Fruits of the Assembly
Table of Contents

3 Editorial Foreword: Celebrating Graced and Unexpected Moments: Dorothy M. Zambito

5 President’s Corner: Sharing Our Gifts: Barb Rudolph

6 Welcome and Farewell

7 Ecclesial Assistant: Mary has chosen the better part: John Lan Tran, S.J.

8 Awards - 2019: Marie A. Schimelfening

10 An Experience in Communal Discernment: Dominic Totaro, S.J.

12 World President Address to the CLC-USA National Assembly: Denis Dobblestein

16 Lessons from the Assembly: Kathy Hicks

17 The Long Way to Pittsburgh: Rob Macgregor

19 The Graces of the Assembly: Mary Ann Cassidy

20 My First Time at the CLC National Assembly: Deidre Vivas

21 Were Not Our Hearts Burning?: Christine Cichello

22 Fruits from the CLC-USA Assembly: Ligia Morales

23 Reflections from the Assembly Liturgy Committee: Compiled by Deb Flynn

25 Salt Statues: Sister Patricia Hottinger, SH

27 CLC - A Tremendous Grace and Treasure: Marta Koczwarra

28 CLC-USA National Assembly Summary Report

Next issue: Implementing Clarities of the Assembly

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Harvest / 2
Celebrating Graced and Unexpected Moments

Sixty years ago this summer, the World Federation of Sodalities held its meeting at Seton Hall University in New Jersey. The proximity of the gathering to the New York metropolitan area meant that local Sodalists were called upon to be hosts to international guests, translators and workers in the field helping wherever needed. Besides providing assistance, local Sodalists were able to attend workshops and participate in the liturgies. The excitement was high as New Yorkers and other members of Sodality met and interacted with our brothers and sisters from around the world. This was my first experience with Sodality as a world movement. I embraced that idea and it has never left me. (On a very personal note, it was at this gathering that I began my courtship with my soon-to-be husband, Ray, my unexpected blessing.)

Just a couple months ago CLC-USA held its National Assembly at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. These two meetings, sixty years apart, displayed similarities and differences. Both meetings were sort of a homecoming, demonstrating that Sodality and CLC are not just small isolated communities but rather “relatives” in a faith journey with Ignatian spirituality as a common denominator. In 1959 the number of Jesuits in attendance far outnumbered those present this year. The communal discernment we experienced in Pittsburgh was not to be found at Seton Hall. The diversity of 1959 attendees was present because the delegates came from various nations, not from US local communities. At the world gathering, most of the laity attended workshops where they were being taught in the ways of Sodality life or in theological themes so as to become better informed about the Church and its teachings. Most of the presenters were priests. A young Father Dan Berrigan, S.J., was one I remember.

Preparation for the Assembly in July began fairly early in the New York Region. A day of prayer was devoted to it as well as the prayerful exercises we did in our local communities. The Editorial Team of Harvest worked on two issues related to it as well. This being said, the event always presents something new. There is always joy in reuniting with longtime friends. A new energy arises as we meet members we knew by name only. Gratitude is experienced as we engage with members totally new to us. Someone described our small groups as ‘our families’ during our time together.

The experience of Communal Discernment was new to many. It provided all present with a tool that should play a prominent role in community decisions on all levels. Listening to and interacting with each other helped us grow as one body, one family in the Lord. The facilitation of the Assembly by Lois Campbell, the spiritual guidance by Pat Carter Anderson and the process guidance by Gilles Michaud kept the participants on track and focused on the task before us. The tech enhancement provided by Frank Vuong and Liem Le brought the Assembly to a place we could not have imagined sixty years ago. The joyful and meaningful liturgies, the informal socials at the close of day and the festive final dinner followed by a DJ and an exuberant group of participants who danced the night away - all added to the event we remember as CLC-USA Assembly 2019.

Look further on in this issue for details of the awards that were presented at the closing dinner, The CLC Development Award and The Development of Peoples Award.

Unfortunately the end of the Assembly came too quickly for me. I felt rushed as we tried to summarize our days of deliberation. I was disappointed that there was little time to recognize outgoing officers and meet, greet and send forth our new ExCo.

To all who worked so hard to make our Assembly successful, the planning committee, the welcome group and all who worked for our comfort and safety throughout, I give profound thanks. As we hear so often, trying to name all puts one at risk of forgetting someone. Know that your names and your faces are forever etched in my memory.

WITHIN THIS ISSUE:

Our newly commissioned CLC President, Barb Rudolph, offers some reflections in “Sharing Our Gifts.”
She refers us to Bernadette Farrell’s song, “Take My Gifts” to better understand the love and gifts we share in CLC, so many that were identified as loaves to be shared. Barb also introduces the new members of ExCo, Paul Gallagher (Secretary) and Frank Vuong (At Large position).

In “Mary has chosen the better part” National EA, Father John Lan Tran, S.J., uses the scripture story of Mary and Martha to reflect on some of his growth and change in how he proceeds in CLC-USA. He also points to the larger community of CLC to move forward from the center (the Mary image) to that of the outward reality (the Martha image).

Dominic Totaro, S.J., gives a detailed description of the proceedings at Duquesne in “An Experience in Communal Discernment.” Dom follows the order of the assembly program which will help the reader sense the movement of the meeting. Throughout, he acknowledges many who worked to bring the assembly to fruition.

The “World President Address to the CLC-USA National Assembly” by Denis Dobblestein of Belgium is included in its entirety. Among the many points he shared were the importance of being contemplatives in action and the use of discernment to choose between good and better. He re-emphasized deepening our identity, sharing our gifts and going forth.

Most of us have been surprised by an unexpected gift. Kathy Hicks in “Lessons from the Assembly” tells about being a substitute rep to NCC from the Western Region. She grew in knowledge and experience regarding the tasks and the generosity of NCC members. She commented about the diversity and unity of cultural groups. She expressed hope in rebuilding her defunct community.

Another surprise of the Assembly was the presence of Rob Macgregor who traveled from Canada as a representative of Toronto Korean CLC. In “The Long Way to Pittsburgh,” Rob tells the story not only of the Assembly but also his journey in faith to Catholicism and CLC.

MaryAnn Cassidy shares her reflections in “The Graces of the Assembly.” An Icon of the Trinity helped draw her into the process of the Assembly. She tells of how powerful the communitarian paralysis exercise was. She found hope in the outreach works shared in the Globalization and Poverty frontier session.

Expectations differ for all of us when attending an event like a national assembly. In “My First Time at the CLC National Assembly,” Deidre Vivas describes her initial concerns and fears. During her interactions those four days, changes took place. She came away rediscovering her calling to CLC and uniting with others as “Sons and Daughters of God. We Are One Body.”

She renewed her commitment to neighbor, to planet Earth and to ongoing Ignatian formation.

Christine Cichello’s enthusiastic response to the Assembly is found in “Were Not Our Hearts Burning?” She hopes to bring back the experiences she encountered to the students in Boston College where she is Campus Minister and leader of CLC. Among the graces she received and wishes to share were sincere listening, deep sharing, openness and courage to move forward especially as a contemplative in action.

In her article, “Fruits from the CLC-USA Assembly,” Ligia Morales writes of her difficulty with the concept of “Body” as we use it in CLC. During the gathering she opened herself to those around her, felt some consolation and had a better understanding. After Denis Dobblestein’s presentation, Ligia was more hopeful and inspired, realizing God’s time is not ours and God is in control.

In “Reflections from the Assembly Liturgy Committee” Deb Flynn compiled remarks from Barb Rudolph, Michael Dante, Kathy Hicks and Suwan Kim in addition to her own. You must read these because they are a telling story of how we receive blessings that are unexpected, but truly precious.

Sister Patricia Hottinger, SH, writes of gifts she received from her life in CLC. Among those mentioned in “Salt Statues” are a maturing prayer time, a deepening of the Exercises, being enabled in leadership roles and in the making of friends.

In “A Tremendous Grace and Treasure” Marta Koczwar suggests a triple challenge for her at the Assembly. Marta was selected to be the rep for Polish CLC. She served on the assembly’s Liturgy Committee, and she was a small group facilitator. Read on to see how she managed all.

Included for your study, reflection and action is CLC-USA National Assembly Summary Report.

CONCLUSION:

The CLC-USA National Assembly is now part of our graced history. We need to read, reflect and act on what took place in Pittsburgh as we continue to deepen our identity, share our gifts and go forth to follow Jesus more closely and work with Him for the building of the Kingdom. We do this not as individuals but as one body in Christ.

With gratitude to our loving God,

Dorothy M. Zambito
There is a song by Bernadette Farrell that starts out, “Take my gifts and let me love you, God, who first of all loved me.” It is a fast moving song, not too many lines, and at your first hearing of the song, you might miss how succinctly Bernadette’s lyrics talk about how we are first touched by God’s love and then because we feel loved by God, that we have love to give away. The chorus ends with “Now the bread of love is rising, now the bread of love is rising; now the bread of love is rising, loaves of love to multiply.” In one of the verses Bernadette says, “Take a risk of new adventure.” Those few words speak of how, sometimes, feeling God’s love, we might surprise ourselves and do more than what we thought we could. As I think back to our Assembly experience, I cannot think of a song that better encapsulates the giftedness/bread loaves theme of the Assembly. If you get a chance to check this song out on YouTube, I think you will find special meaning in the words. I would suggest playing the song several times in a row, so that you can feel the essence of the song deep within yourself.

Google: Bernadette Farrell, Take My Gifts.

Then, if you step back for a moment, you will remember the Eucharistic prayers that speak of how we are invited to live the gift of Eucharist in our lives. At Mass we hear the words, “Do this in remembrance of me.” The loaves that Bernadette talks about, as well as the loaves that we talked about at the Assembly, are gifts/love that we can share with others.

