

PROJECTS: World ExCo Meeting 2016

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Dear Friends in the Lord,

Sitting around the Easter Fire on the shore of the CLC World Community, we send you wishes of joy of the risen Lord as we share our report of the World Executive Council meeting which was held from 26th March to 3rd April 2016. This report will cover in general experiences of the meeting, areas discussed, an outlook of the world community and points of growth and pain. The highlights of the report include the feedback from the regional links and the World Secretariat, the meeting with Fr. General, a glance at the frontiers, and the survey forms received, and hopes for the future.



Top Row (L-R): Herminio Rico SJ, Alwin D Macalalad, Chris Hogan, Luke Rodrigues SJ, Mauricio Lopez

Bottom Row (L-R): Denis Dobbelstein, Ann Marie Brennan, Rojean C Macalalad, Josephine Shamwana-Lungu, Adolfo Nicolás SJ, Najat Sayegh, Edel Churu

As the evening of Good Friday drew near, all members of the council had arrived at Casa di Nazareth, the venue of the meeting. Being in Rome during the Triduum and Easter added an increased enjoyable spirit for the meeting and an immersion into the celebration with the Church of such a significant moment in our faith, as we participated in the Way of the Cross in the Coliseum and the Easter Vigil Liturgy in the nearby parish. It was a graced moment to be with the Lord and to carry the world community throughout the meeting. The events in Brussels, prior to the beginning of the meeting were very fresh in our minds.

Opening Retreat

On Holy Saturday, the opening retreat for the meeting with the theme *‘Touching the Wounds of Christ’* was led by Fr. Luke SJ. The retreat input had an invitation to look at the wounds of Christ on the Cross and through them see his heart, the heart of God and the mystery of his love. A further invitation was made to deeply examine the wounds of humanity with many challenges present around the world and our own personal wounds that needed mercy and healing.

Vice Ecclesial Assistant Transition: Basking in the joy of Easter Sunday and gratitude for the gift of wisdom, energy and generous service of Fr. Luke Rodrigues SJ to the World Community in general, ExCo welcomed the incoming Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant, Fr. Herminio Rico SJ on behalf of the World Community to the meeting. In about seven months, Fr. Luke SJ will have concluded his term as Vice EA and Fr. Herminio SJ will take over his role.

World Community Reflections

REGIONAL REPORTS: The regional reports from the Links were rich, informative and encouraging. They displayed a living image of our CLC world community that is engaged in the Lord's mission on many fronts in a large variety of ways as discerned by local communities. In addition, it was inspiring to note that the activities done in relation with the frontiers prescribed from the Lebanon Assembly brought a sense of solidarity.

SURVEY FEEDBACK: *'Friends have you caught anything to eat?' They answered him, 'No.' so he said to them, 'Cast the net over to the right side of the boat and you will find something.' So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of the fish...* This gospel expresses the motions during the overview of the feedback from the survey. ExCo was grateful the national communities that responded to the survey that sent out last year. This feedback gave some sense of where various communities were with the Lord's mission in relation to the frontiers. The wall was filled with many fronts national communities were engaged in. EXCO dragged in the nets of responses given. We look forward to receive more survey forms so that the greater richness of the community may be shared. The results of the survey will be made available to the world community in a separate piece of communication.

Growth of the World Community

Regions that had communities that needed attention were discussed, and processes were examined for those seeking admission to observer status or incorporation at the next World Assembly.

Meeting With Our EA Fr. Adolfo Nicolás SJ

Prompting the discussion, Fr. Nicolás SJ touched a wide ranging of contemporary issues in the world and the role of the Church and other institutions such as CLC in their attempt to address them. He outlined five areas that needed our attention –

- *Poverty* - with the poor as the sociological front,
- *Religious* – A call to speak with other religions,
- *Cultural* – in the light of migration a need to address the effect of this movement on culture
- *Economic* – the call to continue examining how economic systems are responding to human needs, and
- *Apostolic service* – a reminder that every apostolic service is a frontier.

Fr. Nicolás SJ said it was important to help humanity and especially the young to reacquire a sense of mystery in life, to bring a new level of depth, creativity and grasp of reality about life. To this could also be added the value of a critical sense, a symbolic sense and that sense sometimes described as “the third eye”. He further stressed how this was a critical moment in the Church of the Laity and organizations like CLC not to be afraid to take up their roles in these times and think strategically about what is good for the Church.

