



CLC In Europe Bulletin

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In this Bulletin...

News from the
National
Communities

Dear European friends,

We hope that you are happy to start a new year, a year full of promises, joy... and work. We wish you to be attentive to the presence of our Lord in your daily life and able to say Him in the evening: Thank you, forgive me, we both together tomorrow.

Please don't forget your ERASMUS information for our website. What is happening in your country, inform us about your formation proposals – and follow them in another country!

In union of prayer,
Agnès, Martina, Monika

News from Euroteam

Our next Euroteam meeting will take place in march 6-9, 2008 in Luxembourg in Agnes' house. We will pray for the coming Assembly in Fatima and, of course, inform you about our work. For our meeting, we would be happy to have news from your CLC. We join to this bulletin our answer "Towards Fatima".

Cooperation SJ - CLC

CLC Austria

For many years CLC in Austria has had a fair amount of financial support from the Society of Jesus, but we have little tradition of cooperation on an eye to eye level, although there are many contacts between Jesuits and CLC. However, things are beginning to move in a positive direction. Father Provincial recently appointed two new Ecclesiastical Assistants: one for the existing adult CLC and one for a young adult CLC to be launched. Both assistants put a lot of energy into their new jobs. We are still in an exploration stage on both sides and with the help of the Spirit we shall find out where the Lord is calling us to work together.

Gertrud Zeller

CLC Croatia

The Society of Jesus since the beginning of Christian life community in Croatia (that means 17 years, from 6 February 1991) had very important and active role. CLC Croatia was founded on the suggestion of former provincial of Croatian province of SJ. CLC immediately got church assistant, and the coordinators of few first little groups were scholastics (the candidates for SJ)

Together the Jesuits and the members of CLC have been discovering what CLC is, what the field of our apostolate is in concrete time and place. Together we translated the documents of the Community (General Principals, parts of Progressio, constitutions of some European communities and other materials).

In the beginning of 90-es when in our homeland the forced war was raging, we wrote together, the history of conflicts in this region on several pages. We sent it to the addresses of CLC-s of all European countries asking from them (from you) to spread the truth about this war and to pray for us.

Since those years until today the ways of our cooperation have changed: Jesuits through all these years have been church assistants, they held spiritual exercises and renewals, and they were our spiritual guides. We helped them in various ways: by animating masses in parishes, as singers in the choir and leaders of parish choirs, by animating adoration, as assistants in spiritual exercises and renewals, than as lectors, lawyers, architects – giving advices and participating in very concrete Jesuit projects.

Even thou we do not find the same understanding in all Jesuits, we would not call our cooperation, the cooperation of individuals, but cooperation of two institutions.

Dunja Juras

CLC France

During the 60ties, CLC France started again with Father Paul-Roger Dalbert sj and José Gsell. In 1967 the community adopted the general principles. Community progressed with the national assemblies every three or four years until the last one in Lourdes in 2006 (ignatian jubilee): there the Provincial of France, Father François-Xavier Dumortier sj called us partners, members of the ignatian family. The community was strongly involved in the preparation of this jubilee.

Actually two Jesuits are given from the Company to the community: Paul Legavre sj who is the ecclesial assistant and Bernard Mendiboure sj, responsible for the formation of lay people to give spiritual exercises. This is the actual situation after a long way together; CLC France has more than 6000 members coming in specially during the 80ties and 90ties; very soon it was clear that the formation of the members is a priority. During the 80ties started the formation of lay guides for the local communities, organised by the Service team for formation. In 2002, the formation group offered many different proposals for Spiritual Exercises to allow all the members to practice them. And now it is possible for a member of CLC to be formed for the Spiritual Exercises.

During the 90ties, the Jesuits asked the community to overtake the Jesuits' centre in Biviers near Grenoble, which they left. After a common discernment, the community accepted and this helped us to be a community in mission. Since some years, the community is also responsible for the spiritual contents in the Jesuits' centre of Hautmont (near Lille), we work with the Jesuits in Cised, organisation helping in Paris and in Lyon foreign students and actually we prepare a revue for the ignatian family, including Revue Vie Chrétienne.

Monika Sander

CLC Germany

There is a good communication: annual meeting of the Provincial with ExCo," round table "with two Jesuits and two CLC'ers on the partnership, talks to prepare the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus.