At the Assembly we were asked how many loaves do we have? The responses included community, love, transformation, clarity, reconciliation, belonging, empowerment, discerning, vocation, discernment, spiritual acceptance, re-energization, gratitude, generosity, identity, agape, contemplation, sharing, magis (the more), abundance, intimacy, go forth, sanctuary, depth, trust, freedom, formation, response, unity, action and more. Those were our collective gifts, the wisdom from each table. Individually, we may also have other gifts that did not make it to our collective list, but are intrinsic to our spiritual journey and are gifts we want to share with others. We know, however, that there is a risk, in Bernadette’s words, “a risk of new adventure” in reaching out and doing more than we have done before, of being involved more than we were before. Because it is a risk, it is important to weigh what holds us back and keeps us from fully living or living our life fully. In looking at the effect of paralysis, whatever was causing the blockage, the effect was to feel isolated, depersonalized, distressed, anxious, stressed, depressed, hopeless and many other feelings that were encapsulated in our statues. The power of unfreezing one or two people at the end of the exercise was through, among other things, interactions of being touched, gestures, eye contact, being present, being assured and being engaged.

As we move toward being one body, there are risks that we take. We may be called or have already been called to do things we have never done before, including showing up at the Assembly, feeling unsure about how well we may communicate with others. We may feel “too new” to CLC to make a difference, leading a group when we think others may be more qualified, using the computer more than we are used to, and a host of other things. With different cultures and languages, it is important that we feel connected to the body. We may be willing to share what makes us uncomfortable or to say we do not fully understand something, as well as to share our gifts (the bread of love is rising!). Sometimes we may feel stretched when asked to volunteer to help. We may need to ask for
help if there is something we, in the midst of a project, do not feel we can do on our own. As you read through some of the individual reflections of people who wrote about the Assembly, I am sure that you will see the themes of Bernadette’s song.

This is the juncture when our ExCo team reorganizes. I would like to thank Ady Viera (now Past President) and Christine (Eunock) Kim (our first At Large position) for being willing to share their gifts with us. Ady brought her love of people and sense of humor with her. Christine faithfully attended our meetings and offered thoughtful input into decisions that needed to be made. We thank both of them for serving on our ExCo team. At times, as ExCo we had our challenges. We learned more about each other’s gifts and talents and how they affected our decision making.

At this time, we welcome Frank Vuong who was elected to the At Large position, and Paul Gallagher who said “Yes” to taking on the role of ExCo Secretary. As we begin our new term, we will need to learn more about each other and learn to work together as a team. I am sure there will be moments of excitement and energy and times of challenge and stress. Hopefully, we can learn to appreciate each other more deeply and grow in our relationships.

In conclusion, I would invite all of us, those members who were at the Assembly as well as members who were not able to be there, to join together, and to reflect on what gifts we have to offer the larger community, so that the Bread of Love is rising in each of us. Hopefully, the processes and gifts of the Assembly are being shared in regions, cultural groups and local communities. I hope that we can begin the process of engaging more people in regional and national activities as we have much to share with each other. Being inclusive and engaged helps us to feel ownership of our CLC organization. To move forward, we need to be inclusive and we need to draw upon the gifts of all of our members. It is crucial that we continue our work on the four frontiers. We need the collective energy and wisdom of all members to deepen and to share our gifts. We also need to ask for help if we feel stuck or unsure of how to proceed. As we go forth, we have much to share with those we encounter.

With the completion of our National Assembly, we welcome our new CLC-USA ExCo team:
• Barb Rudolph will serve us as President.
• Ady Viera continues to serve, now as Past President.
• Paul Gallagher has been chosen as Secretary.
• Frank Vuong becomes the new At Large person.

About the Newcomers:

Paul Gallagher is a member of Bread of Life CLC. He is a trained Ignatian retreat leader with a degree from CUA in Ignatian Spirituality. He is a Spiritual Director in the Ignatian tradition. Paul brings a business background as well as a theological one to the community. Professionally, he is employed as a Regional Manager for Loyola Press.

Frank Vuong is an active member of the Con Ca Community. He is well formed in Ignatian spirituality. He has a passion and love of the CLC way of life. Frank has helped organize and execute events for the S.E.E.D. Retreats. He has demonstrated organizational, interpersonal and tech skills. As a young professional, Frank works as a Catholic school teacher.

Farewell:
Our sincere thanks goes out to Christine Kim who served in the At Large position. We appreciate her gifts, time and effort on behalf of our national community.
I invite you to do an Ignatian contemplation on the story of Martha and Mary.

First, we enter into the character of Martha, a hardworking, over-responsible but good woman. Martha wants to do the right thing. Imagine what goes on in her. Ever since she heard Jesus was coming, perhaps she feels responsible for treating him well by preparing the best meal for him. Maybe Martha struggles with the menu, having to borrow what she needs from neighbors to prepare the meal.

As the meal takes on a life of its own, perhaps Martha worries that she might fail, that she might disappoint Jesus. What if he does not like the food? What would he think of her? What would others think of her? Fear produces more fears, whipping Martha into a frenzy. Along with fears also comes anger, which appears as resentment of her sister Mary, and perhaps sadness in the form of self-pity. Losing all joy, Martha’s heart is filled with worry, anxiety and pain.

Many, if not all of us, have had similar experiences. Think of sulking! Or think about the times when you volunteered to serve as a lector, or a Eucharitistic minister, or a parish council member, or the time you assumed a responsible position in your local CLC. As much as you want to serve, at times you feel unappreciated, neglected, lonely or even hurt.

Now we turn to Mary who seems to be more carefree. She too wishes to serve Jesus in the best way she can. For her, this means being with Jesus and listening to him. Noticing the absence of any sense of anxiety or worry in her, perhaps we can say that Mary’s heart is filled with curiosity, joy and delight.

Recall when you have had a similar experience as Mary. Perhaps you may have had a conversation with your spouse, your friend, or someone who paid attention to you, who empathized with your feelings, who cared. Perhaps you had an experience of being loved or of loving someone in these situations. You emptied your heart of resentment, bitterness or loneliness, and let God lift you up with joy, peace and freedom.

Two years ago, I struggled in my discernment to accept the position of National Ecclesial Assistant for CLC in the U.S.A. Having been a member of CLC Dong Hanh for twelve years before I joined the Jesuits, I had some familiarity with the history of CLC-USA. As a result, I was concerned about the difficulties of working with CLC. I must admit that after a couple months of consternation, I accepted the position more out of loyalty and duty, than out of joy and openness.

I struggled in my first year as NEA, partly due to personal reasons, but mainly due to the pressure and anxiety of wanting to fix an organization. CLC-USA had so many problems! Formation problems! Membership problems! Organizational problems! Issues with our By-laws! Things kept piling on. I had become like Martha!

This year, coming back from a personal sabbatical, I am learning and struggling to let the Mary part of me play the central role. As I witnessed the feelings during the Assembly, ranging from joy to fear, from happiness to sadness, from consolation to desolation, I am blessed with a certain sense of peace and lightheartedness. I keep reassuring myself: the sky is not falling … yet! There will be joy at the end of sadness, peace at the end of anger and trust at the end of fear. We in CLC-USA have wrestled with many of the same questions that the Assembly wrestled with, and we will continue to wrestle with them in the future.

We live in a performance-driven society, meaning we can be overly logical, living inside our head, looking at the Assembly as an instrument to diagnose and fix problems. At times I still think that the leadership of CLC-USA should work in a linear, top-down fashion. Yet, a CLC Assembly is actually a discerning body - praying, listening, being open, surrendering our fears, distrust and anxiety to God. Let God fill our hearts with joy, wonder and openness. In other words, a CLC assembly works from the center (Mary) outward (Martha).

I pray that the Assembly can help us, both those who were there in person and those who will read about it, to learn the lesson of communal discernment. Fundamentally, as in the story of Martha and Mary, before we can “choose the better part,” we need to realize the “necessary part,” that is, acknowledge and surrender our hurts, anger and fears to God, asking God to fill our hearts with openness, freedom and trust. Let Mary go before Martha.
Since 1971, at every National CLC Convention (Assembly) two awards were presented to recipients nominated by CLC members. Presentations were made for the Development of CLC in recognition of service in the promotion and growth of CLC, and the Development of Peoples’ Award in recognition of carrying out the principles and ideals of Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Populorum Progressio (on the Development of Peoples).

Thanks to all who submitted nominations. It was not an easy task to choose from the many we received. Our congratulations to all the winners.

AWARDS - 2019
by Marie A. Schimelfening (Chair of the Awards Committee)

The Development of CLC

Marilyn and Ed Bourguignon & Fr. Sung Ho Benedict Kim, S.J.

Marilyn and Ed were active in Sodality in college in the mid-1950s, Marilyn at Notre Dame College in Cleveland and Ed at the University of Detroit. They met and married in 1961 and were active in the Leunis Sodality in Cleveland, OH. In the following years they founded new CLC groups and encouraged the growth of authentic CLCs encouraging members to follow more deeply this CLC way of life.

Together they have worked to promote and maintain Jesuit involvement in CLC, locally, regionally and nationally. Their personal outreach impacted Jesuit understanding and engagement with CLC. Marilyn and Ed served as National Co-Presidents and chaired the National Assembly in Cleveland in the 90s. Marilyn was a delegate to the World Assembly in Hong Kong in 1995. Ed was the founding member of the Ignatian Spirituality Institute at John Carroll University.

They are still active in two CLCs. From a member, “Their love, steadfast dedication and faithfulness to Christian Life Community is beyond impressive.”

Fr. Benedict Kim was the first Korean Jesuit who introduced the Spiritual Exercises to the Korean people in the USA. He was tireless in his efforts to spread Ignatian spirituality to lay people. When the people who were introduced to the Spiritual Exercises hungered for ‘more,’ he introduced Christian Life Community to them. He understood that people needed community life to continue living in the Ignatian way. When CLCs were being formed in NY, Washington, Chicago, Atlanta, Western California and other areas, he put all his efforts into forming lay leaders and training people in giving the Spiritual Exercises.

Fr. Kim encouraged members to make their temporary and permanent commitments. In the words of one of our Korean CLCers, “Without Fr. Benedict Kim, we would not have the vibrant KCLC as it exists in the USA now.”

The Assembly participants were able to see and hear Father’s taped message of acceptance thanks to Christina Kim.
Our Development of Peoples awardee, Pope Francis, needs no introduction. We are familiar with his writings especially *Laudato Si’*. He is steadfast in making us more aware of migrants, refugees and the needy of the world. As CLC he calls us to a greater depth and understanding of our Ignatian spirituality. His letter to CLC at the 2018 World Assembly in Buenos Aires is significant. While his entire letter is one that we should meditate on, here are some of his words.

