Social Justice

...On the Move!
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Vol. 40, No. 4, 2008

Christian Life Community® Harvest (USPS 985-900: ISSN-0739-6422) is published quarterly by the National Christian Life Community® of the United States of America, 3601 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108.

Subscriptions are $24 per year USA; $28 foreign, $34 foreign air mail.

POSTMASTER: Send all changes of address to Christian Life Community® Harvest 3601 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108.

Periodicals postage paid at St. Louis, Missouri
EDITORIAL FOREWORD

Community of Christ, look past the Church’s door and see the refugee, the hungry, and the poor; take hands with the oppressed, the jobless in your street, take towel and water, that you wash your neighbor’s feet.

Community of Christ, through whom the word must sound—cry out for justice and for peace the whole world round:

Disarm the pow’rs that war and all that can destroy, turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish into joy

Bernadette Farrell, Community of Christ

As members of Christian Life Community®, these words ring true in light of our thoughts on Social Justice, and our ‘preferential option for the poor’. Of course, we have not limited our understanding of poor to those who only need more financial assistance. We see many who are needy around us—the many who seem to exist on the fringes of our society because of inopportune circumstances of living, e.g., lack of jobs which leads to inability to maintain necessary family needs, absence of decent housing for those in dire straits, new immigrants(legal or otherwise) adjusting to a different culture, elderly, families faced with very little or no means to support their children, as well as those of our citizenry at subsistence levels without medical care, those affected by injustice, prejudice, local strife, oppression and war…the list could go on and on.

Each of these categories highlights the necessity that ordinary citizens like ourselves join forces with others in order to bring about what is required, whether it be by working to provide needed services (whether they be physical, monetary or legal), and also by striving to restore the dignity that each is entitled to as a Child of God…and as our brothers or sisters. This effort necessitates involvement not only at the local level, but through our elected officials who represent us statewide as well as nationally; your computer and letters to the editor are wonderful tools in this venture…how’s that for being a contemplative in action in the 21st century?

So it is necessary for us to become more actively involved in order to lobby for change, no matter how small. Perhaps we should aim to begin locally and then utilize our country’s legislative systems for making broader changes by not quitting the battle(which it is) until we actually see some of the underlying causes of injustice being confronted publicly and politically, so others can see and hopefully realize that each of us is responsible for those suffering in our society.

In this issue, we have an opportunity to glimpse what paths some of our members have taken to confront the reasons for these inequities, and try to bring true social justice to our neighbors…

“As this Harvest takes a more in depth look at Social Justice, we can see that the charism of Christian Life Community® practiced fully is a true service to our world.

An important aspect of CLC is our work in the world and our collaboration with ‘others of good will’ on issues, actions, or in prayer that bring our world more in line with what we would desire for the Trinity to see in our world.”

“…the idea of a faith that does justice and encouraged participants to consider CLC as a means for facilitating discernment with their social justice groups.

There are people all around us who carry with them the wounds of Christ every day.”

“I felt that God was calling me to go and stand with Jesus Christ by reaching out to His neighbors who, although unknown entities to me, were my neighbors as well.”

“Grounded in my faith and Catholic teaching, I now have the basic elements of what that way would be: a common ethic shared by all religions; the various forms of non-violence; a culture of basic human rights embedded in our legal and constitutional structures; widespread ownership of the factories and farms; and a democratic world authority.”

“Living in Africa renewed for me our CLC and Ignatian call to the greater good in all we do; the call to change structures, to go where others do not go, and to do this with hope. This is a call to reconcile our specific finiteness of time and place with the universal work we are called to do.”

“It is my sincere hope that as a National community, we will continue to be “on the move” as His companions as He was in His earthly journey to constantly readdress and deepen ever more our Ignatian commitment to bring greater justice into our world.”

We are also sharing a young adult CLCer’s impressions of her participation in the recent Ninth International Youth Forum held in Rome; an update on the potential development of CLC in the Charlotte, NC area; and some reflections on the meeting of the New England Region’s meeting with ExCo and members of a Dong Hanh community. We are happy to include Projects 136, Towards...
In the Spiritual Exercises, St. Ignatius provides a Contemplation where the Trinity looks at the whole world. There is the colorful sphere of landscape and water, the green, the brown, the blue… There are no visible political lines. The Trinity looks at all the people in this world—and sees our sinfulness. Yet, the Trinity makes a choice to love us—all of us—and missions Christ to show us the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

As this *Harvest* takes a more in depth look at Social Justice, we can see that the charism of Christian Life Community® practiced fully is a true service to our world. As a discerning body with a worldview, we look at the sinful situations in our world and present ourselves freely before God to hear and respond to God’s call for us in these situations—individually and collectively. There is no shortage of problems for sure! But in using social analysis and Ignatian criteria in choosing where to engage—identifying the greatest need and discerning where we can effect the greatest good—we can be assured that we are doing our part in fulfilling the mission of Christ, prompted by the love of the Trinity.

The United Nations body regularly looks to the spiritual groups of its Non-Governmental Organizations—of which CLC is one—as the greatest resource in bringing about peace in our world “…to harness the power of religious tolerance and spiritual faith to educate and mobilize their communities to focus on reducing divisions and ancient antipathies.” ([www.millenniumpeacesummit.com/news000725.html](http://www.millenniumpeacesummit.com/news000725.html)) To stay abreast of the work of our World CLC NGO, look for the bulletins which are distributed three times a year and can also be found on the World CLC website. ([http://www.cvx-clc.net/news.htm](http://www.cvx-clc.net/news.htm)) The CLC-USA contact to the World CLC NGO is Maggie Khuly; look for her regularly featured article in *Harvest* and periodic action alerts sent out to all our CLC-USA membership. The currently discerned focus areas of our CLC-NGO are water and forced migration.

An important aspect of CLC is our work in the world and our collaboration with “others of good will” on issues, actions, or in prayer that bring our world more in line with what we would desire for the Trinity to see in our world. Just last Summer, we formed an Apostolic Action Team to begin gathering information on how our national community is currently engaged in social justice. Listed below are some collaborators worth noting.

**Partnership for Global Justice, also known as the Religious Orders Partnership (ROP).** CLC is a member of this organization of many religious groups. It offers educational programs which promote global citizenship and global spirituality, providing many groups with resources to expand their vision of the universe and promote justice issues in collaboration with other religious. When I first participated in one of their UN orientation courses, I was in awe realizing the large force for good that these religious women – and some men—have at the UN. Their dynamic presence is an inspiration for many, so much so that if more young women and men were aware of them, I believe there would be a surge in vocations! Coming this April 10-13th, the ROP, Campus Ministry at Fordham University, and our CLC UN Working Group in NY are coordinating a UN Orientation for university CLC students. For more information on the ROP, go to: [www.religiousorderspartnership.org](http://www.religiousorderspartnership.org)

**Jesuit Social Ministries Office in Washington, D.C.** Last November, our CLC delegation had a “providential” opportunity to meet with the full staff of the Jesuit Social

### Questions for Discussion

1. **What are the situations in which you and/or your community are engaged in promoting social justice?**

2. **How do you and your community practice Ignatian discernment in identifying God’s call to you to live a life that is socially just?**

3. **What are the challenges and graces you and your community experience in exploring and/or participating in the work of social justice organizations like ones listed above?**
Ministries Office who happened to be together on the morning of our annual CLC meeting with Paul Macke, S.J., of the National Jesuit Conference Office. Here we had opportunities to explore ways that we might work together. All CLC-USA should be aware that this office, comprised of several full-time social analysts, welcomes opportunities to speak with groups regarding social justice issues, including education and advocacy. Additionally, they have offered their expert services to review special appeals which CLC is requested to either co-sponsor or co-sign. To find out more, go to: www.jesuit.org/SocialJustice On this site, you can also find several levels of ways to advocate on issues such as immigration, war and violence, domestic poverty and Africa.

We would encourage regional CLC leadership to meet with their respective Jesuit Province Social Ministries Office, which is also committed to being available for social justice education and advocacy. Just last year, Fr. Mark Hallinan, S.J., met with our NY CLC Peace and Justice Committee to do just this; and he also spent a day with the NY CLC region for a day of reflection on Charity and Justice.

Ignatian Solidarity Network. As many of you know, this network comprises various Ignatian groups and sponsors two annual Teach Ins at which CLC has had a fairly good presence. The November Teach In has always been held at the School of the Americas in Georgia. The March Teach In is held on an issue of relevance: last year it was in New Orleans; this year it is in LA on the topic of immigration. This network is fairly new and will no doubt grow. Our CLC-USA leadership plans to work more with this organization. Go to: www.ignatiansolidarity.net

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Coming this February 24 –27th, 2008, several members of CLC will be attending The Catholic Social Ministry Gathering which brings together more than 600 social ministry leaders from all over the United States and from national Catholic organizations for four days of prayer and reflection, witness and celebration. If you are planning to attend this conference, be sure to contact Steve Pehanich, chair of our national CLC Apostolic Action Team, as he will be organizing a gathering for our CLC participants there. For more information: www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/csmindex011608.shtml or www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/csmindex011608.shtml. The Apostolic Action team is also encouraging all of us to look at the website: www.justiceforimmigrants.org. This site provides information and advocacy opportunities on immigration reform in this country. It is served by the USCCB Migration and Refugee Services which carries out the commitment of our US bishops “to serve and advocate for immigrants, refugees, migrants, and people on the move. This commitment is rooted in the Gospel mandate that every person is to be welcomed by the disciple as if he or she were Christ himself and in the right of every human being to pursue, without restraint, the call of holiness.”

The USCCB website offers a wealth of information regarding social justice issues. Go to: www.usccb.org and click on the icon for Social Justice Issues. There you should see a listing of links for over fifteen specific issues plus links to Catholic Social Justice Teaching and Faithful Citizenship. This last document is very thorough and especially helpful for this upcoming year as we approach our national elections.

JustFaith. Many of our CLCers have participated in the JustFaith program and have found it to be very worthwhile. Our CLC Apostolic Action Team is looking into developing a pilot program that works in the CLC format with the JustFaith format. For those of you unfamiliar with JustFaith: “JustFaith Ministries offers extended justice formation programs that provide opportunities for individuals to study and be formed by the justice tradition articulated by the Scriptures, the Church’s historical witness, theological inquiry and Church social teaching. JustFaith Ministries help individuals experience conversion—a change of heart—integrating their personal spirituality with social commitment. Participants are empowered to develop a passion and thirst for justice and to express this passion in concrete acts of social ministry in their parish or church—and in the community at large.” For more information, go to: www.justfaith.org.

In conclusion, on behalf of CLC-USA, I wish to express sincere condolences to the family and friends of our beloved CLCer, Fr. Bill Kidwell, S.J., of the New Orleans Province and John McDonald of Omaha, Nebraska, who died this past year. Fr. Kidwell dedicated many years working enthusiastically with young people in Miami and was a strong advocate for Right to Life issues. John McDonald died courageously in extending the ultimate sign of peace, offering his own life to save the lives of many others. Both are models for us of the Trinity’s love. May they now celebrate this love in Heaven. ☪

The Institute of Migration, Culture and Ministry

This institute is a project of the New England, New York and Maryland provinces of the Society of Jesus. The main office is hosted by Loyola College in Maryland. Their “...primary purpose is to advance ministry with and on behalf of those who have found it necessary to leave their homelands and seek employment, shelter and a more dignified life in our region.” Visit the web site at: http://www.iomcm.org

Fr. Bill Rickle, S.J., the Director, has a blog at: http://bill-rickle.blogspot.com/
Humanity, Dignity, and Divinity

THE IGNATIAN SOLIDARITY NETWORK TEACH-IN
AS A CALL TO RECOGNIZE CHRIST IN WOUNDEDNESS

Jen Horan

Each year, thousands of students and faculty members from Jesuit schools and universities meet to educate one another on the social justice efforts and concerns affecting their various communities. The site: the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia. This school, located on a United States military base, is not so very different from the terrorist training camps that our country is fighting to close in other parts of the world. Originally established as a defense against Communist strongholds during the Cold War, the reality is that it has been used to train military insurgents in torture techniques. There have been numerous documented human rights violations attributed to graduates of the School of the Americas.

