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A WORLD COMMUNITY

AT THE SERVICE OF ONE WORLD

Allocution of Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ
at the General Assembly of the CLC'S
Villa Cavalletti, 13 Sept. 1979.

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At this Assembly, I understand you are discussing whether or not you are being called to form a world community at the service of one world. This is a theme that has an immediate appeal to me - it is an area of concern that I, too, share.

I am most heartened by such a world vision, which is characteristic of large hearted people, who have well understood the universality of to-day's problems, and the need to reach solutions which are truly universal. For this reason you are aspiring towards a world community.

I am also heartened to see that it is through service that you want to be present among all the peoples of the world. Such an attitude is truly consistent with the essence of the CLC, and so I find it most appropriate that you have focused on this theme.

As a matter of fact, it is "service" - more precisely, "the greater service" which is the basic, underlying concept of the CLC's. When in 1967, the Holy See was asked to approve the transformation of the Marian Congregations into the Christian Life Communities, and approval was also sought for the General Principles which replaced the Common Rules of 1910, the very reasons behind these requests were - "the better service" of the Church, and renewal according to the spirit and norms of Vatican II. The changes asked for would also allow members of the new Communities "to consecrate themselves with greater simplicity and efficacy to the service of God and of men in the world of to-day." (Letter of Confirmation of Cardinal Cicognani, March 25th, 1968) The Church judged that this aspiration was sincere and realistic; she gave her approval.

Both the spirit and the letter of your General Principles confirm this very point - that the CLC's are the institutionalization of a vocation of service. As is stated in the Preamble, the General Principles are meant to help (the members of the CLC's) "to give themselves always more generously to God in loving and serving all mankind in the world of today." (G.P., no.1)

The generosity of this self-giving and the constant pull of the "magis" are clearly two features of Ignatian origin. There is nothing strange in this, for you expressly recognise the Exercises of St. Ignatius "as a specific source and the characteristic instrument of our spirituality." (G.P., no.4)

All of this encourages me to share with you some reflections on service according to the mind of St. Ignatius, together with some comments of my own.

Service - constant Ignatian ideal

a) the Man of Honour

From his earliest years, the idea of service came as naturally to Ignatius as the air we breathe. Everything he saw in the ancestral home of Casa-Torre spoke to him of service - the pursuits of his brothers, his family traditions, the service of "serfdom" given by the peasants as they worked and tilled the fields, the service of "loyal servants" rendered by members of his own family to their far-away Lord, whom one helped in time of war and who rewarded this faithful service in time of peace.

When he was barely 15, Ignatius entered the service of an important member of the court, the royal treasurer, and followed him for 10 years. At his death, Ignatius passed into the service of the Duke of Najera, Virrey de Navarre, and from there he moved into the royal service, until, 4 years later, he fell wounded on the walls of Pamplona.

As a result of his own experiences, Ignatius' concept of service was a knightly one that included honour, fidelity, courage and the desire for glory. The books of knight-errantry which he enjoyed reading were the embodiment of such ideals.

In the course of his convalescence, when he thought of a certain lady, "who had taken such a hold on his heart" (Autobiography, 6), his love still expresses itself in terms of service: "...he imagined what he would do in the service of a certain lady...the verses, the words he would say to her, the deeds of arms he would do in her service". (Autobiography, 6) For Ignatius, to love was to serve.

b) Ignatius' Conversion

Ignatius' conversion led him, not to give up the ideal of service, but to find a new "Lord". During the first phase of his conversion, he had in mind to serve the Lord in a way that was still rather worldly - not to say belligerent and competitive! - "St. Francis did this, therefore I have to do it." (Autobiography, 7) It is only later, through a graced masterpiece of introspection and discernment, that he takes apart and analyses all the different elements that have combined to form his ideal. Ignatius purifies his idea of service and then proceeds to build his whole spirituality on the foundation of this purified concept - which becomes the first principle and foundation of the Exercises: "Man is created to praise, reverence and serve God our Lord." (S.E., no.23)

For Ignatius, service of the Creator is axiomatic - there is simply no call to justify or prove it. It is the natural condition of "the creature": he is created "for", that is to say, for a purpose which binds him to the One who gives him his very existence.