“...your 2018 World Assembly, which coincides with the 50th anniversary of your journeying as Christian Life Community. For this reason you want to pray and reflect together so that the Lord may grant you a greater depth in the living out of your charism, and thus, by delving deeper into the received charism, you may continue to be a gift for the Church and for the world. ... At the center of your Ignatian spirituality is this desire to be contemplatives in action. Contemplation and action, the two dimensions together: because we can only enter the heart of God through the wounds of Christ, and we know that Christ is wounded in the hungry, the uneducated, the discarded, the old, the sick, the imprisoned, in all the vulnerable human flesh. ... I thank you for your dedication and love of the Church and our brethren, and I encourage you to continue making Christ present in your surroundings, giving apostolic meaning to all your occupations.”

He ended his letter by asking us not to stop praying for him.

(Note: Our World President, Denis Dobbelstein from Belgium, who was present with us at our Assembly will be taking the award to Pope Francis for us.)

Past World CLC President Mauricio Lopez Oropeza has been actively involved in Latin America CLC. He is presently the Executive Secretary of REPAM. This Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network is the Catholic Church’s network that promotes the rights and dignity of people living in the Amazon region. Mauricio is also the director of Caritas Ecuador since 2014.

Mauricio Lopez’s work has always been about people living on the peripheries. His travels have brought him to the Amazon basin where he has seen the plight of the indigenous people. There are three million people living in the Amazon basin, and their land and livelihood are at risk. He has spoken at the United Nations and at Fordham University about the human rights violations affecting the indigenous peoples in the Amazon and the environmental destruction happening there.

Mauricio is in charge of the preparations for the pan-Amazonian synod, October 2019 in Rome. The focus of this synod is the Amazon territory and its neglected and oppressed indigenous peoples. He quotes Pope Francis, “The Amazon is the lungs of our planet and the future of our world.” Mauricio stands in the prophetic tradition of our faith asserting and advocating for the powerless and for the earth’s resources.

Ann Marie Brennan contacted him by phone and ZOOM and he spoke to all the Assembly.
The National Assembly of Christian Life Community held at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA on July 18-21, 2019 was an excellent experience of communal discernment. Lois Campbell was extremely adroit in leading us through an ordered progression both in the discerning process and in the content of the program.

The process followed the usual format with which we in CLC are familiar. After the initial input, the participants took time for personal, private prayer on what had been presented to us. Then the fruit of our prayer was shared in small groups of nine persons each. We shared in three rounds. The first round was the sharing of our fruitful prayer. The second round was: What did you hear? The third round was: What is the Holy Spirit saying to all of us in this small group? This last round enabled a spokesperson from each group to state to the entire gathering the highlight of all of our deliberations. This process enabled us to note that “The Spirit is a-moving” among us and that a consensus is being formed.

The content aimed at giving us an abbreviated experience of what the delegates at the 17th World Assembly in Buenos Aires experienced. Many of us had done some pre-work by looking at the Graced History of our individual communities. Frank Vuong had placed all of our input on a History Line for the participants to consult. On the opening night, we listened to the stories of the Polish, Vietnamese, Korean, Spanish and Anglo communities, as well as the transition from Sodality to Christian Life Community. We were asked to place ourselves into that history. We discovered that these stories were our Foundational Stories. They illustrate how we began, who we are and how the spirituality of St. Ignatius has formed us.

After noting all of the graces which we have received, we looked at our communitarian paralysis, i.e. how we get stuck and how we actually work against ourselves. This was a very humbling experience as we came to recognize both our individual imperfections and our community’s failures. We acknowledged our fears, distrust, conflicts, disconnectedness with others and unwillingness to commit ourselves to the community’s decisions. We even demonstrated these paralyses in the form of statues.

Gilles Michaud, who acted as Assembly Guide, helped us make the connection from what we had done to what we would be doing in the next exercise. We had looked at our gifts and our woundedness; now we needed to look at what God is asking us to do.

This moved us into seeing what we are doing with regard to our Four Frontiers. This was done at four breakout sessions:

- Ecology, led by Carol Gonzalez, touched on four points:
  - the need for greater awareness, education and accountability;
  - that each community discern one action to do;
  - that this action be something specific;
  - and that we collaborate with other groups which are already working in this area, e.g. Catholic Climate Covenant.
Globalization and Poverty, led by Ann Marie Brennan, focused on dialoging with the heart, sharing our Ignatian tools, feeling through physical contact with the poor, networking with the poor and advocating.

Family, led by Nancy Wood, focused on supporting CLCs, Ignatian use of the Spiritual Exercises and networking.

Youth, led by Frank Vuong, stressed the need to pass on the gifts of the Exercises and noted that, since things are not always clear, we constantly need to discern what is to be done.

Denis Dobblestein, the President of WCLC, began with Ignatius’ Suscipe and gave us insights from the World Assembly. The experience at Buenos Aires led those delegates to be contemplatives in action with humility, like an artist seeking balance. He stressed that discernment is needed for all the frontiers and for the Church and that this process of a discerning church might take one or two decades.

Patricia Carter Anderson periodically helped us to EXAMINE how we were proceeding, how we were following the lead of the Holy Spirit, and how all of this taps into Ignatian spirituality. This examen led us to our next exercise which was to ask: What clarities have emerged during these days that begin to suggest the direction for CLC-USA to take? This led to the following suggestions: that the national community is called to root itself in the practice of discernment, which, in turn, is rooted in our experience of the Spiritual Exercises; that we would be well-served by the NCC if they provided communications and compelling guidelines in support of this; that the desire for renewal of our individual and communal prayer life be accomplished through the Spiritual Exercises; that there be a continuity of Formation; that there be a national resource library; and that NCC help find a way to have the individual communities do what we did here.

A team of writers – Maggie Khuly, Tim Rouse, Helen Seol and Ken Vu – put together a Summary Statement to give us a snapshot of CLC-USA today: Who are we? Where are we as CLC-USA? Participants were generally satisfied with the summary. Some recommendations to amend that statement included:

- We need Guides for youth communities.
- We are becoming a “discerning apostolic community” of communities.
- We need a national identity which will invite others to consider being CLC.

Finally, we realized that we could not complete the revision of the Summary Statement. We recommended the National Coordinating Council complete this revision.

Additional words of thanks go to: the Pittsburgh communities for arrangements, set-ups, Friday night doings; Carmen Castagno for registration; Liem Lee and Frank Vuong for I.T. arrangements, especially for the videos of what was happening; the four Jesuits for good liturgies; the musicians and singers for lively music and hymns in different languages for the Masses; Marie Schimelfening for our history; and Barbara Rudolph for the overall responsibility of the Assembly.
An image speaks volumes. Considering my eagerness to say a lot with a very poor English vocabulary and limited time, I will do my best.

This iconic image was made with the ID pictures of all delegates to the Buenos Aires 2018 World Assembly. Guess what: I have been looking for my own picture and I still cannot believe that I did such a stupid thing. Anyway, you don’t look at icons; you rather contemplate them and sooner or later, you understand — I mean deeply understand — that icons have an inverted perspective.

Being a CLC member means no less than being a member of the Body of Christ. You may (and likely will) forget most of my words. Please, keep at least this picture in your minds and hearts.

Born in Belgium, Jean-Claude Van Damme became a post-modern icon in the United States. Van Damme built his reputation on a stunt, doing the splits between the cabs of two Volvo trucks that were moving. I refer to my fellow citizen to address a universal reality within CLC, that is, the tension between each local, regional, cultural community and “THE” Christian Life Community, a worldwide lay Ignatian apostolic body. Google it!

For many of our members, the split is challenging and even painful. Hence, I advise to use the magic word “IN” to be added whenever flexibility is required: e.g. “Hi, I am Denis. I am a member of CLC IN Belgium. However, I do not want to justify the worldwide dimension of CLC. I’d rather tell about two episodes of my journey in CLC.

My Foundational Experience of the Universal Church

I attended my first CLC World Assembly in 1986, in Loyola, Spain. I have to confess that in those days, while getting quite comfortable with the Ignatian spirituality, I hardly knew who Ignatius was and I just could not understand why all these grown up people around me were behaving like teenage fans when visiting the chamber of the conversion in the Loyola castle.

I had my WOW experience in the conference hall, during the whole assembly actually. I was 20 years old, coming from a very small town of a tiny country. Of course, I was overwhelmed by this “around the world in 10 days” experience.

The second thing that struck me would change my life. I thought to myself: if the Ignatian spirituality is relevant to all these people, coming from so many different cultures, there must be something about it. It seemed credible and worth being explored.

The third teaching was the most fundamental: thanks to all these people who had gathered in the name of the Lord, I discovered how diverse the likeness of God can be. I actually have the very same experience in my local community, every time we
meet. My fellow members allow me to contemplate Christ beyond my personal understanding and sensitivity, which are narrowed by my history, my culture, my sin. I hope you are aware of the giftedness of CLC in the US, the diversity being an asset for the contemplation of Christ’s face.

A Glimpse of a Renewed Church

Last year, I attended my fourth World Assembly in Buenos Aires. And I was amazed, once again. We wanted to re-visit the CLC charism and consider the implications of the bold theme: “CLC, a gift for the Church and the world”, without question mark. Those who had been preparing the Assembly were driven by a fundamental intuition with regard to our giftedness: it was probably related to our desire to connect the visible and the invisible, our ability to respect at the same time the complexity of the world and the mystery of God’s presence. And discernment seemed to be central.

Rather than asking brilliant lecturers to talk about discernment, we invited the assembly to make a communal discernment, live, without any prepared conclusions, i.e. without safety net. It was very logical and yet totally crazy. There is one World Assembly every 5 years; there’s no room for failure. Imagine: coming from 70 different countries, there were 204 delegates, used to think and talk as leaders, with strong opinions, ambition, and 50 smart ideas average, which makes 1,000 possible projects for the W-CLC. The risk of a chaos was high.

What happened? The delegates felt empowered and responsible. Not the kind of power that you bring with you when you are ambitious. Not the sense of responsibility you have when you feel in charge. On the contrary; the participants understood that what was at stake was much more important: Would we be willing and able to listen to the Holy Spirit as an Assembly?

