

Report on Eurolink Meeting in Limburg 13 - 16 October 2005

Thursday 13 October 2005

Participants:

Eurolinks: Gertrud Zeller (CLC Austria), Ann Sieuw (CLC Belgium fl.), Charles Bokor (CLC Belgium W), Željko Bibić (representative of CLC Croatia), Joe Egerton (CLC England & Wales), Severine Grosjean (CLC France), Inge Höpfl (CLC Germany), Mary O'Flaherty (CLC Ireland), Marina Villa (CLC Italy), Tessy Geimer-Biver (CLC Luxembourg), Roberta Pace Balzan (CLC Malta), Carla Rebelo (CLC Portugal), Tomaž Šmid (representative of CLC Slovenia), Aurora Camps (CLC Spain), Dorothee Fischer (CLC Switzerland), Zsafia Ercsey (CLC Hungary)

Members of the CLC Europe Formation working group: Evelyne Maloret, Carla Rebelo, Anni Rickenbacher.

ET members: Agnes Rausch, Monika Sander, Leonardo Bechetti, p. Andrej benda SJ, Martina Županić

Daniela Frank and Chris Michallef **from the WExCo**

Missing: Eurolink from CLC –Poland and representatives from CLC-Lithuania

Welcoming: At arrival the Eurolink survival kit was handed over to every Eurolink for personal discovery of this box of surprises.

Personal and country presentation

It was a sharing time where each of us present that first evening said a few words about ones personal life and a few words in order to present the country where one came from. There has been a wonderful collection of photographs, leaflets with beautiful scenery of rivers, mountains, sea, CLC meetings and gatherings, pictures of the national dishes, saint patrons of countries.

Evening prayer in the chapel **Luke 11, 47:45**

Ten little things I want to ask myself before our meeting

Friday, 14 October 2005

Morning Prayer in the chapel Luke 12, 1:7 *“Jesus gives word of warning and hope”*

Morning session: **Eurolink survival kit**

Power point presentation by Leo:

- We are the whole church but not the entire church
- CLC' ers are invited to be competent workers and convincing witnesses
- CLC is a body with bones and flesh: the bones stand for structure
- The symbol of CLC being a net, and hot nodes to be joined together, sewing relationships
- The symbol of stars and planet; we do need many stars to make the sky shining.

Personal reflection time on my role as Eurolink, exchange in **sharing groups** and in **plenary** on the following questions

1. What are your feelings after the presentation: what gives you energy and what blocks you or make you feel overburdened?

Things which gives us energy are: meeting people, new, old friends, love the idea of CLC group as a net, CLC is group who is becoming aware of events in society that differs CLC from other catholic groups, communities,, our life hangs on GP, happy that CLC is becoming global community, joy to be here, being together here helps in fostering the communication beyond border.

What makes us feel blocked: language, lack of enthusiasm at the local level, resistance at the local level regarding CLC as world and European community, we should be careful with the implementation of the 4 steps given in survival kit because each community is different.

2. What are your expectations towards Euroteam regarding eurolink mission?

We expect: more than just electronic communication, investment of resources – time and money for new communities, catalyst role is very important, to be available to communities in crisis, to invite communities which are starting their way to CLC, link between Communities, awareness and focus on realities in EU through mission, formation, spirituality using resources from NC's, to be as WExCo, integrate WExCo recommendations for NC's in Europe, challenge NC's to respond on inputs, be aware of the mission of the WExCo, ET should help us to be better eurolinks, exchange of information should be fostered, brainstorming in good practises, foster experience, story sharing on issues as formation, young people, growth of the community, put forward a newsletter on specific projects or how to handle certain projects,, web page should be improved, to personalize the contact to eurolinks.

3. Erasmus – your reaction about it and how you can promote it?

Erasmus is a good idea but we couldn't discuss it, it came out of Lilles Assembly, we do not know how it works exactly, did not have time to speak about it, financial support, foster family hospitality, information about non CLC events as well, we should also share how to overcome our difficulties, it is richness and also a limitation, NC ExCo should decide on which events we should invite somebody, there is a language problem, problem with translations.

