

The Relationship  
between the Christian Life Community and the Society of Jesus  
in the Church

2006, July the 31<sup>st</sup>

Publication of the "Christian Life Community"  
C.P. 6139 – (Borgo Santo Spirito, 8) 00195 Rome – Italy

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## Presentation

The Society of Jesus and the Christian Life Community – and before 1967, the Marian Congregations – have walked a long way together. Both bodies are deeply marked by and share the Ignatian Charism – living it as religious or as lay people. In our relationship through the centuries and decades, we have experienced a variety of connections and interrelations, questions concerning the role of Jesuits collaborating, guiding and supporting the laity, and efforts to look for ways of fostering the apostolic cooperation between the Society of Jesus and CLC. As CLC, we are very grateful for the gift of the Ignatian spirituality, that Jesuits have generously shared with us following the example of Ignatius of Loyola. Jesuits helped us to rediscover the lay expression of Ignatian spirituality when we moved from the Marian Congregations to CLC. Their support has made possible the establishment of communities and their strengthening in several parts of the world. In many ways, our common history has demonstrated very clearly that CLC cannot develop but in the double relationship with the Society of Jesus in the Church.

Following Ignatius of Loyola and his understanding of "sentire cum ecclesia" – feeling with the Church, we are convinced that "union with Christ leads to union with the Church where Christ here and now continues his mission of salvation." (General Principles #6). Our relationship with Jesus Christ finds its expression also in our belonging to the living structure of the Church and our profound communion with her legitimate pastors, living our apostolic service as part of the body of Christ in the world of today. The Church counts on our commitment and communion – both as individuals and as community, in our daily lives and in our apostolic service.

During our last world assembly 2003 in Nairobi, focusing on CLC as a lay apostolic body that shares responsibility for mission in the Church, we paid special attention to the collaboration of CLC and Jesuits. One dimension of this collaboration are the services Jesuits offer to CLC as Ecclesiastical Assistants. Their tasks necessarily differ according to the local situation of CLC – from supporting the initiation of new communities up to collaborating with and accompanying well-formed lay people who assume responsibility for formation and on-going CLC development. The experiences, both CLCers and Jesuits have made in their cooperation, have called for a more clear definition of the Ecclesiastical Assistant role in CLC. This document wants to offer such a clarification, developing this role in the broader context of the bonds of the Society of Jesus and CLC. And although, we focus especially on the relationship between CLC and the Jesuits, we don't want to forget that in many parts of our world community, diocesan priests and other qualified persons (see General Norms #44) act as Ecclesiastical Assistants, highly appreciated for their important service in and for our communities. We hope that the following reflections will also respond to their concerns and questions.

The desire of CLC, to respond to the call of becoming and acting as an apostolic body, as expressed during our Nairobi assembly, points to the second dimension of the collaboration between the Society of Jesus and CLC in the Church: We ask the Jesuits to explore with us

ways of collaboration in the apostolic field, fostering a growing partnership of both apostolic bodies, including joint discernment and common activities. As two Ignatian bodies, we have also the chance to give signs of hope, presenting ways of cooperation between lay and religious in communion with the Church.

We invite CLC and Jesuits to use this paper as a basis to reflect our relationship in its different dimensions, the joys and sorrows, the questions and doubts, the mutual expectations and needs – in the light of our being Church and acting in the Church. We offer these reflections as a "working document", meant to be further developed by our communities in close dialogue with the Society of Jesus and others, representing the Church and her hierarchy among us. We encourage both CLC and the Society of Jesus to deepen our dialogue in an atmosphere in which each one can express with great frankness his/her experiences and feelings.

We are looking forward to your reflections and discussions shared with us, enriching with your feedback\* a final document, helping us to express and clarify the close bonds between our two bodies within our Church.

*Daniela Frank*  
(World CLC President)

## Presentation

The publication of this significant book is the result of many years of work, meetings and reflection on the ecclesiastical assistant's role in the Christian Life Community. The change from the particular way of Jesuit directors of exercising their mission in the Marian Congregations to that of Jesuit and non-Jesuits in their accompaniment of the distinct apostolic body of CLC in its search for a mode of life based on Ignatian spirituality dates back almost forty years.

There are presently about seven hundred Jesuits working in CLC (as ecclesiastical assistants or as guides) at the service of the CLC members throughout the world. To discern the extent and limits of the responsibilities of the assistants, it was necessary to consider their concrete experiences and listen to their testimony, and to reflect on what Saint Ignatius tells us about the accompaniment of those who seek to develop their spiritual life. As a lay pilgrim on the road to God, he learnt that one cannot advance without the help of a companion. Through a sharing on the word of God and on their personal experience, the members of the Christian communities support each other.

The ecclesiastical assistant is in a privileged position to provide this help. He witnesses to Ignatian thought as an expression of the Gospel and promotes the development of the "genuine attitude which we ought to maintain in the Church" (Sp Ex 352). His presence is indispensable, yet delicate, for it is the Lord himself who calls each member by name and breathes his Spirit on the community to whom he or she belongs, so that it lives in him and for him. The ecclesiastical assistant is like John the Baptist (Jn 3, 28 ff) who desires that the Lord grow and who is glad when he hears the bridegroom's voice among CLC.

I pray that the use of this book may help toward attaining this goal. I thank all those who have contributed to its preparation.

*Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, sj*  
(World CLC Assistant)

## The Relationship between the Christian Life Community and the Society of Jesus in the Church

### Introduction

In its present expression and state the Christian Life Community is the result of a process which has been lived for centuries within the Church and deeply influenced by it. It has also been a process linked closely to the Society of Jesus from the time of Saint Ignatius and it has therefore been very much influenced by that history (1). We can say that CLC cannot grow or develop in any of the aspects that constitute it if it is not done in the context of this double relationship with the Society of Jesus (2) in the Church.

But what are these constitutive elements of the CLC which should be developed? Synthetically, today we can say of CLC:

- From an **ecclesial** point of view it is a worldwide Ignatian and apostolic community of laypersons who actively participate in the life and mission of the Church. This apostolic orientation is the fundamental characteristic of CLC.
- From a **juridical** point of view, it is an international public association of the Church's faithful approved and recognized by the papacy.
- From a **vocational** point of view, it is a particular way of being in the Church and it represents a style of Christian living by lay people marked by the experience of the Spiritual Exercises.
- From a **pedagogical** point of view, it represents a continuous process of growth in Christ, which includes support and reciprocal accompaniment as well as sustained and guided formation.

These four constitutive aspects are not static. On the contrary, we are constantly constructing them and they also react with each other, a fact which has many implications. In some moments or circumstances, one of them may stand out in importance, but we should never lose sight of the others. Above all else, we should allow each element to challenge and question the others in order to enrich the process of discernment, the making of decisions, the process of formation, interrelationships, the services we offer, etc. The essential goal is always to arrive at being an apostolic body in the Church.