Yes, we were. I cannot summarize the whole process. I simply say that something special happened in Buenos Aires. The Assembly, as one body, lived out the “Suscipe” prayer: Take, Lord, and receive all our liberty, our memory, our understanding, and our entire will.

For once, the final document of the Assembly is not the most important thing to recall. The Assembly itself is the message. Nobody will ever take away the experience from us. Nobody may say: communal discernment is too difficult, too time-consuming, out of reach when the diversity is important. BUENOS AIRES HAPPENED. More than ever in the past, the delegates are witnesses and called to spread the good news. Buenos Aires is happening, worldwide.

When we hear “Action”, we start … thinking about the meaning of the word

What do we have so far? CLC as a privileged opportunity to contemplate Christ’s face. Locally and beyond, whenever possible. Fine. CLC as a shared experience of listening to God, i.e. what I call the horizontal experience of transcendence. Sounds attractive.

However, you might, and you even should, be wondering: Where does it lead us to? This is still quite contemplative. What about action? Aren’t we an apostolic body? You bet we are. Nevertheless, since 2003 and the Nairobi World Assembly, CLC has been struggling with the very concept of a lay apostolic body.

What does allow us to call ourselves a body with regard to mission, while we are not structured like a religious order nor like a company? The community has no hierarchy and no worldwide planning.

Hence, we have a huge variety of fields of mission.

Daily, I receive mails referring to meaningful apostolic initiatives and I am asked to put them on the agenda of the World ExCo in view of being given a worldwide echo. I sometimes experience the stress of the juggler trying to spin plates on wooden sticks. I would not say that CLC has too much on the plate, but the World ExCo definitely has many plates to spin.

Don’t get me wrong. CLC has never been looking for one particular mission for all members. On the contrary, we consider that “mission” happens first and foremost in daily life because we seek God in all. For sure, CLC is much more than the addition of the individual commitments. I’m referring to the DSSE process of Discern, Send, Support and Evaluate:

In my local community, together with my fellow members, we discern together, send and support each other, evaluate each one’s mission in daily life. With both respectful distance and friendly closeness, the “mission” of each member becomes a shared concern.

Despite the depth and the strength of the DSSE process, CLC has continuously been looking for a way to act more explicitly, more visibly as a body, through group apostolate, institutional presence and even international advocacy.

The World Assembly of Fatima (2008) was a first attempt to imagine what an eager apostolic body could look like. The chosen methodology unleashed the ambition. To illustrate the process, a cartoonist would have sketched 200 jugglers trying to spin 1,000 plates on 50 sticks. Cartoonists are used to exaggerate; so am I. The Assembly in Fatima was important though, because it
showed the community’s determination to go forth.

The World Assembly in Beirut (2013) was a huge step forward for the World CLC. Prior to the Assembly itself, the community looked seriously at the apostolic fields where the members had already been committed. In Beirut, the delegates acknowledged four frontiers of Family, Youth, Ecology and Poverty-Globalization as urgent and universal areas for mission. Not exclusive or compulsory fields of mission, but challenges worth being considered as priorities by all national and local communities.

We were getting close to a quite decent understanding of the apostolic feature of CLC as one body. We had DSSE as the fundamental link between all members, including their daily life mission. And we had four frontiers as main threads for the more visible efforts of the community itself.

The Unexpected “Magis”

What next? What was the possible “Magis”? The World ExCo in charge of the preparation of the Buenos Aires Assembly went through a deep discernment process. It was rather a spiritual journey, a conversion that led us from ambition to humility. Looking back at our working and praying sessions, I dare to say that the Holy Spirit took the lead.

I now can confess that the previous World ExCo did not expect nor hope any novelty. We were simply keen to offer an opportunity to better integrate the three dimensions of the CLC charism.

Some national communities are primarily focused on Ignatian spirituality. Others are very eager to serve, whereas the very concept of one community is still a challenge in some countries. Buenos Aires was meant to rekindle the desire to be contemplative ... in action ... as a community.

“Being contemplative in action”. It’s our grail, but the phrase is almost overused, which might give the impression that the challenge is easy. Actually, it is ... in theory. However, the practice remains an incredibly difficult balancing act, which makes me think of another circus performance when the artist is trying to keep balance on cylinders rolling freely in three directions.

I mentioned already the mysterious consensus of the delegates to the World Assembly in Buenos Aires. Despite some difficulties, they were willing to play the crazy game seriously and made themselves available for the Holy Spirit’s whisper.

What have we heard:

- **Deepen** your identity in all its dimensions (the verb does not refer to spirituality only).
- **Share** the gift of Ignatian spirituality (which means journeying humbly and patiently with others and not only sharing a message).
- **Go forth** because CLC is a welcome gift for the Church and the world nowadays.

I invite you to change the order of the verbs, all the time, because it is an integrated and not a linear process. Look also for synonyms that would suit CLC in the US.

Discernment: A Responsibility

On top, as a kind of bonus, we received a new key for a better understanding of CLC as a worldwide apostolic body.

- What is common to all CLC groups, worldwide? Discernment, as a way to choose between good and better.
- What is essential to our contribution to the building of the Kingdom? Discernment, as the attitude of those who seek God in all, really in all.

I rarely quote popes, but I like this sentence very much. Pope Francis wrote: “People need welcoming, integration, accompaniment and discernment, but discernment is the less developed dimension in the Church.” Thus, what we cherish so much is what the Church needs most. This sounds pretty much like a call. And the good thing is that when identity and vocation are well aligned, mission is lived out as a joyful overflow of deep energy rather than an effort.

Of course, discernment is a means, a process in order to... However, in Buenos Aires, discernment suddenly appeared also as a responsibility. For all of us and for the whole community. Discernment is transversal to all frontiers. Wherever we are already committed, whether it is almost hidden in daily life or very visible, we are called to create spaces of discernment.

I met an Angel in the line

The last day of the Buenos Aires Assembly, I was pretty sure of my understanding of what had happened. I was sensing the huge potential of the message. And still I had my doubts. That was the moment the Lord chose to put an angel on my road. Actually, I was on my way to the men’s restroom. In the line, I had the opportunity to chat with a delegate from Latin America.
He was the perfect test person for my very informal survey because delegates from Latin America usually expect very explicit calls for action. So, I asked with caution: “How do you feel about the Assembly?” He answered: “I’m so grateful for what happened here. It was an amazing experience. A real breakthrough”. OK. That might have been the polite answer.

Hence, I pushed a little further and asked: “Don’t you think that we’ve spent too much time looking at ourselves, revisiting our charism, hardly mentioning the frontiers. Do you think that your members home will understand what happened here? Do you think that our assembly was consistent with the desire of CLC to be an apostolic community?”

Then, he had this friendly smile and said to me: “I see what you mean. Stop worrying. Of course, we want to go forth and change things. But we want to do it this way”. And he was pointing at the tent where the plenaries had taken place.

“This way” means that we definitely want to be active while totally available for the Holy Spirit. This is the gift of CLC. This is what we received, what we are receiving and what we want to share. Not a recipe, but a specific way to journey with others, always trying to integrate rather than balance contemplation and action.

The privilege of the World ExCo members is to make suggestions that others might take seriously and try to implement in a given context. I apologize if all this sounds either mysterious or hardly feasible. However, this is the whispered message that we heard. We may take our time to check if it really was the whisper of the Holy Spirit. If we get the confirmation, it might take one or two decades to implement the call. But let’s start now.
Lessons from the Assembly

Kathy Hicks

I have been a member of CLC since I was in college in the 70s. Over the years I have attended several CLC assemblies, Ignatian spirituality conferences and many directed retreats. It’s always been fun to travel to new places, see familiar faces, remember where we have been, and share about where we are going/would like to be going. This year’s Assembly in Pittsburgh was similar to ones I have attended in the past, but also different in several ways: 1) There seemed to be more comradery among people of different cultures. 2) We honestly looked at what holds us back from growing in CLC (our paralysis). 3) I came as an alternate NCC member for the first time and had the opportunity to help on the liturgy planning committee. 4) I no longer belong to a CLC group, so I felt a little like an outsider.

The diversity and unity among cultures was especially evident in our small group sharing activities. Both new and old-time members felt welcomed and listened to (though due to the limitations of time, not all ideas were fully shared with the larger group). In our liturgies, English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Polish and Korean speaking communities joyfully sang the refrain from our theme song, “We Are One Body in Christ,” in their own languages each day. This was especially memorable.

Everyone was touched, and many moved to tears, by an afternoon activity in which, after looking at the gifts we had received from CLC, we prayed about what paralyzes us (fear, stubbornness, imbalance, deafness, self-centeredness, etc.) and keeps our groups from growing and thriving. We were asked to narrow this down and identify one paralysis per table, write it down on a poster board, and then demonstrate the idea using our bodies, thus forming “statues” for others to walk around and observe. Seeing other groups present so many things which we have all experienced at one time or another in our communities was sad, yet in the end one felt a sense of hope. When those walking around and observing were told to stop and go to someone who was “frozen” and somehow, through gesture or movement, “unstick them,” we were given the opportunity to act as Christ for them, bringing a healing touch. We were all given the chance to be both statue and healer. This was very moving to me.

In all my years of being involved in CLC, I had never held, nor desired to hold any national office or be involved in the NCC. I don’t really care for business meetings, am basically a shy person and don’t feel comfortable speaking up, and didn’t really understand what the leadership of CLC did. The opportunity to be a substitute representative for the Western Region on the NCC was a wonderful experience. I observed how much work is done by the NCC in planning the Assembly, but also in training guides, developing formation materials, raising money, publishing Harvest, maintaining a website, and promoting the projects suggested by the World Assembly. I was impressed by the NCC members’ friendliness and willingness to put in long hours (sometimes participating in phone meetings late into the evening) to make the Assembly a success. I really enjoyed helping to plan the liturgies for the Assembly. It was very rewarding to work on the logistics for the services, and exchange ideas for songs and Mass intentions, and then to see it all come together so beautifully. Thank you NCC and ExCo!