Afternoon session: CLC formation: a common European concern

Presentation of results by the working group on formation Evelyne, Anni and Carla

The working group received so many answers that they are now in presence of a whole storehouse of treasures; they divided the formation concerns and material into:

- Detailed plan for new groups
- Signs to identify the phases of a group
- E A formation dossier
- G P available in local languages
- Offer of Sp. Ex., focused on growth in relationship with God and the others
- Helps for evaluation and discernment
- Material about common mission

Increased collaboration with S J was mentioned.

Concerns and needs are related to entering and growing communities and to communities in mission; they are different according to the age of the members: college life, adult or aging life

Common challenges are:

- ✓ The formation of lay guides
- ✓ How to create a greater fidelity and sense of the wider community
- ✓ How to attract new people and especially how to deal with young members without religious tradition.
- ✓ How to adapt to young couples and family life situation
- ✓ How to make members aware of financial responsibility within the community
- ✓ How to raise interest for Spiritual Exercises
- ✓ How to widen personal action to common mission
- ✓ How to integrate social justice and dynamic of Sp Ex.

Personal reflection time: what has been good in my own formation as a CLC member?

Sharing in small groups by reflecting on question: in your NC what are the challenges and difficulties regarding formation, what has been helpful?

Reporting in the plenary:

- **What has been good for me in my own formation as a CLC member?**

International experience, SpEx Annotation 19, Spiritual guidance, connection with wider CLC, different kinds of SpEx, service and involvement in structures of CLC, acceptance of ones own rhythm, process of discernment, gentle invitation and freedom helps one to discover oneself more truly.

- **In your NC what are the challenges and difficulties regarding formation?**

Difficulties: lack of trained leaders, lack of people for SpEx (Jesuits and lay), integration of young families, introducing Nairobi recommendations on a national level, wider dimension of CLC, how to offer SpEx, help people when changes come – marriage or career, shortage of people who are available to start with a new group, ignatian spirituality against CLC formation, lack of ongoing formation, implementation of CLC Charism, not all people participate in NC events.

Challenges and what has been helpful: Having a spiritual director, trained guides and leadership team, formation team, social work experience, courses prepared for families, help of Jesuits, lay people expertise, previous experiences, relationship between formation team and WExCo, Formation materials, to have a formation team, support.

We ended the day with the celebration of mass.

Saturday, 15 October 2005

Morning Prayer Luke 12, 8:12

“The Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what should you say”

Morning session: Ignatian Communication / part 1 Input by Willi Lambert SJ

Willi Lambert presents the importance of communication for St Ignatius (*“Love consists in communication between two parts,”* explained Ignatius in the letter to his brothers sent to the Council of Trient); he gave us seven rules for communication:

I should be slow in speech, listen to advantage, be calm and so of greater attention to others and to myself, try to understand the other in its objectivity, emotions and values, decide whether to answer or to keep silent, give a feedback . . .

Loving reverence, freedom, openness, trust, thankfulness, partnership, favourable attitude, respectful love, acknowledgement, are main attitudes for ignatian communication.

Willi Lambert proposes 3 points considering the meaning of communication in the ignatian spirituality:

1. Mystical level

Love is communication – contemplation is communication on mystical level.

2. Attitude level

Ignatius wrote: *“When you speak, your aim must be to be understood. Learn when you listen to somebody; be attentive to you and to the other person; trust in you and in the other person.”*

3. **Acting level** Every man has 3 dimensions as well as the communication:

- Objective truth
- Emotions (be attentive to them)
- Readiness (good will).

To understand another person, you have to know her desires and her suffering (what she is afraid to lose). What are the values and the experiences behind this. This will give you a deeper understanding. As well, it is necessary to take a decision when to speak or be quiet. (As said by Karl Valentin: *“Everything was already said but not from everybody.”*)

Personal reflection time and sharing in groups on following questions:

- What importance has communication in my personal life?
- How do I experience communication and importance of communication in CLC (on local, national, European, world, ET level)?

Afternoon session: Ignatian Communication / part 2

Input by Willi Lambert SJ

Considering the first point: Without communication, I depress.

Second point: Communication makes me attentive to the situation where the other person is. We know that we work in the same direction but we do not know where we are coming from, who is the God we pray to. Be attentive to the expression, stop an unavailing discussion, and start with the freedom of the other one. If you want to change your behaviour: take one point and work on it during 2 months. If there is a conflict: try to find out the value which the other person is defending, which are my values and try to find a compromise.