Two elements of service progressively develop in the dynamic of the Exercises: service in love (the final contemplation in the Exercises is precisely aimed at seeking His love), and the person one serves out of love - God, the Divine Majesty, the Three Divine Persons, Christ in His Incarnation, in His life, His Passion, and in the glory of His Resurrection.

All the Exercises will be based on the concept of service - in one way or another, the words "service", or "to serve" will appear 50 times. Even Christ's relationship to the Father is seen as one of service. (S.E., no.135)

For Ignatius, the service of God is the criteria for discernment in the ordering of one's life: "...the reason he (the retreatant) wants or retains anything will be solely the service, honour and glory of the Divine Majesty." (S.E., no.16) Service is an unconditional attitude: "(the retreatant should) enter upon the Exercises with magnanimity and generosity toward his Creator and Lord, and offer Him his entire will and liberty, that his Divine Majesty may dispose of him and all he possesses according to His most holy will." (S.E., no.5) This service of God disposes the retreatant "for the way in which he can better serve God in the future." (S.E., no.15)

However, the ideal of service is most fully and clearly expressed in the centre point of the Exercises - the Call of the Earthly King, the introduction to the consideration of different states of life, the Two Standards. Ignatius' best memories of his knightly ideas are recalled here: "If anyone would refuse the invitation of such a king, how justly he would deserve to be condemned by the whole world and looked upon as an ignoble knight." (S.E., no.94) And he continues: "those who wish to give greater proof of their love, and to distinguish themselves in whatever concerns the service of the Eternal King and Lord of All" will want to imitate Christ humble and poor, for his "greater service and praise." (S.E., no.97)

The last part of the Exercises closes with the idea of service, but with a certain tone that is quite different from the First Principle and Foundation, where the word "love" is not mentioned: "The zealous service of God our Lord out of pure love should be esteemed above all." (S.E., no.370)

c) Ignatius - the Founder

St. Ignatius is not only the author of the Exercises - he is, first and foremost, THE exercitant. He left Manresa, having decided "to distinguish himself in whatever concerns the service of the Eternal King and Lord of all." (S.E., no.97) The ideal of the service of God - the greater service - will be the star that guides his steps for the rest of his life, as pilgrim, student, Founder and General of the Society of Jesus. The one-time man of honour, whose ideal was to serve in chivalrous enterprises of love and war, had learnt that God had to be served in another way: through imitating the life and works of the apostles, in preaching the Kingdom in poverty and humility. Because apostolic service requires a knowledge of doctrine, he becomes a student. Because the apostolic service of one's neighbour only reaches its fullness in bringing to him the grace of the Sacraments, he becomes a priest. (FN III/816)

He lived his ideal with so much purity and intensity that it could not fail to become contagious. One after another, followers begin to join Ignatius. On the 15th of August, 1534, at Montmartre, Ignatius and his companions, in what could be called a foreshadowing of the founding of the Society of Jesus, take a vow that contains a double clause of service: To go to Jerusalem "to spend their lives there in the service of souls," or, if this could not be accomplished in

the course of a year, to "present themselves to the Vicar of Christ, so that he could make use of them wherever he thought it would be to the greater glory of God and the service of souls." (Autobiography, 85).

The very words and ideas expressed here could not be more Ignatian. Since, in the course of that year, there was no ship leaving Venice for the Holy Land, and since the "papal clause" in the vows at Montmartre offered an alternative, we can see Providence opening up a way for Ignatius to follow, which leads to the birth of the Society. The essential elements of this "papal clause" are: to spend one's life in what is for the greater glory of God and for the good of souls, under the Vicar of Christ. In a word - service.

In 1537 Ignatius goes to Rome with Favre and Lainez to fulfill their promise. There a crucial event takes place. Ignatius has a vision in the little chapel of La Storta - located some 16 kilometers from Rome, in the Via Cassia, the only road, at that time, which led to Rome from the north.

