



Newsletter – April 2023

Spiritually said



Miserere Lenten Veil 2023 | 2024 by Emeka Udemba

The picture shows the Miserere Lenten Veil found in (nearly) each German Church during lent. Every two years, an artist is invited to create this veil which is the base for various initiatives: prayers, Eucharists, and educational activities.

This year's veil is called: "What is sacred to us" and was designed Emeka Udemba, a Nigerian Artist living in Germany.

What is sacred to us?

What will we not touch?

What is life worth to us?

Do we still hear God's voice speaking in our fellow creatures? The encyclical *Laudato Si'* sees a definite connection between the external deserts that grow because our inner emptiness is spreading (*Laudato Si'*, 217). How can we make a contribution so that our world remains intact, and we once again respect the sacred, which is not available and cannot be priced?

It is in our hands:

Among the many news in a pile of pieces of torn old newspaper (that were used for the Lenten veil) are some that are encouraging: "New beginning", "From the beginning", "Women, heroin, knowledge" or "Where people feel comfortable", that make us want to "embrace life" and "show our colours". Emeka Udemba sticks this news on the wounds of creation like colourful, comforting plasters. We need people who have an appetite for

these kinds of changes. People who take responsibility because we are the first generation to see the full extent of the crisis and the last that will be able to stop it. Thus, the Lenten Veil is an invitation to intervene and to be part of the ongoing story of creation. As long as there are people that launch such courageous initiatives, the hope for a new, just earth will always be alive.

It is in our hands!

Claudia Kolletzki

[Lenten Campaign \(misereor.org\)](http://misereor.org)

News from CLC in Europe and Euroteam

1. Euroteam meeting in Amsterdam

The Euroteam met in person in Amsterdam on the 17th -19th of February, 2023. The main focus of our work was the priorities for the last year of our mandate up to the European Assembly in Malta in 2024.

On Saturday evening, we had the pleasure of meeting the community members in the Netherlands. We celebrated Eucharist and had dinner together. We also talked about current initiatives and activities in Europe and shared the experience of being part of the World Community.

Thank you for your hospitality!



2. Online prayers

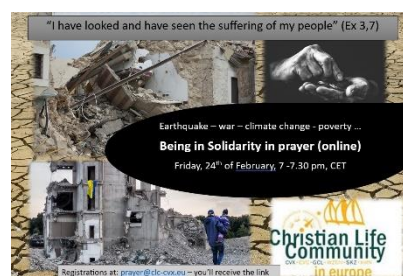
a) Prayer for COP 27 organised by the Ecology network

On the 16th of November 2022, the Ecology Network organised an online prayer session for COP27. It was one of 4 online prayer sessions organised by four regions to pray for the delegates to seek fruitful results for Our Common Home. This session was attended by over 350 members from all over CLC in Europe and beyond.

b) Solidarity prayer online

On the 24th of February, just after the earthquake in Turkey and Syria and a year from the beginning of the war in Ukraine, the Euroteam invited CLC members from all over the world to an online "prayer in solidarity" which aimed to unite us in solidarity with the victims of various crises in the world.

A group of Syrian and Polish CLC members had prepared inspirations for the prayer, including a psalm in Arabic performed by Suhair from CLC in Syria. About 60 CLC members joined that online gathering of the international community. Thank you to everyone for joining!



You are also heartily invited to prepare online prayers – as a group from one national community or as a network! Please get in touch with us at: euroteam@clc-cvx.eu

3. Zoom meeting with Eurolinks

Several national communities have appointed new Eurolinks recently. So, the Euroteam invited the new and existing Eurolinks to an online meeting on the 3rd of March. It was time to share experiences of the service of Eurolinks, discuss some topics of interest and ask questions. Thank you to all of you for joining!



4. Networks

a) The Youth Initiative

After the huge success of the Loyola Youth Gathering 'Embrace the World in an Ignacian way' in July 2021, some young CLC members across Europe, the « Ignacian Ducks », as we call ourselves, are gathering quite regularly (every 2 months).

