



CHRISTIAN  
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# Harvest

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## CELEBRATING A *Golden Jubilee*



*1967-2017*

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**On the cover:** *World Federation of Sodalities of Our Lady, Rome, Oct. 1967. Father Pedro Arrupe, S.J., Father General of the Society of Jesus, Rev. Louis Paulussen, S.J., International Secretary, Rev. Francis K. Drolet, S.J., New York Professional Sodality, Dr. Raymond Zambito, Delegate U.S.A.*



National CLC-USA Office  
3601 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108

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### LAYOUT & DESIGN

Laura Thake Graphic Design

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## Editorial Foreword

### Remembering the Glorious Past

In a statement to the Secretariat for Communications in Rome, Pope Francis said, “Look to the future without forgetting the glorious past.” I thought to myself that this was a great reason for this very issue of *Harvest* as we celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the name Christian Life Community and the approval of our *General Principles*. In his presentation, the Holy Father spoke of building on the past so as to better develop the future. He reminded those present not to get stuck in the past but to move on, taking what is still viable and being open to what is ahead of us. Isn't this what we are called to do in Christian Life Community today?

I have had the privilege of being a living part of the fifty years that span this anniversary. For me, the story began in 1957 when, as a young professional (an elementary school teacher in the New York City Public Schools) I was introduced to Father Francis K. Drolet, S.J. It was Father Drolet who introduced me and urged me to become part of the New York Professional Sodality (NYPS). I am a native New Yorker and was a parishioner of my local church. Even in the 1950s, many parishes offered little in the way of spirituality and service for single young adults. It seemed to me that the NYPS was exactly what I was seeking - a chance for greater spirituality with like-minded adults who also were eager to serve others. Probably you have guessed the next part of my story.

In the fall of 1957, I became a ‘candidate’ in the N.Y. Professional Sodality’s rigorous formation program. The new candidates met regularly on Tuesday evenings at St. Ignatius Church in Manhattan. We covered many topics, were engaged in new forms of prayer, became familiar with Church documents and were introduced to the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. We learned about Sodality’s history as a worldwide organization begun by the Society of Jesus. We reflected on the Sodality as our way of life, our vocation in the Church. Father Drolet challenged us to become **adults** in our faith life and in the Church’s mission. We were urged to serve society through the professions to which each was called.

In those years before the opening of the Second Vatican Council, the Church was stirring and calls for reforms were being heard. Within the Marian Congregations (Sodalities) around the world, efforts were being made to return to the roots of the movement. Pope Pius XII wrote of this in *Bis Saeculari* in 1948. In New York and other



*Harvest Editorial  
Team:  
Dorothy Zambito  
George Willett  
Nancy Head*

places in our country, change was beginning to take place. Far sighted leaders like Father Drolet were prompting and preparing us for the new.

As others have mentioned in this issue, adult Sodalists were listening to the news from Rome during Vatican II. They were studying documents as they were released. They were examining their lives as Catholics, Sodalists, professionals and as family members.

When it came time for the Sodalities of the world to come together, most of us knew that changes would be made to fit in appropriately with the renewal that was going on after the close of Vatican II.

As happens when change occurs, not all are happy and many want to hold on to the past. One example is the name change that was approved in 1967. Many were in favor of retaining Sodality instead of the new Christian Life Community. Some others resisted the *General Principles* because they felt Our Lady’s position had been down-played. Renewal and revision and re-formation were necessary, not only on paper but in our hearts and spirit.

A short while ago I mentioned how closely I lived these years of change and growth. Both my husband Ray and I journeyed together in Sodality and CLC for all the fifty-two plus years of our married life. We met as members of the New York Professional Sodality. We formed the Locust Valley CLC when our family was growing. Both of us were National CLC Presidents and both served as delegates to world assemblies. Ray was the senior delegate to the Assembly in Rome in 1967 when CLC and the *General Principles* came to be. It has been a grace-filled journey and I am most grateful.

Part of our ‘glorious past’ includes a strong formation that became like a cornerstone in our lives. Another segment of our history is made up of numerous members of Sodality/CLC who were community/family to us. Still another part of our story is the personal and community

growth and support we experienced along the way. None of these can or should be forgotten because all contributed to who we have become and also to what CLC looks like today. They will also be remembered as CLC forges forward.

I pause and breathe deeply as I remember and raise to your consciousness three of our deceased CLC family: Robert Cos Costello, S.J.; Sr. Eileen Schulenburg, SC; and Rick Kunkle. *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.* May comfort and peace be with their loved ones. (See pages 12-14 for more.)

#### ***Within this issue:***

In “Remembering,” **President Ed Plocha** calls to mind those CLC saints that passed recently. He calls us to remember and celebrate our Ignatian spirituality, CLC as a way of life, our discerning style and the challenge to see God in all things with *new eyes*.

Our guest **Regional Ecclesial Assistant Jim O’Brien, S.J.** presents a brief history in “Sodality, Christian Life Community and the Role of the Society of Jesus.” He shares some thoughts about leaders in our movement/community. Even as CLC and the Jesuits have separate charisms, Jim tells of some of the common ground that brings both together.

“International Christian Life Community” was written by **Raymond Zambito** in the 1990s. In the article, he, too, tells some Sodality/CLC history. He was the senior delegate from the United States to the World Federation of Sodalities Delegate Assembly. He shares some of his memories in preparation for and reflections after this historic meeting.

Once again, **Marie Schimelfening** tells of her personal experience and some of her findings while researching past CLC documents in “A Long Graced History.” She, too, shares some stories about the 1967 Sodality Assembly and some of her memories of Father Louis Paulussen, S.J., an international Sodality leader.

“A Happy ‘Yes,’ One Community’s Response,” was written by **Ed and Marilyn Bourguignon**. It describes early adult Sodalities in Cleveland. Ed and Marilyn tell of young couples being supported and accommodated in their communities even when their children were little. Family retreats, celebrations within the community and readiness to accept a new name and new guiding principles are shared with us.

**Ana Muller** of the South Miami Region shares some CLC world history in “From Marian Congregations to Christian Life Community.” Ana goes on to relate some of the history of the Marian Congregations in Havana, Cuba.

She then tells of the growth of CVX in Miami and the Jesuit leaders who guided them on their journey.

Our **World CLC Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant Herminio Rico, S.J.**, shares some thoughts in “*General Principles: CLC’s Principle and Foundation*.” The GPs “outline our charism” and “are the guardians of our identity” writes Father Rico. He encourages a love of the *GPs* by getting to know them better.

**Barbara Rudolph**, in “May Our Vessels Be Filled,” likens Christian Life Community to a piece of pottery, a larger cylinder vessel with a couple of attached smaller bowl-shaped vessels. “The tall vessel is God’s gifts to us.” The smaller ones are graces (‘spillovers’) we receive. Barb shares some of her memories and asks questions for us to consider regarding memories of community, of leaders and of national or regional or cluster meetings. Has CLC helped fill your vessels?

In “Reflection on the *General Principles*,” **Bethany Vu** relates the importance of the GPs as “the foundation of my way of living out my faith.” When she prayed over the *General Principles*, she realized she was already living them.

**Mary Ann Cassidy** tells of her invitation to join Christian Life Community and of Father Dan Fitzpatrick’s help in her formation. In “Growth in the CLC Way of Life” Mary Ann also tells of the importance of the *Examen* prayer and the Holy Spirit in discerning the paths of mission for her.

Included is a listing of Sodality/CLC world meetings and their respective themes.

With love and gratitude to our Lord,

*Dorothy M. Zambito+*

**See Page 20  
for Subscription  
Information**

### Remembering

Try to remember the kind of September  
When life was slow and oh, so mellow.  
Try to remember the kind of September  
When grass was green and grain so yellow.  
Try to remember the kind of September  
When you were a young and callow fellow,  
Try to remember and if you remember then follow.

Try to remember when life was so tender  
That no one wept except the willow.  
Try to remember when life was so tender  
That dreams were kept beside your pillow.  
Try to remember when life was so tender  
That love was an ember about to billow.  
Try to remember and if you remember then follow.

Deep in December it's nice to remember  
Although you know the snow will follow.  
Deep in December it's nice to remember  
Without a hurt the heart is hollow.  
Deep in December it's nice to remember  
The fire of September that made you mellow.  
Deep in December our hearts should remember then follow.

