

CLC in 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 of 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 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.

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DEEPEN

Clarity	Call	Action
1. 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.	To stay rooted in and connected to our graced history.	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.
2. Our gift is God's call to be a "lay Ignatian apostolic community."	To deepen our awareness, appreciation, understanding and commitment to this gift.	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.
3. <i>The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius</i> , with its array of tools, is the source of our distinctive Christian spirituality.	To deepen our awareness, appreciation, understanding and commitment to the Exercises and its tools.	Develop a common formation program for all those already active in CLC as well as for those seeking to join CLC.
4. Individual and communal discernment are central to our identity as CLC members.	To use regularly the DSSE process (discern, send, support, evaluate).	Encourage individuals and communities to implement the DSSE process using materials already developed.
5. 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.	To explore, with trust in the mercy of God and of one another, that which is "unfree" in us as individuals and communities.	Compile the fears named at the assembly, make them available to individuals & communities along with a suggested process for discerning these more fully at the individual and communal level.
6. Our cultural, linguistic and geographical diversity is at once a great gift and a challenge as we strive to be one body.	To embrace our diversity while fostering our unity as CLC in USA.	Find ways to experience both our diversity and our unity in the intervening years between assemblies.

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SHARE

<i>Clarity</i>	<i>Call</i>	<i>Action</i>
1. Our call to share the gift God that has entrusted to us presupposes and requires that we are sharing that gift with one another.	To connect with one another regularly and more robustly in our living a lay Ignatian apostolic communal life.	Compile and make easily available (e.g., on website) resources used and developed by individuals and communities.
2. Pertinent information is central to a faithful discernment of God's will.	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.	Investigate tools and structures for strengthening and extending communication efforts within CLC.
3. The gift of discernment that we have received as a community is the gift we must share with our Church and our world.	To move beyond our local and regional communities to be of greater service to the Church and the world.	Gather information about efforts in the past and present of local and regional communities in sharing the gift of discernment with others.
4. 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.	To promote the CLC way of life among others, especially youth and young people.	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.

GO FORTH

<i>Clarity</i>	<i>Call</i>	<i>Action</i>
1. The Spiritual Exercises are a tremendous gift CLC can offer the church and world.	To discern how the Exercises can be integrated more fully into our work and our Four Frontiers	Explore ways the Exercises can be integrated into our formation processes and be connected to our apostolic works.
2. Our life is essentially apostolic.	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.	Compile and distribute the presentations and full reports that emerged from the breakout sessions on the Four Frontiers during the National Assembly.

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<i>Clarity</i>	<i>Call</i>	<i>Action</i>
3. Our common voice as a lay Ignatian apostolic community can be a powerful and transforming resource to the Church and to the world.	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	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.
4. Affirmed the frontier of integral ecology.	We recognize now more than ever the urgent need to respond to the global environmental crisis through the unique gifts CLC has.	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 <i>urgency</i> 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 <i>Season of Creation</i> .)
5. Affirmed the frontier of globalization and poverty.	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.	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.
6. Affirmed the frontier of family.	We honor that families are messy and recognize the unique gift that Ignatian spirituality and the Exercises can be for the family.	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.

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<i>Clarity</i>	<i>Call</i>	<i>Action</i>
7. Affirmed the frontier of youth.	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.	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.

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.