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# Harvest

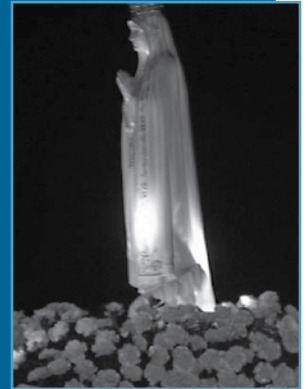
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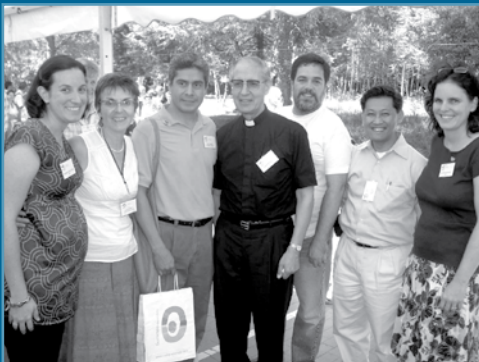
## *Journeying*



*as an*



## *Apostolic Body:*



## *Our Response*



*to this Grace*

*from God*



*Caminhando como corpo apostólico: a nossa resposta a essa graça de Deus*

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## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

As the days were drawing nearer for the beginning of the World Assembly in Fatima, I paused more than once to reflect on past world CLC gatherings. Most vivid in my memory was the 2003 World Assembly in Nairobi for I was privileged and graced to be invited to be one of the three delegates to represent CLC-USA along with Lois Campbell and Ramon Calzada. The weeks and even months of preparation for that meeting were intense as we wanted to be as ready as possible to engage in the deliberations that were to take place. I believe those days of preparedness paid off. We entered fully into the work and spirit of the Assembly. There were moments that we delegates treaded cautiously. The world was not looking with too much favor on the United States because of our pre-emptive war in Iraq. There were times when this concern surfaced and we had to respond – as best we could. Other memories were joy-filled as we greeted and were greeted by delegates from around the world – the welcoming group from the Kenya CLCs, new friends from Portugal, Egypt, Chile, Japan and the Ivory Coast, to mention a few.

Understanding CLC as one world community is not something that came to my consciousness in Nairobi. I was schooled in that fact years ago when I first entered the N.Y. Professional Sodality and on as we transitioned into Christian Life Community®. I experienced the Sodality/CLC world as family in 1959 when the world meeting was held at Seton Hall University. Once again in 1982, Ray and I were host to many delegates to the World Assembly in Providence, Rhode Island. We were not present at the international gathering, but our home was a meeting place, before and after, for delegates from Spain, Italy, Zimbabwe, Austria, Australia, Malta and South America. Many of these delegates stayed with us for several days. How blessed we were to experience the strength, trust and beauty of true communities of faith!

Our Fatima delegation collaborated and produced “Reflections from Our World Assembly of CLC-CVX in Fatima, August ’08.” This 10 reflection document is a day by day re-presentation of the Assembly – including the grace for each day, the experience, prayer resources, personal reflections and, for us, a set of questions. It is their hope that you and/or your community will relive those days that were so grace-filled for them.

Although the ‘pilgrimage’ will be different for you, you can in prayer and imagination, walk the path of Ann Marie Brennan, Liem Le and Angelique Ruhi-Lopez as they met the extended family of World CLC. You can enter into some of the passion of those who traveled far dis-



*Harvest Editorial Team:  
Dorothy Zambito  
George Willett  
Nancy Head*

tances to share the gift that is CLC. Some came with heavy burdens of problems back home, and some came with joy. New friendships were made. New opportunities for communication were opened. New challenges were presented, especially that of being prophetic women and men and prophetic communities in our chaotic world. We believe all left with hope for CLC and the world and gratitude for the unique happening that is a World Assembly.

As you read Sylvia Schmitt’s “Reflections on the World Assembly in Fatima,” you will learn more of CLC as One World Community. Sylvia writes of the ‘stories of pain and struggle as well as stories of growth and success’ among CLCers throughout the world. Connectiveness happens at such events as the Spirit is present and active. Sylvia’s role as representative for the UN Working Group in New York bore fruit as evidenced by delegates seeking her out for resources for their concerns about the water crisis in their own countries. The challenge that Sylvia leaves us with is to ‘respond to the call to live as a prophetic lay community.’

Included in this issue is the address given to the delegates by the recently elected Superior General of the Society of Jesus and World CLC Ecclesial Assistant, Very Reverend Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, S.J. Although our delegates have quoted from his presentation, I recommend reading and pondering the whole document. From his memory of the high school Marian Congregation in Madrid to his citing the interest ‘in the living testimony of committed laity’, to his defining a prophet, to the challenges of being prophetic in community, and the priority of formation – all of these provide material for serious consideration.

At the conclusion of each Assembly, a document is brought back home - something for all CLCers to study and to utilize as a tool for the next five years. The document of the Fifteenth World Assembly of the CLC tells of our graced history in the years since Nairobi, the graces of

*Continued on page 5*



# From the Ecclesial Assistant

*Robert (Cos) Costello, S.J.*

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**Robert (Cos) Costello, S.J.,** is a Missouri native, educated by the Jesuits and University of Missouri at Kansas City. He taught for some years at Rockhurst University and worked as counselor at the U.S. Penitentiary at Leavenworth. He spent a number of years in internal administration for the Jesuits. Before returning to the U.S., Cos was the National Ecclesial Assistant for England and Wales. He is a naturalized Irish citizen.

I found it difficult to write this *Harvest* piece because the World Assembly was still in session and our National Assembly months away. What's to write? I felt like writing a review for an unwritten play. Providentially, an opportunity arose, not to reflect on the absent proceedings of the assemblies, but on their context. As I sat down wondering what to write, the published copy of Society's General Congregation 35 plopped into my mailbox [cf. [www.sjweb.info](http://www.sjweb.info)]. The context arrived in the nick of time, suggesting a framework for this piece.

First, there is no way these few words expose the heart of six Decrees of GC 35. I limit my focus to Decree 2 that recalls who we Jesuits are and what we offer in today's fast changing, unkind world. GC 32 through 34 already contained many excellent words so the GC 35 delegates knew not to repeat that material. Decree 2 refreshes the reason for our mission in areas already claimed in the earlier congregations. In the long strategic discernment leading to GC 35, I anticipated we would be graced and we were.

I thought we needed to get on with our mission in the service of faith, the promotion of justice and in dialoging with cultures and religions. There have been breathtaking changes leading to a globalized world that is technology driven and environmentally destructive. Where would delegates go for meaning in that context? It was predictable. They connected with what still moves the entire Ignatian family: the communal story of the Society which absorbs contemporary ones. Delegates turned to the foundation story of Ignatius' recovery from wounds, his journey to Manresa, Cardoner and La Storta - they are a paradigm of the desires in communal vocations. That story pointed to the *Exercises* and the Call of the King. CLC's preparation for Fatima likewise walked the path of blessed history that ends with the same inspiration.

Decree 2 is titled "A Fire That Kindles Other Fires." It reminds us how we Jesuits understand our work and purpose. The founding story was an inspiration to Ignatius and his early companions as they discerned their commitment to mission. Was it to be the Holy Land? Rome? Over centuries this story remains a living dynamic that GC 35 termed the fire that ignites other fires. We recall the story of the First Companions praying to be open to the Spirit's guidance, for the glory of God. These sixteenth century events still shape personal stories and draw them into a communal one of serving Christ the King. We are who we are because of companionship with Jesus and one another. How like the apostolic community that is CLC with its common mission of serving the Church. Who we are is what we do.

Week 4 of the *Exercises* reviews the retreatant's graced story. The Week yields an *experience* that Christ is present both in personal and in community stories, bestowing gifts. He continues laboring in those gifts as their source. This experience deepens the process of conversion to follow Christ more closely as he labors in and for his creation. Jesus was born into the material and temporal reality he created. He gave himself to its joys and love, pains and alienation, and its hope and despair. I suspect the Fatima delegates experienced these graces as they shared what we have done and taught by our presence.

Decree 2 offers the metaphor of fire igniting other fires; tradition holds Ignatius told Xavier, *Ite inflammate omnia*. The fire in Ignatius was to serve his Divine Majesty and seek the Reign of God, no matter the price. He realized the Father not only sent his Son

to save the world but especially granted Ignatius the single honor of companionship with his Son. We too have the honor of such an identity. The narrative of the Society's early days records Christ teaching Ignatius the needs and costs to serve. The story of every person in the whole Ignatian family becomes incorporated into Ignatius' story, no matter the context. The *Exercises* guide us all to cast off the individuality of our own story to find the meaning and purpose of its author and his companions.

This Decree points out it is insufficient to go on any mission, no matter how selflessly, unless undertaken as a companion of Christ. Ignatius desired to love the world as Christ loved his creation. Today this is more of a challenge because of the *global* context wherein the world is no longer understood as separate realities; it is a *unified whole* in which one aspect depends on another. Globalization challenges traditional divisions. GC 35 states, "Today's consumerist cultures do not foster passion and zeal but rather addiction and compulsion. They demand resistance. A compassionate response to these cultural malaises will be necessary ... In such changing circumstances, our responsibility as Jesuits to collaborate at multiple levels has become imperative..." [GC 35.2.20-21] That is CLC's context as we prepare to digest the conclusions of Fatima and in preparation for our National Assembly.

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*Continued from page 3*

Fatima, and the Assembly's recommendations. Nature of an 'apostolic body,' membership and diversity, commitment to a CLC way of life, formation, the *Spiritual Exercises*, leadership, networking (CLC-SJ) and financial co-responsibility – all will be addressed as we move forward from Fatima to our local communities "...that we might live more deeply and act more effectively as an apostolic body journeying with the poor and humble Christ through human history, and become ever more closely identified with his mission." (GP8)

Be sure to check out Father Costello's message. His focus on Decree 2 from the Society's General Congregation 35 "points out it is insufficient to go on any mission, no matter how selflessly, unless undertaken as a companion of Christ." The Society and CLC are faced with challenges within the globalization that has taken place. Cos suggests that both will need to "collaborate at multiple levels" to situations in our culture that need resistance.

It is appropriate to say thank you to our delegates, Ann Marie, Liem and Angelique; to our UN Working Group rep, Sylvia; to our World ExCo member, Lois Campbell; and to our translator, Ramon Calzada. They gave generously of their time and resources to represent CLC-USA. Now is the time for the rest of us to begin using the newly received fruits of Fatima, as we begin preparations for our National Assembly in 2009.

