



CLC In Europe Bulletin

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In this Bulletin...

News from Euroteam

News from the
National
Communities

Dear European friends,

Fatima is coming nearer and we guess that you all are very deeply engaged in the preparation. But we hope that you have time enough to look to our website, see what is new – specially under Erasmus – and that you will participate to make this more and more alive!

CLC Spain has a new blog: look to <http://cvxe.blogspot.com/>

We are happy to welcome Marina Villa from CLC Italy as Eurolink again, Cristina Allodi has not time enough for this “job” and we will accompany her with our prayers.

Thank you all for your participation to the preparation to this bulletin.

In union of prayer,
Agnès, Martina, Monika

News from Euroteam

Our Meeting took place in March 6-9, 2008 in Luxembourg in Agnes' house. We passed in review finances, the question of a guide for ET, Erasmus, Ecumenism ...

→ Don't forget, it would be very helpful if we could have more information coming from the NC for Erasmus.

- **The next Forced Migration meeting** will take place in November 28-30, 2008 in the Spiritual Centre Hautmont (near Lille in the northern part of France) where we had our last European Assembly in 2004.
- ET hopes that it will be possible to organise a young adults meeting (holy...days) in summer 2009.

March 8, we took the car of Agnes and went to Aachen to have lunch and teatime with Daniela Frank. We had a peaceful time together speaking about CLC Europe, communication and the coming

- **European Assembly in Alicante (Spain)** from 28 to 31 May 2009, it means from Thursday late afternoon to Pentecost Sunday noon; we'll be around 60 persons. Please inform already your presidents and Ecclesiastical Assistants.

Communal discernment in CLC

CLC Austria

A very concrete example as we live it in my own group: Annually in early autumn, around the beginning of the new academic year the whole group spends a weekend together, with our group guide joining us for part of the time. We evaluate the past year and set up orientations for the year ahead of us. This includes the roles of group coordinator and group guide. In order not to get stuck in routine we change the coordinator about every two or three years and try to find a new guide after some three to five years. Election or re-election of the coordinator is part of the weekend programme. However, finding a new group guide may be initiated at the weekend and then take the best part of a year. We don't rush the process and it doesn't dominate our activities.

First we collect possible names and then boil the list down to names acceptable to all group members. Then we decide who contacts whom. This may take quite some time and normally leaves us with not more than one or two candidates who are then invited individually to meet the group to clarify our respective ideas of how we want the role of group guide to be lived. For example, we don't expect the guide to come to all our group meetings. S/he should not become

a full member of the group in order to be able to look upon the group from outside. About half a year after a new guide has taken over we stop to evaluate if we are still happy with each other. Our experience with having a group guide is very positive and we even find it good to vary between Jesuits and non-Jesuits, men and women, religious and lay persons.

Next thing we are going to try and find a permanent name for the group. So far we called ourselves by the name of our coordinator and we seem to be the only group with a changing name. I hope we can find one with meaning and which we all like.

Gertrud Zeller

CLC Flemish speaking Belgium

I would like to tell how much communal discernment there is in Flanders local CLC groups but reality is very different! Till now we never heard about a serious communal discernment. However, in April 2005 we had on national level a short formation about 'communal discernment' for group leaders. We invited Isabelle, the woman who gave a brilliant witness about her proper discernment with the help of her local community in Lille (Euro meeting 2004). All our CLC group leaders were very impressed. Afterwards we had a sharing – all in French! – and we went home with hope that it would ever happen in our own community. Never the less our groups are more 'discussion'-groups. And we have the experience that national formation can help but can not force things. We can only hope that more drops will feed the seed.

Some months ago we gave a formation on "CLC and Identity." We asked Frieda Boeykens to give a very good initiation about our identity; an initiation she gave 10 years ago, but which was in that time recognised as a very 'theoretical explanation'. And what happened... This year our groups leaders and EA's were excited to hear it and to find our foundations. They were all happy to get an answer on 'we are we?' In the past when some outsider asked what is CLC, we were not able to give a pertinent answer on how we could discern us from other 'spiritual talking groups' This (old) clarification of Frieda was a new discernment for all of us...and we hope that now we can proceed on all levels. After this formation our Exco was happy to experience that there is more understanding, more unity, more 'national community' then 10 years ago. And we always tell about Europe and World CLC to create also the awareness of unity all over the world.