In this context we wish to reflect here on the ministry of the ecclesiastical assistants and the men and women religious who accompany us. Most of them are Jesuits who have received from their superiors the mission to work in CLC (3). Often, they ask for clarification on their function in the local community. For this reason, in this text on the right-hand side of the pages, we present a brief summary of the functions of the Ecclesiastical Assistants. We hope that this document will be read by the formed community leaders to clarify the work that is done and foster a rich and deep dialogue on the ministry of the Ecclesiastical Assistant and the relationship between the CLC and the Society of Jesus in the Church for the mission.

## **1. The Christian Life Community in the Church**

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In trying to understand the CLC in the Church, its relationship with the hierarchy, ordained ministers, other ecclesial communities, etc., we should take into consideration several different aspects.

### **1.1 Discernment and Confirmation**

The Christian Life Community is a manifestation of the Spirit in the Church. This means, among other things, that CLC does not exist only by the will of a few who decide to associate, but rather because of a special grace of the Spirit which created it so that the Church can grow. In the life of the Church, all Christians receive, discern, and identify the action of the Spirit and because of that we are free to associate and to take initiatives. But a necessary task and duty of the hierarchy is to discern beyond the individual motions and particular circumstances and recognize the more permanent manifestations of the Spirit which weaves together a more consistent and unfolding ecclesial design. It can then point to these manifestations as clear possible ways of participating in the life and mission of the Church. For Ignatius, discernment does not end with a reading of one's own motions and the formulation of one's own decisions. It must include the ecclesial confirmation.

*Inculcate  
a sense of Church  
and of CLC in the Church.*

*Associate  
and dialogue with  
the Hierarchy on all levels.*

First, the Marian Congregation then CLC have received successive approvals, blessings and confirmations from the hierarchy of the universal Church and of local Churches. This began with the founding bull of 1584 right up to the confirmation of the General in 1990, which included the approval of the revised version of the Norms and General Principles. This encourages us and commits us, who form part of CLC, and all who have received from the Church the mission to serve this association in different ministries.

*Deepen our understanding  
of the General Principles  
and their antecedents  
as an ecclesial document  
and actively  
put them into practice.*

The Second Vatican Council recognized that "in the Church there are many apostolic works constituted by the free election of the laity and are governed by their judgment and prudence." (AA, 24). But it adds: "All associations of the apostolate deserve to be appreciated; however, those which the hierarchy has praised or recommended (..) should be appreciated by priests, religious, and the laity, and each one in his or her own way should promote them. Among these

*Make known  
the teachings of Vatican II  
regarding  
apostolic associations  
of the laity,  
including the  
recommendations of the  
Council*

are included, especially today, international Catholic associations or groups.”  
(AA,21) (4).

*to priests and religious concerning the associations.*

## 1.2 Organic Participation

CLC exists not merely by the will of the members to carry out a common project, or by the will of a charismatic priest in a particular place, time, or circumstance. It exists by the explicit will of the hierarchical Church for the good of the whole Church and its mission. In this sense it is a public - not private - association of the faithful in the Church. It is an international association, a world community. In it, priests and religious have an approved, genuine way of sharing with the laity which calls them together beyond any particular group or personal charisma to form a part of an ecclesial movement which does not exist merely as a spontaneous creation but also as part of the Church’s own program.

*Help go beyond personalities or partial perspectives.*

*Deepen the significance of being an association of the faithful within the Church.*

All this, which seems so rich and clear, frequently seems so difficult for the laity, priests, and religious to understand. At times we would wish to be less “public” and more “private” in the sense that we just explained. At other times we are attracted to something less defined, more “free” and generic, a sort of vague spiritual movement organized by talented and charismatic leaders. This could be characterized as a loose affiliation in which people are bound together by personal ties and which represents a stage in their life, as opposed to a vocation within the Church. Some are attracted by the idea of being a founder, rather than a follower or someone committed to the development of others. Some would prefer to “run their own show”, to have their own “spiritual children” (or “parents”), to run their own business, directed by them or by those whom they designate.

*Esteem and promote the public and international dimension of the CLC.*

This is not the way of CLC, although we should take care not to be bound by overly rigid structures and ways which prevent us from being open to new stimuli or which inhibit us from receiving new ideas and accepting members of various backgrounds.

*Foster a long range vision and an enduring organization.*

CLC must be well inserted in the life of the Church. It must be attuned to the hierarchy and other ecclesial realities, and be very conscious that it represents a legitimate way of being in the Church and of participating in its mission. The competent authorities should recognize this fact and allow

*Ensure that CLC is inserted organically in the Church on different levels.*

CLC to exist and function within their jurisdictions by naming ecclesiastical assistants, and by suggesting ways in which it can participate in diocesan or national Church structures, etc. In each country there are specific ways to fulfill this and we will mention a few of them in this document.

### **1.3 Communion and Specific Mission**

It is clear that CLC is an ecclesial reality and a way of Christian living. Yet, at times we tend to make simplifying distinctions such as, "it's an affair for the laity" or "it's a movement of the laity." In some sense the entire Church is a movement of the laity. A parish is a movement of the laity. If it is not, then what is its purpose? Pius XII was right when he asked the laity to be aware that not only do they belong to the Church, but they "are the Church." We have used the word "lay" and "laity" perhaps too much because we are attempting to define the relationships between the different ministries in the Church and to compensate for an excess in the opposite direction in the past few centuries. Perhaps we need to redefine better the religious vocation and that of the ordained ministers. Yet, going beyond the question of the overuse of an expression, the deeper truth consists in the fact that ecclesial communion is not grounded in the specific mission or characteristics of each particular vocation. It is found in the relations that we are capable of establishing among ourselves and in the benefits which these relations offer to others. We cannot conceive of an association of laypersons without the presence and active and generous ministry of priests and men and women religious because each exist for the others and each helps the others to grow. Each stands in contrast to and questions the others in the healthy pursuit of a greater fidelity, which is not an individual and specific concern.

In the positive wake of the Second Vatican Council the Christian Life Community should see itself now as the expression of a Church in which all Christians are called to sanctity and to participation in the mission of Jesus. The Council recommended lay associations because they "meet human and Christian needs, and they are also an expression of the communion and unity of the Church in Christ." (AA, 18). It recommends that the "laity work together as an organic body so that they manifest the communion of the Church and therefore work more efficiently in the apostolate." (AA, 20c). CLC is therefore one of those organic

*Foster  
an adequate living out,  
understanding and  
appreciation  
of the different  
vocations and ministries  
and the relation  
between them.*

*Foster a sense  
of spiritual and organic  
communion  
which leads  
to a greater  
and more fruitful  
collaboration  
in the mission.*

bodies (5) in which the laity works in a united way, and addresses itself to human and Christian needs, without falling into the trap of making auto-affirmation the objective or to stand out in opposition. Rather, the laity's main intention is to manifest in a better way the Church's communion and to strengthen the apostolate. The existence of an association of the faithful with these characteristics allows the Christian laity to experience an organic communion and allows them to come out of the anonymity of those who participate in certain vague and short-lived movements. In fact, this new experience helps them to enter into a more fluid dialogue among themselves and with other associations and with the Hierarchy.