*Dorothy M. Zambito*

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points out it is  
insufficient to go  
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Christ.*

# World Assembly of Christian Life Community® Fatima, Portugal \* August 2008

*From over 60 countries around the world, about 200 CLC delegates gathered in Fatima this past August to pray together; to share our stories, experiences and understandings in all our diversity; to encourage, inspire and challenge one another as family, united in the fire which enflamed the hearts of Mary Our Mother and St. Ignatius with the love and mission of Christ.*

*We invite you to participate in the movements of this Assembly using these ten reflections, the ten days of our Assembly. This document is written by our three CLC-USA delegates, Liem T. Le (LTL), Angelique Ruhi-Lopez (ARL), and Ann Marie Brennan (AMB). Delegates' personal reflections are indicated by their initials.*

www

## Related Links:

World Assembly web site:

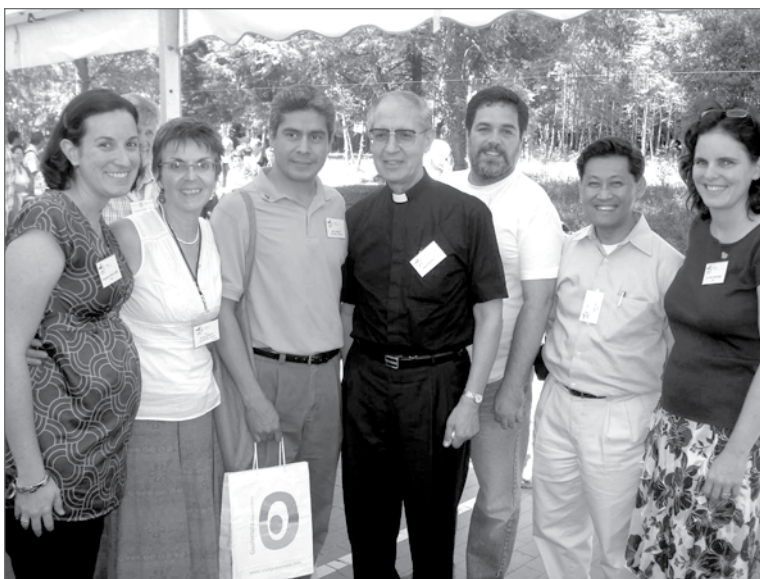
<http://www.fatima2008.org/index.php>

Fr. Nicolás' Address:

<http://www.clc-usa.org/Fatima/ReliveFatimaNicolas.pdf>

Final Document:

[http://www.fatima2008.org/doc/World\\_Assembly\\_Final\\_Document.pdf](http://www.fatima2008.org/doc/World_Assembly_Final_Document.pdf)



*CLC-USA members at Fatima with Fr. General Nicolás  
Left to right: Angelique Ruhi-Lopez (delegate), Sylvia Picard Schmitt (New York UN Working Group Chair), Boris Araujo (Guatemala), Fr. General Aldolfo Nicolás, SJ, Ramon Calzada (translator), Liem T. Le (delegate), Ann Marie Brennan (delegate)*



*The Assembly elects the new Exco:  
Pictured from left to right: World CLC Executive Secretary: Guy Maginzi; Consultor: Beatrice Churu (Kenya); Consultor: Chris Hogan (Australia); President: Daniela Frank (Germany); Secretary: Lois Campbell (USA); Consultor: Rita El-Ramy (Lebanon); Vice-President: Chris Micallef (Malta); Consultor: Mauricio Lopez (Mexico); Vice-Ecclesial Assistant: Alberto Brito, S.J.*



## Reflections from Our World Assembly of CLC-CVX in Fatima, August 08



### DAY 1

**Grace:** To rejoice in being members of a world community, coming together at rest under God's loving gaze.

#### Experience of the Assembly

The Assembly opened with wonderfully boisterous anticipation with delegations from 66 national communities around the world. It was so fitting that we gathered in the chapel in the presence of Christ. Each national community let her colors wave upon the announcement of the country, amidst applause.

*LTL:* I could not help but be aware that I was the only Vietnamese at the Assembly and part of the USA delegation. I told myself, "God is gathering all these communities around the world to Fatima... and He is so much alive in the very humanity of us here." There was a very gentle consolation taking me deep into my heart when I looked around. Many ethnics. Many different cultures. Many languages. And amidst all those differences, there were sincere greetings from one stranger to another, like dear friends for ages. The faces may look very different, but the hearts are so close to one another. We speak in one language spiritually: Ignatian. We all share one life style: our CLC Charism. The desire to love God more seemed to gather us all into one body. With love and grace, the small number, a little over 200, compared to over 6,000,000,000 in the world, actually allowed me to see our Church so much alive in a chaotic and challenging world of ours. Perhaps, this is God's invitation for all of us to embrace the greatness of Christ deep into our bones so that our very lives become the concrete presence of Christ in our world.

Edward Warrington, our Assembly guide, explained the process the delegates will use to 'gather around Jesus and tell him what we have done and taught.' He said, "Here we are — having travelled by 1000 roads and arrived in 1000 different moments, because it is the Lord's will for us." How true! "We are called, personally and communally, as an apostolic body to bring the Good News to the world." With that we began the first part of the Assembly, which was to "come to rest under God's gaze and tell what we have done, taught and

learned." Each national community told its story to the Assembly.

Among the more common struggles of communities with which we were familiar, there were several communities that struggled and grew out of tragedies and suffering of incredible proportion in Kenya, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Zimbabwe. CLC-Zimbabwe's symbol was a broken pot showing the brokenness of their country—exorbitant inflation, extreme poverty, HIV/AIDs, corruption, etc. Embracing the broken pot, Zimbabwe delegate Sekayi held up pieces of the pot saying, "We are broken, but we have Christian Life Community®. We are broken, but we have the *Spiritual Exercises*. We are broken, but we have the love of Christ..." The grace of CLC amazingly found root in people's hearts and sprung forward with so much life and love amidst murdering hatred. It brought hope. God made Himself present in the middle of these tragedies. Together, as we listened to these stories, we were learning to live as one body, apostolically, to feel and embrace the pain of our brothers and sisters from afar in the world who were totally strangers to us a few hours before. Later CLC-Zimbabwe expressed feeling consolation in being able to share its story.



#### Sources for Prayer:

Mark 6:30-34,  
Luke 1: 46-49,  
Acts 2: 42-47,  
CLC General Principle 8

#### Questions for Reflection

- What are some blessings I have experienced in being part of our world community of CLC?
- What are some challenges?

**Grace:** To listen closely to what the Holy Spirit is telling the World Community about the paths that have been taken between Nairobi and Fatima.

### Experience of the Assembly



A "yes" for Rwanda and Hungary from CLC-USA.

Today the Assembly continued to listen to stories. It was World ExCo's turn to tell its story to the world community - the path that has been taken between Nairobi (2003) and Fatima. The story was comprehensive, focusing on efforts in formation, leadership, CLC's presence in the

Church, collaboration with the Society of Jesus, apostolic initiatives and various international presences such as our CLC work at the UN and the World Social Forum. It was good to hear of growth in CLC, that new communities in various parts of the world are being developed. Daniela Frank, President, emphasized the importance of our need for effective communications, "We cannot stress enough the value of communications with the national communities. It is this information sent and received which fertilizes the ground of our being as CLC - it is from here that we glean the Spirit's calling as we continue to grow and deepen as a discerning community for mission."

The financial situation presented was bleak! The Assembly was really shocked to learn that World CLC has been operating with a deficit for the last 5 years, despite steps taken by World ExCo to reduce the deficit. Arising from the Assembly was real concern for the future of our world community. Many suggestions were proposed to address this problem, including the idea of co-responsibility for our world community.

The World ExCo presented communities from Rwanda and Hungary and asked the Assembly to incorporate these communities into our World Community. Here again we heard stories of real struggle. Fr. Ganza S.J. from CLC-Rwanda said, "After the genocide it wasn't possible to believe people could dance again but through CLC we have helped Rwandans to hope and to smile. When I meet a woman raped who has been

helped to regain her confidence and reconcile her pain, I say let CLC come. When I talk to a woman who has lost all her children but comes back to GOD, I say let CLC come. When I see Hutu and Tutsis together in the same groups, I say CLC is a hope for Rwanda. Through CLC, Rwanda will come back to hope." In Hungary, the seed of CLC was planted 20 years ago while the country still had a Communist regime. The first CLC retreat was offered in secret in the loft of a parish priest's house. Despite these difficult times, with strong faith, perseverance and the Holy Spirit, CLC grew! All in the Assembly truly rejoiced in incorporating these two national communities! The Cuban delegates were not able to secure exit visas yet to leave Cuba for Fatima, so we decided to wait for them before incorporating CLC-Cuba; the joy was not yet complete. Also unable to secure visas at this point were some of the delegates from Nigeria and Sudan.

**LTL:** The afternoon was spent in reflection and sharing in language groups. It did wonders for us all to have time to do a personal awareness examen. What happened in the morning? Where were these sentiments leading us? I sat and shared with people from England, South Africa, Belgium, Philippines, Lithuania, Taiwan, Uruguay and Zimbabwe. It was a wonderful experience of the universality of CLC. Deep in each sharing was the common concern for CLC. It is indeed a "precious stone." I found myself entrusting matters to these newly found brothers and sisters, that God would somehow bring things to a happy conclusion.

Mass was the highlight of the day. Canada and the USA planned the liturgy incorporating Native American Traditions. The soothing sounds of loons in nature (on a recording) greeted and settled people into their inner selves. The purification ritual before Mass further helped everyone to come deeper into their hearts. The chapel was bursting with chants and singing.

### Sources for Prayer:

Matthew 18:15-20,  
Revelations 2:8-11;  
29,  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

### Questions for Reflection

- How do we hear the stories of our brothers and sisters who suffer tragedies such as genocide, AIDS/HIV, economic poverty, etc.? How are we called to embrace their pain and suffering and struggles? If we are indeed one body, what is the Spirit saying to us as we listen to these situations? How is God calling us to respond?
- CLC is having a profound impact in many places around the world. What is my responsibility for contributing to the sustainability of the World CLC?



**Grace:** To raise our eyes to the signs of the times around and beyond World CLC, and to consider what inner dispositions and attitudes motivate our choices.

### Experience of the Assembly

The day opened with morning prayers using a film by the Jesuits of the Philippines showing images of the harsh reality in our world today. For example, there are communities of people in the Philippines who make a living scavenging mountains of trash. From these mountains of refuse, they find things to use for the day such as clothes and even food. They share with each other what they find. Children, too, search for toys and play together with their findings. Strangely, smiles seemed to be so ready on their tired faces. Another image showed a chapel next to these mountains of trash. It had no roof, no walls, and no sacristy. The chapel was marked with a wooden post. When it was time for the liturgical celebration, a bell was rung. The toll of the bell gathered people, and the Eucharist was celebrated right next to the garbage. Christ is fully present in the simple hosts that the priest brings with him, just like He is in other churches in the world. Christ is so ready to be with people, even in this situation.

Our wonderful process guide had this to say as the day began: “We are a community that lives the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears of all humanity. We know that in the conflict and extreme poverty that are found in some communities, we are called to an extraordinary response. But in all these stories, we project the vision of Christ proposed in the *Spiritual Exercises*. We are sent on mission together and called to work as an apostolic body. But this isn’t possible without grace.”

We had two speakers today. The first speaker was Dr. Alfredo Sfeir-Younis, who had worked for the World Bank for 29 years. After retiring in 2005, he has served as President of the Zambuling Institute for Human Transformation, promoting world peace and healing around the world. During his time at the World Bank, he was presented with many world problems: 600,000 women dying during pregnancy, 35,000 children dying daily due to preventable diseases, 40 million child soldiers, disenchanted youth and gang phenomena,

wars, conflicts, environmental destruction, etc. His conclusion is that economic, military and political solutions do not bring about solutions to these world problems; rather, our hurting world needs a spiritual solution. He emphasized the importance of both bringing both prayer and silent meditation to our daily life experience and to our world problems.

The second speaker was Fr. Eddie Mercieca, S.J. of Chile. He is the director of the Centre for Ignatian Spirituality in Rome. He spoke about the dispositions and attitudes needed for community discernment, especially the need to be aware of the deceptions in one’s life. He also stated that to embrace what is best [Sp. Ex. #149] means to be on fire with what God wants, not to be content with the mediocre. Each person must constantly ask him/herself, “What is moving within me? Where is this leading me?”

*LTL:* Today was special. Angelique Ruhi-Lopez told us that the Rwanda delegates expressed their desire of having their community “twinning” with CLC-USA. Wow! Amazing! Our CLC-USA delegation had already been thinking about bringing back the experience of being one apostolic body by inviting someone from CLC-Rwanda to our National Assembly next year. Apparently they were thinking of CLC-USA, too. We were all very happy with this sign.

Mass seemed to embody a special meaning today. People were quieter. It seemed that the afternoon’s time for reflection helped all of us in examining the movement we felt in the morning. It was quite moving to realize that Christ is so ready to be present with us and console us when we realized our way and came back to Him. The grace of today was not easy for me to see. What remained with me at the end of the day is this: We remain always imperfect, and God is forever Faithful Love!