Cooperation:

- a) Spiritual exercises, formation courses and formation of spiritual guides for exercises (two-year formation course)
- b) "Ignatian Centre" at St. Michael's Jesuit church in the city centre of Munich (since Jan.2006)
- c) Common publication of a journal on the spirituality of the spiritual exercises.

Our concerns are encountered by interest and responsiveness by the Provincial and his council.

It is not always easy to act as an equal partner (self-confidence, financial aspects, availability of time).

From our experience we would like to give the following advice: keep in touch, realise common initiatives and projects.

Inge Hoepfl

CLC Lithuania

Christian Life Community of Lithuanian is rather young and for this reason it is not possible yet to talk on the relation between the Community and Society, as the collaboration of two independent bodies.

Currently Christian Life Community of Lithuanian experiences the stage of intense growth, self-perception and formation (the Community Statute is being prepared, official legitimating process in Lithuania, integration into the global Christian Life Community) and this is why Community is not a clear independent body yet - it is still bounded up with Jesus Society.

It should be mentioned first, that the Community was established on the initiative of Jesuits' fathers, just after the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. And till now the biggest part of people come to the Community after the experience of Spiritual Exercises.

Lithuanian Jesus Society gives a spiritual and financial support to the Community. The four of Jesuits' fathers are the spiritual directors to the local communities (groups). Community uses the Societies house of retreat frequently.

On the initiative of Jesuits the seminars of spiritual direction are being arranged year in, year out. This prepares spiritual directors and at the same time gives a good foundation to the formation of the spiritual directors for local communities. So a fair part of the Community members have passed this seminar and accompany local communities (groups). On the other hand, the part of them helps Jesuits fathers' to lead the Ignation Spiritual Exercises: they accompany retreators personally or even lead Spiritual Exercises in the daily life. It would be one of the grounds of the shared mission.

Another shared mission would be a turn back to Africa. Two years ago Jesuits' fathers from Lithuania invited to do this. They decided to be more attentive to this land. The Community responded to the Society's invitation: it's members every quarter freely sacrifice the acceptable sum of money to support two missions in Africa (Rwanda) handed by Lithuanian priest and a sister.

CLC Luxemburg

In terms of Jesuit geography, Luxemburg is part of the Southern Belgian Province and the Provincial is based in Namur (Belgium). The ExCo has a customary meeting with him on his annual visit to the Jesuit community in Luxemburg.

The relationship between Jesuits and CLC has been very intensive, and their role in the growth of CLC decisive. They encouraged the move from the Sodalties to CLC. Our current Ecclesiastical assistant always insists that CLC should become an adult and responsible partner alongside the Jesuits at the service of the church, not a sort of sub-organisation of the Society.

At the moment, the majority of the Jesuits in Luxemburg are directly involved in CLC, most of them as group guides ("accompaniers"), members of our formation team, other working groups and as Ecclesiastical Assistant. Some Jesuits are also personal guides to several of our members. National ExCo has encouraged lay CLCers to participate in a formation for group guides, but so far there has been little response. We prize this devotion of the Jesuits to CLC very highly, because they are heavily solicited by the church and related organisations; they are engaged in many different fields of work, their numbers are dwindling and so is their availability. Our Ecclesiastical Assistant is a strong advocate for the needs of CLC among his Jesuit community and they have kept up their dedication to CLC despite their heavy workloads. We cannot take this dedication for granted.

We are happy and slightly proud (although it is none of our merit), that one of "our" Jesuits is currently at the General Congregation; we are supporting them in our prayers! amdg

Tessy Geimer-Biver

In addition to Luxemburg

As CLC, we all participated actively to the Jesuits initiative MAGIS, offering an ignatian preparation for some 250 young persons to the International Youth days in Köln in 2005.

Since a few years, Jesuits and experienced CLCers offer together Spiritual Exercises in daily life, especially during Lent and Advent time in different places of Luxemburg dioceses; the promotion of St Ignatius pedagogy being a common concern of both communities.

Last but not least we share our involvement for forced migrants/refugees and reflect for the moment how to unite CLC-forced migration group and JRS-Luxemburg into one body.

