

CLC in Europe – Ecology Network

Inspirations from our Communal Discernment

Introduction

The members of the Ecology Network of CLC in Europe met over a few meetings to pray and discern the call of our Lord for this new group of people, this new network. The Euroteam (ET) did not want to “feed” the network with a ready formula, as it felt that it was not competent to do this. The role of the ET is clear to facilitate the creation of the network and support it and provide overall direction. However the actual call needed to be discerned within the network.

This document attempts to provide some structure to the process undertaken by the network so far. Once ready it will be a guide to the work of the network for the medium term, until the network will undertake an evaluation and discern again, practicing DSSE.

Our Discernment

The below is a list of the network’s fruits of discernment. Without wanting to discard anything the main aim of this section is to document as faithfully as possible the two rounds of sharing carried out over two meetings. The first round (as practiced in our communal discernment processes) was more of a “without boundaries” sharing of where we all felt the Lord was calling us. We listed all we heard. The second round focused on the fruits of the first round and we were called to see what strikes us as the more urgent calls from amongst all the voices we heard.

Thus, the following paragraphs attempt to do two things with all the rich and deep sharing that we had in the network. They will try to group the various voices into a few more manageable “sub titles” and also first present the ones that were given more focus in the second round of sharing. The others are listed for completeness and to be used for our further prayer and reflection.

Some of the second round of sharing has also started the next step in our communal discernment journey, that of discernment in action. To be truly Ignatian the network is clear that our discernment needs to be rooted in reality so that we can also formulate action plans.

1. Ecological Conversion

The topic of ecological conversion was given the most prominence. Many of us in the network expressed the need for us and for people around us to engage with this issue. What does ecological conversion mean for me? How do I do ecological conversion? How can we help others identify what it means to them? How can we walk with others on their journey?

The sharing in this topic is reflected below:

- **Move forward with our own commitment:** There are small compromises to be made that we could share. For example, recycle and/or eliminate individual coffee capsules. Or carry out the ecological Examination once a week.
Mix technical commitments with ethics.
- **Poverty and extreme personal needs lead to the destruction of nature (eg. forests to sell wood)**
- **CLC can help people to overcome their fears for ecological conversion.** Retreats/spiritual exercises focused on ecological conversion (Euroteam could help local/national communities

which have the desire to organise this). For example, in Spain they have been carrying out S.E. for several years. Ecological in "Celorio". Organized by Jesuits with the involvement of people from CLC

- **Reflection on the root cause: why we do not recognize sins against Our Common Home as sins.** Reflect on our environmental foot print. Is there a lack in ecological awareness? It would be a good idea to technically develop a small technical calculation of our carbon footprint
- **Promote and support ecological conversion.** This could mean different things to different people, and its OK, but start the journey. Accompany people on *their* journey.
- **Assist international initiatives to get to know local ecological activities, e.g. through pilgrimages to other places/countries to learn about concrete forms of ecological conversion.**
- **Encourage people to start.** Encourage local communities to work in this field and seek ecological conversion For example, the ecology group in Spain sent a letter to local communities, to find out "the state of the art of ecology) in CLC Spain

2. Connecting with others

This is another very wide area that came under many different shades and voices. It is clear to us that this network is not to close in on itself but remain open to others.

- **Connect with other ecological networks.** For example, EcoJesuits, Laudato Si network, Any others? Centres of Ignatian spirituality of the Jesuits? CLC International Ecology Network
- **Be in touch with ecological initiatives taken by other religions.**
- **Bring the insights of this group to our local communities.** For example In Spain their Ecology group deal with the topics seen here, as one more point of the day.
- **Local/Global.** A strength of CLC - share and connect various initiatives already in place in the region with focus on integral Ecology.
- **Local solutions can be shared and inventory them.**
- **Accompany.** Caring for and connecting people who work loosely

3. Advocacy

This topic stands alone however it did gain prominence and thus its place as a stand alone topic like the others. It probably needs more prayer and reflection however we did say the following:

- Our group can write short briefs or press releases for relevant events or news. We need to discuss a process to be defined with the Euroteam and/or ExCo

4. Information Gathering and Dissemination

This topic has many sub topics and sub titles, another could be "Information and Formation". The importance of this topic lies in the contents of the voices heard as they could lead us on to the next step in our journey, moving into action priorities:

- **collect practical ideas how to raise awareness and discern which to follow.** bring ideas how we personally reflect/introduce/implement the care for our Common Home in our daily life...how our awareness affects our decisions and our thinking
+collect ideas/approaches from our local communities and discern which examples/inspirations would be beneficial to follow in our local communities
- **Choose one or two themes to work on each year.** For example, renewable energy generation in the light of the pandemic and the war? Water conservation / generation / consumption

- **Give ideas and tools to act.** There are already many resources on ecology but CLC may give specific perspectives on actions towards ecology, for example in Spain they are developing awareness talks in different areas of ecology from our spirituality (On the lines of the family clock). The idea is green, but we are doing things.
- **Education and Formation.** Organize conferences, lectures and seminars on ecological themes from different perspectives: theology, philosophy, socio-cultural, economic and political issues, eco-justice, sustainability, technocratic paradigm, reconciliation and ecological conversion, and ecological education.
- **Collect information and spread it out again.** Collect what people already do here and there, and share in all national communities. Maybe create a catalogue of possibilities, from which people can choose what's in their capabilities. It would be really helpful and inspirational to have such a catalogue, e.g. for Lent season.

5. Others

Now there are a number of distinct voices that do not seem to revolve around the above four topics but still it is important to list them here. They may be helpful in future conversations, decisions, needs for inspiration, etc.

- **Remember to marvel at nature's strength and praise the Lord. See the good things being done all over the world for nature and mankind.**
- **Keep a memory of what is being done.** Maybe create a google drive or a common repository where we can put and share our resources.
- **Celebrate important dates together.** Find ways of celebrating important annual dates like Earth Hour; when COP meets, etc.
- **Strike a good and helpful balance.** Ecology is now at the heart of CLC, existing governance structure are supposed to carry this preoccupation in what they do and say.