### Sources for Prayer:

*Exodus 14:14,  
Psalm 46:10,  
Mark 10: 21,  
Luke 4:18,  
John 2:5,  
John 6: 28-33*

### Questions for Reflection

- *Am I ready to be with my fellow human beings in their poverty? Am I ready to fully embrace them so their hardship and poverty would be mine?*
- *Do I allow times of silence to influence my efforts to help transform a violent society?*
- *As CLC, we are called to read the signs of the times. What issues have I and/or my community been prompted by the Holy Spirit to address?*
- *Am I aware of the inner movements within me? Even the deceptive ones? Do I have the inner freedom, openness and generosity to respond to God’s call to me, to do whatever Jesus tells me?*

## DAY 4

### Aug 15th Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**Grace:** To open our hearts and minds to the creative urging of the Holy Spirit, in an attitude of hope and generosity.

### Experience of the Assembly



The theme of the day was “How can we move and act more effectively as an apostolic body?”

We gathered outside under the canopy of the trees in the large garden in the back of the campus. The weather in Fatima was quite pleasant, warm in the sun and cool in the shade with a light breeze. The change of setting for the Assembly to start “working” was just perfect. Morning prayers brought



One of the circles in Open Space

us into the contemplation of Pentecost. It was a sudden and immediate sign that the presence of God could not be mistaken. All were embraced by the grace of God, no exceptions. We were invited to read similar signs for our national communities. Like the apostles 2,000 years ago, they received unique gifts from

the Holy Spirit and began their journey. The Assembly was invited to collect the gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit on our communities, and especially on each of the delegates. We were invited to use the gifts and together build up CLC into a more effective apostolic body of and for the Church.

**Open Space.** The World ExCo decided to incorporate the Open Space process for our Assembly to generate the ideas and commitments that will help CLC live more deeply and effectively as an apostolic body. The Principles of Open Space are: “Whoever comes are the right people; when it starts is the right time; whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened; and when it’s over, it’s over. Be prepared to be surprised!” Delegates were free to suggest their own topics for discussion, posting them on a board with a meeting time and place for interested others to join them. There were over 70 topics displayed in French, English and Spanish. The Law of Two Feet applied: Delegates chose when and where to go—

with their two feet. “Some delegates are bees who move from group to group pollinating them with new ideas. Others are butterflies, who flutter beautifully outside the discussions.” The person who initiated the topic filed a report of the discussion.

**ARL:** At our CLC-USA NCC meeting in St. Louis, we proposed Open Space topic ideas and ranked them. Family CLC was the front-runner, so I felt compelled to propose this topic at the Assembly, not because I had too much to share, but mostly because I have so much to learn. I was very surprised by the positive response I received from those at the Assembly. About 15 people attended my session, in which we shared what has worked around the world in the way of family CLC and models that are currently being developed. It was very encouraging to hear how countries such as Spain are making family CLCs an apostolic priority. Given that there were representatives at the Open Space session from all the continents, this seems to me to be truly a worldwide priority and concern for CLC.

Ann Marie focused on Our Way of Proceeding (Discern, Send, Support and Evaluate otherwise known as DSSE). Liem took the issue of The Identity of CLC – How do we answer the question “What does CLC do?”

**LTL:** It was so beautiful to witness the desire to build CLC into a more effective apostolic body unfolding into concrete actions, transcending all boundaries. “Is this what the Church really is?” I wondered to myself. I was convinced again that CLC is that “precious stone”; of the presence of God within and without us; and of the guidance of the Holy Spirit for CLC. We recognized the ambivalences and unknowns on the road ahead that we are traveling, but we are assured that it is nevertheless the road that God has called us to take. Father Mercieca’s message to the Assembly the previous day was just perfectly timed: Do not fear to move forward.

### Sources for Prayer:

Acts 2:1-12, 17-21,  
Luke 1:39-56,  
Acts 2:42-47

### Questions for Reflection

- As a community, how are we responding to God’s call to build the Kingdom?
- What attributes describe our community when we are Spirit-filled?
- What are some priorities of our local group that we would like to discuss with others?

**Grace:** To open our hearts and minds to the creative urging of the Holy Spirit, in an attitude of hope and generosity.

### Experience of the Assembly

The question for the Assembly today was “Why am I in Christian Life Community®?” A story: at a construction site, nothing was visible yet except for some excavation to ready the site for construction. There were 3 stone cutters. A journalist appeared at the construction site to interview the workers: What do you do? The first one said: I cut stone. To the same question, the second said: I cut stone so the masons can build walls. The third one said: I am building a cathedral. Consider which of these stonecutters found the ideal, the passion and the meaning in their work, even though they were doing the same thing. How about me? Which stonecutter am I when it comes to CLC?

**LTL:** About 70 reports from topics in the Open Space process were compiled into a book by the Open Space Team. They embodied the collective desire and vision for a more effective CLC and the love for God. So many graces God has bestowed upon us. Shall we together build the cathedral or do we just want to work in our individualistic way cutting the stones and stacking them up?

To close the Open Space, we were then invited to “advertise” one or two projects that we have been pondering. Many folks outlined projects covering a wide range of issues from social concerns to formation to working for world peace. All the projects were posted on the walls for all delegates to see and to join. Let’s pray that initiatives will not revert to just “good ideas.”

**ARL:** I proposed the project to create a database of materials from around the world for family CLCs. My “project” would have three steps: 1) determine what already exists in the way of family CLC resources and collect these, 2) assess the needs that remain, as well as the materials that are in process (such as the Spain materials), 3) translate and post them to the World CLC site. Once again, I was surprised to find that a vast number of people signed on to my project. It was very exciting

for me personally, and I hope it is for CLC-USA, too, since I know this was a priority going into the Assembly. At many points during breaks and meals, different delegates would approach me and tell me what they are doing in the way of Family CLCs. Others indicated there are no resources for that in their country right now but they would be interested in knowing what does exist. I hope to do what I can to help meet this need.

In the afternoon, we had time for recreation, and some of us took excursions to tourist sites nearby such as the Cistercian Monastery in Alcobaca, the walled-in town of Obidos, and the fossilized Dinosaur Tracks! Later in the evening, our French Canadian neighbors, who had arrived late because of airline delays, shared their symbol and story. We — CLC-USA — hope to further develop our relationship with them through our North American connection.



*Portuguese coffee and Projects*

### Sources for Prayer:

*1 Corinthians 12*

### Questions for Reflection:

- *Why am I in CLC?*
- *In the context of being and thinking with the Church, just like the Assembly, we are invited to do very humble things in the mission of the Church for our world. Are we “cutting stone” or “building the cathedral?” How would I get from “cutting stone” to “building the cathedral?”*
- *Which gifts of the Spirit do I bring to the body of Christ, to the Church?*
- *What kind of “CLC project” might interest me?*



## Reflections from Our World Assembly of CLC-CVX in Fatima, August 08

**Grace:** To open our hearts and minds to the creative urging of the Holy Spirit, in an attitude of hope and generosity.

### Experience of the Assembly



**ARL:** This morning CLC Cuba, after having arrived late at the Assembly due to visa troubles, was officially accepted into the world body. This moment was much more emotional for me than I ever could have anticipated, much more for what Elena and Vivian, the delegates from Cuba,

didn't say than for what they did say in the presentation of their symbol. I know what they have had to endure in CLC Cuba – lack of human rights, lack of food, lack of resources and materials – but for all they lack, they have an overabundance of joy and hope that is an inspiration to the world community. Because my own heritage is Cuban, I felt incredible pride at the fact that I was able to be



present when they were accepted into the World CLC community. I also felt a huge responsibility to represent all of those in CVX Regina Mundi in the South Florida Region, many of whom are exiled Cubans, but also to give hope to our friends in Dong Hanh CLC, who I fervently pray may someday soon be able to witness CLC Vietnam enter into the world community as well.



### Sources for Prayer:

*Isaiah 56:1, 6-7,  
Romans 11:13-15,  
29-32,  
Matthew 15: 21-28*

### Questions for Reflection

- How do you experience diversity in your local CLC?
- What is Jesus asking me, us, to do through the grace of CLC?

Morning Mass was a joyful celebration with many of our delegates in their native garments. It was celebrated outdoors with our very own World Ecclesial Assistant, Very Reverend Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, S.J., the Superior General of the Society of Jesus. The decorations were creative and awesome. Pews were simply rows of bundled straw. The altar was a big stack of straw. A cross was artfully woven from straw. A choir was assembled from among the delegation with two choir masters for this occasion, Father Etienne Vandeputte, S.J. from Belgium and Cristina Lima from Portugal. Cristina was such a gift to us throughout the Assembly leading us in singing; she also played the guitar and organ with such masterful skill, and her soprano voice was so uplifting.

Awaiting Mass to begin, Ruth Chipman from CLC-Canada remarked, "This must be what Heaven is like!" We all agreed!

Reflecting on the story of the Canaanite woman, Fr. Adolfo challenged us to see beyond cultural barriers and, like Jesus, be prepared to change. "We must continue to listen – the Spirit works where we least expect it."

**LTL:** Father Nicolás reminded us all this Mass might be ended but our journey continues, and that we will need to keep accompanying one another in that journey – the journey of building the "cathedral."

Lunch was a feast of traditional Portuguese food and topped off with festive traditional Portuguese folk dancing. Many of the Portuguese CLC joined us! Indeed we are very grateful to them for their generosity and service to our world community in all the logistical planning and daily running around to be sure that our Assembly ran smoothly. In the afternoon we headed off on foot to the Shrine of Fatima for a Eucharistic Procession led by about 40 of our Jesuit EAs and then communal prayer in the Fatima Chapel.

CLC-USA is definitely blessed with diversity right in our home country. Father Nicolas' message during the communal prayer in the Fatima Chapel was indeed a challenge for us all, borrowing Mary's instruction to the servants at the Canaan wedding, "Do whatever He [Jesus] tells you."



**Grace:** To commit myself and our local, national and world community to practical, realistic initiatives that express ever more deeply and more authentically the World Community's election in Itaici and Nairobi.

[Note: In Itaici, we elected to be an apostolic body living Christ in our culture, Christ in our social reality, and Christ in our daily life. In Nairobi, we elected to be a lay apostolic body that shares responsibility for mission in the Church using the DSSE (Discerning, Sending, Supporting, Evaluating) way of proceeding where our individual or group service becomes a common mission of our community.]

### **Experience of the Assembly**

We opened the day with Father General Nicolás' address to the Assembly entitled: Notes for a Prophetic Lay Community guided by the Spirit of God. He affirmed to the Assembly the position of CLC in the Church, that CLC is a lay Community of the Church, and not an extension of the Society of Jesus. He shared with the Assembly his visit to Cardinal Rylko, Prefect of the Congregation for the Laity at the Vatican. The Cardinal was happy about CLC "because of the serious formation given to all its members." We had discerned and confirmed in Itaici (1998) and Nairobi (2003) that we are "an apostolic community sharing mission in the Church." This mission "has to be a Prophetic Mission," he stressed. He challenged us to embrace our calling to be a prophetic community, a body, not just a collection of individuals. We can be prophetic by living out more faithfully our Ignatian spirituality both personally and communally to deepen our awareness of God in our world, especially through our senses to:

- SEE with the Eyes of God,
- LISTEN with the Hearing of God,
- FEEL with the Heart of God, and
- SPEAK with the Words of God.

Fr. Nicolás' emphasis on formation was reassuring as this focus is precisely our effort in CLC-USA now, with the work of our Formation Committee on developing Guides and Coordinators training programs and even with the work of the Diversity & Organization Committee. Also, in the area of formation, we have opportunities to collaborate with the Jesuits. There was a sense that the relationship between CLC and the Society has grown and become more positive. The full text of Father Nicolás' address is provided in this edition of *Harvest*.

Next, we moved onto the third part of the Assembly, to identify our priority areas and look for concrete ways to enact them. At this time, the World ExCo identified the following priorities based on our Open Space work and the proposed projects:

1. Experience of the *Spiritual Exercises*
2. Formation
3. Membership
4. Commitment to the CLC way of life
5. Leadership
6. Collaboration between the Society of Jesus and CLC
7. Networking of apostolic initiatives
8. Financial co-responsibility

We had one overall goal: What does the World Community — all of us in CLC — need to do in each of these categories? The national delegations were invited to discuss and strategize their participation in the workshop groups to respond to the needs of their national community. Fr. Dom Totaro of CLC-Nigeria and Sylvia Schmitt of the NY UN working group joined us for some of these national sessions.

