



## Christian Life Community

On the 1<sup>st</sup> week end of May, 22 CLCers gathered at the Sevenhill monastery in the Clare Valley, for a CLC retreat; expertly guided by Chris Hogan and Fr Noel Bradford. In this “much prayed-in” and sacred place, we asked for the grace to deepen our sense of CLC vocation, community and service in Jesus’ mission.

Noel highlighted the retreat process which also applies to our daily prayer:

1 NOTICE what moves you, how you are moved (the resulting feelings and thoughts,) where they come from and where they are leading you.

2 Pray to the Lord about that.

We spent the first part of Saturday on 3 extracts from Annotations and on passages from Isaiah 43 and Hosea 11. We were urged to open to the movements of the Spirit who is always active, prompting our thoughts and emotions so that we can “respond ever more faithfully to the love of God ... which first created me and now wraps me around with total care and concern.”

In our spare time, we sat under the large trees, walked the labyrinth and through the vineyards and prayed at the grotto of our Lady; absorbing the absolute beauty of this ancient place. Coming back regularly during the day, we all shared our reflections in an atmosphere of complete trust. We had a great sense of community and “of being fellow travellers who companion together” (Joan from Henley beach)

The second part of our English’s notes on the theology behind it. He reminds drawing us:” We feel it in our feelings, moods, impulses, after the Eucharist, the important activity. By going become aware of God we are at home and of all the faith experiences we surrenders to God. In the present feelings - testing them



reflection centred around John awareness examen and the deep us that the Trinity is constantly own hearts. It registers in our desires, urges.” St Ignatius said that, awareness examen is the single most back to the core of our being, we operating there. That core is where comfortable with God. It is the heart ever had; all our moments of total awareness examine, we sort our against this core experience of God.

The last part of the retreat Principles 4-7-8 and reminded us that our life as CLC members is essentially apostolic. We are asked to be “witnesses before all people by our attitudes, words and actions”. The discussion about the GP’s was vibrant and enlightening. While the lively music of the Clare Valley Food and Wine Festival was playing in the background, to our great amusement, we decided that, in the words of Paul Kelly ‘from little things big things grow”, that we can only start by sm all steps.

The evaluation on Sunday afternoon reflected the many and similar ways in which we had been moved during this retreat which will most probably become an annual event in South Australia. We were “renewed, inspired, refreshed, hopeful and touched by the Holy Spirit”. As Sister Mary Reardon said’ in our small group, “to be praying together, sitting in silence, searching for God together, is a powerful experience.” Yes it was.

**Jocelyne Randabel-Williamson**

## THE HOLY SPIRIT AND ME by **The Pilgrims**

At a recent meeting of our CLC group, we shared our feelings and perceptions of how the Holy Spirit is acting in our lives. We asked ourselves 'what "sense" do we have of the Holy Spirit?' As often happens, we shared very different ideas of how, when or where we "feel the Spirit moving..." Here is mine.

Since I was young, I have experienced the Holy Spirit as a strong "felt" force in my life. It is an almost physical sense of being enveloped by a powerful force for good. As a child it was often experienced in prayer, in church or in special moments with my parents and family.

It is hard to explain but I'm sure other people experience this too. Since coming to know the Ignatian way – that is to look for Christ in all things - this "felt" sense of the Holy Spirit has grown. Now it is often apparent when faced with the simplicity, power and beauty of nature but mostly "felt" in moments of real connection with others – that is when we are connecting through the heart and not the head. It is a great force for strength in life and I hope it never leaves me.

### **By June Duffy**

At confirmation, we were taught that the Holy Spirit was light and conferred its specific gifts. I went to Wikipedia on the net and copied them down: Wisdom, understanding, Right judgment, Courage, Knowledge, Reverence and Awe of God.

I have been thinking more since that meeting and discovered that for me the Holy Spirit was a feminine entity; Sophia, the Wisdom. It reconciles me with the more preeminent masculine figures in our faith. I experience the Holy Spirit as a breath, a blowing wind and an inspiration.

In my daily examen, I know when the Holy Spirit has been guiding me during the day to pick up that spiritual book and read or to go to my room and pray. I invoke the Holy Spirit in times of confusion when I need desperately some light on a problem. Since doing the daily examen, I love its starting point when you feel the 3 persons of the Trinity enveloping you with their energy. I feel loved and embraced. How can you feel alone or lonely when you have such a loving presence in you and around you! I wish I had been taught these marvellous truths when I was growing up.