After the discussion a gentle pause led the ExCo to thank Fr. Nicolás SJ for his accompaniment of CLC over the last 8 years and for his wise and challenging words at various CLC and ExCo events over



his term of office as our Ecclesiastical Assistant. *‘Were not our hearts burning (within us) while he spoke to us...’* (C.f. Luke 23:32) sums the enthusiasm felt by ExCo during and after Fr. Nicolás’ SJ engagement with us. We also expressed our solidarity with the Society of Jesus in the upcoming General Congregation 36 that begins in October this year.

Review and Update on the ExCo Commissions

Sitting in the glow of daily Easter Readings and liturgy, the pinwheel was reviewed in these areas under various operative commissions and frontiers: *Family, Youth, Ecology, Globalization and Poverty, Lay Ignatian Vocation, General Principles and Norms, Collaboration, Formation and Leadership.*

Prior to listening to the reports, the Lebanon Assembly final document was read again in order that the reports would be seen through the lenses of that document. After listening to the reports, fields of progress caressed and warmed our hearts, enthusiasm around the room grew when hopes for the future were shared. But thoughts of discomfort were felt and shared where challenges were faced. The feedback showed that many local communities were using discernment process in their frontiers, and even though the DSSE way of proceeding was followed, there was need to ensure that the ‘E’ in the process was not ignored.

CLC continues to have a presence at the UN as one of its many pathways for advocacy and networking. Some stories shared in the survey at the frontiers are possible resources to strengthen our voice. The world community is reminded to use the CLC publications in order to respond adequately to the needs of the church and the wider society and continue to be relevant. *‘What are we doing to impact the Church of the future as CLC?’* is a question that needs a response as we go about the Lord’s mission at the frontiers. The outcome of the commission and frontiers shared at various levels will be expressed to the world community after continued consultation with the wider community through our various publications

CLC 50th Year Celebration

Grace upon grace! Jubilee upon jubilee! Looking back with gratitude, we remember that in 1967, driven by the spirit of Vatican II there was a renewal within the Marian Congregations moving into a new phase as Christian Life Community (CLC). Next year, October 2017, marks fifty years since the transition. It is indeed another moment to celebrate who we are as we pursue the quest to answer what God is calling CLC to now and in the future. This golden celebration will culminate in the next World Assembly in 2018!



Pope Francis reminds us that an institution needs:

- ❖ Memory;
- ❖ Availability to see the reality of the present; and
- ❖ Vision.

These are the three worthy perspectives to help guide our forthcoming jubilee celebration. In doing so, we might undertake an Ignatian recollection and review of our history entertain a realistic perspective and celebration of the present and contemplate where we, as a global community, are being drawn in the future.

Fr. Arrupe SJ and others have commented that CLC is well placed to help carry the Church into the world. We therefore accept Fr. Nicolás' challenge to do so with increasing depth, creativity, joy, fun and a close eye on reality.

Next CLC World Assembly – 2018

The discernment work is well under way in finalizing arrangements for the venue and the theme of the next CLC World Assembly in 2018. In this process, the ExCo is keeping in mind the historical movements of successive CLC world assemblies, major directions in the movements of the Church, the views of and benefits to the global CLC and where the Holy Spirit might be drawing us in all these matters. ExCo expects to be able to inform the World Community about this decision through the President's letter. In the meantime, national communities can begin to prepare the financial obligations towards the Assembly.

Secretariat Report

FINANCES: The ExCo is very grateful for the maturity taken up by the world community on financial co responsibility. This is with particular reference to the dues. In the 2014/2015 period, almost 99% of the national dues were collected. This has made it possible not only to meet most operation obligations for the secretariat but also created some capacity to render support to some formation and apostolic activities.

COMMUNICATION: The Secretariat and ExCo will continue to use the following means to communicate with the World Community: *Projects, Progressio Magazine and Supplement, the President's Letter, Facebook and the website.* The latest Supplement on Ecology 'Caring for Creation' has been distributed and has attracted a lot of readers among the Ignatian family. There is however a deeper yearning in the Secretariat to get a better sense of the world body through more feedback. *How can the secretariat engage with the World Community a little better so that there is a multi-sided flow of information?* National communities are encouraged to give some feedback through the secretariat or with their Regional Links regarding the publications.

Finally, enjoying the warmth of the Easter charcoal fire with fish and bread, the liveliness in some national communities, the struggles of others, urges us on to continue recognizing the mission of the Lord and his invitation not to be afraid to reach out because he is with us.

We also encourage you to read the recently published Post Synodal Exhortation '*Amoris Laetitia*' on the love in the Family, a rich resource for our discernment. What a moment of grace to be at the frontiers in the church and the wider society to have an impact as CLC.

We wish you the joy of the Risen Lord,

United in prayer and service,

Josephine Shamwana-Lungu, Chris Hogan, and Najat Sayegh
With and in behalf of CLC World Executive Council