

CLC KENYA – A JOURNEY OF GRACE

CLC Kenya was started in 1989 when Fr. Tim Quinlan, S.J., the Vice Ecclesiastical Assistant for World CLC, visited and spoke to several groups in Nairobi and Mombasa about CLC. From this visit, one group of recent university graduates, including Loreto Sisters, emerged in Nairobi. A scholastic, Gerry Whelan, S.J., from Hekima College initially took responsibility for CLC in Kenya. In 1990, Fr. Terry Charlton, S.J, came to Kenya and was asked to serve as Ecclesiastical Assistant for CLC Kenya which he gladly accepted; a job he was to do for the next twenty years.



Fr. Terry Celebrating Mass during a St. Al's event

CLC Kenya then later spread to four other parts of the country and University groups. CLC in Nairobi undertook a six-month process of discernment of common mission in 1993 and the result was to focus on mission to youth. This thrust was confirmed in a nation-wide discernment process in 1998.

In 1994, CLC Kenya was incorporated into the World Community during World Assembly held in Hong Kong.

In 1995, CLC Kenya held its first National Assembly (NA) which was attended by 65 members. This assembly set the direction for development of CLC Kenya for the next two years. It is during this assembly that the first Executive Council (ExCo), which is responsible for executing the directions set by the NA, was elected. Levi Matseshe was elected the first president of CLC Kenya.

1st National Assembly Social Night



The Second NA was held in 1997 which reviewed progress so far and set directions for the next two years. Another National ExCo was elected to spearhead the implementation of the set directions. Levi Matseshe was re-elected president.

The Third NA held in 1999 at Kasarani discerned on the CLC Kenya's three mission priorities: *Youth, Sharing our Ignatian Spirituality with others*, and *Civic Education and Constitutional Reform*. This NA also approved the Constitution of CLC Kenya. The assembly elected Tom Omariba as president.

In the year 2000 CLC Kenya, in collaboration with other organizations in the Ignatian family, started Zaidi Centre for Ignatian Spirituality. These organizations included the Jesuits, Loreto Sisters, Missionaries of Africa, Missionary Sisters of our Lady of Africa and Christian Brothers. Zaidi Centre was established as a means of ministering to Christians through workshops, presentations, recollections and retreats on aspects of our Christian life. Zaidi is a Swahili word for more (*Magis*).

The Fourth NA was held in 2002 at Highridge Training Teachers College. It focused on the growth of CLC Kenya and monitored the progress of mission. Isaac Momanyi Oigo was elected president; a position he diligently served for six months before passing on to be with the Lord on 9th October 2002. Catherine Waiyaki, the vice president then, took over as president to the completion of the term. Within the same year, members of CLC in Nairobi founded Hands of Love, an organization to minister to AIDS infected and affected, especially in Kibera slums, Nairobi.

In 2003, CLC Kenya hosted the Fourteenth (14th) World Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya. There was good representation from the international community.



African CLC during the 2003 World Assembly in Kenya

In January, 2004, Hands of Love, with the support of CLC Kenya, began St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School which, to date, serves needy youth who are affected and infected by HIV/AIDS. The school was located in the heart of Kibera slum.



Students cleaning the compound of the old school

Fr. Terry with students during a class session in the old school



It is in the same year that the CLC Kenya Fifth NA was held and which focused on the CLC Kenya National Identity. Edel Churu Ebale was elected as president. Three members from CLC Kenya participated in an international Africa Formation Encounter held in South Africa in 2005 which focused on formation needs.

In 2006, CLC Kenya was registered as a Charity organization in Kenya. The Sixth and Seventh Kenya National Assembly were held in 2007 and 2009 respectively with focus on CLC identity. Cornel Okalo led the community as president between 2007 and 2012.

Plans were underway by CLC Kenya to construct a new modern structure for the St. Aloysius (St. Al's) Gonzaga School away from the slum of Kibera where it was started. This dream was realized in 2010 when the new modern campus for St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School was opened in Langata area.



Front view of St. Aloysius New Campus in Langata



Students during a computer class in the new campus

The Eighth CLC Kenya NA was held in 2012 where Four key areas were emphasized; Formation for mission (financial co-responsibility), CLC identity, CLC visibility with regard to family and youth and EXCO mandated to ratify the proposed new constitution for CLC Kenya. This assembly elected Daniel Obonyo as CLC Kenya president.

The Ninth NA held in 2014 focused on CLC Membership, Formation for Mission and CLC Mission projects. A new Exco team was put in place. Daniel Obonyo was however re-elected president.



National ExCo Elected in the 2017 National Assembly

The Tenth NA was held on **29th April to 1st May 2017** was based on the Theme; CLC –A Call to service for Humanity. The fruit of the assembly’s discernment process highlighted the following four areas; new evangelization, social justice and family life, financial sustainability and mission projects. Ms. Catherine waiyaki was elected president.



10th CLC Kenya National Assembly at Carmelite Community

The 11th CLC Kenya National Assembly was held from 19th – 21st October 2019 at Carmelite Community. The theme of the Assembly was **back to our roots, committing to our charism**. The assembly mandated Exco to put more emphasis on Formation of members on Ignatian Spirituality, community living, financial sustainability as well as engaging in mission activities. Ms. Catherine Waiyaki was re-elected the president.



12th CLC Kenya Assembly was held from 29th July and ending on the feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola on 31st July. The event took place at Carmelite Community with the theme “**Deepening our Charism for the World**”. The new Executive council, under the leadership of Mrs. Lucina Koyio, was mandated to put more emphasis on the three pillars of CLC putting focus on formation of members in the spirituality, taking more interest on the two CLC mission projects as well as emphasis on financial co-responsibility of members.

**12TH CLC KENYA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HELD
AT CARMELITE COMMUNITY FROM
29TH - 31ST JULY 2022**



Transition of Ecclesiastical Assistants

Since the inception of CLC Kenya, we have been blessed with Six Ecclesiastical Assistants (EA).

- Gerry Whelan S.J. was the first E.A to serve the CLC Kenya community. He served from 1989 to mid 1990.
- Fr. Terry Charlton, S.J. then picked up from Gerry Whelan, S.J. and has been the longest serving EA having served from 1990-2010.
- Fr. Ambrose Kituyi, S.J. then took over as E.A for a period of two years between 2010 and 2011.
- Fr. Michael Mungai, S.J. served for two years in 2012 and 2013.
- Fr. Mungai then passed the mantle to Fr. Eric Simiyu, S.J. who served for a period of one year before handing the mantle to...
- Fr. Richard D’Souza, S.J. who has been the CLC Kenya E.A. from August 2015 to date.

CLC Kenya Statistics

The community currently has **477 members**; **141** in adult and parish groups and **336** youth members from twelve university and college groups. We have an estimate of about **four hundred** university alumni members who have not joined the community due to various life challenges after campus.

Thirty-Four members have taken permanent commitment in CLC way of life with **Eighty-four** currently on permanent commitment. About **Seventy-three** members have done the full Spiritual Exercises and **twenty-Six** are trained to give retreats and spiritual direction.