



# Newsletter – September 2019

## Spiritually said ...

*“Set out on your journey without preconceived ideas and without anticipated weariness, without a plan for God, or even a memory of him; leave without enthusiasm, without a library as you go to meet him*

*Set out without a road map to discover him, knowing that the way is sure and has no ending. Don't try to find him through new techniques but let yourself be formed by him in the poverty of a banal life.”*

(Madeleine Delbr el)

## News from CLC in Europe and Euroteam

### Thanks to the former Euroteam

A great thanks to the former Euroteam: **Luisa Bonetti, Claudine Drochon, Ann Siew, Bianka Speidl and Fr. Vince Magri SJ!** During their mandate (2014-2019) they took on the work following the Lebanon Assembly's recommendations to go to the frontiers, focussing especially on migrants by starting the ATF (At the Frontiers) ` project with migrants in Italy, as well as on young adults by initiating a young adults ` formation week in Malta in 2017. They also participated in a great number of national gatherings, met many national ExCos, created a new website and started a very fruitful cooperation with Nikolaas Sintobin SJ.

### Introduction of the new Euroteam

We were happy to have 9 candidates from different countries, all willing to offer their time, energy and prayer to our community and serve in the Euroteam. So it was a difficult decision for the delegations to make. On Pentecost Sunday the Assembly elected the new Euroteam, which consists of the following members:



- ✚ **Angelika Scholz** (coordinator): CLC Germany, 51 years old, high-school-teacher (French and religious education)
- ✚ **Jean-Beno t Hoet**: CLC-CVX Belgium, 51 years old, Head of an Emergency Food Aid Centre in an NGO working against poverty
- ✚ **Kasia Artemiuk**: CLC Poland, 44 years old, education consultant, teacher of English and intercultural trainer (freelance)
- ✚ **Chris Micallef**: CLC Malta, 52 years old, Head of Information Systems

## **European Assembly in Vilnius: “CLC as an Experience of Discernment. Five years of journeying with the Young” (7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2019)**

### ***Training on Indifference***

Father Nikolaas Sintobin SJ delivered training on discernment. He also introduced us into youtube meditations, which he used during the sessions. The meditations were based on short, inspiring youtube videos or animations that were inviting us to reflect and share our inner experiences. The videos can be found on the website Seeing More: [www.seeing-more.org](http://www.seeing-more.org)

### ***CLC Syria***

We were very grateful to have Abed Alrayess from CLC Syria among us in Vilnius. He was a delegate to the World Assembly in Buenos Aires but couldn't be there because his visa was delayed. Abed shared with us some really moving stories of how the Holy Spirit is fully alive and active in CLC Syria, amidst the crisis and destruction caused by different powers fighting for domination in the country. The CLC members in Syria organize spiritual retreats for university students, taking on an interreligious dimension as they welcome Muslims who want to participate. Another mission that is led by young adults is called 'Harmony', which is the name of a house for displaying, practicing and teaching art. They also run a little café for friends' meetings and a reading room. And the last story shared by Abed was about a mission that aims at giving comfort and a sense of community to elderly people in Aleppo, especially those who are left alone.

If you or your community would like to support the activities of CLC Syria you can contact Abed via email: [abedalrayess@gmail.com](mailto:abedalrayess@gmail.com)

### ***Migration Network***

Ulrich Treipl from Austria shared a presentation on migration. He focussed less on the work of the migration network but more on migration as a topic which concerns each of us – also present in the history of our families and even in a more abstract form: as an escape from reality, from our sufferings and vulnerabilities, in our self-defiance. More information about the migration network can be found here: <https://www.clc-europeanmigrationnetwork.com/?lang=de>

### ***Final Document***

We are preparing a short final document from the Assembly, which you'll receive in the autumn.