About communal discernment I had by accident one in my own local group. Here it is: For some reason during 2 years we didn't have a spiritual guide any more. Our meetings became "eatings" and serious talk but never going to the point of the subject we decided to share about. Lots of sharing about life and family and cares and problems and happiness but...there was missing the 'Ignatian contemplation and action', the Ignatian discernment, review, evaluation, support...Some of us felt very at ease being so unformal and enjoying food. Others missed the deepness and Spirit. After so many time we were finally lucky to find a new EA. And even a new member wanted to join us. After two times bomb exploded because of lots of non-spoken resentment among group members and on the other hand the expectations of the new ones not at all fitting with us.

To make it short: We took 2 evaluation meetings to listen to each other: about the timing, the way of sharing, the place where to meet, the expectations, the subjects to share about, who is leader of the sharing etc...

Finally we became to a complete renewing, good agreements not simply based on a compromise but growing towards each others feelings and thoughts. We really have the impression that we did a big step forwards in personal growing and growing with the group. We want to share this experience with other groups, who fear evaluation, but may be who need it.

Now we are preparing Fatima and trying to answer the 3 questions on the 7 items...this evaluation is at the same time a discernment as well!!

A new discernment is growing: how to promote CLC and get new members because we have become a very small national community of only 127 members, most of them between 35 and 50.

Ann Siewu

CLC French speaking Belgium

In 2002, the CLC of the French speaking part of Belgium began a reflection on the way to be a community. The National Executive Council (Conex) has pointed out two major items:

- ❖ To put the CLC legal status in accordance with the GN.

Up to that 2002, the CLC was structured according to regional (more federal) divisions, coming from the time where the Jesuits led the different local CLC communities (which were grouped around the Jesuit Colleges). When the laics took over the leading of the CLC (1986-1991), it has not been judged adequate to keep the structure inherited in order to allow a smooth transition between the Jesuits and the laics.

- ❖ Supporting life instead of forcing it

The Conex felt that the CLC was mature enough for this major evolution: to quit the parity representation of the different regions, as some of these regions were not strong enough to be able to provide all the different services linked to that level (formation, welcome team...).

The vote of the new status was the end way of a long process where all local and regional communities have been involved. The idea of this process was to ensure that the status would be endorsed by the different local communities and that this new way of making community will promote the life and the communication in between the communities.

In this new status, the regional level is kept when the local communities feel the need otherwise the level has been skipped, leading a direct link between the local communities and the Conex.

This needs the Conex to have a specific care to the local communities (without regions), in order to keep the link with the other local communities and to ensure a synergy between all the local communities.

The new status strengthen the relationship between the local communities and to promote the identity feeling to the national community. The General Assembly includes now not only the delegates of the regions, but also and firstly one delegate per local community, allowing then a better and closer participation (and feedbacks of) of all local communities to the main decisions of the CLC.

Thanks to that, a special attention has been placed successfully to ensure that the annual fee is recovered at a higher level than in the past. This - for cultural and historical reasons - is not obvious to obtain in Belgium, activities linked with any spiritual aspect must set to be free-of-charge. The level of recovery has indeed raised from 40% in 2006 to 75% in 2007.

Marc Dubois

CLC Croatia

Christian life community in Croatia has experience in communal discernment in several important situations for our Community.

Maybe the strongest such experience of communal discernment has been in the time before the affiliation to the World CLC. Months before that, we have talked, stated arguments, prayed, we were letting time pass to see whether for us and our Community is better to be part of World community. After long time, consultations within the Community, but also consultation with members of other Communities especially with CLC from Slovenia, we decided to submit

application for affiliation to World CLC at the previous General Assembly in Nairobi five years ago.

Dunja Juras

CLC France

In 1992, the Jesuits proposed to the Community to take over their spiritual centre Saint Hugues de Biviers near Grenoble (French Alps).

The discernment process started during the meeting of the national committee in October 1992. One member of each region was present during two days.

First step after the common prayer was presentation of the centre, present situation and proposals.

Second step was situation and growth of our community, called to serve but needing to find a common mission in order to be able to bring the members together, to make us more united.

Third step was consideration in small groups. Everybody was able to say how he feels, express their feelings about the proposal, which are the problems they see and what seems to be good.

The major arguments were:

In a positive way: the project is the answer to the proposal of the last national assembly to be more open to the world and take a place in the church

In a negative way: the community did not grow up enough, there is only a spiritual visibility and it is too far from the poor.

The next day was time to discuss about the situation of the community, relationship with the Jesuits and the Church. Mass and prayer were helpful on this way and on the end of the day, it was clear, that the discernment had to go on.

The next step was the creation of a "Biviers Commission" which had to deepen the consideration, visit the centre, and talk to people working there, meetings with the bishop. Several reports were sent to the members of the committee who informed their region about the progress of the discernment.