### **Sources for Prayer:**

*Fr. Nicolás' Address,  
Matthew 19:16-22,  
Luke 12: 13-35*

### **Questions for Reflection**

- In what ways am I and my community called to be prophetic?
- Do we ask the Spirit to guide our conversations and deliberations?

## Reflections from Our World Assembly of CLC-CVX in Fatima, August 08

**Grace:** To commit our community to practical, realistic initiatives that express ever more deeply and more authentically the World Community's election in Itaiaci and Nairobi.

### Experience of the Assembly

This morning, our North American delegates led the morning prayer. A blessing with salt water reminded us of the tears of the world and our call to cleanse and heal.



We recommitted our world, national, and regional communities to practical, realistic initiatives. Our Assembly guide Edward Warrington encouraged our Assembly to be aware of the inner journey amidst the business of our work in the remaining three days. He challenged the Assembly to refocus, to bring into further clarity that the goal of our work in Fatima is to do God's will. The Assembly added two more priorities: Apostolic Body and Family CLC.

**LTL:** Today we would address the remaining 5 themes. Surprise! I saw my name circled to facilitate the workshop on the *Spiritual Exercises*; Ann Marie was invited to facilitate the workshop on Apostolic Body. Angelique led the workshop on Family in CLC. The experience of being called to rest in Jesus during Mass last night came back to me. I felt certain that I was not the only one that God rejuvenated with his love so that we could be as sharp, dedicated and gentle as possible in our journey here in Fatima. I felt affirmed again that CLC is a dream of God for the Church, for our world today. My workshop had people from India, Hong Kong, Kenya, Europe and America; it was like having the "world" coming together to tackle an issue.

**ARL:** I guess if I were a character in the Old Testament, I would be one of the reluctant prophets because I just didn't feel capable of spearheading a Family CLC workshop. But because CLC-USA was clear that Family CLCs are a priority, I felt sent and supported by my national community to pursue this. Delegates from 7 different countries participated, as well as one member of the World

ExCo who is very interested in the topic. In addition, delegates from about 20 other countries approached me during the course of the Assembly to indicate their interest in hearing more on the subject as they return to their countries. To summarize the outcome of the workshop: we agreed to form a working/steering committee to gather materials and share experiences and apostolic initiatives in Family CLC. Some long term goals include international Family CLC exchanges/visits and an International CLC Formation Encounter for the Family. I was asked to be the coordinator of this group. After some prayer, I decided to accept the task, since I know I will have the support and assistance of a great committee.



*The sanctuary of the New Shrine of Fatima*

### Sources for Prayer

Matthew 19: 23-30,  
Matthew 19: 13-15

### Questions for Reflection

- Do you see how God cares for CLC—locally as well as globally?
- Which of the ten priorities of the General Assembly in Fatima strikes you the most? Why?



**Grace:** To commit our community to practical, realistic initiatives that express ever more deeply and more authentically the World Community's election to become an apostolic body.

DAY 9

### Experience of the Assembly

A writing team of five people were gathered to draft a World Assembly document: Dorothee Fischer (Switzerland), Chris Hogan (Australia), Gilles Noudjag (Cameroon), James McGloin, S.J. (Zambia), and Francisco Armas (Uruguay). "They have the task of capturing the spirit of the Assembly," said Edward Warrington. "Not just scribes or spokespersons, they will try to articulate the conversation taking place between God's Spirit and the Assembly during these days." After the team read through its draft, there were many questions and concerns raised by the delegates. Some desolation arose about the draft. It did not satisfactorily represent our collective experience of the Fatima Assembly. The delegates desired that the report be visionary and inspiring. The writers humbly took notes. We offered them our prayers that the Holy Spirit would inspire them in this undertaking.

Over the course of the next few years, our World Community will continue to flesh out practical, realistic initiatives on the priorities. Here are ideas on two areas:

### Apostolic Body

In several of the sessions related to our being an apostolic body, we were reminded by some wise one in the group—such as Fr. Konrad from Zimbabwe or Fr. Alberto Brito—that Christ's mission is love and that our call is to spread this Good News of Christ and to build the Kingdom of God. We are challenged to go where the needs are greatest, where we can make the greatest impact, and where we can bring about the greatest good – our Ignatian criteria! Levi Matseshe of CLC-Kenya, an outgoing World ExCo Consultor, expressed that to do this we can use our CLC "tools of the trade": our daily personal awareness examen and our communal DSSE (Discerning, Sending, Supporting, Evaluating) way of proceeding. The DSSE process was confirmed many times over throughout the Assembly as a defining, ideal process for our CLC com-

munities at all levels. While there are some communities that are actively practicing this process, for many others it is still theoretical, and many expressed the need for additional formation on this with very concrete examples and stories of how this is done. Sylvia Schmitt, our NY UN Working Group Chair, suggested that we develop a formation packet of about four meetings on implementation of the DSSE process.

### Networking of Apostolic initiatives

was another topic of much interest among delegates as it is here in the US. There was a strong sense of "strengthening our capacity for international advocacy" as expressed by Daniela Frank. Others suggested ways to do this including developing our communications using our website; sharing our stories and initiatives with one another; making a database listing worldwide apostolic projects; and twinning of national communities. We confirmed World ExCo's recommendation to appoint a coordinator at the world level to manage these efforts.

*LTL:* That evening, Mass was planned by all the African delegations. Again I was led to see the richness in diversity through the cultures and hymns from the several African communities. Each culture, each language is a gift to all of us. The explicit expressions were different, but the universal and boundless Love – God was present. I believe it was Ignatius who said, "In everything, to love and to serve." God did indeed walk with us during this Fatima journey and labored with all of us within our human fragility and limitations. The fruit of Fatima is not meant for the Assembly alone, but for the entire World Community, for all of us.



### Sources for Prayer

Psalm 23: 1-6,  
John 17: 20-22,  
Luke 12: 49

### Questions for Reflection

- When has our community experienced moving through struggle to peace?
- How well does my community implement the DSSE way of proceeding?

## Reflections from Our World Assembly of CLC-CVX in Fatima, August 08

**Grace:** To resume our journey as an apostolic body with our hope and our commitment renewed, with a clear understanding of our purpose and under the guidance of courageous leaders.

### Experience of the Assembly

To give more time to the writing team, the Assembly first completed the election of our new World Executive Council. President: Daniela Frank (Germany) won with 57 of the 60 votes cast! Vice-President: Chris Micallef (Malta), Secretary: Lois Campbell (USA), Consultors: Edel Churu (Kenya), Mauricio Lopez (México), Chris Hogan (Australia), and Rita El-Ramy (Lebanon). Guy Maginzi will stay on in the position of Executive Secretary until June 2009.

Our USA group consisting of Angelique, Ann Marie, Liem plus Sylvia had lunch with the Rwanda delegates, Yvonne, Martin and Fr. Ganza. It was very wonderful to deepen our sense of being called together for a common cause, even though all of us did not have clarity on its nature and process, not just yet anyway. We explored the idea of having the Rwanda team at our National Assembly next year. There is much we can learn from CLC Rwanda.

Our writing team came before us and read out the new draft of the World Assembly document. As they read, heads nodded up and down, faces looked about as if to say, "They got it right!" It was a moment of rejoicing as we recognized the work of the Holy Spirit in the writing of this version of the document. We happily approved the world document with the caveat that the World ExCo would make the necessary minor edits. (You can read it in this issue of *Harvest*.) It sheds light on the graces as well as the challenges for us as a world community!

The Mass that evening was planned by the delegates of Europe. Interesting were the gifts at the offertory consisting of objects used during our Assembly such as a computer! There was also a blessing and sending ceremony of our new World ExCo and the delegates. Their task is to share the message with all our communities.

**ARL:** A huge grace for me has been to connect with so many other young adults attending the Assembly. I made friends with

delegates from countries such as Croatia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Hong Kong, Philippines, Colombia, Argentina, Uruguay, Korea and many more. I learned a lot about how people are adapting the *Spiritual Exercises* and CLC meetings to meet the needs of young people with differing realities across the world. CLC truly is a place for everyone.

**AMB:** Striking all of us was and continues to be a strong sense of gratitude. Gratitude to the World ExCo in preparing a very effective and joyous Assembly. Gratitude to our Jesuit brothers who have accompanied us with wisdom, and support and love; their efforts have been instrumental in founding and developing CLC almost everywhere and especially in places requiring courage, trust and perseverance. Gratitude for St. Ignatius whose spirituality continues to inspire and transform! Gratitude to our communities back home for sending and supporting us. Gratitude to CLC Portugal for their generous hospitality. Gratitude for the magnificent music and especially the Ignatian hymns. Gratitude for the evening dancing and entertainment! Gratitude for the site of Fatima and the strong sense of faith among the pilgrims as well as the strong sense of our Mother Mary watching out for us. Gratitude for all the friendships we have made and have already nurtured on cyberspace in these weeks following the Assembly, including on Facebook! These friends are your friends, too, as we connect with one another in the telling of our stories, in our prayer requests, in sharing common ministries, etc. We look forward to telling you much more about all the wonderful people we met—too numerous to mention here! All these friends and gifts have deepened our sense of the Holy Spirit within and around us. Gratitude to God permeates all. Our hope now is that these gifts will empower us to transform ourselves and those parts of the world we impact, however little, according to God's Truth and Love and Compassion.

The World Assembly Document expresses it perfectly: We are one people, called from many nations, speaking the language of love, living a common way of life, sent on a mission, bearing God's gifts.

### Sources for Prayer:

*Acts 15: 6-31,  
Matthew 22: 37,  
John 15: 7-15,  
John 20: 21*

### Questions for Reflection

- The grace received at this Assembly is our becoming an apostolic body. What does this mean for me and my local community? What are our questions? What are our hopes?
- The world report and the messengers affirm the spirit of unity and joy which transcend superficial differences among the different peoples. In what ways can we as a CLC grow in this spirit of unity and joy?

# Reflections on the World Assembly in Fatima



**Sylvia Picard Schmitt**  
**New York UN Working Group Chair**

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In August, when CLC delegates from over 60 nations gathered in Fatima, the focal theme was: *Journeying as an Apostolic Body: Our Response to this Grace from God*. This was a response to the Nairobi Assembly's call to CLC "to become a lay apostolic body that shares responsibility for mission in the Church" (Final Document, 2003). Precise language that defines what it means to be an "apostolic body" still eludes us, as the final document from Fatima acknowledges, but the movement of the Spirit through the Assembly confirmed our collective commitment to being ONE World Community, called to be a prophetic community in the world today.

My presence at the Fatima Assembly grew out of the directives of Nairobi. Part of the expression of CLC's Common Mission was an expansion of our presence and activity at the United Nations. For many years CLC had been represented at the UN in NY by Fr. Daniel Fitzpatrick, S.J. but Father Dan was ready to hand this role back to lay CLCers, and after the Nairobi Assembly, a group of us came together to share responsibility for CLC's presence as an NGO at the UN. One Working Group formed in NY, and another group formed around the work of the UN in Geneva. (The development of our work can be traced through other articles in *Harvest* and in *Progressio* over the past few years or in *Projects 127*.) Previous World CLC Assemblies heard from the Jesuits who served CLC at the UN, but for Fatima it was decided that representatives of the two UN Working Groups (WG's) would be invited.

Manolo Enciso of Spain and I were named as delegates from the UN WG's. It was an added grace for us that Ann Marie Brennan, President of CLC-USA and a member of the US delegation is also an active member of the NY WG. We came prepared to reach out to every national delegation to promote the idea of CLC's presence as an NGO and to encourage more national communities to appoint individuals as national contacts for our communications network. The Spirit arrived ahead of us though, and made our work easier than we anticipated.