The last CLC group I belonged to in San Jose, CA, disbanded three years ago due to distances to be traveled, poor health and other commitments of some of the members. Up until the Assembly, I thought it was fine to be a diaspora member and carry on living my life in the Ignatian spirit. However, I learned from Denis Dobbelstein, our World President who we were blessed to have with us at the
Assembly, that unless one has a community that one meets with regularly, you are not a member of CLC. After all, CLC stands for Christian Life Community. Without a community, how can one share or grow? This makes a lot of sense. We are not called CLI—“Christian Life Individuals.” This saddened me in a way, as many of our Western region groups have also disbanded. It is difficult to get new communities started where there are few guides, few Jesuit parishes and few opportunities for affordable Ignatian retreats. In talking to several people at the Assembly, I was given ideas for forming a new group and some materials that could be used. It will be a challenge. A small group, three of us in Northern CA, have met a few times in the past year to share what we can do to help rebuild CLC, but it may be a bigger task than we can handle.

I will continue to use and value all I have learned about Ignatian contemplation, discernment, the Examen and the Exercises. Perhaps someday I will be able to participate in another CLC group. If not, this may have been my last assembly, but I am grateful for all I have learned and all the experiences I have had. They will continue to shape who I am and who I continue to become.

I learned many lessons at this Assembly, probably most importantly that CLC is a gift to the Church and the world, but also, maybe more importantly, a gift to each other – a gift we should not take for granted, and one for which we should be very grateful.

The Long Way to Pittsburgh

Rob Macgregor

Born, raised, and for the most part educated in the US, I was headed to Pittsburgh from Toronto to attend the CLC-USA National Assembly. My path to this point hasn’t been straight. Throughout my childhood and undergraduate years, I was surrounded by Catholics. Although I wasn’t raised Catholic or baptized for that matter, I ended up going to Mass with one or another of my friends many, many times during this period of my life.

Upon entering graduate school and for the next 30 years, I had next to no contact with anything Catholic other than visiting churches as a tourist. Now, here I was attending the CLC-USA National Assembly as one of the representatives of the Toronto Korean CLC. Alert readers may have noticed that my name is Macgregor and I assure you that my family was not part of some lost Korean diaspora. For me, the story is more spiritual than that.

A few years ago, after my 30-year hiatus, I was in a church in suburban Seoul with a friend who sang in the church choir. Despite understanding nothing in Korean, and being the only non-Korean among the 800 parishioners, I felt completely at home and at peace during the Mass. I returned to Canada a few days later and continued the experiment. Does going to church always feel so good? The feeling of belonging and peace happened every time I was in a church, whether I was there for Mass or just to reflect and pray.

My Korean friend eventually became my wife. We lived in Seoul for a year during which time I was baptized in the same church in which I had the initial awakening. I believe that I am still the only non-Korean ever to have been baptized in that church. My wife and I moved back to Toronto and became parishioners at St. Andrew Kim Catholic Church, one of the Korean churches in Toronto. Then, through interactions with friends at the church, we became active in CLC. For cultural and language reasons, the Toronto Korean CLC group is closely attached to the much larger Korean CLC in the US. And that is how I ended up driving to the Pittsburgh Assembly as one of three members of the Toronto Korean CLC contingent, one of the other two being my wife.

The group in Toronto is small. It was a revelation to see the number and diversity of people at the Assembly. There was the Korean CLC, of course, but also Vietnamese,
Polish and other ethnic groups. The meeting itself, prior to arriving, had been something of a mystery. I wasn’t at all sure what would be discussed or presented, how or if we were supposed to interact with the other attendees, or what sort of atmosphere the Assembly would have. All of these unknowns were quickly taken care of at the Thursday evening session. Different groups within CLC-USA were introduced, as was the President of the World CLC, Mr. Denis Dobbelstein from Belgium and representatives from other countries. We had a brief history of CLC and then a brief explanation of how the next few days would unfold. We adjourned at 9 pm and headed for a welcoming party.

Friday morning after breakfast, the work began. We were divided into more than 20 groups of nine or ten people. These groups remained our little families for the next three days. We repeated more or less the same procedure, namely the practical application of Ignatian discernment. We were given a topic and some accompanying scripture, and then given 20 minutes for silent reflection. Then the group members shared their reflections without interruption from the other members. We then went around the table again to discuss what we heard. Going around the table for a third time, each person talked about the general themes and clarities we heard from the members. I found the topics interesting and surprising. For example, using only three words, we were to describe the three most important gifts we receive from CLC. The results of each groups’ discussions were then presented to the whole Assembly. I was surprised at the extent to which these 20 or so groups arrived at similar ideas and themes.

We also had sessions with one of four frontier groups of our choice, reflecting on and discussing one of these topics: Ecology, Globalization and Poverty, Family, Youth. My wife and I chose Ecology. Generally, a format similar to that of the large group sessions was followed to guide the discussion. For us, this fit well with the Friday evening event we had chosen. Each participant at the Assembly could take part in one of four activities. We chose to go to a session on sustainable farming at the Ballfield Farm, a small organic farm cooperative in the city. We learned about the cooperative’s efforts and had black bean arepas (corn pancakes) for dinner at the farm.

Saturday was similar to Friday with two major exceptions. We had Mass at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit on the Duquesne campus, and we had a buffet dinner, including open bar, followed by a DJ. Entering the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, I was struck by its familiar feel. After a few minutes, I noticed that the stained-glass windows were identical to a church in our neighborhood, St. Patrick’s Church in downtown Toronto. However, I still do not know who the artist was for the windows in these two cities.

Sunday, we had the wrap-up session. We discussed the topics that we would like to forward to the NCC, which was meeting for the three days following the Assembly. The group had a difficult time deciding what message we would like the NCC to hear. The Assembly wrapped up and most of us started to make our way home across North America and beyond.

Perhaps it will seem obvious to most readers but my main take-away lesson from the Assembly is that CLC is made up of a group of very sincere, earnest, warm-hearted and friendly people. Although everyone realizes there are things that the organization might do better, everyone also believes that the goals of CLC go right to the heart of the ideas and spirit of Jesus, the Catholic Church and the teachings of St. Ignatius. It was with these warm memories that we returned to our parish in Toronto and reported on our activities at the Assembly. I only hope that we will have an opportunity to attend when the group convenes again in five years.
The Graces of the Assembly

Mary Ann Cassidy

The graces of the 2019 National Assembly began with the preparatory prayer exercises that I shared with my local community. Having the opportunity to pray with our history, our growth and loss, helped each of us to revisit the goodness of God in our faith journey as Northern New Jersey CLC.

After arriving at Duquesne, I found the opening prayer and session powerful. It included the projection of the Icon of the Trinity by Rublev (1425). The Icon depicts the three angels who visited Abraham at the Oak of Mamre. (Genesis 18:1-8) However, the painting was and is interpreted as an Icon of the Holy Trinity. At the time of Rublev, the Holy Trinity was the embodiment of spiritual unity, peace, harmony, mutual love and humility. This powerful Icon drew me into the process of the Assembly and after. It is the Trinity that pulls me into the dance of life and love. The Trinity has given growth to CLC and sustained me in times of struggle and desolation. It is the Trinity who invites me to deeper trust and generosity in sharing myself, despite the blocks I inevitably put in God’s way. Re-membering in the context of the Assembly had the effect of a re-joining, a re-connecting, with the CLC of the present and gratitude for the CLC heroes of the past: Rick Kunkle, Father Costello, Ray Zambito, Father Drolet, Fred Leone. We are ‘One Body’ born in the waters of Baptism, never to be forgotten or abandoned by the Trinity.

I also found the prayer and exercise on communitarian paralysis most beneficial. Like so many images in scripture, the image of Lot’s wife ‘s indecisiveness resonated with me. Its easy to dwell on how things used to be in CLC and in the Church. It’s great to remember and be grateful for the graces of the past, but not if it cements us into inaction. The dance of the Trinity is for life and growth each day. In my assigned small group at the Assembly, we each shared our home community’s “stuckness.” Then we chose one paralysis to demonstrate. The one we chose was “unrealistic expectations” put on a neophyte in CLC. The body sculpture vividly demonstrated the disorder and the pain it caused the candidate. In this sculpture, I saw myself lacking understanding and patience for the pace of an individual I was journeying with many years ago. Thank God someone else in my community was more compassionate. The other paralysis or stuckness that was discussed was boredom, apathy or tepidity. In his book on discernment, God’s Voice Within, Mark Thibodeaux, S.J., writes that when one is apathetic, “there is no relationship—like a sailboat lost on a windless sea.” (p.27) The invitation of the Spiritual Exercises is always to go deeper. Also, our small group recognized that humility is needed to recognize our paralysis and trust that God will take us through our struggles. The experience of praying the examen communally and the Eucharistic celebrations helped me to return to focus on what it is that God is doing and a deeper trust that God is leading CLC–USA.

In the gathering on Globalization and Poverty several shared on their outreach. It was a grace for me to hear of a business begun, not for profit, but to help the chronically unemployed train and achieve meaningful employment. Secondly, CLC in St. Louis organized a summer outreach providing lunches for children and their grandparents. Both were responses to needs and powered by prayer and love. This was a far cry from the tepid attitude that says “what difference would my voice make when the problem of poverty and hunger is so vast?”

The Assembly was energized by prayer, love and commitment. I am very grateful for those who gave so much of their time, energy and talent to provide a meaningful weekend that helped me to re-connect with our Charism nationally, and celebrate God’s dance of life and love.
I didn’t know what to expect. I was scared. There were many doubts, even after I had already decided. God was telling me that I had to go but I found many excuses not to do so. Yet God knocked at my door in many ways: people I didn’t know called me, financial aid was available, someone was praying for me. The more this happened, the more scared I was. At times I would say to myself, “I, with this simple heart, have so much to learn. The Ignatians are very complex, so deep that sometimes I don’t understand them.” I was terrified.

God got me on a plane with two angels that carried and guided me from Miami to Pittsburgh, from the city of the burning sun to the city of bridges. When we landed at the airport they told me, “We Are One Body,” and with this phrase we shared a ride to Duquesne University in a very small car. We did not fit comfortably, loaded with a suitcase larger than me on my lap. When I complained they said, “We Are One Body, and you came for this.”

When we got to the university, I looked for signs, anything indicating the conference. I did not see them. We were pointed to the chapel, where we sang We Are One Body... and I cried.

I was waiting for the conference to begin and found new friends, friends from my own city. Five minutes later they were my sisters. I was looking for elegance and found simplicity. I was looking for tablecloths and found bare tables, half empty, with a loaf of bread and a bowl. I was expecting wise persons and found love and smiles.