The following committee took place in January 1993. The most important discussion was: What could be the project of CLC for the centre?

Prayers and discernment in a peaceful atmosphere were helpful to take the right decision.

First decision: Considering the situation of CLC France in 1993 and taking into account the situation of the church in France, the decision to take over the spiritual centre was approved.

Second decision: The national ExCo has to verify if this project is achievable with the commission and the centre. The final decision has to take place on the end of the year.

Finally, CLC France took over the centre and this brought very positive results. The community became mature, nearly every member attend the centre for spiritual exercises, prayer weeks or holidays.

Monika Sander

CLC Germany

In Germany we have apart from the CLC national secretariat in Augsburg a regional office in Osnabrück serving the northern part of the country. For quite some time there was a Jesuit and a CLC member working there as a team. When the Jesuits finished their involvement last year Marlies Fricke was left alone. At about the same time a similar situation developed in the regional office Main where the contract of a diocesan priest came to an end. He had worked with Sabine Krienen for the young adults. Thus the idea came up to move the office for the young adults with Sabine Krienen to Osnabrück so that the two, Sabine and Marlies, can work as a team again. In consequence an intensive discernment and decision making process started between the national ExCo and the CLC in Region of Main. Something people had got used to go lost – what

did that mean? What can we as community leave behind, what can we continue, or was it time to start something new? What is the regional community able to support both financially and with personal involvement? What type of support does it need from the national community? The fruit of this process: The regional community will run its own office with a person especially in charge of the CLC programme “Salt in the group” (Ignatian and CLC methods for working with parish councils and teams etc.) supported by a subsidy of the national ExCo for two years. After this period we foresee a common evaluation of this experience.

Inge Hoepfl

CLC Lithuania

CLC Lithuania is too young to have already an experience in communal discernment. We had of course some discernment in local groups to help a member to take a decision but it did not happen on national level. A possibility would be to discern about spiritual guiding: the decision to make a formation for personal guides or guides for spiritual exercises could be the matter in a near future for a communal discernment. But this needs still some more time.

Kristina Rankelyte

CLC Luxemburg

I would like to share with you about the long communal process of discernment that our national CLC undertook to be able to participate fully in the **Ignatian project MAGIS** in the context of **World Youth Day 2005** in Cologne, Germany.

The MAGIS-project was a 10-day Ignatian preparation (juicily called Ignatian experiments) for young people (aged between 20 and 40) from different nations. These experiments were to take place in Germany and neighbouring regions just before WYD. As Luxembourg is very close to Cologne, the German Jesuit organisers of the project approached the Luxembourgish Jesuits and CLC Luxembourg to ask if we could accommodate (and perhaps accompany) a few groups of about 20 young people each.

Here are the different stages of this discernment:

1. September 2003: Vincent Klein SJ (the later co-ordinator of the Luxembourgish MAGIS-Team and project) and CLC president René Schmit take part in a preparatory weekend in Bonn. René and Vincent are impressed by the work that has already been done and by the clarity of the vision. Our CLC president realises that CLC Luxembourg alone cannot ensure the accommodation of 9 groups.

2. National CLC ExCo says “yes” in principle to participate in the project, recognising the MAGIS-project as a possible implementation of the recommendations of Nairobi.

3. Magis-Committee for Luxembourg founded

CLC is one partner among the members of the Ignatian family (the Jesuits, the congregation of the Jesuit parish, an Ignatian religious order)

At a first meeting in November 2003, a plan to accommodate 9 experiments or groups in Luxembourg is elaborated. It is not clear yet, whether these groups can be accompanied and guided by residents of our country yet.

4. How does CLC Luxembourg recognise the MAGIS-project as a project of communal responsibility?

*World Assembly in Nairobi and European Assembly in Lille (DSSE)

*various national CLC meetings, during which we reflect on what shared responsibility could mean

*a seminal article by one of our delegates to Nairobi in our national CLC journal: "it is an essential part of our vocation to do God's will not only as individuals, but also as a community" (Christ Kremer in *CVX-INTERN*, 54, December 2003)

*National CLC World Day, March 2004, the project Magis is presented, among other topics, to our members as a project which might invite us "to go further"

*National Day of the Groups (Journée des Equipes), November 2004:

The national ExCo has invited Vincent Klein SJ and Ludger Joos, SJ, one of the German "founding fathers" of the MAGIS-project. In the morning, Ludger presents the project and indicates what would be needed to put it into practice. The theme of the day is shared responsibility and the MAGIS project is presented as a possible implementation of this communal responsibility.

