

**Recommendations from the Nairobi World Assembly
to Christian Life Community
“Sent by Christ. Members of one Body”**

Preamble

We, the delegates of the General Assembly of the World Christian Life Community gathered here in Nairobi, Kenya 2003, felt confirmed in our call to become a lay apostolic body that shares responsibility for mission in the Church. We acknowledge the different stages in our CLC experience among our many diverse and rich communities. In this diversity, we as a world community choose to walk together supporting each other in our weaknesses and calling forth each other’s strengths.

We wish to acknowledge, with thanks and gratitude, the felt presence of the Lord in our midst during our journey. As we move forward toward becoming one apostolic body we notice, with humility, our total dependency on God and our personal and collective need for continued conversion in the Lord.

While the current structures and processes in our Community have been important for our life and journey, we realize that they may need to be re-visited so as to better respond to our call to become a more apostolic body. Any changes must respect the various stages of community life that our National Communities are currently experiencing.

In this document which we address to our world and national leaderships and to the world CLC, we wish to encompass and describe our work done at this Assembly and the journey traveled.

We have identified strong formation and leadership at all levels in our World Community as essential requirements in a move towards a more apostolic body.

In Formation

The General Assembly reminds the National Communities and the World Executive Council (ExCo) of the Christian Life Community (CLC) of their responsibility to:

- 1. Encourage and support all its members to engage with the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius;**
- 2. Impart the fact that the CLC way of life is a lived lay expression of the Spiritual Exercises;**
- 3. Use the tools available to CLC, such as “The Charism of CLC”, when formulating or updating its formation programs;**
- 4. Deepen the understanding of the second part of “The Charism of CLC”;**
- 5. Orient our formation programs towards becoming an outreaching lay apostolic body at all levels.**

In Leadership

Our Community continues to need leaders who facilitate the communities' processes of discerning, sending, supporting, and evaluating our personal and communal mission. The capacities we seek in people include:

- ◆ Leadership skills (both as individuals and when working in a team);
- ◆ Spiritual growth through grounding in the Spiritual Exercises;
- ◆ An awareness of their own limitations and gifts as human beings;
- ◆ A willingness and ability to work collaboratively.

The above implies that the people chosen to fulfill these roles will be able and willing to “order their lives” (Spiritual Exercises #21) so that they may be able to offer quality time to the community, irrespective of the level at which they serve.

CLC's movement toward becoming an apostolic body calls for some specific priorities for the World ExCo and developing structures to support the world community at all levels.

Our World Dimension

The World ExCo

1. We ask that the World ExCo proceed purposefully in its leadership of service to our apostolic body.
 - a. It is important that the World ExCo has regular contact with National ExCos offering them their support and inspiration in their discernments, according to the decisions of the Assembly
 - b. To facilitate contact with the National ExCos, we invite each member to serve as a link with a region (ExCo link), ideally with the one in which he/she lives.
 - c. In order to lead the whole community, the World ExCo will not only be present to CLC, but will also promote regular contact with the Church Hierarchy and with other movements of the Church.
 - d. As expressed in the appendix to this mandate, entitled “*CLC – Society of Jesus Collaboration: An Invitation*”, the World ExCo will look for ways to deepen our relationship and enhance apostolic collaboration with the Society of Jesus.

World CLC administration

2. The CLC Secretariat renders an important service to the whole community. The World ExCo members will clarify and, as necessary, reformulate the roles and responsibilities of the executive secretary. Care must be taken to fairly provide for the needs of adequate living conditions in Rome.

Moving toward the experience of one world community

3. The World ExCo request a short annual report from each National ExCo on the situation in its community. A brief summary of all this information together with a report on the work of the ExCo will be sent back to the National Communities.
4. The World ExCo encourage and support national communities to twin with communities in other regions to foster the experience of world community.

Identity and formation

5. The World ExCo will recommend to CLC at all levels a deepening of the knowledge and implementation of “The CLC Charism” (Progressio Dec. 2001) as one of the most appropriate ways of developing and strengthening our identity.
6. The World ExCo will recommend the second part of the initial version of “The CLC Charism” (Progressio Dec. 1996) as an important instrument to define common guidelines for national plans of formation. It will also encourage National Communities to evaluate and develop this document and send the results of this evaluation to the World ExCo for consideration at the next World Assembly.

Public visibility of the CLC

7. The World ExCo will support initiatives in the field of advocacy for social responsibility as effective means to promote social justice. The NGO status of CLC at the UN is an important vehicle for this work.

Regional Presence

National Communities in active relationships with other National Communities in their region have expressed the desire to shape their relationship based on mutual support and particular organizational needs. This regional co-operation should help the National Communities grow into the sense of being part of one world community and help them move toward becoming an apostolic body sharing mission. The practical expression of this relationship is left to each region. As a minimum it would include:

- A means of communication and co-operation among themselves;
- A means of communication with the World ExCo;
- A means of communication between the national Ecclesiastical Assistants (EA) and the World Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant.

This relationship may develop over time into regional teams at the service of both the National Communities and the World ExCo. National Communities are encouraged to discern, experiment and carefully evaluate their process of regional collaboration.