Ignatius had been ordained three months previously, but he had not yet celebrated the Eucharist, as he wished to prepare himself thoroughly for his first Mass. And by way of preparing himself - in the depths of his own heart - he had prayed to the Virgin Mary that she would "place him with her Son." In this extraordinary mystical event at La Storta, Ignatius "experienced such a change in his soul, and he saw so clearly that God the Father had placed him with His Son Christ that his mind could not doubt (it)." The Father turns to the Son who stands at his side with the cross over his shoulder, and tells him, pointing to Ignatius: "I want you to take this man as your servant." Jesus then turns to Ignatius and says: "I want you to serve us."

For Ignatius, this moment marks a turning point in his spiritual odyssey; it permeates the rest of his life, when later he becomes the founder of the Society of Jesus. For this experience underlines service as a determining factor in Ignatius' relationship with the Divine Persons: the Father assigns him to be the servant of His Son; the Son accepts him into his own service, and into the service of the Father. This is the climax of a process which had begun 31 years before, in 1506, when the 15 years old Inigo had entered into the service of his earthly lord. And so no wonder that Ignatius now considers himself as a man of divine service, or, more precisely, of "greater divine service."

Henceforth, Ignatius institutionalises his charism and shares it with the group he has gathered around himself, so that the group becomes even more united. Inspired by the vision at La Storta, he calls himself and his companions "the Company of Jesus", which carries clear overtones of militant service. The Formula for the Society of Jesus (in the Bull "Exposcit debitum" of Julius III) begins in such a way as to make the mind of Ignatius and companions abundantly clear: "Whoever desires to serve as a soldier of God beneath the banner of the cross in our Society, which we desire to be designated by the name of Jesus, and to serve the Lord alone and the Church, His Spouse, under the Roman Pontiff, the vicar of Christ on earth..."

The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus are filled with references and specific exhortations to the divine service; I shall not pause here to quote the relevant passages. What I have already said should sufficiently clarify how central the

idea of service - the theme chosen for this Assembly - is in Ignatian spirituality, the very spirituality which inspires you, according to your General Principles.

II. Christian Life Community - One Community for Service

We might say that the basic connection between the CLC and the Society of Jesus is found here - in the common inspiration that derives from the Spiritual Exercises, and in the communion of a shared spirituality. All other considerations run along divergent lines. Along one line, this Ignatian spirituality, with its own proper character, gives birth to the Society of Jesus as a religious, apostolic and priestly order, closely linked with the Vicar of Christ, by special bonds.

Along another line, this same Ignatian spirituality has inspired your own movement, which is not any less valuable than, but simply different from a religious order - because you have a different concrete apostolic orientation. The CLC is essentially a spiritual movement for lay people - with its limitations, certainly, but also with its unique apostolic opportunities.

Furthermore, only a fraction of the CLC's are established in Jesuit centres, or assisted by Jesuits. Theoretically, the CLC's allow for (and indeed do admit) the creation of groups totally free from direct contact with the Society of Jesus. Of course, such groups will hold the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius as a specific source and characteristic instrument of their spirituality. (G.P. 4) Consequently, your spirituality and your apostolic life should make full use of all the opportunities offered by your situation as lay people - given that such possibilities would be less fitting, or clearly inappropriate, for religious. Likewise, you should be careful not to adopt lines of action that are more properly clerical, or religious - for this would surely limit your own range of apostolic initiatives.

In mentioning this danger to you, I have in mind the kind of service which, according to your own General Principles, you should render to the Church and to all peoples to-day. This, certainly, is a grave responsibility you undertake - to "form committed men and women, adults and youth, for service to the Church and the world in every area of life: family, professional, civic, ecclesial..." (G.P. 3) Those last 4 words were chosen, I am sure, with great care; they cover the 4 fundamental areas of human life.