It would be exciting if CLC members wanted to contribute to our spiritual corner, by sending their thoughts about the Holy Spirit. So, take your pens or computers and send your contribution to Jocelyne. **By Jocelyne Randabel-Williamson**

## **Invitation to groups to cluster**

The word 'community' is never far away in any conversation about CLC and it is not surprising that this is so. The CLC handbook (and the General Principles that underpin the organization that we belong to) is peppered with the word 'community'. At our recent retreat at Sevenhill, Fr Noel Bradford said that the key feature of CLC is that we feel called to live our faith as a community. As someone relatively new to CLC, I realize that I'm not saying anything new to you. Perhaps you might even feel a bit like tuning out when you hear someone talking or writing about 'community' again. So I would like to ask you this question -

'How can we make our sense of CLC community feel new to us?' Not only for our individual groups, but how we can connect as a wider SA CLC community? Those who experienced the recent Sevenhill retreat (which was attended by members from most of the individual SA groups) were given the grace of connecting with each other in new way; sharing and reflecting as a larger community over those days. This has encouraged our sense of common vocation and mission.

A couple of possible ways of creating a shared spirit of community in SA have been suggested and I'll put them to you. One idea is for individual groups to form 'clusters', and by this I mean that two or more CLC groups might form an ongoing relationship of some kind, connecting in some way once or twice every year – building a kind of extended family in the CLC spirit.

Another possibility is for Guides to cluster (something that happens in NSW, albeit a bigger state with more groups) to support each other or to discern how to build connections between groups. Perhaps you as individuals or as a group have some ideas that you think might work to build CLC as a wider community of like-minded people. We are interested in hearing any of your thoughts or suggestions, so please feel welcome to get in touch with us at Exco or speak to any of us at the next public gathering.

We know that as Exco we don't have all the answers ourselves and we need your help and creativity to realize our dream of building a stronger community in CLC. I would like to end with words from St Paul - the earliest builder of Christian communities. 1 Corinthians: 12 (27), 14 (1, 12)

*Now Christ's body is yourselves, each of you with a part to play in the whole.....*

*Make love your aim; but be eager, too, for spiritual gifts....*

*So with you, as you are eager for spiritual powers, aim to be rich in those which build up community.*

**Lyudmila Milo for SA Exco**

## Profile of a group: The Hillbillies

About 25 years ago, Fred Nixon mentioned, during a phone-call that I might enjoy a particular style of meeting called "Christian Life Community". He asked me if I knew of anyone to invite to such a meeting. My immediate thought was that I didn't have many nights home as it was and that this proposed meeting would need to include Jeff and others that I'd like to spend more time with than current life-demands allowed.

Helen Cramond is the one of those who is with Jeff and me in Hillbillies now. She remembers being invited to learn to meditate and said yes, as she'd been thinking about it.

Joan Curnow, unable to attend meetings because of her commitment to the parish sacramental programme, writes: "I have been a 'new' member of the original Hillbillies for several years. In 2008 my life unexpectedly turned upside down and, as a result, I have been unable to attend meetings. I want to go but just can't make it. However I still feel I am one of the group if only in spirit.

Hillbillies have CLC locally and of prayer, the means the ability to be still found the skills I with children and own spirit".

Marie-Louise year, is also missing unexpectedly turned be able to take next meeting.

Paris Huffman is the not been with the son and daughter, teens when we clearing round the dry-stone shrine to St. Ignatius.



opened my eyes to the wide world of globally. They have taught me the power to experience God in everyday life and silent (if only for a minute). I have learnt in CLC invaluable in my work youth groups as well as soothing to my

Adams, who became a Hillbilly last from the picture because tonight her life upside down so we're hopeful that she'll advantage of the support of the group

4<sup>th</sup> of the group pictured. Although she's group as long as Helen, her sons and our now in their 30s, were in their early enjoyed working picnics at Sevenhill

Having brought us into existence, Fred provided our name, which cunningly suggests the importance of hospitality; guidance to the 16 or so who have joined over the years and our experience of the life after death of his continued presence in our meetings and decisions.