There were four days full of activities with 183 participants and four Masses. Little by little, with each dynamic, we were guided to open the gifts that God has given us through CLC. Each step taken was full of prayer, of the Word of God, of reflection and discernment, individually and in groups.

We started from the inside to the outside, from the individual to the group, first reflecting on how CLC has changed our lives in my Ignatian community, in my group, in its members. We then shared what other communities went through to become CLC as did others in the United States (Polish, Vietnamese, Filipinos, Koreans, those from Southern Florida); from the individual to the community, to national, to world.

God granted me the grace to discover how important it has been to belong to an Ignatian community and how important each of its member is to my life. God gave me the grace to find out why I have been chosen for CLC. It is not because of my background, or my ideals or degrees, but simply because I am GOD’S DAUGHTER. This love keeps us as one in community.

I kept on waiting for ‘the conference’ and found a group of people from different places, full of knowledge, love and commitment to the Lord and to the planet. I learned from them, and found out that we were here not for our wisdom or great discernments, but because WE ARE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD. We Are One Body.

My notes turned into drawings instead of words in my attempt to bring this message to my community in Miami. The drawings represented my reflections. I drew bridges (Pittsburgh has more than 400) and it became clear that we need to be bridges to communicate with the frontiers, become bridges to reach youth, the poor, the needy. Become bridges to cross and be free from those fears or paralyses that we often encounter in community.

I wanted to visit the city and get to know its bridges, but this never happened. The furthest I reached was two blocks away, walking within the university. During this walk, God had a beautiful surprise for me and my friends; we stumbled upon Our Lady of Victory. It was beautiful. We prayed, implored, laughed and cried.

On the last night, we had a wonderful party. We danced, laughed, hugged. God united us in our joy, One Body.

I left the Assembly full of God, strengthened in my commitment to my neighbor, to planet Earth, and to a continued spiritual Ignatian formation dedicated to act and search for the MAGIS.

We Are One Body. Together we can achieve much more. We were called for that.
“Were Not Our Hearts Burning?”

Christine Cichello

Attending the CLC-USA Assembly in Pittsburgh was a joy and grace for me. It was inspiring to be a tangible part of the wider community and participate in the discernment process that will help shape the efforts of CLC for the next five years. There are many ways the Assembly energized me to bring efforts of the larger community back to the students I work with at Boston College (BC).

As a Campus Minister at Boston College, we have more than 250 students participating in the CLC program each year. Many other Jesuit universities are also experiencing a huge interest in CLC. In conversation with other Campus Ministers at other Jesuit universities, we know CLC is a place where students get a small taste of the Exercises through regular practice of the Examen, sharing of consolations, desolations and graces and praying with the Principle and Foundation. Campus ministers try to plant the seeds in students to consider forming CLC groups when they graduate and to experience the 19th Annotation.

Were not our hearts burning at the Assembly this year: as we met and prayed together; as we tried to listen to one another, bringing our own experience of the Exercises lived out in community through CLC? We became attentive to our own biases and emotions, open to naming graces and areas where Jesus is inviting me/us to see things differently, to be consoled to see Jesus revealed and say ‘yes.’

Were not our hearts burning when we heard on the last day that a few veteran community members stayed up late condensing all that we shared into a three paragraph document? It expressed ‘who we are’, ‘where we are now’ and ‘where we are going’ as CLC. I am grateful for the deep knowledge of the history of CLC in USA that they brought to our gathering.

Were not our hearts burning when we broke into smaller groups to pray about the document, to share, to pray again and listen and ultimately to decide whether to support it, disagree with it or amend it? There is much unity and agreement on the fact that CLC is about a diverse group of people strongly rooted in Ignatian and community formation. ‘Where we are’ and ‘where we are going’ invite us to look at possible fears concerning corporate actions on public issues. Some expressed the desire to be more accountable.

When I listened to what others felt, one shared being on a boat as an immigrant. He, like the disciples, called out to Jesus to calm the waves. He desired not be motivated by fear. Another person shared an experience of being with Jesus on the mountaintop. She heard Jesus tell her to come down and say ‘yes’ to the summary document. Another shared about the lack of youth in CLC and her desire for CLC to be more attractive and relevant to young people. Most ended up desiring to say ‘yes’ to the document but with some changes in language and emphasis.

I felt God’s presence in our trying to listen to one another and share our thoughts and feelings through difficult conversations. I saw Jesus and recognized grace in each person I got to know, witnessing their openness to the process, praying together, reflecting and listening for God’s voice.

As we begin a new academic year at BC, I ask God for the same courage shown by the wider CLC-USA body to discern how we are to be contemplatives in action. The world is longing to have conversations where we truly listen to one another and trust one another. We are invited to imagine things beyond our limited understanding. CLC has so much to offer our world as we journey together, attentive to where our hearts were burning and ready to receive God’s abundant grace.
Fruits from the CLC-USA Assembly

Ligia Morales

Thanks to God for my insight and reflections. At first I couldn’t see the fruits of this Assembly in my journey of faith. During the Assembly I was overwhelmed with everything that was going on. One theme that everyone in CLC was talking about was that We are one “Body.”

From my own point of view I thought that we were not really a “Body.” A body has a relationship with all its parts. I felt this was missing in our CLC-USA locally and regionally, individually and as a group. I saw my brothers and sisters every year in our annual face-to-face meetings and every five years in our National Assembly meetings. I did not really have any connection with them. I asked myself what type of relationship do we have if I don’t know what is going on in their everyday life, their community life and so on. I felt disconnected from the whole idea of “Body.”

I recognize that I am very idealistic. One definition of a Body is “an organized group of people who deal with something officially.” According to this definition, we are an organized group. The ideal is there, but the relationship is a dream, a journey in process.

I can see from a distance that those days of the Assembly were intense and full of passion. The fire and desire for the magis were burning inside of us all. The first fruit of the Assembly for me was to realize that even though I felt disconnected, the image and ideal of a Body, were real. Even though I don’t have the relationship that I wish I had, the connection is still there. The testimony of my brothers and sisters, their stories of their journey through this way of life in our Ignatian spirituality, is the ideal and dream of our beloved Ignatius. We are a Body with a great goal and mission. Our Body is working for a better world, a world of justice, peace and compassion. We, as a Body, are planting the seed of the Kingdom of God. We, as a Body, are fulfilling Jesus’ commands to: go and spread the good news, go feed and teach my people. I am grateful for the grace that I received at the Assembly. I believe in the promise of Jesus that He will be with us until the end.

Another fruit that I received was when our World CLC President, Denis Dobbelstein, talked to us. I flashed back to the image of Jesus that he projected on the screen. It was a face of Jesus comprised of many small photos of Assembly participants. He said, “Don’t look at Jesus’ picture. Contemplate Jesus.” For me, it was a powerful message. I saw our Body in this picture and I was one of these people. I was not alone in this picture. All my brothers and sisters were there. We, CLC-USA and WCLC, were reflected on this face. I considered his words about our projects and our anxiety and worries about their taking such a long time to be put into practice. I cannot repeat exactly what Denis said, but he said something along the lines that our time is not God’s time. God is patient. Our work and life take time. Work and appreciate what you have. You have wonderful communities that do not exist anywhere else. You are a diversified community with Anglo, Vietnamese, Korean, Polish and Latin-American/Hispanic people.

I am feeling hopeful with the knowledge that my personal project, my mission in my journey of faith is in God’s hand. I am working on a project that transcends our time. God is in charge of the time. My frustration and paralysis are only a stone in my way. With the grace of God I will continue looking toward the future with faith with all my brothers and sisters in CLC-USA and WCLC.

My reflection took me to an article that Dorothy Zambito wrote in Harvest 2015 regarding Wisdom Language. Denis used this language that made me change my attitude and inspire me to continue walking with Jesus and all my brothers and sisters around the world.

Thanks to all the people who have worked so hard in order for us to have a beautiful Assembly 2019, especially our hosts of the Pittsburgh community.

God Bless you all!

AMDG
Members of the Liturgy Committee, Barb Rudolph, Deb Flynn, Kathy Hicks, Marta Koczwarra, Lucy Kim and Michael Dante, helped plan the four Masses that were celebrated during the Assembly. Lucy Kim reached out to the Korean Community and found Suwan Kim, who volunteered to play the piano. Suwan lifted us up with her beautiful piano accompaniment, and was joined by Jon Lin of Dong Hahn on the guitar, Micheal Dante from Wisconsin on the trumpet, and Paul Riek from Oregon, also on the guitar. With his strong, clear voice, Paul led our Spanish language songs. We cannot forget our many gifted CLC members who offered to lead us in song by joining our impromptu choir, that was assembled on the spot, rehearsing during our lunch breaks at the Assembly.

In our planning, we were attentive to the theme of being “One Body in Christ,” and faithful to the process of working together and of being a multicultural team. We were each gifted with memories and graces from our time working on the committee and then seeing our work come together during the liturgies. In this article we share some of the graces received after reflecting on our time together.

Our committee loved the idea of choosing music to support our theme for each liturgy, even though most of us were not musicians. We searched hymnals and YouTube for songs we liked and listened to songs online together. Sometimes our enthusiasm on hearing a song for the first time was followed by a less enthusiastic second listening, because we thought it might be too difficult for us to play or sing. We wanted joyful music and songs that are favorites of some of our cultural groups. We wanted to honor a mix of traditional songs and to try some new music. We wanted to listen to songs in different languages and sing the same song in our many languages.

There was much more to do than pick the music for Mass. Duquesne’s chapel staff provided awesome support, from copying instrumental sheet music for all of our musicians, adjusting the microphones for our choir, and bringing the bread, wine and the sacred vessels for our Eucharistic feasts to whatever location we were celebrating Mass (of which there were three, each with its own nuances). We needed a plan for choosing readers, Eucharistic ministers and members to bring up the gifts, while making sure to include all of our diverse cultural groups and individuals from different regions. Members seemed pleased to contribute as well as to share, demonstrating a sense of respectful participation and openness to what others had to offer. Marta verbalized that she felt honored to suggest the theme song, “We Are One Body in Christ,” and suggested that we sing it in many languages. Her excitement and work on finding translations brought this into reality. Marta and Lucy mobilized the Polish and Korean communities to sing some favorite worship songs in their native languages.