#### **1.4 Authority and Autonomy**

In a community in which by baptism we all participate equally in the mission and are equally called to holiness, the old models of the "states of perfection," or those which define the apostolate of the laity as the "long arm" of the hierarchical apostolate, or as "collaborators" of religious congregations, do not help much. The fall into disuse of these concepts is a result of a redefining and an enriching of the relationship between the laity, the hierarchy, and priests and religious present in the association. Many laypeople may be called to collaborate and even receive a mandate from the hierarchy or a religious congregation, but their vocation and mission cannot be perceived as an extension or a functional and efficient asset of the latter.

With respect to the relation of the lay associations with ordained ministers, the Second Vatican Council says: "Choose carefully adequate and well formed priests to serve as guides for the special forms of lay apostolates. The priests who devote themselves to this ministry, by virtue of the mission they have received from the hierarchy, (...) should work especially hard to nourish the spiritual life and apostolic sense of the Catholic in associations entrusted them. They should aid the apostolic work of the laity with prudent advice and help stimulate their endeavors. Through constant dialogue with the laity they should carefully examine ways to make their apostolic action more fruitful; they should foster a spirit of unity within the association and with other groups."(AA, 25) The Council does not ask the ordained ministers to step aside so as to allow for a greater maturity on the part of the laity. Rather, it asks them to become

*Strengthen  
the vocation  
and mission  
of the laity  
and their  
adult and autonomous  
insertion  
in the Church.*

*Foster and promote  
an active and creative  
presence  
of ordained ministers,  
religious men and women  
in the association,  
by participating in the  
government,  
in the formation programs,  
the apostolates,  
the liturgy,  
and by  
accompanying the laity  
in the growth process.*

actively involved, to fulfill their role as agents sent by the hierarchy, offering advice, fostering dialogue, encouraging the laity to carry out their apostolic mission, promoting a sense of unity and of commitment within the Church. The Council asks them to place the focus of formation and of the apostolate in the laity itself and not in personal necessities and those of the congregation. Rather, they should stimulate the endeavors of the laity and help them to discover the best ways to be more apostolically productive.

In this context there is no room for the figure of the priest "director"; rather, he now becomes an ecclesiastical assistant, a guide or spiritual companion who accompanies the laity in the different processes that the community or association goes through. The dominant person or vertical authority models associated with the ordained ministry now give way to the model of the community itself which assumes a leading role. This involves shared leadership and responsibilities and a greater autonomy exercised by the laity in the context of a discerning apostolic community which has its own deliberating structures for making decisions. This same model is proposed not only for lay movements and associations, but for other realities in the Church as well.

Often, it seems easier and more efficient to return to the model of the "Director" that in the past was perhaps justifiable. But, in the light of the Council, we have come to understand that the Church best expresses itself through communitarian participation.

The principle of authority does not simply disappear in proportion to which autonomy and participation grow. Rather, authority is shared, as well as the responsibility for looking out for the good of the communities and their works. In CLC we are to help each other - the laity, the religious, and the ordained ministers - and to live and learn this style of ecclesial communion which is not dependent on authority, although authority is not eliminated, but in genuine collaboration among equals. According to this style, we are to joyfully live the fact that the Church is a hierarchical community and the ecclesial assistants should be conscious that they represent the hierarchy in the association. The laity, too, should recognize, appreciate, and value the hierarchical aspect of the ordained ministry.

*Develop  
a style of leadership  
and accompaniment  
which reflects  
the ecclesial  
community model  
inspired by the Council.*

*Foster  
an adequate  
understanding of the place  
and of the mission  
of the hierarchy  
which  
the ecclesiastical assistants  
represent.*

### 1.5. Grace and Ministries

In the Church we recognize, appreciate, and value the graces associated with the sacraments and the ministry. The image of the good pastor or "father" associated with the ordained ministry, and also with men and women religious should be fostered and esteemed in the life of the community. In this way the laity recognizes and appreciates the special grace which priests have, a grace associated with their ministry and the sacrament of Holy Orders, which empowers them to transmit the Church's doctrine and proclaim the Word. We wish to have among us consecrated priests who freely and generously offer these graces to the community.

To say this more clearly, we the laity need and desire to have a more active and incisive participation of ecclesiastical assistants in promoting the association and recruiting new members, in providing for the initial and continual formation, in setting up the processes and structures of decision-making, in accompanying CLC in its crisis, in helping form leaders, in establishing ties with other ecclesial realities and with the hierarchy, and encouraging the community's apostolic works, etc.

In CLC we know, for example, that many new members come to us and learn about us and our spirituality thanks to the invitation and encouragement of a priest or a religious. Indeed, we wish that the men and women religious who appreciate and accompany us would propose our way to many, invite them, and call them together in fulfillment of their ministry placed at the service of a Christian community. The community appreciates this service and will do whatever is necessary to facilitate the carrying out of that service.

In general, the model of Church which we wish to develop, following the Council, should not inhibit or limit the exercise of any pastoral ministry. We need to get away from older authoritarian and vertical models centered on one person. We know from experience that many ordained ministers and men and women religious have been able to harmonize the new challenges and styles with the grace which is always there and is deeply appreciated by Christians. That this is possible does not depend only on them, but also on the relations, the structures, and the ways of thinking and acting of the community. An adult relationship, free of prejudices among the lay leaders and the religious, the product of a common effort, of dialogue, of prayers, and of the planning

*Foster  
a communitarian style  
which appreciates,  
values, and fosters  
the pastoral and  
empowering ministry  
of priests,  
and men and women  
religious.*

*Organize and foster  
the attracting  
of new members  
and the forming  
of new local communities.*

*Evaluate permanently  
the difficulties  
which arise  
in the  
associative way of life.*

of future projects which are the fruit of mutual reflection, will contribute much to helping the whole community to bring this harmony about.

## **2. CLC in its relationship to the Society of Jesus**

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We will presume as a given the wider concept of Church which we have presented here and to which all members of the community - especially ecclesiastical assistants such as priests, men and women religious, and all those in charge of formation, group leaders, and apostolic guides - are committed. Now we will attempt to understand better the relationship between CLC and the Society of Jesus and the role of Jesuits in CLC. By analogy, we can apply this relationship to other religious congregations and individual religious who participate in some way in the CLC.

### **2.1. An Historical Bond**

The CLC-Society of Jesus relationship goes back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Much has been written on that topic and we refer readers to those sources to deepen their knowledge. Of special interest are the comments of the General of the Society of Jesus and ecclesiastical assistant of CLC, Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, from 1986 to the present (6). Also very pertinent is General Principle number 3, which is given special emphasis in the pontifical decree approving the General Principles, (7) and commented upon in an article to which we refer the reader (8).