Your work is to bring to birth, within the framework of your daily environment, "human life in all its dimensions with the fullness of Christian faith, especially among those concerned with temporal affairs." (G.P. 3) For in this way you are responding to "the call of Christ from within the world in which we live". (G.P. 3) And in this way, too, you are with Christ seeking "constantly the answers to the needs of our times and to work together with the people of God for progress and peace, justice and charity, liberty and the dignity of all men." (G.P. 2) These words entail a specific program: "We are aware we must consecrate ourselves first of all, to the renewal and sanctification of the temporal order." (G.P. 7) This, then, is your service to the world - a thorough, intelligent, unremitting lay apostolate, which most surely presupposes an interior life no less intense,

intelligent and constant. But the theme you have chosen for your General Assembly leads me specifically to focus on the apostolic orientation of your groups - at the service of all peoples, in the world of to-day.

a) A Contemporary Service

Your lay apostolate should be of a kind I dare call new. In 1967 when the Marian Congregations decided to 'take the leap' introducing changes, "some of which were fundamental," (Letter of Cardinal Cicognani, 25 March, 1968) to become the CLC's, they did so because they were conscious of the fact that a world with new needs should be approached also with new lines of action. The Second Vatican Council recently ended, itself offered a most brilliant example of the need and the possibility of such transformations.

And so the apostolic activity which formerly had been auxiliary to the priestly ministry (teaching catechism, formation activities, etc.) was directed - as provided for in the General Principles - towards a new service, the "renewal and sanctification of the temporal order...to work for the reform of the structures of society, participating in efforts to liberate the victims of all forms of discrimination and especially to abolish differences between rich and poor within the Church." (G.P. 7) Your purpose, according to your General Principles, is to work "in a spirit of service to establish justice and peace among all men." (G.P. 7)

Reading these lines, I almost get the impression of citing you the fourth decree of our 32nd General Congregation, written four years later, and which states that - "the mission of the Society of Jesus to-day is the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement. For reconciliation with God demands the reconciliation of people with one another." (G.C. 32; Decree 4, no. 2)

b) Along the Lines of the Council

The qualitative change in your apostolic orientation is no mere passing phase, much less the fruit of some particular individual's private intuition. On the contrary, it is exactly according to the mind of the Council.

Permit me to clarify this point somewhat. One of the principal graces the Lord gave to the Church, through the Second Vatican Council, was to highlight, in a new way, the importance of the lay person, and his or her role in the Church. The entire fourth chapter of the Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) is dedicated to the laity, and their participation in the saving mystery of the Church, in Christ's priestly and prophetic functions, and in his royal character. This section is entirely given over to a theology of the laity; through studying it at depth, you will gain even clearer insights into your own importance and responsibilities - in the Church.

But that is not all. One year later, in 1965, the Council prepared a decree dedicated exclusively to the apostolic activity of the laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* - a decree based on the theology of the laity. Both these documents I have referred to have inspired some of the most striking and courageous phrases in your General Principles. This is why your ongoing formation should

be centred round these texts, and why you should reflect on them over and over again, trusting that you will find there the most authentic expression of the hopes that the Church places in you. These documents will serve you as reference - points for the "revision of life" that you all practise, (G.P. 7) and also as a source of light for your future decisions.

Well then, the qualitative leap in your apostolic mission that I have already mentioned corresponds to one of the Council's directives, namely: "An apostolate of this kind does not consist only in the witness of one's way of life." (A.A.6) "The laity must take on the renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation. Led by the light of the gospel and the mind of the Church, and motivated by Christian love, let them act directly and definitively in the temporal sphere. As citizens they must cooperate with other citizens, using their own particular skills and acting on their own responsibility. Everywhere and in all things they must seek the justice characteristic of God's kingdom. The temporal order must be renewed in such a way that, without the slightest detriment to its own proper laws, it can be brought into conformity with the higher principles of the Christian life and adapted to the shifting circumstances of time, place, and person. Outstanding among the works of this type of apostolate is that of Christian social action. This sacred Synod desires to see it extended now to the whole temporal sphere, including culture." (A.A.7)