At the Ignatian Solidarity Network Teach-In, participants are invited not just to speak, listen and learn, but also to demonstrate in a non-violent protest at the gates of the military base. This demonstration, known as the School of the Americas Watch, involves a funeral procession and the reading of a litany of names of individuals killed at the hands of SOA graduates, as well as speeches and information on the various atrocities still being committed, especially in Latin America.

For the past four years, CLC-USA has been able to participate in this effort. This year, CLC was invited to host a break-out session. The session was team-led by myself (representing the Western Region), Jazmin Jimenez (representing alumni of Jesuit universities), and Matthew “Jake” Jacobson (Campus Minister of Loyola University Chicago). We had about thirty participants from various parts of the country, some of whom were already involved with CLC, and some who were hoping to learn more about the university-level programs. The presentation revolved mainly around the idea of a faith that does justice and encouraged participants to consider CLC as a means for facilitating discernment with their social justice groups. Another alum, Peter Glenn (LMU ’02), premiered his documentary about the Teach In On The Line. The project was born when the Western Region hosted Glenn at the Teach In in 2004.

As I personally prepared to travel to Georgia for the Teach In, my own CLC small group was able to pray with a pastoral letter on the topic from the California Provincial, John McGarry, S.J. One of the Jesuits in our province was sentenced to time in federal prison for his protesting activities in 2006 against U.S. government encouraged torture. My group was able to read, pray and discuss Fr. McGarry’s pastoral letter in light of the upcoming event and our own lives and vocation in CLC. We remembered victims of violence all around us and reflected on the many ways we do not contribute to peace in our own lives and local community.

My CLC used the story of Jesus appearing to Thomas in the Gospel of John. We prayed for the woundedness that reveals the humanity, dignity and divinity of Christ in our world. As we prayed to end torture, we remembered all those who experience victimization and unfair treatment in our midst—from the bullied kindergarteners to the ostracized middle school girl, to the people who sit alone on the street corners and wait for their demons and scars to pass away from them. There are people all around us who carry with them the wounds of Christ every day. The Teach In offered a concrete opportunity for us, as members of the Ignatian community, to remember some of our own who were violently killed in El Salvador and the many others who continue to suffer at
the hands of unfair systems. More importantly, we paused to reflect on the violence we carry in our own hearts, and welcomed in a more peaceful and loving way of being as we moved into the Advent season.

Questions for Discussion
1. Have members of your CLC ever participated as a group in a social justice protest?
2. Are you attuned to visualize the “wounds of Christ” in those you meet?
3. Do you find time to pause “to reflect on the violence we carry in our own hearts”?

Fatima 2008, so that each CLC can have the opportunity of reflecting on it as we prepare, individually and communally, for the World Assembly that will take place this Summer in Portugal.

News has come of the election of a new Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Fr. Adolfo Nicolás. We offer our heartfelt good wishes for a grace-filled experience as he leads the Society in the coming years.

We pause to thank Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, who is retiring as the Superior General of the Society. We CLCers have been especially blessed to have had his personal support as well as the encouragement he gave his fellow Jesuits so that they might become more involved with CLC. Thank you, Fr. Kolvenbach.

One of our dear leaders in CLC, Fr. Bill Kidwell, S.J., has returned home to the Father. We have been inspired by his great commitment to working with Miami CVX, as well as our youth and young adults in Southern Florida, which has been a centerpiece of Young Adult CLC. We are happy to have had the opportunity to recognize his work (Harvest, Summer 2007) as he retired from active involvement, due to ill health. “Well done, good and faithful servant. Go in peace.”
“Jesus, remember me”

As a member of the Christian Life Community® (CLC), my identity comes from the sense that my whole life is being beckoned into God’s presence and the actions and spiritual exercises which result from it.

CLC is a means to put oneself at God’s disposal. Mission and contemplation are not two separate obligatory subjects, but one intricate net woven to catch the human soul and bring it onto the shore of God’s kingdom.

Last February, I felt that God was calling me to go and stand with Jesus Christ by reaching out to his neighbors who, although unknown entities to me, were my neighbors as well. These neighbors were those incarcerated in a prison that reminded me of Calvary, and the prisoners brought images of those sentenced to death on the cross next to Jesus.

I was fortunate to be a part of Kairos Weekend # 25 at the Federal Penitentiary in Lompoc, California. ‘Kairos’ meaning God’s time in Greek, is the name for this international, trans-denominational Christian ministry which serves to provide weekend retreats for the incarcerated.

All seven members of the St. Ignatius Diaconate Formation Group in the Los Angeles Archdiocese, to which I belong, decided to join the Kairos weekend program as our formation group project. We were assigned as clergy members and joined with other team volunteers who came from various Christian denominations.

It was truly exhilarating experiencing this God-appointed time for the restoration of love and trust among the children of God.

It was my first time volunteering for the detention ministry. I vividly remember the moment when I first came to the Lompoc Federal Penitentiary.

It was nothing else than a huge concentration camp, surrounded with layers of shining metal wires, which resembled howling beasts baring their razor-sharp teeth under the cold harsh winter sunlight. Or it looked like a giant factory, completely closed off from the world without even a chimney to offer an opening. I wondered how it could be possible for anyone inside the penitentiary to enjoy any kind of release of pent up tension or connection to the outside and what good being so repressed and shut off could accomplish for the prisoners.

I was a little nervous when we entered the cleared library hall where we were to spend the weekend with inmates. There were about fifty inmates signed for the Kairos weekend program, though one-third of them dropped out on the first Friday evening.

Before coming into the Penitentiary, I was assigned to sponsor two of the inmates, as a preparatory step for the program.

As I was introduced to those two brothers in Christ on Friday evening, I felt any fear or shadow of doubt beginning to melt away. They were humans, not unlike myself. One of them showed me the pictures of three little girls with beautiful smiles. He said they were his children. The photos were innocently poignant in their everyday casualness and I commented on how proud he and his wife must have been of their little girls. He shrugged and responded off-handedly that the girls were the offspring of two separate girlfriends, and not a single wife.

Questions for Discussion

1. Would you consider prison ministry something you and your CLC members could do jointly?

2. Have you ever embarked on a mission/ministry which you thought was outside of your comfort zone? What did you learn from the experience?

3. With which of the corporal works of mercy do you identify with most strongly/are you most involved?
The weekend program ran on a very tight schedule that seemed quite normal, considering the tight security procedures in the prison facility. Everything was run like clockwork, without a single second or prisoner left to be accounted for. It was evident that we needed to adapt to the environmental conditions using the barest minimum of our limited rations as well as the restricted space we were allowed.

The prison meal was an unforgettable experience. The colossal dining hall could be mistaken for a gymnasium. At first glance, everything on the menu was not so different from the outside world; they served bread and salad, meat and soft drinks along with coffee. However, I was soon made aware by whispers from the inmates that the soft drinks were actually toothpaste in disguise. I saw shapes similar to chicken wings and legs, only when it came time to chew them, the texture was a bit too rough and dry to actually be mistaken as the poultry we civilians consume on a normal basis. We speculated that some unlucky pigeon must have been captured in the prison backyard and made into our paltry meal. The roast beef put up a fight of its own as it appeared to have been made from the outer sole of a leather shoe. The alleged amount of government money spent for each inmate’s daily meal is thirty-seven cents.

The Kairos program served as a way to feel the deepening presence and grace of God, thanks to the efforts of the outside and inside team members, along with the earnest and heartfelt participation of inmates. I could feel that we all were growing together in empowering God through each small group sharing and large group praising and testimony. For three full days we shared prayers, talks, laughter and tears.

At the penitential ceremony on Saturday night we set up a sacred altar lit with a candle at each corner of the hall. Everyone, including inmates and team members, wrote down his sins to be forgiven by God on specially made paper. The paper was put into a water bowl to melt and disappear. As a clergy member, I stood at the altar and gave a blessing to each person whose paper-thin sin was just gone without trace. At that blissful moment of completion of ritual, I could sense that God finally restored loving relationship with this human person for whom He promised redemption, in return for the shedding of blood by His beloved Son Jesus. One of the inmates whispered to me, “Thank you, it was the most beautiful prayer I ever heard.” And he hugged me. I knew God accepted his gratitude instantly.

After the weekend, Monday evening was the graduation ceremony. Outside people serving Kairos ministry and family members of the team volunteers were gathering to celebrate the occasion. Thunderous applause and cheers filled the prison hall. The spirit of community and support that filled the air was enough to lift anybody’s soul with vitalizing joy, which at first glance would have appeared to be a foreign concept within the prison walls. Each person received a graduate certificate with the encouraging words “Christ counts on you!” An especially moving moment occurred when a young, tattooed man came to receive his certificate. Turning to face the crowd, this young man from whose tattoos and shaved head could label him as a ‘skinhead,’ shyly declared: “I was an extremely wicked person...”

That young man’s testimony contributed to the image of Jesus and His neighbors on the cross in my mind. I could not help but remember how one of the crucified convicts jeered and mocked Jesus and asked why his mighty God was not saving them from their cursed fates. And then how, instead of joining in with a cutting jibe, the other convict instead asked Jesus to simply remember him upon his entrance to Heaven. Jesus replied that the convict who asked for remembrance would rest with Him in Paradise because of his belief.

Redemption comes through faith. I found and witnessed this beautiful interaction between those we deem as fallen and God at the Lompoc Penitentiary that Kairos weekend.

Augustine Won was born in Seoul, Korea, and graduated from Fine Arts College at Seoul National University, before moving to the United States. He continued to study sculpture and art history at California State University. “Augie” exhibited his sculptural works in group showings with other artists in Los Angeles. He also worked as a local community newspaper reporter and magazine editor. He is currently working as a financial advisor.

When he was younger, his interest in religion was very much influenced by Zen Buddhism. After reading “The Seven Story Mountain” by Thomas Merton, he felt a strong urge to learn about Catholicism. He and his wife Marie were baptized into the Catholic Church in 1986, on Korean Martyrs Feast Day. They have two daughters, Therese (a journalism major at Fordham University) and Helen (a student at La Canada High School).

Along with a number of other Korean lay Ignatians, Augie helped found a Korean CLC in Southern California in 1996, serving as its president until August of 2004. He is currently the Inter-cultural Coordinator for the CLC Western Region.

He and his wife Marie are enjoying the fifth and final year in the journey of Diaconate Formation in the Los Angeles Archdiocese. He is scheduled to be ordained this coming June 14th and asks for prayers from fellow CLCers.
Fr. John English, S.J., a Canadian Jesuit very active in CLC and Fr. David Hassel, S.J., of Loyola University in Chicago, taught me to reflect and pray over my light and dark graced story, how God has acted in my life in the good times and in the not so good times. For many years I prayed over my school years, my years as a Jesuit, my teaching and my activism toward a peace with justice. John English asked whether there was any period in my life that I was blocking out or skipping over. Immediately it dawned on me that because there were experiences I would sooner forget, I would always jump over my time in the U.S. Army during World War II.