“Try to Remember” from *The Fantasticks*

Rather unconsciously, I slipped into a free association when I read the title “Remembering” in *Projects 166*. In the 1970s I saw an off-Broadway musical, *The Fantasticks*. It is a love story that provides some insights into the nature of relationships, rites of passage to adulthood, dealing with some disillusioning experiences of the real world to which we're all subject. The musical's signature song is a lyrical tune, “Try To Remember” that I quote above. The song's message is that when confronted with life's icy realities (December), it's good to return to the warm glow and feelings we had in September. The original fervor we felt in first love graduates or reaches other milestones on which we set our hearts. In short, the exuberance we felt any number of times with happy new beginnings or the wonderful resonance of clarity and deep satisfaction comes from having reached desired goals or landed at destinations we had set out for ourselves. Remembering these occasions could be a real morale booster especially at times when we're down or in an emotional slump. They could provide us with the impetus, the encouragement and the incentive to continue. Knowing where we came from and how we got there can offer direction and stimulus for moving forward and staying on course.

Remembering is something we do in families with birthdays, anniversaries and the like. We're all used to that. In the religious faith context, remembering is also very important. It is something we do at Mass, in our CLC group meetings, on feast days. We remember persons, events, special occasions. By remembering, we honor these special people, special occurrences, our faith and our traditions.



*Ed Plocha*  
*President*

We remember the living and we remember the dead — those who have passed from this life into their new one. We are united with them as members of the Communion of Saints which, frankly, has become more of a reality for me as I've grown older.

In this issue you will find reflections on several CLC "Saints" who died in recent months: Sr. Eileen Schulenburg, SC, Ecclesial Assistant of Metro New York CLC, who died on January 21st; Fr. Robert "Cos" Costello, S.J., former National Ecclesial Assistant, who died on February 21st; and Rick Kunkle, Past President of CLC-USA, who died March 4th.

We honor these CLC brothers and sister by celebrating their lives and their time spent with us on this earthly journey. We miss their physical presence among us, and we are saddened at not having them with us. On the other hand, we remember and rejoice. They are still with us in glory, and remain in our thoughts and in our hearts.

We remember and celebrate as a CLC body. In 2013-2014 we celebrated 450 Years of our Ignatian lay community (see *Projects 152*). Now we are invited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of another major CLC landmark, the approval of the *General Principles* and the name Christian Life Community. This occurred at the 4th Assembly of the World Federation of Marian Congregations in Rome in October 1967. This event, as noted in *Projects 166*, "marked a key step towards rediscovering Ignatian spirituality and affirming the lay character of our community." As we approach the golden anniversary of this event, we are asked to "remember these gifts with gratitude." (*Projects 166*) We remember the *gift* of CLC and our journey both as individuals and as a national community.

We remember as a community so that we can move forward in step with our charism. We need to know where we've come from, our original intent in choosing to follow this way of life. We look at the *General Principles* for guidance as we proceed, and check to see that the "what" that we are doing and the "how" we are doing it are in step with our charism and "way of proceeding." It's a time to take stock, reflect, re-set. We return to the original fervor of joining CLC especially if it has chilled a little. The *GPs* provide us with a road map and a compass for our journey.

In the larger context this remembering is consistent with the discerning lives we live when we go back to the Principle and Foundation. This is our *vision* statement as members of the Ignatian family. We use the Principle and Foundation to answer the questions, "What is it all about?" and "Why am I doing this?" It provides the context, the main reference point, the "what" and the "why" for my choosing to embrace this Ignatian way of proceeding. "Our only desire and our one choice should be this: I want and I choose what better leads to

God's deepening life in me." (adapted by David L. Fleming, S.J.) Then the question becomes, "How best to do this?" This is what discernment is all about.

A discerning life is really a state of mind. It means that we are attuned to the movements of the Spirit within us, and respond accordingly - to the best of our ability. Our remembering provides direction from our past, in our present and into our personal and communal future. We're not restricted by the past but use it to focus, inspire and guide. To be men and women for others is an ever-expanding role that includes not just humankind, broadly defined to include all peoples everywhere, but also the invitation and challenge to accept the fact that we are called to be in right relationship with all of creation.

Ultimately, of course, the challenge is to see God in *all* things and to be present to God on God's terms. To do this we constantly need to readjust or fine-tune our perspective on life, adapting to the many surprises that life presents. Fr. Pedro Arrupe prayed, "Grant me, O Lord, to see everything now with *new eyes*..." I think that remembering provides context and perspective, helping us to see with *new eyes*.

Let me end by lifting another Broadway tune, from *Godspell*, for your reflection. This one is a direct paraphrase of St. Ignatius. (*Sp Ex #104*, Third Prelude) We pray:

"Oh, Dear Lord  
Three things I pray  
To see thee more clearly  
Love thee more dearly  
Follow thee more nearly  
Day by day."

Amen!

# Sodality, Christian Life Community and the Role of the Society of Jesus

by Fr. Jim O'Brien, S.J.

If you were asked, "What is a 'Sodality'?" you would probably describe it as a women's organization in the Catholic Church, meeting every week or two for prayer and, on regular occasions, some practical activity like keeping the church building clean. Historically speaking, you would be correct, if you went back to the time of the French Revolution. In such a period of religious persecution, women especially found this a way to experience support for their faith, continuing to do so when parish life became viable again.

The roots of Sodality go deeper than this though. The original Sodality came into being in 1563 at the Roman College of the Society of Jesus, organized by a Belgian Jesuit preparing for ordination, John Leunis by name. The Jesuits had been founded in 1540. In 1547 they began to invite laymen to study with, and often to be taught by, their enthusiastic younger members. These "colleges" (residences or places for reading together) located at larger "universities," grew in due time to be separate educational institutions. By the early sixties the Roman College, the present Gregorian University, had already become the flagship of what was to constitute an extraordinary and influential system, numbering more than 800 schools worldwide by the time of the Suppression of the Society in 1773.

And where did that first Sodality fit into the scheme of things? It was a group of companions (*Sodales*) who came together for prayer and spiritual development, with a special devotion to Mary and an apostolic outreach to street kids, teaching them the truths of the faith, for example, or to the homeless, the seriously ill, or other marginalized people in civil societies not yet capable of institutionalizing such services. Sodality did become an important, even an essential aspect of Jesuit education, however, continuing into our own day. The groups were often large, dependent for size and vigor upon Father So and So, their moderator.

It's obvious, don't you agree, that Sodality manifests many of the characteristics of Christian Life Community, but not all. To factor in some of these latter features, a shorter historical reference may be helpful. In 1947 Pope Pius XII sent a communication to the Jesuit headquarters in Rome. It was entitled *Bis Saeculari*, making reference to a papal document two centuries earlier which recommended an emphasis on Sodality formation and way of life. Pius recalled how important this practice was to his own vocation, and asked that there be a renewed effort on spiritual growth in Jesuit education and apostolic praxis.

Notice that this was seventy years ago, a full decade before Pope John XXIII announced the Second Vatican Council and twenty years before the CLC World Assembly we are celebrating today. The Jesuits did honor Pius's request. There was serious attention exercised in and from the Jesuit Curia; Americans like our own Fred and Betty Leone, Fr. Nick Rieman from Detroit, and Edith Darrow, the founder, years later, of the CLC group in Martinsburg, West Virginia, were instruments of the Holy Spirit in helping to fashion the emerging profile of CLC in those early years before and after the Council. Not that we have been left on our own since that time. To reflect on the intervening series of World Assemblies is to experience the Spirit almost visibly at work, teaching us in learnable steps who and how we are to be as World CLC in the Church and world of the emerging future. Our charism we have been taught is to be lay, prophetic in our apostolic concerns and public outreach, communally discerning at every level of our community interaction. In a word, we should seek to make Christ Jesus and his style of generous living and loving present for others both in our interpersonal contacts and social interactions.

Is this to say that CLC has now reached a level of maturity such that it is now called to proceed independent of the Society of Jesus? I would hope fervently that neither CLC members nor the Jesuit order come to such a conclusion. Beyond the fact that we have been fellow travelers for over four and a half centuries, our separate charisms, rooted as each is in the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, have far too much in common to accept such a supposition. Thanks to Jesuit scholarship of the past fifty years and more, the power of the directed retreat has been rediscovered--REMEMBERED?? Now this wonderful grace is spreading throughout CLC and among other alert and forward-looking Christians, inviting all of us into a creative and interactive growth of the Kingdom in our midst.

At the international level there are many indications of firm and mutually supportive juncturing between the two bodies, e.g. CLC's central administration is located in the Jesuit headquarters in Rome; recent Jesuit Superiors General have accepted the invitation to fill the role of World Ecclesial Assistant in CLC and our National ExCo is in ready contact with the Jesuit Conference in this country. If it were a wine-tasting contest, you might have a hard time identifying one or other of CLC's *General Principles* over against a passage from one of the recent Jesuit General Congregations.

As you celebrate World CLC Day, I hope it will present the opportunity for entering into CLC's past history and carrying it more consciously into your and its future. We stand in such a rich and wondrous tradition! May today send you back to your small group gatherings with an eagerness "to connect the dots" more fully, desiring perhaps to explore the *General Principles* together, to grow in Pope Francis's vision and practice of Church and to renew your praying of the daily *examen*. May none of these feel like a burden, but rather as a fuller living of the greater glory of God!



