



## Christian Life Community Australia

### Important dates:

#### September 22:

Pilgrimage to Sevenhill to celebrate our 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary

We are driving, so, phone Judy if you want a ride.

Meet at 11 am. There will be a working bee, a picnic and mass in the afternoon.

BYO picnic chairs and picnic to share.

#### November 9: End of year mass:

Mass at 6 pm at the Norwood parish of St Ignatius, followed by a shared dinner and guest speakers.

### Dear Members and friends of CLC South Australia,

Here I am sitting at my computer, looking out my office window, listening to the wind and relishing the sight of lush green paddocks of wheat and barley. Having God intimately part of our lives challenges us to be deeply connected to our loving God in prayer and outwardly looking, ready to take loving action in the midst of our daily lives. Sometimes I think this can be easy for us to say but much more difficult to implement in the reality of our busy lives. I am

deeply grateful for the opportunity to be involved in CLC which provides a structure to nurture, challenge and support me in this way of living Ignatian Spirituality.

Members across South Australia are endeavouring to find their way of living Ignatian Spirituality as part of the wider CLC body, which this year celebrates 450 Years of Ignatian Lay Spirituality. A number of different things have happened or are about to happen which build up our skills, our sense of belonging to a wider CLC community and our ability to take action with people on the fringe.

- **Retreat at Sevenhill** – 13 people attended the retreat ‘Inner Peace and Friendship with Jesus’ directed by Rachel McLoughlin, Ann Maloney and Deidre McInerney. A special thanks to these gifted women who generously gave their time without charge.
- **Congratulations to Chris Hogan** who has been re-elected as a consultor on the World EXCO and chairperson of the Asia Pacific region.
- **Congratulations to Maxine Hogan** who was awarded a medal for distinguished service to Jesuit ministry at the Province gathering. A wonderful recognition of her

tireless contribution to CLC Australia.

- **FSE training** – There are 8 South Australian people (6 CLC members) being trained as trainers to give the FSE to others in the wider community. The CLC members being trained are June Duffy, Louise Howell, Jocelyne and Rob Randabel-Williamson, Virginia Mehrrens and Helen Cantwell.
- **Pilgrimage to Sevenhill** – Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September all CLC members, family and friends are invited to go on pilgrimage to Sevenhill to participate in a working bee at the Mary MacKillop cottage, share lunch, celebrate Mass and enjoy some delicious Sevenhill wines. A car pool will be arranged.
- **Action to celebrate 450 years of Lay Ignatian Spirituality** – It is encouraging that a number of groups have taken up the opportunity to take action/ service for celebrating 450 years of Ignatian Spirituality. Some of the things that are happening:
  - Gathering monthly with a group supporting disabled adults;
  - Enquiring to support to refugee families;
  - ‘Walking a Mile in my shoes’ to raise money for Hutt St. homeless shelter;

- Financially supporting a program to build a Jesuit school in East Timor,
- FSE training,
- Building relationships with the Otherway Indigenous Centre.
- **Supporting Paris and Brian after their house was burnt in the bushfire in April** - the harsh reality of what this means is still being experienced. Our prayers and love to Paris, Brian and boys. I am still aware that some of you are keen to assist but we are not yet able to name the most suitable way – please stay connected.

Blessings to all,  
**Judy Foster**  
 Chairperson SA CLC

## **FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS**

*Wendy Baker*



In autumn 2013 my husband and I set off on one of those “post-retirement” driving trips. No caravan or mobile home – we just had our trusty little Nissan Micra, with cabins booked ahead for overnight stops. We decided to spend exactly forty days and forty nights away from home – not that we intended to be wandering in the desert, but rather because we were in need of reconnection with each

other and our spirituality, away from the distractions and trivia of daily routine.

It was an important part of our faith journey, and I soon realised that the biblical forty days is a significant time to be absent. Reflecting on this journey, I asked myself what I had learned about God in this time. Each day was fresh and beautiful and precious, and I saw God all around us. He was in the wind that roared through the melaleuca scrub at night, in the touch of gold on curling waves at sunset, in cliffs and waterfalls, in rainbows and snow and blue mountains layering into the distance. I found Him in sacred buildings; whether cathedral or faded weatherboard. He is in all the spaces between.