After watching the recent documentary of *The War*, by Kenneth Burns, several people have asked me to write about what I remember about World War II. I could mention dead soldiers on the side of the road as we marched past, wounded soldiers shrieking in agony, members of our company killed instantly, crossing the Rhine River in rubber boats under fire, bombs and bullets coming close, discovering a truck filled with soldiers turned over into a ditch with the dead and wounded lying trapped together.

There was also the companionship of my army buddies that still exists today; the resort town in Austria where we were when the war ended, the Catholic German family with whom we stayed after the war and with whom I corresponded for many years.

What is most remarkable is that the war years were among the most spiritual years of my life. Away from my usual home surroundings, with intelligent and committed men from all religions and from all over the United States, with plenty of time to read, meditate and pray, my army days were like an extended retreat. It was in the Philippines after the war was over that I received my vocation to become a Jesuit priest. I emerged from the war with the conviction there had to be a better way. I knew not what that better way would be, but for me I felt I could find what that better way should be as a Jesuit priest.

Grounded in my faith and Catholic teaching, I now have the basic elements of what that way would be: a common ethic shared by all religions; the various forms of non-violence; a culture of basic human rights embedded in our legal and constitutional structure; widespread ownership of the factories and farms; and a democratic world authority. These five pillars of a new world mansion have been incorporated into a fifteen minute DVD I produced with the help of the Xavier University TV studio.

I feel the most satisfaction from the programs I initiated at Xavier: a Peace Studies Minor; Peace and Justice Programs; the home for several co-curricular programs; and the Vision of Hope Speaker Series, now in its third year. Many have also found my website, Ignatian Spirituality and Justice (URL [www.xavier.edu/peace/ben/htm](http://www.xavier.edu/peace/ben/htm)) helpful.

As the Ecclesial Assistant for the Jesuit Chicago Province, I have long encouraged gathering in a Christian Life Community® as a practical step toward the challenge of a permanent peace with justice. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (No. 2307) states:

> “The fifth commandment forbids the intentional destruction of human life. Because of the evils and injustices that accompany all war, the Church urges everyone to pray and action so that the divine Goodness may free us from the ancient bondage of war.”

Continued on page 13
Reflections from Mwanza on CLC and Enduring Justice

Tom Bausch
Past President

In a companion article in this issue, Father Ben, as he considers justice, reflects movingly on his experience from World War II. I will reflect on my recent experiences at Saint Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT) in the city of Mwanza on the shore of beautiful Lake Victoria, not far from Serengeti, the Ngorongoro Crater, and the place of the beginnings of humanity, the Rift Valley. As I went about my teaching and other work at SAUT, and as Bernie and I made great friends and lived our daily lives, I found myself praying for the grace of being able to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable involved in God’s infinite love of this flawed humanity.

Tanzanians, despite living in the midst of terrible injustice and need in part caused by the colonialism and current actions of the West, are persons with a deep sense of hope and peace. Somehow, as we see in the genealogy of Christ himself, as revealed in the first chapter of Matthew, God comes to us not only in justice, but through injustice. Christ came to us not only through the heroes and saints of his lineage, but through sinners and mediocrities. Or as Dolly Parton sings, “through horns and halos”. Maybe it is providential that I am writing these words during Advent, the season with the beautiful intention of awakening in all of us the healing memory, the hope, of a God who became a child. (Joseph Ratzinger, Seek That Which is Above) The reality of the world pictured by Ignatius in the Incarnation meditation comes alive for me in Africa and with it the love of the Trinity for all of us, better, for each of us.

Living in Africa renewed for me our CLC and Ignatian call to the greater good in all we do; the call to change structures, to go where others do not go, and to do this with hope. This is a call to reconcile our specific finiteness of time and place with the universal work we are called to do. Maybe Thomas Merton captures a solution to this apparent disconnect in the reconciliation of prayer and work with the words, “All Christian life is meant to be at the same time profoundly contemplative and rich in active work”. When in Africa it is obvious that prayer and work demand each other, not in a theoretical manner, but as my friend Father Ted Walters, S.J., says, after his many years in Tanzania, in the needed fruits of “patience, humor, adaptability, and a sense of mission”. I can only thank God for my CLC calling, a gift from God that enables in me the growth of these four qualities as I do His work in the here and now, but always in solidarity with my CLC brothers and sisters across the globe.

In Africa I found myself also turning to Merton to reconcile another irreconcilable, on the surface at least, of CLC character and mission. “Christian holiness can no longer be considered a matter purely of individual and isolated acts of virtue. It must also be seen as part of a great collaborative effort for spiritual and cultural renewal in society, to produce conditions in which all can work and enjoy the just fruits of labor in peace.” (Both of these quotes are on page 75 of Thomas Merton: A Book of Hours edited by Kathleen Deignan.)

Yes, when we leave the frenetic action of western life, and when the power goes out, or the internet is down, the connection of prayer and action is easier to realize. Yes, God calls each of us in a unique and deeply personal manner as the person we are, but being person implies community. In Africa it is much clearer that the critical problems of today’s world will only be solved in the solidarity of community. Being world com-
community is at the heart of CLC, for we are in active community with all of our brothers and sisters in Africa. CLC enables us to affirm in our commitments and life that no one can be a full person except in community. We hold in our Catholic Social Thought tradition of an option for the poor, not something that is paternalistic, but a deep desire to strive to make “work in peace” available for every single person as each of us has the right and duty to serve each other. Working in solidarity is far more than buying African handicrafts so an African can feed her family; it is working for structural change so every single person can be the fullness she or he is meant to be by a loving God, serving all of us!

So you ask me, “Tom, if we are to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Africa how do you reconcile ‘Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done so Much Ill and so Little Good?’” For an answer I suggest that all of our CLCs read, study and pray over the book The White Man’s Burden, the subtitle of which is the words quoted. The author is William Easterly. It is a devastating account of how our aid dollars through USAID, The World Bank and the other bureaucratic agencies do not reach the poor, but provide jobs for bureaucrats and line the pockets of the corrupt. Easterly challenges those of us who care about the poor “to be real” and to serve the real needs of real people.

Easterly’s call is for each of us to do our bit as citizen, as fellow human beings in solidarity with the poor, to insist that aid reaches those in need, as for the most part it does through private agencies including all of the arms of the Catholic Church, with our CLC brothers and sisters in Kibera serving as shining examples as they provide education to AIDS orphans. We in CLC-USA need to be more creative through our CLC brothers and sisters in Africa as they work to do justice. This is how our shared mission can manifest itself!

CLC also calls each of us to aid the poor directly. This year my daughter Martha provided Bernie and me with a Christmas present that enables the two of us to do this. She made a contribution to an organization called Kiva, a micro-financing group, [http://www.kiva.org](http://www.kiva.org) and we can choose the person to whom this money will be loaned (not given!). As this person pays off the loan we will be able to keep turning it over to help others in their attempts to become independent and more fully the person God has called them to be. We find this exciting, a way to relate to real persons! In a small way this is for us an opportunity to change structures! This will promote human dignity! This is an opportunity for us “to call by name” in imitation of the way the Lord deals with each of us. Once more I am reminded that the full potential of the UN will be reached not through our government leaders alone, but through NGOs, like Kiva and our CLC work at the UN and in Geneva.

How do we busy middle class folks in the West reconcile “so much already filling our lives” and our need to become more informed about Africa and the other poor parts of the world? Do not start by reading technical reports and academic tomes written by people like me? No! Begin to identify with the people of Africa by reading the literature of Africa. I suggest two books to start. First, Unbowed: A Memoir, by the Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai. It is an account of her extraordinary life as a political activist, feminist and environmentalist in Kenya. Second, a novel set in South Africa, that is required reading for secondary students in Africa, Mine Boy by Peter Abrahams. Both of these should be required reading for all of us. Both of these books enabled me to see the African first as a person sharing with me the dignity of being a Child of God and then as African. If such books do not fit into our world without time, then we have bigger problems in living CLC.

I am often asked how to reconcile “free market economics” with justice in the modern world. My experience in Tanzania confirmed my long held belief that there can be no justice without free markets, regulated where necessary to prevent abuses of power. In other words, there is basically nothing to reconcile. We need to work to harness the powers of the free market and of capitalism to serve the poor. We must always recognize that regulation too often gives power to those not accountable for results and therefore can become very dangerous.

Let me provide a few examples of how markets must be used to serve the poor. First, the poor, especially the rural poor must be given better access to markets. In many cases half of what they produce rots in the field or spoils between farm and market and neither feeds the hungry nor provides income to the farmers. Tanzanians need more and better sources of protein, yet the markets for dairy products are not developed and farmers’ milk spoils and is destroyed, it does not get to market. There is a need for better infrastructure, cooperatives, and institutions that can get products into both local and global markets. Access to credit and banking needs to be improved for rural people. Farmers must have access to the education and training they need to be productive enough to support a family. We in the West must stop protecting a few farmers in our own agricultural sectors so that we can have trade that is both free and fair for the many farmers in Africa. Adam Smith may not be the Fifth Evangelist, as some of my friends appear to proclaim, but the working of our market system is one of the top five institutional inventions of the human race, a gift from God, and a gift to give to all on earth.
To me as a professional educator, the greatest challenge is to reconcile the impossibility of development without education and the huge gap between education in the West and in the Rest and, on the other hand, the even great cost of closing this gap. Education is at the core of changing structures so that self-sustaining justice can be achieved. As we attempt to close this gap there are many reasons for hope. First, and most important, every African I have met hungers for more education and is willing to make sacrifices to achieve it for self and children. Second, the educators I met and worked with are not daunted by the odds. Whenever I expressed frustration with the overwhelming problems, the response was always something like, “Tom, remember how you eat an elephant. One bite at a time!”

One of the tragic fallouts of “9-11” is that today, a very short time later, there are twenty percent fewer foreign students studying in the USA. If one believes justice is the foundation for peace, this decline is sure evidence that we Americans desire to fry our children and grandchildren in a nuclear war. What can we in CLC do? We in CLC should demand that every parish we belong to provide the non-tuition support that an African Priest, Brother, Nun or lay person needs in order to earn a PhD in the USA and then return to Africa to build educational institutions. We will then also have the leverage to demand that our Catholic institutions work harder to provide, in solidarity, the tuition-free education these persons need. Very specifically, in terms of CLC, I am very uncomfortable with adult CLC in the USA being subsidized by the Jesuits. We should pay the Jesuits working with us a just compensation that their communities can then use to bring their brother Jesuits from the Third World to the USA for studies. And the USA Jesuit communities are already most generous in this regard.

In conclusion, I wish to tie my essay more closely to Father Ben’s constant call to structural change. Specifically, I draw two conclusions and ask two questions. First, my very limited experience in Mwanza and elsewhere keeps bringing me back to the image of the classroom full of peaceful and hard-working students at St. Aloysius Gonzaga High School. This initiative is CLC at its best for it is an African initiative that will bring structural change through serving individual and real students. We in CLC in the West must intensify our global solidarity in and through CLC and support the initiatives of our sisters and brothers in Africa. How do we do this?

Second, our highest priority Mission in CLC, in the World and here in the USA, must be the formation of Ignatian-inspired lay leaders for business, government, educational institutions and all the other secular sectors of society. If we are not willing to work towards this end we are neither committed to enduring structural change or the magis. How do we do this? It took the early Jesuits several decades to get focused on education. And so, 500 years later, history is repeating itself. It is requiring CLC several decades to take the Vatican II teachings on the role of the laity, in the context of our Ignatian charism, seriously. Yet God loves us as we are! Let us respond!

