

A PERIOD OF INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY

Christian life community is not merely a movement but a way of life, a way of living our Christian life. A fitting image or symbol this way is the journey .it is a journey where we encounter the saving and transforming presence of the lord and invited to travel the journey of Christian faith with him and with another, that is, as a community

As contained in our CLC general principle

Christian life community is made up of Christian: mem and women, adults and youth of all social conditions who want to follow Christ more closely and work with him for the building of the reign of God, who have recognized Christian life community as their particular vocation within the church

MEETING 1: GETTING ACQUAINTED AND BUILDING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

GRACE: That we may be open to ourselves, to one another and to God

OPENING HYMN AND PRAYER: “For you my god’ or another; let someone make up a prayer asking for the grace of this meeting.

SCRIPTURE; DEUTERONOMY 7:6-8

Share what this passage means to you

EXPLANATION OF THE TOPIC:

Each of us has our personal identity from many sources: we have our own parents and families who have influenced us deeply; we have elements of our personalities with which we were born and others which have developed over time. We are also influenced by the group we were born into and in which we have grown up; our ethnic groups and our country and our being Christian have supplied much of our culture, our values, our beliefs and our ways of living

We have come together today because we have heard about Christian life community; and we would like to try it. We know that it emphasizes a bonding community; and we would like to try it .Emphasizes a bonding in community, the spirituality of Ignatius Loyola, services to church and to the world, loving the church as a mother, having Mary as our mother and as a model for the Christian life As a community, CLC is a group of people. We begin by sharing our lives and our aspirations, and our experiences of Christian community.

Questions for Reflection:

1. What are the three things that you would like the group to know about you?
 - (a).
 - (b).
 - (c).
2. What is your experience of community or of Christian community?
3. What are your expectations of this group?

GROUP SHARING: Each share what you would like of your reflections

ACTION RESPONSE: How will I/we put this topic into practice?

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING: Was the grace achieved? Did the meeting go smoothly?
What contributed to good meeting? What might be done to overcome this?

CLOSING PRAYER OR HYMN

TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

Jer.29: 11-15 Jn. 15:5-15 PS. 138 Mk.1;16-20 Mk.8;27-30

MEETING 2: THE SPIRITUALITY OF CLC

GRACE: That we may be open to the spiritual themes of Loyola

OPENING HYMN AND PRAYER: “You Are Near” or “Take, Lord, and Receive”. Let someone pray for the grace.

LIFE SHARING: What has happened in your life?

How has God been a part of those experiences?

SCRIPTURE: Ephesian 2:1-10 Share what this passage means to you.

EXPLANATION OF THE TOPIC:

African Spirituality emphasizes among other things:

Active presence of the Creator God in the world.

A unified sense of reality-no dualism, finally all is from God

Life is the ultimate gift and it is sacred. The family as the place to be born, live, die.

The active role of ancestors. The sense of oral tradition.

The sacredness of nature and the environment in which we live.

Ignatian spirituality emphasizes:

God’s unique love for each person and for all of creation.

Becoming truly free from sin and other additions.

Becoming a companion of Jesus Christ

Having right relationship with God, self, others, all of creation

St. Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556) is of Basque origin of lower nobility, born in Loyola. Spain. He lived a vain life in court until his leg was shattered in the Battle of Pamplona. During his recovery, he needed the differences in feelings when he thought of doing great things for noble lady versus doing great things for Christ. He spent 11 months in “retreat” at Manresa where he

underwent a profound conversion from sin to Christ, the basis of his Spiritual Exercises, at the heart of spirituality. He gathered companions, including St. Francis Xavier, at University of Paris. He spent the last 15 years of his life at Rome where he founded the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) and wrote its Constitution.

Question for Reflection:

1. Are you interested in this spirituality of Ignatius? Why?
2. What is your favorite passage from Scripture? Explain why it attracts you.
3. What is the place of prayer and the Eucharist in your life now?

