

CLC Formation Stages

INTRODUCTION

This document describes the different stages of CLC group growth. Awareness of these stages can open the eyes of the group and each group member to the richness of CLC as a way of life on the personal and communal levels of mission. This awareness can reveal the spiritual richness that God leads us towards. In time of crisis, confusion or change the description of the different stages can help us to understand the process that the group has to live through.

It is not intended that the word "stage" suggests we have to climb a ladder leaving behind all previous experiences as a step that is left behind. A better image of the process is that of a spiral. In every relationship we retain the experiences of the different stages we have had to go through: understanding, crises, forgiving, grief, leaving behind, a new beginning. Every now and then we have to go through this process, personally and as a group. It is part of our life. When we are able to live through it, it puts in order and strengthens our life and may even deepen our relationships and our faith. In every stage of group life God gives us the promise that his Spirit will be with us and lead us to a richer life: the people of Israel are called out of Egypt and through the desert to the Promised Land.

This document offers helpful descriptions rather than an ideal picture. The reality is often less clear but more rich and complex. Nor need every stage or detail be understood beforehand, as it is more important to allow the experience of it to unfold: an individual and a group may go through a stage without recognising what is happening.

THE SCHEMA

The schema is based on

- : life experience;
- : the Scriptures, especially the life of Jesus;
- : experience and knowledge of Ignatian spirituality, in particular the Spiritual Exercises;
- : the CLC General Principles;
- : the Survey of the Formation Process in the CLC.

Important developments in understanding CLC are also found in

- : The CLC Charism : Guidelines for CLC Formation, 1998, which emphasises the personal dimension of the CLC vocation;
- : Our Common Mission : Brazil 1998;
- : The Common Mission of the Christian Life Community in Australia, 1999.

This schema of the stages presumes

- : the CLC Community lives as part of today's Church in the world;
- : the goal is that a group be an Apostolic Discerning Community (ADC), in dialogue with the world;
- : but the qualities of an ADC will be seen in earlier stages in ways appropriate to those stages;
- : transition is helped by CLC processes of evaluation (periodic and at end of meetings), reverent questioning, modes of discerning, by the presence of guides and wisdom people;
- : a CLC group is not a prayer group but it cannot survive without prayer.

This document recognises the influence on the group of the dynamics of ordinary human relationships, e.g. that between a married couple, or between friends, to say nothing of those springing out of gender difference.

THE FIVE STAGES

1. Pre-CLC Stage
2. Initiation Stage
3. Redemptive Stage
 - First Phase: the rejection of love
 - Second Phase: identification with Christ
4. Deepening Stage
5. Apostolic Discerning Community Stage

After a quotation from the gospels and a reference to the relevant section of the **Spiritual Exercises**, each stage is described under regular headings. Firstly, an account is given of its **Aim** or purpose. Secondly, the **Special characteristics** that are distinctive to the stage are given, usually by a concrete example and then by a list of characteristics in point form. Thirdly, under the heading **Evolving characteristics**, come those characteristics that are constant throughout but express themselves in differing ways. They are listed under *modes* that are essential for CLC spirituality: discernment, mission, community, vocation/commitment. Then come **Signs the stage is ending**, followed by a list of **Resources**, with **Some observations** to conclude the presentation of the stage.

1. Pre-CLC Stage

"Lord, where do you live?" John 1:38

The Annotations of the Spiritual Exercises

Aim

The aim in the Pre-CLC Stage is to introduce people to CLC and offer elements according to the needs of persons and the group to foster some experience and awareness on personal, communal and apostolic levels.

The aim is also to discover whether or not they are drawn to move further in this way of Christian life, whether they are able to commit to it, and whether they are suited.

Special characteristics (See Survey, p. 18)

An example: "There are people interested in deepening their faith. They meet others to share their experience of being inside and outside the Church. They hear something about CLC. Often a certain person is known as a member of CLC and acts as a catalyst, or CLC is mentioned at the end of an Ignatian retreat."

- a) Diversity - of backgrounds, outlook, expectations, life and faith experiences, level of formation.
- b) Instability - turn-over of members, short-term commitment.
- c) Vague group identity - members do not as yet identify with the group, nor with wider CLC.
- d) The guide is usually the centre of the group - members rely on the guide to carry responsibilities and to lead the way.
- e) Emergence of natural leaders.

Evolving characteristics

Mode of discernment seen in:

- a) Appreciation of value of reflection, especially reflection on personal thoughts and feelings.
- b) Stirring of prayer life.
- c) Experience of social life, especially for younger people, can open up questions about the meaning of life.