*Fr. Jim O'Brien, an emeritus member of the Philosophy Department at Wheeling Jesuit University, has been the Ecclesial Assistant for the Mid-Atlantic Region (MARCLC) since 1992. He remains in continuing contact with the Alumni Association and with the vibrant justice activities at Wheeling Jesuit.*

# International Christian Life Community

By Raymond F. Zambito, DDS, EdD



Raymond F. Zambito, DDS,  
EdD.

(The following article was written by Ray Zambito in the late 1990s. Ray was a committed Sodalist/CLC'er from 1955 until his death in 2012. He served CLC-USA as National President and was a frequent speaker and writer on topics related to Sodality and Christian Life Community, especially the laity's role in Church and society. Ray had the privilege of being the Senior US Delegate to the World Federation of Sodalities Delegate Assembly in Rome in 1967 when Sodality was renamed Christian Life Community and the Common Rules were replaced with the General Principles.)

Christian Life Community is a worldwide Catholic lay association, chartered by the Holy See. It is a continuation of the Sodalities of Our Lady (originally called Marian Congregations) and was started by a young Jesuit father, John Leunis in 1563. Prior to these early Sodalities, we find their origin in groups of lay people before and after 1540, the year the Society of Jesus was formed through the initiative of St. Ignatius of Loyola and his companions, and inspired by his *Spiritual Exercises*.

The Sodalities were formed in the schools and colleges founded by the Jesuits as its members were missioned around the world. These educational institutions were male-oriented, and so were the Sodalities. The Sodalities grew extensively, and in 1584, the Holy See gave its first approval and named the Roman College group *Prima Primaria* Sodality. All others were to be affiliated to it in order to establish authenticity.

In addition to these student Sodalities, adult groups soon developed in every city the Jesuits had established a college. These groups were for men who were professionals, teachers, doctors, officials, artisans, farmers and laborers. Some authors attributed to these adult Sodalists an extraordinary participation with the Jesuits in building the Catholic Counter-Reformation as a new social order in a Protestant-changing Europe.

In 1773, the Society of Jesus was suppressed by the Holy See "to keep peace among Christian Princes." Sodalities now came under the jurisdiction of the local bishops and religious orders who gradually adapted these groups to their specific spirituality. The Sodalities and their unique charism, the *Spiritual Exercises*, diminished or disappeared.

The Society of Jesus was re-established in 1814, and once again Sodalities came under their jurisdiction. During the years of Jesuit suppression, the United States was experiencing great growth. The Bishops mandated that the Society of the Holy Name of Jesus was the main organization for men of the parish and that Sodalities of Our Lady would be the primary organization for the women of the parish. Under this arrangement, Sodalities took on a form not originally intended by the Jesuits. In Jesuit schools and colleges and parishes, male Sodalities continued to grow. In the United States the combination of female parish groups and the male Jesuit Sodalities grew to the thousands. A main office was established by the Jesuits in St. Louis in 1900. As a result of these diverse spiritualities in the US, confusion existed as to what constituted the "real Sodality."

In 1948, Pope Pius XII, himself a Sodalist for fifty years, addressed the Sodalists of the world in his Apostolic Letter, *Bis Saeculari*, asking them to return to their original spirituality, derived from the *Spiritual Exercises*. This request was taken seriously but experienced unevenly.

Within Jesuit schools and colleges Ignatian spirituality prevailed for the male population. It was not until 1954 that a mixed gender Sodality of professional men and women was established in New York City by Father Francis K. Drolet, S.J. The goal of the New



Dr. Ray Zambito  
presiding at Sodality  
Congress of the Lay  
Apostolate – mid  
1960's.

York Professional Sodality was to form professional men and women through the *Spiritual Exercises* to grow in love for Christ and their faith and to use their skills to build a more just Christian social order. A two year formation program was followed by a discernment to make a lifelong commitment to the movement. This commitment was formal and public.

In 1959, the International Sodality Congress was held at Seton Hall University in New Jersey. During the Congress, serious questions arose regarding our identity, the name of our movement and its many faces that continued to cause confusion. Our brethren from Europe and South America who followed the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* could not understand the varieties of Sodality they encountered and wondered about us in the USA. This 'voice' continued to be heard until a study group was formed to consider the name and the impact various spiritualities had on the centrality of the movement since all Sodalities of the world were linked via the Roman affiliated *Prima Primaria*.

During 1962-1965, under the inspiration and leadership of Popes John XXIII and Paul VI, Vatican Council II was in session, as a hope-filled "New Pentecost" for the Church. Simultaneously, and encouraged by the Council's decrees, the Sodality Secretariat in Rome called upon its thirty-eight National Federations to collaborate in preparing a more contemporary Rule of Sodality life that restored its Ignatian Charism, the *Spiritual Exercises*, retaining what was essential in the old Sodality rules and bringing the new more fully into line with the signs of the times and Vatican Council II Decrees on The Laity and The Church in the Modern World.

The time now was October 1967. Two very important events for the laity were taking place in Rome. The Third World Congress of the Laity was in progress and immediately following it, our World Federation of Sodalities Delegate Assembly with delegates from the thirty-eight National Federations. Fortunately, many attendees from the Congress of the Laity were also Sodalists who brought to our Assembly their spirit, energy, and their sense of "the people of God" as expressed in the Vatican Council.

movement's new guiding ideals and goals, entitled *General Principles*. The final decision of the Assembly was the vote which changed the name "Sodality" to "Christian Life Community." When the Holy See gave papal approval for the changes, the document stated:

In their desire to better serve the Church, the delegates of the Sodality General Council chose to adopt the new name, **The World Federation of the Christian Life Communities (WF-CLC)**, being convinced that this title better explained the reality and the internal dynamism of their association, without removing any of its specific elements.

Recently, the name was shortened, with approval from Rome, to **World Christian Life Community**.

The meeting in Rome was indeed strengthening as we met and shared with Sodalists from all over the world. We found out that we were all on the same wave length. My favorite photo of that meeting is one of me talking with Father Pedro Arrupe, the then Father General of the Society of Jesus. I was fortunate to have been the senior American delegate of the five from the USA.

On the American scene today, our numbers as Christian Life Community are more modest, with fewer schools and colleges. A good number of former adult Sodalities have crossed over the "Rome-approved Renewal Bridge" now known throughout the world as Christian Life Community. We are growing like the post Vatican II Church with its developments and challenges. We are no longer made up of large groups of individuals, but a world of small faith-sharing communities, inspired by the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* and dedicated to growth in the faith developments of the Church and to a discerning way of life essential for our ultimate goal: a commitment to a mission of service in today's Church and world.

# A Long Graced Journey

By Marie Schimelfening



Marie A. Schimelfening has been a Sodality/CLC member for over fifty years. She served as CLC Executive Secretary (1971-1975) and as Executive Director (1975-1980). Marie was a delegate to several world assemblies and was World ExCo Secretary (1982-1990). She serves as a CLC NGO representative to the United Nations in New York. She is a member of the Nick Rieman, S.J. Guides CLC and a guide for the Companions CLC, both in Detroit.

In preparing for our World CLC Day celebration in Detroit on Remembering, I was asked to give a presentation on the theme. It was good for me to not only re-remember, but also to look back at some of the history. 1967 just did not happen overnight. It was a history that began way back in the fifteen hundreds. I began to re-read a few Sodality and CLC pamphlets that I still had in my files. To my great surprise I found a copy of *Acies Ordinata*, Autumn of 1967. What a treasure! It was the name of our world publication before it was changed to *Progressio*. It outlined the preparation for the world meeting in Rome in 1967. At that particular time of our history, thirty-eight nations were present at that assembly. Today we have over sixty.

The other key document I found and read was the *Progressio Supplement* N. 14, June 1979. The title was GOD WORKS LIKE THAT: Origins of the Christian Life Community, by Louis Paulussen, S.J. In 1951 he became the head of the central secretariat for Sodality in Rome. He was asked to write this history and a publication that I wish everyone could read. He wrote about the rules that members lived by, dating back to 1540 and the first set of rules from 1574. He states, "Likewise, the *General Principles* were not prefabricated behind a desk. They are the fruit of living experience. ... All of them followed the orientation of Pius XII and so there began within the movement a complete revival of the Exercises, the original source of the authentic CM (Marian Congregations)."

The renewal of the rules began in 1959 with a world-wide consultation ensuing until 1964. Father Paulussen stated, "Little by little the main features of our *General Principles* appeared." They could have been presented to the General Council in Bombay in 1964. When Vatican II had finished its work and the Third World Congress for the Lay Apostolate was going to be convened in October 1967, the Executive Council decided to have our assembly in Rome immediately after the congress.