The Act of Foundation (1584) was the result of the initiative of a Jesuit (Jean Leunis), who belonged to a particular congregation, or community (The Annunciation), which became the first and prime congregation or community. The Act of Foundation is also based upon the pontifical bull of erection (*Omnipotentis Dei*). The decree of approval and confirmation of 1990 places this founding act in the context of the experience of the groups which existed before the act (9), going back to Ignatius and his companions. It also shows due respect for the history of successive processes and approbations, which reached their culmination in the apostolic constitution *Bis Saeculari* of Pius XII (1948, November 27<sup>th</sup>).

*Bis Saeculari* signaled the beginning of a period of refounding, very much directed and oriented by the Society of Jesus, which established a secretariat to serve what were

*To know and value  
the history  
of the relationship  
CLC- Society of Jesus  
from its sources,  
written accounts  
and founding documents.*

*To know  
the different stages  
and important moments*

known then as Marian Congregations. The call and dynamic impulse of the Second Vatican Council to return to the origins, to reappraise the lay vocation within the Church, and to deepen the mission to which we are all called, was heeded by the association. A new emphasis was given to the Spiritual Exercises and the lay style of life which the Exercises propose and promote. The Society of Jesus accompanied this process of discernment which began taking concrete form in certain decisive moments such as the creation of a World Federation (1953), the change of name to CLC and the adoption of new General Principles (1967), the installation of a "lay" secretariat commissioned to work closely with the Society of Jesus (1967), etc. (10).

Within this historical context and based on the shared discernment inspired by the Council, the General of the Society of Jesus, Pedro Arrupe, turned the responsibility for the running of the renewed association over to the laity. He asked Jesuits that they relinquish their role as directors insofar as possible and at the same time assume the role of guides and sources of inspiration for the community.

They were also reminded that their specific role was to represent the Church's hierarchy.(8) The "common rules" would no longer be provided by the superior general of the Society; rather they would be worked out by a process of discernment in the association and confirmed by the hierarchical Church. Furthermore, they were now to be called "General Principles."

The years of the Council energized us, produced all kinds of signs of renovation, and filled us with enthusiasm for many years afterwards. Today, thirty years later, perhaps we are no longer experiencing the enthusiasm of that refoundation, but rather tiredness. The distance of those thirty years have dimmed that enthusiasm. Yet, the tensions and opportunities of these days challenge us to look with greater clarity on our mission today.

The way of living CLC has changed since 1967. The Exercises were subsequently discovered as a central help and instrument for personal interior development and a good preparation for apostolic work in the community. CLC came to perceive itself as a universal body at the service of humanity and recently as an apostolic community engaged in a common discernment for which we are all responsible. Subsequent world assemblies gradually defined this development.

*of this history  
in order to understand  
and throw light  
on the present moment.*

*Live the spirit of service  
of the CLC  
and its organic forms  
with a sense of history  
and in communion  
with the Church  
and the Society of Jesus.*

It is crucial that the Jesuits who accompany CLC keep in mind these centuries' long history of grace and live their insertion by choosing the best of both tradition and renovation, and not as an innovation only. The CLC of today is the fruit of a long history in which the Society of Jesus has always known how to maintain a proper leadership role, involving accompaniment and an intelligent and generous presence. The members of CLC and its groups have also had to develop this capacity to situate themselves in history, take stock of where they are and continue to carry on their vocation in faithfulness and a spirit of renovation.

## 2.2 A Shared, Continuous, and Progressive Discernment

The facts of history show that there is a strong bond between CLC and the Society of Jesus. But more important than the facts are the processes and the discernments which finally arose from those processes. In the beginning, the task of discernment probably fell more heavily upon the Society of Jesus, the superior general, local superiors, and the directors of the congregations who intervened decisively in the decision-making. But even in those more clerical-dominated years, there was always a spirit of dialogue and participation in the more simple structures (for example, the prefect of the congregation) or more complex structures (for example, the World Federation created in 1953).

It is well and necessary to remember and appreciate the fact that we walked along this road together – the laity and the Jesuits leading to the more recent period when we began to speak of “lay autonomy.” In fact, in all the CLC general assemblies, from 1967 to the present at least a third of the delegates have been Jesuits. They participated with voice and vote by statutory right or because they were commissioned by their superiors and local CLC groups, not by personal decision. This is the way we want it and, indeed, this is the way it has been expressed in the General Norms of the CLC (11). No less important have been the contributions of the Superior Generals, Arrupe and Kolvenbach, although they no longer handed over the Common Rules or decided for the Community as in former times. Rather, they simply put forth their points of view and provided orientations.

There are still other ways in which the Society has participated and continues to do so in this process of continuous discernment: at the local level it does it through the presence and participation of Jesuits as group guides or

*Participate  
with liberty of spirit  
in the processes  
of the association  
and its discernments,  
on all levels,  
and in the  
resulting consequences  
which they produce.*

*Devote time and energy  
to continuous formation,  
especially that  
of current*

assistants in the city or region; at the national level they do it by participating in assemblies, executive councils, and other deliberating bodies of government. Finally, on the level of individuals they also accompany lay directors and other members of CLC in a relationship which we all appreciate and esteem very much.

On this journey we laypeople and Jesuits have been able to pray and discern together as a cell within the Church, and undoubtedly we have also made mistakes together. Together also we must face the difficulties that arise during the journey. We have done this together before and we will continue to do so, always looking for genuine collaboration and mutual help while avoiding exaggerations in any form. We will continue to look for a participation which is both relevant and fluid in making community decisions on the part of Jesuits. Finally, we will allow different currents of opinion and individual positions to be heard and presented constructively and in a spirit of loyalty at the formal levels of government.

There are a few negative considerations which dampen the dynamics of shared discernment and of living through the different processes with perseverance in an apostolic spirit. For example, lately some countries have not fulfilled the Norm which requests the delegations to the World General Assembly to include the ecclesiastical assistant, who is generally a Jesuit. This has happened perhaps because some Jesuit ecclesiastical assistants have felt that the Assembly does not have anything to do with the mission they have received from their superiors, the hierarchy, or their community. In these few cases, the provincials or local superiors did not name any ecclesiastical assistants for reasons which were perhaps justified or they did not allow them to set aside the necessary time to prepare their mission well.

### **2.3. An Ecclesial Task**

We have reflected above on CLC as a public association in communion with the Church and sharing in its mission. It is a gift of the Spirit for the whole Church grounded in and sustained by the discernment and the collective will of its members, the Society of Jesus, and the Church's hierarchy. For centuries this ecclesial reality has always allowed for

*and future directors.*

*Learn from one another,  
support and appreciate  
each other mutually.*

*Fulfill the obligations  
in the statutes  
and canon law  
which guarantee  
the opportune  
presence of Jesuits  
in the processes  
and structures  
of CLC.*

*Live CLC's service  
as a mission  
received from the Church,  
the religious superiors,  
and the community itself.*

different organic and canonical expressions (12).

It can be said therefore that the Society, from the act of foundation until now, received a mandate and has been delegated by the hierarchy to promote the Marian Congregations first (13), and later the CLC. In the past thirty years this relationship CLC-Society of Jesus has followed the path laid out by the post-conciliar Church which sees as normal the existence of "a tension between tradition and progress, between continuity and change." (14).