Mode of mission seen in:

- a) Desire for more in life, however vague.
- b) Prayer/spirituality is linked with personal life.
- c) Appreciation of coming to a balance, e.g. work with faith relationship.
- d) Growing awareness of the mission dimension of ordinary life experience, e.g. caring for one's family.
- e) Direct service experiences, e.g. with St. Vincent de Paul.

Mode of community seen in:

- a) People learn to listen, to respect one another.
- b) Meeting of people with similar values, experiences, etc.
- c) The guide has a pro-active leadership role, and members depend on the guide to give direction while open to consultation; the guide is accepted by group members.

Mode of vocation/commitment seen in:

- a) Short-term commitment - "there for a look" – first tasting.
- b) Searching - "Lord, if you are there, where are you for me?" - How can I live my Christian life more fully?
- c) Sense of wanting more than traditional Mass, etc. - a desire to explore below the surface of merely meeting one's obligations.

Signs the stage is ending

(See Survey, P. 29)

- a) Group articulates common objectives.
- b) Members drawn and ready to commit to further engagement with CLC, or they withdraw.
- c) Members feel some responsibility for each other and for the group.
- d) Group identity emerging, group gels, and members have some sense of belonging.

Resources

- a) Simple form of examen, evaluation.
- b) Ignatian forms of prayer, scripture prayer.
- c) Guidelines for first eight meetings.
- d) Experience of wider CLC, e.g. other guides, groups and EXCO members.

Some observations

- a) Pre-CLC is not finished at the end of eight meetings.
- b) The stage usually lasts about 12 months.
- c) There is a need to clarify that "CLC is one graced way in a many-graced Church" and to encourage a decision in freedom whether or not to stay in CLC.
- d) There may be departures.
- e) The group may show pathological behaviour, e.g. attempts to control the group or to attempt to fulfil an individual's over-riding personal needs.
- f) Initial attempts at evaluation may be rudimentary; nevertheless, the guide needs especially to foster growth in this skill.

2. Initiation Stage

"Come and see" John 1:39

The Principle and Foundation in the Spiritual Exercises

Aim

The aim of the Initiation Stage is to know and experience more about CLC on the personal, group and wider CLC levels, and to grow in awareness that one is individually loved by God and has the freedom to respond.

Special characteristics

An example: "During a periodic evaluation most people express a deeper commitment to the group and an interest in 'knowing' more about CLC spirituality. 'I feel very happy being with you in this group. Over the last few months the sharing, the common prayer, and the listening have become very important to me.' 'CLC seems to be a way of life that enriches me. I wish to know more about it.'"

- a) Having tested deepening on personal and group levels, both individuals and the group want to go further, and so take on CLC as "an animating and shaping way of life".
- b) This is accompanied by growth in the intellectual understanding of CLC as a way of life. So there is wider reading, etc., with regard to CLC.
- c) There is growth in understanding CLC and Ignatian language to name one's experiences, and maybe a desire to know more about the Spiritual Exercises.
- d) Members of the group commit themselves to each other in a deeper way: they share more of life and faith experiences. The group is more stable. Trust develops, as does spontaneity. Happiness and enthusiasm are signs of this stage. Members of the group assume responsibility for different functions. The communal life of the group becomes more important, and so responsibility has a communal dimension.
- e) There is some movement out to wider CLC. This strengthens personal sense of CLC identity. However, there can also be resistance to this movement.

Evolving characteristics

Mode of discernment seen in:

- a) Members have a growing desire for a personal relationship with Jesus, and some experience of it.
- b) Members bring issues of personal decisions, e.g. about work, to the group.
- c) The group undergoes a shift as it comes to reflect and decide on what kind of group it is; the members gain a better sense of the direction of the group.
- d) Members gain in appreciation of the value of communal reflection, e.g. periodic evaluation.

- e) Evaluation at end of meeting is very important as it enables members to express difficult experiences in group life to the group. Laxity in practice of evaluation may be a sign of fluctuating commitment.

Mode of mission seen in:

- a) Members allow their spiritual lives to be challenged by people different from themselves; they gain a new sense of what life can be like.
- b) There can be an ease with which members bring issues of public and social concern to the group.

Mode of community seen in:

- a) Members show a deeper level of listening, attentiveness, intuitional connection, readiness to empathise with difficulties and problems without an anxiety to resolve them, and a greater honesty in evaluation.
- b) In experiencing the wider CLC community, members come to a deeper sense of identity and understanding of the CLC way.

