

## PROJECTS

### World CLC Day 2020:

### Young people are an indispensable part of the CLC apostolic body

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**“Dear young people... the Church needs your momentum,  
your intuitions, your faith. We need them!  
And when you arrive where we have not yet reached,  
have the patience to wait for us.”**

Pope Francis, in *Christus vivit*, no.299

#### 1. Introduction

CLC is with and for young people. Youth are an indispensable part of the apostolic body. The intergenerational togetherness is an essential dimension of the universality – a universality displayed in time. In CLC around the world, we are young, adult, elder, all of us belong to one apostolic body. While the young are an apostolic frontier, the young are primarily an essential part of the body. The priority of communicating the gift of CLC to the next generation is not only a priority, but also a vital matter of communion and historical responsibility with young people, with the Ignatian Family and with the Church.

Over the last 450 years, approximately 15 generations have transmitted successively the gift of Ignatian lay spirituality which our current CLC members hold so dear. Now it's our turn to be the link in the chain that transmits this precious gift to the next generations in an effective, comprehensive and enriched way. CLC is a gift of 450 years of history, and our historical mission is to engage a new generation on the Ignatian lay path.

Youth Ministry is a priority for many of the Ignatian Family. Our dear Ecclesial Assistant, Father Arturo Sosa SJ, wrote us a letter about the Four Universal Apostolic Preferences<sup>1</sup> of the Society of Jesus. The mission to young people is expressed directly in the third (To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future), implied in the first (To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment), and has a strategic impact on the second preference (To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice) and the fourth preference (To collaborate in the care of our Common Home).

Youth is not just a nice topic for the 2020 World CLC Day (March, 25<sup>th</sup>), but it is a major concern and challenge for all of us in CLC. We are inviting you to launch a long-term effort! Regional CLC teams, National ExCo's, National formation teams and leaders of local communities, should design concrete plans to communicate and offer the gift of CLC to young people in this new context. In general, all the members of local CLC should review how to share our gifts with the younger people.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://jesuits.global/en/uap>

## 2. Proposal for the CLC World CLC Day 2020

We are inviting you to increase participation as well as expand the role of young people in regional, national and local CLC leadership, activities and communities. To begin, we recommend that you reflect and share on these four questions:

- *What is the relationship between CLC and youth in your local communities?*
- *How can we start or improve our collaboration with the Ignatian Family and other institutions of the Church (parishes, schools, universities, centers, etc.) in Youth Ministry?*
- *How can we create renewed, innovative and attractive experiences of encounter with Christ and Ignatian Discernment for and with young people?*
- *How can we communicate, promote and offer CLC to new young communities?*

We need to think deeper and broader. Pope Francis has renewed the ecclesial framework for young people. Before you answer -personally and in groups- the above questions, we invite you to pray and reflect on the following approach to *Christus vivit* and other considerations that we will offer you in this same document.

### 3. *Christus vivit*: A new framework for youth and Church relationship

During 2018, the Synod Assembly was dedicated to *youth, faith and vocational discernment*, and, in the year 2019, Pope Francis published the Apostolic Exhortation ***Christus vivit***. It is the highest-ranking document that in the history of the Church has been dedicated to young people. It provides a deep and refined framework to shape the relationship between youth, Christian communities, youth ministry and the Church as a whole.

*Christus vivit* is a proposal of reflection and renewal for the whole Church. CLC is called to follow that path, especially in this time of CLC's awareness about the essential preference of Youth Ministry. Take a moment to pray with the following hymn:

***Christ is alive! He is our hope<sup>2</sup>***

*Christ is alive! He is our hope,  
and in a wonderful way  
he brings youth to our world,  
and everything he touches becomes young,  
new, full of life.*

*He is always there, the Risen One.  
He calls you and he waits for you  
to return to him and start over again.*

*When you feel you are growing old out of sorrow,  
resentment or fear, doubt or failure,  
he will always be there to restore  
your strength and your hope.  
He is the true youthfulness of a world grown old.*

*With him at our side,  
we can drink from the true wellspring*

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<sup>2</sup> This prayer has been composed with the words of the Pope Francis in *Christus vivit*, numbers 1, 2, 13, 20 and 32.