The time between 1964 and 1967 was very productive. New consultations with several countries produced new suggestions and proposals. The draft of the Principles became better - short, simple and clear. In these years we arrived at a consensus as regards composition. The Preamble is much more than just an introduction. It is the center, the core of everything, the heart of the matter.

I was so privileged to have had the opportunity to meet Fr. Paulussen and to participate in meetings with him as well. He truly is one of our saints.

Our remembering the history of CLC as we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of re-naming our movement from Sodality (in some countries Marian Congregations) to Christian Life Communities is exciting and awesome.

My personal remembering: In 1967 I was very active in the Sodality Movement in my parish and President of the Sodality movement in the Archdiocese of Detroit. That year several of us were planning to make a pilgrimage to Italy and other places. We heard about the World Sodality Meeting in Rome and wondered if we would be able to attend. Fr. Raymond Skoney, our diocesan moderator and I received notification that we could come as observers for a couple of days. That was exciting! We had the opportunity to also meet with our US delegation. I can only recall two: Dr. Raymond Zambito from New York and Dr. Charles Wohl from Toledo, Ohio. To this day I can remember Dr. Wohl standing before the assembly and speaking with great passion about the spirituality of our movement. He spoke about how important it was for him to make the *Spiritual Exercises* every year because of his commitment to Sodality and its Way of Life. I truly believe because of his witness, our *General Principles* state that the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* is "THE" specific source of our spirituality.

Little did I know that in 1971 I would be moving to St. Louis to work at our National CLC Office. I believe that I was in Rome in 1967 in preparation for my own journey in CLC. In the words of Fr. Louis Paulussen, S.J., "God works like that." He quoted what Karl Rahner, S.J., wrote shortly after the last session of Vatican II: "In Christian spirituality one cannot divide the old and the new into various parts. The reason is that what is new is authentic only if it preserves what is old, and what is old retains its vitality only if it is lived in a new way." This is a great quotation for us about the *General Principles* and how we live our life in CLC.

# A Happy “Yes,” One Community’s Response

By Ed and Marilyn Bourguignon

In 1948 Pope Pius XII issued an apostolic constitution, *Bis Saeculari*, to the Sodalities of Our Lady. He asked them to stop trying to be a mass organization and to go back to their source, the *Spiritual Exercises*. This was perfect timing for us. Soon after that we belonged to high school, college and post-college Sodalities which were renewed. The place was right, too. Father Joe Schell, S.J. at John Carroll University began to offer preached eight-day *Spiritual Exercises* retreats to college Sodalists. Father Nick Rieman, S.J. formed both a men’s Sodality and women’s Sodality, and later a couple’s Sodality at Gesu Church. For us Sodality was never just a group we belonged to, but a way life we lived.

In January of 1961, Ed came back to Cleveland from service in the army. We started dating and were married in September of that year. A whirlwind courtship for sure, but we had so many values, beliefs and Sodality in common. When Sodality renewal broke through the top in 1967 with the new *General Principles* and a new name, we were members of the Family Life Sodality. This was a group of couples with young children. They had left two adult Sodalities to form a community in which they could support each other in their sometimes frantic vocation to marriage and family life. We joined the group when we saw that this was the kind of community we needed. The change from Sodality to Christian Life Community was not a problem at all for our Family Life Sodality. In fact, it affirmed for us who we were and what we hoped to become.

The new *General Principles* were in the spirit of Vatican II. Our Sodality knew about Vatican II because we all got baby sitters every few weeks and went off to John Carroll to learn about the documents coming from the Council. That the Sodality wanted their new principles to be in touch with this new thinking in the Church seemed like a good idea to us. It told us that Sodality was alive, thinking with the Church and willing to update itself.

The new changes stressed that we were a lay movement. That was fine with us. We were right in the middle of living a lay life, busy with marriage, kids, jobs and trying to help others. We knew what lay people who supported each other could do for the Church and for their community.

The new changes also put a lot of emphasis on the *Spiritual Exercises*. We thought this was good too. We had all made eight-day retreats when we were single and it was

easier. Now we took care of one another’s children so parents could make a retreat together. Then we found a retreat center nearby which had a camp for the children so that the parents got a retreat while the children got a week at camp. We sponsored the first directed retreat in our area. One of the directors, Father Mike Lavelle, S.J., became a much loved member of our community until his death.

The new principles also stressed community. This reflected our experience, too. We thought we had invented community. One day we heard our son telling a friend that he couldn’t play the next day. He said, “Our community is having a picnic.” We celebrated together, we grieved together, we looked out for each other. We celebrated lots of baptisms, first communions, confirmations and wedding anniversaries. We even went camping together for several Fourth of July holidays. That really was community. Our kids still talk about it. It made a lot of sense to us that community was recognized as a valued charism of Christian Life Community.



*Marilyn and Ed Bourguignon are Past Presidents of NCLC. They have both been active in the Rieman Great Lakes Region, and attended the WCLC meeting in Hong Kong in 1994. In addition to Family Life CLC, they are members of Magis CLC. They find each CLC to be life-giving in a different way.*

The new principles put an emphasis on formation. We thought this was a good idea, too. We came from Sodalities with strong formation programs. Even now in 2017, each year in September we take a good look at ourselves and ask if we are still an authentic Christian Life Community and what we should be doing to keep ourselves truly formed or re-formed. We read *Harvest* and try to stay current with new ideas from the World and National Christian Life Community.

Finally, we liked the emphasis in the new principles on social involvement. As a community we supported our members in their individual missions. We helped each other discern a call to mission long before DSSE (Discern, Send, Support, and Evaluate). In 1967 we were working as a community with the Diocesan Office on Marriage and the Family. We always saw mission as part of our Sodality way of life.

We were a happy “yes” to the changes. Fifty years later, we are still a happy “yes.” We are still together. We are older, getting smaller in number as members die, meeting in the daytime as fewer of us can drive at night and speaking louder at meetings for those who forgot their hearing aids. But we still proudly answer to the name of Christian Life Community. It is who we are. We still help each other to live as fully as we can the Christian Life Community charism of spirituality, mission and community.

# Father Robert Costello, S.J.

June 20, 1929 – February 21, 2017



The topic for World CLC Day this year was “Remembering.” We in the Missouri Region used the celebration to remember Father Robert Costello, S.J., who had been our Ecclesial Assistant since 2004. What a wonderful thirteen years it had been! Cos died on February 21, 2017, after a brief illness.

Cos was a man of sharp intelligence, deep sensitivity and empathy, balanced with a delightful sense of humor. He was a man of passion, vision and encouragement. He could be deeply aware of what someone was really trying to say, focus in on the grace and reciprocate with support and insight. He was well known by many in CLC, not just those of us in the Missouri Region. He worked in

Christian Life Community in Birmingham, England 2000 to 2004. He returned to St. Louis and became our Regional Ecclesial Assistant 2004-2017, and also served as National Ecclesial Assistant 2009-2011. Therefore, there are personal stories about Cos at every CLC level: international, national and regional.

When Cos was Ecclesial Assistant of England and Wales, he attended the World Assembly in Nairobi. On an immersion experience to a slum, he visited a woman at her home who had only hours earlier rescued twin babies left on a roadside. He was so overwhelmed with the story that when they shook hands on leaving, he pressed into her hand all the money he had with him. Generous spirit met generous spirit. Also, while in England, he contributed to the production of materials for CLC meetings. His publications are still on the England/Wales CLC publications list.

We in CLC may have benefitted the most from his extensive background in spirituality. When he worked at Loyola House in Guelph Centre of Spirituality, he was drawn more deeply into the ministry of the Exercises. Then in Wales, he was invited by the British Provincial to get involved in CLC which became a major focus of his life up to the time of his death.

Everyone who has spoken of Cos has mentioned his sense of humor. It is only fitting to recount some of these stories. Cos loved his niece’s cherry pies so when he was invited for dinner she made two, one for dessert and another for him to take home. Cos’s vice was hoarding cherry pie. He ate in the privacy of his own room, washed the dish in his shower and then delivered it to Pius XII Library with his great nephew’s name on it. His niece’s son works as an archivist in the library. He retells how he’d get a call from a puzzled student at the front desk saying that a pie plate had been dropped off with his name on it.

At De Smet Jesuit High School Cos was faculty chaplain. He began CLCs for the boys and for the faculty and staff. The boys loved him and discovered he loved doughnuts. Nobody actually saw him eating the doughnuts, but traces of the telltale powdered sugar dotted the front of his black garb for the rest of the day. The students also had a BBQ and pool party in his honor at the end of the school year.