GROUP SHARING: Each share what you would like of your reflections.

ACTION RESPONSE: Begin practicing the central CLC daily exercise of the “Prayer of Awareness”. This spiritual exercise will be introduced more at length at the first meeting after the Introductory Period, but to begin now will help you test whether the CLC is the way of life for you. Practice the prayer of awareness daily for about 15 minutes near the end of your day. There are five steps:

1. *Thanksgiving:* Thank God for the gifts of your life, the gift of the day.
2. *Asking for Light:* Ask the Spirit for help in reviewing the day.
3. *Reviewing of the day:* Where and how has God been present in the events of the day? What have been your responses?
4. *Turning to God:* Where you responded well, be grateful; where not so well, ask God’s help and forgiveness.
5. *Looking for the future:* Consider yourself; commend yourself to God’s help.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING: Was the grace achieved?

What did I like about meeting? Do I see areas of improvement?

CLOSING PRAYER OR HYMN

TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

Mt. 5; Mt. 6, Mt. 7; Lk. 10:25-37; Jn. 13:1-15

MEETING 3: MISSION

GRACE: That we may look at the apostolic dimension of CLC and see that we are called to serve Christ, the Church, and the World.

OPENING HYMN AND PRAYER: “Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God” Or “They’ll know we are Christians by Our Love” Someone leads a Prayer for the grace.

LIFE SHARING: What has happened in my life?

How has God been a part of these experiences?

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 25:31-46 Share what the passage means to you

EXPLANATION OF THE TOPIC:

“Walking along the street one day, I met a well- dressed woman carrying a baby on her back, and she asked me for few shillings to enable her to transport herself to a nearby destination. I gave her the money. A few days later, I fell ill and needed money for my treatment. Someone gave me one thousand times what I gave that woman.”

CLC says that I must look out for my neighbor as I do for myself. This service is to be in charity, i.e giving the person what he/she needs. This service is also to be in justice, i.e giving the person what is his/her due; this means going to the root causes of the evils of society, freeing people from what binds them, caring for victims of discrimination, giving a preference to those who cannot help themselves, renewing and reforming the structures of society, bringing peace and justice to the neighborhood and to the world.

MISSION IS NOT SO MUCH SOMETHING WE DO BUT A QUALITY OF OUR WHOLE LIFE, a quality of the presence we bring to those around us as the bearers of Christ. Christ’s mission was not just what he did, it was who he was.

As we grow in CLC, we progressively share responsibility for mission. Over time, you will be invited to enter, with your small group, into an ongoing 4-step process: discern, send, support, and evaluate mission.

QUESTION FOR REFLECTION:

1. State one example of poverty, unjust actions, or wrong-doing in your neighborhood.
2. Could God be calling you to counter or correct this wrong?
3. What could you do to counter or this wrong?
4. What could this community do to counter or correct this wrong?

GROUP SHARING: Each share what you would like of your reflections.

ACTION RESPONSE: How will I/we put this topic into practice?

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING: Was the grace achieved?

How did the meeting go?

CLOSING PRAYER OR HYMN

TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

Jas. 2:1-13 Jas. 2:14-26 Amos. 2:6-8 Is. 58:5-12 Rom. 12:1-8 Eph.2:13-18

Jn. 15:1-10

Read “Appendix: The History of CLC Kenya,” app. 14-15

MEETING 4:

CLC: A COMMUNITY OF DISCIPLES OF JESUS IN THE CHURCH

GRACE: That we may see CLC as one way of exercising membership in the Church, and that each may begin to discern whether CLC is the way he/she is being called to live their Christian life.

OPENING HYMN AND PRAYER: “Priestly People” or “The Church’s one foundation” Let someone share a prayer asking for the grace.

LIFE SHARING: As usual

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 Share on this passage

EXPLANATION OF THE TOPIC:

African spirituality emphasizes the *family* as the place to be born, live and die. The African Synod has called us use family as our central image for the church. For us in CLC, church is family.