This relationship involves finding new ways of expression, while at the same time conserving the special bond between CLC and the Society of Jesus as a characteristic which is not only spiritual, but canonical and juridical as well.

The Principles and General Norms of 1990 were written after quite a bit of post-conciliar experience and after the new Code of Canon Law (CIC) had been promulgated. This also involved being in close dialogue with the authorities of the Society of Jesus and the Holy See, and with on-going advice of experts. They were finally approved by pontifical authority in a decree which in the opening remarks clarified the type of bond between the CLC and the Society of Jesus. The present text of the General Principles alternates between statements which very clearly emphasize lay autonomy and authority (15), and others which affirm the need for a filial spirit, ecclesial communion, and union with the hierarchy, a close reliance on the Society of Jesus and the desire to walk side by side with the Society in facing future challenges (16).

In this sense, it is necessary to reinterpret phrases which now apply to every one, in part because of the changes which the Society of Jesus has implemented (17) and in part because of the more complex nature of the society in which we live (18).

This is the case of General Norm 32 which from the moment of pontifical approval allows the World CLC to approve national communities. This is accomplished with the consent of the appropriate bishops, or in the case of already established communities in places which belong to the Society of Jesus or which have been entrusted to it (19), with the consent of the general or vicar general of the Society of Jesus, who may delegate this authority to a provincial or ecclesiastical assistant.

From what has been said it follows that the General of the Society, by virtue of his position, has a relationship with CLC. In the same way, the Jesuit Provincials have at least a canonical relationship with CLC. It should be clarified that the

*Deepen  
our understanding  
of the canonical meaning  
of the mandate  
which we have received,  
in the context of  
the General Principles  
and canon law;  
interpret  
how to apply this  
in concrete ways  
within the spirit of the law.*

*Appreciate  
the presence of Jesuits  
in the CLC  
from an ecclesial*

fact that the General is the World Ecclesiastical Assistant results from a wide discernment approved by the Holy See. However, this does not mean that this function can be exercised only by the General.

It is reasonable to admit that at any given moment another person could be named as ecclesiastical assistant, including a non-Jesuit, without weakening the tie between CLC and the Society of Jesus. This tie manifests itself in many different ways, but, especially through the "Secretary of the Society of Jesus for CLC", which is the established canonical and statutory tie between the CLC and the Society; in fact, it fulfills the function of World Vice-Assistant.

By virtue of their office, both the Ecclesiastical Assistant and the Vice-Assistant belong to the Executive Council of CLC: the former represents the Holy See and the latter, the Society of Jesus. Both, therefore, participate in the ordinary government of the association. Analogously, the Jesuit provincials have a relation - at least canonically - with CLC, although they may not be ecclesiastical assistants. Most of all, we need most of all Jesuits who are capable of understanding, and of integrating all aspects of this relationship, on the international, the national and the local levels, and who have a broad understanding of the relations between both Ignatian communities and the Church.

*perspective  
and open ourselves  
to different ways  
of defining  
their presence  
when naming them  
and in making agreements  
for collaboration.*

## **2.4 Dependency or Autonomy**

It would now be well to raise the question which many have asked: whether CLC today is still today a "work of the Society" as it was originally and throughout most of its history. We might reply that we have already answered this question in the light of the reflections we have just made. But it would be well to reflect more on this topic because it determines to a large extent the attitude of many Jesuits and laypeople toward CLC.

*Make progress in forging  
a healthy integration  
of the CLC  
and the Society of Jesus,  
and in strengthening  
mutual ties.*

By "work of the Society" we understand a situation in which the Society accepts final responsibility for the orientation, governance, and maintenance of the work.

Today, given this definition, practically no one would say offhand that CLC is a work of the Society, except perhaps in the initial stages. But one would also not answer lightly that CLC is "not" a work of the Society because the Society participates actively in the government and orientation of the association. This is the way Arrupe understood it after the

Council and in the instruction he gave to the Jesuits at the time (21).

The answer to the question which introduces this section requires nuances and considerations like the ones we have been making throughout this document. We have clearly seen that CLC does not exist nor can it exist only by the will of its members. It exists by the will of the authority of the Church, which in many cases is represented by the Society of Jesus in its governmental structures and which offers it pastoral encouragement. We know also that both the Society and CLC are interested in developing a relationship of mutual esteem and of collaboration in the formation of its members in the apostolate. In the beginning the Society of Jesus acted as founder, than as promoter and many times as final authority and support. Nevertheless, the Society has always sought to adapt itself to the particular circumstances of time, places, and persons.

CLC for its part recognizes at least three stages in its growth, which consequently determine different needs and possibilities in its relationship with the Society, as we pointed out above. In none of the stages have we contemplated prescindning from its relationship with the Society, although CLC is aware of the fact that a healthy autonomy can very well represent the fruit of a process of growth.

Therefore, a simple and outright negative answer to the initial question would not be the most exact from an historical, spiritual, juridical, formational or ecclesial point of view.

On the other hand, a negative answer could also discourage laypeople and Jesuits from being interested in cultivating the desired relationship as laid out in the General Principles and which was repeatedly underlined in the successive General Assemblies of CLC and the General Congregations of the Society of Jesus.

The relation between Jesuits and the laity could come to adopt the style of a sort of "confraternity," that is, a "spontaneous creation of the laity in which the rules or interior pact of the group is decided by the laypeople themselves, who would invite a priest to accompany them." (22).

This model is possible, but it is not the one most in line with the desires and orientations of CLC, or those of the Society of Jesus in relationship to CLC, or those of the Church.

*Participate  
in the life  
and government  
of the community,  
taking into account  
the level of maturity  
achieved  
and with an eye  
toward fostering growth.*

Given all this, it would seem more exact and encouraging to affirm that the 34<sup>th</sup> General Congregation included CLC when it tells the Jesuits that whenever we speak of "our apostolates," we must understand the "our" to mean an authentic Ignatian collaboration with lay people in which each acts according to his own vocation. The laity will quite properly assume a role of greater responsibility and leadership in these works." (23).

In this way, the end of the process of growth will not be marked by the withdrawal of the Jesuits involved in the work which has now reached maturity. Rather, the ideal is on-going development with its attendant difficulties of a genuine spiritual and apostolic collaboration in which each needs the others, not only for reasons of apostolic efficacy, but also for the growth of one's own vocation and for the greater credibility of the Church before society.

## 2.5. A Spiritual and Apostolic Accompaniment

Beyond these necessary canonical considerations, CLC wishes to devote itself body and soul to fully developing and living out its charism, and to that end it needs the Society of Jesus and the Jesuits. At the same time it recognizes the contributions of other religious congregations and orders and that of the diocesan clergy. CLC is grounded in the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius which suppose an intense and continuous encounter with the Lord and which give rise to an apostolic lay style of life which in turn is nourished by the on-going living inner dynamics of the community.