*that keeps alive all our dreams,  
our projects, our great ideals,  
while impelling us to proclaim  
what makes life truly worthwhile.  
Jesus, himself eternally young,  
wants to give us hearts that are ever young.*

*If you have lost your inner vitality,  
your dreams, your enthusiasm,  
your optimism and your generosity,  
Jesus stands before you  
as once he stood before the dead son of the widow,  
and with all the power of his resurrection  
he urges you: "Young man, I say to you, arise!"*

Throughout *Christus vivit*, Pope Francis encourages young people to pursue their authentic, God-given personal vocation. In this new framework of youth ministry, the wisdom of discernment plays a key role. Vocational culture<sup>3</sup> is embodied within the CLC way of life in the development of any Christian, a follower of Jesus. A young person begins their spiritual journey with a personal encounter with Christ alive, and CLC can follow up in a process of love, accompaniment, discernment and celebration. The Spiritual Exercises are our model and path for this process.

All of us and our communities are capable of communicating the Love of God and the gist of the discernment process, but we need to be adaptable. *Christus vivit* encourages us to be more active, creative and collaborative in Youth Ministry.

We invite you to read and meditate on the follow quotes of *Christus vivit*. Consider how to apply these points in your local, regional, and/or national CLC.

- *"Christ's Church can always yield to the temptation to lose enthusiasm... Young people can help keep her young... help her to be poorer and to bear better witness, to take the side of the poor and the outcast, to fight for justice and humbly to let herself be challenged." (Christus vivit, no.37)*
- *"This means humbly acknowledging that some things concretely need to change, and if that is to happen, she needs to appreciate the vision but also the criticisms of young people." (Christus vivit, no.39)*
- *"We need projects that can strengthen them, accompany them and impel them to encounter others, to engage in generous service, in mission." (Christus vivit, no.30)*
- *"I encourage communities to examine, respectfully and seriously, the situation of their young people, in order to find the most fitting ways of providing them with pastoral care." (Christus vivit, no.103)*
- *"The first thing we need to discern and discover is this: Jesus wants to be a friend to every young person. This discernment is the basis of all else. In the risen Lord's dialogue with Simon Peter, his great question was: "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" (Jn 21:16)." (Christus vivit, no.250)*
- *"The young make us see the need for new styles and new strategies." (Christus vivit, no.204)*

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<sup>3</sup> "The word "vocation" can be understood in a broad sense as a calling from God, including the call to life, the call to friendship with him, the call to holiness, and so forth." (*Christus vivit*, no.248)

- *“While adults often worry about having everything properly planned, with regular meetings and fixed times, most young people today have little interest in this kind of pastoral approach.” (Christus vivit, no.204)*
- *“Youth ministry needs to become more flexible: inviting young people to events or occasions that provide an opportunity not only for learning, but also for conversing, celebrating, singing, listening to real stories and experiencing a shared encounter with the living God.” (Christus vivit, no.204)*
- *“The young will be better integrated into communities that are open, living their faith, eager to radiate Christ, joyful, free, fraternal and committed. These communities can be settings where they feel that it is possible to cultivate precious relationships.” (Christus vivit, no.220)*

#### **4. The next generation urgently needs the wisdom of Ignatian discernment**

Our XXI Century is very young, 20 years-old, and needs the gift of Ignatian discernment. All of us are feeling that a new era is emerging. We are involved in a global revolution. Our world is changing among sufferings and enthusiasm. On the one hand, we are living a more connected, ecological and capable world; on the other hand, the risks of inequality, superficiality or unsustainability are bigger. More and more, the generations must unite and collaborate. This is an essential point of the *Integral Ecology (Laudato Si’)*.

