

# *International communities chart*

*International communities are one of the most concrete ways through which we bear witness of the Kingdom. Beyond simply existing as a matter of managing human resources or joining forces, communities are the place par excellence where we must live and witness the values of the Kingdom of God.*

*Several international communities have already existed, and both the riches and the difficulties of the same are more clear.*

*With these proposals, it is intended to reach a document, accepted by a large majority, which can be the object of study and reflection for all the CLM that will be sent to an international community and for all international communities that will receive a new CLM. We hope that it contributes to a richer and deeper experience of the community and that it can help to avoid frustrations and sufferings often arrived at by the lack of preparation and the existence of often illusory expectations.*



*"By this all will know that you are my disciples: if you love one another".*

*Jn 13, 35*

# *CLM International communities*

## *Introduction*

*Community is the first way through which, without speaking about Jesus, we give (or not) testimony of the Kingdom of God.*

*Much more than simply existing as a matter of human resource management or union of forces, communities are the place par excellence where we must live and witness the values of the Kingdom of God.*

*All CLM that be sent to mission integrating an international community should be aware of the invaluable value of the community in communicating the Gospel, but also be prepared for all the challenges that arise sometimes in the meeting of different personalities, aggravated by the different cultures to which we belong.*

*When experience the internationality of the movement within the communities, the CLM must always be aware of the different rhythms with which each country walks and respect the other members in their culture and formation.*

## *Community project*

*The international communities must have a community project, where the objectives, the type of missionary presence, the rhythms of the community, times of prayer, work and coexistence, formation, division of tasks, etc. are delineated.*

*This community project must be reflected and debated among all. It is important to seek the greatest possible consensus, avoiding all contradictory positions that may lead to our missionary presence being a counter-testimony.*

*It is fundamental the gift of listening, humility and the ability to accept decisions that may be contrary to our personal vision of things, as long as they do not question our conscience.*

*Whenever possible, it will be desirable that CLM preparing to join an international community may have some information about the community project of the community that awaits him/her.*

## *Prayer and spirituality*

*Never forget that the protagonist of the Mission is the Holy Spirit, and that our presence in Mission is due to His call.*

*Let prayer, personal and community, never be in the background.*

*The meeting with the Lord of the Harvest, the listening prayed of his Word must be the precious pearl from which all the activity develops.*

*Each community must find its rhythms of prayer, respecting the path of each member, but never leaving aside some moments of community prayer.*

*It will also be good to find time to have an annual retreat for each member, as well as to find moments to share our vocation and charisma in a formative-spiritual way. We must nourish our Christian, missionary and Comboni spirituality all together since without this food we will be weakened and our community will become a simple work group and not a Christian community.*

## *Activities*

*International communities should make an effort to register what they do and decide, so for the CLM that will come later will be easier to give continuity to the work.*

*The activities in which each member of the CLM community is involved are commitments of the entire community. Except for cases that require professional secrecy, the issues must be shared, debated, reflected and prayed together.*

*The time dedicated to missionary activities should be especially reflected, avoiding situations in which community life is completely in the background.*

*If there were conditions for this, there should be a planning of joint activities as Comboni family.*

## *Affectivity and brotherhood*

*The CLM lives its affectivity conscious of the environment in which it is inserted (community, parish, social environment, etc.), seeking in all, to be a witness of the values of the Gospel. Living it in a responsible way, without being hostage of it or disappointing the reason for which it was sent.*

*Within the community, the CLM seeks a balance in friendly relations, both within and outside the community, in order not to endanger the pace of the community or the mission. We should take care of the welcoming of the newcomers, doing what is within their reach so that they feel integrated. In the welcoming period and integration of the new members we lay the foundations of the community future and the success of the mission of our CLM.*

*In the CLM communities where we have couples and singles, we must find ways to provide space for the couple without the singles being isolated.*

*We know that the CLM do not go to mission to find a partner, but we are also aware that this circumstance may happen. In this sense, we propose an adequate formation and dialogue on the topics of affectivity before the sending. It is also advised that if this happens, the CLM will search accompaniment that will help to discern more clearly and live their relationship (sometimes with people from other cultures) in a way that matures adequately, as well as so that the mission does not pass it into the background.*

*If the CLM community or the apostolic community understand that a CLM lives in a situation of Christian counter-witness, it should call attention to it, and, if necessary, inform the coordinating team of their country of the situation, in order to amend the situation or even if it were necessary to interrupt the project and make it return.*