Mode of vocation/commitment seen in:

- a) There is growth in commitment to the group, and the CLC life in a group is of increasing importance to its members.
- b) There are signs of personal confirmation that one is loved and called by God, such as joy, "falling in love".

Signs the stage is ending

- a) If there is no move outwards and to wider CLC, then members will either stagnate or leave. The group will function as a protected room, no more than a prayer group. Stagnation is a sign that life and faith are not integrating.
- b) Often there is a big crisis that affects the whole group, e.g.
 - # there can be a sense of coming unstuck, of staleness;
 - # tensions and awareness of undercurrents appear;
 - # members can question the foundations of the group;
 - # there is a discovery of the limitations in individuals and in the group.
- c) The group can break up or continue at a superficial level; sometimes incorporating new members masks the basic issues and helps the group avoid the next step; activism can also be a mask.
- d) There can be factions and cliques.

Resources

- a) Members are encouraged to develop their prayerful familiarity with scripture, especially the gospels.
- b) Members are encouraged to develop their experience of the Spiritual Exercises, especially through personally directed retreats, e.g. the retreat in daily life.
- c) Group evaluation and periodic evaluation are of great importance.
- d) CLC documents, especially The CLC Charism, Our Common Mission.
- e) CLC programmes from overseas, such as "The Canadian programme", "The German programme", "The Larry Gooley, S.J. programme".
- f) Invitation to wider CLC.
- g) The guide uses the dynamic process of the Spiritual Exercises to discern what is happening. The guide needs to draw on Our Common Charism and Our Common Mission statements of Brazil and of Australia.
- h) Service projects, such as the Ignatian "experiments", through which he has experience in a ministry.

Some observations

- a) For much of the stage there is joy and enthusiasm in the group.
- b) There can be a limited degree of personal integration, so that one shifts from seeing the CLC way as rules to be kept to seeing it as principles to be lived.
- c) The group in this stage goes through 'seasons', beginning with a possibly unduly positive attitude, then moving to a period of calm, and then showing signs of stagnation, disillusionment and crisis.
- d) There is growing network among members, but towards the end these become tensions, and there is a need to create proper space between members.
- e) A group made up of friends or drawn from a small parish may have more difficulty in facing the redemptive stage, because the ordinary social circumstances of its members can exacerbate the tensions without providing opportunities for their resolution.
- f) Often the guide will see these signs before the members are ready to face them; naming the problem, however, can help make the group aware.
- g) The guide is attentive to the group as a whole, and works with members in its growth. So the guide takes an encouraging role, listens more, offers feed-back, provides information, and acts as a structural link between the group and the wider CLC. The guide offers different Ignatian means to the group, and helps move it to the next "exercise".
- h) The guide may feel very alone, and so may need to call on outside help and support and wisdom as the group moves into the redemptive stage. The guide may experience psychological

projection from members. The group may seek to impose responsibility on the guide.

- i) To avoid introspection the group needs to keep its focus outside itself.**
- j) This stage lasts about 2 to 3 years.**

3. Redemptive Stage

First Phase: The rejection of love, and its consequences

*"Lord, / am not worthy to receive you under my roof.
Say but the word . . ."* Matthew 8:8, Luke 7:6

First Week of the Spiritual Exercises

Aim

To discover and develop an awareness of personal and collective sinfulness and limitations, and so experience the need for Christ's redemptive love, and God's mercy in acceptance of one another's personal limitations and the limitations of the group.

Special characteristics

An example: "Over several meetings the mood within the group has been very flat and lifeless. Some members seem to be without interest. One of them missed two of the last four meetings without excuse. When they all are gathered one of them expresses anger about this lack of interest, 'I miss the power and the spirit of the time when we started our group', and then accuses the person who missed the meetings of paralysing the group. At the end of the evening, the group members see that they need a careful evaluation of their group life, their roles, their hopes and despair."

- a) The tensions can be masked as boredom, loss of interest.
- b) The group is called to face its deficiencies, powerlessness to change, fear and defences.
- c) The group is focused on itself - a necessary preoccupation at this stage, as interest in outside (e.g. work) can be a mask.
- d) Positively, this stage is firstly an invitation to conversion and change, and secondly a clarification of relationships with one another and with God.
- e) A thunderstorm is needed to clear the air; beforehand the air is heavy, muggy. The group is stuck, goes around and around in circles, e.g. in predictable patterns of sharing; an evaluation can dislodge this.
- f) Maybe a member of the group will name the situation, others will intuit undercurrents, or express resistance and even rejection of the challenge to move forward.
- g) The crisis can help the group discover a new sense and value in community.