Such a tall order requires much prayer, reflection and action, preferably together in small faith-centered groups such as Christian Life Community®. We need adequate external structures. We also need to change internal structures, our attitudes, our values, our ways of thinking.

My own prayer makes me bold enough to propose one path to peace, both local and global peace...a search for peaceful law.

CLC has a national and international network. No one can do everything. CLC can establish priorities and divide responsibilities.

We are used to working for the common good of our country. We just need to extend that sense to the common security of the human family and the stewardship of our planet.
Enfleshing EverMORE the Word of JUSTICE

John LeVecke, S.J.

The Word became flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory... (Jn 1:14)

May the promised glory of God-with-us and all creation encourage us toward ever greater partnership in God’s creative plan for peace and justice in a world without borders which foster haves and have-nots; especially in protecting the dignified migration of all God’s people and equitably stewarding the precious resource of water sustenance.

May we see this glory all the more, truly building up the Kingdom of Christ where all are One as water meets earth, unifying all borders in our own sacred lives and world we share; helping to enflesh God’s Word anew throughout the New Year.

Christmas Wish, 2007
CLC-USA, Western Region

My New Year message to you is taken from the 2007 Christmas wish of my Western Region Community. This call of the Incarnation both excites and challenges me here in my own Region, but I think it says so much concerning our National and World contemporary concerns, especially when addressing the theme of this publication: “Social Justice – On the Move.”

These past years, I have had the great privilege of traveling, meeting, praying and celebrating with so many of our Local, Regional, and National communities. I particularly was inspired in 2007, when we were able to have two Regional Ecclesial Assistant meetings and to hear the reports of so many graced efforts within our National Community that truly exemplify our charism of Men and Women WITH and FOR Others! Many members of CLC are actively involved in World, National, Regional, and Local advocacy issues and concerns toward a more just world without borders as Emmanuel deeply desires for all. It was a privileged opportunity for us to host our CLC-World Vice Ecclesial Assistant, Alberto Brito, S.J., during his U.S. tour of our National works and meeting with the U.S. Jesuit Provincials.

While in New York City, we were able to meet with some of our members of our CLC NGO Working Group at the United Nations. Much of their work is directed toward our CLC World justice concern for international water rights and conservation efforts. For more information concerning these and other CLC justice issues from the United Nations, please go to our CLC NGO Bulletins: [www.cvxc-clc.net/NOTES]

Of immediate concern for the U.S. Jesuits’ justice priorities is immigration reform in our nation. Steve Pehanich, as the President of the Western Region and the Regional Representative to the NCC, is the Executive Director of Advocacy for the California Bishops Conference. He works directly with the Bishops Conference in coordinating efforts addressing the Justice for Immigrants Campaign and continues to keep these ad-
vocacy efforts communicated to our National community. For more information, please go to: www.justiceforimmigrants.org.

Many CLC-USA members also are members of the Ignatian Solidarity Network (ISN). In recent years in mid-November, CLC-USA, especially our Young Adult community, has participated in the Ignatian Family Teach In in Columbus, Georgia, in its demonstration for closure of the School of the Americas (SOA) at Fort Benning. The ISN now will be hosting an Ignatian Family Teach In, supporting the Bishops’ Justice for Immigrants Campaign at Loyola High School, Los Angeles, March 7-9, 2008. This will be another profound means of Ignatian collaboration, not only for National efforts, but to help bring this vital justice concern home to our Regions and Local communities. For more information, please go to www.ignatiansolidarity.net.

Three years ago, I invited Peter Glenn (LMU ’02), as a charter leader of our Western Region Young Adult /Post-Undergrad effort, to attend the Ignatian Family Teach In in Columbus. Being a filmmaker, and aware that I have a television production background, Peter suggested that we consider producing a documentary on the effort. Three years later, Peter premiered “On the Line,” a feature length documentary about the movement to close the U.S. Army’s School of the Americas, at the Teach In ’07. “On the Line” uses dynamic interviews and images from the protest to examine issues of dissent, torture and unjust American foreign policy. For more information, please go to www.onthelinefilm.com

Each of these efforts truly exemplify the numerous ways we are responding to the call of our Baptism and CLC-USA membership in a union of hearts and minds with the Society of Jesus. Already, as a member, I am encouraged and challenged in 2008 to keep trying to change some old ways of proceeding which are not conducive to helping to live more justly within our World community. Jesus’ saving mission as our Emmanuel is to continue to enflesh God’s Word anew throughout the New Year. It is my sincere hope that as a National community, we will continue to be “on the move” as His companions as He was in His earthly journey to constantly readdress and deepen ever more our Ignatian commitment to bring greater justice into our world.

May 2008 be a gift received by us all gratefully and joyfully as a new year of grace in fidelity to our calling to more authentically and courageously witness to our partnership with and for the living, saving Word of Justice, Emmanuel, who is both with-us and on the move! ☮

www.onthelinefilm.com

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A Year-End Reflection

Tina Vu

Dear companions in Christ,

The year is coming to an end. For me, this was a special one because of many significant events. But the one thing that made it different from many previous years was the strong recognition of God’s concrete grace, blessing and gifts for me. God gave me a compass of confidence, of trust and of companionship. I would like to share my experience with you. I also invite you to review the year along with me to identify your own God’s gifts.

I like to think of myself as a fairly structured and organized individual. I like to set goals for myself and focus on achieving them. I would like to control my destiny as much as possible. My goals were fairly ordinary, challenging but achievable; finish my bachelor’s degree in four years, obtain a master’s, have a stable job, and own an apartment/home. A normal lifestyle, don’t you think? When I reflected on the past years, I came to the realization that God has blessed me with many things. I had gotten everything I wished for. However, this year I started to see that many things happened that were not what I had planned and were not within my control. It was very different from what I am used to. Looking back, as much as I would like to take credit for the things that have happened, it was God who planned and created everything for me.

It started in April with the invitation to represent World CLC at the Ninth International Youth Forum in Rome sponsored by the Pontifical Council for the Laity. It was one of those life-changing experiences that I will never forget. The experience made me realize how being in Dong Hanh CLC for the past ten years has led me to deepen my spirituality and enlarge my mental capacity to embrace people from all over the world.

Getting to Rome was not smooth but full of delays. It was the chaos that made me realize that I could not control everything. The first leg of my trip, out of Washington-Dulles Airport, was canceled. I finally got to Paris; however, I missed my connection because my flight was late. I was stuck in Paris for a few hours and I was stranded. The experience was even worse when I could not get in touch with anyone because of the international boundaries. I had to figure out how to use a French calling card to notify a Jesuit, Father Tri Nguyen S.J., who was at the airport in Rome waiting to pick me up. I have not encountered this language problem since I first arrived in the U.S. seventeen years ago. During this troubled time, I met an American woman who was facing even more difficulties with her travel. We were able to support one another.

When I finally arrived in Rome, “Grandpa” Father Julian Elizalde, S.J., picked me up and had everything planned out for me. He arranged a place for me to stay, gave me several awesome tours of Rome, fed me and got me in touch with the right people so I could get to Mondo Migliore (where the Ninth International Youth Forum was held). I don’t know what I would have done without him.

At the conference, I found God’s presence in many people I met. But there were two presenters who left lasting impressions on me. The first is Professor Michael J. Naughton of the University of St. Thomas, Saint Paul, Minnesota, who spoke on the significance of work and human life. He took the subject of work and distinguished different ways of looking at it; work as a job, work as a career, and work as a vocation.

1) When work is a job, we’re seeking economic returns. This life style produces leaders as materialist bureaucrats. Moreover, we view leisure as amusement.
and escaping reality. We focus on gratification and focus on what we have instead of who we’re becoming.

2) When viewing work as career, we seek a psychological reward. In this perspective, workers are great achievers. To them, leisure is a function of rest in order to “sharpen the saw,” to become more productive. Professor Naughton called this careerism, focus on doing over being. One could be great businessman, but a spiritual dwarf.

3) Finally, work as vocation. Vocation is a calling to give, a call to love, and to be whole. We are called to work, to exercise our work for others. We must use our gifts for others. Professor Naughton compared work to a vocation as leisure to contemplation. Successful leaders possess two key characteristics, resolution and humility. Through Professor Naughton’s lecture, I am encouraged to find my vocation in life—God’s plan and purpose for me in this world, and share my gifts with others. It is an ongoing process, but with my desire and trusting in God as well as His providence, I will discover God’s purpose for me in life.

The other memorable speaker at the forum was a young adult in her early twenties named Idy. She gave her testimony of her work bearing witness to Christ. Idy earned her living as a housekeeper. Although the job is simple and not highly prestigious, she performed it with passion and with so much love. She was able to do so because of her faith in God. Open to be a witness to Christ, she let God used her as an instrument to convert the people she works for. I was moved by her simple and humble life, yet God used her to do His very important work.

God has a way of preparing us for the future. In my case, the forum was preparing me for what was coming. Right after I came back from Rome, my manager put me on a task that does not require much thinking. In normal circumstances, I would have confronted my manager by calling him out, and either quit my job or request a change to another group within the company. But Idy’s humility taught me the value of the work and learning to ‘let go and let God.’ Seeing so many young adults my age in other countries struggle to find a job, I felt ashamed. I am not allowed to complain. I realized that it is more in my attitude than the task at hand. Through these lessons, I was able to accept the task given to me and did it with great love. Although the task was very mundane, with the grace of God, I was able to complete it with great care and inner peace.

There were several more instances where things did not settle according to my desire throughout the year. However, looking back, God had a plan for me and those incidents turned out to be blessings. God works in mysterious ways. Those ways are beyond my understanding but I know it is the best way for me. I am slowly starting to learn accepting these undesirable circumstances, because in it, God’s will can be found. If I have patience and trust, God, my companion, He will lead me.
A Workshop on Ignatian Spirituality and CLC

Ady P. Viera

It is with great happiness that I report on my trip to the Parish of St. Gabriel in Charlotte, North Carolina, part of the CLC’s Mid-Atlantic Region. I went to conduct a workshop on Ignatian Spirituality and CLC; this was my second trip, per request of the Hispanic Ministry of the parish, after an initial visit in 2006.

These visits are part of the mission discerned by CLC-USA and entrusted to the South Florida Region to help form new CLCs for Spanish speakers. My region and my local community sent me to St. Gabriel, have supported me with prayers and assisted with preparing the meetings.

The theme for this year’s workshop was *Cura Personalis*. It was based on the speech that Father General Kolvenbach, S.J., gave this year in Rome at the beginning of a course-workshop on *Spiritual Accompaniment in the Ignatian Tradition*.

The workshop started at 9:00 AM and finished at 5:00 PM. It included a full-hour for lunch so the participants would have the opportunity to use part of it to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation provided specially for them by the parish. Although most of the time was spent in learning what Cura Personalis is and how it applies to our spiritual life, the workshop was highly interactive with the participants asking questions and relating life experiences pertaining to the topic.

There was also an hour set aside for small group discussion.

Ricardo Greeley, S.J., a Jesuit brother, participated in the small group discussions. Br. Greeley works for the Hispanic Ministries of the Archdiocese of Charlotte but had no previous contact with St. Gabriel Parish. He believes his own religious vocation was formed through his involvement as a young adult in a pre-CLC in Mexico, so his contributions were particularly valuable.