## *Economy*

*The economy is a reality inherent in any entity of contemporary society. The CLM try to live this aspect of life in an increasingly evangelical way, following the model of the first Christian communities, where "All believers lived together and had everything in common" (Acts .2, 44).*

*In the CLM community, each member must make available to the common fund of the community the money sent to him/her for the missionary life.*

*The community, each member having the same right as the others, whatever the amount with which he/she contributes to the fund, must manage the common fund.*

*The money that arrives during the time of the mission will be part of the common fund except in cases where it is agreed to have pocket money for personal expenses.*

*Within our economic responsibilities is the need for an expanded vision, where we include a clear budget and ways to raise funds for the present and future needs of the mission. We can create a fund in anticipation of them,*

*maintain the house, the car or any another good of the mission, trips on vacation or return home, participation in international meetings...*

*We must have an austere life but with dignity. Have a proper diet, receive the necessary medical treatments, etc.*

*When we manage project's money, we must have a separate accounting. Within these projects, we can consider a percentage for the maintenance of the community or even hiring a member of the community that may manage the project. In mission, we are not going to look for a job but we must be aware that our presence is necessary to carry out and facilitate things and we must live in some way. The salary will be part of the common fund that will make possible the life of the community.*

*We must also consider how to contribute to the expenses that we have at the international level as a CLM movement, thus creating a network of solidarity with mutual support.*

### *Holidays and renovations*

*The possible vacation periods or the renewal of the missionary presence of each CLM should be discussed in community. After this debate, the agreement with the CLM group and the MCCJ province of origin and destination will be necessary to coordinate in the best possible way the missionary service we do as a family.*

*This discernment must also be shared with the CLM Central Committee in charge of helping the coordination and continuity of our international presences.*

### *Conflict management*

*Conflicts are inherent to human beings and community life. Even with excellent preparation it is normal that they can occur. They are a privileged time to grow on a personal and community level, but we must also be aware that they are painful for the people who suffer them. We cannot escape them; we have to face them with fraternity and mutual understanding.*

*The great struggle in the management of conflicts must occur within us and usually with our own ego. The light of prayer, the reading of the Word, listening to the other and openness to forgiveness must constantly illuminate this struggle.*

*In the conflict with other members of the community, the CLM must bear in mind that, rather than being right, it must seek the greatest interest of the mission, which will always go through the greatest demonstration of love possible.*

*It is convenient that each community can have a person of reference who can help the discernment of the parties in situations of conflict. For this, you can have a reference to a Comboni missionary or other person who is close and who has the qualities in this regard.*

*In the most serious cases, each CLM must discern (preferably together with the reference person) its permanence in the CLM community. These difficult decisions should, as far as possible, be discussed and prayed in community.*

### *Continuity*

*It is the responsibility of all of us to give continuity to our missionary presence. This continuity includes the analysis of the reality where we are immersed as CLM community and, together with the Comboni family or pastoral community, discern our present and future. In this sense, we should also be aware of the need for proper planning of our presence, especially at the personnel level. For this, we will be in contact with our coordination teams to inform about the renovations and the specific needs we may have as a community.*

## *Communication*

*As Comboni knew very well, part of our missionary service is the Missionary Animation and the communication of the situations where we serve to make others aware of these realities and encourage everyone to collaborate (those who leave, those who support us, those who work in a network with us, etc.).*

*Therefore, there must be a fluid communication, whether news, photos or other information about the reality of the mission. This can make others feel part of their mission and also open possibilities of Missionary Animation and vocational promotion. They must communicate not only with their countries of origin but with everyone.*

*The mission will only be possible from this networking and maintaining this work in a network implies communication. We are sent to the mission and we keep in communication with those who send us, encouraging and sharing this joint mission.*

*Communication with our CLM organization at local level, origin group, international coordination and communication with our support networks (family, parish, diocese, friends, NGOs that support), with social networks through our local and international blogs, social networks, magazines and other media that we can use for the good of the mission.*

## *Conclusion*

*In conclusion, let us always keep in mind the first Christian communities as described in the Acts of the Apostles, as the disciples persevered in the doctrine of the apostles, the fraternal union, in the breaking of bread and in prayer. They had only one soul, take food with joy and simplicity of heart, praising God and having the favor of all the people. (cf Act 2, 42)*

*We pray to Saint Daniel Comboni, who saw his Institute as a small cenacle of apostles for Africa, a luminous point sending as many rays to the center of Africa as the solicitous and virtuous missionaries that came out of its bosom. (Cf. W 2648)*

*Because these rays, which together glowed and warmed, would necessarily reveal the nature of the center from which they come ... Jesus Christ! (Cf. W 2648)*