During the time Cos was National Ecclesial Assistant, Jen Horan Coito was his administrative assistant. She so valued her time with him that she was determined to attend his funeral. She flew to St. Louis from Los Angeles, bringing her infant daughter with her because she was

nursing. She flew back home that very night. Certainly, Cos touched Jen’s life in a very special way.

Mike Callahan, De Smet faculty member, shared this anecdote. Mike’s family was waiting to start the baptism of his niece in St. Francis Xavier College Church. Cos noticed someone pacing back and forth in the vestibule. Cos went to him and the next thing Mike noticed was Cos sitting in a pew talking with the man. A few minutes later Cos returned. He felt the man was having a hard time and thought he might be of help. He spoke with the man and then heard his confession. Vintage Cos.

Mike listed these Cos favorites in his eulogy. Don’t they sound like sources for meditation?

Enter into a prayerful state with a grateful heart.

Be mindful and have a calm awareness of the present.

Nothing is more beautiful than to speak of our friendship with Christ.

Strive for a purpose larger than yourself.

Desire should be driven by gratitude.

Experience includes commitment, healing and grace.

Know the difference between talking about prayer and praying.

Gratitude is an action, not an idea.

Honor and celebrate someone special.

Death is not the end of a relationship.

The best is yet to come.

Returning to our World CLC Day mentioned above, we began with reminiscing about our personal interactions with Cos. We also drew Rick Kunkle into our “remembering experiences,” because he died so soon after Cos. And we included memories of members from our communities who passed away.

Next we broke into groups and made posters honoring Cos, Rick and our deceased members. This proved to be the most fun. As we gathered for Mass, we processed to the chapel carrying our posters and lining the walls of the chapel with them. Our presider continued our theme of remembering. It was the kind of World CLC Day that Cos would have liked.

The De Smet adult CLC concluded each meeting with the following prayer from St. Matthew’s Gospel, “You are like light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead it is put on the lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.”

This material has been drawn from Father John Armstrong’s memorandum announcing Cos’s call to eternal life (dated February 23, 2017), Father James Blumeyer’s homily at Father Robert Costello’s funeral, and Mike Callahan’s eulogy at the funeral.

*Ann Padberg joined Christian Life Community after she completed the 19th Annotation retreat of the Spiritual Exercises in 2005. She is Regional Coordinator for the Missouri Region and is a member of the People of St. Paul CLC. Together with Father Robert Costello, S.J., she started two new CLCs at her parish, St. Francis Xavier (College) Church. She serves on the Adult Faith Formation Commission. Professionally, Ann is retired but has a seasonal job as an usher with the St. Louis Baseball Cardinals.*

# Rick Kunkle

June 12, 1961 – March 3, 2017

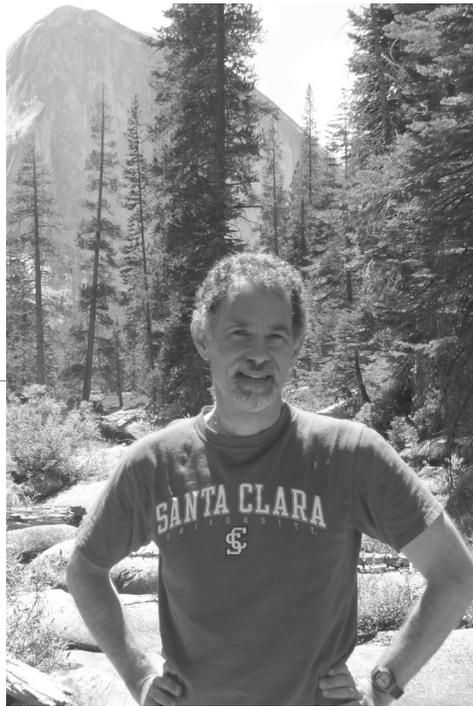
Rick Kunkle, 55, died peacefully March 3, surrounded by his family. A Vigil for Rick was held the evening of Friday, March 10 at 7:30 pm. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Saturday, March 11, 2017 at 11 am, followed by a luncheon. Both services took place at St. Michael Catholic Church in Olympia, Washington.

Rick was born June 12, 1961 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Dick and Leah Kunkle. Rick graduated from Puyallup High School. He received a Bachelor's and Master's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Portland and the University of Washington respectively. Rick worked for the Washington Energy Office and then the WSU Energy Program for nearly 30 years. His research and evaluation skills focused on improving the performance of energy efficiency programs.

Rick married Anne Jenck in 1984. They shared a passion for running and met while on the cross country team at University of Portland. Rick treasured time with family and friends and continued his love for running,

hiking and bike commuting. His vocation was CLC/Christian Life Community. He enjoyed being part of a small local group and used his patient, positive and respectful demeanor to guide CLC at the regional and national level. He served for two years as President of CLC-USA. Rick exemplified CLC's principles of being centered on Christ, working for justice through service and maintaining simplicity in all aspects of life.

Rick is survived by his wife Anne, son Aaron of Olympia, WA and daughter and son-in-law Claire and Christopher Wemp of San Jose, CA. Memorial contributions may be made to Homes First! of Lacey, Washington. <http://homesfirst.org>



## Remarks at Rick Kunkle's Vigil

By Ed Plocha

I bring warm wishes and prayers from the Christian Life Community Executive Council and from so many others in CLC who knew Rick and hold him in their hearts.

As Rick's successor to the Presidency of Christian Life Community-USA, and co-member of the Executive Council with him for a couple of years, I had an opportunity to experience first-hand how he lived his Christian calling with great awareness and intention.

As many of you know, Rick was a research engineer with the Washington State University Energy Program, where he spent over 25 years applying a unique combination of engineering, planning, evaluation, research and management skills to improve the quality and performance of energy efficiency programs and energy systems. Rick brought these multidisciplinary skills to CLC.

He was particularly concerned with personal spiritual growth lived out in context of community. In CLC this is what we call "formation." It is to this endeavor that he brought great energy, a characteristic clear-headedness and focus. Before proceeding, he would stand back and ask, "What is our current reality?" Then we'd reflect on "Where do we go from here?" and "How best to get there?"

As a complement to analytical and management skills, Rick embodied the humanist and scholar, Cardinal John Henry Newman's definition of a "gentlemen." While this quality is conspicuously lacking in much of today's public discourse, Rick lived it. He never stooped to the petty, never took the cheap shot, piled on, or engaged in humor at the expense of others.

Cardinal Newman says, "[I]t is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain or hurt" (at least not consciously). "He is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd... He is kind." That's how I felt about Rick.

Confronted with life's realities, Rick was "patient, forbearing, and resigned... he submitted to pain, because pain is inevitable, to bereavement, because it is irreparable, and to death, because it is his – [and our] – destiny."

It's said that death comes like a thief in the night, but not so with Rick. In conversations he and I had and emails we exchanged, it was clear that he was aware of the reality – his reality. He faced matters with courage and fortitude, honor and resolve. He did so because of his strong faith and deep spirituality and so much support and love from his wife, Anne, his children, family and friends. And, Rick, as all of us Christians, believed that life does not end, it merely changes.

We who have known and loved Rick will continue to hold him in our thoughts and in our hearts. His legacy to CLC, through the work he did, the people he touched, and the memories he left behind for those of us who had the privilege to know him will continue to be part of our reality for a very long time to come.

Thank you Rick. We honor you; we love you. Pray for us.

# Sister Eileen Schulenburg, SC

April 24, 1941 - January 20, 2017



Eileen Schulenburg was professed as a Sister of Charity of Halifax in 1963. She taught in parochial schools in Brooklyn. After receiving her Master's Degree in Education from Brooklyn College, she was Director of Formation for her order as well as Chairperson of the Sister Formation Confer-

ence in the diocese of Rockville Centre. After receiving a Master's Degree in Pastoral Studies and Counseling from Loyola University in Chicago, she was invited by the Trinity Missions to do grass roots work in the Appalachian Extension Area of Tennessee. With a laywoman in the area, she educated women, the public, and law enforcement officials about the law against domestic violence and the need for shelter for those experiencing domestic abuse. In 1986 Eileen was a co-founding mother of Women Are Safe, a shelter for women and children which continues to expand services even to this day. Upon returning to NY in 1990, Eileen worked for twelve years with the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services as Associate Director and Supervisor of Children's Services in a Domestic Violence Program and Shelter. While serving extensively in social services, Eileen studied and interned, becoming a spiritual director and retreat director. She ministered as a staff associate at St. Ignatius Retreat House in Manhasset, New York. After a sabbatical in 2006 Eileen desired to open up opportunities of spirituality and prayer for women on the margins. Never in her life imagining this turn, she accepted a position with the Department of Correction through the Archdiocese of NY as Chaplain at Rikers Island Women's Facility (Rose M. Singer Center). She continued to volunteer there until her sudden death. Eileen said with a passion that could not be contained that she met God so powerfully in the women and was so aware of sharing the Charism of Charity in collaboration with all her Sisters of Charity. The last two years of her life, Sister Eileen served as Regional Ecclesial Assistant of Metro New York CLC.