We are sitting in a circle and everybody is given a white stone with his or her name on it; the word MAGIS is written in the centre of our circle on the floor and we are invited to place the stone in relation to the word MAGIS, the position of the stone should mirror our attitude to the project (if we feel close to it or not). In the afternoon, we reflect on various aspects of the project in smaller groups.

At the end of the day, we are asked to take a second look at the position of our stone and to evaluate its position; has our attitude changed? We can leave the stone where it is or change its place.

I clearly recall that this day inspired our members to feel concerned by the project. For me, this national CLC day, particularly the presentations by Ludger and Vincent, and the exercise of placing the stone, seem the turning point, where the community was able to "adopt" the project as a communal project.

*National CLC WORLD DAY, March 2005: theme: "MAGIS – living more with God"; what does that mean for us? We try to discover and sense what the concept of MAGIS (apart from the project) could mean in our lives.

In summer 2005, the Ignatian family in Luxembourg accommodates and accompanies 9 experiments. We are helped by some French and Belgian Jesuits.

5. We also evaluate this project later:

+ practically the whole community was involved in the project in summer 2005; our major problem was that we have about 60 members and that a majority of us also helped in the diocesan and the Scout programme for WYD!! Our resources were very limited, in the end, I believe, every single member was involved, according to his or her abilities. Some CLCers were members of the organisation team and led groups, others donated money, helped with the cooking for a day and many supported the project with their prayers.

+ we became aware of the great Ignatian family

+ it was an excellent "warming up activity" for the 2006 celebration of "friends in the Lord", which was also celebrated jointly with the other Ignatian relatives

- the practical requirements of this project dawned on us as we were going along, not all could be foreseen, and some rather grave practical/technical problems surfaced unpredictably

- a few people were, however, overwhelmed by the work, and we were not able to encourage and support them enough in those hard moments.

René Schmit, « *L'aujourd'hui de magis* » : *relecture du discernement communautaire*

Translated and adapted by Tessy Geimer-Biver; Eurolink Luxembourg

CLC Poland**Topic: A choice of the name of the basic community****Purpose:** Discernment of the name of the community**Grace:** We ask the Holy Spirit for light in the choice of the name of the community (the name should be associated to the way and the service of this community)**The plan of the meeting:****1. Prayer to the Holy Spirit****2. What does a name denote?** (based on the: *Catechism of Catholic Church* and *Dictionary of Biblical Pictures and Symbols*)

A name is a power, which is associated to the person. If we know the name of a person, we may have an influence on this person.

In the Bible a name often expresses a nature, character, behavior and personality of a human being (1Sam 25, 25); describes the mission to carry out (Judg 6, 12) and contains life vocation given by God, e.g. to Abraham (Gen 17, 5), to Peter (Mt 16, 18).

To have a name means: to be an important person (Ruth 4, 14). God gives a name each living creature (Is 40, 26) and tells Adam to give the names to all creatures (Gen 2, 19n). The names of the first people express their essence. Adam means „a man”. Adam gives his wife a name Eve, because she is a mother of all living people. (Gen 3, 20).

Saul's conversion is shown by a change in his name: “Paul”. Jesus gives two brothers James and John nicknames: “sons of thunder” (Mk 3, 17), because He wants to show their power when they preach on Jesus.

Christians believe that a name is associated with to a child's way of life and the child will be protected by the Saint, even His virtues.

3. Prayer – Meditation – Mt 16, 13-19 (Confession of Peter)

Simon Peter confesses in Jesus' and other disciples' presence:

“ You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God”. Jesus praises Peter not for his wisdom, but for his listening to the Holy Spirit. Jesus gives Simon a new name, which is associated to his mission – being the leader of the Church.

What name does Jesus want to give to our community? What is the character of our community from its beginning? What kind of community is it? What is its mission?

4. The sharing

What name comes to my mind during this meditation. Why ?

5. A moment of a reflection after the sharing

Which name seems to be the most suitable for our community?

6. The sharing after sharing

What name has the Lord chosen for our community?

(if we don't see the any name, we should do this meditation at home once again. If we see only one name, we should do this meditation at home once again to confirm this name).

7. Final prayer

(Thanksgiving for the meeting, request for the choice or confirm of the choice of the name of the community)

8. A reflection after the meeting:

For me, what was the most important aspect of this meeting?

Malgorzata Sosinska

CLC Slovenia

- Last autumn the national formation team hold a formation course for coordinators and others members on »communal discernment« giving practical advice and the way of prayer. Some members hold it for very important for our community and reported and shared their reflection in our national monthly publication.

