

ATLANTIC REGIONAL CLC MEETING
SUMMERSIDE PEI – OCTOBER 24-25, 2014
A REFLECTION

This past weekend I attended the **Atlantic Regional CLC Meeting** held in Summerside, PEI. Though I do not presently belong to a CLC these meetings are special to me because, by attending these Regional Meetings, I am able to reconnect with so many of my CLC friends – for me, it is like “going-home”.

But this weekend held a special opportunity for all of us.

Following an “at home” preparatory prayer and reflection using materials from EXCO I arrived in Summerside prayerfully prepared to continue “with an open heart” the Regional Common Mission Process that began at the 2013 Atlantic Regional Assembly where “a consensus was not reached due to a lack of time”.

As we gathered in the Meeting Room I saw two circles of chairs. We were informed the center circle was for the delegates chosen by their communities to “become the Regional discerning body” for our Regional Common Mission Process. The other circle was for the rest of us who would remain silent throughout this process. It consisted of other members from the represented communities and non-communities (like myself) lovingly referred to as a “non-com”. Our new Ecclesial Assistant, Fr. Trevor, was on hand to act as Process Guide.

Before we began, Pam reviewed the Forms of Consensus and Julia, our Process Facilitator, assisted the group through this Discernment Process. It was exciting to be there – to witness what was about to unfold. From the beginning, there was no doubt the Spirit was at work; even, at times, “playing with us” as the day progressed.

It is not my intention here to restate the Process but to share my observations and inner movements of the Spirit.

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

(2 Corinthians 3:17)

At the beginning, I mentioned I was part of the “outside circle”, but in no way did I feel like an outsider. Having prayerfully prepared for this day with the same material as the delegates and their communities, I discovered within myself that I was a “silent participant” spiritually free to pray along with the delegates and to offer to God what was happening in my prayer/reflections. More than once my heart leapt as I heard the delegates sharing their prayers/reflections and found them mirrored within my own prayers. Probably much like the way Elizabeth felt when John leapt within her womb acknowledging Christ present.

***“May God enlighten the eyes of your mind
so that you can see what hope God’s call holds for you....”***

(Ephesians 1:18)

And as the process unfolded, this is what happened. With prayerful listening and openness to the guidance of the Spirit, a consensus began to unfold before us as a “textbook” experience of discerning a common mission.

With two rounds completed but before beginning the final round, we were asked to reflect on two questions: “What is clearer to us now?” and “What truths are we asked to face as we continue on our journey?”

What was clear to me was the truth of Christ’s words “I am with you”.

There was a long reflective pause and the consensus was taken. Everyone was listening; marks were being made on the flip-chart and then a loud applause. A “Unanimous Consensus” was reached.

The Common Mission Statement was, as I recall:

**As the Atlantic Region, we are called
to place our gifts at the service of the poor
assisted by on-going CLC development
for this mission.**

Truly, the greatest gift of grace given was the gift of “**Spiritual Freedom**” which allowed each delegate to stay true to their own awareness of the inner movements of the Spirit within them throughout the process – and so deep and respectful was the listening to one another, that it could be “heard” in the outside circle.

This led to my deepening awareness of what was actually taking place: God enlightening our minds so that we could “see” what hope God’s call holds for the Atlantic Regional CLC and to bring the deeper awareness that “we have only just begun” which was echoed in the words: “EXCO has their work cut out for them.”

So, in gratitude for this experience, I am

Gratefully yours,
Judy Hanshaw