## Photos from Vilnius



## Press release on the situation in the Mediterranean

The EuroTeam has been monitoring and discerning the very sad and serious situation of mass loss of life and the risk of even more loss of life in the Mediterranean. Following on from our Assembly we felt that we could not sit back and watch. As Pope Francis exclaimed in Lampedusa a few years ago, “where is your brother?”

So we published a brief press release on our facebook page and website and we also sent it to all the national communities. Many communities have already translated it in their language and posted it on the national websites.

You can find the entire text on page 9.

We pray that the MCT and the ATF teams continue to work and propose workable human and economic solutions that we (as a discerning social voice in Europe) can propose to our national governments.

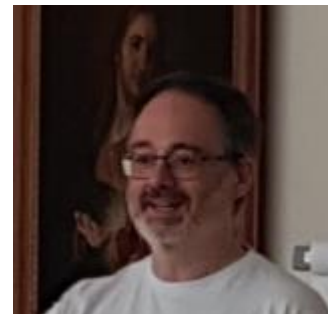
## Some words from the world ExCo ...

### To be decisive or not to be

*Fernando Vidal*

*Eurolink in the World ExCo*

The Vilnius Assembly happened in a wounded Europe by the post-Truth, the xenophobia, the particularism and the separatism. CLC opened a tent in Vilnius looking for answers for a universalist, creative, wise and spiritual Europe. We received the message of the Buenos Aires Experience: the key is to promote and share processes of discernment in every concrete place we are. We enjoyed several spiritual conversations with people around Europe –included Syria and Egypt. We identified several crucial fields for the future of Europe: Youth, Migrations, Families, Spiritual development, Politics...



In any of them we are called to be decisive. The Ignatian Spirituality invite us to be decisive in any place and moment of the world: to give our best, to move things to God. It is not a call for “activism”. Sometimes, to be decisive is to contemplate the Beauty of the core of a problem, or to enjoy deeply a joy. To be decisive is to connect our life with the greatest Hope (the actual world with the Eschatology).

If you are serving in an accompaniment: be decisive. Look for a question, a word, a gesture to open a straighter path to God. If you are father or mother: be decisive for your children. If you are in the border of Africa among immigrants, be decisive. If you are with a younger who is searching the core of the life, be decisive. If you are listening a spiritual conversation in your CLC group, be decisive.

To be decisive requires to take decisions. Obvious, but... Sometimes we are happy because we discern, but frequently we forget at the end to take decisions. In CLC our main decision is to be decisive. The problem is not where, the trick is how. Our main Ignatian decision is to give our best to the most needy people or to the deepest need. In Vilnius we were looking for the main fields. We were very near of taking the crucial decisions. The main decision in CLC is to give ourselves, our own best gift to the world: the communal spiritual discernment. The world is thirsty of wisdom and paths to God –to the Truth, The Goodness, the Beauty.

In Vilnius I were awareness about one principle. In CLC, we have our Hamletian “to be or not to be”: to be decisive or not to be.

## And the National communities...

### Special Encounters At the Frontiers

At the Frontiers is an international volunteer programme established by CLC Europe in 2015. This summer ATF brings committed volunteers to reception centres for asylum seekers and refugees in Italy for the fifth time already. The shifts are taking place in Ragusa, Turin, and Reggio Calabria in July and August. The participants come from France, Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Hungary, Belgium and Bangladesh. ATF is more than “just” a volunteer programme. It is a chance to be with the refugees and foster our spiritual growth as we stand firmly by their side. Follow our Facebook page for more insights on ATF Summer 2019: <https://www.facebook.com/ATHEFRONTIERS/>



### D-A-CH – Holidays on the Lake Constance



From 20th to 23rd of June, 25 CLC members from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Syria spent a long weekend at Lake Constance – with sightseeing, sharing, prayer time, Eucharist and – of course – a feast with some CLC members living in the area as guests.

