

CLC EUROPE – Bulletin



December 2005

Information about common apostolic projects on local, regional or national level in the European communities.

CLC Austria

Housing Project for Ecuador

After Nairobi 2003 **Austrian** CLC underwent a discernment process on a large basis. The immediate outcome was that we decided on a positive answer to the request of CLC-Ecuador for a twinning venture. As an initial action we agreed to support their housing project in the slums of Guayaquil. The small group, of which Ulrich Treipl – one of our Nairobi delegates – is a member, was missioned to implement the project:

In February, 2005 Margaretha, the daughter of another group member, went to Guayaquil, taking part in a building campaign. She was ill prepared but in a spirit of enterprise and came back full of enthusiasm, having promised to return to Ecuador with more volunteers. She kept her promise and in August she took relatives and friends and a student-CLCer with her. And this time they were better prepared, with a little Spanish and a day's briefing by our sending CLC group.

In mid-November the project was presented to a wider public. The aim is to

send more volunteers to Ecuador for an initial experience there and then to channel their enthusiasm towards social work with the poor and marginalised in our own country. Also a better financial basis must be found. So far expenses, especially travelling costs, have been met mostly by the volunteers' families themselves.

Launching the project was a positive experience for Ulrich's group. But for nearly a year the project was so dominant that other vital interests of the group were neglected. So for the next year a team of some group members and volunteers will look after the project. After taking on responsibility Ulrich's group felt little support from the rest of adult-CLC, but that may have to do with our present (lack of) national structures.

In the long run twinning will have to imply more than joining building campaigns. One volunteer has already made a good start by staying longer, touring the country, and making friends with a number of CLCers in Ecuador

Gertrud Zeller

CLC french speaking Belgium

The main (only...) common apostolic project of the Belgian-South CLC is the CLC Student house project.

This project is born more than 10 years ago, from the vision of some CLC members and Jesuits. They sensed the need for the CLC to become more visible and open to the World, they vetaed thus two student houses, one in Louvain-la-Neuve, the other one in Namur (each with 7 students).

The aim of the project is to give the opportunity to young students, in supplement to their studies, to live a richer life, via a life in community a spiritual life, with ignatian spirituality in background a social project (with a limited scope, compatible with the studies)

The inhabitants of the two houses participate also in the life of the student parish.

For each house we have ideally a guide team of two people, one younger, and the other one with more experience. These guides are CLC members, Jesuits, St-André sisters, depending on the years. A CLC member is also managing all the administration and maintenance of the houses.

Often the student houses are very active places, open to the other students. They are also clearly a point of spiritual presence on the campuses, and a sign of the CLC.

It is not easy to have the wider CLC feel his common responsibility in this mission. How could the community express his support?

At each important step of the life of the houses, the General Assembly of the Belgian CLC is requested to confirm that the CLC is sending his members for this mission, and support it, including financially.

Each member of the CLC is requested to promote the houses so that there are no remaining empty rooms at the beginning of the academic year.

Some members are invited to examine the possibility of playing an role as a guide for the houses

Other members may help in the maintenance

All members are invited to support this mission in their prayers

In the real life, the first and last steps are relatively easy to obtain, but for the rest, our community is still very far of our ideal of a common mission. Nevertheless, step by step, we are continuing to try to build the Kingdom of God.

Charles Bokor

CLC France

In the same time as it has been growing, CLC France has been asked and has accepted to take the responsibility of a certain number of apostolic missions. The main ones are:

The management of 2 “houses” offering possibilities to experiment the “spirituality of Ignace” and to take a time off the world to pray and grow in the Christ. These houses are entirely managed by members of the CLC (nominated for 4 years) with the spiritual support and presence of Jesuits. They offer “spiritual services” all year long to CLC and not CLC people, and they act in close partnership with the members of their local Church. The responsibility of these 2 religious centres is in term of budget totally supported by CLC France which is quite heavy as far as there are some employees to pay, the buildings to maintain, etc..

The CISED is a mission within a university located in the north of Paris. The objective is to provide support to foreign students in their studies (French lessons, etc..) and in their integration in France. The CISED has been co-created with the Jesuits and it involves several members of different religious or secular communities. 12 members of CLC out of 40 members in total are involved in this mission helping more than 300 students of 40 different nationalities.

In partnership with the Jesuits, the publication of a monthly magazine called “Vie chrétienne” dealing with in depth qualitative articles on spiritual and society subjects. This Magazine counts 6000 subscribers.