Perhaps I forgot to mention some additional important moments in the relations between CLC and SJ: we join the Jesuit community every 31.July to celebrate St Ignatius day as we join them for moments of joy (50. anniversary of priesthood or entering to the SJ) and sorrow (illness and final departure).

Agnes/CLC-Luxemburg

CLC Poland

CLC has been initiated by the Jesuits in the cooperation with the lay. The majority of the communities have been created as a result of this collaboration.

At the early stage of the community development the Jesuits had, and they still have, a significant position.

In the 80s the Jesuits restarted giving the Spiritual Exercises to the lay according to saint Ignace method. These people in the collaboration with the Jesuits created the communities CLC in different cities of Poland.

Initially the Jesuits were the assistants and the animators of the communities. Then they helped to find the lay animators. They still act as assistants in the basic and local communities as well as in national ones. They are also the members of the Executive Council.

The Jesuits take the active part in the substantive preparation and in leading the retreat for the communities. They are spiritual leaders during the retreat and in individual lives, they help in sessions for animators and coordinators as well as in sessions for the lay accompanying in the Spiritual Exercises. They act as assistants. They also involve our members to the collaboration in their apostolic activities such as retreat " Couples Meetings", retreat in everyday life, retreat for people suffering from MS, collection of money for missions, radio retreat, retreat in Retreat Houses, help in the parishes, OCIPE (the Centre of the Lay Spirituality), Catholic Movements Council. Gradually the members of CLC take the initiative, especially in organizing of these activities, and sometimes in the substantive preparation. In some activities the collaboration exists on the institutional level (i.e. radio retreat, retreat for the ill, the Centre of the Lay Spirituality, collection of money for missions). In other cases it is rather the collaboration between persons. The reason for such a situation may be the fact that the majority of members take the apostolic initiatives individually and only some communities – the group commitment.

Margaret Sosinska

CLC SLOVENIA

1. The collaboration between Slovenian CLC and Jesuits is excellent, very close. We feel as one family (Jesuits are our fathers, always prepared to help us). We have a sustained dialogue with the Jesuit's authorities, so the provincial of the Slovenian Jesuits always comes to the introductory CLC-meeting at the beginning of the academic year and on the end of it, he is very open for any kind of collaboration. SJ and CLC collaboration is intense: Jesuits are CLC-group assistants, they organize and guide spiritual exercises, retreats, hold masses, they confess, and never the less they are always ready to hear and sustain us as friends.

2. Till now we collaborated occasionally, so for example we collaborated last year celebrating Xavier-Faber-Ignatius Year, we organized together a special meeting/congress about this anniversary. There also exists a personal contact and collaboration between some members and Jesuits, so for example a CLC member traduces an internet page the Jesuits have (Secret Space).

The new spiritual assistant of the Slovenian CLC (p. Damjan Ristić) has the idea for CLC-ers to help with the spiritual guiding. That's why he organized a seminar and right now some members are trained to be spiritual guides for retreats. There is a big interest for it, not all of the interested could attend the seminar.

3. To such good collaboration between SJ and CLC came probably because Slovenian CLC came to the existence because the »seeds« of Slovenian CLC began when a group of young people under the guides of a Jesuit (p. Marko Rupnik) 31 years ago started to live Ignatius spirituality, Slovenian CLC came into existence and since then many joined CLC. There is a historical bond between our two communities and there has always been a lot of good will on the side of the Jesuits. We thank God for them.

26.1. 2008 is Slovenian CLC-national assembly where we will thank the »old« leadership and elect a new one. We would appreciate your prayers.

Tomaz Smid

CLC Switzerland

In Switzerland it was a Jesuit who initiated the foundation of CLC in 1982, and since then there are good contacts between SJ and CLC in mutual respect and friendship. Always our Ecclesiastical Assistant is a Jesuit.

The SJ supports CLC with an annual financial contribution, and mostly we hold our meetings in the Exercise houses of the Jesuits. A concrete collaboration takes place in accompanying Spiritual Exercises together. We don't have other common projects.

Spiritual guides of our CLC members and local groups are Jesuits but also – and even more - lay people with a special formation.

For the moment we don't see an urgency to treat more in this topic. But in the context of the world assembly in Fatima we will concern probably the relationship between CLC and SJ in a new way.

Dorothee Fischer