Willi Lambert insisted on the importance given by Ignatius to letters. He gave 20 reasons why. The main letter should be objective in order to be shown to all, the subsidiary letter (called little daughter, could be more personal and spontaneous)

He underlined the importance of the language wording, to be to the point.

Personal reflection time and sharing in groups on questions:

1. What do I see as helpful instruments/tools for communication in CLC?

2. What do I experience as blocks/obstacles?
3. Have I got a vision concerning future communication in CLC?

Helpful input from Willi Lambert:

- Give a deadline.
- Make a prayer.
- Try to find out which God the other person prays.
- Try to speak so that the other person can have a positive reaction.
- Try to understand the project of the other person.
- Help the other person to grow up.
- Be attentive to the Holy Spirit working in you.

Plenary:

Our vision: Sharing our treasure with outsiders, facilitating leadership and responsibility taking, Pygmalion effect, encouraging, and network reinforced, sewing relationship. Meetings foster communication, make formations for young people, make our experience more available for many people.

Dinner with guests from CLC - Germany. Ursula Becker (the president of CLC Germany, Marita Brückner (regional CLC coordinator and member of the hosting team).

Visit of the wonderfully restored Limburg cathedral, guided by a religious sister full of knowledge and humour.

Sunday Eucharist Celebration in the chapel of the cathedral, with special service by Tessy and Joe.

Social evening guided by Martina. With plenty of sweets and drinks from all over Europe.

Sunday, 16 October 2005

Morning Prayer, Psalm 96

“Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.”

Morning session: CLC in Europe a growing reality or a wishful dreaming.

Summary of the two past days by Agnes

13 common elements on Formation identified by WG-formation

- A) Formation: 1.group guides 2. Setting up new groups’ 3.Young people 4.Young families 5. Leadership rooted in CLC as way of life 6. Lay people as Spiritual guides and directors of SpEx 7. Specific mission field.
- B) SpEx: 8. having people understand the importance of SpEx 9. Offering various opportunities of experiencing SpEx and spiritual direction
- C) CLC as way of life: 10. Need to explore the significance of commitment (vocational approach) 11. Need to foster awareness of the wider/international community 12. Improving apostolic awareness and mission of CLC, both as individuals and as a Community 13. Improving the communication at all levels

ET proposals

- **Resources tool box** to establish by WG-formation
- **European newsletter** 3 times a year focused on certain issues, short and relevant news (responsible: Monika)
- **Personal contact between Euroteam and NC's**
Leo: Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland
Agnes: Austria, Luxembourg, Belgium Fl, Belgium Fr,
Monika: France, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Ireland
Martina: Slovenia, England & Wales, Malta, Scotland, Croatia
- **website** – will be renewed and improved with photo gallery, good practices corner, question corner, all NC should put European page on NC websites in local languages (responsible: Leo)
- **CLC-Erasmus initiative** (responsible: Eurolinks and Leo)
- **CLC index (glossary) of the most common used ignatian words** – vocabulary of words in connection with Ignatian Spirituality (responsible: Tessy)
- **world polynomial:** discern, send, support, evaluate as common disposition for all

Personal reflection time on what this all means to me personally and my community?

Sharing in neighbour groups on suggestions given by formation group and ET

- Which of 13 challenges make you believe there is a need for a cross border initiative?
- Choose 2-3 suggestions of the ET proposals, which are in your opinion the most important to you/your NC?

Given in written form to ET:

Regarding formation:

- Setting up new groups: 2x
- Apostolic awareness and mission of CLC as individuals and as a Community: 2x
- need to explore the significance of commitment (vocational approach): 2x
- need to foster awareness of the wider/international community: 2x
- spiritual exercises and personal vocation
- We need formation regarding specific mission field.

Regarding ET proposals: - Newsletter: 3x
- New personalised relationship: 2x
- Toolbox available in the internet
- English CLC index

Evaluation in plenary on questions: What will I bring back home with me?

Face images of people. Metaphor: CLC as a net composed of many nodes. Set of photographs. Glimpse of realities of European CLC NC's. Reflections on the water of Lahn River on our way back from the Limburg Cathedral. Atmosphere of compassion, several ideas on formation, interest we show to each other in sharing groups. How realistic we are in our hopes and desires. We got a flower that needs nourishing by all of us. My guardian angel from the Limburg station. It was a new and positive experience; I feel peace about what will happen in the future. Schedule was well organized. Personal contacts I have established.

Departure: after lunch