

Preamble

“From generation to generation You gather a people to Yourself so that from east to west a perfect offering is made,” *Ad majorem Dei gloriam – For the greater glory of God!*
The experience of the Assembly has been rich, evocative and transforming for us. The attempt to capture the experience in words is inadequate and thus we rely on graced memory to catch the fire of what happened within us. However, we will try to tell the story.

The Unfolding Grace of the Assembly

Our story began Thursday evening with a mosaic of communities gathered from east to west - holy ground. Ignatius Jesuit Centre is a place that has much significance for CLC Canada. We expressed our gratitude for all who preceded us in CLC Canada. We acknowledged with gratitude CLC Central and its Organising Committee for preparing the way for us. We expressed our gratitude to General Council for sharing leadership responsibility for CLC Canada. Friday morning we shared our regional and local community stories of the graces received since Lethbridge. We did this through images of what we look like and symbols that held the meaning of who we are. This communal experience consoled us and reminded us that the Spirit calls us as community on mission, rooted in the Spiritual Exercises. The Leadership Formation Working Group presented the Assembly with the revised Phase 1 Manual for CLC formation. The Communications Working Group provided us with a new and well designed website.

Through Friday morning and afternoon, the Assembly discussed and discerned recommendations around the Constitution and the three related issues of membership/commitment/financial co-responsibility. Around the Constitution, the Assembly made a decision to postpone the proposed amendments and ratification until the next Assembly. This consensual decision resulted in a consolation for the Assembly. Regarding the issue of membership/commitment/financial co-responsibility, there was given a deeper awareness and clarity around their inter-relatedness to our charism.

Friday evening's presentation of Fr. Adolfo Nicolás' talk at Fatima and the images of the world assembly affirmed us as CLC and challenged us to consider the question of being a prophetic, apostolic community. He said: “To be prophetic we must listen deeply. We need to feel the pain and suffering of others and use our hands and feet for action and service. Real change takes time because it is transformative. There is no prophecy without discernment.” We slept on his words. Saturday morning's prayer ritual using salt and water expressed the pain of the world and disposed us for the keynote presentation, which immersed us in an amazing story of mission. We listened to the witness of two joyful young women, Sarah and Heather, and Fr. Jack Costello, SJ. We heard how their hearts had been broken open as they learned about just being with the refugee claimants at Romero House in Toronto. Fr. Jack's reflection illustrated vividly these points: “the interior and the exterior life are one; prayer and justice are one; the hidden life and the public life are one in prayer.”

This Saturday morning experience was a pivotal point of transformation for our Assembly. Our communal heart was deeply moved and stretched toward our own call to be community on mission with the Risen Christ. From this moment on in the Assembly, we were given new energy and passion to find creative ways to make the Fatima priorities our own. Emerging from the break out sessions which followed, the Assembly expressed the desire to promote and provide the Spiritual Exercises, to encourage the development of leadership, young adult and family CLC's, networking, communal apostolic discernment and financial co-responsibility/commitment/membership. There was an unprecedented desire in some groups to move CLC mission into areas of social justice relating to the environment, poverty and marginalised people. The Regional groups met in the afternoon and were asked to reflect on the impact of the Assembly and begin to discern, decide and act upon the directions needed in their Regions. Finally, the communal prayers and Eucharists throughout the Assembly helped to dispose us for, and to celebrate the graces we were receiving.

Out of the story of the Assembly, the following recommendation is made: that General Council reflect for some time on the prophetic graces of this Assembly, and discern ways to move CLC Canada forward; in particular, to promote and encourage the third pillar, mission, as an integral part of our CLC charism.

WE WISH TO HIGHLIGHT PARTICULAR ISSUES ARISING FROM THE GROUP DISCUSSIONS.

Formation/Leadership and Spiritual Exercises

The house of CLC must be built on a foundation of desire and the Spiritual Exercises. That foundation must be available, affordable, simple and strengthened by diversity and adaptation. From this foundation CLC leaders are discerned and called forth. These need to continue to be formed and supported with leadership gatherings to deepen their understanding of CLC documents, CLC fundamental stages of growth in the context of the Manuals, communal apostolic discernment, and DSSE as a way of proceeding. This process requires human and financial resources earmarked for formation by the General Council.

Membership/Commitment/Financial co-responsibility

The Assembly aspires to be more like the early Christian communities and how they shared resources and how they lived. This means paying attention to our unique charism and countercultural community called to mission, so that membership, commitment/ financial resources are seen and strategised around this larger vision.

They are integrated so as to support the need to focus on and contribute to our common mission. The desire of the Assembly is to overcome obstacles and to find and implement more creative and communal means to address these issues of membership/commitment/ finances.

They must be seen as part of our formation, i.e. to understand what we mean by membership, commitment and how apostolic projects are supported in CLC. Financial accountability should be addressed at all CLC levels. Conversations about membership, commitment and finance raise the level of awareness of CLC as a prophetic apostolic body.

Recommendation: A working group with a clearly defined mandate, and accountable to the General Council on the topic of Membership, Commitment/Financial co-responsibility.

Constitution

The Assembly expressed its appreciation for all the effort and commitment of those who have been working on the Constitution.

Recommendation: A working group of CLC'ers will be established by General Council to continue to work on the Constitution.

Conclusion:

We leave grateful for the experience and graces received at this National Assembly 2009. Existing friendships were deepened and new friendships made as we became more aware of how CLC helps us to become more committed and faithful followers of Jesus. The closing Eucharist with Bishop Gerard Bergie, auxiliary bishop of Hamilton, and his homily on Luke 24:35-48, celebrated and confirmed the movements of God's Spirit throughout the Assembly. We look forward with joyful anticipation to sharing with our brothers and sisters in our local communities and regions. Our story continues. We entrust our efforts and CLC Canada to the will of the Trinity in their continuing work of creating, redeeming and transforming us.

Blessed are your eyes for you see and your ears for they hear. Truly I tell you many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it and to hear what you hear but did not hear it. Hear then the parable of the sower... As for what was sown on good soil this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty and in another thirty. (Matthew 13:16-18, 23)