What for?

To pray, to share what we are living and experiencing, to reflect on Youth within the CLC Community, to discern about our difficulties and the obstacles we meet, to encourage one another to create, experiment...

Create and facilitate new spaces that we will promote across Europe, where we invite all young CLC members to join, where we can meet up with one another.

Organizing and promoting online prayers, online sharing groups and why not an event in presence, these are the topics (the dreams) we have in mind.

- *"Youth sometimes feels cut off from others ..."*
- *"Youth group in my country is getting bigger & bigger every year!"*
- *"There are small groups of youth spread across the countries... We need to be connected with each other!"*
- *"I feel part of this group, even we've never met before..."*
- *"We have something special in common... We should share that with others!"*

We are convinced new spaces are needed.

If you want to be part of this forum of encouragement and share with other young CLC members across Europe, don't hesitate!

Join us!

In the meantime, see you in LISBON at the **MAGIS Youth camp** (www.magis2023.org) and/or at the **World Youth Days** (www.liboa2023.org) !

Elena (CVXe Spain) – Magda (CLC Poland) – Natalia (CLC England & Wales) – Jeantide & Bernard (CLC Malta) – Daniela (GCL The Netherlands & WW-Exco) – Jean-Louis (CVX Belgium) – Jean-Benoît (CLC Belgium & CLC EuroTeam)

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b) The Migration Network had its annual meeting (online) on the 3rd of December, 2022. We shared prayer, best practices and difficulties we experience in our respective countries where migration is determined by different issues: poverty, politics, post-colonial and historical matters, and geography.

We are pleased to share a short video we shot during our recent face-to-face meeting in Lille. You can view it on the YouTube channel of CLC in Europe:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSciOQY0AmaNk7Zrg41-jtQ>

We pose some important questions in this video and share our answers. We hope it will inspire you to seek answers to migration questions.

Many thanks to Marielle Matthee for her work on this video!

We are planning our next face-to-face meeting at the weekend of the 8th - 10th of September 2023. This time we will meet in Budapest, Hungary [TBC]. The meeting aims to connect and raise awareness. It will be open to all members who want to participate as we plan a workshop focused on some contemporary aspects of migration.

Save the date. We are going to keep you updated.

c) The Ecology Network has been working on the priorities it set for itself, namely, to find like-minded networks already working in the area of the environment and deepening our understanding of ecological conversion. Regarding networking, we held a very positive and fruitful meeting with Fr. Filipe Martins SJ, the Director of JESC. On the theme of deepening our ecological conversion, we are planning and organising two webinars that will be open to all CLCers. At this point we can only say, "watch this space" for more information as the organisation is finalised and we announce the dates.

Some words from the world ExCo ...

Dear friends of CLC in Europe!

We are still walking towards the next General Assembly in Amiens. You already have the dates, don't you? From 3 to the 12th of August, 230 delegates will gather as one World Community to share, deepen and discern paths of hope. To search for what will help us today to be more of a lay, apostolic and Ignatian community. We will need your prayer and accompaniment during these days.

It is a time of preparation in which many people are looking to be creative in order to have a good meeting. CLC members in France, divided into different commissions, are putting their all into meeting, celebrating and desiring new steps as a World Community. As Projects 179 puts it: *"Although the task is great, Jesus calls us to faith and to witness to his Gospel in our lives. He encourages us to go out to the horizon as witnesses, sending us 'to the ends of the earth'"*. What hopes do we need to build today in our community life?

And in case you haven't seen it yet, here is the logo of the next General Assembly and its explanation. I invite you to look at it, enjoy it and share it. (see the text below)



Manuel

On the way to the World Assembly in Amiens

Explanation of the Logo of the XVIII World Assembly of the Christian Life Community in Amiens

The logo of the World Assembly in Amiens is inspired by that of CLC in France, which shows three characters walking on a path, like the Emmaus companions, in search of new hope. In the CLC France logo background, we see the sun, of a characteristic yellow.