There were two movements of the Spirit in the Assembly that led to an enthusiastic response to our presence as UN WG representatives. First, there was a call to a greater solidarity and sense of co-responsibility among the national communities. Second, there was a call for a stronger response to the signs of the times. The call for greater solidarity was rooted in our joy at being united as One World Community there in Fatima, but it also sprang from the sharing of our stories — stories of pain and struggle as well stories of growth and success. One pivotal moment came when the Zimbabwe delegation shared their national symbol. Many of us had been following news accounts of the crisis in Zimbabwe, but those accounts are of people in a distant land. Our brother Konrad and our sister Sekayi from Zimbabwe made it personal. Presenting their national symbol — a clay pot — they related how they had intended to present a pot that suffered from a crack. Instead, they lifted up a pot that had been crushed in transit and was barely held together by glue, a compelling image of the situation in Zimbabwe. We shared their sorrow, and we felt called to respond. We are, after all, One World Community. The delegation from South Africa led us to respond in a tangible way. We created a special fund for Zimbabwe to help their community respond to the current crisis, and also to help them meet expenses for their upcoming National Assembly, and people gave generously.



**Sylvia Picard Schmitt** serves as the Chair of the NGO Working Group in New York, and as one of CLC's NGO representatives at the United Nations. She teaches a lay formation program call *Christian Foundations for Ministry*, facilitates the *JustFaith Program* in her home parish and gives workshops on spiritual and theological topics. Sylvia and her husband, Jack, are members of St. Catharine's CLC in Glen Rock, NJ.



*This desire to remain united as One World Community was accompanied by a sense of responsibility for the larger world community — a desire for a stronger response to the signs of the times.*

Another poignant moment was during the welcoming of the Cuban community into the CLC World Community. The Cuban delegates spoke of the struggles that they faced, but it was a delegate from Mexico — the godparent nation that accompanied Cuba during its journey — who put things into a different perspective. Jose Luis described the powerful witness that Cuban CLC had provided to Mexico. “They are faithful and persevere in spite of hardship,” he told us. “How much more should we, who enjoy so much freedom and comfort, be strong in our faith and our commitment to the Gospel and to CLC!”

Living as One World Community — sharing meals and worship and conversation with men and women from all around the globe — brought home the sense of unity in diversity that we embrace as CLC. Over and again delegates spoke about carrying this sense of oneness back to their local and national communities, of finding ways to share this rich experience. They also asked about ways to enhance our on-going communication and to share more information among the various national communities. The goal was to communicate at a level that would enable us to gather in five years at the next Assembly not to share our experiences, but already knowing one another’s stories. There were other suggestions about more frequent exchanges of visits among various national communities and possibly “twinning” — linking two national communities in a bond of solidarity.

This desire to remain united as One World Community was accompanied by a sense of responsibility for the larger world community — a desire for a stronger response to the signs of the times. The new Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Very Reverend Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, S.J. addressed the Assembly and articulated this desire, challenging us to live as a prophetic lay community. He called on CLC to “see the world with the eyes of God... listen with the ears of God... feel with the heart of God... and speak the word of God... a word of mercy, of compassion for those who suffer... and a word of conversion and solidarity for those who can do something about that suffering.”

It remains for us to discern concrete responses to this challenge, but the strength of the Spirit and the energy of the Assembly will guide us in this. Many national communities are already hard at work on apostolic initiatives in response to the needs they see around them. The Assembly offered me an opportunity to learn more about projects like the work of CLC Korea with immigrants, CLC Kenya’s school for AIDS orphans, and CLC Lebanon’s cooperation with other organizations in response to climate change. There was a wealth of stories from around the globe outlining ways that CLC responds to needs.

In turn, I was able to explain to other delegates how CLC interacts with other NGOs at the UN, how we have networked with the religious community present there, and how we came to choose our present areas of concern: migration for the Geneva WG, and water for the WG in New York. A number of delegates came to me with stories of the water crisis in their homelands and expressed a desire for more of the information and resources that are available to us through our UN contacts. We were able to establish relationships that will continue to bear fruit even now that we have each returned to our local communities.

During the Assembly, I found myself reacting as I had in Miami, at my first US National CLC Assembly. I felt that I was getting a foretaste of the reign of God: people from many nations living together in peace, none putting his or her needs first, but wanting only what was best for each other, and best for the whole of God’s creation. I am immensely grateful for having shared this experience with the World Community and I hope we can carry this sense of possibility with us as we strive to respond to the call to live as a prophetic lay community.

# Notes for a Prophetic Lay Community

## guided by the Spirit of God



*Father General Nicolás' Talk to the CLC General Assembly 2008*  
*Fátima, August 17th*

### ***Introduction – Greeting***

I forgot when it happened. I was finishing a period of my life: two years of studies in Rome or six years of service at the East Asian Pastoral Institute in Manila. Someone told me that the CLC Community in Japan, where I was returning, had asked Father Provincial to assign me as their Ecclesiastical Assistant. Maybe they were very desperate and wanted to secure a Jesuit, any Jesuit. But the Provincial had other plans and the Japanese CLC was protected from me. My contacts with CLC (CVX for others) were sporadic and not very frequent, although they were never cut off. And, of course, I never thought that I would be here today addressing the General Assembly. And I have to say that I do it with great pleasure.

I want also to say that I am very impressed. I have read some of your recent key documents. I have had access to your sharing, reports and exchanges. I have met some of your representatives and members of the Executive Council. And I never fail to be impressed by the vision, the dedication and the depth of humanity that I find in all of them. I congratulate you all for this level of human life and of Christian commitment. [I have to confess that I had to search in your Statutes or General Principles for the right terminology regarding leadership for CLC. I wanted to know how you call your leaders. I opened the Principles and read: “The Three Divine Persons”. I did not need long to realize that I was reading the wrong page. It was far down the pages that I found Assembly and Executive Council, and President, etc.]

It is also a factor in the comfortable joy I have today to know that we share so much, from the basic directions of Ignatian spirituality, to even some structural elements of your system of leadership. This is a far cry from the time when in High School I formed part of the Marian Congregation of the Jesuit School in Madrid.

### ***Much has changed since I last related to CVX/CLC.***

The reading of the letters of communication from the Executive Council to the members is fascinating. The recommendations from the Assembly in Nairobi are, no doubt, epoch-making. I read: “We felt confirmed in our call to become a lay apostolic body that shares responsibility for mission in the Church” (Nairobi 2003). This is simply extraordinary for a community or an organization of lay persons. The reason is that such a statement coming from a process of discernment has enormous consequences for the CLC and for all its members. And it is precisely this that you want to deepen in this Assembly of Fatima.

This important change in the awareness of the CLC members happens — providentially — at a time when other epochal changes are also taking place. There was a time in the world when strong, gifted and visionary individuals made the difference in Church and Society. To a certain degree, this continues to be true, even if at a lesser degree. All ages and generations have known some individuals that have had great influence for good or for evil. A gifted person never fails to influence others.



*I congratulate  
you all for this  
level of human life  
and of Christian  
commitment.*



*Fr. Nicolás' Address:  
<http://www.clc-usa.org/Fatima/ReliveFatimaNicolás.pdf>*



*That, at a time like this, your Communities “feel confirmed” in a shared mission is one of God’s responses to the growing need of our world for concerted and enlightened action on behalf of people, justice and reconciliation.*

But times have changed and now we can see and experience how whole groups, movements, communities, collaborative projects and the like make the difference. If an individual aims at real social change, his first question will be how to mobilize others, how to practically create such movement of thought, motivation and vision that change becomes a possibility.

That, at a time like this, your Communities “feel confirmed” in a shared mission is one of God’s responses to the growing need of our world for concerted and enlightened action on behalf of people, justice and reconciliation.

We can translate the above observation into ecclesiastical terms. There was a time when it was the role of priests, religious and other officially approved ministers to set the tone of Church Life and give directions in every relevant sector of the life of the Church and Faith. But also here times have changed. We are getting used to live our faith and our charity with greater spontaneity coming out of our experience and training in the discernment of the movements of the Spirit. We respect lay leaders as we did clerics in the past; we read the writings of lay theologians, we are inspired by the life and the testimonies of lay couples, of consecrated lay persons, of people who have found ways of holiness where before we only looked for secular “good life”. The laity and the groups they form are being heard and accompanied with awe in the many new journeys that they have created.

There was a time, finally, when the preached and the written word had the edge in our lives. We come from a long and very rich tradition in which words were all important and faith, in the words of Saint Paul, entered our hearts mediated by the “hearing” — *Fides ex auditu*. There is something in the “hearing” that reaches depths of the person that other senses do not reach. All our cultures passed through an “audial” stage that coincided in great part with the most original testimonies of humanity and of God’s communication to humanity. This continues to be true and we see real crowds of people gathering to listen to the Holy Father, his words and through them have a glimpse of God’s revelation.

And yet, those of us who have been alive a long time, or who have also been blessed with long and deep contacts with the East of Asia have experience the strong emergence of “sight” in the search for deeper life and truth. The present generation finds many people who are tired and disappointed with empty words, campaign promises, dispirited and anemic homilies, words and words and words that, quoting again Saint Paul, are only clatter, sounding brass, or clanging cymbals. People today want to “see” what they “hear.” They want to see “living words.” The preacher and the prophet are under scrutiny. That is why there is so much interest today in the living testimony of committed laity, couples who, through the years, have transformed difficulties, differences and conflicts into testimonies of greater love, Christian fidelity and creative hope. The eye has become an inseparable companion to the ear.

### ***Can we, as a Community, live a Prophetic Vocation?***

Whatever the analysis of recent change, its motivation, its process and evolution might be, we have in our midst a new awareness and a new reality. We felt confirmed that God wants us to be “an apostolic community sharing mission in the Church.”

But this mission, in good biblical and Church tradition, has to be a prophetic mission, done and carried out in the name of God and under His guidance. And we can meaningfully ask ourselves: Can we be really prophetic? Not long ago several scripture and spiritual writers were writing books and articles in which the big question was: “Where are the prophets?” This question is particularly relevant when addressing a community. Can a community — like an institution — afford to be prophetic?



Most probably the answer is here, in our midst, in your midst. You have chosen as one of the key phrases of this Assembly: “The Disciples rejoined Jesus and told him all they had done and taught.” (Mk 6:30)

Of course, not all are prophets. Maybe some among you... Or, at least, sometime, at certain times... Not always..., not on all fronts...

But maybe — and this is far more important — this is the time for Prophetic Communities... and I feel that you are decidedly moving in this direction.

And if this is the case, we can say again that Saint Ignatius is the Master that we need at this time. Let us consider some points around the question: What is it that makes or defines a Prophet? What does the Bible tell us about Prophets?

- The Prophet SEES the world with the Eyes of God. — We have seen and contemplated this in the Incarnation. “The Three Divine Persons...” (Now I am in the right page!) Ignatius is not timid at all when he contemplates the world...
- The Prophet LISTENS with the Ears, the Hearing of God. God listens to the voice, the crying out, the anguished clamor, the outcry of the people. God hears the people when they ask for justice, when they suffer pain and loneliness and oppression...
- The Prophet FEELS with the Heart of God. We see how Jesus’ insides churn, how he is moved to the depths... And the same we read about the God of the Old Testament... He cries and suffers with the sufferings of, (and here we can evoke the language of the Bible) “My Daughter,” “My People,” “My Beloved,” “My Family”... God is near, feels empathy and communion with his poor people. Compassion is his first response.
- Then the Prophet SPEAKS the Word of God. And we know that this is a word of mercy, of compassion for those who suffer... and a word of Conversion and Solidarity for those who can do something about that suffering. (We leave for another time to make a deeper analysis of this Word, which is not only an utterance with the mouth, but a living word that affects reality and changes it).

