



Link between the Executive Council and the World Christian Life Community

PROJECTS

No.160, August 2014

Original : English

Wisdom Language

Dear Sisters and Brothers in CLC,

Resuming the issues highlighted in our General Assembly in Lebanon 2013, the World ExCo is pleased to introduce our progress on Wisdom Language (WL). We invite you also to join us in the process to develop these ideas in your national community and in your local groups.

The stakes regarding Wisdom Language

The way in which CLC responds to our call to go to the frontiers in our social realities, cultures and daily lives challenges us as Ignatian Lay Body to consider a) What are the particularities of our identity that can bring a fruitful dialogue with the world of today?, and b) What should our disposition be towards the frontiers that effectively reflect this lay Church? *"We the laity, who are the Church, we have to be able to recognize and to proclaim Jesus Christ and His Gospel not as a set of prohibitions, interruptions, regulations, dictates or marginal statements but as a word of life in real situations which are being lived...the image of a good Christian must be less stereotyped and more dynamic and capable of discovering the good within people"*¹

With regard of this, during our last Assembly in Lebanon 2013 Fr. General Adolfo Nicolás SJ invited us to rediscover the Language of Wisdom². *He inspired us to explore how we might engage with the contemporary world in terms of wisdom.* He pointed out that through Ignatian spirituality we can provide the depth which societies need today. *Wisdom in this sense is about discovering God's gracious action, not simply in his more obvious actions in history, but in everything, in ordinary life. It is the way of the Contemplation on Love (SpEx 230-237), of finding God in all things.* (Lebanon 2013 – Final Document No. 7).

There is a widespread tendency to consider the spiritual life as *fuga mundi* (flight from the world) where it seems necessary to withdraw from the world to get closer to God. In contrast, Ignatian Spirituality and especially the Ignatian Lay Vocation are rooted in Finding God in everything. It is a spirituality incarnated in the world and therefore it is not averse to the world. Rather it is a constant invitation to be aware of the signs of the presence of God in the ordinary life and to distinguish what leads us to be closer to or away from God's will.

In this vein, for us (CLCers), Wisdom Language means to find out how God works in our lay reality (everyday life) in the family, at work, in the society we live in, culture, etc. What's more, Wisdom language is not a second choice. In some circumstances it is the suitable language to use if we want to keep on searching for God in all, especially at the frontiers.

¹ "The Church of the Laity", Jose Reyes, Progressio Supplement 59

² Wisdom Language for the Frontiers – Progressio Supplement 70 XVI World Assembly of CLC Lebanon 2013 (pg. 88-97)

Briefly, this is what we mean when we refer to Wisdom Language:

- WL might not be a "language" but an approach or a disposition/attitude
- Wisdom brings in depth and counteracts the superficial tendencies of today.
- Ignatian spirituality allows us to distinguish what is superficial from what is deep.
- the core experiences of Ignatian Spirituality/Exercises might offer keys for Wisdom
- WL is a means to address those who are not familiar with God and to appreciate their joie de vivre
- WL is an invitation for all ignatian family to really search God in all.
- WL requires a conversion of our own understanding and not only a translation of ancient words.

What does it mean to take wisdom language to the frontiers of our lay mission?

1. To live life with openness and a sense of wonder, attentive to and receptive to different perspectives and especially to be positively pre-disposed to others, and to new realities.
2. To make the right choices and help others to do so. Choose what is deep, permanent and meaningful.
3. Research and intellectual work. Give genuine effort to find out what are the different options available which can enrich life in that situation. Be able to understand and speak in language of the non-religious discourses surrounding the frontier.
4. Recognize the presence of God in the little things of daily life and help others to also recognize this presence. We get depth not necessarily through academic studies, because *"You have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to simple people (Mt 11,25)*
5. Bring the compassion of God to life situations. Prioritize a message of unconditional love instead of norms and commandments as Jesus did and Pope Francis insists in our days
6. Do not settle for simplistic solutions. Do not also accept dilemmas in which there is no solution offered. Believe that there is Hope, that God offers us a solution and the possibility of a better life. Evil is never the last word. God's love is the last word.
7. Give value to the wisdom of humanity we have inherited from our parents, cultures, environments and life experiences that we have had unconscious or hidden in our daily lives.

Wisdom Language as a process

This deepening on WL is the starting point of a process that we hope to develop in these five years, therefore we encourage a reflection of WL, especially as an expression of our lay identity, within our CLC communities. As proposal we invite our members to promote a meeting dedicated on this subject. Below in Annex you will find guidelines for a CLC local group meeting on WL.

If you have ideas, suggestions or additional questions please feel free to contact us: wisdomlanguage@cvx-clc.net

Called or not called, God is present,

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Consultor

Alwin Macalalad
New Executive Secretary

Sofia Montanez

World ExCo working group on Wisdom Language

PROJECTS 160

Wisdom Language

ANNEX

Guidelines for a CLC local group meeting on Wisdom Language

We recommend that the person who is going to lead up the meeting read *Projects 160 Wisdom Language (the stakes regarding Wisdom Language)* in order to help the participants to go to the core message of Wisdom Language approach for CLC.

Prayer time:

The participants sit in a circle and in the center put the written sentence of the petition and ask each of them to write down in a piece of paper one sphere of our lay vocation that has to do with God's Wisdom (e.g. work, family, etc)

Petition: Lord, let us recognize your Wisdom in the mist of the everyday life

Reading: Elijah meets God at Horeb

God said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by". Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. 1 King 19, 11:13

To the Reflection: How do you experience God's Wisdom in your daily life? / What was your experience of God in the last week amidst the bustle, rush, fatigue and complexity of everyday life?

Sharing time:

about Wisdom Language: How the fact of paying attention to the presence of God in the little things in the ordinary life can raise our awareness of the Wisdom Language? / From what I have heard in this meeting where I have found words of wisdom?

At the end of the meeting try to answer the following questions to be shared with World CLC (*): *As Lay people, how do I/we communicate the Wisdom of God among ourselves and with others? / Could you identified the tool that may help our members to be more attentive to Wisdom Language in ordinary life?*

(* we kindly invite you to share your answer with the world community, please send us photos, reflections, images, poems, etc. to wisdomlanguage@cvx-clc.net, your feedback will be shared mainly in Facebook (page of CVX – CLC) and in a possible Progressio Supplement with the most relevant inputs/testimonies received.