For the world gathering in Amiens, the sun in the background is replaced by the Earth, which the three characters are invited to roam. They just have to follow the path that winds freely around the globe.

Indeed, the hope of the Gospel promises more than a better future: it announces that the Kingdom is already here, living in and around us.

It is up to us to explore the world to find God in all things!

Therefore, just like the Magi who walked under the guidance of a star, the three characters in the logo advance towards the world with their eyes fixed on the dove, which guides them along the way.

Trusting, they follow it: the texts in the Bible see the dove as a messenger of hope and a sign of the Holy Spirit.

The dove is also known to announce peace. It evokes so many men, women and children who are hoping for an end to war. They remind us that the discernment of paths for hope is not an abstract issue.

The yellow of the path is that of the sun that illuminates the CLC in France logo.

The tones of the colours have been chosen carefully; the blue-green tone harmonises with the sunny, warm yellow. Blue suggests the spiritual dimension; green suggests hope. The titles are handwritten, and some elements are neither regular, centred nor precise,

- just as with the irregular stroke of the original CLC in France logo,
- just as with the spirit of Creation: Nothing is straight or square... but it is so beautiful!



News from the National Communities

1. CLC in Syria: Messages from the National Coordinator of CLC in Syria, Antoinette Khayat, to CLC in Lebanon

Following the earthquakes in Syria on the 6th of February, 2023, we thank you for your thoughts, prayers and actions towards us, which you have called "the widow's mite".

We thank the Lord that no CLC member in Syria (Aleppo, Homs, Damascus) has died or been under fire. The community members in Homs and Damascus have reported no damage. In Aleppo, the damage suffered by the members is only material and not physical.

While waiting for the official and specialised commissions to carry out the expertise on the state of the place and the estimation of the damages, we formed a commission called "The Apostolic Body for the Christian Life Community in Aleppo". We surveyed the current

state of the damages and imminent needs related to housing, food, medicine, clothing, home rent, catering, consolidation of the buildings etc. Community members in different teams in Aleppo analysed and evaluated the data.

We identified the members and their families who couldn't leave their homes because of the presence of older people and the difficulties in transporting them, as well as those who left their homes for another temporary accommodation, either with relatives or in churches. Some people didn't know anything about the situation of their houses because they had to leave immediately and did not return. They settled where they felt most secure while waiting for the restoration and consolidation of the houses by the official and competent authorities, which will take some time, between two months and six months or more.

We have managed to collect and distribute medicines and other items and provide temporary accommodation following the evacuation necessary for public safety.

We are seeking a specialist, such as Fr Rami Elias SJ, to give us lectures on healing from shock. We are collaborating with Fr Mourad Abou Seif SJ, the Provincial of the Society of Jesus in Syria, to find a legal way of receiving financial aid as CLC in Syria has no legal personality.

There was an initiative (humble, according to them) of the members of CLC in Damascus and other initiatives from various countries.

We have taken the initiative concerning a family. We provided mattresses to sleep on and a small amount of money from one of our members. We also try to provide sheets and blankets.

At the request of some community members to go to the service of the local society, we met in Aleppo to study and discern how we can go beyond our community and create places of welcome to help others.

The community in Homs and Damascus were able to assist the community in Aleppo. Some members of the community in Homs opened their homes.

The convents of Jesuit fathers in the Boustan Al Diwan region and the Al Nazha region opened their doors to welcome people. They supported them generously, just as we have always known the Jesuits.

In Damascus, some houses were open for reception and accommodation.

We will keep you informed about any needs on the ground.

In the face of the pain, shock and horror we have experienced, God's mercy and gentleness prevail.

On behalf of myself and every member, I thank you for asking us and for your prayer and support in whatever form. And we ask for your prayers again and again.

In the union of prayer.

For the greater glory of God.