### ***The Ignatian process and the Holy Spirit.***

- ☼ Less than one month ago we witnessed the great experience of the World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia. 250.000 young people from all over the world. In a sense something parallel to this gathering here took place.
- ☼ At the heart of that gathering, the Holy Father spoke of the Holy Spirit. He felt the need of a catechesis of the Holy Spirit.
- ☼ Well, this is our theme as well. Ignatius did not have a good theology of the Holy Spirit, because at that time Catholic theology was on a different line of reflection.
- ☼ But Ignatius had the EXPERIENCE of the Holy Spirit and the METHOD to help us have the same living experience. The spirituality of the *Spiritual Exercises* is a practical and concrete expression of that missing Theology (missing in theory, living in practice).
- ☼ The whole process of the *Exercises* on which we feed our hearts prepares the person (the soul, he would say) to come close to Jesus and do his doings:
  - It prepares us to SEE as we were saying that the prophets see.
  - It prepares us to HEAR what the Lord hears from the poor and the suffering.
  - It brings us to FEEL what Christ and God feels of reality, of good and evil.
  - It teaches us how to DISCERN in the middle of so much and such intense feelings with human and historical reality.
  - It sustains us as we come to DECISIONS about how to respond and con-

*And if this is the case, we can say again that Saint Ignatius is the Master that we need at this time. Let us consider some points around the question: What is it that makes or defines a Prophet?*





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tribute to that reality that we have become a part of.

- It moves us to ACT, to DO according to what the Spirit has moved in us.
- And it opens our mouths so that we can SPEAK what is happening.
  - Tell him what we have done and taught, and
  - Tell people of the sweetness and goodness of the Lord.

### *The Challenges of doing this in Community and as Community*

- ☛ We were asking a minute ago whether it is possible to be prophetic in community.
- ☛ There is no theoretical answer. There is only a practical answer. It is possible IF AND WHEN... Allow me to say a few words about these “If and When”. But, first, let me remind you that you have made an option to become an Apostolic Community and share your mission in the Church. In other words, you have made an option to become a prophetic, missionary community, as community. The challenge, thus, is not theoretical, but practical: How to become one such living apostolic community. And maybe here this simple reflection about prophetic living might help:
- ☛ To be prophetic ALL of us have to be LISTENING people. Listening to the People - Listening to the Word of God - Listening to the soft musings of the Holy Spirit. Ignatius gives us so many directions so that we can know when those three listening modes become one. Because when they become one we change and become aglow in joy, hope and consolation... Saint Thomas Aquinas wrote that in the experience of Faith there are two words: The outside word that is given to us in the Scriptures - and the inner word that the Holy Spirit puts in our hearts. When these two words come together we reach a very deep communion with the Lord. But for this to become a Community experience, we all have to be LISTENING...
- ☛ In order to be prophetic ALL of us have to be SEARCHING. There is no prophecy without DISCERNMENT. “Fast food-like” conclusions are only the expressions of false prophecy. Ignatius was so convinced of this. That is why he was always ready to test, and test again his conclusions...lest he had missed some important fact, or feeling, or motion of the Spirit. An apostolic and prophetic community is a community of very humble, ever-searching believers.
- ☛ That means that a prophetic community lives in the healthy tension of being in need to RECEIVE, because the gift of the Spirit — as Benedict XVI said — is never conquered, but is always received in humble thanksgiving. You can see how far we have to be from any kind of spiritual fundamentalism. Our security goes hand in hand with our humility; it is not based on possession but on the ongoing awareness of living in God’s mercy and love, the gift of gifts. This is also the tension of DISCERNING, of SEARCHING and DECIDING. It may sound like a contradiction: How can we be humble and decisive at the same time? That is precisely the point of discerning, because when the Spirit comes to our community our fears are gone and we know what God wants from us.
- ☛ Now, if this is the spirit in which we as a community discern and decide, it is clear that the recently coined expression, “MEN/WOMEN WITH OTHERS,” is not something added to the more traditional expression of Arrupe’s, “MEN/WOMEN FOR OTHERS,” but that, on the contrary, it can even be more original and radical for CLC that has opted to be an Apostolic Community.
- ☛ ALL the members are invited to have EYES to SEE. You also know that you, as lay people, very often see what we priests do not, or cannot see.
- ☛ ALL the members are invited to HEAR... what priests and clergy often do not hear. It is amazing, as a curiosity, how “hearing” can also be culturally conditioned. Who can hear a coin falling in a busy street? Or your own name whispered ten meters away? Hearing is a discerned operation.

- ☛ ALL are invited and called to FEEL the pain and the suffering of others. The Third Week of the *Exercises* trains us to feel with the pain of Jesus, the Other. It was the great Bishop Saint Hilaire de Poitiers who said: “*Sanctior mens plebis quam cor est sacerdotum*” (Fourth Century).
- ☛ ALL are called to DISCERN, DECIDE, and use their HANDS and FEET for action, service and compassion.
- ☛ Being a Prophetic Community for Shared Mission becomes a possibility if we dare take the challenge and move in Ignatian style to the Will of God.

#### *Priority Importance of Formation for all*

- ☛ All the above remarks and reflections lead me to the obvious conclusion that our greatest priority as CLC has to be the Formation of our members. This is the priority of priorities.
- ☛ In the recent weeks I have visited a few Cardinals of different Congregations in the Vatican. (Part of my job, I guess). Well, when I met Cardinal Rylko, Prefect of the Congregation for the Laity, he told me right from the start how happy he was with CLC; and he underlined repeatedly, “because of the serious formation they give to all members.”
- ☛ You remember how Saint Ignatius did not think that every person can profit from the *Spiritual Exercises* in the same degree. He was not elitist, but he knew that there is need of a basic capacity, an openness of the mind and the heart that prepares the person to be sensitive and responsive to the encounter with God and the guidance of the Spirit. Real education, in this sense, is to be measured by the ability to open the minds of people for greater and deeper realities.
- ☛ It is in this area where our main field of cooperation is. We Jesuits are extremely happy to see that the gifts of Ignatius are yours, are spreading and move beyond Jesuit circles and control. What Ig-

natius did was at the service of the Gospel, which is never owned by anyone. It is our joy to see the gifts of Ignatius become a shared patrimony for the good of the Church and the World.

- ☛ We will have to work together for Formation in depth. A Formation that will include, naturally:
  - Theology, Psychology, Anthropology... anything that helps people grow as persons and as believing persons in love
  - But, mainly, the formation has to be in the Life of the Spirit, so that we all
    - master the tools to become interiorly free
    - for real discernment of God’s will
    - for docile and joyful familiarity with the ways of the Spirit
- ☛ I really hope that we can work together in this important priority
- ☛ And I also hope that you, members of the CLC, help us Jesuits go deeper into the same Spirituality.
- ☛ Remember, that we are only a part, a very small part of the Body of Christ, of the People of God, of the Church of all. And it will always be a joy to serve all.

#### **Conclusion**

My gratitude for this invitation and for whatever form of cooperation that we will have in the future. Our task is big, but it is mostly deep, a task in which and through which we hope to build in each other the Body of Christ and share with each other the guidance and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Something to look forward to and to thank the Lord for.

Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, sj  
*CLC Ecclesial Assistant /  
 Superior General of the Society of Jesus*

*Being a Prophetic Community for Shared Mission becomes a possibility if we dare take the challenge and move in Ignatian style to the Will of God.*



# XV World Assembly of Christian Life Community®

FÁTIMA, PORTUGAL

12-21 AUGUST 2008

## Final Document

### *Journeying as an Apostolic Body: Our Response to this Grace from God*

*“The apostles gathered around Jesus and told him all they had done and taught.”*

*(Mk 6:30)*



#### PREAMBLE

We, the delegates of the General Assembly of the World Christian Life Community®, gathered in Fátima, Portugal, have reviewed how CLC is responding to the grace of the Nairobi World Assembly, when “we felt confirmed to become a lay apostolic body that shares responsibility for mission in the Church.” (Final Document, 2003)

Gathering around Jesus, in the presence of Mary, model of our collaboration in Christ’s mission (GP9), we told him and one another all that we have done, taught and learnt on our journey from Nairobi. The Assembly of the Twelve around Jesus (Mk 6: 30) became the model of the Fátima Assembly!

#### I.

#### OUR GRACED HISTORY, 2003-2008

1.1 Ours are stories of sorrow and joy, desolation and hope, stagnation and growth, failure and success. Though it is not always easy to recognise God at work in our broken world, in symbols, if not always in words, we affirm that our stories are parts of the Great Story of Christ’s saving love. Nothing more vividly expresses the hope that CLC lives day by day than the incorporation of the national communities of Cuba, Hungary and Rwanda into the World Community here in Fátima.

1.2 Thus, our stories challenge, inspire, console and teach us. Above all, they affirm that we are fellow disciples, apostles, pilgrims — one people, called from many nations, speaking the language of love, living a common way of life, sent on a common mission, bearing God’s abundant gifts. With Mary, *our souls proclaim the greatness of the Lord and our spirit rejoices in God our Saviour ... for the Almighty has done great things for us ...* (Lk 1: 46-49).

#### II.

#### LIVING MORE DEEPLY AND ACTING MORE EFFECTIVELY AS AN APOSTOLIC BODY: THE GRACES OF FÁTIMA 2008.

2.1 Five signs of hope and challenges stand out among the many graces received in Fátima:

- Fidelity to the orientations of Nairobi
- Unity in diversity
- The call to live as a prophetic lay community
- Closer identification with Christ’s mission to bring the good news to the poor, and
- Widening and deepening networks of collaboration.

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www

This Final Document:  
[http://www.cvx-clc.net/l-en/  
documents/fatima2008.pdf](http://www.cvx-clc.net/l-en/documents/fatima2008.pdf)

Nairobi Assembly:  
[http://www.cvx-clc.net/l-en/  
assembly.html](http://www.cvx-clc.net/l-en/assembly.html)

2.2 *Fidelity to the orientations of Nairobi* – Our graced history confirms the World Community’s fidelity to the orientations of Nairobi. At every level, our efforts clearly have a single aim, which is to live more deeply and act more effectively as an apostolic body, because “our life is essentially apostolic” (GP 8). This is evident in the growing insistence on the *Spiritual Exercises* as “the specific source and characteristic instrument of our spirituality” (GP 5); in efforts to improve the effectiveness of formation; in a new emphasis on leadership in mission; and in noteworthy examples of collaboration within and outside the communities. At world level particularly, within the Church and at the UN, CLC is a coherent, credible presence. Collaboration between CLC and the Society of Jesus is also growing appreciably. We have considerable experience of exercising the dynamic of *Discerning - Sending - Supporting - Evaluating*, although the Assembly acknowledges there is much room for growth and consistency in this area, and that formation should take greater account of its importance.

2.3 *Unity in diversity* – The Assembly vividly demonstrates both the unity and the diversity of World CLC. There is growing awareness that this is characteristic of our charism, a source of creativity and potentially a powerful instrument in mission. Because of this unity in diversity “the field of CLC mission knows no limits.” (GP 8)

2.4 The Assembly recognizes that it is not always easy to reconcile unity and diversity. As our common mission grows and our realities become more complex, only an ever clearer understanding of our charism will enable us to transcend the differences among us. Thus, by living our charism more deeply, we will also act more effectively as an apostolic body. A more explicit adhesion to CLC, such as the one implied by CLC commitment (GP7), appeared to us especially relevant for the World Community’s present stage of development.

2.5 The Assembly recognizes that an individualistic culture and the specific social or historical circumstances of some communities may raise resistance to CLC commitment. However, the idea that the apostolic strength of the body depends on the depth of commitment to our way of life, as articulated in GP 12, leads the Assembly to call for a review of the meaning and importance of CLC commitment, both temporary and permanent. Therefore, “as the wise head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old” (Mt 13, 52) the Assembly urges the World Community to rediscover commitment as an invitation to a personal spiritual journey and a discerned vocation lived in and through the apostolic body.

2.6 The Assembly also recognises the difficulties entailed in expressing our hope and experience of “commitment” within an “apostolic body” using different languages and in different cultures: we therefore invite the World Community to on-going dialogue and reflection about the language and forms through which these are expressed.