Your General Principles, elaborated two years later in 1967, include this directive of the Council: "We are aware we must consecrate ourselves first of all to the renewal and sanctification of the temporal order." (G.P. 7)

c) A Temptation

Perhaps some of you have an opposite temptation, and that would be very understandable. Tired of grappling with your daily professional and family life, haunted by a social environment which each day becomes more materialistic, selfish, sexually-oriented and corrupt, you may be tempted to consider the CLC's - of which you are a part - as an oasis of peace: a spiritual haven in which a person can rest, recover himself or herself, and become closer to God through the encouragement that flows from the community ideals of members of the group. This certainly is one aspect of the situation, but it is by no means the full picture - and there is no greater deceit than the deceit of half-truth. (As the famous English author, G.K. Chesterton, once said: "A half-truth, like a half-brick, travels twice the distance.") Such a limited view is alien to your General Principles; it parts from the vision the Council proposes about the role of the laity in the Church; and to diminish the Council's vision of the laity, in this way, would be to mutilate, or cripple, the Body of Christ. Why? Because there are things to be done which you alone - as laity - are able to accomplish. As I have mentioned previously, the lay person - through the very fact of being a lay person - has apostolic opportunities and possibilities that are lacking in the case of many other categories of persons in the Church, for instance, the hierarchy, priests and religious. Let us take an example - political action, on the party level. Some priests and religious who have great apostolic zeal and a clear insight into the problems of to-day, could fall into the temptation of using their civic rights to intervene in politics, for they believe, and not without

reason, that the establishing of peace and justice depends in a large part on political action. It is painful for the superiors of such religious to impose, for good reasons, limitations on their apostolic service. One of the reasons for imposing these restrictions is that it is your duty, as lay people and members of the secular city, to exercise fully your civil rights and carry out this kind of apostolic service. In this area, concrete action should be exclusively yours. The Church can, and must give - and in fact, it is providing - the doctrinal orientations and clarifications, as well as the kind of support that is compatible with its supernatural mission. But only that part of the Church to which you belong is able to assume this serious responsibility, within the very wide context of possible concrete options.

At this point I would like to stop to make special note of the four "areas of life" that are expressly mentioned in your General Principles: family, professional, civic, ecclesial. (G.P. 3)

d) The Family

The family is, so to speak, "the domestic Church", as the Council calls it (L.G. 11), and, by nature, it is the first area for your apostolic service. One should begin naturally with one's own family. When I say "family", I include all those issues that impinge on a family - marital life, abortion, divorce, education, freedom of education, premarital relations, the feminist movement, morality, drugs, housing, and so on. "Where Christianity pervades a whole way of (family) life and ever increasingly transforms it, there will exist both the practice and an excellent school for the lay apostolate." (L.G. 35)

Each member of a Christian Life Community has under his or her own roof the first and most immediate area for his or her apostolic service. The group to which a person belongs should be of assistance to him, just as he in turn should offer his help to the group. There are a thousand ways to offer one's help that only concrete circumstances can dictate.

But this is not enough. One must declare and promote Christian values outside of the family circle as well, by always avoiding ambivalence in announcing one's values, by refusing one's vote to those who pursue policies that are contrary to the family values proclaimed by the Church. Even more so, according to the possibilities of the individual, one should participate actively in movements that defend and promote such values.

This brings to mind a story from the rector of one of our schools, who told me that private education in his country was going through considerable difficulties - for example, in maintaining the explicit confessionality of the school. Throughout these difficulties, his principal support came from CLC members and from the teams of Our Lady for married couples - a movement similar to yours. Members of these groups stood for elections to the board of directors of the parents' association, and as a result of the elections, they occupied the most important seats of the board. This is a good example of one of the numerous possibilities available to you.

e) Professional Life

On 3 different occasions during the last 2 months, Pope John Paul II has spoken about the apostolate of the lay person, placing special emphasis on his or her profession. It is through our profession that we have the opportunity to accomplish something, and this develops our talents, our productive capacity, as well as forms a web of relationships in our lives. I realize that by their very nature, some professions have less apostolic opportunities than others. The housewife who spends her day busy with housework has fewer apostolic possibilities than a social worker. A university professor has generally more apostolic opportunities than a civil servant. However, no CLC member should ignore his duty, not only to live his work with a Christian attitude, but to bring a message, through his profession, to all those around him.

Pope Paul VI said that not only can one sanctify one's profession, but that the profession itself is a source of sanctification (Allocution to the Union of Catholic Jurists; 15th Dec., 1963). This mutual interaction is a very fruitful one.

