

COMMUNITY OF GOODS IN THE LCM

PAYMENT PROCEDURES MANUAL

Secretary of Economy (Patricia Arancibia)

Lay Claretian Movement

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INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this Payment Procedures Manual is to order and document the information regarding the procedures for payment of quotas and other payments that members of the Claretian Lay Movement must know in order to achieve a better communication of the LCM in the economic area. It is useful mainly for Regional Economy responsables or Groups without Region.

In this document you will also find relevant information about the accounts that the LCM has, as the way in which the General Council operates the resources.

However, in order to understand the information presented (it seems so cold and structured) it is necessary first to reflect on the vocation that has allowed us to be part of a Christian group or community, and has motivated the community to belong to the Movement. In order to reflect on the duties and responsibilities that the members of a community have for the organization to which they belong, it is necessary to do so under the light of faith and common spirituality. In this way we will never lose sight of the fact that communion and sharing all that we have is what is strengthening the practice of the values of the Gospel in the temporal realities that each one lives.

1. COMMUNITY OF GOODS

1.1. From the Community

From its very pre-Easter origin the Christian communication of goods has played a predominant role between the expressions of community and Christian communion. It is not possible to complete the transmission of the message without this indispensable gesture by which the brothers manifest the transformation of the faith and the knowledge of the gospel.

Sometimes Christian communication of goods is presented as the summit or goal of the maturity of a Christian community in its growth process. However, this is an indispensable element in all phases and moments of pastoral action, since it is related to the fundamental dimensions of evangelization: koinonia or community, subject, mediator and goal of evangelization. Each community exists because it has been "summoned", "made a group" by Jesus, as the apostolic community [Mark 3: 13-15]: Jesus goes up into the mountain and calls himself to those he loves, and they went to him. And he gathered "Twelve" to be with him, and to send them to preach and to have authority to cast out devils.

In order to develop this vocation, the community has to initiate a series of dynamisms of communion contrasted by the Christian tradition, such as: community meeting, community project, contrast with a counselor, ecclesial services ... and one of the most decisive: the communion of goods.

These "vocational" dynamisms carry a double responsibility:

✓ At the individual, irreplaceable level. Jesus has called us by our name to live in communion. The effective response to that call is the individual responsibility of each called person. It is a requirement that cannot be delegated to the community group. And it is up to each of us to question the relationship with material goods and their availability to others.

✓ At the community level, essential. Jesus "made" the community, and it cannot relegate this primordial summons to other matters nor can it be derived to the private life of its members.

They are, therefore, two independent and complementary responsibilities. Both, to answer to the "convocation" of Jesus.

1.2. From the Lay Claretian Sourcebook

Number 14 of the LCM sourcebook addresses two issues that are part of the radical experience of the gospel:

- the awareness of our smallness, which leads us to put our trust in God.
- the relationship with material goods; a relationship that is governed by the evangelical demand of sharing and solidarity.

What links these two themes together in the same number of the sourcebook is that they are both an expression of the first beatitude: "Blessed are the poor" (Mt 5: 3, Lk 6,20), and also the fact of understanding that an important element of evangelical poverty is the detachment of oneself and of material goods for the sake of the Kingdom. As background music of this number are sounding the following words of Jesus: "If any man wants to follow me, let him deny himself" (Mk 8:34); "You cannot serve God and money" (Lk 16:13); "Whoever does not renounce his possessions cannot be my disciple" (Lk 14:33)

The awareness of our condition of creatures, our limitations and our weakness, makes us humble before God. We know that we can do nothing for ourselves and put our hope and our security in Him (cf. Mt 6: 32-33; 2 Cor 1: 3-4).

The new commandment of Jesus (Jn 13:34) leads us to solidarity and to share our goods with those who suffer misery and injustice and help them to come out of them through human promotion.

The evangelical sense of poverty boost us to work (cf. 1Cor 4, 12), to administer our goods with diligence to use them with criteria of simplicity and generous service to our brothers and sisters (cf. Acts 2: 344-45) and evangelization. We proclaim with thanksgiving the goodness of all creation and the relative character of earthly goods before the absolute of God and his Kingdom (cf. Mt 6:33).

We reject all forms of attachment to riches, consumerism and ostentation as opposed to love of God and neighbor. This attitude allows us to grow in inner freedom and to be available for following Jesus and serving our brothers and sisters (Lk 12, 33-34)

1.3. Opening of our goods to the brothers and evangelization

The sourcebook tells us in this paragraph that "the evangelical sense of poverty impels us to work, to administer our goods with diligence and to use them with criteria of simplicity and generous service to our brothers and to the work of evangelization."

