

*Newsletter
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June 2008*

Christian Life Community



Reflections on April/May gatherings

Our focus for the April gathering was reflecting on how CLC helped us build and live the body of Christ. We asked members to bring their ideas on what riches CLC brought to their lives. After the gathering prayer said by Rachel McLoughlin, Jocelyne shared with us her journey into accepting the Exco invitation and her discoveries at the January gathering in Melbourne.

One emphasis of the gathering was on communication within CLC: each small group tends to be insular but if we want to be a sign of the body of Christ, we need to establish links with the other groups, the other states and the international movement. Communication plays a vital role in that venture: this is why we have started to email members, launch a newsletter, and instigate a series of gatherings... Another way is to access the national and international websites. What a thrill it is to be able to read about the concerns and achievements of CLC in England or Canada. I am lucky to be able to read what the French speaking world is doing and might take up Spanish just to read what South American movements are doing.

The young people present at the Melbourne gathering kept asking us why we kept our wonderful movement under the bushel and did not share it with the wider community. Their vitality and enthusiasm was very provoking and we asked ourselves what would happen if we became so convinced about the beauty of CLC that we started talking about it and offering it to those who seem

open to it.

Groups shared their reflections about what CLC meant to them and how they would talk about it. I have grouped the main ideas.

Process of the meeting;

The meetings are a precious and invaluable time and place to reflect on the deeper meaning of life. Through sharing deeply and listening to each other, we feel totally accepted. A trust is established which we do not get easily in other aspects of our lives. We connect in truth and speak from our inner selves. Silence plays an important role.

A faith Community:

Being in CLC is a journey of faith in time with other believers. We support and nurture each other in times of crisis and share joys and laughter. Some groups stay together for a very long time and value their belonging to each other.

We try to live Christ centred lives, focusing on our daily relationship with Christ through prayer. As a result we experience inner change and personal renewal. We examine our motivations and discover our deepest desires. We listen to what God wants from us, discovering our individual mission. We gain greater confidence in articulating our faith.

Mission- Individual ministries:

CLC is a way of life. Having discovered what God wants from us, we carry it to our family and community.

Our outreach has many forms depending on our availability, strength and personal circumstances. Some examples:

Spirituality in the pub. Liturgies in the parish Visiting the sick, Vinnies Social justice groups Retreat in daily life	Hospital chaplains Support for alienated families, individual people and our own families. A general lifestyle of caring for people in our jobs and personal life.
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Ignatian spiritual tools:

The awareness Examen Retreats Ways of praying	Discernment Spiritual exercises.
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Connection with a faith wider community

Let us not forget that we belong to a national and global movement. A general discussion was held about how we can extend CLC to the wider community. One strong idea which comes from last year’s newsletter is for each member to offer CLC to another willing person. This set us on course to our next meeting: the art of Spiritual conversation. (Report in the next newsletter).

Talk by Patrick O’Sullivan

Forty people amongst which 8 visitors gathered in the Parish hall on Saturday the 10th for a talk on leadership by the CIC ecclesiastical assistant, Patrick O’ Sullivan who has also written the most wonderful books. Here are some main points of his talk.

Leadership of our own life.

We are first and foremost leaders of our own lives. Through the help of the awareness examen, we reflect on our journey. We get to know who we are and take responsibility for our actions. Otherwise our day is a series of disconnected events which happen to us. A life unreflected is a live un-lived. We don’t take responsibility for other people’s actions; we don’t try to fix people. Jesus is the savior, not me. We need to let go and trust Him for he is much more involved with them than we are. We take responsibility for our own mistakes. We can be aware of what others may think of us but not let that dictate our behaviour. This is living with integrity. When we are in touch with our own truth and in relationship with Jesus, we are in touch with Jesus since He is the Truth. Patrick explained briefly what the Examen was about and stressed the importance of recalling how the Trinity looks upon us with the eyes of love. We become aware of our interior journey:

NAME our feelings through the day, our interior movements.

CLAIM AND OWN them: “I feel angry”

TAME them: it is o.k.

AIM: Where am I going?

Group process and mission:

We meet on the level of the heart and are contemplatives in action. We practice loving attention in prayer and in the group so that the other is fully present. Because of our relationship with Jesus, we listen in faith. Our aim is to always be closer to him and carry on his kingdom. We share on the level of experience and vulnerability.

When power meets power, there is a power struggle.

When power meets vulnerability, there is alienation.

When vulnerability meets vulnerability, there is intimacy. Hearts are touched. The quality of presence in the group, e.g. vulnerability, openness, transparency will determine how we are in the world. The quality of our lives changes.

We share our service with the group but our personal mission has a community dimension because the group supports me in what I am doing. My mission becomes a common mission.

Question time allowed Patrick to elaborate on some of his ideas.

Suffering: Am I prepared to suffer? It is a sign of discipleship. Our attitude to suffering transforms a situation. That is my reality, my truth, where Jesus wants me to be. We accept things that cannot change and allow Jesus the space to console us and thus, our suffering becomes source of life. We name our deepest experiences in terms of our relationship with Jesus. Never lose sight of the relationship, do not become like the rich young man who turned his back on Jesus instead of dialoguing with him about his difficulties.

Friendship with Jesus:

Never forget that because Jesus is completely human as well as divine, He is capable of being changed by our relationship with us. It is a mutual relationship: we are changed, he is changed. We make a difference to Jesus, he rejoices in us.

Leadership;

We can be called to formal leadership by invitation to leadership positions.

Publications by Patrick O'Sullivan: (Available at St. Paul's Bookshop)

"Sure Beats Selling Cardigans"

"God Knows How to Come Back Home"

"Prayer and Relationships"

Dear friends,

We hope everything is going fine in your groups. EXCo has been very busy since the last newsletter organising a series of meetings around the uniqueness of CLC and trying to offer our movement to the wider community. To that effect, we are having an information meeting on Thursday the 19th of June from 7.30 to 9.00 pm in the St Ignatius parish hall. Could you spread the word and invite people that you think would be interested? We would like to have an idea of numbers, so would appreciate an answer to Jocelyne on 83628272 asap as we are offering light refreshments.

We are looking for a name for our newsletter. Could you at your next meeting come up with a few ideas and send them to us? For your information, the English CLC's newsletter is entitled "Refreshing Springs".

Friends in Christ,
SA EXCO

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