Permit me to cite a concrete case: those who come from Italy know well the name of Giuseppe Moscati - a doctor, who carried out a marvellous apostolate both in academic circles and in the hospitals of Naples. He was beatified in 1975, just 40 years after his death, and Paul VI said in his homily on that occasion: "He was a layman, a simple Christian, who gave a mission to his life; a doctor who made his profession his apostolate, a school of love; a university professor who extended to his students and colleagues the high ideal - and example - of moral rectitude and total devotion to one's profession." (Homily on the Beatification of Giuseppe Moscati; 16th Nov., 1975)

This is certainly a famous example - from one man's professional apostolate - of that service we can render our brothers and sisters, through our occupation, so that our profession itself becomes an excellent means for apostolic service.

f) The Civic and Social Sector

"The apostolate of the social milieu, that is, the effort to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws and structures of the community in which a person lives, is so much the duty and responsibility of the laity that it can never be properly performed by others." (A.A. 13) These are peremptory words from the Council which do not allow for divergence or diminution. It is the lay person's responsibility to make sure that the temporal order is organised according to the Christian precepts of charity and justice. And there are so many things to be done!

- in the area of labour: unions, employment, assistance for workers;
- in the legal and structural order: justice, equality, freedom, participation, political parties;
- in the area of public service: housing, schooling, environment, health, the elderly, energy, public safety;
- in the national and international order: international relations, colonialism, independence, development, spheres of influence.

As you can see, our world is beset by many problems, and if we were to enumerate them all, our list would grow longer and longer. In all of this, there is a theoretical level on which the Church can shed the light of its doctrine. However, political action as such falls within the competence of the laity. (A.A. 13) Naturally, there has to be a sense of responsibility with regard to the means by which this apostolate is exercised by each individual, according to his own circumstances. But over and above that, there is a common avenue of service open to all - the promotion of the common good, special attention to the most needy and support for those in high office who can promote a more just order.

The Second Vatican Council encourages those who are properly qualified, to assume public offices. By doing this, such people can exercise influence in conformity with the spirit of the Gospel, and accomplish great good. I would say that in your CLC groups, where you have men and women inspired by faith and a spirit of service, there is a reservoir of people who, within their area of activity, however modest it might be, try to render this kind of service. You should not fail to become involved through apathy or fear of commitment.

In short, you cannot disappoint the hopes of the Church and of the world that await the apostolic help of those lay people who, through their Christian faith, are well qualified to serve. Listen to how Paul VI expressed it in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, of December 1975 (E.N.70): "Lay people, whose particular vocation places them in the midst of the world and in charge of the most varied temporal tasks, must for this very reason exercise a very special form of evangelisation...Their own field of evangelising activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media. It also includes other realities which are open to evangelisation, such as human love, the family, the education of children and adolescents, professional work, suffering."

Over the years I have had many experiences with members of the Society of Jesus, and other religious orders, which enable me to share this confidence with you: there is an appreciable lack of lay people who are prepared to commit themselves apostolically in those areas of life that I have been speaking about. This means there is a great imbalance between what actually is done and what is left to be done, and such a state of affairs constitutes a serious temptation for not a few priests, especially those who are zealous, extremely competent and see in a secular profession innumerable possibilities for evangelisation. Let us not make the mistake of having priests take on vocations that you can and should undertake. Are there few priests at the moment? If, as real apostles, your numbers increase, so will ours; and the better apostles you are, the better servants of the Word shall we priests be.

g) The Christian and Politics

I throw out an invitation to Christian lay people, to encourage them to assume, in a spirit of service, political responsibilities in different areas. They should follow this course, which is a way to sanctity and evangelisation, especially if they experience a call in this direction, and have the necessary qualifications.

However briefly, let me give you an image of the Christian in politics:

- a man of profound faith and prayer, who through his love for Christ, puts himself at the service of his brothers, to achieve the common good at different levels;
- a man who is not an opportunist, and yet can see beyond his own party;
- a man with a strong sense of the Church, who is enlightened by its social and political doctrine;
- a man who exercises power as a service, without ever falling into the idolatry of power;
- a man who inspires confidence in others - they see a man engaged in politics who speaks the truth and keeps his word;
- a man who studies problems and their human context;
- a man who is realistic in the choice of possible solutions;
- a man who is humble and knows how to consult and listen to others - and not only those of his own party or electorate;
- a man who, when faced with difficulties, has confidence in the power of God;
- a man who, as his very life witnesses, seeks to incarnate in society the evangelical values of respect, brotherhood, human progress, justice and special devotion to and concern for the poor;
- a man who is aware of the way that others, with the help of the Lord, have followed - St. Fernand of Castille, St. Louis of France, St. Thomas More and St. John Fischer in England.