Br. Greeley agreed to discuss the possibility of starting a pre-CLC at St. Gabriel’s with Father Bill Ameche, S.J., who is also working with Hispanic Ministries in Charlotte. This is what the parishioners want; they are eager to start learning more about Ignatian Spirituality and the CLC way of life.

Workshop attendees included Spanish-speaking natives of Central and South America as well as from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. In total there were forty-two participants, teenagers, young adults and adults. Their personal testimonies and their openness to the graces of this day were a humbling occasion for me, so used to having my relationship with God enhanced by my CLC experience.

God gave us the gift of many incredible moments during the workshop. There are too many to recount, but I will finish with a simple and striking testimony from a participant: *We Catholics are like French fries; they have to be eaten hot or else they are no good. The Holy Spirit has set us on fire, what are we waiting for?*

Note: Less than three weeks after the workshop and two days before Thanksgiving Carmen Calvar, who originally invited Ady to talk about Ignatian Spirituality and CLC at St. Gabriel’s, collapsed from a ruptured brain aneurism and required emergency surgery. The Hispanic community at St. Gabriel’s went to the hospital to pray; Carmen made an immediate, almost miraculous recovery which the community believes is a sign of a special blessing from the Holy Spirit. 

Grupo que asistio al taller en St. Gabriel.
Un Taller Sobre la Espiritualidad Ignaciana y la CVX

Ady P. Viera

Es con gran alegría que presenta este reporte sobre mi viaje a la Parroquia de San Gabriel en Charlotte, Carolina del Norte, parte de la región Mid-Atlantic de la CVX de Estados Unidos. Fui a presentar un taller sobre la espiritualidad ignaciana y la CVX; a petición del Ministerio Hispano de la parroquia viajé por segunda vez, después de una visita inicial en el 2006, a continuar este proceso de formación.

Estas visitas son parte de la misión que la CVX-USA discernió y encomendó a la South Florida región, y que consiste en ayudar a formar CVX para personas de habla hispana. Mi región y comunidad local me enviaron a St. Gabriel; me han apoyado con oraciones y me ayudaron a preparar las reuniones.

El tema para el taller de este año fue Cura Personalis. El material se basó en un discurso que el Padre General Kolvenbach, S.J., pronunció este año en Roma al comienzo de un curso-taller sobre Acompañamiento Espiritual en la tradición Ignaciana.

El taller comenzó a las 9:00 AM y concluyó a las 5:00 PM. Incluyó una hora completa de almuerzo para ofrecer a los participantes la oportunidad de recibir el Sacramento de la Reconciliación ofrecido por la parroquia. Aunque pasamos la mayor parte del tiempo profundizando sobre lo que es Cura Personalis y cómo se aplica a nuestra vida espiritual, la reunión fue participativa y los asistentes hicieron preguntas y relataron experiencias de vida y fe relacionadas con el tema. Se dedicó una hora para discusiones en grupos pequeños.

Ricardo Greeley, S.J., un hermano Jesuita, participó en estas discusiones de grupos pequeños. El Hermano Greeley trabaja con los Ministerios Hispanos de la Arquidiócesis de Charlotte pero no había tenido contacto hasta esta reunión con la Parroquia de St. Gabriel. El cree que su propia vocación religiosa fue formada a través de su contacto con una pre-CVX en México, así que sus contribuciones fueron particularmente valiosas.

El Hermano Greeley acordó discutir la posibilidad de comenzar una pre-CVX en St. Gabriel con el Padre Bill Ameche, S.J., quien también trabaja con los Ministerios Hispanos en Charlotte. Esto es lo que los miembros de St. Gabriel quieren; están deseosos de comenzar a conocer mejor la espiritualidad ignaciana y el estilo de vida CVX.

Los asistentes al taller incluyeron personas de habla hispana oriundos de América Central y del Sur, así como de Puerto Rico y de la República Dominicana. Participaron 42 personas entre adolescentes, jóvenes adultos y adultos. Sus testimonios personales y sus apertura a las gracias de este día fueron una ocasión de humildad para mi, tan acostumbrada a tener mi relación con Dios intensificada por mi experiencia CVX.

Fueron muchos los momentos increíbles que Dios nos regaló durante este taller. Son demasiados para enumerarlos todos, pero quiero concluir con un testimonio simple e impactante: Nosotros los Católicos somos como las papas fritas: tienen que comerse calientes; si no, no sirven. El Espíritu Santo nos has prendido con su fuego, ¿qué más esperamos?

Nota: Menos de tres semanas después del taller y dos días antes del Día de Acción de Gracias, Carmen Calvar, quien originalmente invitó a Ady a hablar sobre la espiritualidad ignaciana y la CVX en St. Gabriel, sufrrió la ruptura de un aneurisma cerebral y tuvo que ser intervenida quirúrgicamente de emergencia. La comunidad Hispana de St. Gabriel la acompañó con sus oraciones en el hospital; Carmen se recuperó de inmediato después de la cirugía y de manera casi milagrosa, lo cual la comunidad percibe como un signo de bendición especial del Espíritu Santo.

Ady P. Viera es coordinadora de la CVX Montserrat y miembro de la comunidad CVX Magnificat, ambas en Charlotte, así como de Puerto Rico y de la República Dominicana. Participaron 42 personas entre adolescentes, jóvenes adultos y adultos. Sus testimonios personales y sus apertura a las gracias de este día fueron una ocasión de humildad para mi, tan acostumbrada a tener mi relación con Dios intensificada por mi experiencia CVX.

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Meeting with CLC’s ExCo was a pleasure for me as an individual, for GDTT as a big family and for Dong Hanh as a community. The joy is still here as I’m writing this reflection to share with you and others. May this feeling never fade away as time goes by.

I joined GDTT four years ago and it had changed my life completely. I’m looking at everything with the inner eyes of Love, Faith and Peace.

Reflecting on the gathering, I’m thankful for all of the companionship, for all the conversations, for the smiles that shine in the heart, and for the hugs, the warmth that we give one another and the feeling as if we had known each other for a long period of time. As for the children, they enjoyed as much fun as the adults.

All seemed to have united spiritually with Christ, especially the ExCo. It was a great treat for GDTT. It’s true that God is always watching over us and we have many things to be grateful for.

Mai (Jeanne) Phung

In the meeting of Dong Hanh of the North East Region last July, Liem had explained the difficulties we may encounter within the next few years, when CLC-USA changes its organization, making new adjustments in light of the reforms in the Society of Jesus of the USA. One of these adjustments might be that Dong Hanh groups at the local level would have to separate themselves and integrate with the regional CLC-USA. This is the reason why the theme for this year is: “Throwing ourselves forward.”

Could it have been as Liem said, “God is using the GDTT group as the ambassador for Dong Hanh and CLC-USA?”

At the meeting with ExCo, I had the opportunity to speak with Ann Marie Brennan, CLC-USA President, and brief her about the monthly activities of the group, which includes the parents as well as the children. The group does have a separate, customized program for children, in order to familiarize the children with St. Ignatius’ way of life during their formative years, to create a loving, caring, healthy environment for their children. One of the group’s goals is that their children will form their very own Youth CLC group during their teen years. She seemed surprised and interested when I told her that the children were looking forward to the monthly meetings even more than the parents.
On our historic meeting date, the ExCo members came late because their car ran out of gas. We often had meetings and as time went by, we tend to get one meeting mixed up with another except for the ones with exceptional events. Perhaps…it was just unexplainable that they all ignored the gas meter’s warning signals. I believed it must have been God’s intention to attach a special, exceptional event to the meeting so that none of us could ever forget this historic meeting.

Van Xuan Nguyen

On the 13th of October, my family had the honor of hosting God and His friends. Though the initial plan did not have our home as the designated hosting location, the sudden change near the date of the event did not overwhelm or make me nervous!

When the monthly meeting finished upstairs, I had also finished the children’s program. The people from CLC New England had just arrived also. I was very happy to see Clarivel’s grown-up daughter as well as her foster child. What a generous soul the Dragas family has!

Fr. John LeVecke was the main figure with a touching sermon. The children reflected on the story when he was ten years old. Adults had reflections about the ‘out of gas’ incident…often God would give us warnings, but we had chosen to ignore those signs until it was too late and then when we were in trouble we would dare to open our mouths to complain, “Oh God, where have you been?”

When Holy Mass was over, the children performed a short, but touching play…about Fatima. Fr. John said Fatima is this year’s theme for all CLCs in the country. What a coincidence!

Kitty Gray and the children got along together extremely well. I didn’t know if the children were attracted to her or it was the other way around. The sound of children shouting and laughing brought joy to us all. Having thought that the officials from ExCo would be all serious personalities, I could never imagine that they could have played along so well with children, they are down to earth more than I thought.

When saying good bye, an eighty-three year old official from CLC New England had whispered in my ears, “I had a wonderful time. It makes me feel so young!” We didn’t know when we would have a chance to meet ExCo officials in an informal place such as a home, and not at a meeting or conference. Though I didn’t remember all the visitors’ names, their faces and graciousness had become indelible in my heart.

Chau-Hoan (Christine) Tran

Since following the call of Dong Hanh, I have heard a great deal about the high officials of CLC, but I have never met any of these officials. This first meeting of mine with them seems to be just a coincidence. Coincidences happen, perhaps due to some kind of special arrangement beyond our human perception. When the ExCo members finally came, we greeted one another, shook hands and then attended Holy Mass together.

To grace the Mass, hymns with Vietnamese lyrics had been sung. During the singing, I heard voices singing in accents half Vietnamese, half English, sounding a bit strange, but joyful. Prior to the singing, we had explained to the representatives the meanings of the selected songs. But we had never thought that the officials would actually join us in singing. I admired them deeply for...
their graceful act and told myself privately that if one day the situation is reversed, I would definitely do the same regardless of how awkward my voice may sound during such an English hymn.

As with all other meeting in life, our meeting came to an end. We said ‘Good Bye’ and promised we would meet again in the future. Some asked me to visit if there is a chance. One asked me to come to Alaska to visit. Perhaps we all would remember these special moments. Though we said “Good Bye”, within ourselves we know it’s not good bye.

We share the same life, we follow the same spiritual path led by our Lord God.

Minh Juy Bui

FROM THE CHILDREN……

When the American CLC came I felt glad and joyful that we have some visitors to fill the crowd. I also felt very excited that the President of the CLC was at the Mass and Fr. John gave me and my friends a meaningful lesson about how to love my little sister and tell us about his childhood. I really enjoyed his story and I’m glad that in sharing it somehow makes me know who I am.

We had a wonderful time at the gathering. The best part was getting together with friends and enjoying each other’s company in Christ. I hope that you will be CLC members to experience the joy that I’m having right now. May God Bless Us All.

Alan Phung, age 10

After all of our kids’ activities, we got together with our parents and the CLC group, and had Mass. My friends and I were the readers and singers. During the homily, the priest told us a story…It made me think of my typical ten years of life right now. I have two siblings, a brother and a sister. I usually get annoyed and get mad at them. The story was just like a story I would tell if I were a priest!

Tiffany Tran, age 10

Here are my prayers for the rosary I did—
I pray for my mother to stay healthy
I pray for my dad to do good
I pray for my sister to do well in school
I pray for my brother for him to get good grades
I pray for my grandfather for him to stay alive.

Jensine Tran, age 8

In the month of October, 2007, CLC gathered together. We gathered once or twice a every month. We gather together and do fun activities. This month, we did a play, made a rosary and…most important of all, we had Mass. Mass was very important in the CLC. The CLC was so much fun. We hope you (friends Travis has not met) can join to learn more about God.