The sudden passing of Sister Eileen shocked most of those who flocked to her wake and funeral. Both services were held in Williston Park on Long Island, her childhood home. Numerous family, friends and religious sisters attended the wake where prayers were held in common and memories were shared. The tributes paid Eileen told of her courage, her commitment and her fidelity to God, to her community and to all she touched in family, friends and ministry. The funeral Mass was held at the Church of St. Aidan, the parish and school she attended as a youngster. Sister's congregation prepared a beautiful liturgy: selecting Scripture and hymns; placing the pall on the coffin; lighting the Paschal candle; serving as ministers of Holy Communion; and delivering some closing thoughts on Eileen's life. Her friend and co-worker at St. Ignatius Retreat House, Father Damien Halligan, S.J., celebrated the Liturgy. It was a most fitting sendoff for a very special woman.

The principal end  
for which God has called and assembled the  
Sisters of Charity  
is to honor Jesus Christ our Lord  
as the source and model of all charity  
by rendering to him  
every temporal and spiritual service in their power,  
in the persons of the poor,  
either sick, children, prisoners  
or others who through shame would conceal  
their necessities.

# From Marian Congregation to Christian Life Community

By Ana Muller



Ana Muller joined a Marian Congregation in Cuba in 1960 and arrived in the USA in 1979. She has been a member of CLC Mensajeras de la Luz since 1994. Ana recently retired and is working full time as a grandmother.

As we all know, Christian Life Community is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. During the 4th Assembly of the World Federation of Marian Congregations held in Rome in October, 1967, the *General Principles* were approved and the former Sodalities adopted a new name, Christian Life Community, more in line with the signs of the times.

We were invited to reflect on the meaning these events had for us. Now, I also invite you to share the memories we have from those years. I will begin in Havana. During the 1950's there were three Marian Congregations for women: *Universitarias Católicas (La Casita)*, *Rosa Mística* and *Mater Inmaculata*.

In 1959, Castro came to power in Cuba. This political situation changed the course of our lives. Upon arriving in Miami, many of the members from the *Rosa Mística* Sodality were in need of a place to stay. They decided to rent a house in Flagler and S.W. 23rd Avenue. At this house they had all kinds of Sodality activities, including the *Spiritual Exercises*. They were blessed to receive many new members during those years. This group from *Rosa Mística* was not aware of the new *General Principles*, already approved in Rome. They still continued to use the Marian Congregations' Common Rules.

Back in Cuba, the Castro government took over the buildings of the three Sodalities already mentioned whose members continued to meet separately at Sacred Heart Church in Havana. In 1964, we gathered together under the umbrella of a new Sodality which we decided to name: *Regina Pacis*. Sacred Heart Church, run by the Society of Jesus, allowed us to continue our growth in Ignatian spirituality and provided us with a place to invite new members. We received the new *General Principles* in 1968 and we used them in our formation. However, we kept the typical Sodality structure of a Marian Congregation with its traditional levels: visitor/postulant/aspirant/congregant. We are most grateful for the dedication and guidance of two holy priests, Father Jose Manuel Miyares, S.J., and Father Luis Morin, S.J.

Between 1969 and 1972 both groups, the *Congre* in Miami and *Regina Pacis* in Havana, stopped meeting. The group in Miami continued gathering in different homes at least once a year to celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception and to renew our consecration to Our Lady. For years the Sacred Heart Church in Havana continued to be a formation center for all of us. By then, impoverishment of public transportation forced us to meet at our nearest parishes.

**Miami, 1992:** Some of us who shared the concerns of getting back to our common way of life approached Father Pedro Suarez, S.J., then Superior of the Jesuits in Miami, letting him know of our desire to form a community. With great joy we received the announcement of Father Sergio Figueredo, S.J., as our EA. We invited all of our old Sodality members living in Miami and started to meet once a month for Mass and to study the *General Principles and Norms*. At that time we gathered under the umbrella of *Regina Mundi*.

For three years we studied the *General Principles*, fully aware that other CLC's had already been doing so for twenty-five years. It was difficult for our group, so used to meeting together, to realize now that we had to divide into small communities. As a consequence of this discernment, we determined to gather in groups of 6-10 members and so the first three small communities were born: *El Peregrino*, *Magnificat* and *Mensajeros de la Luz*.

In 1994, we decided to join the Hispanic Pastoral Council of the Archdiocese of Miami. We realized that in order to work in this Archdiocese we needed to be part of the Apostolic Movements. That year, we also participated as guests for the first time in a National CLC-USA Assembly.

After much discernment we decided to join CLC-USA, even though we felt more comfortable with Latin American-CVX. It was clear to us that since we lived in Florida, we should join CLC-USA. In 1995, we were affiliated with the New Orleans Region of NCLC-USA. That same year, sixteen of us made our Temporary Commitment with the World Christian Life Community.

At this point, we would like to pause to thank Eva Rodriguez for her dedication in this mission and Father Sergio Figueredo, S.J., for his vision and guidance.

In 1996, Father Víctor Hernández, S.J., was appointed as our EA and in 1997 he directed the first group of *Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (EVD)*. We became familiar with this modality of the *Spiritual Exercises*, which proved to be a very fruitful experience. We appreciated Father Víctor's prophetic vision allowing CLC members to guide *Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life*. Since the year 2000 the EVD's have spread to several parishes in our Archdiocese, remaining one of the main ministries of CLC members. I would also like to mention a young adult community, *Alas de Cristo*, whose members were in charge of the *Magis* retreat for young adults for many years.

*CVX en Acción*, our regional newsletter, was first published in 1996. Since 2002, we are also responsible for a program on Radio Paz, our local Catholic Spanish radio station. This program, *Compartiendo fe y vida*, broadcasts on Saturdays from 7:30 - 8:00 pm.

Since we joined CLC-USA, we have participated in all national assemblies and leadership conferences. We want to thank many of our members who have generously served in different national ministries. In 2004, we had the privilege to host the USA-National Assembly that was held in Miami. This service turned out to be an enrichment experience, putting us in contact with the various needs of our members spread throughout this vast country.

In 2005, the CLC-USA National Council approved the creation of a new region, South Florida Region. Our original 1992's CVX-CLC communities were formed mainly by members of Cuban origin. Currently, however, there are more than fifteen different nationalities among us. We can experience first hand the variety and richness of the Spanish-speaking South Florida population.

We want to thank God for the superabundance of graces received during this, our journey from *Congregación Mariana* to Christian Life Community. We truly regret all the limitations that may have hindered this process. We also ask the Lord to continue by our side and show us the way ahead.

As you may have already guessed, in addition to this Golden Jubilee, locally we are celebrating our twenty-fifth anniversary here in South Florida: 1992-2017. Join us in giving thanks to God for this blessing.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Sister Eileen Schulenburg, SC**, Metro NY E.A., Jan. 20, 2017

**Rev. Robert Costello, SJ**, E.A. for CLC-USA, Feb. 21, 2017

**Rick Kunkle**, Past President CLC-USA, March 3, 2017

**Robert Wagner**, Fordham Prep CLC, March 28, 2017

**Bernadette Wallace**, Sister of Ann Marie Wallace, Westchester CLC, April 11, 2017

**Barbara McCann**, Milwaukee CLC, April 26, 2017

**Dick O'Brien**, Quest for Metanoia CLC, Omaha, May 10, 2017

# May Our Vessels Be Filled

By Barbara Rudolph



*Barbara is a member of the Rieman Great Lakes Region. She is the Regional Chair and is currently serving as the CLC-USA Executive Secretary. Barb is a member of the Potter's Clay CLC, a group that formed in the early 1990's. She belongs to a pottery co-op and volunteers as a pottery instructor. In this article, she mentions "Gifts of the Kiln," clay projects that take on special meaning or create additional options for reflection or meditation.*

About two or three times a year, a pot comes out of the kiln that seems to have a special meaning or message. Such it is with this photo of some pots that are joined together. When the kiln had cooled and was being unloaded, imagine my surprise to find that during the firing, three pots had joined together. Initially I dubbed it the "Oops!" pot and was relieved that all three items were mine, not several peoples' works. It is always more complicated when pieces of more than one person are accidentally fused together. When I had thrown the larger cylinder vessel, I had hoped to use it as a drinking cup. Now here it was, fired, but with a couple of attached smaller bowl-shaped vessels. It is no longer a practical drinking vessel. However, its symbolic value has increased exponentially.