Evolving characteristics

Mode of discernment seen in:

- a) The 'evil spirit' likes to keep things hidden (see Spiritual Exercises [326]), and so it is important to recognise this and bring matters into the open.
- b) Aggression and anger are ambiguous - they may not be bad, they can be a cry for life.
- c) The guide and members need to enable expression of

- "disturbing" and "ambiguous" feelings, experiences, opinions.
- d) It is important to go to the roots of the present crisis in the past group life, e.g. entrenched patterns of dominance and passivity, inappropriate anger, sense of boredom.
 - e) Note the importance of psychological "projection", of one member projecting feelings, etc., onto another, or of the group onto the guide, or of scapegoating.
 - f) Note the signs of discouragement.
 - g) While the above features relate to the overall situation of the group, individual members may also be avoiding bringing the challenges of their personal life to the group.

Mode of mission seen in:

- a) It is important to retain or actively to pursue links with the wider CLC.
- b) The mission can move out of central focus; alternatively, busyness can be a mask, e.g. for not committing to CLC.
- c) There is a need to focus on the ideal that the group exists for its growth in discernment for better service.

Mode of community seen in:

- a) The group is entrenched in its relationships.
- b) There can be a sharp sense of personal differences.
- c) Even at the risk of the group breaking up, the process should be pursued; members need to be encouraged to move forward.
- d) In their differences, members need to respect the sincerity and dignity of each person and to remember the Spirit of truth is found between members.
- e) Members of the group have to acknowledge their own partiality, and so move to cooperation.
- f) So the dynamic is from dependency (Pre-CLC), to independence (initiation), to interdependence (Redemptive).

Mode of vocation/commitment seen in:

- a) The group is called to go through this stage and not avoid it; it is timely. The group undergoes a desert experience.
- b) With regard to God, a distancing and false image of God for individuals and the group comes to the fore.
- c) Externally produced crises and events can throw the group into this stage or make the group spiral around it.
- d) Sin is the refusal of relationship with God and others.
- e) There is a strong need to recommit to the value and habit of prayer.

Signs the group is moving into the second phase

- a) Awareness and acceptance of the crisis and of the limitedness and sinfulness of members of the group.

Resources

- a) The guide needs to enable the group to move; the guide needs the freedom to recognise the group might disintegrate; the guide will find this stage difficult if he/she has not been through it beforehand.
- b) The guide and the group may need to call for another who has experience and skills in the wider CLC to facilitate movement through this stage. Ongoing contact with the wider CLC or a mentor can be helpful.
- c) Draw on especially appropriate Scripture passages, e.g. short healing passages in the gospels, John 8:1-11, Romans 7.
- d) Rules for the discernment of Spirits in the Spiritual Exercises [313-336].

Some observations

- a) There will be feelings of disappointment, of stagnation, a sense of glimpses of the truth emerging, and a shift from boredom to being empowered.
- b) Evaluations are more important here than ever, and so is prayer.
- c) In times of crisis do not change decisions or commitment to meetings, etc.; be on guard against avoidance of going through the process (Ignatian "agere contra" - working against one's weakness).
- d) Patience is needed for truth to emerge; members will come to the place of redemption at different paces; each needs his/her proper time to own the process.
- e) The limitations will affect the life of the group if they are not faced, and will do so even if not expressed.

3. Redemptive Stage

Second Phase: Identification with Christ

*"It is good to be here" The Transfiguration
Matthew 17:4, Mark 9:5, Luke 9:33*

The Kingdom Meditation, The Two Standards

Aim

The group moves towards a sense of discipleship with Jesus, and so needs to hear and savour the call, and to be loved by the Lord.

Special characteristics

An example: "After a time of ups and downs, turbulence and difficulties, all members of the group express in an evaluation that they have a new motivation to go on. 'I desire to go further within the CLC together with you.' 'I think that without prayer and God's help we wouldn't have been able to go through that difficult time. I'd like to know and experience more deeply how God shows us our way and where he wants to lead us.' At the end of the evaluation there is a joint gratitude and a common commitment to stay together."