Travis Tran, age 9

I loved the night when we gathered together and had a BLAST of fun and love, joy and laughter together.

The food there was great! I thank you for all the food you (parents and Cade) and I think you enjoyed the skit because of your loud applause! By the way, I was Mary in the skit, the most important member in the play, so I felt very proud to be Mary. I hope to see you (CLC NE members and ExCo members) again soon, but now God be with you!

Yvonne Pham Nguyen, age 9

I liked Fr. John telling a story about him and his sister when he was a kid.

I liked to make my own rosary. I like to go to the Dong Hanh meeting every month so I can learn more about Jesus. Go Jesus. I love you, Jesus.

Benjamin Pham Nguyen, age 7

During the rosary making time, I felt joyful because I got to do arts and crafts with my friends. During the Mass, I felt anxious because I got to read the second reading. During dinner, I felt thankful because I had food to eat while some people in the world don’t have anything to eat at all so they starve.

Overall, I had a great day. I also had a lot of things to be thankful for since there were no failures on anything at all. I can’t wait ‘till next year!

Thanks friends for giving each other laughs. Thanks to our parents for giving us plenty of opportunities which we take for granted sometimes. Thank God for what you have done for me!

Alphonse Le, age 10

Due to space limitations we could only publish a samll portion of excerpts from the many reflections we received. All the reflections in their entirety can be read at

http://www.clc-usa.org/HarvestSample.htm
Dear friends,

As announced in Projects 135, we continue our journey toward Fátima 2008. The spiritual setting which can facilitate our ability to move forward is that of “Three kinds of persons” (Spiritual Exercises 149 and following). This classic Ignatian meditation is not only meant to prepare the election, but it is also an ongoing exercise through which we try to keep ourselves faithful to the election. It helps us by removing obstacles, disordered affections or other situations which confuse us or get us lost in our process. We as CLC have made an election in the previous assemblies (a common mission as an apostolic body). However, we know that even great visions and elections may fail in bringing them into practice. In that moment resistances may appear that before were subtle or even hidden. So, in regard to God’s gifts we can respond like the three pairs of persons: we can postpone the election, accommodate it to our own interests, or welcome it fully. Three pairs of persons is an invitation to a permanent Examen in order to bring the means for implementation into the election and to embrace what will help us carry out the election. We know that our actual tendencies or habits are not immediately or automatically in line with our great dreams of holiness. So we have to examine our life as a community.

In this spiritual frame, we invite you now to use the scripture passage that we have chosen as inspiration for our Assembly:

“The apostles rejoined Jesus and told him all they have done and taught” (Mk 6, 30)

The invitation is to review your own experience, organize it and communicate it to the entire world body. In this way we can move forward toward embracing the gift that we received in Nairobi and Itaici. Or if you prefer, to free ourselves to live better the election that we have made in God’s grace.

Concretely, we ask you now to take the following seven topics and to recollect, organize and share your experience for each of them, using the questions that we suggest.

At a first look it may seem too much, but we suggest that you call upon many CLC members and distribute among them the six topics. You may perhaps convene national or regional meetings to reflect on the topics. You do not need to answer all questions in a topic, as they are meant to be a help and not a school work. However, we ask you to send us short and well-elaborated responses for each of these subjects.

1. The dynamic of discerning – sending – supporting - evaluating (DSSE) ·
   • What we have done: Is this dynamic well known by CLC members and local groups? What we have done to spread it within the community? How has it affected the local group meetings? How has it affected the process lived at the national ExCo? ·
   • What we have learned: Which are the main difficulties in living this dynamics? What helps are needed? ·
   • What we have taught: Have we some written guidelines to share with the World Community? Have we written articles or power points or other materials on this?

2. Formation (focus on apostolic body) ·
   • What we have done: Have we run guides courses? Have we run formation courses for membership? Do our members take part in formation events? Have we collaborated with others to make formation more available to our members? ·
   • What we have learned: Which activities of formation are more suitable to our members? Which are the major difficulties that we face in this regard? What strategies do we recommend to develop on-going formation for our members? ·
   • What we have taught: Have we some written guidelines to share with the World Community? Have we written articles or power points or other materials on this? Have we long term formation programs to share?

3. Leadership (connect to Rome course) ·
   • What we have done: Have we used or are we planning to use the leadership development course/mate-
rials from the international course held in Rome last November? Are our structures and leadership teams working well within our national community? Do we formulate annual operative plans? Do we regularly evaluate our plans? How have we used external programs for leadership formation? Have we taken advantage of the participation of our members in these sorts of programs? ·

• What we have learned: If we have offered leadership formation what have we learned? What are our main difficulties in having people available for leadership positions? How do we prepare people for leadership? Given our experience in leadership, what are we envisioning? How do we benefit from people who have a large and deep experience in CLC but who are not longer in leadership positions? ·

• What we have taught: Do we have written material for leadership formation? Can we recommend readings, strategies, programs, activities or other ways of fostering CLC leadership?

4. SJ – CLC collaboration ·

• What we have done: Have we progressed in a more effective collaboration with the Society of Jesus? Through which concrete forms? Have we a sustained dialogue with the Society’s authorities, works, spiritual guides, etc? Have we received the helps that we need? Have we offered ourselves in ways we are able to help? Have we one or more concrete stories to tell on this subject? ·

• What we have learned: Which are our own main difficulties in this field? Which are the most difficult issues in our dialogue with the SJ? Which are the main opportunities/fields for actual collaboration? Have we worked/reflected upon the working document about CLC – SJ collaboration in the Church? ·

• What we have taught: Can we recommend readings, strategies, programs, activities or other ways of fostering CLC – SJ collaboration?

5. Apostolic initiatives ·

• What we have done: Have we initiated new apostolate activity since Nairobi? Which fields of apostolate are more developed and convoke more members in our national community? Have we developed some expertise within our national community that we can offer and share with others? Do we have an NGO Contact and is that person linked effectively to our structures? What communication network is in place to share the information from the UN Working Groups to the whole National Community? Have you shared information back from your National Community to the Working Groups? ·

• What we have learned: Which new elements have we brought to our apostolic reflection and involvement since Nairobi? Which reforms have we intro-

duced in our traditional apostolate? How we deal with personal/communal dimension of apostolate?

• What we have taught: Which criteria do we use for selecting our apostolic engagements? Have we distributed the orientations coming from Itaici (Common mission), Nairobi (DSSE), and further developments (Supplement to Progressio, articles, etc.) widely to our members?

6. Membership and commitment ·

• What we have done: Are we attracting new members? How? Are our members persevering and deepening in the CLC way of life? ·

• What we have learned: Which are our main difficulties in this regard? What concrete proposals help more our members to grow in their vocation and become CLC committed members? What does not help, distract or disturb? ·

• What we have taught: Have we formulated clear orientations for temporal – permanent commitment? Do we have a “formula” for commitments, well accepted by everybody and that can be shared with the World Community?

7. Finances ·

• What have we done: Does our National Community have sufficient financial resources to meet the needs of the community? Are we preparing a financial plan/ yearly budget taking into account our different activities and commitments? How well do our members support the National Community with dues or in other ways? What efforts are underway to improve the financial situation in our community? ·

• What have we learned: What have been the barriers to improving our financial situation? If we initiated efforts to become more financially viable, how have they worked? ·

• What have we taught: What has worked for us in this area? Do we have strategies or materials that we can share?

Finally, we ask you also to complete the enclosed community profile, which intends to have similar information from all national communities, and to be able to have a rapid screening of where we are, how many we are, what do we do, etc. A directory of these profiles will be available to all delegates at Fatima 2008.

Please do react before January 31 and if you need clarification please contact our Secretariat.

In Christ,

Daniela Frank
President

José Reyes
Vice President

Alberto Brito sj
Ecclesiastical Assistant.
The Diversity and Organization committee is working towards the completion of its charges. In July, 2007, the NCC charged the Diversity and Organization Committee (formerly called Culture and Structure) to develop a process and convene leadership to “understand the current realities of CLC-USA, frame a vision of CLC-USA, and make recommendations for a new organization of CLC-USA that would support these realities and vision.” The committee is planning two weekend meetings to both develop CLC leadership and provide a forum for visioning a functional structure for CLC-USA as we progress into the 21st century. These weekend meetings in 2008 and 2009 coupled with input from local communities and regional/cultural leadership groups are the central place where we will do this work. At this point regional, culture groups and youth and young adult leaders should have received an invitation to discern representatives to attend these two meetings. The following is an excerpt from that invitation:

“You and several other leaders from your region/cultural or young adult group are invited to participate in two important leadership meetings of CLC USA. The first of these weekend meetings will take place in Pittsburgh, PA from April 24 – 27, 2008 at Gilmary Diocesan Center. The follow up meeting will be in early 2009. In both cases we will gather on Thursday evening and finish our work together on Sunday afternoon around 3:00pm. Our goals are to:

1. Connect our diverse communities so that we all feel part of one CLC USA – “unity in diversity”;
2. Develop supportive structures to link youth and young adults to each other and the larger CLC;
3. Develop greater consistency of language and experience across our community;
4. Develop models of organization to better support and facilitate growth of our membership -- geographically, culturally and among various age groups;
5. Develop those characteristics needed for leading within CLC-USA including the skills needed for personal and communal discernment”

At this time your communities are probably in the process of discerning participants for the conference in 2008. All participants are to register at the Dong Hanh website: www.donghanh.org. Scroll to the bottom of the page and you’ll find a link to the registration page and other documents of interest including an initial survey and criteria for selecting representatives. Please feel free to review the material and take the time to reflect on your calling within CLC-USA. You can respond to your regional/cultural or Youth and Young Adult leadership if you feel you would like to be considered for an active role in this exciting project. Our committee looks forward to working with many of you as we move towards our goals. Have a blessed and grace filled New Year.

More information can be found at:

Please remember CLC in your estate plan. Your contribution can make a difference in faith formation, building community and promoting the Ignatian charism.

Even a small contribution can make a huge impact over time...
Youth and Young Adult Updates

December 2007

The Ignatian Solidarity Network’s 10th annual Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice took place Nov. 16-18th in Ft. Benning, GA. Youth and young adult CLCs were represented by Jen Horan (CLC Western Region), Jazmin Jimenez (CLC LMU Alumni), and Matthew “Jake” Jacobson (CLC Loyola University Chicago), who presented a breakout session entitled “Where Faith Meets Justice in Community.”

Jen Horan had this to say about the experience:

“We had a wonderful trip to Georgia and the CLC breakout session was successful. We had a good connection with several people interested in CLC and some students from existing CLC programs came as well in order to connect with the greater CLC community. Jessica Mueller [Loyola University New Orleans) introduced herself to the group as being the host for the next Cura Personalis and it was great that we had something so very concrete to offer to the participants in our session as a follow-up if they were interested. There was a priest (Roco) from the New York Province as well whose provincial sent him to the workshop.”

Plans are underway to plan the Cura Personalis Leadership Conference for college/university students and campus ministers that will take place in 2008 at Loyola University New Orleans. A planning committee has been formed and is comprised of representation from Loyola New Orleans, Rockhurst University, Fordham University, Loyola Marymount University, as well as members of the National Formation Team and NCC. Please stay tuned for more information.

Approximately ten to fifteen youth/young adults are being invited to participate in the CLC Leadership Conference in Pittsburgh, PA from April 24-27, 2008. In addition to attending this important meeting, young adults will meet separately during this meeting to help discern and guide the future of young adult CLCs in the U.S.