This past week, as I thought about writing an article for this issue of *Harvest*, I realized that, in some ways, these joined together pots are a good visual image of Christian Life Community. Imagine that the tall vessel is God's gifts to us, and that the smaller pots are the "spillovers" or graces that each of us receives. As you think of the history of Christian Life Community, and the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of being called Christian Life Community, both recollect and imagine what is in your vessel.



Having joined CLC in the early 90s, my CLC vessel is filled with recollections of people saying, "We used to be called Sodality." People often stated that they had been involved in Sodality during college, and that they did not know that it had changed names. Another remembrance that remains with me is that CLC is a Way of Life. That saying is something that seems to come from the tall vessel. Each of us may receive different graces from that saying. What do you cherish most about the saying, CLC is a Way of Life? A third recollection that comes to my mind is that CLC is a group of like-minded people who are interested (through community) in growing or deepening their relationship with God. There is energy and nourishment in experiencing the graces of living in community. What are some of your most memorable moments of being in community in CLC?

On a regional level, I had joined CLC shortly before regionalization was implemented. I can recall that the funeral for Father Nick Rieman, S.J., was held at Gesu Church in Cleveland. Within about a year of our new CLC being formed, some of the older CLC members went to his funeral and helped with the funeral Mass. Only later did I appreciate more that Father Nick had helped to start CLC at Gesu Church and that the early members of Gesu CLC were concerned about the poor and had helped to start what is now known as the Greater Cleveland Area Food Bank. I later learned that CLC members in Toledo, Ohio had helped to form a Free Clinic for the poor and uninsured. What memories do you have of CLC members providing leadership that supports spiritual and corporal works of mercy?

What memories do you have of your region or cultural group being formed? I have vivid recollections of a pre-discussion in Cleveland and later a meeting of all Michigan and Ohio CLC members. The Michigan and Ohio CLC meeting was held to form the region, and a vote was taken to name ourselves the Rieman Great Lakes Region in honor of all the work that Father Nick Rieman had done in Michigan and Ohio. His work resulted in forming multiple CLCs in both states. What memories do you have of cluster meetings, regional meetings or meetings of cultural groups? What regional or cluster meetings have been particularly enriching for you? How has participating in CLC conventions, national assemblies or other national CLC meetings, such as the leadership conferences, helped to form you as a member of CLC?

In reading through the *General Principles*, how has your understanding or appreciation of them grown or changed? Can you envision the *General Principles* as being in the large cylinder vessel? Have you been in awe of their wording? What has impressed you the most? Recently I read an article that spoke of Pope Paul VI's encyclical, *On the Development of Peoples (Populorum Progressio)*. The article spoke of aid for poor nations, equitable trade relations and universal charity. Pope Paul's encyclical was written fifty years ago. It gave me great

comfort, as I thought of the needs of our world today. The work done by Justice for Immigrants, groups that help with famines etc. dovetail with what was written fifty years ago. What church teachings or needs of the world are in your large cylinder vessel? How has CLC helped you to fill the vessel or spill over into your individual life? How are your actions influenced by your values?

Finally, I would like to encourage all of us, as CLC groups, to think of ways to preserve our graced histories. How can we use today's technology to help create visual and auditory histories of our communities, as well as written histories? As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Christian Life Community, can we commit to taking the time to interview members of our communities, and to recording commentary from communities, clusters and regions? Recently, I learned that our local library system has established and will train library users how to use a media room to record histories. Can we create more visual and auditory histories that can also fill our vessels? Our stories can inspire us to continue to live out our *General Principles* and the CLC Way of Life. As we draw strength from our large vessel, may we be graced by spillover into our own individual, small bowl-shaped vessels. May we be nourished, affirmed and filled with gratitude through celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Christian Life Community.



*World CLC Day, 3/26/17: Pittsburgh Cluster Celebration*

# General Principles: CLC's Principle and Foundation

By *Hermínio Rico, S.J., Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant for World CLC*



*Hermínio Rico is a Jesuit from Portugal. He was a CLC member before he joined the Society in 1981. In 1999, he received a Ph.D. in Moral Theology from Boston College. He was National Ecclesiastical Assistant for CLC-Portugal from 2004 to 2014. Since December 2016, he has been World CLC Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant, residing in Rome.*

The pairing of two words to describe an attitude or endeavor of prominent importance in our spiritual experience is characteristically Ignatian. It could show only a liking for repetition, also typically Ignatian. However, if we look closely, they are never exact synonyms. Rather they are balanced in a slight tension. They set an interaction that challenges and complements the acting of each one on the other. The dynamic sum of both movements points to the full richness of the experience. Some examples: take and receive, love and serve, seek and find; and the one I want to explore here, principle and foundation.

## **Principle**

The *General Principles* take us back in time, to the beginnings – so appropriate as we celebrate 50 years of the *General Principles* and CLC. “Principle” also means starter of processes, source of movement, prompter of stories and creator of history. In what the *General Principles* have already accomplished, we see the history of grace of CLC, the many blessings received. Then again, in our world, it is not sufficient to start a movement, it needs to be continually sustained. Principle is also this impulse that constantly works against attrition and entropy. It is always the necessary mover, sustainer of development and growth. Without a permanent lifegiving connection to this vital sap, there is no way to prevent stagnation, dryness, decay and death.

The *General Principles* outline the CLC charism, describing a style of living and a path of personal and communal, human and spiritual growth. Visioning ideals and setting goals, they map the road for CLC, but they also provide the encouragement to persevere, the light to choose and decide, and the creativeness to devise and to build the actual path that constitutes the vocational journey of each member and each community. All of that is there, in what they point and remind, teach and warn, challenge and propose, offer and promise. To allow the *General Principles* to accomplish their potential in our personal and communal life as CLC members, we must be familiar with them, revisit them frequently. We need to develop a relationship with them. We let them entice us, surprise us and question us in new and ever surprising ways. Yes, they can always do that. Just try them! The *General Principles* unsettle, and may even cause some healthy restlessness, but they are also capable of being a constant source of inspiration, progress and life.

## **Foundation**

The *General Principles* are also foundation. Here and now, among all the changes and uncertainties, before so much complexity, feeling pressured into so many hasty decisions, a trusted foundation is such a valuable thing. They tell us where to stand, give a sense of security, never let us lose heart or give up in our search for a deeper meaning under the surface of things. With their formal approval by the Holy See, the Church confirmed our vision and desires, establishing CLC as a Charism of the Spirit, at the service of the Kingdom of God, a reliably graced way of following Christ and serving his mission. No less than such a stronghold is what the *General Principles* offer us.

The *GPs* are the guardians of our identity, the criteria for our discernments, the benchmark of our fidelity. They help us to move where we want to go, but they also tell us who we are already. They define our vocation, and, therefore, they are constantly reassuring us in our identity, revealing to us the kind of persons and communities it is possible for us to become. They are a lighthouse, guiding us in our Christian journey from the tradition received

to the future of our responsibility. They are a rock we can always rely upon and our stronghold of wisdom.

### Do you love the General Principles?

The *General Principles* challenge us and make us grow, but they also offer us reference and steadiness. They help us to discover who we are, and they bring out the better in us, by driving to fulfillment our deepest desires. They are a source of life and of steadfastness in self-giving. Deep personal involvement, assurance of treasured fruits, long term commitment to a developmental process: these are traits of a valuable love relationship.

Our love for the *General Principles*, though, does not happen by an easy falling in love by a serendipitous encounter with them. It may become the kind of love we pray for in the Second Week of the *Spiritual Exercises*: the result of an intimate knowledge we need to search for persistently, by listening, contemplating, meditating, reflecting on ourselves.

Most probably, the best way to celebrate the fifty years of the *General Principles* would be to get to know them better, in order to love them deeply. There are some good helps for that in past issues of *Progressio: Progressio Supplement* n. 38-39, September 1992; and n. 36, January 1991 (comments after the text of the *GPs* and *GNs*); and a series of articles in the different issues of *Progressio* for the years 1968 to 1970.

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# A Reflection on the General Principles

By Bethany Vu



*Bethany Vu is twenty-four years old and currently living in Phoenix, Arizona with her family of seven. She is a sixth grade teacher of Math and Social Studies at Saints Simon and Jude Cathedral School in Phoenix. She will be pursuing a doctorate in Occupational Therapy at Northern Arizona University in the fall. Bethany grew up attending S.E.E.D. Retreats and now serves as the National Chair of S.E.E.D. Ministry. She enjoys taking care of her fish, Oliver, and singing Beatles' songs with her siblings.*

Two years ago I made my temporary commitment as part of CLC within the Dong Hanh community in the Southwest. I have had the blessing of being raised in a very spiritual family, and in the Dong Hanh and CLC traditions. When I reflect on how the *General Principles* came to be the foundation of my way of living out my faith, I can't help but smile realizing that it is much like taking vitamins as a child. My dad would make me eat my vitamins, and I did so reluctantly because I did not understand how eating this chalky bitter tablet was supposed to be healthy for me. Similarly, the first time I read the *General Principles*, I felt like they were flowery jargon to which I could not relate. I, nevertheless, resolved to figure them out, because my parents and the Dong Hanh community said they were an invaluable source of grace.