And because He was, and is, all around me, he is an invisible but palpable presence. Without outside distractions of everyday life, I really felt that presence and I felt it most closely in the stunning majesty of nature. I could be still and know that He is.

I also discovered that although I could attend Mass anywhere on our travels to pray, take communion and reflect, I felt not the same connection as being in communion with the church community at home. The one exception was when we worshipped in Tamworth with a dear friend who lives there; the person who was instrumental in bringing me to faith. God truly touched me there.

But a faith journey is two-way. It’s not only about what I receive from God, but about how I live my life. Reflecting on those forty days, I know I learned a few home truths

about myself. I had always fancied myself a bit of a gypsy – cut loose, keep travelling on. No, I am not a gypsy. Not a day of that time passed that I did not think of my family and all my friends. So many things I saw, places we visited, where I found myself wishing so much that I could share the experience with the people in my life. I thought I was a loner. “I’d be happy on a desert island as long as I had a book,” I had often said. Well no, I am not a loner. I had a burning need to communicate.

I was surprised that I did not miss all the “stuff” - the goods and chattels, of home life – but what counted for me was my basic physical comfort. A good bed, plenty of room to move, good meals and hot showers. I learned that my husband and I, as much as we love each other, needed our own personal outlets for communication and creativity if sanity was to prevail. Travel can have its own minor pressures and living at close quarters 24/7 away from home base held the odd challenge or two!

Knowing more about myself and my God, I can look forward to another forty day journey – next time, perhaps, to the grand north and west – another journey of faith, sharing and discovery.

### **OUR LONG SHARED JOURNEY OF CLC AND FRIENDSHIP**

*Helen Cantwell*

I was reminded, during a recent visit with Merle Morris, that our particularly rich CLC connection came about through Fred Nixon’s gathering of those of the Emmaus and Hillbillies groups - who enjoy

classical music - to attend symphony concerts, then held regularly, in the Adelaide Town Hall.



Fred had generously moved from Emmaus to support the new Hillbillies as guide. His membership in the community was a model of creativity in generosity. I was delighted to have the memory of those occasions, in the early 1990s, when Fred, Jeff, Diana, Merle and I enjoyed the complex beauty woven by our friendship in CLC, the comfortable grandeur of the town hall and easily acknowledged connection between God and the creativity of classical composers.

Merle is one of those treasured senior members whose age prevented attending the gatherings of the wider community. Yet these 'wisdom' members still find ways of living the CLC charism in their daily lives. Merle is part of the Emmaus group and still managing to meet regularly to share God in their daily lives.

Through my visit, I learned that we still share enjoying classical music together. How I loved seeing her face, beautiful from regular meditation, lit with enjoyed mischief

when we spoke of the humour of 103.9FM host, Christopher Lawrence.

It is an honour and privilege to be connected with these special people who have been such foundational members in Australian CLC.

### **RETREAT AT SEVENHILL 2-4 August 2013**

*Pauline Lergessner  
Loyola group*

This was the first time I'd made a retreat at Sevenhill and I was looking forward to the "break away" to reflect, walk and pray. Though the weather raged outside, within was all peace as we met each other and settled into our rooms with bright quilts and spectacular views.

The team - Rachel, Deirdre, Anne and Judy- made us feel so welcome and had everything ready for us: music, circle of comfy chairs, candle light, warmth, etc. The quiet times between the talks and reflections were balm to my spirit. "Friendship with Jesus", such an apt theme, took me into Scripture and my personal experiences and out into a more peaceful space. The freedom to "walk my reflections" through the gullies, into the shrines and around the vineyards is an experience I still treasure.

My heartfelt thanks to all who made the retreat possible.!

### **CELEBRATING WORLD CLC DAY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA 2013**

Our South Australian CLC region shared an afternoon on 6<sup>th</sup> April to celebrate World CLC day and to launch our 450 celebrations of Ignatian Spirituality. About 20

members gathered in the Norwood Parish Hall to enjoy each other's company by starting with a cuppa and home made treats.

