

Resource Material for CLC Guides

Discerning, Sending, Supporting and Evaluating

CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY



Material drawn from

PROJECTS No. 125 – October, 2003

**A link between the Executive Council
and the World Christian Life Community**

CLC “sees itself not only as a community of apostles, that is of persons more or less committed to their own individual missions, but rather, it is an apostolic community in which the members, although dedicated to their own different tasks, **share** together their lives and the way they each carry out their mission. They also **discern** together the object and content of each other's mission. They are **sent by** the community and, with its help, **evaluate** how they are following Christ who was sent by the Father”.¹ Nairobi takes up these ideas once more, seeking to place itself on a very basic and practical level – that of the local groups – and uses four words that will characterize our journey in CLC. Indeed, the final document affirms that “the **local group meetings** may need to be refocused to better live out the call to be members of an apostolic body who practice personal and communal **discerning, sending, supporting** and **evaluating**”.²

Complete text of Projects No. 125 can be downloaded from <http://www.cvx-clc.net/> or print copy can be obtained from National CLC office

1 PROGRESSIO: Supplement n° 56, December 2001: The CLC Charism (Revised). n° 132.

2 Recommendations from the Nairobi World Assembly to Christian Life Community: Our National Dimension, n° 2.

PROCESS

It is suggested that guides meet to share their experience on each topic.

Guides receive the topic and any background material and questions prior to coming together.



TOPIC ONE

Components of a CLC Meeting

Background Material

Read the meeting plan "Components of a CLC Meeting"

Questions

How similar/dissimilar is my CLC meeting?



TOPIC TWO

When and how have we practised apostolic discernment in our group? And when in the larger community?

Background Material

Taken from *Progressio Supplements No. 45/46; 56*

APOSTOLIC DISCERNMENT

Apostolic discernment is intelligent and contemplative attention given to the Spirit by mature Christians in their family, work, social life and Church commitments. The purpose is to seek and to find God's will for our mission: *What does God want of me, now, in this situation?*

In order to seek the divine will, one's heart must burn with the same fire as burns within the Heart of Christ. One must also be familiar with the different ways in which God can make His will manifest. One must, in short, have what is necessary to allow one to opt for the greater glory of God and for the universal good.

From beginning to end, discernment is a journey of personal and communal prayer. We want to ask our Lord for the gifts of availability and of knowing His will in this world in which we live.

The Ignatian prayers of examen (Review of Prayer and Daily Examen) are perhaps the most important activities which make apostolic discernment a habit which accompanies all our other activities.

Questions

How do you notice members of your group and members of wider CLC growing as contemplatives in action?

What examples have you seen of personal and community discernment?

What signs do you see of a deeper integration of (a) faith and life and (b) faith and justice?



TOPIC THREE

How have we practised the sending in mission or the confirmation of mission in our group? And how in the larger community?

Background Material

John 17:18-19

As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For their sake I consecrate myself, so that they too may be consecrated in the truth

Acts 13: 1-3

In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.



The following is a quote from the booklet "Components of a CLC meeting:

Closing Prayer "At this point in the meeting, 'Sending each other forth' is important. This sending could be formal or informal. A more formal sending might be appropriate when a person has discerned with the group a new direction. We state the support and prayer offered as each goes out from the group sent in the Lord's name."



An example of a prayer that might be used for a **formal sending** is:

Spirit of Light and Wisdom, be with.....

Strengthen him/her in his/her desire to serve you.

May he/she be assured of our support and continuing prayer.

We ask this prayer through the intercession of Ignatius and the first companions, through Mary and all the saints. Amen



Questions

How have we practised the sending in mission or the confirmation of mission in our group?
And how in the larger community?

What is the practice in your group of "sending each other forth" – informally or formally?



TOPIC FOUR

How and when have we experienced the backing, the support or the permanent stimulus of the group in connection with our apostolic work?

Questions

Are members sharing on a regular basis the main area of their apostolic mission?

Is there an atmosphere of listening, trust and acceptance in the group?

After the sharing on life, is there a period of exchange during which one can deepen the understanding of how one's activity might be more effective for the Lord.



TOPIC FIVE

Background Material

Taken from *Progressio Supplement No 56*

4.3. Criteria for apostolic discernment

122. The CLC General Principles underline the need for apostolic discernment.³ They also propose a number of criteria, inspired by those drawn up by St Ignatius, for choosing our ministries and specific missions. Everything, which comes to us from Ignatius, in this case apostolic discernment, is marked by the "*magis*" (*the more effective*). His zeal for the greater glory of God enabled him to seek the most effective means for helping others.
123. This discernment of the more appropriate means is made in the Spirit of Christ, by means of the rules for discerning which interior movements arise from the same Spirit, through our contemplation of the life of Jesus. These rules have already been mentioned in the paragraph concerning the choice of our personal vocation. It is a process, which involves the heart no less than the head. Ignatius proposes, however, certain rational criteria (cf. *Three times suitable for making an election* SpEx 175) with a view to discovering the greatest service, which can be rendered to our neighbour in particular circumstances.
124. The Ignatian criteria for apostolic discernment are found not only in the Spiritual Exercises but above all in the *Autobiography*, where personal progress and processes are illustrated and in his *Letters*, where Ignatius suggests strategies for definitive objectives and proposes means for attaining them. In the *Constitutions of the Society*⁴, Ignatius makes a systematic presentation of the criteria for choosing ministries.⁵ These criteria can help us in CLC to define our own apostolic mission⁶; for example, that CLC members should be open to what is more *urgent and more universal*.

Questions

Once we have chosen an area of apostolic action, what processes can the group use to help us move towards more effective service?

How has/can the group helped/help us to evaluate our apostolic action?

³ "The community helps us to live the different dimensions of this apostolic commitment, and to be always open to what is more urgent and universal, particularly through the *Review of Life* and through personal and communal discernment. We try to give an apostolic sense even to the most ordinary parts of our daily life" (GP 8). "Since the Christian Life Community aims to work with Christ for the coming of the Kingdom, each individual member is called to be active in the vast field of apostolic service. Apostolic discernment, both individual and communal, is the ordinary way of discovering how best to bring Christ presence, concretely into our world." (GP 12b)

⁴ Constitutions 618, 622.

⁵ *The universal and most enduring good*: "to think globally and act locally"; in other words "to set up structures rather than one-time events", to develop actions and services which can be replicated or repeated by the participants.

The greatest need and urgency: to go where there is no one else, where those who should be there, care little or nothing about their obligations.

The greatest good: the formation of "multipliers"; the creation of networks of communication conscience that we are one global family.

⁶ GP 8c.