



Link between the Executive Council and the World Christian Life Community

Towards Lebanon 2013

Dear friends,

Warmest greetings from the Executive Council of the World CLC!

Following the convocation of our forthcoming World Assembly, sent out Easter 2012, we would like to start with all of you our preparatory process towards our World Assembly in Lebanon 2013!

Our Assembly theme is:

From our Roots to the Frontiers

This is my son, The Beloved. Listen to what He says. (Mk 9,7)

With this theme, we intend to bridge the time from our inception as a lay Ignatian community till the present time – and our 450th anniversary – which we will celebrate in 2013. We will reflect on the journey we have travelled together, especially since Itaici 1998, during which we confirmed our identity as a lay apostolic body. In addition, we affirm and explore our desire to respond to the signs of the time, ready to cross borders and touch new frontiers.

As on past occasions, it is crucial for our world community that the World Assembly is not just the concern of the delegates gathering during those ten days, but is also the concern of all members around the globe. We therefore invite you to join our discernment process, contemplating the reality of our community with its opportunities and challenges. We also reflect on the reality of the world and the Church in which we live today, and seek to discern the special call of our Lord to us. This process will culminate in our Assembly in Lebanon. We pray that we will respond with open hearts and inner freedom to what HE offers us to live more faithfully our vocation as CLC.

The Assembly will take place from 30th July to 8th August, 2013 in Lebanon, close to Beirut. The delegate arrival date is therefore 29th July and the delegate departure date is 9th August.

It will be the first time for World CLC to gather in the Middle East. With our meeting there, we want to give a sign of our solidarity with our three national CLCs there (ie Lebanon, Syria and Egypt) and all Christians living in this region where our faith has its roots. In union with them, we all who long for peace in mutual respect, conviviality and justice. We want to invite CLCers all over the world to open their hearts and minds both to the “treasure” that this

region means for our world community and also to the many challenges people there are facing.

In Lebanon, CLC is already busy preparing for our coming Assembly. We thank CLC Lebanon once again for its availability to host the world community. Our brothers and sisters of CLC Lebanon have already started local preparations - and with a huge amount of joy, enthusiasm and confidence in God. The house where we will gather is Notre Dame du Mont, Fatka-Kesserwan, B.P.1451 Journieh-LIBAN. (see its website: <http://ndmont.com/>). Further practical information will follow over the next few months.

Our worldwide common preparations will include several steps – note that these may include not only national leadership teams but also all members and communities:

1. Nomination of World Exco candidates: Already in our convocation letter, we invited national communities to nominate candidates for the next World Executive Council. The election of members of the ExCo is an important task of the World Assembly. All national communities are invited to propose Exco candidates according to the Criteria for Candidates (see attachment). Nominations need to reach the WCLC Secretariat by 1st Oct 2012!

2. Formation of a World Assembly Preparation and Implementation Team: To facilitate all pre- and post- assembly processes, , we request the formation of a national "World General Assembly preparation and implementation team". The role of this team will be, firstly, to reflect on and discern about all the preparatory material between now and Lebanon. Secondly, its role will be to guide and support the implementation of the graces received in this forthcoming World Assembly in the respective national community. This task should not be left only to those who will be nominated as delegates to the Assembly. The quality of our Assembly depends a lot on the level of preparation and post-Assembly implementation by individual national communities.

3. Identifying Assembly delegates: We are also inviting you to start considering potential delegates to the Assembly according to the Criteria for delegates (see attachment). Nominations of national delegations should reach the Secretariat by 31st January, 2013. Please keep in mind that we have already asked you to send in your proposals for candidates for the next World Executive Council by 1st October. We asked that this be done by 1st October in order to allow (confirmed) candidates to be part of the Assembly delegations of their national communities. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the nomination process of Exco candidates - and to maintain a level of openness to possible changes in your selection of delegates until end of 2012. We will inform National ExCos about nominations of members of their community as soon as possible after 1st October so that they can be taken into account when forming their Assembly delegations.

4. Amendments to General Principles and Norms: National Communities also have the opportunity to propose changes to the General Principles and Norms. These should be submitted to the Secretariat by end of December 2012 so that the World ExCo may have an overview when meeting in February 2013. All proposed amendments will be sent out to National Communities at least three months before the Assembly (ie, in April). You can find a copy of the General Principles and General Norms on the world CLC website under “resources/CLC documents”.

5. Financial preparations: We are all aware, that holding a World Assembly is a big financial challenge for our world community - and for each national community. Thus, we encourage you to start collecting funds for the participation of your delegation. During the

next few months, we will be publishing the local costs, ie costs to national communities. But, in the meantime, please start to develop your own budget, calculating the travel expenses to Lebanon as well as the delegates' fee - which have not been calculated yet but will have to be higher than the amount requested in 2008 at Fátima (ie EUR 620,--). Therefore, fundraising to cover your delegations' expenses should start as soon as possible.

6. Solidarity Fund: As always, we will begin a Solidarity Fund to support National Communities who are not able to carry the full cost of their delegation. To this end, we ask for donations for this purpose. Please find attached a separate letter in this respect.