Our prayer for the day began around the beautiful new statute of St Ignatius at the front of St Ignatius Church. This was deeply moving and set the scene for our reflections on the history and charism of CLC. Louise Howell introduced our first session by speaking of CLC history and the core qualities of the Ignatian traditions that call us to make it alive and relevant in the world today. Her pertinent and thought provoking talk was followed by prayer and reflection based on our own graced history of CLC and of our understanding of CLC charism. The shared experience from the group was blessed and rich.

In the last session, members reflected on ways we may choose to celebrate 450 Years of Ignatian Spirituality through some service or action. Many great ideas for action were expressed during group sharing. Members were asked to take this process of discernment back to their groups. Now each group is determining their service/action for celebrating 450 Years of Ignatian Spirituality in their own particular way.





## OUR NEW PRESIDENT

elected in Lebanon

August 2013

Mauricio Lopez from Mexico



**Vice President:** Edel Churu  
{ Kenya)

**Secretary:** Najat El Sayegh  
(Lebanon)

**Consultors:** Denis Dobbstein  
French-Belgium)

Chris Hogan (Australia)

Anne-Marie Brennan (USA)

Josephine Shamwana-Lungu  
(Zambia).



## LEARNING TO BE A GIVER OF THE FIRST SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

*June Duffy  
The Pilgrims*

In June this year several people from South Australia commenced training to become Givers of the First Spiritual Exercises. There has been a growing interest in the FSE within the CLC national community in recent times and this 450<sup>th</sup> year of celebrating Ignatius' life is a fitting opportunity for more people to share in the wonderful gift he left us.

The training consists of three weekend sessions in Melbourne, being led by Father Michael Hansen SJ, author of the newly released "The First Spiritual Exercises – four Guided Retreats". The South Australian group has been meeting weekly in Adelaide to share experiences, prayer, insights and reflections. We are currently making the first of the four retreats together: "Inner Peace in Divine Love". This is an opportunity to reflect on how we have experienced love in our lives: how we receive love, give love to others and how we experience love through the Holy Trinity.

The retreat process is fairly structured but very clear and accessible and requires no prior spiritual "experience" or "holiness"! It is a lovely thought that we are following in St Ignatius' footsteps in making these First Spiritual Exercises as ordinary people from all walks of life; as he intended. Each retreat is completed over 22 days in daily life. About 45 minutes is needed for prayer and reflection each day for four days in the week.

Sunday Eucharist is strongly recommended while making the retreat. There is a compelling dynamic to each retreat, as each Exercise introduces us to many different images of God and our relationship with Him. This not only develops our prayer life but, as Michael Hansen says, "can help to renew and shed light on central elements of our faith". We are following a process involving Sacred Listening, Spiritual Conversation, Discernment, Spiritual Journaling and Ways of Acting which will be very familiar to all CLC members.

St Ignatius of Loyola created the First Spiritual Exercises to help us ask for and receive inner peace. Six gifts are asked for over the four retreats: the gift of unconditional love, the gift of service to others, the gift of forgiveness, the gift of healing, the gift of freedom and the great gift of friendship with Jesus. It is not a requirement to complete every retreat as each stands on its own.

The Exercises are a down to earth way of entering into Ignatian Spirituality. We hope that many in our CLC community and further afield will join us in experiencing this beautiful legacy of St Ignatius.

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Pope Francis called for Christians to start a prayer campaign for peace in Syria and the whole world.

Members of the CLC in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt talked at the recent World assembly in Lebanon about the violence in their countries.

We feel called to pray in solidarity with the people in Syria and the Middle East.

### **Prayer**

Jesus, help to understand that in every life, something good fails, something great ends, something righteous is taken unjustly away, something looms like an abandonment by God. Give me the wisdom to know that You rose from the dead as a sign to us that every one of these “little deaths” is life become new all over again. Be with me in living Your Resurrection over and over again.