2.7 *The call to live as a prophetic lay community* – “Our mission, in good biblical and Church tradition, has to be a prophetic mission, carried out in the name of God and under His guidance. And we can meaningfully ask ourselves: Can we really be prophetic?” – seeing with the Eyes of God; listening with the ears, the Hearing of God; feeling with the Heart of God; and speaking the Word of God, “a word of compassion for those who suffer ... and a word of Conversion and Solidarity for those who can do something about that suffering.” (Address of Fr A. Nicolás, World Ecclesiastical Assistant, to the Assembly) We received this challenge as *the defining grace of Fátima 2008*, finding inspiration and consolation in his words: “this is the time for prophetic communities ... and I feel that you are decidedly moving in this direction.”

2.8 The Assembly responds to this with another question: in what issues is God’s Spirit prompting World CLC to be prophetic?

2.9 The Assembly reaffirmed three important desires that were first identified in Itaici: “to promote family life as a basic unit in building the world into the Kingdom of God; to accompany young people on the way to meaningful life ...; and to integrate professional and other working activities into ... our Christian faith” (Itaici Final Recommendations).

*We received this challenge as the defining grace of Fátima 2008, finding inspiration and consolation in his words: “this is the time for prophetic communities ... and I feel that you are decidedly moving in this direction.”*



*We recognize the urgent need to bring the experience of the Spiritual Exercises to those who are marginalized and less powerful in our societies, and to invite them to join our communities, if necessary by creatively adapting programmes of formation and our way of life to their realities.*

The Assembly observed the growing prominence of “family CLC” — ie, living the CLC way of life together as a family unit — as an expression of “our urgent need to unite human life in all its dimensions with the fullness of our Christian faith according to our charism” (GP 4). We listened to other calls for prophetic witness, in areas such as the dignity of creation and the environment; a vision for women in society and in the Church, with Mary the mother of God as our model; ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue.

2.10 *Closer identification with Christ’s mission to bring the good news to those who are “excluded” or “strangers”* — When Jesus healed the daughter of a Caananite woman (Mt 15: 21-28), “a new, Christian era, where all can see and treat each other as brothers and sisters” was announced (Homily, Fr A Nicolás). As the Assembly progressed, the call for a closer identification with Christ’s mission to bring the good news to those who are “excluded” or “strangers” rang ever more clearly. We recognize the urgent need to bring the experience of the *Spiritual Exercises* to those who are marginalized and less powerful in our societies, and to invite them to join our communities, if necessary by creatively adapting programmes of formation and our way of life to their realities.

2.11 *Widening and deepening networks of collaboration* — Finally, reflecting on the World Community’s experience of collaboration with other ecclesial bodies in the UN and elsewhere, and especially our collaboration with the Society of Jesus, the Assembly recognizes *the urgent need to widen and deepen networks of joint discernment and action at world, regional, national and local levels.*

2.12 The Nairobi Assembly called for greater collaboration with the Society of Jesus and greater clarity of roles in our relationship. The Assembly in Fátima gratefully acknowledges this collaboration and our desire that it continue to grow, not only between individual Jesuits and CLC members but also between CLC as an apostolic body and the Society of Jesus as an apostolic body. Three important documents outline our relationship and give direction for this to develop: *CLC – Society of Jesus Collaboration* (Appendix to the Nairobi Final Document); *The Relationship between the Christian Life Community® and the Society of Jesus in the Church*; and *The Role of the Ecclesiastical Assistant*. *We urge our communities to become familiar with these documents. We encourage our Jesuit brothers, perhaps through our Ecclesiastical Assistants, to become aware of these documents so that our cooperation can be more fruitful.*

### III.

#### BUILDING KNOWLEDGE AND ORIENTING ACTION:

##### THE ASSEMBLY’S RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 In response to the graces outlined above, the Assembly identified nine themes around which to build our understanding of the signs of the times, and to orient apostolic action, namely:

- a) The nature of our “apostolic body” and the processes through which it acts
- b) Increasing membership in numbers and diversity
- c) Commitment to the CLC way of life
- d) Formation, which is closely associated with greater availability of the *Spiritual Exercises*
- e) Leadership
- f) Networking apostolic initiatives, which is closely associated with SJ-CLC-Church collaboration
- g) Financial co-responsibility.

3.2 *The nature of our “apostolic body” and the processes through which it acts* — While the signs confirm that CLC is becoming an apostolic body, numerous questions originating from our diversity were also raised in the Assembly. Thus, it is not (yet) possible to give a clear description or definition of a “lay apostolic body”, because ours is a new way of being in the Church. Questions also arise about the relationship between the common mission and the discerned commitments of individual members. We need patience in this process and



have to live with the questions as a challenge. The Assembly acknowledges the dynamic of DSSE practised on all levels — local, national and regional — as *the* means to build the apostolic body.

3.3 In light of our reality, the Assembly recommends that —

- a) national and local communities integrate the *Discerning, Sending, Supporting, Evaluating* dynamic into their formation programmes;
- b) exchanges of information, formation material and personal experiences be actively promoted at all levels, so that all members can identify more closely with our emerging apostolic body.

3.4 *Membership* — Clearly, membership is crucial not only to our desire to be an effective apostolic body, but also to the survival and spread of CLC. Though membership should always be discerned as a personal vocation (G.P 10), we feel called to propose CLC as a way of life for people from all social classes, economic conditions and states of life, seeking out those who are often excluded from community or ecclesial life.

3.5 The Assembly therefore **recommends** that —

- a) communities at all levels improve the “visibility” of CLC through prophetic stances in favour of justice and the poor;
- b) demonstrate the value of CLC as a community for the laity which participates in the mission of the Church through insertion in the world (apostolate);
- c) promote the experience of the *Spiritual Exercises* among lay people, and invite them to continue the experience in CLC;
- d) search creatively for new members in contexts other than the traditional ones and explain our charism in a language which is more accessible;
- e) promote and support CLC among families who wish to live the CLC way of life as a family unit.



3.6 *Commitment to CLC way of life* — As already explained, the notion that the apostolic strength of the body depends on the depth of commitment to our way of life, led the Assembly to call for a renewed look into the meaning and importance of temporary and permanent commitment in CLC.

3.7 The Assembly therefore **recommends** that —

- a) national communities evaluate their current approach to CLC commitment; and
- b) the World ExCo make available documentation which evaluates the current national practices and articulates the concepts of vocation, apostolic body and commitment, drawing from already existing materials.

3.8 *Formation* — Attention must be paid to adapting formation to different stages of life, different social and cultural environments, families and younger members. It must adapt to changing realities within and outside CLC. The Assembly recommends that —

- a) the revised *Guidelines for Formation: The Process of growth in CLC* be circulated as soon as possible;
- b) formation that is oriented towards mission and financial co-responsibility be emphasised, especially by deepening the use, in all our discernments, of the methodology of *Discerning, Sending, Supporting and Evaluating*;
- c) formation resources, materials and expertise be made widely available to all CLC national communities, for example, by developing a central sharing and distribution centre.

3.9 *Experience of the Spiritual Exercises* — Together with our General Principles, the *Spiritual Exercises* constitute one of the three pillars of CLC charism. We are aware that the existence of many different social and cultural realities calls for creativity and flexibility in offering the experience to more people. The Assembly therefore **recommends** that —

*Thus, it is not (yet) possible to give a clear description or definition of a “lay apostolic body”, because ours is a new way of being in the Church.*



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- a) such creativity be encouraged;
- b) those experiencing the *Exercises* be informed that they are a specific source and the characteristic instrument of our spirituality, and a constitutive element of our way of life;
- c) the formation of guides (especially lay guides) be promoted, and the guides themselves supported, in collaboration with the Society of Jesus.

3.10 *Leadership* – Following the example of Jesus Christ, CLC desires leaders who will serve their communities and who can facilitate the DSSE process. The Assembly is gratefully aware of CLC's distinctive pattern of leadership, the range and quality of formation resources, and the gifts that many CLC members bring to leadership. It also acknowledges the challenges involved in fostering leadership development, encouraging suitable people to come forward for leadership roles, and supporting them.

3.11 Thus, the Assembly **recommends** that —

- a) the World Community continue to clarify the nature of CLC leadership and the characteristics of various CLC leadership roles;
- b) the World ExCo make more visible and accessible modules from the Rome International Formation Encounter leadership course for use by national communities; and
- c) the World Community identify persons having leadership qualities to be available to facilitate leadership development where needed.

3.12 *Networking apostolic action and promoting solidarity* — The Assembly listened attentively to the call for greater solidarity among the national communities and for a more effective response to the signs of the times. The experience of the UN Working Groups and other experiences of networking apostolic action and promoting solidarity demonstrates the greater effectiveness of collective action in promoting justice and human dignity; it offers important lessons for world, regional and local projects. Thus, the Assembly **recommends** that —

- a “World Coordinator of Apostolic Initiatives and Advocacy” should be appointed to facilitate joint action and networking; this could be a role assumed by a World ExCo member;
- a) each national community should appoint a “contact person” to provide information and respond to international apostolic concerns;
- b) each national community should actively collaborate, where possible, on international issues with the CLC Working Groups at the United Nations;
- c) national communities should consider twinning as an effective means of fostering solidarity among communities around the world.

3.13 Part II of this Document proposes specific measures to promote *collaboration between the Society of Jesus and CLC*, which need not be repeated here.

3.14 *Financial co-responsibility* – The Assembly listened to the World Executive Council's frank account of its difficult financial circumstances and of some national communities. It considers financial co-responsibility to be an essential expression of our belonging to one World Community, and a necessary means for becoming an Apostolic Body. Being responsible for one another is an essential aspect of community life. We recognise the need to develop existing and new ways of financing operating expenses as well as special apostolic initiatives. To inspire in CLC members an appreciation of financial coresponsibility, the Assembly **recommends** that the World Executive Council should —

- a) ask each national community to assume greater responsibility in gathering and sharing financial information;
- b) establish five-year financial plans;
- c) establish an “apostolic fund for national community projects”;
- d) seek professional expertise where needed;
- e) propose a strategy for reducing the World Executive's financial deficit as a specific project for World CLC;
- f) consider, at national level, the development of guidelines concerning the financial contributions of members of the communities.

## IV. CONCLUSION

4.1 The orientations and recommendations sketched out in this Final Document of the Fátima Assembly will be followed by a record of the Assembly's Proceedings, which gives a full account of the insights, proposals and projects brought before the Assembly.

4.2 May all members of the World Community "store up all these things in their hearts" (Lk 2, 51), that we might live more deeply and act more effectively as an apostolic body journeying with the poor and humble Christ through human history, and become ever more closely identified with his mission (GP 8).



***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...*

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## FROM THE REGIONS

### KCLC

#### *New York Area*

The New York Metro Korean CLC held the 7th annual young adults Ignatian silent retreat at St. Mary's Abbey, Morristown, NJ, from July 24 -27. Korean CLC has been providing the retreat programs since 2000 as one of our mission activities sharing the Ignatian spirituality with young adults. This year, we had 25 young adult retreatants participating from New York and New Jersey areas with a waiting list of few others due to the number of rooms available at the retreat house. There were several retreatants who have been coming every year and it's been gratifying to see the interest grow each year. The service team consisted of four Korean CLCers and Fr. Paul Hwang, a diocesan priest from Korea who currently studies Spiritual Direction at Fordham University. This year's theme "Culture & Spirituality", provided the retreatants an opportunity to find God using films (based

on the book *Finding God in the Dark* by J. Pungente, S.J. & G. Williams, S.J.). The book presents the *Spiritual Exercises* using the scriptural reflections and films to "find God in all things." Except for the daily individual direction sessions, the retreatants spent time alone in silence as they prayed over the scriptures and reflections on the films presented each day. During daily evening Mass, retreatants also had opportunities to give thanks and celebrate the fruits and graces of each day as a community.

An Ignatian silent retreat for adults also took place at Loyola Retreat House, Morristown, NJ, from August 16 – 24. We had 27 retreatants from Metro NY area. The guest speaker was Fr. Jeong-Ho An, S.J. from Atlanta, Georgia. He is a Jesuit priest from Korea who is currently serving at Atlanta Korean Catholic Church. The service team consisted of Jennifer Yoo, Natalia Choi, Theresa Paik from Metro NY KCLC and Peter Choi from Canada KCLC.



