



Lay Claretian Movement
General Council

Bilbao, March 29th , 2017

Dear lay Claretian brothers and sisters, a warm greeting.

We would like to begin this letter by recalling the words that Pope Francis enlightened us at the beginning of Lent to help us deepen this time of prayer "The other is a gift." The first invitation of this parable (Lazarus and the rich man) is to open the door of our heart to the other, because each person is a gift, our neighbor or a poor stranger. Lent is a propitious time to open the door to anyone in need and recognize in him (or her) the face of Christ (Pope Francis).

As lay Claretians, living the Movement from this key of complementarity, feeling that my brothers and sisters are a gift for me, leads us to feel more united and to recognize the wealth that this entails at a personal level, at a community level and for the whole Movement.

With this feeling of recognizing each and all as a gift, we get back in touch to tell you the latest news.

One of the ambitious tasks in which we are involved is the elaboration of a general training plan to respond to some requests from the last two General Assemblies. Whenever a group has to accompany another who begins, or to new people who want to initiate discernment, ask what materials we have and where to start. We have found that although there are many materials, they are unorganized and unstructured. Miguelo, as responsible for this area, has created a support group to be able to do this work and gradually catalog these materials by levels. Fundamentally the Plan is structured in four projects or stages: the first and most basic to promote the charisma of the Claretian layman to those who do not know him, the second, for incorporation into the Movement, the third for initial training in the first years as LC and the fourth for permanent training. The Plan incorporates a fifth project, which is oriented to the training agents (advisers and companions). As you will assume, this is a time-consuming job. They have already



presented the draft plan to the training deputies of all Regional Councils and also to the delegates of groups without a region. They have been asked to make the contributions they think necessary, because we believe that it must be an open plan that will be enriched with everything that can be added. The intention is that little by little it will be uploading on the web so it can be available to everyone. As soon as it is available, we will let you know.

From April 8 to 12, Bernardeta, Miguel Angel and Father Manolo Tamargo will go to the DR of the Congo to visit the groups there. In Kinshasa and Kikwit there are several lay groups with a Claretian charisma that wanted for long to know the Movement to discern if they want to be part of it. In spite of the difficulties of language and cultural differences, we will try to make them aware of the Movement and to convey to them the richness that groups of the Claretian charisma live in. From the Congo, we will stay in Madrid and there we will meet with Edison for the annual Council meeting, April 13-16. In future communications we will tell you the most important matters that we deal with.

The promotion of the Movement, animated by the action of the Spirit, is giving fruits. In the Claretian parish of Zurich (Switzerland), committed to the Spanish-speaking immigrants of that country, has emerged a group that wants to raise the discernment. In turn, the young people of the Claret parish of Mixco (Guatemala) have already begun with this. The group of La Ceiba of Honduras, after many years of deepening in the Claretian charisma and in the knowledge of the Movement, intends to request entry in June. The groups of Sherbrooke in Canada, San Gabriel in the USA and Juanjuí in Peru keep on with illusion. Surely there are many more people in the process of discerning their Claretian lay charisma. We pray for all of them so that the Spirit will guide them on their search path.

On the other hand, in the October meeting in Rome between the General Government of the Claretian Missionaries and the Lay Claretian General Council, among other things, we are committed to collaborate in the preparation of the next WYD 2019 to be held in Panama. At the moment, the Claretian lay people of Central America, Angélica Lombardo of Panama and Carlos Funes of Guatemala, together with the other branches of the Claretian Family, are part of the preparation teams. The intention is to be someone else



from Honduras to these teams work. There is much enthusiasm in preparing this beautiful event as CF.

Although you probably already know it, we encourage you to enter into the web page recently opened by the Claretian Missionaries to deepen their knowledge of the Claretian charisma, of Father Claret and his work. It is called Claretian Spirituality Center and its address is <http://www.cescvic.org>. The directors of this project have asked us, the LC, for collaborations for the section of "fellow travelers", telling our experience of meeting Claret from our secular identity. If someone is encouraged to write something, please communicate us. And as always, we also ask you to send news with the lives of groups for our website. It is important for us to cultivate fraternity and mutual knowledge. We know that we count on the protection of Mary, our Mother, and the impulse of the Holy Spirit. We wish they guide our steps so that, like Claret, our only end may be "the greater glory of God" (Aut. 494). In order to do so, we invite you not forget to pray for our Movement and this Council. On behalf of all the people of the General Council, receive a very warm brotherly embrace.

Bernardeta Arbaiza
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