### International Hiking retreat in Biviers/ France

During the week of 30 June to 7 July, when the Alps are at their best and their fields are filled with flowers, 8 CLC members hiked and prayed in the mountains surrounding the CLC Spiritual Centre of St Hugues in Biviers (France). With the theme ‘walking with Christ’, we discovered how we gradually became a community with Christ in our midst. We started the mornings reading psalms; walked in beautiful environments naturally inspiring to contemplation, such as the woods surrounding the Chartreuse; presented each other with the delicacies from our countries; and learned from each other how and where to find God (Marielle Matthée, CLC Netherlands)



## Spiritual Days in Lebanon - an encounter between European and Arab Christians

The GCL Lebanon invited us to spend 12 days with them in August. At the beginning (the first 4 days) we went to Beirut and made trips to some interesting places such as Biblos, Baalbek, Sidon, places of pilgrimage and churches.



Different Christian denominations like Maronites, Druze and Orthodox live next to each other in Lebanon, as well as different Muslim groups like Shiites, Sunites and Alewites. Thus one experiences the country, although Arabic speaking, not as predominantly Muslim but diverse and open.

I found it remarkable that there is a common holiday for Muslims and Christians in Lebanon, which is probably unique in the world. The two religions celebrate Mary's Assumption, because Mary is also worshipped by some Muslim groups.

After the first days, which were mainly touristic, we spent 6 more days in the mountains hiking and praying. During one of our walks we had a surprising encounter with a hermit, who with a smile answered our question about the way to find inner peace: through a simple life. Then I spent 5 days meditating what 'simple' means to me. The hermit also said that we should do everything we do with love. We experienced this attitude while being hosted by the members of CLC Lebanon, who took care of our food and the whole stay, so it was difficult for us to say goodbye at the end.

(Ingrid Jutz, CLC Germany)



## Holidays in Sweden (CLC Sweden and CLC Germany)

About 50 CLC-members from Sweden and Germany met for a week in ÅH STIFTS- OCH KONFERENSGÅRD 60 km north of Gothenburg on the Swedish coast.

The programme was a good combination of sharing about CLC-experiences and -identity, enjoying Swedish nature (especially water), singing, praying, group meetings and more.

The background for having this encounter is the desire of the Swedish CLC to become accepted as a new national community by the next World Assembly, and Germany godparenting.

(Bernhard Zaunseder, Barbara Mende, CLC Germany)



### Meeting of presidents (CLC Poland/ CLC Lithuania)

At the end of August a short meeting of CLC Presidents of Lithuania and Poland took place in Vilnius. The exchange of experiences from the period after the World Assembly resulted in the desire for a community meeting bringing the two national communities together. We hope to realize this dream in the next 2 years.



(Marta Lewandowska-Harasimowicz, CLC Poland)

### You are invited! (sessions, international retreats, gatherings)

#### Scratch Card – Poland

The Lenten Scratch Card is an international event of the Christian Life Community in Poland which is organized since 2015. Every year on Ash Wednesday, hundreds of thousands of people in Poland and abroad receive the Scratch Card from friends, priests or animators.

Our action is aiming at leading participants to more integrity in their lives, as well as in their relationship with God, other people and with themselves. The innovative form of the Lenten Scratch Card helps in the regular practice of different spiritual tasks. It is a colorful card that hides 40 tasks - one for each day of Lent. The tasks include suggestions of prayers, meetings, reflections and inspiring activities that can be followed by people of all ages.

The Lenten Scratch Card can be a great form of Easter preparation for communities, parishes, families and individuals from various walks of life.

So far almost one million people in Poland, China and Taiwan have discovered these exciting tasks for spirit and body. We want the Lenten Scratch Card to be available all over the world by 2025. Let's do the second international Lenten Scratch Card together!