- a) Calm after the thunderstorm, freshness and light; a subtle time; a sense of being in a new place; a deeper sense of gratitude.
- b) The beginning of deep empathy for others; each is loved for him/her self; treasuring of differences; awareness of God's love of differences.
- c) CLC way of life is now better understood and lived out; members have a stronger identification with it.
- d) The power of Christ the Lord is experienced by the group: individual members experience this in different ways and degrees - a savouring of this; maybe a waiting to be captured by the Lord.

Evolving characteristics

Mode of discernment seen in:

- a) There is breakthrough into subtlety; now members are at peace about not knowing where the group is or is going; there is greater patience; the group's life is known more intuitively than rationally; there is awareness of the deep energy that comes from the experience of being loved and called; there is the energy of having come through a test.
- b) Members are in touch with a new and deeper level, and begin to work from it - "living waters welling up to eternal life".
- c) Image of God - God is now someone who spontaneously draws us.

Mode of mission seen in:

- a) There is a move from service to identification with Christ's call and mission - "I call you no longer servants but friends".
- b) An energy for mission can grow quietly in members.
- c) This is an appropriate time to suggest that an individual/group move out of its comfort zone; beware of an infatuation with Jesus - "Jesus and me".

Mode of community seen in:

- a) There is greater freedom for members to be themselves and accepted; they can trust more in their own experience.

Mode of vocation/commitment seen in:

- a) Members awoken to the person of Jesus - he moves to the centre of personal and group life.

Signs the phase and stage is ending

- a) Henceforth all movements in the group are more subtle than formerly.
- b) The group is assimilating as a whole.
- c) There is a readiness for the journey ahead; energy builds up to move on - "let's get going".
- d) Closure of the second phase should not take too long, so the guide may have to urge it forward.
- e) The guide listens to the readiness to move, and so offers some form of evaluation to articulate a new commitment and readiness to move.
- f) There is a new ability to challenge among the group members.

Resources

- a) Material/books on conflict; some knowledge of group dynamics.
- b) A facilitator or senior guide needs to be in contact with the guide.
- c) The guide needs to know Ignatian Annotations about discernment and temptations, and the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits.

Some observations

- a) The group can break up during or after the first phase; there needs to be responsible discussion about this: the guide can help by bringing the issue to the open and by helping proper

closure; it can be a moving and owning process for those who leave, and so part of the "quiet" of this stage.

- b) The guide needs to be free to let the group take control of its destiny/future, and be at peace that it may decide to break up.**

4. Deepening Stage

"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Matthew 6:10

Second and Third Weeks of the Spiritual Exercises

Aim

The growing intimacy with Christ leads to a response of love which becomes a personal, heartfelt commitment to the mission of Christ, and especially as he moves among the suffering. The primary stress is now on living with Christ on mission, and the energy comes from the redemptive love of God. There can develop a common as well as an individual mission.

Special characteristics

An example: "In a group meeting a member talks about her volunteer work in a social institution. There she tries to accompany teenagers who live in unstable family situations, to listen to them, to be their advocate. The whole group is so impressed with her response to this particular need that they decide to pray and discern about the call to ministry of each member of the group."

- a) There is a readiness in the individual and the group for a full identification with Christ on mission.
- b) The gospel stories of Jesus on mission gain in importance, e.g. his ministry and preaching become alive in revealing and challenging the life of the individual and the group.
- c) The group is still finding its way to becoming an apostolic discerning community in its normal modes of operation; the group is trying this out.
- d) Members grow in honesty and in the ability to challenge each other.

Evolving characteristics

Mode of discernment seen in:

- a) Images of Christ - group members come to know the many faces of Christ; he challenges as well as comforts.
- b) Jesus' presence is discerned in hard times; the pattern of his death and resurrection becomes real.
- c) Group members need to be encouraged not to answer every pressure to help; they need to grow in discerning the call in a situation, an immediate situation as well as a global one.

Mode of mission seen in:

- a) The group listens to the world much more, and hears the call addressed to it (the call in the needs, not just the needs).
- b) Members of the group become capable of starting another group; they have more energy, motivation and ability to hear what is happening in people and groups, and to help them.

Mode of community seen in:

- a) The group is ready to accept new members who are themselves formed, and such an individual is able to join such a formed group.
- b) Bad experiences do not break the group up, because it is now deepened into Christ's death and resurrection; there is a deeper level of mutual commitment; crises do not question the existence or life of the group as it did in the early redemptive stage.

