwan, CSJ., and Fr. Dick McCaslin, S.J.

RIEMAN GREAT LAKES REGION

On Saturday April 14th the Great Lakes Regional Spring Meeting took place at St. John’s High School in Toledo from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Toledo, Cleveland and Detroit CLC groups met to discuss A Meditation On our Response to the Call of Christ, from the Provincials of the United States Assistancy Jesuit Conference.

Each of the CLC groups read the book before the April meeting and we did reflect and dialog on the meditation.

The National CLC Training of Guides and Coordinators meeting was held in Griswold, Iowa in June, 2007. Barbara Bedolla, Marie Schimelfening and Maria Grimminger from the Riemann Great Lakes Region were some of the Guides trainers for the National Training, amongst many others. Six members from our region also attended. The week was so energizing—in the Spirit of St. Ignatius.

SOUTH FLORIDA REGION

The communities of the South Florida Region have been involved in several projects and activities during the summer months.

As members of the Hispanic Apostolic Movements of the Archdiocese of Miami, we participated in the Marian Week that was celebrated in several parishes of the Archdiocese the week of May 20 to May 26th. The theme for this year was: Mary, as our model for mission.

On Thursday, May 24th, it was our privilege to conduct the program, which consisted of an opening prayer, personal testimony and praying of the rosary at St. Francis of Sales parish in Miami Beach.

The NCLC-USA subcommittee for Culture and Organization met in Miami, at the house of Marcia Iglesias, the week-end of the 15th to the 17th of June.

The members of this sub-committee represent the different cultural groups that are part of CLC-USA: Anglos, Vietnamese, African-Americans, Koreans and Hispanics. The chair is Peggy Edwards and Pat Carter was the guide for this meeting.

We had a welcome dinner on Friday, and on Sunday night, after the meeting was over, Pat met with several members of the region who were interested in Reflections on Water at Clarita Baloyra’s house.

As a result of this meeting, members of CVX El Peregrino are following these Spiritual Exercises and we hope to promote them even more among other communities of the region.

Four members of different communities participated in the Course for Guides and Coordinators of CLC at Griswold, Iowa, during the week of June 24 to 30th. Maggie Khuly, of CVX Magnificat, Mimi León, of CVX Mensajeros de la Luz, and María del Carmen Morera and Clarita Baloyra, of CVX El Peregrino, were enriched by the presentations of the themes and the sharing with as many
Remembering CLC-USA in Your Estate Planning

Through charitable giving, we are called into a new, more spiritual relationship with our own personal needs and resources; we begin to see all things in this world as “gifts of God, with the potential of calling forth in us a deeper response to our life in God,” (Spiritual Exercises Principle and Foundation) and through this to help build the Kingdom.

The mission of CLC is one of communal discerning, sending, supporting and evaluating. Support and stewardship are important components of Christian Life Community®. Supporting means to give of our time, our talents, and increasingly, our treasure.

Supporting CLC is a concrete way of expressing gratitude to God for a lifetime of blessings. For the members of Christian Life Community®, giving is a way of expressing our gratitude and our solidarity with the local, national and world Christian Life Community®. As CLC-USA moves into the future, and is called upon to provide additional programs and ministries, more funding will be needed.

Please remember and support CLC in your charitable giving, and consider including CLC as part of your estate planning.

Bequests are the most frequent form of legacy giving. They are made part of a standard type of will or can be added to an existing will by means of a codicil. Bequests can be made for as little as several hundred dollars or larger amounts. You may choose to include a bequest for a specific dollar amount or as a fixed percentage of your estate; or you can designate CLC as the residuary beneficiary of your estate, after you have provided for your loved ones.

We would be happy to speak with you about your will, about structuring a charitable gift arrangement or other giving options in support of CLC-USA.

For additional information, please contact:

CLC-USA
3601 Lindell Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63108
Tel. 314-633-4628

Thank you for your consideration.

☐ Please provide me with more information about estate planning
☐ I have a question. Please call me. Best time to call: ___________________________ a.m. / p.m.
☐ I have not previously informed you, but I have already included CLC in my estate planning through:
  ☐ my will ☐ a trust arrangement ☐ an insurance policy
  ☐ my retirement plan assets ☐ other ___________________________

Name (please print)____________________________________
Address______________________________________________
City, State, Zip_________________________________________
Telephone____________________________________________

This information is strictly confidential
as eighty members of CLC. They are already putting into action what they learned.

We celebrated the feast of San Ignacio de Loyola on the 31st of July at Casa Manresa. After the Eucharist (to nourish our spirits) we enjoyed a reception that included pastelitos de guayaba y de carne, among many other delicacies.

On August 22nd, the feast of María Reina, the evening Mass at St. Brendan’s Church was celebrated by Carlos Baldrón, the Cuban Bishop visiting Miami, and offered for the intentions of members of Regina Mundi, who were present.

On August 25th we celebrated a Regional Assembly. Mimi León and María del Carmen Morera, who participated in the Course for Guides and Coordinators at Griswold, Iowa, shared with us the most important topics, as well as a PowerPoint presentation about the objectives of the Course, the presenters, different views of the Retreat Complex and the participants. We are grateful to Ramón Calzada, who helped us with this PowerPoint.

Members of CVX Magister—José Pedro Redondo, Luis Maderal and José Cruz guided us through The Ignatian Examen. We collected $2,000 from among the participants, to be sent to CVX Perú through the Perú Province of the Society of Jesus, as a small contribution for their efforts to alleviate the needs of the residents of Chinchaca and Pueblo Nuevo, who are in need as a result of the recent earthquake.

On the 8th of September we started a course of Formation CVX for the members of the Region. This will take place every second Saturday of the month, at 9:00 a.m., followed by celebration of the Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. by our Ecclesial Assistant, Pedro Suárez, S.J., along with a theme of general formation presented by members of the Regina Mundi cluster at 11 a.m.

The Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life are being offered by members of our communities, for the third consecutive year, in five different parishes of the Archdiocese of Miami, besides Casa Manresa, Villa Javier (the Jesuit Residence) and Belén Jesuit Prep. This mission was initiated thanks to the joint efforts of our late beloved Fr. Victor Hernández, S.J., and Marcia Iglesias, of CVX El Peregrino.

Another MAGIS Retreat, organized and directed by members of CVX Alas de Cristo, took place at Juan Pablo II Retreat House on the weekend of September 14 to 16th, with the participation of fifteen young adults and five leaders (and there was a waiting list). The next MAGIS Retreat will take place during the first weekend of January 08.

Ady Viera, of CVX Magnificat, will travel to Charlotte, N.C. at the end of October to give another day of recollection based on the Spiritual Exercises, as a follow up of the one she presented to the members of St. Gabriel Parish last year.

On the 23, 24 and 25th of November, we will participate in the third workshop for Companions to the Spiritual Exercises at Casa Manresa. The themes will be presented by Ricardo Antoncich, S.J., and Sister Barbara Bucker, STD.