

Relive the Fatima Experience

Fatima, Friday 8/15: Day 4

The theme of the day was “How can we move and act more effectively as an apostolic body?”



The change of setting for the assembly to start “working” was just perfect; we did need the change. We gathered outside ☺ under the canopy of the trees in the large garden in the back of the campus. The weather in Fatima was quite pleasant, warm in the sun and cool in the shade with light breeze.

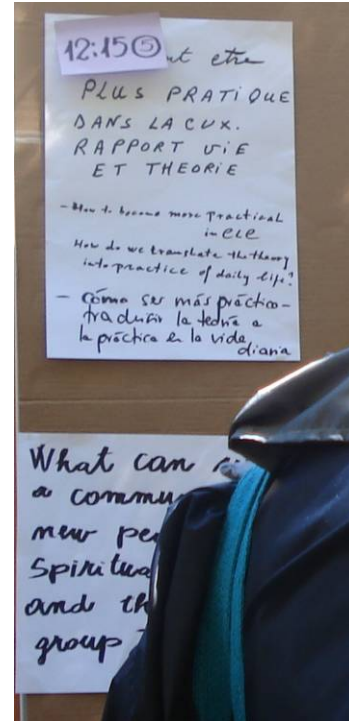
Morning prayers brought us into the contemplation of Pentecost. It was a sudden and immediate sign that the presence of God could not be mistaken. All were embraced by the grace of God, no exceptions. We were invited to read similar signs for our national communities. (Dear friends, can you see the signs with sudden and immediate impacts in your communities?) Like the apostles 2,000 years ago, they received unique gifts from the Holy Spirits and began their journey. The assembly was invited to collect the gifts that the Holy Spirit has bestowed on our communities, and especially on each of the delegates. We were invited to use the gifts so together to build up CLC into a more effective apostolic body of and for the Church.



The “market” of Open Space

Today was dedicated to Open Space, a technology of bringing together people with diverse background and experience for a common solution. Bettina Kolbeck from Germany and Piotr Banach of Polan (there was another person that I could not remember) did a wonderful job preparing and explaining this new technology in 3 languages to all of

us. It looked so chaotic at the beginning, just like a marketing, but it did not take us long for us to settle into the grooves of this wonderful technology¹. All were invited to freely post an issue for the them of the day (How can we move and act more effectively as an apostolic body?) and invite others to the discussion circle to share the experiences and to suggest solutions. Ann Marie, Angelique and I quickly got together to “strategize” ☺ our topics: Ann Marie would focus on Our Way of Proceeding (Discern, Send, Support and Evaluate – this was known at the assembly as DSSE), Angelique would discuss Family in the CLC Way of Life, and I took the issue of The Identity of CLC – How do we answer (precisely) to the question of “What does CLC do?”. There were 4 time slots. Each person could facilitate one session and attend 3. At the end of a session, the facilitator must turn in a report detailing what happened and any suggested solutions. There must be more than 100 postings; there were many sessions on financial in responding to the reality that WEXCO reported to the assembly on Day 2. We were reminded: You have 7 hours. If you come out of the day the same person, with the same knowledge, then you had wasted your time. It was wonderful.



One of the circles in Open Space

We sat together in a circle, laics and priests, old and young together. We shared our experiences. We offered our hearts to one another. We searched for possible solutions. We embraced others’ ideas. We agreed together at the end. Some started the session with a prayer, some did not. I wish that we all did. It was so beautiful to witness the desires in keeping building CLC into a more effective apostolic body unfolding into concrete actions, transcending all boundaries. “Is this what the Church really is?” I wondered to myself. Again, I was confirmed in the fast pace of the day that CLC is that “precious stone”, of the presence of God within and without us, of the guidance of the Holy Spirit for CLC. All the desolations of the previous days seemed to be overwhelmed by the sincerity of all. We recognized the ambivalences and unknowns on the road ahead that we are traveling, but we are assured that it is nevertheless the road that God has called us to take. Father Mecieca’s message to the assembly the previous day was just perfectly timed: Do not fear to move forward.

I took what happened into my examen and wondered: “Is building CLC the same as building the Kingdom of God in the world for me, for us? Is it that CLC is a gift for us to make concrete the Kingdom of God with the humble presence of our community? How are we responding to this call from God for us as a community?” The answer I believe lies deep in my heart and your hearts.

In Christ,

Liem

ⁱ You can read more about it at www.openspaceworld.org. Lois also has a lot of experience on this.