## Local and National News

Last National meeting in Melbourne in August

- A National Formation group has been formed with 2 members from each state; South Australia will be represented by Rachel McLoughlin and Ludmila Milo.
- We have a new National Ecclesial assistant: Robin Koning SJ.
- The Jesuit provincial, Steve Curtin, was asked about the possibility of establishing some structure for regular dialogue between CLC and the Jesuits.
- CLC has now a link on the Jesuit website.
- Groups and individual members are encouraged to subscribe to the Jesuit publication: *Province Express and Companions*. Articles about CLC are welcomed in these publications.
- The CLC membership kit has been developed and is being sent out to all members on the receipt of their membership fees.
- A Pre- CLC group is up and running in Brighton following an earlier Information night. The guides are Jocelyne and Ludmila. We will have the possibility of welcoming them at the end of year gathering.
- Book Saturday the 21st of November in your diary for our end of year gathering. Mass will be in the Norwood church at 6 pm followed by dinner in the hall. Please be there for our last community event of the year.
- For next year, we are already planning a retreat at Sevenhill, a Guides training weekend, a day of prayer and more.....
- The two yearly National Gathering, to which every member is invited, will take place on the 8-11 April 2010 at Mittagong at the Marist Conference centre. Our theme: "We are your witnesses. A vision of work, life and love." This will be a Family-friendly gathering.

## CLC: A global picture

CLC is present in a world with its increasingly pressing issues of human rights, ecology and material wellbeing. Following are some of the highlights:

**In the Middle East**, Lebanon continues to work, especially in formation outreach, thereby attracting some new members. Syria is planning a formation course for guides and Egypt is offering leadership formation. Assemblies are also planned for Syria and Egypt. Interfaith issues are of special importance in this region. All countries are engaged in various aspects of spirituality and, at a recent regional meeting, interest was expressed in bringing CLC to other parts of the Middle East.

**In the Asia/Pacific region**, national communities are progressing well with formation, leadership and apostolic engagement activities being planned or undertaken. All nationalities have engaged in Formation activities and further planning in Leadership/Guide formation; most have scheduled or already conducted a National Assembly. Almost all are involved in spirituality and outreach, especially in collaboration with the Jesuits— of whom some have strong engagement in collective apostolic works. We are indebted to the Philippines for its special assistance in the past in hosting Asia/Pacific meetings. There are further possibilities for CLC in other countries/places such as Singapore, Macao, Thailand and Vietnam. At the present time, the Asia/Pacific region is also clarifying its regional structures and working arrangements including the possibilities of a Leadership training workshop in the near future.

**In North America/Canada**, while no formal regional arrangement is functioning at present, formation and Leadership work continues and Assemblies are planned for English Canada and the USA in April and July respectively.

**Reports from Africa** indicate that progress, with determination and imagination and albeit under some difficulties (especially financially), is being made. It is intended to share travel costs, formation materials and the development of standards. Zambia is conducting discussion on the implications of 'Fatima'. The subject of Fatima will also be dealt with by Kenya in planning its forthcoming Assembly. The Democratic Republic of Congo (especially in the Kinshasa region) is focussing on applying the principles of DSSE and undertaking AIDS work. In the future, reforms are planned for Africa's regional structures and for conducting two regional Leadership courses; one for each of the two main language groups (English and French). In many **European countries, the** strong and competent engagement by CLC in formation, leadership and various apostolic works is being reported.

An issue, shared by many, relates to 'migration' where some (e.g. France, Spain, Luxembourg and Belgium) are especially involved - including in collaboration with the Jesuit Refugee Service. While a few communities were struggling, others, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, were growing such as Hungary, Lithuania, Croatia, Latvia and Slovakia. At the end of May, the European communities will meet for their regional assembly in Alicante, Spain where a new Euroteam will also be elected.

Concerning **Latin America**, we heard a report about a comprehensive analysis (involving 18 countries) of their strengths and opportunities for future CLC development and also about strong progress with the Magis Program. Most Latin American countries are engaged in formation, leadership and spirituality; the latter seen as essential to nourish and sustain apostolic work with some very involved in apostolic works and advocacy. Assessment and engagement is being undertaken with those communities needing special assistance.

Where needed most, the CLC World Executive is considering the provision of some financial assistance to support regional efforts and also to conduct, where geographical convenience and costs permit, supporting visits and consultations - usually in connection with such occasions as Assemblies or where special needs apply. During 2009, visits are foreseen: e.g. to Syria, Central America as well as the Asia region.

### Reminders:

**November 14<sup>th</sup>**: Parish mass at Our lady of the Sacred heart (420 Seaview Rd) said by Father Peter Hendriks. Mary Schinella, member of CLC, has organised a breakfast for those willing to stay after mass. Please contact the Evida Café (83530222) to book a seat, mentioning Mary's name.

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> of November**: Mass at the Norwood church at 6 pm, followed by gathering and dinner. Please bring a plate and drink to share. Thanks. Look forward to see you.

**April 2010, 8-11**: National gathering at Mittagong, NSW.

**February 2010, 28-29<sup>th</sup>**: Guides formation week end at Middleton Jesuit house.