



Seeking financial sustainability of World CLC and our apostolic works “The Rome accommodation project”

Rome, May 2011

Aim of project

The aim of this project is one of creating long term institutional stability in the world CLC community in order to act more efficiently as an apostolic body. It is as far reaching as another defining moment for the world community. In 2013 CLC, as heir of The Marian Congregation, will be 450 years old¹. Apart from the celebrations, it will be a time of evaluation, including how we have developed and taken care of our “institutional body” which is so much needed to promote and support the CLC Charism and our works around the world. Now is a time for a further step in the institutional development of CLC as needed to help realize our financial viability and apostolic hopes.

This project raises the following questions and thoughts about CLC and our apostolic works. What kind of CLC do we want to bequeath to future generations of CLC members? And what kind of CLC do we want to put at the disposal of the world which we serve? Our aim is to ensure our apostolic action, as WCLC, is as efficient and effective as possible - with the soundest of organizational foundations. And this has several dimensions, including an economic one. In our focus on apostolic works, we also mention another example of efforts in this respect. Last year, we created an apostolic fund to support apostolic works, especially those which are being developed by our more financially poor communities, for the poor. So the objective of this current project, ie to buy an apartment in Rome, is to release about 10% of the annual operational costs of the world CLC community. As we have been emphasizing, this is only a means for our real ends, ie our apostolic efforts.

The process of discernment leading to this project

In its meeting of February 2010, ExCo decided to ask its financial team² to develop a project to place the financial situation of CLC world community on a firmer footing. The financial team focused on the possibility of purchasing an apartment for the Executive Secretary in Rome since rental is currently one of the most expensive items in the annual budget. At the present time, CLC spends more than €17,000 yearly renting such an apartment (nearly 12% of our annual budget) and this situation has existed since the foundation of CLC (1968) – amounting to expenditure of over €700,000 on today’s figures.

After a careful study of and reflection on the matter, the financial team proposed we purchase an apartment in Rome. In the meantime, several past ExCo members and some national communities were also approached to get their feedback and advice. There was a consensus on the

¹ In 1563, the first Marian Congregation met in Rome thanks to Jean Leunis sj.

² The financial team (FT) which supports ExCo’s work comprises Leonardo Becchetti (Italy), Thomas Bausch (USA), Olivier Piganeau (France), Chris Micallef (Malta) and Franklin Ibanez (Peru). Additionally we thank Augusto Reggiani (Italy) and Alison Vella (Malta) for all their support at different stages.

advisability of the project. Also, as a pilot strategy to raise €330,000, ExCo approached some CLCers asking if they would be ready to donate €1,000 should this project be approved. Their positive answers encouraged us to continue in this way.³ Then ExCo, after its own discernment on the matter and weighing all evidence for and against, approved the project at its meeting in February 2011. Apart from the wide support for the project mentioned above, it is worth reporting that our Ecclesial Assistant, Fr. General Adolfo Nicolas SJ, referred to the Project as “a very good sign of the maturity of CLC as an apostolic body”.

The concrete objective

Since its foundation in 1968, CLC has had a Secretariat in Rome to implement decisions of world assemblies and support the ongoing work of ExCo and the life of the CLC global community generally. Its work has been recognized by successive world assemblies as valuable and needed. The Executive Secretary, who is responsible for the Secretariat and is the legal representative of CLC, changes approximately every five years. CLC is responsible for providing decent accommodation for him/her/them and family. So the objective is to purchase a standard apartment of modest proportions for a family of four or five members, not too far from CLC office (at Jesuit Curia) in Rome.

Positive effects

Instead of paying rent and trying to cover this cost through our annual operational budget, CLC (in many ways) will be free of this item and able to focus more directly on apostolic works. In this way, our general activities and financial efforts can be better directed at supporting projects at different levels, be they local, national, international.

Significant *positive effects of this are as follows:*

- We reduce, immediately, the annual operational budget
- We increase, immediately, our assets by a very significant percentage
- Over time, the asset will continue to appreciate to CLC’s long-term advantage
- Donors and communities who collaborate in this project will feel very much a part of the CLC World Community - immediately. This project, and the type of financial co-responsibility and solidarity it represents, is an opportunity for us all to reach out to our fellow CLC members around the world. It will help us all feel and understand that CLC is a truly world community. This project and its long-term results will only be possible through our collective shared and direct involvement
- We are further freed up for concentration on apostolic works.

The fundraising campaign

Various possibilities were considered to raise the necessary funds, including securing a mortgage. But finally the decision was made to purchase it directly by cash. Our knowledge of CLC worldwide suggests that, as global body with 25,000 members around the world, CLC has sufficient resources. From our further research and consultation, a campaign to get the full amount of money needed seems feasible. In fact, some donations, near 15% of total target, are already coming in. This project is an effort to be undertaken only once but our CLC Community will feel its effects in many ways, immediately and in the long-term.

³ At this point, May 2011, we have already obtained 50 pledges of individuals and communities to donate €1,000. It is 15% of the total target and a very promising sign of success. Initially, it was projected that at least €400,000 would be needed according to Roman market (and this was just the value of the property). We subsequently received a very good proposal of €330,000 including legal and other expenses.

Should the response to our campaign to raise funds for this project achieve a little more than we expect (say, about 10%), we would normally redirect such monies to our other works eg apostolic projects, advocacy and/or formation. Alternatively, we would of course redirect any surplus funds (beyond the 10%) or return them, as specified by the donor - should that specifically be requested.

ExCo now launches this campaign and asks for donations from both individual members and national communities. The deadline to receive pledges of donations is December 2011 and, to receive the actual financial transfers March 2012. At the end of the campaign, a plate with the list of donors and acknowledging wider community support will be placed in this property of W CLC.

We thank you in anticipation for your involvement in this significant CLC project and ask your ongoing prayers and support generally for its success.

Franklin Ibáñez
Executive Secretary

Daniela Frank
President

Chris Micallef
Vice-President