Antoinette Khayat, CLC National Coordinator in Syria

2. CLC in Spain

a) Extraordinary National Assembly in Spain

In August 2019, our previous national assembly recommended that the elected National Executive Committee (ExCo) creates the necessary structures to accomplish the apostolic and institutional mission, including human and economic resources, while ensuring the accompaniment of people directly involved in the service.

As a community, we spent these years reviewing our history of grace with gratitude,

reflecting on the fruits of our apostolic activity during the first 40 years of the Spanish CLC (CVX-E), listening to the current calls from our world and our church, and preparing three possible organisational scenarios for the coming years.

The process culminated in our National Extraordinary Assembly held in Madrid from the 27th through the 29th of January, 2023. During the weekend, the delegates from local communities, in prayer and spiritual conversations, decided that the structure for CLC's apostolic mission in Spain for the coming year will be: *"the creation of an office for the mission, which will provide technical support for our apostolic activities"*.



For more information, please visit: <https://cvx-e.es/en/uncategorized/clc-e-extraordinary-assembly/>

b) 40th anniversary of the Christian Life Community in Spain (CVX-E)

This year, 2023, marks the 40th anniversary of the Christian Life Community (CLC-CVX) in Spain. Several events have been organised to celebrate our history. The opening event took place in Manresa on Saturday, the 11th of February, with a conference entitled "Our History" given by Pep Baquer SJ and José Antonio Suffo. Their talk aimed to offer a "grateful memory of the CLC-CVX journey in Spain throughout these years". During the following months, several publications and events will allow us to *"Celebrate our vocation"*, deepen our *"Process of Growth in CLC"*, and renew our commitment *"To follow Jesus Christ more closely and work with Him for the building of the Kingdom"*. Everybody is invited to attend the next event in Málaga on the 25th of March, in Celorio on the 7th of October, or in Madrid during the first weekend of July!!!

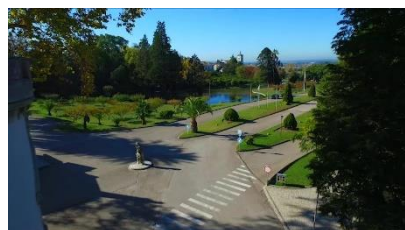
For more information, please visit: <https://cvx-e.es/40-anos-de-cvx-en-espana/>



3. CLC in Portugal

a) Formation team

On Sunday, 12.03.2023, Formation team from CVX-P had a meeting with the National team to summarize and present the state of the work dreamt during the former 2 years (current mandate of national team). This Formation team is divided into 3 groups: 1) Welcome – is the group devoted to dream the initial CVX members formation; 2) Animators & Guides – devoted to dream the formation to



members who animate or guide CVX groups; 3) Members – devoted to dream the formation for regular members. It was with joy and consolation that within the work shared by all groups the evidence of the Holy Spirit presence was highly clear and visible. The proposed paths from all groups have visible links between each other which build a possible CVX

growing path. Guides to the ones involved in animation and groups guidance were presented, discussed and approved and are ready to be used by all community. This group also felt the need to



listen members that are directly working the CVX groups, therefore an auscultation to those members was also proposed, approved and is now ready to be performed. The Formation team is regularly accompanied by two members of the national team and by the ecclesiastic assistant José Eduardo Lima SJ.



Portuguese CVX members have been praying together the recent report released about sexual abuse in church.

Sensitive to the perplexity and suffering in the face of abuses in the Church and the reaction of the Episcopal Conference to the report of the Independent Commission we feel that these difficult times we are living, must be lived and prayed together. Therefore sessions to debate, pray and propose concrete actions to be performed are being organized along our country.

On March 25th CVX-P will get together in Cernache to celebrate the world CLC/CVX day. We want it to be a day



of conversation between CLC Members, around the areas of mission that each one chooses to embrace. Groups will be formed between CLC Members with the same horizon of work in the Kingdom of God. Moments to share, look with new eyes, and possibly also to understand each other's, and our own journey are expected.