Certainly, none of these traits coincide with the image of "The Prince" of Machiavelli, nor with that of "The Courtier" Castiglione - both of whom have been an inspiration for so many of their illustrious disciples! But they do follow the model of "The Universal Lord" who said He came "not to be served, but to serve." And doubtless, these traits I have mentioned might prove helpful to certain powerful politicians who claim to be Catholics: they might open their eyes and see the need to change or to stop calling themselves Catholics - which is at least one step towards conversion.

For the Christian in politics, we must insist on the necessity of prayer, the sacraments and the ability to love Christ in others. For the whole political arena to be sanctified, the people involved there must aspire to sanctity.

h) The Church

I would say this is the privileged area for your apostolic activity and service. Without in any way detracting from what I have said concerning other areas, it is clear that your cooperation with the life and work of the Church is indispensable, and so much so that "without it the apostolate of the pastors is generally unable to achieve its full effectiveness." (A.A. 10) You are the "multiplying agents" which the Church needs to make itself present in society.

It is not enough to say that in belonging to a CLC group, you are giving life to a movement in the Church. The CLC is not an end in itself, but rather a means "to form committed lay people for service." (G.P. 3) You have not fulfilled your goals when your groups are running smoothly - meetings held regularly, members feeling closely united around the Eucharist - but have not yet extended their apostolic service into the areas of need I have already mentioned. You must "collaborate with the pastors, share their concern for the problems and progress of mankind... (and offer a) concrete personal collaboration in the work of building up the Kingdom of God." (G.P. 5) The parish, the diocese, or possibly even higher levels of official Church structure, together with other kinds of specialised activities, such as charities, missionary work, preparation for marriage, counselling, the press, radio - all these areas offer unlimited possibilities for your apostolic service. And unless something quite extraordinary and obvious should occur, each one of you will surely be able to find some apostolic activity suitable to his expertise and his circumstances.

i) Pedagogical Value of the Groups

I would not like to finish without mentioning a certain point which I feel is essential to the CLC's - the indisputable value of the group. The group structure falls in between an undifferentiated mass of people and the isolated individual. The group helps to create a homogeneous cell of "people of like qualities" (G.P. 3), and facilitates, in conformity with a healthy pedagogy, the spiritual growth and apostolic zeal of the individual. Without implying the acceptance of class structures, and various forms of segregation, the CLC's enable groups to form, capable of handling diverse situations. These groups are like cells in the Mystical Body of Christ in which he is present, for they are gathered in his name. In other words, the group experiences a basic community, and the beginnings of a fellowship which has to be extended to all who share our common faith and also to all those who have not yet experienced the vision which belief in Jesus offers.

But let me also add a few words on the duties of a CLC group. Do not ask: "What can the group give me?" Ask instead: "What can I contribute to the group?" Passivity is like a cancer in a group. The group lives off the life of its members, each of whom, in turn, receives back many times over his or her own contributions. For the group - ideally - helps a person to be open, teaches the art of dialogue and the virtue of tolerance; enriches an individual's point of view and introduces such an individual to a healthy pluralism. A group, moreover, deepens an individual's faith by challenging him or her to explain it and share it; creates a climate of trust in which persons can offer or receive help; and names the deep fellowship experienced in the group as a revelation of the fatherhood of God.

These days are very important for you and for all the CLC's throughout the world. I ask the Mother of God, whom you venerate with "filial love" (G.P. 6), and whose intercession you rely on in fulfilling your vocation (G.P. 8), "to place you with her Son" - as St. Ignatius himself asked her. I am sure that with her help your efforts and work throughout these days will bring to the CLC's a renewal of and even greater commitment to your vocation of service.