We are a community of disciples of Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Thus, we can come together as a people to worship him, to learn his teachings, to adopt his way of living, to worship him, to learn his teachings, to adopt his way of living, to be committed to lives of services open to all, Christians and others alike, and to work for the building of the Reign of God in the world

For CLCers, we experience CLC community primarily in our small group in regular attendance and participation, through our sharing of our lives, through the support we give to, and receive from, one another in living our lives. Just as the church is universal, it is important that we recognize our involvement in CLC is not only at our levels of local-regional, national (Africa and English- speaking Africa) and world. Living community at these different levels will mean different things: we gain much of our personal support us in the CLC vision and to help us keep growing by being challenged to more. There is also a greater power for building the Reign of God in large levels of community.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTIONS:

1. Do I feel “at home” at church? Why or why not?
2. Am I an active member in my parish church? Explain.
3. Is this group for me a community of disciples of Jesus Christ?
4. How do we take responsibility for the universal church?

GROUP SHARING: Each share what you would like for your reflections

ACTION RESPONSE: How will I/We put this topic into practice?

ANNOUNCEMENTS: A few words should be said about the financial responsibility which goes with membership in CLC Kenya after the period of introduction. Members are asked to pledge according to their means. At present the suggested amount is 150 shillings, 200 for Nairobi, monthly for working members, 30 shillings for non-working(for 10 months) and 150 shillings at the beginning of each of two semesters for university student group. Those who are able are also asked to contribute for solidarity fund which helps those who cannot pay the full cost of residential programs.

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING: In which way was the grace achieved? How did the meeting go?

TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT MEETING: Jn. 10: 1-6 Jn. 10:7-18 Lk. 1: 46-55 Jn. 2:1-12

MEETING 5:

MARY, MOTHER AND MODEL FOR LIVING CHRISTIAN LIFE

GRACE: That we may see Mary as total openness to God.

OPENNING HYMN AND PRAYER: “Sing of Mary” or “Gentle Woman”

Let someone lead an opening prayer for the grace.

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:26-38 share what this page means to you

EXPLANATION TO THE TOPIC:

In Kenya society a mother is a bearer, the comforter, and the trainer of her child. She nourishes her child at her breast, and she prepares the child for future activities. When a child is small, the mother carries the child about, well secured at her back; the child can be a party of all the mother’s activities, or the child can sleep contentedly. The mother speaks to the father on behalf of the child and helps the child to make good decisions.

Mary is the mother of the church and our mother too. In our prayer to her, she helps us carry our daily burdens. She gives us an example of saying yes to God. In her instructions to the stewards at the wedding feast at Cana (Jn. 2:5), she trains us to follow the directions of her son. Her sharing of our burden and comforting us can be imagined from her standing beneath the cross (Jn. 19:25). Finally she intercedes for us at the throne of heaven and helps us in arriving at what God really wants of us.

QUESTION FOR REFLECTION:

1. What has been your image on Mary? Explain.
2. Who is Mary for you now? Explain.
3. What are two characteristics of Mary which attracts you?

4. How has your experience of Mary affected you?

GROUP SHARING: Each share what you would like of your reflections.

ACTION RESPONSE: How will I/we put this topic into practice between now and the next meeting?

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING: Was the grace achieved? With what word would you characterize the meeting overall? What did you especially like about the meeting? Were there any problems? And how did many they be remedied?

CLOSING PRAYER OR HYMN

TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

Lk.8:19-21; Jn.19:25-27; Acts.6:1-6; Eph.1:3-13; Jn.4:1-6

MEETING 6:

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

GRACE: that we may be open to where the Spirit of God is leading us.

OPENING HYMN AND PRAYER: “Spirit of the Living God” or “Abba Father” Let someone lead a prayer for the grace.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 15:22-29 Share what the passage means to you.