Members of our community will make their permanent commitment with CVX during the Mass celebration. It is always a strong moment of thanksgiving of our community.

b) National Assembly in Fatima

From 28th of April to 01st of May 2023, the Portuguese community will be gathered in Fátima to have its National Assembly. Delegates from all groups are expected to pray under the lemma “In Service, Rediscover Who We Are”.

We are a large community that bears witness to Jesus with multiple “possibilities of service to help build the Kingdom of God”. With our feet on Earth, we know that this witness of Jesus happens in life (everyday life) and in the balance of our Pillars, where we base the “CLC being”: the Spirituality of Ignatius, the community where we are inserted and the tasks what we do to help the Mission of Jesus and the Church. But we also have our eyes set on Heaven. And, seeing so many good things that each one of the members brings to CLC and to the Church, we dream of a community where everyone can do everything even better, in the joy of being faithful to “being CLC” while following Jesus!

This is our proposal for the National Assembly: seek to re-cognize WHAT WE ARE, FROM what WE already DO, bearing in mind that what we already do can help us to do more and better. And in this way to taste that we have a 'way of proceeding' in everyday life, which comes from 'following Jesus poor and humble', in a 'permanent attitude of discernment' and 'contemplation in action'. Thus, we propose this “look” at CVX-P in a path with 2 STRONG MOMENTS, always under the GRACE TO ASK of “Recognizing ourselves in Service, in the mission of Christ, happy and confirmed in what we are”.



4. CLC in French-speaking Belgium

The Christian Life Community (CLC) in French-speaking Belgium is currently in a transitional situation after a period of community discernment that took about 18 months. With the Covid-19 pandemic, the former national Exco, which should have finished its mandate in October 2020, has agreed to continue until June 2021. At the same time, an important election process was set up to identify the missions and functions of the new Exco.

In 2021, there were not enough candidates to proceed with the election of a new Exco (in particular, there was a lack of candidates willing to serve as president): the community chose a time of vacancy of service and wants to live it as a time of opportunity. To get through this time, it is important not to be alone, to be helped: a community discernment was therefore set up with the help of an ESDAC team (Spiritual Exercises for Apostolic Discernment in Common, as at the Buenos Aires World Assembly), and took up again over five days the main lines of the covenant prayer: thank you, forgiveness, for tomorrow. More than a third of the community participated: a rereading of the history of the community was proposed, things left unsaid were lifted, forgiveness was given, a renewal impulse ran through the community, which became aware of co-responsibility.

On October 23, 2022, a coordination team was approved by the community assembly. Its role? It is called to coordinate not by authority, but by encouraging various commitments on the part of its members in the service of the community. These members act in small groups. It is a matter of experimenting with another model, of taking a leap towards



something else. It is up to the community to take stock after two years. The small service groups are gathered in three poles: the "spirituality" pole (which also includes formation), the "taking care of the body of the community" pole and the "mission" pole, which are reminiscent of the three pillars of CLC: community, mission and spirituality.

We are still in this time of organization and coordination of the poles, but some sub-groups are already well underway, such as "prayerful support", "formation", "La Diglette" (preparation of the biannual national weekend) or logistical support for community events, "Open CLC" (welcoming people wishing to join CLC), an initiative "Participation in the open day in Amiens".

Others are still in the making (in particular "Communication" and "Website"). Finally, other mission groups that were suggested last October have not yet been tested by the reality of our current situation.

Our community assembly next April will be the occasion to make a first review of this new mode of governance.

Constance Dubus, for the CLC coordination team in French-speaking Belgium

5. CLC in Croatia

Assembly of the Community of Christian Life, 25 March 2023

On World CLC Day, celebrated on the Feast of the Annunciation, after a long break caused by the pandemic, Christian Life Community in Croatia held its General Assembly in the parish of Presv. Heart of Jesus of Zamet (Rijeka).

The Community has elected a new Executive Council, which consists of the following people: President: Damijan Srdoč, Vice President: Jadranka Ažić, Eurolink: Katelijn Radić, Secretary: Andja Jakovljević.