The following time table summarizes the next steps in the preparatory process towards Lebanon 2013 as planned so far:

- *By 1st October, 2012:* nomination of candidates for the next World Executive Council to be sent by NExCos to the CLC Secretariat, Rome
- *Mid Oct 2012:* Mini-World ExCo meeting to be held in Lebanon, immediately followed by further input to national communities on Assembly preparations
- *November 2012 (approx):* Projects 154, focusing on next year's World CLC Day, will invite all national communities to join together in preparing for our World Assembly, a time of grace for all our community
- *By 31st December, 2012:* Proposals for changes to the General Principles and Norms should reach the Secretariat
- *By 31st January, 2013:* Nominations of Delegates are to be sent by the NExCos to the CLC Secretariat
- *By end-February, 2013:* National Communities requiring financial support from the CLC Assembly Solidarity Fund must lodge their applications by this time
- *February 16 to 26, 2013:* Meeting of World ExCo in Miami, USA: This will be followed by an update to national communities on preparations for the assembly, the list of candidates that have accepted nomination (confirmation of full list) and information about proposed changes to the General Principles and Norms.

Apart from the above formal Assembly processes, we also now take the opportunity to share with you some early reflections on the Assembly's spirit and content. The Assembly in Lebanon will be rooted in the path we have travelled over recent years and especially since Itaiçi 1998 and "Our Common Mission". Our two previous World Assemblies (Nairobi 2003, Fatima 2008) have spelled out some important characteristics of CLC as a *lay apostolic body*. These may be summarized as follows:

- Our many local communities and the CLC one world community are essentially apostolic. Members gather together in small communities which form themselves into one larger community with the important aim of better collaborating with the mission of Christ in the world today.
- The unity of the CLC body comes from the CLC/Ignatian charism. This is a unity which does not require every member to participate in the same activity or apostolic field.
- The mission is common because the members share with their group how they live out their personal daily mission and receive from the group support to live out the same. Thus each one partakes in the mission of the others. This is achieved through the dynamic of Discerning, Sending, Supporting and Evaluating (DSSE).

- Our lay state of life determines our primary mission. This field of mission lies in the activities of daily life (family, work, relationships) into which God has placed us. We seek to encounter God and reveal God's presence in and through these activities.
- Having said that, it is important to be involved in other levels of mission whenever possible. As a body, we are also called to participate in further apostolic activities and/or set up apostolic works at local/national levels.

As a lay apostolic body, the mission of CLC can be described at four levels. Each person is invited to respond to her/his own calling at a particular moment in life and in their own way.

1. Daily Life: The primary mission of the laity is to encounter and reveal God in and through the daily activities of family and work. All CLC members are called to this mission which we achieve through fidelity to our Faith and our CLC vocations. A challenge here might be a particular mentality (even within part of the Church) which still considers this type of mission ('invisible' to some) to be something of inferior value. We know otherwise.
2. Apostolic services: At this level of mission, members are involved in diverse services, eg in the social, pastoral, educational and ecological spheres. We estimate that one third of CLC members offer their time and talents at this level of mission. Often, institutional works of the Society of Jesus (schools, parishes, retreat houses, social institutes etc) are the places in which this mission is lived out.
3. Institutional works: In recent years, a growing number of national communities are taking on the administration or establishment of apostolic institutions (eg schools, retreat houses, a centre for migrants, a home for orphans etc) – and often in collaboration with the Society of Jesus. This brings some visibility and strengthens the sense of “common mission”.
4. International cooperation: Advocacy at the regional and global levels has been further developed lately. Through its working group in New York, CLC, as an NGO, has participated in a number of United Nations deliberations. We have regional advocacy networks set up in Europe (for migration) and in South America (for ecology and migration). We also participate in other networks such as the World Social Forum and the Forum of Catholic NGOs.

Questions for starting and guiding some of our preparatory reflections:

- How have we consciously lived, individually and collectively, our CLC vocations in daily life?
- How do we see our own national community against these characteristics of our being a lay apostolic body, on mission, actively present in the world?
- What signs of growth do we perceive in this respect? Which “fruits” of the process lived especially since Fátima 2008 can we gratefully acknowledge?
- And what are the limitations and threats we face?
- What do we consider as the primary challenge(s) for our national community?
- What are our desires for moving ahead?

Feel free to share with us your ideas and concerns - preferably before 1st Oct - so that we can keep them in mind in our further preparations. You will hear from us again soon after that meeting with some further refinements to Assembly preparations.

We invite you and all your national community to join us in our prayers for our Lebanon Assembly that we may be open to whatever is the call our Lord offers us to embrace!

United in our service and prayers,
for the World Executive Council

Daniela Frank
President

Franklin Ibañez
Executive Secretary

Prayer for our Lebanon Assembly

Heavenly Father, you offer us Jesus, your Beloved Son, and ask us to listen to Him. In response to this gift, we the members of the Christian Life Community commit ourselves to following Jesus more closely and working with Him to build your Kingdom.

O Lord, our World Assembly at Lebanon is part of a long and rich history which you have bequeathed to us. Today, your Spirit invites us to be present at the ever changing frontiers of faith and justice. Relying on the intercession of the Virgin Mary Our Lady of Lebanon and St. Ignatius, we seek to deepen our identity and act effectively as a Lay Apostolic Body in the Church. May your love and grace empower us along this journey.

O God of Love, we ask your Blessings of Peace upon the whole world and especially upon the region of the Middle East. Illuminate the hearts of your children; free us from all bitterness and strife; guide our steps along the paths of Peace.

Almighty God, we entrust our CLC World Assembly to your loving providence. Eternal Father, confirm us. Eternal Son, confirm us, Eternal Spirit, confirm us. Most Holy Trinity, confirm us.

Amen.