However, CLC is conscious of the distance between what it is and what it wants to be and of how slow and difficult the process of genuine apostolic growth can be. The orientations of the world assemblies reflect this tension between looking beyond, discerning, and receiving the call of the Lord with generosity, and working with patience and perseverance and in the acceptance of our limitations and the reality of sin.

CLC is not essentially characterized by the spectacular or by quick results, though we can be grateful for a success when it comes. Nor is it distinctive of the CLC to greatly influence only one stage in life. Rather, we aim to influence the entire life by placing upon a member a seal of belonging and by demanding a commitment beyond what he or she normally does: in this they must be always willing to do things and to

*Find  
a pedagogical and  
organizational equilibrium  
between  
"being Father"  
and "allowing for growth,"  
or between  
"being sons and daughters"  
and  
"being adult sons and  
daughters  
or companions."*

*Foster the practice  
of the Spiritual Exercises  
and the on-going  
formativational and apostolic  
processes  
which emanate from them  
with a sense of the time  
and respect for persons  
in the forming  
of an apostolic community  
in the Church.*

start new initiatives. For this, we need generous Jesuit companions who are patient, persistent, realistic, set on fire by the Spiritual Exercises, and who are willing to call others together, to accompany them, and to help them become apostolically fruitful.

The last General Assembly of the Christian Life Community (Nairobi, Kenya, July, 2003) treated the theme of the relationship with the Society of Jesus and prepared a document which was annexed to the final "Recommendations." (24). It recognized three stages in this process of growth and proposed several ways of collaboration for each stage. For the initial stage, it attributes to the Jesuits the role of "catalyzers in the formation of the new community". They will have an important role in conducting the Spiritual Exercises, in forming lay leaders, in guiding the groups and the community, etc. For the final stage, when CLC has attained sufficient maturity and produced well-formed lay leaders, who can assume a greater responsibility in the formation and development of CLC, the General Assembly does not say that Jesuits are no longer needed. On the contrary, it asks, in addition to continuing to practice the forms of collaboration of the first stages - because the CLC, like the Society, is always beginning anew with new members - that the Jesuits explore other ways of collaboration. This could be as companions in the work of formation, sharing apostolic endeavors, establishing institutional relations, fostering reciprocally the growth of both apostolic bodies, discerning together in order to widen the fields of their common apostolic mission, contributing within the Church toward a more adequate understanding of the lay vocation, supporting the vocation discernments of the young, etc.

This collaboration is not merely functional. Rather, it expresses a deep ecclesial significance and, for that reason, it cannot be abandoned when certain operational objectives have been fulfilled.

But there are other things related to this theme which deserve attention. For example, there is the summary of the replies which 143 Jesuits gave in response to questions which Father Peter-Hans Kolvenbach asked them in a letter, (25), while serving in his double role as superior general of the Society of Jesus and Ecclesiastical Assistant to the World Christian Life Community.

The report read by Father Fernando Salas, the Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant of the World Christian Life Community

*To know,  
disseminate and apply  
the recommendations  
of the World Assembly  
at Nairobi  
concerning the relationship  
between the CLC  
and the Society of Jesus,  
always respecting  
the stages  
which were described.*

*Deepen the relationship  
by referring  
to other texts  
and through  
frequent communication  
among  
the ecclesiastical assistants,  
and each one  
with the CLC Secretariat*

(26), as well as the allocution which Father Kolvenbach himself delivered to the World Assembly, should also be read with great attention (27).

Naturally, these documents contain both questions and answers, and since they are written from experience, they also reflect the state of the relationship between these two Ignatian communities.

*in Rome.*

## 2.6. Differences and Mutual Perceptions

It is important in a long term relationship to keep present not only the objective components - facts, norms, documents, actions, etc. - but also to be very free to recognize and face those components which are more psychological and unconscious. They determine our way of relating and of proceeding. At times, these show up in informal conversations or explode into conflicts in some of the many reunions that we hold. In order to deepen and to sustain the healthy relationship in which we are interested, it is important to consider the different aspects which cut through the relationship.

We do this with a deep love for both communities. At the same time, we need to be uninhibited about asking questions or revealing sentiments which surface along the way and which we experience at times as contradictory or conflictive, or simply as strange.

In this line, there is a need to facilitate an atmosphere in which one can express and take into account the weariness and the disappointments, the unsatisfied expectations, the difficulties posed by relationships and the organization.

Criticisms, from within and without, should reach those responsible for the community. Serious and permanent reflection should be carried on at all levels on the difficulties and adequate planning should be made for all actions and programs.

In this, it is well to keep in mind that, at times, a major difference marks the relationship between CLC and the Society and in some cases between the Jesuits and the lay members themselves in the association. While not idealizing it, and well aware of its faults, we can say that the Society of Jesus is truly an apostolic body, with its history, its constitutions, its general congregations, its financial resources, its works, its structures, etc.

Each Jesuit receives a mission from his superiors and his

*Strengthen  
the underlying substratum  
of positive affection  
and the  
atmosphere of dialogue  
between CLC  
and the Society of Jesus.*

*Channel  
criticisms toward  
the competent  
deliberative organs.*

*Recognize the differences  
between  
the laity  
and the Jesuits  
and learn  
to work with them,  
each giving the best  
of themselves.*

apostolic life marks his being as a Jesuit and manifests itself in community life.

On the other hand, while recognizing the wealth which it possesses, we should accept the fact that CLC has the seeds of all this, but still needs to find ways to operate, to consolidate its style of life, to establish economic autonomy and consolidate its apostolic structures, etc.

Although CLC has taken great steps towards maturity, even to the point of presenting itself in Nairobi as an Apostolic Body, many delegates experienced a healthy humility which usually accompanies great decisions. The option to define itself as an Apostolic Body was meant to be a grace-filled, humble, and hope-filled option which looks to the future, free of arrogance. This means that in its relation to the Society of Jesus, which clearly is an Apostolic Body, CLC does not presume to put itself on the same level, but rather to give thanks for, to recognize its need for the accompaniment and help of the Jesuits. This is the key to understanding several references in the documents we have cited on collaboration between CLC and the Society.

Dialogue and relating are not easy between persons and communities with evident differences. We all must learn with much humility and patience to walk with greater determination along the road which opens up before us.

## **2.7 The Fruits of the Process and the Apostolic Life**

There is no doubt that the majority of CLC members, in the dynamics of the following of Christ which spring from the Spiritual Exercises and which are cultivated in community, strive to live their Christian life in their families, in their work or profession, in their particular way of participating in society and in the civil or religious institutions to which they belong. Furthermore, many give of their time and apostolic energies to works of service in the Church or outside it, tied to the Society of Jesus or not.

In this sense, CLC is a community of apostles, a reality which should be valued and encouraged. Interventions should be made whenever this dimension fades or when some members of CLC cease to follow a simple and apostolic life style in the following of Christ.

