



FINAL STATEMENT FROM OUR CLM EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY KRAKOW 2023

The representatives of the Comboni Lay Missionaries (CLM) of Europe – Poland, Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal met in their continental assembly in October 2023 in Krakow, Poland.

We want to start recognizing the variety of our country groups and we see it as an opportunity and richness to grow as a CLM family. We know the fragility of our groups; therefore, we encourage our members to maintain as simple as possible and become more efficient in what we do. One of the most relevant things continue to be the exchange of experience and vocation among the CLM of different countries, that allows us to grow and understand better our vocation as CLMs. Our formation, that we should reference in our international formation guide, is a strength that we should reinforce at all levels, paying special attention for those CLMs returned from mission abroad and their reintegration for a missionary life and service in the CLM groups of their countries of origin. We realize that there are many years of our missionary life that we stay in our country of origin and this is something we have to care in our discernment process and formation. Remembering that one of the purposes of the CLMs is to *accompany and nourish the missionary vocation of its members throughout their life wherever the Lord calls them in each moment of their life*¹. To facilitate and continue to grow in this aspect, we encourage the exchange of experiences, and mutual accompaniment on how we live our vocation through life, dedicating time not only for practical aspects like organization, training or economy in our meetings. We also believe that it is an opportunity and richness the participation in meetings with other CLMs from different countries, therefore we invite all our members to try to participate in the continental and intercontinental opportunities we regularly offer as a great wealth.

Care for our missionary life in Europe as a long-life commitment means to accompany those returning from mission abroad, and help them to understand the call that the Lord is asking them back home. It is also very important to accompany those CLMs who can't go abroad to develop their own vocation where they are and grow within the movement. We know that Europe is a missionary land and we feel the responsibility to care for this duty.

We understand the difficulties that our people face living their vocation in their own country. The difficulties we have to combine our different duties (work, family, missionary services...), prioritize them and make possible the vocation that Jesus have entrusted us. We cannot live our vocation as compartments but to allow that our CLM vocation embrace and make sense to our whole life, the style of family we want to be, the way we develop our job, the involvement in the Church and/or the social movements, the implication in our community, the commitment for global justice, peace and integrity of Creation, etc.

The society push us to enter in a certain style of life. But we know that it is our CLM community that reinforce our vocation. It is maintaining us together as a family that we can make possible

¹ CLM International Agreements Rome 2018



our missionary vocation, find solutions and propose an alternative style of life that make us testimony of Jesus where we are. It is a challenge that we want to face together as CLMs and within the Comboni Family.

We had the time to describe the multiples difficulties that we face in our daily life, but also the ideal of being missionary, drawing all the ideal features that we want to have as CLM and so forth will allow us to follow our vocation. Among all of them we would like to underline that it is important not to remain in difficulties and debate of abstracts issues but to share our local dreams at national and international level to reach global aims. To be credible, Comboni wanted us to be “Saint and Capable” and with the determination to commit ourselves to the end. We know that when we put Jesus in the center of our community wonderful things happens.

We know that we develop many of our commitments at local or national level but we are not a local group. We have to look our international reality as a global commitment where all of us should commit according to our possibilities, without being afraid of losing our independence. In this sense, we see the existence of an international CLM association as a concretization of a CLM movement where we are all inside as a family. We realize the fear of becoming hierarchically structured, dependent of others, and also the will of maintaining our conventions. However, the knowledge and the experience of sharing and being together makes us move forward in the idea of being recognize by the church as a CLM family, committed together for the mission the Lord entrust us.

Finally, we discuss on the possibilities for the next years. We insist on the idea of being focus on what we do. There are commitments we do in several countries, like the one of JPIC, where we may grow in collaboration, exchanging or jointly carrying out initiatives.

Develop the European committee as a place of reference where we can share the difficulties but also the success we are having in our countries and learn from each other according to the different experiences we have.

We have a common missionary duty and we hope our European committee may help us accomplish it. May our representatives help us create synergy within our CLM groups, and there may be a good communication that allows all this information come from the base to coordination and then back to our communities to enrich our live and missionary services.

May the Lord give us strength and San Daniel Comboni enthusiasm for the mission.

Krakow, October 14, 2023