Mode of vocation/commitment seen in:

- a) Members of a group are ready to be involved in interest groups and in the wider CLC, or to be called by the CLC community to wider service. The wider CLC, seeing the needs of the Church and society, is able to notice such people and call them to offer themselves to service in the CLC or the Church.

Signs the stage is transforming

- a) Individuals and the group focus more on being with Jesus on mission rather than seeing Jesus as being with us on mission.
- b) With regard to discernment the group is free both to hear and to speak honestly about a challenge put to individuals and the whole group.
- c) At a personal and group level there is freedom
 - (i) for the fruits of discernment to be offered to the wider community (CLC, Church, society),
 - (ii) for such offering to be rejected.
- d) There is a growing interest in the life of the Church, and maybe wavering engagement.

Resources

- a) The Communal Apostolic Discernment Retreat and Course is particularly apt at this stage.
- b) Full experience of the Spiritual Exercises (8 Day and 30 Day retreats), and their gradual appropriation over the years.
- c) Deepening personal appropriation of Church documents, and growing theological literacy and interest in social and political life from a Christian perspective.

Some observations

- a) There is a shift in focus from how Christ meets one's own suffering to one's being led through identification with Christ in his suffering to the suffering of the world.
- b) Transition to the next stage can be imperceptible - "You are in it before you notice".

5. Apostolic Discerning Community Stage

"Another will put a belt around you and take you where you would rather not go" John 21:18

The Contemplation on the Love of God [230]

Aim

An apostolic CLC is a community which in response to an experience or situation is able truly to discern a decision in community with all members participating to wait for confirmation and then to follow through or live out the decision openly. This way of proceeding becomes their way of operation. ("Deepening our understanding of the General Principles", Progressio no. 38-39, Sept. 1992.)

Special characteristics

No example is given, because this stage exhibits real and deep openness, and so takes many forms. Nevertheless, whereas previously members of the group probably had their own apostolic activity, now the group itself generates a more communally integrated apostolic life. Each member now sees his/her apostolic activity in the light of the group's apostolic commitment.

- a) There is a communal counter-cultural effect.
Members live in a communal stance. Groups and their members act as a sign of contradiction in an individualistic society.
- b) There is a full owning of our baptismal life in the Church. There is therefore a growing identification with the Church in its glory and pain, frailty and reality - there is a "sensus ecclesiae" (sense of the Church). There is readiness to be committed to a dysfunctional Church, however painful that might be – "lamentations replace complaints".

Evolving characteristics

Mode of discernment seen in:

- a) Being a member of a group is an occasion of joy. Members may bring to the group their sense of Christ's suffering in themselves and the world. The group has a sense of the Holy Spirit being with it.
- b) Group members are ready to be sent by the group, CLC at the Church.
- c) Members of the group each have discerning hearts operative in the details of daily life, and bring the fruits of this to the group for more formal discernment, for confirmation and challenge, etc..
- d) Members have an habitual knowledge and sense to the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits [313-336].

Mode of mission seen in:

- a) There is now an apostolic meaning to one's whole life; life is lived in the context of mission.
- b) There is both a readiness to be confronted by reality and a freedom at the personal and communal levels not to be swayed by a fear of consequences, e.g. holding back on making a practical proposal for fear that one will have to take on the task oneself.
- c) There is an attitude of openness and grateful generosity associated with one's sense of mission; the motivation is not reward or honour, etc., but the call to be sent on mission.

Mode of community seen in:

- a) Freedom, openness, honesty.
- b) There is an awareness of what can block the group and the discernment process, a sense of one's own pathology (deep-seated negative patterns) and an acknowledgment that "every community has its own sin", but an awareness also that these are points of redemption and that from this comes energy for mission; a group's knowledge of its "traps and tricks" is often recognised by its redemptive laughter.

Mode of vocation/commitment seen in:

- a) There is an engagement and commitment with living one's vocation in a World CLC Community within a universal Church in the world of today.
- b) There is an ever-deepening sense of identity with Jesus in the mission of his death and resurrection.

Signs the stage is being abandoned - signs of retrogression

- a) Burn-out.
- b) Over-commitment in taking up responsibilities, undue concern for the crying needs, failure to be truly discerning to the call.
- c) Turning the ADC into an idol - it becomes the end not the means.

Resources

- a) The Contemplation on the Love of God in the Spiritual Exercises [230-236].
- b) The desert experience.

Some observations

- a) ADC is not solely focussed on the Church, but on the world, and the Church in the world.
- b) ADC can repeat former stages but at a deeper level, the group being now more conscious of what is happening.