Our National Dimension

- 1. To achieve the task of fostering an apostolic body, all members need a formation that empowers them for mission and active participation in community life. Each National ExCo can facilitate this process through its own formation team or by co-operating with other communities to prepare a formation plan adapted to their reality. Such a plan will also be a fruitful instrument for local group guides.**
- 2. The local group meetings may need to be refocused to better live out the call to be members of an apostolic body who practice personal and communal discerning, sending, supporting and evaluating.**
- 3. The National Executive Councils are called to promote and develop CLC apostolic projects as discerned by the community.**
- 4. At all stages of personal and group development, formation should prepare them for an active membership in a world apostolic community grounded in the Spiritual Exercises and committed to CLC as a way of life.**
- 5. The National ExCo may receive valuable support by contact with communities in neighboring countries. This might include collaborating in service projects and in the preparation of formation plans.**
- 6. We wish to recall that financial co-responsibility is a sign of mature commitment of the community and with the community, which, basically, can only offer what its members have financed. We suggest that this topic be addressed in the discernment at all levels of the national community.**
- 7. It is beneficial for each National Community to have regular contact with the world CLC Secretariat, so as to increase the communication between the different members of the apostolic body.**
- 8. In order to better serve the mission of the Church, the National ExCo promotes stable relationships with the Hierarchy, and with congregations, organizations and movements in the local church especially those who share Ignatian Spirituality.**
- 9. To facilitate growing collaboration with the Society of Jesus, we suggest more regular contact between members of the National ExCo with the Jesuit Provincial and his team. This can promote the implementation of formation programmes and shared apostolic projects.**
- 10. The National ExCo will support initiatives in the field of advocacy for social responsibility as effective means to promote social justice.**

In conclusion, we the General Assembly of Christian Life Community desire that these recommendations will inspire CLC members, groups, and national and world leadership to a deeper capacity to know the will of God and respond to it completely in love and humility (St. Ignatius). We trust that our efforts on this journey will move us closer to the vision of lay apostolic community.

Appendix

CLC – Society of Jesus Collaboration

We the General Assembly of Christian Life Community, gathered in Nairobi, Kenya wish to respond to a request received many times from different levels of governance in the Society of Jesus and from individual Jesuits; “What do we the Christian Life Community expect from Jesuits and the Society of Jesus?”

First we want to express our gratitude for all the gifts received over the many years of our journey. We are grateful for the gift of Ignatian Spirituality which you have generously shared with us following the example of Ignatius. We acknowledge the critical Jesuit presence and leadership during the rediscovery of the lay expression of Ignatius Spirituality as we moved from the Marian Congregations to CLC. This formative work made possible the establishment and strengthening of CLC in many countries all over the world.

It continues today as CLC grows towards becoming an apostolic body. CLC would not be what it is today without the help and collaboration of the Society of Jesus. We want to continue and deepen this relationship until it fully matures as collaboration of two apostolic bodies in service to the Church’s mission.

In places where CLC is not yet present we hope for your support in initiating beginning communities.

In areas where CLC is in its early stages of development, we hope for your continued presence as catalysts of new community formation, together with our lay members.

In National Communities more advanced in the process of becoming an apostolic body, where the above work has left its fruits, lay people are assuming responsibility for formation and ongoing CLC development. Here too, we would like you to continue the above forms of cooperation and explore new ways of collaborating.

- We desire your continued partnership in formative work;
- We want to develop ways of collaborating between our respective apostolic bodies, and be mutually open to shared apostolic work;
- We propose more promotion of each others’ activities in our respective publications;
- We want to establish more institutional relationships between the Society of Jesus and Christian Life Community (e.g. periodic meetings between the National ExCos and Provincials and their teams; building consensus for the appointment of an Ecclesiastical Assistant; planning, supporting and evaluating common apostolic work).
- We want a relationship that will allow a shared apostolic discernment capable of widening the fields of common apostolic mission to include

areas such as spirituality, social action, family, youth, political and professional involvement.

- We wish the on-going contribution from the Society of Jesus in deepening the understanding and appreciation of the lay vocation in the church:
- We wish a relationship that respects and values the differences in our vocations. This will help both CLC and the Society of Jesus together to support vocation discernments especially of young people.

In the spirit of improving and deepening our relationship and collaboration, we invite Jesuits, especially those in formation to participate in the life of CLC through:

- Formation events and seminars;
- National and Regional gatherings;
- Regular participation in local communities;
- Joint involvement in apostolic works;
- Making the Spiritual Exercises together with CLC members;
- Knowledge of basic CLC documents.

To support the work of the World Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant and the National Ecclesiastical Assistants we respectfully suggest the introduction of structures for communication and mutual support at relevant regional levels (e.g. a Eurogroup within the conference of European Provincials).

Finally we would like to stress the over-riding importance of a more clear definition of the Ecclesiastical Assistant role in CLC. This should be developed by CLC working together with the Society of Jesus and especially current Ecclesiastical Assistants. This has been consistently called for by both the Society of Jesus and CLC and will support the on-going work and evaluation of the Ecclesiastical Assistants.

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