*Encourage, challenge  
and strengthen  
the apostolic life  
of the individual members.*

CLC does not wish to be the total sum of groups of persons who come together to pray, in some cases for years, without changing their individual lives and without generating significant actions within the association. A genuine process leads to apostolic fertility which has to do with the capacity to plan and take the initiative. Making decisions which commit the members to take steps leading to growth and to carry out concrete actions puts into practice the apostolic orientations of the community such as the priorities laid out in the Assembly in Itaicí in 1998. Co-responsibility in the mission is an invitation to not separate the apostolic life of individual persons from their belonging to CLC.

That is what CLC put into words recently when it stated that we wish to go from being "a community of apostles" to being "an apostolic community."

Furthermore, we wish that the apostolic life in CLC be built, not only upon the indispensable generosity and initiative of its members, but also incorporating a sense of discerned mission or mandate with supporting structures and continuous evaluation. In this way a really important possibility for cooperating with the Society of Jesus opens up, including the possibility of joint discernment, shared tasks, apostolic agreements, the presence of CLC members in the apostolic works of the Society and vice versa, etc.

## 2.8 Visibility and the Power to Convoke

Closely related to all that we have covered, and taking into consideration the state of the world today, CLC seems to play a very small role with little power to influence matters and with little visibility in Church and in society.

In fact, it seems rather timid and retiring. In an age ruled to a great extent by the laws of marketing, which demand that one prove the comparative advantages of one's product over others, or that one compete to gain a higher rating or preference in surveys, CLC frequently does not shine. This is especially if it is compared to a few new ecclesial associations or to the best experiences of its own history, or with the Church's power to call forth multitudes by which it makes itself present in the world.

In this there is some truth. The evil spirit can conduce us to blame each other, to regress to nostalgic dreaming which leads to nothing, to become envious, to show off, to look for spectacular settings, to put forth individual figures and foster

*Encourage and strengthen  
the association's  
apostolic life  
based on  
the worldwide orientations  
and the General Principles  
and Norms.*

*Foster  
apostolic collaboration  
with the Society of Jesus  
and with the local Church  
in multiple ways.*

*To understand  
and seek a balance,  
with a sense of  
discernment and process,  
in the tensions between  
quality and quantity,  
between immediate and  
long term effects,  
between  
visibility and depth, etc.*

a cult of personality. But the evil spirit can also lead us to disdain this concern while looking to the prevalent anti-Christian social models, thus abdicating our call to attract others and falling into a hopeless and empty fatalism. This problem involves a real evangelical component which we should face and understand; this is an ecclesial responsibility which challenges us.

The number of CLC members is uneven from one country to the next. In some regions, CLC is decreasing and disappearing, while in others it is just beginning or in the process of developing. This has much to do with the relation with the Society of Jesus. In this line, one great task is to foster the great wealth of the charism of CLC and its message by putting into practice at the same time General Norm 6, which calls for diversification in order to expand.

The Norm is part of our mandate: "All that which has been said should be understood and practiced taking into account ages, cultures, and other specific characteristics. With this objective in mind, the national communities should develop diversified formation programs which take into account groups or sections and the possible exceptional circumstances in which some individual members may be living."(GN 6)

*Widen  
the call to belong and  
discretely  
diversify programs  
and ways  
to welcome  
different types of members.*

## **2.9 CLC and the Mission of the Society of Jesus**

The last General Congregation of the Society of Jesus gave great importance to the theme of "Collaboration with the laity in the mission" (Decree 13).

The theme is rich and complex and goes beyond the limits of CLC because it refers to all the laity who are capable of participating in this relationship of collaboration, among diverse people.

This theme involves theoretical components (theological, ecclesial) and practical ones (ways of doing things, organizational methods, etc.).

On the one hand, the aim is to recognize, value, and strengthen the mission of the laity in the Church, who are in a process of opening themselves up to a more mature ecclesial communion and to a more constructive reciprocal relationship between themselves and the religious. In this sense, the laity are called upon to be protagonists in their participation in the Church's mission, while the Society is called upon to help them to assume this more leading role (28).

*Deepen  
the different components  
in the apostolic relationship  
between the laity  
and the Society of Jesus.*

At the same time, in this context the Society also looks for the collaboration of the laity to carry out its own mission and works (29). The logic of the document applies to both entities: it points out that CLC cannot define itself in function of the mission or the works of the Society of Jesus, but it can receive clear orientations on how to contribute to them by means of some concrete ways of collaboration. This is one of the major desires of CLC.

In this perspective and keeping in mind what we have said about the diversification of members, a section could be established in CLC, at the national and/or world level, to develop a closer collaboration with the mission and the works of the Society of Jesus, according to the text and in the spirit of the text - which could be modified if it were deemed necessary - of General Norms 6, 7 and 10.

In the process, the characteristics of individual persons should be respected as well as the necessities of CLC. This requires that some of the more well-formed members remain also at the service of the association as directors and/or in charge of formation, alternating with apostolic commitments outside of the association.

*Discern  
and put into practice  
concrete and organic ways  
to foster  
apostolic collaboration  
between CLC  
and the Society of Jesus.*

## **Conclusion**

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CLC desires to be an apostolic body at the service of the Church's mission with a special link to the Society of Jesus. This wish is rooted in the history and the original charism and needs a generous creative participation of lay people and Jesuits. Early and recent history is rich with examples of growth and fruitful experiences. Nevertheless, a permanent renewal of the motivations, methods and relationships is necessary. There must also be a continued dialogue between CLC members and the Jesuits. This dialogue must also be maintained at the institutional level for a better contribution to the good of the Church.

The present document wishes to foster this dialogue, putting forward important elements to be studied and evaluated. The Ecclesiastical Assistants are encouraged to use this document as a guide in their work. It can also be a help to the community for a healthy self-appraisal.