This is true that these apostolic services represent a heavy responsibility for CLC France which counts like in other countries profane people managing their family and professional obligations. But taking in charge these services is also a great opportunity for CLC to grow in a strong partnership with the Jesuit communities, to share with others the richness of the spirituality of Ignace, to be engaged in the Church and to deliver the message of hope and love it has received.

Séverine Grosjean

CLC Germany

Our main focus continues to be offering Spiritual Exercises in different ways. The Formation

programme in Spiritual Exercises prepares people to give spiritual guidance within and outside CLC. For more than 20 years, CLC members have given spiritual exercises in daily life (Annotation 19) in parishes.

A new project is “Salz in der Gruppe” [Salt in the groups] which aims at supporting parishes councils and other bodies in the Church to discover the spiritual dimension of their work and give it more space in their activities. We still don’t know how far this workshop will be accepted. But we have discerned, prepared a concept and people (most CLC members) who could offer this concept to Church bodies – and now we just try it! Our national formation is in charge of planning, coordination and reflection.

A separate office (with a half-time lay person and a half-time priest in charge) is offering spiritual and group guidance and organizing courses especially for young adults.

Our three networks are developing very well: for people in medical professions, for teachers and others working in schools and for self-employed people and managers.

Inge Hoepfl

CLC Slovenia

Before the General Assembly in Nairobi in Slovenian CLC was very active discernment about our common mission in which every local group was involved. However at the end we found out, that we couldn't find any special apostolic project in which all or most of the members would participate, but we managed to see that our greatest occupation is family and leading a good Christian family life. Than the Projects 125 came and we found many solutions for our questions about common mission in it. We generally accepted the Projects 125 and 4 steps, however in years which passed, it became clear that the four steps as such and especially the structure of proposed group meetings in all of our groups were not accepted on the regular basis of local group meetings.

Slovenian CLC is in such a state that most of the members have little children and are mostly occupied in family matters. Most of them also have important and responsible jobs, which occupy them a lot and require most of the time. So for now in our CLC the most common »projects« are of individuals which are supported morally, with prayer and if needed in person by others CLC members.

Together as a project, Slovenian CLC organise - together with JRS- a Pilgrimage to Pohorje (on foot, around 120 km, every summer), where there is the only church in Slovenia of St. Ignatius. With the other pilgrims (usually youth and families) pilgrim with us the also the children from Bosnia and Hercegovina.

We also organize every year some courses of Spiritual exercises (usually for 5 days) together with Jesuits, which are open for anyone who is interested in it.

These projects are on regular basis and we recognised them as good and are well accepted in CLC and in wider society.

Our CLC is trying to become more an more an apostolic community, however we know that we have our limits and difficulties.

Andreja Schwarzbartl

CLC-SPAIN

After the Itaici World Assembly, the Spanish Christian Life Community began to work on the elaboration of its Communitarian Apostolic Projects (CAP). Most of the local communities were involved in this process, so that, for a period of time that covered from one to three years, each local community has been elaborating its local project.

Having the analysis of the social and ecclesial situation of their surroundings as point of departure, and revising their fields of mission, these local communities have reflected on where the Lord called them to serve him and who should be engaged to work in every field of mission. The national Ex-Co proposed the methodology thanks to which these local CAPs could be developed, and every local community, with the aid of the guides and local assistants, adapted the general guidelines that the Ex-Co proposed to their local situations.

The CLC-Spain as a whole did also elaborate its national Apostolic Project. Nevertheless, in this case the point was not to choose and give priority to concrete fields of mission, but rather to stress which our way of behaving, our “way of living and acting as CLC members” should be towards a series of challenges of the present world: the economic and cultural globalization, migrations, belligerence and the search of peace, the crisis of the sense of transcending, the new models of family, how to spend our leisure time, the relationship with the environment and the development policies.

The process of elaboration of the CLC-Spain National Apostolic Project came to

an end during the Barcelona National Assembly in 1999. This Project has acted as a guideline for the later development of apostolic projects and plans created by the local communities.

During the last years the elaboration and application of the CAP have been an important incentive for the life of the communities. This work has played an important role in the clarification of their mission within the Church. As time passed, some local communities have evaluated and reformulated their Apostolic Projects. Moreover, the National Executive Committee has recently created a working team, called “Apostolic Committee”, whose specific mission is to help the communities in this evaluation process (how, and how much they are working in their local Churches, having the fields of migrations and young people as the most important criteria of discernment...). The “Apostolic Committee” also encourages those communities that have not even initiated its process of deliberation towards the elaboration of the CAP, so that they can define their fields of apostolic mission. This committee helps all of them (those communities that already have a CAP and those that have not yet elaborated it) to make use of the “four steps” method (to discern, to send, to support and to evaluate) as the specific way of proceeding of an Ignatian Lay Apostolic Body.

