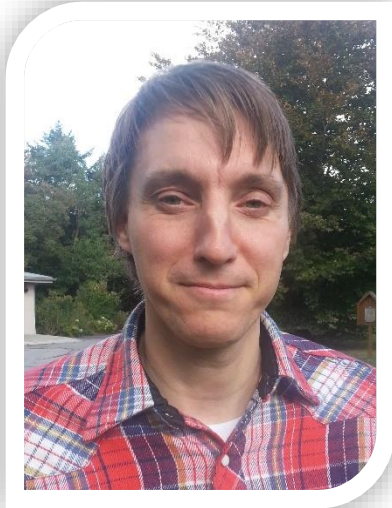


CLC Reflection – October 2014
Trevor Scott, sj



As students, as teachers, or as parents, the autumn season has always been the beginning of a new year. It's a busy time, it's an exciting time... and maybe even a time of anxiety. For CLC at this time of year it is also new, busy and exciting... and yes, even filled with a bit of anxiety for some of us. CLC groups of friends in our Lord are starting to meet once again across the country and many have taken on new roles and responsibilities within CLC Canada. To name just a couple that are most immediate to myself... Leah Michaud is our new National president, and I have taken on the roles of your National Ecclesial Assistant, and the role of Ecclesial Assistant of the Atlantic Region. This is

exciting, but it can also be a little overwhelming.... the e-mails! The dates to remember! The names and roles and acronyms to learn!:)

In the first part of our first National Exco meeting of our new 2014-2015 year we were asked what our hopes and desires were for CLC for the coming year. Among the desires that were shared amongst us these stood out for me: that we *grow* as a National community and spiritual family; that we *grow* in awareness of our gifts to each other; and that we *grow* in connection with one another *and* with others beyond ourselves... our common desire was that we *grow* in all that we are and all that we do in relation to God as a church. There were practical desires too of course. But our deepest desires were to continue to grow in our relationships with one another in the midst of our faith in God, we who are so spread out over large distances, and with others in our communities through apostolic interaction. How can we continue to grow with one another? As a community we have to start with our own personal relationships with God through Christ, don't we?

In my preparations for a recent retreat that I gave I came across these words by the Japanese Zen Buddhist monk, Soyen Shaku:

*"If God exists, God must be felt.
If God is love, it must be experienced
and become the object of one's inmost life."*

This reminded me of the prayer of Pedro Arrupe, the Jesuit Superior General during the 60's and 70's that most of us would know and have taken to heart:

*"Nothing is more practical than finding God,
than falling in Love in a quite absolute, final way.
What you are in love with,
what seizes your imagination,
will affect everything..."*

Here are two thoughts that clearly express in the simplest way that a genuine encounter

with Christ alters our perspective, it changes us... and to be changed, to love in such a way cannot be hidden. The people we encounter in our lives will see that we live with faith and hope in God. To witness such an experience of love affects us.

If we, as CLC, allow ourselves to grow - first in the deepening of our personal relationship with God, and then (and only then) as a community - others will be affected I'm certain. They will want to share in our genuine experience of growth. We only have to look at Brother Roger and his Taize community of France. After having started a small community by himself for the purpose of reconciliation between peoples in the aftermath of WWII it grew and grew in number and became a place of pilgrimage for thousands of young people seeking an authentic experience of faith in our world today. What was in Taize that was so compelling and attractive? God... Christ incarnate in the faith of the Taize community. Through their faith people travelling from all over to be in the genuine presence of God here in the world. Taize is a story of personal faith and growth of community that is given to us to help us on our own way as a faith-filled community of members of CLC. If we genuinely experience God in our lives, genuinely love God in an absolute, final way it will affect everything. Only this can be the foundation of our growth as a community. We will have to continue to discern, plan, and build structures for ourselves as a community. But let's not forget that our common foundation is our own personal lives of faith in God. Let's not build towers, let's grow in loving and caring relationship with God and with one another.