

CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES HOLD 2013
ATLANTIC REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

*“ First born of Mary, provocative preacher, itinerant preacher, outsider’s choice,
Jesus inspires and disarms and confuses whoever he chooses to hear his voice.”*

John L. Bell

This was the song led by Hilary Branch and sung at the 8th Atlantic Regional Assembly of the 13 CLCs in NS, NB and PE. With 59 attending at the Villa Madonna Retreat House in Rothesay, NB, the Assembly theme, *“Crossing the Bridge (from our past to the present): Carrying the Torch on Mission With Christ”*, the members continued in their year long discernment for a Regional Mission.

Christian Life Communities (CLCs) are groups of 6-10 Christians who share their faith stories and practice contemplative living by developing a personal relationship with the Trinity through daily prayer with scripture and striving to live each day with the eyes, ears and heart of Jesus in all their encounters... in their work and play... with creation, family and neighbours. CLC’ers practice the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in collaboration with Jesuits throughout the world.

Each Christian is responsible for continuing Christ’s mission and each is given the graces necessary for their ministry - whether in family, community, country or world. Besides individual missions, each of the three Regions in Canada (Atlantic, Central and Rockies) prays and discerns what the will of God is for their ‘corporate’ mission in their area.

Welcomed by Yves Daigle, Atlantic Regional Coordinator and Geraldine Tingley, Atlantic Representative to National CLC, members as well as guests were introduced including Bishop Robert Harris of the Diocese of Saint John; Fr. Charles Pottie, SJ, of Calgary, Ecclesial Assistant to National CLC; Fr. Earl Smith, SJ, of Halifax, Ecclesial Assistant to the Atlantic Region CLC; Mary Balfe of Manitoulin Island, ON, National CLC President; and Dominique Cyr of CVX (French Canada) from St. Jerome in the province of Quebec.

Through the 7 sessions on the weekend of August 23-25, 2013, Atlantic CLCers celebrated who they were with one person from each of the CLCs carrying a torch (candle) over a bridge to place in the environment. The Atlantic graced history of past assemblies was presented by slide presentation prepared by Peter Chouinard. The next session invited participants to go on an actual ‘Emmaus’ walk in pairs to tell our witnessing stories of *“what we have done and what we are doing for Christ”*.

Gathering together in a large group, regional mission priority stories on Poverty, Evangelization and CLC Development were presented by three CLCs. The seventh session began the communal discernment toward an Atlantic Common Mission on one of these named areas.

The preparation for the 2013 Atlantic Regional CLC Assembly made evident *“the beauty of collaborative ministry and blessedness of communal discernment”* (Jane Abernethy-Parker).

Thanks and gratitude go to organizers Pam and Yves Daigle, Betty Poley, Margaret Melanson, Leah Michaud, Jane Abernethy-Parker, Bob and Dorie McDermott and Geraldine Tingly for creating the preparatory and prayer materials, agenda, and the process to work toward a common mission and to the NB CLCs for hosting the Assembly. A special prayer of thanks to Terri Chouinard who inspired the very moving St. Ignatius ‘mime’ for the Saturday prayer ritual before she succumbed to cancer on February 17, 2013.

Were not hearts on fire, “enflamed’ with God’s love during this Assembly! *“I am aware that as Ignatian spirituality permeates our communities, we are given powerful tools to help us move in the world in concrete ways to affect those we encounter”*. (François Thebeau) *“It was a wonderful grace-filled time to reflect, ponder, and bask on the love of the Trinity and the legacy of St. Ignatius as we journey in Jesus in our daily lives.”* (Graydon Nicholas) *“Over three assemblies I have seen a greater ability to use the tools of CLC toward discerning a mission - which is the CLC way. I saw a deepening growth of Regional Community. I will bring your understanding of the process, the stories of communities who shared their missions, and Yves’ CLC development guidelines back to my community of CVX Canada.”* Dominique Cyr). *“A very grace-filled, enriching and informative weekend; another wonderful opportunity to bond with other community members; great teaching moments as we listened deeply and experienced more of our discerning way as CLCers.”* (Sandy Mudge)

The Assembly closed with the celebration of Mass with Bishop Harris, Fr. Charles Pottie and Fr. Earl Smith con-celebrants. Members then renewed their commitment to living the CLC way of life with Yves Daigle and Fr. Earl leading the *Prayer of Commitment*.