When I took the time to pray over the *GPs*, I found that I was already living them! For example, in S.E.E.D. Ministry, one hundred other young adults and I “bear witness to the human and Gospel values... [that] affect the welfare of the family.” In our interactions with the children on retreat, we strive to be spiritual big brothers and sisters. We try to shine a light on the beauties of our Catholic identity. This work is truly “apostolic witness and service in our daily environment,” because we partner with their parents to help the children choose Christ in a world that rejects and even ridicules our faith. I feel that young adults are particularly drawn to *GP4* which includes the above-mentioned charisms of CLC. We are drawn to the idea of integrating our faith into our everyday thoughts and actions – to the practice of being contemplatives in action.

The *General Principle* that challenges me the most right now is *GP5* which invites us to be “open and disposed to whatever God wishes in each concrete situation of our daily life” and to do so by practicing the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. Doing the 19th Annotation is intimidating to me because of the time commitment required. Also the idea of being completely free and detached to recognize God's will for me can be overwhelming for my driver personality. The beauty of the *General Principles* is that while I struggle with part of a principle, another part of the very same principle might offer consolation and inspiration to overcome the block that I am experiencing. The last part of *GP5* recognizes the essential place of prayer, discernment and the *Examen* of Consciousness. Praying the *Examen* has helped me to recognize the times in my day when God is smiling at me and drawing my attention to something going on in my internal world. Recently, in my evening *Examen* I find a sense of peace whenever I spend time alone just imagining being with God – sometimes at the park, on a grassy mountainside, or in a quiet café. After leaving these prayer periods, I find myself hungry for a deeper personal relationship with the Lord and I think, perhaps, I am not so unprepared to take on the *Spiritual Exercises* after all. As long as I have the desire to respond to God's invitation, He will take care of everything else.

Realizing that I was already living out many of the *General Principles* gives me a deeper sense of belonging to CLC. Finding that I have the desire to engage in the rest of the *Principles* confirms that this way of life will be a constant spring of God's grace in my life. I am so grateful for CLC at home and throughout the world that is united with me as “a gathering of people in Christ.” I look forward to uncovering the rest of the gifts God has set out for us through the gift of Christian Life Community.

# Growth in the CLC Way of Life

By Mary Ann Cassidy



*Mary Ann Cassidy has been a member of Northern New Jersey CLC for thirty years. She is retired and uses her Spiritual Direction background to volunteer in her parish in the areas of social justice and spirituality. She enjoys travelling, especially to visit her eight grandchildren.*

A desire for a deeper prayer life drew me to Christian Life Community over 30 years ago. Father Dan Fitzpatrick with Ellen Durkin, Marianne and Dennis Cummins, and Lillian Caldarise were trying to establish a CLC group in Northern New Jersey. While I was teaching a religious education class at St. Luke's, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ, a fellow catechist, Lillian Caldarise, invited me to try a deeper prayer experience through the *Spiritual Exercises* and CLC. Like Jesus, she said, "Come and see." As the saying goes, "The rest is history."

Fr. Dan tirelessly led us through the formation materials, prayer experiences, the *Examen*. He presided at Mass at our meetings. I am very grateful for his patience and guidance. As our community journeyed together, many of us had challenges in our work, family life or health. Our meetings and prayer often gave the support and encouragement needed when one of us was in need. I will always be grateful for the past and present members of the Northern New Jersey CLC.

I am grateful for the directed retreats that deepened my relationship with God and bonded us as a community. The carefully planned days of prayer helped me to grow in appreciation of the *Spiritual Exercises* and the *General Principles*, especially *GP8*. Even more than that, the days of prayer connected the NNJ community to the larger regional community, where the 'option for the poor' was visible through different communities' missions.

CLC is essentially apostolic. I remember Fr. Dan saying, "Do something. Easy to talk... action is needed." *GP8*, made it very clear "we are to become identified with His mission of bringing the good news to the poor, proclaiming liberty to captives and to the blind, new sight, setting the downtrodden free and proclaiming the Lord's year of favor." This prophetic stance is what I am most grateful for in CLC. Regional, National and World CLC join together in mission, either directly or indirectly through advocacy and financial support. Our Charism states that "...we need to work together with the entire People of God and all people of good will to seek progress and peace, justice and charity, liberty and dignity for all."

When Metro NY CLC had days of mission at the Little Sisters of the Assumption in East Harlem, I put my anxiety aside about driving in the city and met those who were serving the poor and some of the beneficiaries. Poverty in the city was different from poverty in the suburbs. Without a car, the poor of East Harlem had few choices for shopping. The Sharing Place (a shop started by the Little Sisters) gives the local residents a way to provide for their families through the gently used goods we donate.

I am grateful for St. Ignatius' Awareness *Examen*, and the way it deepened my faith and gratitude to a loving God. The Holy Spirit was indeed active the day before and will also be today and tomorrow. By my taking the time to pray the *Examen*, the Holy Spirit often points me to areas of mission in my family and beyond. Being aware of what was touching my heart often was the choice for mission. While living in New Jersey, a friend and I offered an evening of reflection on Human Trafficking facilitated by Lifeway Network. I heard the desperation of victims of this horror. I learned what to look for, and how to support efforts to provide education and counseling for trafficked victims.

The vista of mission is very broad. Through the *Examen* and discernment, the Holy Spirit does show the path to each of us for mission and for changing structures. Often the path is different for each member of NNJ CLC. However, with the DSSE process we are able to support one another.

Father Terry Charlton spoke to a group at St. Catharine's in Glen Rock, about a school he and CLC started in Nairobi, Kenya. I knew I wanted to support a student there. Another member of NNJ CLC, Terri Mierswa, felt the same way. The bonus to the financial support was receiving letters from our student twice a year. Despite the poverty in the Kibera slum and many other challenges she faced each day, she thrived at St. Al's and graduated. I was touched by her deep gratitude for the opportunity to study there.

The *Spiritual Exercises*, community and mission are interwoven in CLC. I am deeply grateful for the years of growth in the CLC way of life and the generous leaders who were part of my formation. I go back often to the question, "What is it you desire?" It always brings me to consider the love of God poured out for me and all people and how I am living that gift daily.

## ***Listing of World Sodality/CLC Assemblies***

- 1954 1st Assembly of World Federation of Marian Congregations (Sodalities of Our Lady) Rome, Italy
- 1959 2nd Assembly, South Orange, New Jersey, USA - A worldwide dialogue for new rules begins.
- 1964 3rd Assembly - Waiting for conclusion of Vatican II.
- 1967 4th Assembly, Rome, Italy: a new name and a new beginning: Christian Life Communities. On the Feast of the Annunciation in 1968, Pope Paul VI confirms the *General Principles* of the World Federation of the Christian Life Communities.
- 1970 5th Assembly, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: The *General Principles* are amended and approved in 1971 by the Holy See.
- 1973 6th General Assembly, Augsburg, Germany: The call to be free: "The Liberation of the Whole Person and of All People"
- 1976 7th General Assembly, Manila, Philippines: The call to be poor: "Poor with Christ for a Better Service"
- 1979 8th General Assembly, Rome, Italy: The call towards: "A World Community at the Service of One World"
- 1982 9th General Assembly, Providence, Rhode Island, USA: The challenge to be: "One World Community on Mission to Bring about Justice"
- 1986 10th General Assembly, Loyola, Spain: Seeing Mary as Model of Our Mission: "Being Asked to Do Whatever Christ Tells Us"
- 1990 11th General Assembly, Guadalajara, Mexico: an International Community: "At the Service of the Kingdom, to Go Out and Bear Fruit"
- 1994 12th General Assembly, Hong Kong: CLC: Community in Mission: "I have come to bring fire to the earth and how I wish it were blazing already!"
- 1998 13th General Assembly, Itaici, Brazil: Deepening Our Identity as an Apostolic Community - Clarifying Our Common Mission: "CLC a Letter from Christ, Written by the Spirit, Sent to Today's World"
- 2003 14th General Assembly, Nairobi, Kenya: an Apostolic Body: "Sent by Christ, Members of One Body"
- 2008 15th General Assembly, Fatima, Portugal: Journeying as an Apostolic Body: "Our Response to This Grace from God"
- 2013 16th General Assembly, Beirut, Lebanon: "From Our Roots to the Frontiers"

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*See website [CLC-USA.org](http://CLC-USA.org) for dates.*

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**October 12-15, 2017**

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***Celebrating a Golden Jubilee  
Part II***

- ***Leaders During 50 Years***