As CLC’s Projects #172 says, the wisdom of discernment is increasingly necessary in a more reflective, communicative and uncertain world. One of the most valuable legacies that we can leave to the next generation is a capacity for discernment, a gift that may be internalized by our cultures, our human communities, democracies and the Church. The renewal of the Church itself requires that spiritual discernment permeate all ecclesial spaces and our missionary action. The transmission of discernment and Ignatian spirituality to the next generation is an absolute priority.

A new young generation is playing a key role in the global change we see today. An ecological movement led by youth worried about climate change has spread around the world; different political springs and protest movements have developed in recent years; young women have led a current of change in promoting gender equality in many countries; young people are steering social networks and leading the digital revolution of the world. The global awareness of the new generation is new and intense, and it is strongly engaged with important values of freedom, sustainability, equity and solidarity (The Global Shapers Survey<sup>4</sup> for 186 countries, 2017). Young people are optimistic despite uncertainty and change across the globe (IPSOS Youth Survey<sup>5</sup> for 45 countries, 2017), and they are already the leaders and shapers of some of the most important processes of the XXI Century. Definitely, again times are changing<sup>6</sup>...

Young people need personal and communal discernment for their participation in transformative movements, innovations and challenges. They are a vulnerable population. The influence of superficiality, relativism, totalitarianism or injustice is very serious as they face new decisions, formation, maturation, searching, doubts... In this context, every young person today faces new risks, challenges and opportunities that require a deeper sense of discernment. The CLC and the Ignatian Family can offer young people experiences of discernment, adapted to today’s world and culture.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.shaperssurvey.org/static/data/WEF\\_GSC\\_Annual\\_Survey\\_2017.pdf](http://www.shaperssurvey.org/static/data/WEF_GSC_Annual_Survey_2017.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.citigroup.com/citi/foundation/data/p2p\\_global\\_youth\\_survey\\_full\\_data.pdf](https://www.citigroup.com/citi/foundation/data/p2p_global_youth_survey_full_data.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMz\\_zplGza0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMz_zplGza0)

Working with youth is the most basic, effective and enduring way to improve the world in any field (Justice, Ecology, Spirituality, etc.). If we apply the Ignatian criteria, Youth Ministry is at the center of any mission field.

We need to interiorize the Post-Synodal Exhortation *Christus vivit* and to work closely with this apostolic framework.

## 5. Let's build a network for the youth mission!

### Some invitations

- We invite you to share your best practices in youth mission. Please, write to the World Secretariat telling us about your experiences and models. We will post them on the youth section of the World CLC website.
- We invite you to offer or ask for help. The W-ExCo will connect those who need help and those who have ideas and experiences to share. We encourage you to share with us the fruits of the reflection that emerged from the questions posed in this document.
- We invite local, national and regional CLC to reflect on *Christus vivit*, the new framework of the Church, and to adopt key points within your groups, teams, committees and councils.
- Think about a new framework of collaboration with parishes, schools, universities, centers and other projects and institutions, especially in the Jesuit network and wider Ignatian Family.
- If you do not already have one, consider establishing an apostolic committee for Youth Ministry at the national level. In many countries, CLC already has one and the fruits are encouraging.
- Encourage the apostolic impulse for youth among every CLC person, open spaces, looking for collaboration and alliances. Love and serve in everything.

We are starting a new way of understanding the apostolic work with and for youth. The situation of youth in the world has changed. There is something new. The Church has developed a new framework for Youth Ministry, based on vocational culture and discernment. For us in CLC, this is an opportunity for renewed commitment to youth and for an apostolic renovation. We find ourselves at a new starting point, but with a long-term vision of 10 years or more. We will work, innovate, collaborate! We place our hope in Christ alive! We pray to the Holy Spirit:

*Fill our souls of your Holy Wind,  
Open our heart with your grace,  
Give us your courage and creativity,  
Send us to collaborate with others,  
Send us to love and serve in everything,  
Inspire young people to discover our gift,  
Inspire us to give all our gift to the next generation  
Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam.*

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