- In a group one member who was invited to be a part of the formation team did not discern about it for him alone but the whole group discerned on their meetings about it. Finally they decided that he is to join the formation team.

- In January 2008 we hold national assembly. We elected new leadership. The process went on as follows: 1. The process of communal discernment begun in June 2007 when groups proposed different members for the posts of president, vice-president and secretary. 2. Than the candidates were asked to discerned and decide for candidature or not. 3. The candidates who accepted the invitation introduced them self in our monthly magazine to all community. 4. The groups discerned and selected one candidate for each post. 5. Finally in the assembly the representatives of all groups voted and we elected a new leadership.

Tomaz Smid

CLC Spain

In CVX-Spain we have been working diligently over the last three years on a deepening of DEAE (to discern, to send out, to support, to evaluate): this process was recommended by our CVX World Assembly in Nairobi.

The Spanish Executive Committee created an apostolic team at national level (called "The Apostolic Commission") and it gave them the task of reflecting on, deepening, and drawing up some "Guidelines for DEAE", which would serve as a help for the local communities in this essential matter. From the presentation of these guidelines we would like to offer the following reflections:

DEAE is a central and essential instrument in order that our communities be essentially apostolic and so that CVX be converted into an apostolic body for mission in the Church and in the world. DEAE is anchored in our tradition, our Ignatian charism and our history: it points towards our own personal daily lives, our groups of life and communities. It is not something new or unknown, nor is it simply a method for action: a mysticism of mission, a mysticism of community, is necessary.

It sends us to the God of Christ and the Christ of the Spiritual Exercises: a God who wants us as apostles, collaborators, workers active in the midst of the world and engaged in it in its depths. The Christ who was sent, also sends and sends us. That is the essence of Ignatian spirituality: to contemplate Christ as the one sent by the Father.

To do this according to our own way, as persons with deep Ignatian roots:

- To look for and find the will of God for my life
- To stretch my heart to the dimensions of the world.
- To know my own reality as fully as possible.
- To discern, through the light of prayer and reason illuminated by faith, how to make this reality better in order that it be more evangelical.
- To encounter God in all created things: contemplatives in action, united with God in action.

At this time, over the last few months, the Apostolic Commission has visited the different local communities in Spain to present a little book produced by CVX Spain called "Guidelines for DEAE" and to help them, over a weekend retreat, to grow and make progress in this task. The guidelines try to clarify the meaning of each of the elements of DEAE, in order to then offer ways, means, help, ways of proceeding... the guidelines can help to open up other possibilities,

can be complemented and enriched, and can be adapted to the concrete circumstances of each issue and of each community.

We offer this material to CVX in Europe, recognising that at the moment we only have it in Spanish, but we hope to produce an English version in the future.

Well united in the same vocation and mission of Jesus,

Aurora Camps

CLC Switzerland

We nearly don't have an experience with communal discernment about common apostolic themes.

Regarding personal questions and decisions of single members this discernment is practised in the local groups with the method of "revision de vie" (described in the "Werkmappe" of German CLC).

The steps of this method are:

- **Listen:**

The person who has to discern about a personal decision explains the most concretely the situation, the question to decide, the facts, the circumstances, reactions of other people ...

This shall help the other members in the group to get an idea of the question to decide, to imagine the most really the situation the CLC member lives. You can compare this step with the meditation of St. Ignatius when he invites to imagine with all inner senses the biblical scene.

Important in this step is that all participants listen without just have a "quick" solution.

- **Discern:**

in a time of personal reflection and prayer in silence each one "enters" in the situation of decision. Where do I see the greatest problems? Which rational reasons are to respect? Where can I discover the Spirit of God, where do I feel the "bad spirit"? What could be an invitation of God to grow in faith, hope and love?

After a time of silence the members of the group share their impressions without discussion.

- **Answer:**

Each one tries in a time of prayer to give his/her answer to the proposed question. In which direction do I see the solution? Which steps are to go to reach a good way who leads to more life?

Which is my personal contribution to the decision of the other? How can I support my CLC companion? Are there any consequences for our group?

Then follows a sharing time when everyone tells his/her impression.

The person who brought the personal question has to decide finally on his/her own, but is supported by the other members.

- **Support and evaluate:**

After some weeks or months it is important to evaluate the made decision once again in the group and to ask about the felt support or what would be needed in the future.

Important is that all these steps are made in an atmosphere of prayer and spiritual disposition.

We made the experience that this method is very "ignatian" and helpful for all kind of decision, personal or communal.

Dorothee Fischer