During the Eucharist celebration at the Assembly, several community members made their permanent or temporary commitment, strengthening their decision to serve the Church and others as members of the Christian Life Community. Considering Maria's "FIAT", each member wanted to respond to their vocation in the Community and the Church, seeking a way to express their "YES" to God's call.

We also met with the representatives of our sister associations, MAGIS and SKAC, which gave us great joy as we agreed upon further cooperation.



Some inspirations from the National Communities

SPANISH SOCIOPOLITICAL MISSION.

The National team for this apostolic service encourages, promotes, and supports the civic engagement of CLC in political, social and cultural spheres, both individually and as Communities, to achieve *Social Transformation*. We aim to contribute to changing the unjust structures of our world and promoting “*the common good*”. To achieve these goals, we provide the most specific aspect of our charism: Ignatian discernment.

To reach this goal:

- A) We create forums for reflection and analysis on current social, economic, and political issues where justice, human rights, and the care of the common home are at stake. We aim to promote apostolic networks among the different communities and also with other persons and institutions.

We collaborate in the organisation of biannual meetings on [“Faith and Socio-Political Commitment”](#) for young professionals.

- B) We promote actions to disseminate and make visible the political dimension of the faith and the Social Doctrine of the Church.

We also invite you to visit our Socio-political reflection column, [“Politicamente”](#)

- C) We offer opportunities for personal growth and sharing knowledge or experience among CLC members through spaces of “active listening”, meant to accompany those who accompany.

As a tool, we have prepared [“The pills for reconciliation”](#), small keys meant to help us in ordinary life to live reconciled with ourselves, with others, with God-Source of Life and with the Creation. They are based on the dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises: a journey that is performed from "The First Principle and Foundation" to "The Contemplation to Attain the Love of God" through "six anchors".

- D) We create, promote, and accompany spaces for civic dialogue from the Ignatian spirituality, focusing on reconciliation, to reverse the spiral of violence of social and political conflicts and transform unjust structures into structures of grace".

On this path, a fruit has recently emerged: the tool [“The six anchors of reconciliation”](#) (“Los 6 Anclajes de la Reconciliación”). It is a methodologic guide for conflict transformation, currently available only in Spanish. We will be happy to share it with everybody interested in the field.

We invite you to visit: <https://cvx-e.es/sociopolitica/>

Contact person: sociopolitico@cvx-e.es

An infographic will be available soon.

You are invited! (sessions, international retreats, gatherings)

1. CLC in Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Luxembourg: Trip to the Open Day at the World Assembly in Amiens: 4th-7th of August 2023

CLC communities in Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Luxembourg are organising a trip to the Open day of the World Assembly in Amiens from 4th-7th of August 2023 for CLC members speaking **French** or/and **German**. The participants will attend the open day, visit Amiens and have much time to meet and share.



You find further information on: <http://dach-amiens-2023.gcl.de> or just contact angelika@clc-cvx.eu

2. New Online sharing groups in preparation for the World Assembly

As you surely remember, we have already launched several shifts of online sharing groups. Nearly 200 people have joined the groups so far. Some of the groups have been meeting since 2020!

In preparation for the World Assembly, we invite all CLC members to a new shift of international sharing groups with inspirations based on Projects 178. We will also send the inspirations to the existing groups.



Registrations for new sharing groups: <https://lmy.de/zgVrBbQF>

Ask for the inspirations (without joining a new group): inspirations@clc-cvx.eu

3. Webinars on discernment

As we have already communicated, the Euroteam organises a series of online meetings about discernment with Fr. Nikolaas Sintobin SJ. The first session that took place in February attracted over 60 CLCers. Each session is focused on a different aspect of discernment, so you can attend them independently. Everyone is welcome to join one of our meetings!

The next sessions are planned on the following dates:

27th of May, 23rd of September, 18th of November – at 4-6 pm CET.

Please register on registrations@clc-cvx.eu as it allows us to estimate the number of participants.



The Euroteam

Angelika

Kasia

Jean-Benoît

Chris

Nikolaas