Our Ecclesial Assistants (EA) graciously presided at our liturgies. National EA, Father John Tran’s inclusion of his co-celebrants in the Eucharistic Prayer and his memorable homily on Martha and Mary at the closing liturgy helped to pull us together, moving us out of desolation to becoming more centered (or perhaps re-centered) in being One Body.

Barb Rudolph, our National President, reflects that: “None of us knew that when Michael Dante said he could play a trumpet that he really could play a trumpet. My own personal most awesome moment came at the pre-Assembly liturgy. Our guitar players and some committee members had travel delays. Gene Forish, the head of the Duquesne Music Department, offered to play the piano. The synchronicity between Gene’s piano playing and Michael Dante’s trumpet playing was astonishing. Gene and Michael had never met and yet they played so well, complementing each other, that one would have thought that they practiced for hours. It was a privilege to stand between them and to offer a little vocal support to go along with their music. The piano and trumpet music and singing resonated within me. Music and vibrational sound and singing are very healing. Given the number of Assembly details that had to be taken care of prior to the meeting, it was wonderful to pause and give praise to our Creator God who brought us together. Sensing the willingness and flexibility to work together for a purpose greater than our individual selves was the gift I got from being on the Liturgy Committee.”

Michael Dante added: “Being on the liturgy planning team was a rewarding experience. It was a time of prayer and reflection. Our hope was to make the “One Body” theme really come to life in our worship. In many ways it did! The music was reflective of the cultural and language groups of CLC-USA. The songs ranged from traditional to more contemporary. Even the pick-up choir reflected the diverse face of CLC. The members brought their gifts of sound and song. A real beauty happened in the blending.”

Kathy Hicks carefully prepared the “Prayers of the Faithful” for each of our Masses. She shares that: “Being
on the Liturgy Committee was a wonderful experience. It was an opportunity for me to give back to CLC for the many years of blessings membership has given me. Through the magic of ZOOM calls, several of us from all over the country were able to meet and share ideas about songs, readings, prayer intentions, musicians and set up. I didn’t know any of these people prior to our phone meetings and was so glad to have been able to come to know them. It was nice working with people from different cultural groups and together we were able to come up with a theme song and other Mass songs which included words in different languages. We weren’t sure how many musicians we would have, but our little group of piano, trumpet and guitar players turned out to be perfect. Our diverse volunteer choir conducted by our cheerful director Deb Flynn, led the Assembly singing in different languages. We truly sounded like “One Body in Christ!” Though I loved them all, the most touching song we sang was at our last liturgy together, “Servant Song” by David Haas. The second verse speaks to what CLC is all about:

We are pilgrims on the journey,
We are travelers on the road.
We are here to help each other,
walk the mile and bear the load.

I am grateful to have had the chance to “be on the journey” with the Liturgy Committee, and together with the whole Assembly, to help each other and share our experience through prayer and song.”

Deb Flynn recalls: “In helping to plan the liturgical music, I was graced with meeting many talented musicians and CLC friends offering their voices to assemble an impromptu choir on the spot. When we came together to practice for the first time on Friday afternoon, I was expecting to sing, of course, but something else happened. We needed a leader, someone to bring it all together. Seeing no other candidates for this role and with less than an hour to practice, I began to “conduct” the group. Who else but the Holy Spirit could have prompted this? I felt my musical experience to be less than that of the musicians. I can sing the melody along with a choir, but being a conductor for a group of musicians was a new experience I had not expected. Reflecting on the experience, I am grateful for the graces that flowed from it. I am grateful for the compliments, the joy of hearing voices singing God’s praise in many languages, and the grace not to judge myself when my lack of experience revealed details I had not considered in the moment. I was gifted with joy, the joy that comes only from God.”

Deb recalls another graced moment during the final Mass: “I had compiled the words to songs and readings for the overhead projector just days before the Assembly, including one of the readings for Mass that would be proclaimed in Korean. When I looked at the slide, it was the wrong reading. I wondered if I should go up and read it in English for all those at the Assembly who didn’t understand Korean. The Mass continued before I could intervene to correct my mistake. During Fr. John’s homily on Martha and Mary, my perceived blunder evaporated and I realized at once that I did not need to hear the word of God in my own language to experience the “Word of God.” The Mass continued with Fr. John and the concelebrants offering the Eucharistic prayer in Vietnamese, English, Spanish and French. We all said the Our Father in our own language simultaneously. The Korean CLC members sang the meditation in their native language. What a beautiful celebration of being One Body in Christ.”

Suwan Kim, our piano accompanist, shares that: “Participating as an accompanist at the National Assembly was my great pleasure and unforgettable memory. One of the gifts that I received as a member of CLC is courage empowered by the Spirit to contribute my talents. Prior to the National Assembly, I had not played a church organ in over ten years. When I heard of the need for an accompanist, I raised my hand and started my journey to be a part of the multicultural liturgy group for this Assembly. Many songs were new to me, and so I watched YouTube videos to learn the melody and tempo. Practicing with the other members was very enjoyable, especially Michael’s beautiful trumpet sound, Paul’s confident voice, Katherine’s silky voice and John’s cheerful guitar support. All instruments helped participants to be one body under Deb’s conducting. After the Assembly, the melody of songs stayed in me, We Are One Body in Christ.”
Salt Statues

Sister Patricia Hottinger, SH

Let me share with you some of the images staying with me from the days of the CLC National Assembly 2019 and my experience of the exercise of the loaves and fishes.

Images include: the participants from so many cultures and different countries; our Graced History Timeline on the wall; presenters of the different topics; the music and songs shared in five plus languages; the technology used for on-screen reflection; meditation; tracking themes; seeing participants of the former Assembly in the face of Christ and our current Assembly participants shown in the logo.

My recent prayer times have taken me back to considering again the Loaves and Fishes. EXERCISE 1 is an ongoing experience for me. Answering the question: “How many loaves of bread do you have?” we considered our lives in CLC, recalling and naming gifts received so far. There have been many over the years. I will share a few that I am very aware of in my day to day prayer and life.

My regular prayer time has matured and been enabled through the many topics shared in our local meetings. When I review the General Principles it helps to enable me to stay on the path to which I am called.

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius has been an ongoing tool since my high school days. The Exercises, have deepened through my religious vocation and the influence of CLC. This tool helps me grow in an increased love of God.

CLC has enabled and encouraged me: to take leadership roles in our community at various times; to be a companion/guide for others with the Spiritual Exercises; to reach out to others in various local and community actions.

It seems people who are part of CLC locally, nationally and around the world are friends with one another. My local group has helped me with discernments. They have enabled me to move out of my ‘box,’ stretching and enabling me to go forth in new ways.

CLC has been one of the foundations for me as a member of the Society of Helpers in following my vocation.

EXERCISE 2, with prayer and sharing, had us acknowledging our communitarian paralysis. Our prayer was based on Mt 5:13-16. You are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world and on Genesis 19:26, where Lot’s wife looks back and becomes a pillar of salt.

In our groups we prayed over and shared about what we saw as blocks to moving forward in our local and world community. Choosing one of the blocks, we imagined the shape of a group statue that represented that block. Statues represented the disconnected, parochial and fearful. While half the ‘statues’ were standing around the room the other participants walked around the room prayerfully taking in each of the blocks that keeps us from moving forward. The facilitator then invited those moving about the room to touch a figure in the statue to bring it to life. This was a meaningful and emotional experience for many.

My group remarked how separated communities seem to be from one another. We chose ‘disconnected’ as our block to moving forward. While in the ‘disconnected statue’ I felt blocked. It was difficult holding the position for a length of time. When touched I felt such gratitude and relief. Around the room were hugs and tears.
When walking around quietly looking at the other statues, I was struck that there were three that showed fear as their block. I wondered, what were their fears? One of the groups marked their primary block as PAROCHIAL. I really stopped and looked and saw how each person was doing something different with no connection. I saw how this is happening in our own regional area. It was very similar to how our group saw ‘disconnect’ as a block to moving forward. It will be an ongoing challenge for me to see how I can reach out to other CLC members and groups.

The planners for this gathering did well in following the focus of the XVII World Assembly and I believe we came to the same graces as given in its FINAL DOCUMENT.

“We journeyed together desiring greater depth and integration in the living out of our CLC charism in the world today, and the Lord called us to DEEPEN, SHARE, AND GO FORTH.”

Footnotes
1. The Society of Helpers is a congregation of Catholic sisters, spanning 22 countries, working to ease the suffering of those most in need. Founded in 1856 by Eugenie Smet of Lille, France, the Helpers are — as their foundress Mary of Province intended — Helpers for the whole world. They continue to live in awareness of an ever changing, globalized world and they work with people where they are, as they are, moving toward a brighter future. Through vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and an Ignatian spirituality that recognizes God in all things, Helpers focus their time, effort and talents on doing God’s work.

2. FINAL DOCUMENT, XVII World Assembly CVX-CLC, pg 1
The guides group from my community delegated me to be their representative for the 2019 CLC-USA National Assembly. My engagement started a few months before the July gathering. I was asked to join the liturgical committee which was preparing prayers, readings, liturgies and music for the entire Assembly. Our committee consisted of six people from various ethnic groups. We were meeting on Zoom conference calls every few weeks. One of the more important tasks was to find a theme song for the Assembly, which would be sung in different languages: English, Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese and Polish. Our goal was to create the atmosphere of multiculturalism during the meeting. We chose the song, “We Are One Body in Christ.” It was sung in different languages every day during Mass. It was a great joy for me that our small group was able to sing two other songs in Polish.

One week before the Assembly started, I was also asked to be a facilitator of a small sharing group of ten people. I was not sure how to respond to this invitation since I had never been a facilitator and was not sure what it involved. I accepted this assignment and it turned out to be a tremendously enriching experience. It was not easy. On the contrary, it required attentive listening, discernment and decision making. The people in my sharing group included persons of different age, temperament, level of life, CLC experience and culture. For me it was a great lesson in listening and accepting ideas different from mine. I learned more about the process of communal discernment and decision making.