As representatives of CLC-Spain, we would like to share this experience with the rest of the European and World Community, to make available the materials that we have used to those who could be interested on them, as well as to explain with greater detail the process followed in the elaboration of our Apostolic Projects. The CLC-Spain “Apostolic Committee”, that is in charge of supervising and helping the local communities, can be reached by getting in touch with its representatives: José M. Riera

(josepmaria@riera-camps.e.telefonica.net)

and Alfonso Salgado (salgado@upsa.es).

Alvaro Díaz (ex-president CVX-Spain)

CLC Switzerland

First of all I can say that in Switzerland we don't have (already) a common apostolic project or a common mission for the whole national community.

This year we started a twinning with the CLC in Congo. Depending on the process and growth of this partnership perhaps there will be some common apostolic project at the end. For this moment the partnership is a new experience for our community. The first idea is not starting an apostolic project but to enter in a closer contact and friendship with another CLC in a different reality of life and culture.

Now I can describe the way we came into contact with the CLC in Congo:

At the World Assembly in Nairobi our delegates entered in closer contact with the delegates of the Congo and of Ecuador. Both expressed their desire to begin a deeper contact with our Swiss community. Beside that since a lot of years our community has a close contact to a social project in Romania which was founded and is guided by a former member of CLC Switzerland.

Our national team then prepared a common process of discernment. The members elaborated a "program" for three group meetings which all local communities were invited to hold. Each group received concrete information about the three projects (Romania, Ecuador, Congo). Then we followed the steps of a common spiritual discernment to find out where we feel most a personal and common "calling" to enter in a commitment. At the end each local community decided their priority in choice.

In a meeting of the national group coordinators we made a common choice for the twinning with the CLC Congo. One main reason was surely the question of language: for most of us it is possible to communicate in English or French...

The contact with the project in Romania will go on at a personal level.

On a local level we have something like a common apostolic project. There are two or three members of one group who offer spiritual exercises in daily life in a retreat house at Lucerne.

The reasons why we are not at the point to have a common mission are not exactly clear. We are quite a small community with a small number of local communities and members (12 local groups with about 55 members and about 50 other people in contact with the CLC). I personally think that for most groups it is not an actual question because of their common spiritual development. Most are in the stage of entering more in Ignatian spirituality and are not deeply decided on CLC way of life. Another reason seems to me the age of entering in CLC. We have a lot of members who come to CLC in the adult phase (30 – 40 years), and they then are already strongly engaged in their professional life, have their commitments in family, parish etc. A lot of members feel their place in daily life the place to live their personal mission.

Dorothee Fischer

Some news from **CLC Lithuania** : you can find informations about their community on the website : <http://www.jesuit.lt/>

News from CLC Scotland:

GROWTH : We now have a small, but vibrant, new group in Glasgow University and the 'core' of a new young and committed group in Dundee. These groups meet fortnightly. Although we lost our Chaplain some 18 months ago, we do have the valuable support of the Jesuit clergy at St. Aloysius Church, Glasgow. We also have in Glasgow the Ignatian Spirituality Centre and members have been active in pursuing many of the course offered there. There are three very active groups in Glasgow. Two meet weekly - Glasgow

'Ephesians' and Glasgow 'Galatians'. Among other things, these two groups have a special mission commitment to those with addiction problems and we have seen some remarkable fruits of our prayer and mission. The third Glasgow group 'Corinthians' meets fortnightly and among their mission projects in prison visiting. We gather together as a Scottish Community on a regular basis for a Saturday retreat and we have regular Executive meetings to discern the future and deal with urgent CLC matters. Great work has been done by the current President, Dr. Eric Coleman to set us up

with a proper constitution and to establish us with a bank account and subscriptions. FUTURE We are very concerned to build up numbers and we hope to have a group in Edinburgh. 'Galatians' meets on a Friday night weekly and we have a special 'charism' of being an 'Open-Door Group' so that from time to time visitors can join us or those wishing to 'come and see'. This group is convened by Joe Constantine who has years of expertise in Ignatian spirituality, group guiding etc.

Margaret Tejerizo