The sourcebook presents in the text a series of indications and lines of action that have to guide the behavior of lay Claretians with respect to material goods. There are several points to highlight:

A) First, it makes an invitation to work with the intention of sustaining and helping others. It is not for the purpose of getting rich and accumulating, so characteristic of the rich. The footnote refers to a passage in Acts 20 in which Paul exhorts the representatives of the community of Ephesus to work not to burden others and, above all, to share with the needy: "you know that I worked with my own hands to get what was necessary for me and my companions. In all that he taught that this is how he must also work to help the needy, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus who said: the mayor of hay congratulated on giving Than to receive "(Acts 20: 34-35).

B) Secondly, we are invited to "manage our goods with diligence". Precisely because of their goods that also belong to the poor, they must be used in evangelical discernment, without wasting them in the rhythm of the consumer society in which we live. We must make them produce for the good of all, especially the poor.

C) Thirdly, this text recommends simplicity and austerity of life. Many people from rich countries and some people from poor countries are immersed in the consumer society. His eagerness to win, accumulate and consume has no limits. How strange is the sentence of Jesus: "Do not worry about what you are going to eat or drink, what you are going to wear" (Mt 6: 25-26). Simplicity and austerity of life is an essential element of following Jesus and a demand for justice and love for others. No doubt, while some swim in abundance others drown in misery; while some live surrounded by superfluous things, others lack the indispensable. For Jesus' follower, simplicity and austerity must be a lifestyle, an evangelical alternative to the consumerist way of life.

D) Finally, it speaks of putting our goods at the service of evangelization; this suggestion is very much in tune with our charisma. If we are missionaries, all our goods must be open to the demands of the mission.

In the economic and social scenario that the world lives today, Christian communication of goods must be a requirement for all. The needy and the poor must participate in the goods of creation, all collaborating in their development and in their just distribution. In our present societies, socially unequal, culturally pluralistic and religiously secular, it is urgent and necessary to speak of the universal destiny of goods, to which every person has a right. It is urgent to collaborate in a more fraternal, more symmetrical, more human-divine model,

collaborating in the creation of goods, their communication and, demand their fair distribution: each according to their possibilities, each according to their needs.

The invitation to each group or community is therefore to promote a culture of communion above all differences of race, culture or creed, always animated by our conviction that each vocation is the answer of our experience of God's love for our brothers, working together as agents of change, inspired by the life of St. Anthony Mary Claret and trying to help others to experience the love of God.

2. IMPORTANCE OF LCM'S SELF-FINANCING

The LCM Statutes state that all members are responsible for the financing of the Movement¹. This means that each member admitted has the duty to contribute the minimum quota set by the General Council, as these contributions compose the fund for the Movement to cover various expenses necessary for the performance of its functions².

It should be noted that steps still have to be taken so that the Movement can self-finance, since it is currently dependent on the direct contribution made annually by the Congregation of the Claretian Missionaries to the LCM. On average the last three years accounted for 35% of total revenues received; the remaining 65% was covered by membership fees. This percentage could be higher if all the admitted groups were committed to comply with this requirement, until succeeding for the wish that the LCM become economically independent.

In the year 2013 the General Council has appointed 2 members of the Movement as Delegates of some very necessary areas, to the charge of which a direct person has been appointed. These are the Delegate of Communications and the Delegate of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JUPIC). For the development of their functions they need resources, which are directly delivered by the General Council.

This makes it much more urgent to raise awareness of the importance of the payment of each member's dues as a duty that gives us a "sense of belonging" to the Movement, rather than a mere administrative obligation. It is for this reason that the Groups and Regions have within their main functions: to promote the communion of goods among its members, to eliminate all desire for profit and luxury in its activities and the obligation to always address the goods to the service of the group's objective, which is evangelization³.

¹ N.23.1. every group and person admitted has the obligation to contribute to the financing of the General Fund of the Movement.

² E.24. the expenses of the Movement in the general field will be covered with the contributions of the groups. In order for all groups to cooperate with the financing of the Movement, the GC will set the minimum contribution, which will be dispensed with groups that even this quota cannot meet. On the basis of the amount fixed by the Council, each group shall determine its own quota, taking into account the number of members and their economic possibilities.

³ N.5.3, N.5.4, E.13, N.13.2, N.13.3, N.16.5., E.20. E) and E.23. A) B) C) and D). 4 E.2. The Movement is based in Rome, via Sacro Cuore di Maria, 5.

3. CUSTODY OF FUNDS

The Lay Claretians Movement is an association of faithful of private law that counts on the recognition of the Church through the Pontifical Council of the Laity. Due to its international character, it is very complex to obtain legal personality worldwide. Due to this difficulty several years ago it was agreed with the Congregation of Claretian Missionaries that the funds of the LCM should be kept under custody by the Congregation itself.

This does not mean that the Missionaries are the ones who manage the goods, they only guard them, since the administration of these depends directly on the General Council of the Movement, through its Secretariat of Economy.

Thus the funds of the Claretian Secular Movement are deposited in the fundus Roma⁴, which is the bank account of the Claretian Missionaries of the General Government in the Curia, since it also has a bank account in the city of Madrid, which is directly related with the fundus Roma.