The Assembly was filled with small group meetings, conferences, prayer. The one exercise which touched me the most was one regarding our personal and communal paralysis. It was a group exercise during which we were to identify our paralyses, our personal and communal obstacles. After a time of discussion, each group was asked to present their paralysis in the form of a “salt statue.” While one half of the groups was presenting their statues, the other half was looking at them as in a museum. It was an incredible experience for me. In the eyes and gestures of the people representing the paralysis I saw stiffness, indifference, fear, sadness, lack of interest, attention or empathy. I think these are our common paralyses. This experience showed me the reality of the world in which we live, the world of our families and church communities. At the end of this exercise, the persons who were watching the statues were asked to bring a “paralyzed” person to life with a gesture. This showed me that in order to heal the paralysis, we need another person, one who will care and love us no matter what.

In the last day of our Assembly, during the special celebration of Holy Mass we were all reciting the Our Father, each in his own language. It was a very moving experience reminding me of speaking in tongues at Pentecost. There was a tangible presence of the Holy Spirit in our community. It was a great joy being sent forth experiencing unity and community.

In summary, the Assembly was a beautiful time, filled with new experiences, new people, learning, growth and openness to the new and the unknown. It was a time of my growing in appreciation of CLC as a tremendous grace and treasure. I am forever thankful to God for this time.
CLC-USA National Assembly Summary Report

Preface

From Thursday evening, July 18, 2019 through Sunday morning July 21, 2019 approximately 183 members of CLC in USA assembled at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The event was neither a convention nor a conference but rather a true assembly, that is, a group of those who seek to live a lay, Ignatian, apostolic and communal life gathered together in one place for a common purpose. That purpose was to identify, through discovery and discernment, how God is calling CLC in USA to deepen, share and go forth as a gift to the Church and to the world.

Norms for Our Gathering

Since this assembly was a discerning body, the design and execution of our time together was rooted in the essential elements of communal discernment, namely:

• An explicit attitude and atmosphere of faith. We gathered intentionally in response to the presence and activity of God in our individual and communal lives and not merely out of human initiative.

• Prayer before, during, and after our discovery and discernment. This included exercises of individual prayer, group prayer sessions, Eucharistic liturgies and the awareness examen.

• The desire, search and intercession for genuine interior spiritual freedom. This included the naming and symbolic expression through “salt statues” of those affections and attachments (what the assembly called “paralysis”) that hold us back from being free to receive, embrace and respond generously to God’s presence and activity in our lives. This was a deeply moving experience for the whole Assembly as we witnessed the power of love to overcome fear.

• The use of pertinent information. This included the gathering and representation of our graced history as CLC in USA, presentations on the Four Frontiers that emerged at the World Assembly in Lebanon in 2013 and a presentation by our world president.

• Surfacing issues out of paying attention to God in individual prayer as well small group and large group sharing. We sought to surface issues for decision that we might weigh and consider the reasons for and the reasons against, but most especially by being attentive to the movements of the Spirit within us, individually and communally.

Our Clarities

Due to time constraints, the size of the group, richness and diversity of the experiences of those present for the gathering, and the seriousness of how God is calling CLC in USA to deepen, share and go forth as a gift to the Church and to the world, full consensus was not able to be formed before the group disbanded. We see this not as failure, but as a call to the ongoing work to which God invites us in our individual lives, in our local communities, and in our regional and national bodies. The Assembly did reach consensus in giving NCC a mandate to pray and work with the important clarities that had emerged together with attendant calls as a foundation for going forward in this communal discernment process. They are offered here in the context of the grace sought for this assembly.
## DEEPEN

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<td>Our shared history is one of richness and diversity that is at once a source of pride, a recognition of God’s purposefulness, a grounding for our future and a model of how grace unfolds over time, even if in uneven ways.</td>
<td>To stay rooted in and connected to our graced history.</td>
<td>Compile the history line that was on display at the assembly, the oral histories presented, as well as the ‘word cloud’ of CLC graces and make these available to all local and regional communities for reference, reflection and prayer.</td>
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<td>Our gift is God’s call to be a “lay Ignatian apostolic community.”</td>
<td>To deepen our awareness, appreciation, understanding and commitment to this gift.</td>
<td>Make CLC World President Denis Dobbelstein’s presentation available to all individuals and communities, along with a suggested process for exploring this talk more fully.</td>
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<td>The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, with its array of tools, is the source of our distinctive Christian spirituality.</td>
<td>To deepen our awareness, appreciation, understanding and commitment to the Exercises and its tools.</td>
<td>Develop a common formation program for all those already active in CLC as well as for those seeking to join CLC.</td>
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<td>Individual and communal discernment are central to our identity as CLC members.</td>
<td>To use regularly the DSSE process (discern, send, support, evaluate).</td>
<td>Encourage individuals and communities to implement the DSSE process using materials already developed.</td>
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<td>We must grow in spiritual freedom by naming our “paralysis” that is, those affections and attachments which hold us back from being the lay Ignatian apostolic community to which we are called.</td>
<td>To explore, with trust in the mercy of God and of one another, that which is “unfree” in us as individuals and communities.</td>
<td>Compile the fears named at the assembly, make them available to individuals &amp; communities along with a suggested process for discerning these more fully at the individual and communal level.</td>
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<td>Our cultural, linguistic and geographical diversity is at once a great gift and a challenge as we strive to be one body.</td>
<td>To embrace our diversity while fostering our unity as CLC in USA.</td>
<td>Find ways to experience both our diversity and our unity in the intervening years between assemblies.</td>
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SHARE

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<td>Our call to share the gift God that has entrusted to us presupposes and requires that we are sharing that gift with one another.</td>
<td>To connect with one another regularly and more robustly in our living a lay Ignatian apostolic communal life.</td>
<td>Compile and make easily available (e.g., on website) resources used and developed by individuals and communities.</td>
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<td>Pertinent information is central to a faithful discernment of God’s will.</td>
<td>To improve both horizontal and vertical communications within CLC in USA, that is, communication between and among local and regional communities as well as communication to and from the NCC and the ExCo.</td>
<td>Investigate tools and structures for strengthening and extending communication efforts within CLC.</td>
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<td>The gift of discernment that we have received as a community is the gift we must share with our Church and our world.</td>
<td>To move beyond our local and regional communities to be of greater service to the Church and the world.</td>
<td>Gather information about efforts in the past and present of local and regional communities in sharing the gift of discernment with others.</td>
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<td>While the call to CLC as a way of life is precisely that, namely a call offered to some and not to all, we are called to be joy-filled missionaries of this way of life.</td>
<td>To promote the CLC way of life among others, especially youth and young people.</td>
<td>Leverage existing programs such as CLC on campus and the Dong Hanh SEED program to invite more people to consider CLC as a way of life.</td>
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God’s Gift, Our Task

The gift of the 2019 National Assembly is truly a gift from God. As faithful stewards of that gift, those in attendance at the assembly, as well as all those in CLC in USA, are called to receive that gift gratefully, to cultivate that gift responsibly, to share that gift lovingly with others, and to return that gift with increase to the Lord. This cannot happen without the ongoing creative and sustaining grace of God and our own mutual accountability to God and to one another.

May God who has begun this good work among us bring it to fulfillment in God’s time and in God’s grace with our generous cooperation.
## GO FORTH

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<td>The Spiritual Exercises are a tremendous gift CLC can offer the church and world.</td>
<td>To discern how the Exercises can be integrated more fully into our work and our Four Frontiers</td>
<td>Explore ways the Exercises can be integrated into our formation processes and be connected to our apostolic works.</td>
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<td>Our life is essentially apostolic.</td>
<td>To discern how and where we are called to be generous in seeking the greater good, especially in the Four Frontiers identified at the World Assembly in Lebanon in 2013.</td>
<td>Compile and distribute the presentations and full reports that emerged from the breakout sessions on the Four Frontiers during the National Assembly.</td>
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<td>Our common voice as a lay Ignatian apostolic community can be a powerful and transforming resource to the Church and to the world.</td>
<td>To give voice to the fruit of our communal discernment as to how God is inviting us to speak compassionately and prophetically to a wounded Church and world</td>
<td>Explore the mechanisms and structures that at once honor our commitment to group discernment and yet empower those in leadership to speak with us and on our behalf.</td>
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<td>Affirmed the frontier of integral ecology.</td>
<td>We recognize now more than ever the urgent need to respond to the global environmental crisis through the unique gifts CLC has.</td>
<td>Share the Laudato Si’ Encyclical, make lifestyle choices, and participate in or lead efforts and advocacy around creation care. NCC was asked to help raise awareness around the urgency of the issue, with AAA helping to create 2-3 meeting plans which will include some specific actions for local CLCs to be used in 2019 (during Season of Creation.)</td>
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<td>Affirmed the frontier of globalization and poverty.</td>
<td>We recognize that the human dignity of many people at the margins is dismissed and the cry of the poor and suffering continues to increase ever louder.</td>
<td>Our General Principles call us to an active participation in the vast field of apostolic service. Utilizing apostolic discernment, we are invited to bring Christ’s presence to the world. Continue to utilize DSSE (Discern, Send, Support and Evaluate) to encourage and support CLC members’ individual and communal ministries. Provide affirmation and support for members who work in ministries that enhance services for the poor and marginalized. Promote development of networking and advocacy skills so that CLC can join with others who promote social change and justice.</td>
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<td>Affirmed the frontier of family.</td>
<td>We honor that families are messy and recognize the unique gift that Ignatian spirituality and the Exercises can be for the family.</td>
<td>Our diverse communities have produced a number of programs in support of families. These need to be brought together and support provided to assure they are available to all CLC-USA regions.</td>
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<td>Affirmed the frontier of youth.</td>
<td>We recognize that youth and young adults are the future of the Church. Ignatian spirituality has much to offer as youth grow as persons of faith.</td>
<td>1) Pass on the gift of the Spiritual Exercises; 2) There is still work to be done and the conversation on youth needs to continue; 3) Affirm and support the many good things that are happening on so many levels including attitudes and desire; 4) We need to listen and explore what it means to listen and engage the youth without imposing.</td>
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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...

For more information write us at

Christian Life Community®-USA
3601 Lindell Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63108
www.clc-usa.org

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Calendar

Metro New York
Advent Day of Prayer

December 8, 2019

Next Issue

Implementing Clarities of the Assembly