If anyone has any ideas, articles or photos for submission to the CLC-YYA website and/or the CLC-YYA bi-annual newsletter that will be sent in January, please contact us by Dec. 31 at csantamaria@clcyya.org or aruhilopez@clcyya.org

UN Conference on Climate Change

The December 2007 CLC-NGO Bulletin has been sent to the regional representatives for distribution within the regions’ communities. It features a full report on CLC participation at the Annual United Nations Department of Information/NGO Conference, on “Climate Change: How It Impacts Us All”. It includes comments from the NY CLC Working Group members who attended, and information on how NGOs like CLC can act to reduce the threat of global warming.

CLCers’ Actions on Water Issues

Jeanne DeSimone Sieger reports from the North Central Region, Milwaukee, WI, area, that CLCers were asked at their Regional retreat not to purchase/use bottled water. She has also been personally involved in keeping the Franklin, WI, Environmental Commission from being disbanded by having neighbors sign petitions and alerting local newspapers to the situation. Environmental issues are very important in the area because of the need to protect the wetlands whose waters run into Lake Michigan, and because of the fact that half of these wetlands, crucial to water supplies, have already been lost in Wisconsin. Jeanne also provided us with the following quote:

All ethics ... rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts ... The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants and animals, or collectively, the land.

—Aldo Leopold, conservationist, author, Wilderness Society founder

Note: If you, as a CLC member or as part of your CLC, are working on water issues, please let us know so we can share your concerns and actions with all CLC-USA communities. You may e-mail your information to your regional representative or to Maggie Khuly at makhuly@aol.com
FROM THE REGIONS...

MISSOURI REGION

We have been busy in the Missouri Region with a number of CLC happenings. We held a Visioning Day in October with fourteen in attendance for reports and revisiting the goals we set two years ago in building community and involvement in CLC. It was Linda Leib’s first gathering as our new Regional Coordinator and she is off to a great beginning with much planning and organizational ideas already in place. We are happy and grateful to have her leadership at this time.

Here in the Midwest, we head into winter with snow on the ground. This time of year reminds us of those who need extra help not only around Thanksgiving and Christmas but throughout the year. Some of our members from Sacred Circle prepared packages with their parish to provide Thanksgiving dinner to a great number of families. Joan Nowak from Sacred Circle coordinates the opening of St. Joseph’s to house and feed homeless families with young children over the Thanksgiving and Christmas weekends as well as one weekend each month. John XXIII CLC has adopted a senior citizen for Christmas with presents and good wishes.

There are many examples of participation in all manner of social ministry. As a region we have taken on the Water Project from National CLC, learning about the ramifications of being good stewards of water. We have studied it locally and globally with the expertise of Ron Nimer. Every year at our World CLC Day we provide a time for immersion experiences where we join in some good work in the city. This coming January, CLC members will be called upon to provide the transportation to a retreat for homeless men given by a Jesuit retreat master from Chicago. Later in the month, Pat Carter, a member of Discipleship CLC, will offer an experiential workshop using the Ignatian tools of discernment, examen and others.

Steve Fowler, our Saint Louis University CLC Campus Minister is planning a project around the Water issue. In March, World CLC day will be in conjunction with St. Matthew’s Parish in the Ville Neighborhood of St. Louis. Fr. Mark McKenzie, S.J., welcomes us to spend the day with members of St. Matthew’s.

Every Sunday on the front steps of Saint Francis Xavier College Church, citizens from all areas and walks of life keep vigil together standing against the war. Judy Szot, a long time CLCer, is present almost every week. St. Francis also opens its doors every Wednesday to assist people in the community to apply for assistance in a variety of situations—from giving out packets of necessities to helping individuals attend to their civil affairs. Sr. Mary Funge from Discipleship volunteers in the National CLC office at Jesuit Hall answering the phone and handling the mail for us. A member of the Pilgrim CLC, Dan Zink, M.D., made contact this year with Our Lady’s Inn, a residential pregnancy care center, to set up well baby and well women visits with the mothers. Joan Nowak from Sacred Circle Ken Weindel, another John XXIII member, works on a project with Fr. Joseph from Africa. Joan DeWitt, from National CLC fame, now runs a food pantry year round at a local parish in Ferguson, MO. Mary Ann Wachtel from Discipleship is participating in talks concerning social action with regard to the situation in the U.S. for immigrants and undocumented persons. Nicholas Owen has a very active CLC in social ministry with Jan Nimer working with women from Bosnia, Don DeHart at St. Peter and Paul, a parish very well known for its work with the poor. Bro. Joseph works at the Retreat Center run by his religious community, the Christian Brothers. Sr. Pauline Blandina and Carol Boerding are Spiritual Directors. This only scratches the surface of all that our CLC members engage in in the area of social ministry.

In closing, we are grateful for the yearly hospitality of Yvonne and Don DeHart who welcome the region for an Advent celebration. This table fellowship is a highlight of our calendar. The DeHarts greet us the way Christians wait to welcome the Christ Child; Yvonne and Don always have ‘room at the inn.’ They witness for all of us the true spirit of Christian Life Community®

RIEMAN-GREAT LAKES REGION

Detroit, Toledo and Cleveland members gathered together at St. John’s High School in Toledo, Ohio, on Saturday, October 27th to meditate on the tapes of Fr. John Shea, S.J., Praying the Our Father, led by Fr. Bernie Owens, S.J.

Helpful prayer links — www.prayingeachday.org

Exciting news! Another CLC group is forming in Toledo, Ohio.

NEW YORK REGION

Several members of our Metro CLC are responding to e-mail alerts from Catholic Charities and Justice for Immigrants. They are writing to congressional representatives about the punitive unjust sections of comprehensive immigration reform bills, additional aid to poor families for fuel and health care, and supporting a bill which would allow children of immigrants to attend college under the Dream Act. This has been a direct response from the Day of Prayer held last Spring, which focused in part on unjust structures and how, through prayer, some have chosen to
respond. While the legislation hasn’t passed, the advocacy is continuing.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

Over fifty CLCers, including members from every cluster in the Region, attended the retreat and meeting at the Creighton University Retreat Center near Griswold, Iowa. The number of retreatants was one of the largest since the regional retreats began a decade ago.

The presenters were Father Dick McCaslin, S.J., and Sister Marie Schwann, C.S.J., both experienced retreat leaders.

A special feature was a surprise program honoring our Regional Ecclesial Assistant, Father Jack Zuercher, S.J. On hand for the gentle roast was a surprise visitor, Sister Suzanne Zuercher, O.S.B., Father Jack’s sister.

A treasurer’s report and reports on the National Guides Course and the National Formation Team were presented at the business meeting that followed the retreat.

In presenting his report, Treasurer Bob Smith stressed that CLCers are members not only of their small communities, but also of Regional, National and World CLC—all of which require financial support.

Linda Hayek and Dennis Hamm, S.J., who participated in the National Guides and Coordinators Formation Course in June, were enthusiastic about the insights gained about their own CLC experiences.

Eileen Burke-Sullivan, a member of the National Formation Team, told of its goals and plans. She said it is stressing the need for increased formation experiences in established communities as well as beginning communities. This led to a lively discussion about ideas for the future for communities, clusters and the region. Several members mentioned the need for more formation for better communities.

Our Regional Executive Council met Sept. 14-15th. Early next year we will complete two years of convening. It is time to establish rules, e.g., for replacing members. The Missouri Region recently established such rules. We hope to adapt them for our region, then approve them—perhaps during a December teleconference.

Omaha Cluster

The Creighton Jesuit Community invited members of CLC along with Ignatian Associates to a Nov. 14th celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Father Pedro Arrupe, S.J., the late General of the Society of Jesus. The celebration began with Mass at 5 PM in St. John’s Church on the Creighton University Campus. A social and potluck supper followed in the lower church.

An Advent Afternoon of Reflection was planned for members in the Omaha area from 1:30 to 4:30 PM on Saturday, Dec. 1st. It was to be held in the Union Pacific Room of Creighton University’s Reinert Alumni Library. Dr. Susan Calef, Director of Graduate Studies in Theology, was the presenter. Her theme was, “Waiting and Longing.” (Because of icy weather, this event was postponed until Dec. 8th)

The new Omaha Cluster Convener, Linda Hayek, invited area community representatives to attend a planning meeting on Saturday, Nov. 14th. The meeting was held at Ignatius House, the Jesuit residence on the Creighton Campus.

All churches in Omaha held a Vigil of Hope on Sunday, Dec. 2nd at 5 PM, to pray for the end of violence in our beloved community. Many members of CLC attended.

Milwaukee Cluster

Pat Ruel, of Gesu Companions, hosted a Milwaukee cluster potluck and social at his home to celebrate the Feast of St. Ignatius.

Martin Claude Domfang, S.J., of Cameroon, has joined Gesu Companions. A Jesuit priest of the Province of West Africa, he began study for a doctorate in mechanical engineering this Fall at Marquette University. He was active in CLC in Cameroon.

We mourn the passing of one of our Omaha members, John McDonald. While acting bravely and trying to save other lives, he fell victim to a gunman who shot and killed a number of people at the Westroads Mall in early December.

NEW ENGLAND REGION

Once again NECLC was blessed to meet with the Dong Hanh community in the area.

Around fifteen children and twenty five adults gathered at the Nguyen’s residence in October.

NECLC members and ExCo members joined the Dong Hanh community members at their monthly meeting. It did not take long for little ones Lucia and Alexis to join in with
all of the other children. They all played and had so much fun together.

Mass was celebrated with active participation of the young ones. A wonderful skit about the Virgin of Fatima and a delicious feast were also included as a part of the program.

Our three communities continue meeting regularly. Two communities meet at their members’ houses and one community meets at a local church. Each community decides the theme and the materials to be used during the meetings. Social gatherings are also part of the life of our communities.

The region keeps in touch with Steve Stasheff, who moved to Iowa in July. We look forward to going to his wedding in 2008.

At the moment NECLC does not have an Ecclesial Assistant. We hope somebody is appointed to that position ASAP.

Our regional website is regularly updated. Please go to www.clcnewengland.net “News and Events” section to see pictures of all of our regional gatherings, dating from 2004.

Our region has started working on Projects 136, as we prepare for the World CLC Assembly in 2008 in Portugal. Each community will prepare a report which will be compiled by our Regional Chair Person/Regional Representative

WESTERN REGION

Holy Family Community has begun a series of discussions on ‘Simple Living’ as the focus of the group’s meetings for the next several months of 2008. In 2007 we completed the exercises in The People’s Peace Initiative provided by Pax Christi. This was a little longer, but it was a really interesting challenge to each individual’s sense of ‘peace’ and what that term means in many different arenas or contexts. This would be a good option on which the CLC Regions or even CLC-USA could collaborate on for a larger input to the Pax Christi project!

Our Cluster also began a review/compilation of its ‘history’ at a meeting in 2006 (placed in chronological order, including the Ecclesial Assistant ‘lineage’ and then sent to all members during 2007. We intend to keep it updated.

Fresno’s pre-CLC group, The Vine and the Branches, has been blessed with two new members as we met in the Fall and continue into the new year. A special CLC event of the Christmas season was a liturgy on December 27th, concelebrated by Fr. Gabriel and Fr. Tony, both Claretians and both acquainted with ‘comunidades de base’ in the U.S. and in Nigeria. Also in attendance were members of the San Antonio Claret parish, Fr. Camille Prat, S.J., and Fred Leone, former NCLC President (1967—1971), when the National Federation of Sodalities changed its name to National Federation of Christian Life Communities. After Mass, about twenty persons gathered to hear Fred tell about CLC and to ask questions, all of this taking place in both Spanish and English.