EXPLANATION OF THE TOPIC:

Your group has committed itself to be together for six sessions of initial formation. In the five previous-sessions, you have reflected upon and prayed over major aspects of Christian Life Community.

During this session you will do some prayerful consideration of where the Spirit of God is leading you as a group. We call this process **discernment**. Try especially to listen to your feelings, how your heart is moved.

QUESTION FOR REFLECTION:

Before you begin your personal reflection, it would be good for you to pray together that you may arrive at God’s choice for you: *“What does God want to do as a group?”*

1. **PAST:** How have these past five sessions affected you:
 - In you understanding of CLC?
 - In your life of prayer?
 - In your desire to grow as a Christian?
 - In your commitment this group of people?

2. **PRESENT:** How has this community been affected by these sessions?

3. What growth brings the group to this present- moment?

4. **FUTURE:** Where do you as a group go from here?

The major options are:

- a. Disband
- b. Continue to be a friendly, prayerful group.
- c. Proceed as a CLC group with ongoing formation.

Why do you choose this option?

GROUP SHARING: Let each share the results of your discernment.

LET THERE BE A LITTLE CEREMONY TO RATIFY THE GROUP'S DECISION.

REPORT THE GROUP'S DECISION TO:

Christian Life Community of Kenya

P. O. Box 21399

00505 Nairobi.

If you decide to proceed as a CLC group, report names and addresses as soon as possible. Upon notification of a decision to continue, a formation booklet will be sent for each member along with material on financial accountability. Each group must be accepted as a member by the CLC Kenya Executive Council at a semi-annual meeting.

ACTION RESPONSE: How will I/we put this topic into practice?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVALUATION: Do you think you received the grace of this meeting?

What was your experience like? Do you think you have experienced a good group discernment through which you have found the will of God?

ONGOING PRAYER: If you are going to continue as CLC, you might like material for prayer before the next meeting. Go back and pray again and the scripture passages which have struck you most.

Appendix:

THE HISTORY OF CLC KENYA

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 Kenyan 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 Ecclesial Assistant for CLC Kenya. It is in this year that CLC Kenya attended the first World Assembly in Guadalajara, Mexico.

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.

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.

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.

The Third NA held in 1999 discerned 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. Since this assembly, there has been a focus on implementing the three mission priorities.

In the year 2000, CLC Kenya established an organization by the name **Zaidi Centre** for Ignatian Spirituality as a means of ministering to Christians through workshops, presentations, recollections and retreats on aspects of our Christian life.

The Fourth NA was held in 2002. It focused on the growth of CLC Kenya and monitored the progress of mission. 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.

In 2003, CLC Kenya hosted the Fourteenth World Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya. There was good representation from the international community. In January, 2004, Hands of Love with the support of CLC began St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School which, to date, serves needy youth who are affected and infected by HIV/AIDS. It is in the same year that the CLC Kenya Fifth NA was held and which focused on the CLC Kenya National Identity.

Three members from CLC Kenya participated in an international Africa Formation Encounter held in South Africa in 2005 which focused on formation needs.

CLC Kenya was then registered as a Charity organization in Kenya in 2006. The Sixth and Seventh Kenya National Assembly were held in 2007 and 2009 respectively with focus on CLC identity.

Plans were underway by CLC Kenya to construct a new modern structure for the St. Aloysius 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. Al's was opened in Langata.

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.

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.

The Tenth NA was held slightly over a month ago and was based on the Theme; CLC –A Call to service for Humanity. The Assembly resolved to focus on four key areas namely; New Evangelization; Social Justice and Family life; Financial Sustainability and Mission Projects.

Symbol of CLC:



This symbol for CLC has X over the **P**, (for the Greek, Christus) and the inserted **M** as we are under the Patronage of Mary.

The curved line illustrates a movement forward to ONE WORLD COMMUNITY, hence the globe.

Hence, Christian Life Community (CLC) in English, Communauté de Vie Chrétienne in French (CVX) and Comunidad de Vida Cristiana (CVX) in Spanish.