Metro NY KCLC is preparing for very special event this fall. We are expecting 25 KCLC members to make their Permanent Commitment and 19 KCLC members to make their Temporary Commitment on September 21st at Fordham University, NY. They have been preparing themselves for the commitment by attending retreat or by participating in ICL (Institute for Christian Life) since last September.

### **Atlanta Region**

The Atlanta KCLC held a one-day retreat at Korean Martyrs Catholic Church. The theme of the retreat was about forgiveness and based on a movie titled "Meal Yang." Fr. Joseph Song-Yong Choe., S.J. held the daily lectures. We watched the movie and had open discussions. It was an enlightening experience for everyone.

We also celebrated the feast of St. Ignatius on July 27th and 31st. We watched his life story in an elaborate slide show which introduced his spirituality to every church member.

We will begin a 4-8 week commitment retreat program for members who are making a First Commitment or a Renewal Commitment. The beginning of this commitment retreat will be held on August 4th and continue to September 27th. This rigorous retreat will include 4 members for the First Commitment program and 18 members for the Renewal Commitment program.

The Atlanta KCLC is planning another one day retreat on November 15th at a monastery in Conyers, GA.

Fr. Isidore Jeong-Ho An, S.J. visited N.Y. and led the CLC silent retreat on August 16-24th.

### **Western Region**

Three members from KCLC-WR participated at the CHC Leadership Conference in Pittsburg from April 24th to 27th.

There were 7 formation meetings from Oct. 2007 to June 2008 for the preparation of First Temporary, Renewal and Permanent Commitment. This ceremony is scheduled for Oct. 5th, 2008 at the closing Mass of Western Region Discernment Conference at Loyola Marymount University.



*Harvest / 30*

8 KCLC-WR members will make their Permanent Commitments.

On the feast day of St. Ignatius, we had a Mass celebrated by Fr. Jong Gu Park, Korean Jesuit. A social gathering was held after the Mass.

An Ignatian spirituality silent retreat guided by Fr. Jong Gu Park, Korean Jesuit was held from Aug. 1st to Aug. 8th at Mater Dolorosa Retreat House. 8 out of 25 participants were candidates for Permanent Commitments.

Christine Kim was elected as a new President of Korean CLC-WR by communal discernment on June 29th.

### **MISSOURI REGION**

Consideration and preparation for the World Assembly in Fatima began formally in the fall of 2007. In October 2007, Pat Carter led a Visioning Day for the Region in which we looked at the graced history of our Region particularly focusing on that history since our last Visioning Day in 2005.

In January 2008, Pat gave a day of reflection on "Encountering God in Our Daily Lives Together: Living Ignatian Spirituality in Community." Participants were presented Ignatian discernment principles, and in breakout groups, were given time to apply these principles. Linda Leib adapted the questions outlined in Projects 136 and sent them to the small groups in the Region. A summary of the responses was reported at the February 2008 Regional meeting. At the same meeting a prayer from Projects 137 was used and the representatives were sent out with the mission to pray for the success of the World Assembly.

The responses received from the questionnaire indicated awareness of the value of the DSSE (discerning, sending, supporting, evaluating) process. Some groups reported their efforts to specifically incorporate DSSE into the small group process. Others reported a renewed effort to identify the parts of the process during their small group meetings and specifically concentrate on the final part, evaluation. Two groups, Discipleship and Sacred Circle, reported the use of a specific sending ritual at the end of each meeting. St. Rose Philippine Duchesne felt strongly that DSSE has always been a part of their meeting process. Discipleship felt it would be useful to give DSSE a name that encompasses the entire process. Our EA, Father Robert Costello, S.J. has encouraged the use of CLC meeting format and DSSE process at every meeting including the quarterly regional meetings.

In March 2008, we celebrated World CLC Day by praying and working alongside parishioners of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, a Jesuit African American parish in north St. Louis City.

In July 2008, we hosted an informational gathering at the Ignatian Spirituality Conference held at Saint Louis University. Those invited were CLC members and persons interested in CLC. On July 28, we showed typical St. Louis hospitality

by providing an Italian dinner for the participants of the NCC (National Coordinating Council) meeting.

Since becoming our Ecclesial Assistant in 2005, Father Robert Costello, S.J. has led us in spreading the Christian Life Community® charism. He accompanied a group of CLC-MO Region leaders to Oklahoma City in 2006 to encourage CLC group formation among the hundreds of people in the area who have experienced the *Spiritual Exercises*. Several small groups have formed and in 2007 and 2008 Father Costello, S.J. and Father Ralph Huse, S.J., both from St. Louis, have given days of reflection for these communities.

Father Costello, S.J. has also been instrumental in introducing CLC to Saint Louis University students working closely with campus minister, Stephen Fowler. Steve has done a remarkable job in expanding CLC among the undergraduates. At DeSmet Jesuit High School, Fr. Costello, S.J. serves as faculty chaplain. He led members of the faculty through the *Spiritual Exercises* this past academic year and hopes to repeat the experience again this year. He has one student group interested in CLC and possibly a second one this school year.

Our region received a grant from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet to assist in expanding our World CLC Day celebration in 2009. We have begun working with the St. Matthew's parishioners in planning the day. In addition, our planning committee has divided preparation responsibilities so we can start now in getting ready for the day.

We are especially proud of the historical timeline each community created as they reviewed their "graced history." This process made us aware of how far we have come on our journey. We look forward to traveling the route ahead guided by the outcomes of the General Assembly in Fatima.

## NEW ENGLAND REGION

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The strength of our regional community is the life of our three local communities. We do not plan regional events very often, so this time each community will share a little bit about itself.

### *Journey CLC*

The formal community was formed in 1987. In the beginning we were deeply committed. However, we were unwilling to become involved with, and to participate with the other communities. We were a solitary, isolated cell. Other groups joined us at the annual retreat. In this experience we were invaded by Christ. Our personal lives and our collective life changed. Transformation was happening. Formation was forming us. During these early years we were blessed by the spiritual guidance and the delicious humanity of John Surrence S.J. As older men and women we are familiar with death. Now we realize the importance of saying farewell. The loss of our sister Mary W. shaped our souls as we walked with her, through her suffering and tears. We are individually experiencing physical weakness. We are older, conscious of health limitations. As we

suffer these losses, we are graced by the gift of gratitude, as we continue our journey with and through faith, albeit sometimes limping.

### *Hope CLC*

The four women and one man who make up the group range in age from late forties to late sixties, with two now retired. Two members have been members since choosing the community's name in 1976; another joined in 1980; one came after past CLC participation elsewhere in the late 90's; and our newest member joined in 2003. What we in Hope CLC share in common - and what gives us our identity - is a way of life grounded in the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius. It is our experience that this lay vocation challenges and helps us to integrate Ignatian spirituality, Christian community and Gospel mission.

### *Cambridge CLC*

We are a group of young professionals from different parts of the world. A family with a young child and a married couple from France are also members. Everything started when a Brazilian couple arrived in Boston in 2001. They felt a need to have a prayer group based on Ignatian Spirituality. Although we were involved with the other CLCs in the New England Region, we considered ourselves a Pre-CLC for over 2 years. After a long discernment, some of our members decided to make a temporary commitment to CLC. In October 2003, we became "official" and had a special celebration with the whole New England region.

## NEW YORK REGION

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Leadership training is at the top of the agenda this year for Metro NY CLC. The first of three scheduled formation leadership workshops takes place October 18 at Fordham University. Key points from the Guides and Coordinators Course are among the topics that will be covered at the all-day event. This year we are focusing on the *Spiritual Exercises*.

With over 50 Fordham students now participating in CLC, the need for leadership training at the college level is also now at the forefront. Randy Jerome, Campus Minister at Fordham, met this all important call by developing a one day course geared to college CLC groups. This course will also be offered during the upcoming year.

During early spring Ann Marie Brennan, Sylvia Schmitt, Randy Jerome, Fr. Daniel Fitzpatrick, S.J. and Carol Gibney led a delegation of students from several Jesuit universities in attending a forum at the United Nations covering some of the major issues facing the UN at this time.

On September 21, the Metro NY Korean CLC hosted a Commitment Ceremony at Fordham University. Twenty-one members from several Metro NY Communities made their Temporary Commitment and twenty made their Permanent Commitment to CLC. Mass was celebrated by Fr. Dan fol-

lowed by a reception for members, families and benefactors of CLC.

Plans are underway for an Advent Day of Prayer and Reflection for all members of the NY Region, which will take place on December 7 at Fordham Prep. This annual event is always popular and well attended with over 60 participants from across the region.

## NORTH CENTRAL REGION

The North Central Region's Annual Fall Assembly will be October 24-26, 2008 at American Martyrs Retreat House in Cedar Falls, Iowa. The theme will be "Overturning the Baskets: Letting the Light Shine on Our CLC Graced Histories." Outlines of two meetings will be sent to coordinators of each community with the invitation to spend two meetings engaged in the common remembrance. Members will then share their Graced History with others of the Region.

The Gigi Cannon Memorial Retreat will be offered in the Omaha Cluster for the third time this fall. The Retreat offers an opportunity to pray the *Spiritual Exercises*—the heart of Ignatian Spirituality and the foundation of CLC. Each retreatant will have a guide from an experienced team of lay persons and Jesuits. In the past three years, 18 members have completed the nine month program. Among the experience's gifts, retreatants mentioned: "a blessed wake-up call," "a greater intimacy with Jesus," "a deeper love of Scriptures," and "a new awareness of God's love."

Several CLC members from Omaha attended the Ignatian Spirituality Conference in St. Louis in July. Renee O'Brien and Maryanne Rouse shared their rich experience in our Regional Newsletter. Renee, as our Representative to the National Coordinating Council, attended the NCC meeting, too. She reported that it was filled with energy and enthusiasm. Discussion topics included communication, formation, development, diversity, organization and, most urgently, the World Assembly at Fatima.

Creighton University hosted this year's Province Days, the annual meeting of Jesuits within the Wisconsin Province. Members of CLC were among the lay organizations invited to attend. A major presentation was on Inter-religious Dialogue. Father Dennis Hamm of the Siloam Community was honored as a 50 year jubilarian. Father Jack Zuercher of Ichthus and Q.M. Communities was honored for his work as Ecclesial Assistant for CLC throughout the Wisconsin Province.

Creighton University faculty and alumni mourn the death of Father Lee Lubbers in June. He was internationally known for founding an international foreign language satellite news service (SCOLA). He was a member of Noah's Ark Community in Omaha. The members will remember him with fondness and gratitude.

During the past year, Coordinators of Communities have met quarterly with Promotor, Linda Hayak To plan Cluster events. These included Days of Reflection for Advent and Lent, social gatherings for Epiphany and the feast of St. Ignatius. News and information about opportunities for prayer were disseminated to CLC members through the coordinators. A meeting was hosted for people who had expressed interest in becoming part of a CLC Community.

## NORTHWEST REGION

**Formation.** A Coordinators Course has been developed for the region using material from the training in Iowa last summer. A first training session had to be cancelled, but will be rescheduled soon.

Rick Kunkle has had several contacts with the Director of the SEEL program in the Seattle. This has led to other contact possibilities with parishes that are doing Lightworks and with the person leading the Hispanic Ministries in the Bellevue area. A first contact was made with one of the parishes last week.

A new community in Tacoma has made its commitment to continue with CLC and is doing well.

**Activities.** A pot luck social was held August 17th in Newport, OR to introduce members of two new communities to members of the other communities in the cluster.

The Annual Regional Retreat will be held at Nestucca Sanctuary September 12-14. The Retreat will be led by Rick Kunkle with assistance from Fr. David Robinson, S.J. The work of the retreat will be to develop the Graced History of each of the communities present. An abbreviated form of this retreat will be used later for a Puget Sound cluster retreat.

**Please**  
**Remember CLC In your Will**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

***Leadership Conference II***  
Pittsburgh, PA  
March 26-29, 2009

***National CLC-USA Assembly***  
Trinity University  
Washington, DC  
July 9-12, 2009