Since that special Mass, where Beti Leone made a temporary commitment to CLC, members of the pre-CLC group continue with their involvement in diverse projects: prison ministry, ESL classes in ‘campesino’ labor camps near Raisin City, and work with various parishes in Fresno. The group would like to partner with an established CLC for sharing support and community. In this spirit of collaboration, the coordinator of The Vine and the Branches, Beti Leone, will be meeting with life-long (currently diaspora) CLCer Kathy Hicks of Salinas, for consultation and support.

FROM OUR TREASURER——

What does your National CLC dues support?

Total operating expenses for CLC-USA for the year ending December 31, 2007, amounted to approximately $59,791. Here is a break out of what your National dues have been able to support so far this year——

25.6% Harvest publication costs
22.2% ExCo and NCC quarterly meetings
18.3% World CLC dues
13.1% National office support
8.4% Formation Committee efforts
7.9% World CLC initiatives (includes School for AIDS Orphans in Kenya)
4.5% Diversity and Organization (Culture and Diversity) Committee

A complete review of CLC-USA’s financial results will be forthcoming in a future Harvest article.

If you have any questions regarding dues, finances or other fiscal matters, please contact Kitty Gray, CLC-USA Treasurer or your Regional Representative.
The Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church (ARCC), in its Summer 2007 newsletter, published a proposal by its President, Dr. Leonard Swidler (dialogue@temple.edu), with the request that it be widely disseminated among Catholic organizations. The proposal is for a Council broadly representative of American Catholics, to be prepared for over a period of several years by public hearings and other ways of gathering recommendations for dealing with the problems in our Church. ARCC suggests that Catholic organizations (such as ours, perhaps) even focus their national meetings on this proposed Council as a contribution to the preparatory process. Some of the proposal’s highlights are the following:

1. ARCC has long advocated a U.S. national Catholic council, at times even using the term “Constitutional Convention”. Around three years ago several U.S. bishops spoke publicly about a U.S. national council. Recently the idea of a national synod surfaced as a possible focus of Voice of the Faithful.

2. Such a Council would aim to raise the consciousness of American (and other) Catholics about what Vatican II Catholicism should look like in the 21st century. It would mainly be an educational effort, aimed at changing the minds of thinking Catholics who are committed to staying in the Catholic Church and working to bring about reforms.

3. This should not be just a “lay” council. Presumably most participants will be laity, women and men, but it should be open to all Catholics, whether lay, religious, or clerical. The American bishops should also be invited.

4. The documents of Vatican II plus the resolutions of the 1976 Call to Action – Liberty and Justice for All conference in Detroit should be used as the resource documents for the Council. The Detroit conference included such recommendations as:
   • Accountability to the people of God of church authorities on all levels, including official agencies and church-related institutions, for their financial policies and practices, including investments and the ownership and alienation of property....
   • Involvement of the local church in the selection of bishops and pastors....
   • Shared responsibility in policy-making through development of structures and practices of consultation at every level of the church....

5. At least a three- to five-year recommendation gathering process leading up to the Council, including public national hearings in a half-dozen major representative cities, with encouragement of every kind of gathering of recommendations from organizations, parishes, etc. This prior process will be at least as important as the Council itself.

6. ARCC urges everyone reading this to promote the idea every way possible, privately, publicly, and in every organization you have a connection with.

For those not familiar with ARCC, it was founded in 1980 and has focused particularly on issues of canon law, producing such documents as A Catholic Bill of Rights (Sheed & Ward, 1988), Charter of the Rights of Catholics in the Church (5th edition, 1994), and Toward a Catholic Constitution (Crossroad, 1996). For more information see [http://arccsites.org/](http://arccsites.org/)

You may recall a similar process that we in CLC followed twenty years ago in preparation for the 1987 World Synod of Bishops on the Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World. CLC then took an active interest in the preparations for that bishops’ conference, and we made extensive comments on the lineamenta circulated by the Vatican. Despite the efforts of many, that top-down initiative seemed to have little result. Our hope is that a broadly-based bottom-up effort, constructive in spirit, will make a greater impact. The need is self-evident. The members of Whisper of God CLC (Carole Burnett, John and Meg Czajka, Daryl Domning, Fred Leone, Hubert Ngueha, and Nestor Ymeli) unanimously endorse this plan and recommend this proposal to CLC for formal consideration at our future regional and national meetings.
From South Africa
The day reason and right died: Friday 16 November, 6:30 PM

Mike Larkin (age 58) was walking in Roslyn Road towards St. Michael’s Catholic Church, on nearby busy Rowkoop Road, which was only 500 yards away. In the verdant back road, sun dappled peacefully though new summer leaves, bouncing off clear flowing water in the Liesbeek River Canal, next to it.

Mike strode towards the little wooden bridge spanning the canal that would have brought him into the church parking area behind the Adoration Chapel, where he was going to fulfill his allocated Friday evening meditation before Our Lord. Mike’s working week as Professor of Commercial Law at the University of Cape Town was over. The meeting of the Animal Rights Ethics Committee, from which he was returning, could have made him feel at peace with the world in the quiet road he was crossing. The University end of year examination scripts were in his bag for later work; for the coming weekend.

But what the muggers saw was only a neat black bag. Perhaps it contained a laptop, a wallet or other ‘saleable goods’. And they grabbed. Mike pulled. A blade flashed; it sank into his chest. “It only has exam papers,” he shouted repeatedly. He was stabbed again and again; then fell. “Help me. Help me,” he shouted. The muggers ran into the canal towards Rondebosch Station. Rushing out, a Roslyn Road resident held Mike’s bleeding body as he died, there on the road, for the price of a black canvas bag.

Mike Larkin was highly respected as a lawyer, teacher, administrator, colleague, friend and family man. Tributes at the packed St. Michael’s requiem Mass on 23 November, officiated by Fr. Graham Pugin, S.J., described a gentle, peace loving, yet determined man of action, with great supportive empathy and acute insight, blessed with a marvelous sense of humour. Friends and associates from America, Rome, Vienna, Toronto, Australia and all over South Africa were still in shock at his utterly senseless murder. “The right of safety that should exist in the societies we create has been violated,” close friend Judge Dennis Davis wrote. Nephew Jarred Larkin said his uncle would have wanted forgiveness from them, “…which I can’t do right now.”

Michael Patrick Larkin was born on 10 March, 1949 in Johannesburg. He was partially sighted from birth, a condition then known as a ‘squint’ that did not improve despite an operation and extensive treatment in England. With age it deteriorated, leaving him unable to drive. The (originally Irish) family members were committed Catholics and Mike, along with his younger brother Peter, were altar boys throughout their Marist Brothers, St. David, schooling in Johannesburg. Their mother died in 1969; their father in 1976.

While a student at the University of the Witwatersrand, Mike as a daily communicant at Holy Trinity, Braamfontein. After his LLM, Mike served with Werksmans Attorneys, Johannesburg and was admitted as an attorney in 1975. In 1976 he joined the staff of Wits as Lecturer in Corporate Law. He became a professor in 1990 and was Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Law from 1999-2000. At Wits he served on many boards, the Board of the Faculty of Commerce, among others. He chaired the Board of Management of a non-governmental organisation that responded to the educational needs of young people whose lives were disrupted by apartheid.

He also served on numerous committees, e.g., Senate committees concerned with language policy, academic timetables, scholarships and research awards. He was part of a task group that prepared evidence for submission by Wits to the National Commission on Higher Education. Mike was a member of the Editorial Board of the Annual Survey of South African Law and the Editorial Advisory Board of the Annual Mercantile Law Journal. He was examiner to various institutions, e.g., Corporate Law for the South African Institute of Charted Secretaries and Administrators. His publications include chapters in “Company Law” of “The Law of South Africa” (1982 published by Butterworths and dozens of articles in accredited journals.

Professor Hugh Corder, Dean of the UCT Law Faculty, attests to considerable persuasion on his part to get Professor Michael Larkin to join the University of Cape Town staff as head of the department of Commercial Law in 2006. He made “…an immediate and deep impact on the staff and the students, both of which are utterly stricken with grief at their loss.” A note left with some flowers from a student, read, “You were the man I want to be.”

Mike as a dearly loved and regular member of eight who attended the Kolbe CLC meetings on a Tuesday evening. He often attended the 7 PM Mass said by Fr. Pugin, before he led the group. We were a finely bonded group and like so many others Mike has left behind, it is difficult to think of how we will continue without him.

Mike leaves an adult daughter Elizabeth, in London, a brother Peter and his family in Cape Town, and a sister Bridget with her family in Johannesburg.

“His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix’d in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world,
‘This was a man!’” (Julius Caesar, Act V. Sc V.)
FROM AN ADDRESS OF POPE BENEDICT XVI...

The theme of the Twelfth World Congress of the International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care, “Discovering the Face of Christ in Every Prisoner,” (Mt 25:36), aptly portrays your ministry as a vivid encounter with the Lord. Indeed, in Christ the “love of God and love of neighbor have become one”, so that “in the least of the brethren we find Jesus himself, and in him God”

(Deus Caritas Est,”15).

NATIONAL IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY CONFERENCE IV

IGNATIAN PASSION:

THE CHALLENGE OF THE CROSS IN THE 21ST CENTURY,

July 24-27, 2008,
at Saint Louis University.

The Missouri Province of the Society of Jesus, Saint Louis University, and the St. Louis Center for Ignatian Spirituality will sponsor a fourth conference on Ignatian Spirituality.

The conference, Ignatian Passion: The Challenge of the Cross in the 21st Century, will be held on Thursday evening, through Sunday, noon, July 24-27, 2008, at Saint Louis University.

Once again, the conference will gather persons (lay, Jesuit, clergy and other religious) who:

- Conduct works rooted in Ignatian spirituality such as the retreat in everyday life (19th annotation retreat) programs, Christian Life Communities, Ignatian-centered prayer groups, university, high school, retreat, and parish ministries; and Jesuit Volunteer Corps
- Participate in the activities of such programs and desire to deepen their spiritual growth and their commitment to creating the reign of God
- Have a personal desire to live Ignatian spirituality more deeply
- Desire, as Jesuits, to share Ignatian spirituality with others as envisioned in the Decree on Cooperation with the Laity in Mission, in the documents of General Congregation 34

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES:

The Passion of Christ and the Third Week
Rev. David L. Fleming, S.J

What Does Ignatian Passion Look Like Today?
Marie Schwann, C.S.J

The Passion in Everyday Life
Dr. Eileen Burke-Sullivan, S.T.D.
Rev. Kevin Burke, S.J.

For more information and to register:

http://www.slu.edu/conferences/isc/index.html

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

UN Orientation for University CLC Students
Fordham University
April 10-13, 2008
www.religiousorderspartnership.org

CLC-USA Leadership Conference 2008
Gilmary Diocesan Center,
601 Flaugherty Run Rd., Coraopolis, PA 15108
April 24-27, 2008

Meditative Retreat
Cahokia Mounds, Illinois
July 22 - 24, 2008

Ignatian Spirituality Conference
Ignatian Passion, The Challenge of the Cross in the 21st Century,
St. Louis, MO
July 24-27, 2008
http://www.slu.edu/conferences/isc/index.html

Summer NCC Meeting
St. Louis, Missouri

World CLC Assembly
Fatima, Portugal
August 8-21, 2008
http://www.fatima2008.org/

NEXT ISSUE

IN SEARCH OF NEW HORIZONS