For the administration of fundus, the Congregation has an accounting system that internally orders the accounts of the Congregation. Within this system, each of the provinces of the CMF has an "account" (assigned code), which allows the direct administration of resources between the Provincial Treasurers and the General Treasurer, as well as the transfers of resources between the different accounts.

Since the funds of the LCM are in custody at fundus Rome, it is the Secretary of Economy of the General Council to whom he has close communication with the General Treasurer of the Claretian Missionaries to manage the resources. Both in the identification of the income by means of payment of quotas of the different regions or groups and contributions of another nature, as in the formal request of the expenses of each of the accounts, with the agreement of the General Council.

In this way, the Secretary of Economy is the "administrator" of the different accounts of the LCM, as representative of the GC and responsible for the information registered there, after communication with the different Secretaries of Economy of the Regional Councils and / or Groups without Region.

4. MSC FUNDS

According to the Statutes governing the MSC, the funds available to the Movement are as follows:

A) General Fund: This fund reflects all the contributions and expenses generated by the MSC through its members, that are annual contributions⁵ of Regions and Groups without Region,

⁴ E.2. The Movement is based in Rome, via Sacro Cuore di María, 5.

⁵ The contribution of the groups to the General Fund shall be proportional to the number of members of the groups. It is set to a minimum of \$ 10 per person per year. Those groups that cannot cover this contribution must contact the Secretary of Economy and communicate how much they can contribute.

extraordinary income when necessary, General Council expenses for its annual meetings, expenses of a member of the GC that must participate in some specific function, expenses for the printing and sending of the magazines, among others.

This fund is divided into two separate accounts: one in dollars and the other in euros, to facilitate the payment and accounting of the contributions of the different regions.

B) Equity Fund: This fund is a "savings" account of the Movement. Into it, funds are deposited, with the prior agreement of the Council and its consultation to the General Assembly, necessary for the LCM to have certain patrimony in money.

The advantage of having these resources, without making any movement in the account, is that by being deposited in the current account of the Claretian Missionaries, once a year it has the possibility of submitting to the application of interests (depending on the outcome of the investment of funds made by the General Government) and representing the opportunity to increase the Movement's Heritage in a safe and reliable manner.

C) Solidarity Fund: For this fund there is no specific account in the LCM accounting records. At a meeting of the General Council held in Rome, it was agreed to keep a separate accounting record for the funds that the Regions or Communities of the LCM contribute to the general fund, either in euros or dollars, in order to control resources that have been deposited and do not represent the contribution in quotas indicated in the Statutes.

This is the fund that expresses the solidarity and communion of goods that must exist among the members of the Movement. To this end, those Regions and / or Communities that can and wish to provide extraordinary contributions may do so through deposits to the general fund account, expressly stating that it is for the solidarity fund. They must also send an email to the Secretary of Economy indicating the reason for the contribution.

In general the resources that are deposited for this purpose go to the aid of groups that cannot attend the General Assemblies for economic reasons. The GC with these funds will help finance the expenses necessary for any member of that group to participate and be represented in the GA.

5. PAYMENT PROCEDURES

The payment procedures available to the LCM so that regions and groups without Region can make payment of quotas or enter resources for the solidarity fund are as follows, in order of priority:

1. Through the Claretian Missionaries: As explained in the item 1, the LCM funds are deposited in a Rome bank account. Therefore, the safest and most practical way of making the payments is to deliver an envelope with the funds and the detail to the Provincial Economy of the

Congregation, to which the region or group of the LCM belongs. The Econome will internally send the funds to the General Econome of the CMF who manages the bank accounts.

Together with this, the Secretary of Economy of the LCM shall be informed by electronic mail of the delivery of said funds, detailing the following information:

- A) Fund to which it corresponds: payment of quotas, fund of solidarity or other additional contribution, like General Assemblies, etc.
- B) In case of payment of quotas, year and number of members to which the payment corresponds.

The Secretary of Economy, after verifying the entry of the funds into the account of the accounting system of the Congregation, must send the proof of income corresponding to the Regional Secretary of Economy that made the payment.

This alternative can be used at any time, without having to wait for a General Assembly or General Council Meeting in the Region in question.

2. Visit of the General Council: As a second alternative, one can take advantage of the visit made by the General Council to some regions of the Movement, within the framework of its planning, , to hold its annual meeting and to visit the existing Groups. As well as use this alternative when any member of the General Council visits for any other reason of the regions or groups of the LCM.

3. Bank Account: for regions and groups that belong to Spain the possibility is much more direct. Since the payment of fees and other contributions can be made through deposits or transfers to the bank account that the Congregation maintains in Spain and which is directly linked to the fundus Roma.

4. General Assemblies: This option is presented only in exceptional cases, understanding that regions and groups without Region must use any of the three aforementioned alternatives to make the entry of funds to the Movement, according to the Statutes.

Secretary of Economy, July 2015.