## Notes

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- 1 Since 1967 we can properly speak of CLC which follows on the long tradition of the Marian Congregations going back to 1584 and even before. In some countries and at different times in history there was no relationship with the Society of Jesus. The Marian Congregations maintained relationships with other religious congregations or operated under the authority of the Bishop.
- 2 Or in some cases with other religious congregations.
- 3 There are about 700 Jesuits in the world officially involved in CLC.
- 4 From the renewal following the Vatican Council, CLC has participated in the Conference of the "International Catholic Organizations" (ICO) which had a close relationship with the "Pontifical Council for the Laity". Because of the present-day diversity of organizations, the ICO is not the only point of reference.
- 5 The last World Assembly at Nairobi focused more on the notion of "apostolic body".
- 6 Annexed are the Letters and Talks of the Generals of the Society of Jesus on CLC.
- 7 See *Progressio, Supplement* n<sup>o</sup>. 36 1991, January, pages 2-4.
- 8 "A History of Grace", in *Progressio, Supplement* n<sup>o</sup> 38-39, 1992, pages 17-23.
- 9 See for example the Peter Favre groups, in *Progressio*, 1989, November, n<sup>o</sup> 6, pages 12-15.
- 10 Louis Paulussen, SJ, has written extensively on the transition from Marian Congregations to the CLC. He was Director of the Jesuit Secretariat of the CCMM and the CLC.
- 11 Norm 15 states that "the General Assembly is the supreme organ of government" and adds: "Each delegation normally consists of three delegates, one of whom should be the ecclesiastical assistant or his or her representative."
- 12 Except during the suppression of the Society, during which time the Marian congregations were not suppressed; rather they passed under the tutelage of the diocesan bishops.
- 13 The General of the Society in fact acted as the ecclesiastical authority: he authorized the creation of the first congregation, handed over the "common rules," and established congregations in houses of the Society, etc.
- 14 Kolvenbach, S.J., Peter-Hans: Conference of the Ecclesiastical Assistant of the World CLC, Nairobi, August 4, 2003. In *Progressio, Supplement* n<sup>o</sup> 58, p. 80.
- 15 "The General Assembly is the supreme organ of government of the Christian Life Community" (*General Norms 15*); "The Executive Council is responsible for the ordinary governance of the Community." (*GN 20*) and "it has a Secretariat to carry out its policies and decisions." (*GN 23*). It also states that "the ecclesiastical authority which officially approves a national, regional or local community is the World Christian Life Community" (*GN 32*), which in the Church is "an international association of public right." (*General Principles 3*)

- 16 For example, apostolic works are no longer tied to particular geographical places or to "professed houses." The older "houses" of the Society have changed their nature many times.
- 17 The size of cities and the life styles of modern life have transformed geographical places into sociological concepts. "Where the pavement ends," for example, is a phrase which identifies the popular educational system "Fe y Alegría": but that is clearly a sociological concept and not a literal description.
- 18 This is clearly a sociological concept as described in the preceding footnote.
- 20 For various reasons, considering the international character of CLC, it seems better that the Ecclesiastical Assistant be a Jesuit instead of a diocesan Bishop as happened in the past. In addition, since the *Spiritual Exercises* are so basic to the formation of CLC members, the presence of a Jesuit is preferable. Finally, because the responsibility comes to the General directly from the Holy See, he is in a better position to maintain effective contacts.
- 21 Fr. Arrupe's letter to the Major Superiors, 1973, June 21<sup>st</sup>. [ARSI](#)
- 22 Kolvenbach, S.J., Peter-Hans, "Conference of the Ecclesiastical Assistant of the World CLC", Nairobi, August 4, 2003. In *Progressio, Supplement* n° 58, p. 83.
- 23 SJ General Congregation 34, Decree 13, n. 20.
- 24 "Collaboration between the CLC and the Society of Jesus," in *Progressio, Supplement*, n° 58/2003, p. 101.
- 25 "Report about Jesuit Assistants in CLC," *ibidem*, p. 76.
- 26 "Report of the Vice-Assistants of the World CLC," *ibidem*, p. 35.
- 27 "Conference of the Ecclesiastical Assistant of the World CLC", *ibidem*, p. 80.
- 28 *Confer* Decree 13, num. 1: "The Society of Jesus recognizes as a grace of our time and a hope of the future that the laity are taking an active, conscious, and responsible role in the mission of the Church (...) We wish to respond to this grace by placing ourselves at the service of the full realization of the mission of the laity and we commit ourselves to carry this out by cooperating with them in the mission."
- 29 *Confer* Decree 13, num. 2: "In some parts of the world the works of the Society depends primarily on the laity for the fulfilling of its mission. We foresee an expansion of lay apostolic participation in the works of the Society in the next few years and we commit ourselves to support this expansion."

## Annex

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Letters and Talks by the Generals of the Society of Jesus  
(and after 1985, of Fr. Kolvenbach as CLC Assistant)  
Published in *Progressio* and and *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu* (ARSI)  
on CLC and the relationship with lay persons

- 1968, March, 25<sup>th</sup> – “Sancta Sedes approbat Principia Generalia et Statuta Communitatum vitae Christianae” (only the French text), in *ARSI*, Vol. XV, Fasc. II (1968), pages 191-203.
- 1968, August, 15<sup>th</sup> – Fr. Arrupe’s Letter - *De Congregationibus Marianis seu Communitatibus Vitae Christianae* (only the Latin text), in *ARSI*, Vol. XV, Fasc. II (1968), pages 321-327.
- 1973, June, 21<sup>st</sup> – Fr. Arrupe’s Letter - *Normae quaedam collaborandi cum Communitatibus Vitae Christianae* (only the French text), in *ARSI*, Vol. XVI, Fasc. I (1973), pages 71-72.
- 1974 – “Father Arrupe speaks to CLC Leaders”, in *Progressio*, 1974, n° 2, pages 3-5.
- 1974 – Fr. Pedro Arrupe – “Simplicity of Life and Poverty”, in *Progressio*, 1974, n° 6, pages 4-8.
- 1977 – “Padre Arrupe meets with the Executive Council”, in *Progressio*, 1977, n° 2, pages 5-9.
- 1978, July, 17<sup>th</sup> – “De bonibus Communitatum Vital Christianae eorumque regimine” (only the Spanish text), in *ARSI*, Vol. XVII, Fasc. II (1979), page 627.
- 1980 – Fr. Pedro Arrupe – “Life’s prospects for the young people of today”, in Supplement n° 16, *Progressio*, 1980, pages 9-31.
- 1984 – Fr. Kolvenbach’s answer to the Postulates about the collaboration of lay people in *ARSI*, Vol. XIX, Fasc. I (1984), pages 39-40 (French), page 48 (Spanish), pages 56-57 (English).
- 1984, November, 26<sup>th</sup> – Fr. General as CLC Ecclesiastic Assistant, on the 400<sup>o</sup> Anniversary of “Omnipotentis Dei”, in *ARSI*, Vol. XIX, Fasc. I (1984), pages 116-120 (English, Spanish, French).
- 1985 – The first Letter of Fr. Kolvenbach to CLC, after being nominated Ecclesiastical Assistant, in *Progressio*, 1985, n° 3, pages 2-3.
- 1986, August, 24<sup>th</sup> – Fr. General’s Talk to the Loyola World Assembly (1986) - in *ARSI*, Vol. XIX, Fasc. III (1986), pages 649-657 (French), pages 657-664 (Spanish), pages 665-671 (English).
- 1990 - “The journey of Saint Ignatius and the Charism of CLC” (Talk by Fr. Kolvenbach to the Assembly of Guadalajara), in *Progressio*, 1990, n° 4, pages 3-16.
- 1990, September, 7<sup>th</sup> (approbation of the new General Principles of CLC, Guadalajara Assembly) 3rd of December (confirmation of the GPs by the Holy See) - *Generals Principles of the Christian Life Community* (Spanish) in *Progressio Supplement n° 36* (1991).

- 1990, September, 20th – « Discours du Père Général à l'ouverture de la Congrégation des Provinciaux » in Loyola, in *ARSI*, Vol. XX, Fasc. III (1990) (only the French text), n° 72-75, pages 461-461.
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