

Priorities for the World Community

What does it mean to live more deeply and act more effectively as an apostolic body? The issues, challenges, concerns and additional questions emerging as a response to this question from the first and second parts of the Assembly converge around eight inter-related themes, namely –

- Experience of the Spiritual Exercises
- Formation
- Membership
- Commitment to the CLC way of life
- Leadership
- Collaboration between the Society of Jesus and CLC
- Networking of apostolic initiatives
- Financial co-responsibility.

It is important to be aware that these are not self-contained themes: they overlap and reinforce each other in such a way that it is impossible to address any one theme in isolation from others.

Other issues, such as communication, also emerged but, because they are less broad, will be tackled using a somewhat different methodology.

The eight priority themes are clearly rooted in the three dimensions or “pillars” of the CLC way of life, namely, the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius, community and mission.

At this point, the ExCo offers the delegates a brief description of the theme as it emerges from the Assembly's collected voice.

1. Experiencing the Spiritual Exercises. CLC recognizes the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius are a central pillar of the CLC way of life. However, experiences of the Exercises sometimes lack depth, and are sometimes not seen as a priority by members. In some places where demand for the Exercises is high, or potentially high, lack of availability of guides, and issues of affordability limit the number of people who can benefit from the Exercises.

- How can members and potential members be encouraged and assisted to come forward for the Exercises? Are the opportunities offered by existing and new means of accompanying people in the Exercises being used efficiently?
- What more could be done to share the Exercises by others in the Church and in the world?

2. Formation. Formation must become more explicitly oriented towards mission and leadership in apostolic initiatives. Besides, as CLC grows more diverse, by reaching out to different age groups and different social groups such as the poor, or families, or

multi-cultural societies, the established model of formation must be adapted to their specific needs and circumstances. It must help CLC members to sustain their commitment to the CLC way of life at different stages of their lives.

- What are the principal stages of life, social and ecclesial realities, and apostolic commitments that our formation process should adjust to?

3. Membership. In the sharing of our graced history and again in Open Space, it became clear that several national communities sometimes experience real difficulties in recruiting new members. Other communities find that, at a certain stage of their lives, many members find it impossible to sustain their commitment, and leave the community. Furthermore, generally speaking, World CLC tends to attract members from a limited range of social groups and social realities.

What are the likely reasons for CLC's comparatively limited appeal?

Why is it that, at certain stages of their lives, members face a crisis of commitment?

In what ways can the World Community help national communities to be more open to potential members, more representative of the wider church and society, and more faithful in their commitment?

4. Commitment in CLC. Many national communities are in the process of clarifying understanding of commitment to CLC. Yet there is a growing consensus about the need to articulate our harmonise the criteria and practices that lead to temporary and permanent commitment. Although our GP 10 and GNs 1-7 and *The CLC Charism* provide guidelines, practice around the national communities continues to vary widely.

- How important is permanent commitment to the issue of becoming an apostolic community?
- How does permanent commitment facilitate discernment of CLC vocation and sustain faithfulness to this way of life?
- What type of orientation might be needed at world level?

5. Leadership. We recognize that formation of leaders at all levels of our community is an outstanding need. Two dimensions urgently need attention, namely, formation of guides and formation of organizational leaders.

- What more needs to be done to inspire, form, encourage and support guides?
- What measures would help to extend the effectiveness of the leadership course given in Rome, and to encourage other leaders to benefit from leadership formation programmes?

6. Collaboration between CLC and the Society of Jesus. The Assembly clearly wants to inspire both Jesuits and CLC members to grow in their relationships as

individuals and as bodies. It wishes to review the intentions, statements and experience of the past years, so as to identify continuing difficulties and lessons from successful experiences. It sees the need to develop a common “language” of SJ-CLC collaboration, to foster a common understanding.

- What spirit would animate collaboration between CLC and the Society of Jesus? What areas of future collaboration could be identified?

7. Networking of apostolic initiatives. World CLC also desires to deepen and to express its identity as an apostolic body by intervening in world realities. We perceive that injustice is the basis of poverty around the world. We want to focus our efforts more towards restoration of justice and less on conventional charity. We recognize our involvement in two dimensions, namely, *ad intra*, ie, among the communities and *ad extra*, ie, reaching out to the world through global partnerships.

- What issues call for a co-ordinated response by the World Community? Should our existing commitments, priorities, networks and ways of working be revised to make them more responsive to world needs?

8. Financial co-responsibility. Financial co-responsibility is an expression of our being ONE World Community. Being responsible for each other is an essential aspect of living in a community. We see the need to develop existing and new ways of financing apostolic initiatives, financing core operating expenses at all levels, creating economic co-responsibility, raising additional funds for special purposes. What are the prospects of increasing financial co-responsibility? What needs to be done to inspire in CLC members an appreciation of the need and the value of financial co-responsibility?

- What can be learnt from existing funding practices?

Conclusion. In addressing these themes, the Assembly is invited not only to propose practical measures to tackle problems, needs, challenges and opportunities. It is just as important to seek to inspire the World Community to live its charism as an apostolic body more joyfully, more authentically and more faithfully.