For more information about the global campaign and ways to introduce the international edition of the Lenten Scratch Card in your country, please visit the website:

<http://wzch.org.pl/ogini>

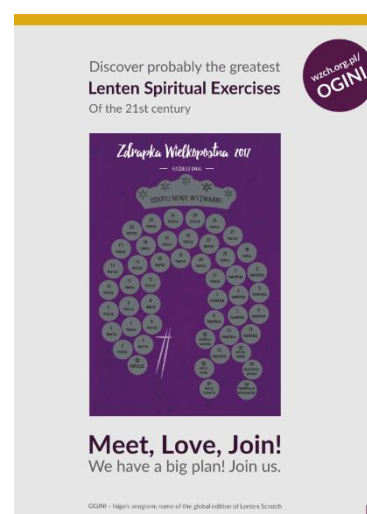
We will be glad to answer all your questions. About this year's international edition of the Scratch Card please contact us until 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

Coordinator / CLC Member in Poland

Wojciech Koczorowski

Tel: +48501199957

Email: [editors@zdrapkawielkopostna.pl](mailto:editors@zdrapkawielkopostna.pl)



#### Université d'été – France

CLC France organizes a « Summer University” about migration on several dates and in different places in the summer and autumn. An online retreat already started in June.

If you are interested, you can find further information on <https://ue2019.cvxe.fr/>

## For further information

### Newsletter

We will try to send you this newsletter more or less regularly in order to provide information about the work of the Euroteam and CLC communities. These newsletters offer the possibility to share events between national communities. So please send us the information you want to share.

### CLC-CVX in Europe homepage

We are currently having some problems with our homepage – it has to be rebuilt. So don't wonder if there are no updates. But we try to post regularly on Facebook (Christian Life Community in Europe). Please don't hesitate to send us links and other information you want to share.

### Contact details

If you want to contact us, you can use the following email addresses:

- ✚ The Euroteam: [et@clc-cvx.eu](mailto:et@clc-cvx.eu)
- ✚ Kasia: [kasia@clc-cvx.eu](mailto:kasia@clc-cvx.eu)
- ✚ Jean-Benoît: [jean-benoit@clc-cvx.eu](mailto:jean-benoit@clc-cvx.eu) or [jb@clc-cvx.eu](mailto:jb@clc-cvx.eu)
- ✚ Chris: [chris@clc-cvx.eu](mailto:chris@clc-cvx.eu)
- ✚ Angelika: [angelika@clc-cvx.eu](mailto:angelika@clc-cvx.eu)

## The Euroteam

Angelika

Kasia

Jean-Benoît

Chris

## Group photo – Vilnius





## **Press Release to all National Press Offices**

24 August, 2019

We, the members of the Christian Life Community in Europe express our solidarity and closeness to all the people trapped in the current ordeal taking place on our southern borders of Italy, Spain and Malta. We also want to thank the governments of the European states that have agreed to welcome the refugees on the Ocean Viking and hope for another safe ending to the refugees of the vessel Open Arms. As human beings we need to do all that is necessary to preserve and protect life. As Christians we are also convinced of the uniqueness and value of each human being.

We cannot agree with the current political discourse that mixes political rhetoric and political gain with the value of human life. In the situation when life is in danger we are deeply worried about the fact that the world's more powerful nations, including the three concerned nations of Italy, Malta and Spain are not willing to assume their civil responsibilities. We need to come up with economic policies that put the wellbeing of all people first rather than exploit other nations' wealth, which causes people to undertake very dangerous travels in order to seek a better future. Every nation has a responsibility for each other, no nation is an island. As a rich continent we cannot close our eyes towards human suffering at our borders.

Human life is precious and needs to be protected. No one, no matter how powerful, has the right to decide whether someone can die or live. Our governments need to be held responsible for the mass loss of life taking place in the Mediterranean. All life is equally important!

We call upon the governments of Europe to work together for the common good and the protection of all the people currently stranded in North African countries where they are being exploited and seeking to make the dangerous sea crossing. Let us work together as nations of Europe to improve the dignity of human life and our common home.

### **The CLC Euroteam**

**Angelika Scholz**

**Jean-Benoît Hoet**

**Katarzyna Artemiuk**

**Chris Micallef**