

# CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY

## WELCOME TO OUR April 2026 Newsletter



**Alleluia! The Risen Christ leads us into a season of renewed hope, listening, and mission.** This April newsletter highlights the many ways our CLC-USA community is praying, discerning, and accompanying one another across regions and frontiers. South Florida celebrates CLC World Day with gratitude and reflection on Amoris Laetitia, while Anchorage invites us into deeper synodal listening. The Globalization & Poverty Frontier prepares for its April 20 prayer on the interconnectedness of climate, poverty, and globalization, and Missouri communities gather for prayer and fellowship. Nationally, we give thanks for Mimi Parks' leadership of the Ignatian Spirituality Frontier Team and hold in prayer our nominees for President-Elect and At-Large Members as they discern their call to serve. We stand in solidarity with CLC Lebanon through Najat Sayegh's powerful testimony of resilience amid renewed conflict, and we accompany our Executive Council as they gather in Boston for prayer and mission discernment, trusting the Holy Spirit and the Risen Jesus to guide our shared path forward.



In this newsletter you will find:

**Regional, National, Frontier News, Events & Happenings**

# UPCOMING *Events*



## *Globalization & Poverty Team*

Monthly Virtual Prayer Gathering  
We'll pray together and briefly share  
what's on our hearts, guided by our  
Frontier themes: Peace, Human  
Dignity, Race, Migration & Poverty

*April*  
**20**

8:00 PM ET

# GLOBALIZATION & POVERTY FRONTIER

## WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?

As a new Frontier member leading Globalization & Poverty, I have been learning and experiencing the linkages between Integral Ecology and Globalization & Poverty.

Earth Day is coming up quickly on **April 22, 2026**. Globalization & Poverty, together with Integral Ecology, will be hosting our monthly prayer with a focus on the **Interconnectedness of Climate, Poverty, and Globalization**. Please join us – *just 30 minutes*.

### **April Virtual Prayer: Interconnectedness**

**April 20, 2026**

**8:00–8:30 pm Eastern Time**

Zoom Link on our website: <https://clc-usa.com/globalization-poverty>

Globalization, poverty, and integral ecology are deeply connected parts of our world today. Understanding how they relate can help us care better for both people and the planet.

Integral ecology asks us to see these connections clearly. It calls us to think not only about economic growth, but also about human dignity and the health of our planet. It challenges businesses, governments, and individuals to make choices that are fair and sustainable. This might include paying fair wages, protecting natural resources, and reducing pollution. This idea is strongly expressed in *Laudato Si'*, written by Pope Francis. In this teaching, we are reminded that harming the earth often harms the poorest people the most.

It also reminds us that we all have a role to play. Even small actions – like reducing waste, supporting ethical products, sharing resources, treating others fairly, or learning about global issues – can make a difference. When we act with care for both people and creation, we help build a more just and balanced world.

In the end, globalization is not just about markets and trade. It is about relationships between people across the globe. If guided by the principles of integral ecology, globalization can become a force for good. It can help reduce poverty while also protecting the earth, our common home.

Anne Papinchak

# 19<sup>th</sup> Annotation of the Spiritual Exercises

Dear CLC Member,

The CLC USA Leadership and Formation Team are offering again the 19th Annotation of the Spiritual Exercises. The retreat will begin this August 2026 and run until May 2027. It is open to any CLC or Pre-CLC member who wishes to make the full Spiritual Exercises. Watch for specific information and the date for a 'Come and See' on the CLC Website under Resources

<https://clc-usa.com/19th-annotation-program-resources>.

To register for the 'Come and See', please follow this link

<https://forms.gle/998rCT1HRsYXqNZu8>

Every retreatant will be assigned a prayer companion with whom the retreatant will meet weekly, in your preferred language (English, Korean, and Vietnamese). They will also be in a small group that will meet monthly for two hours for some instruction on the Exercises and for faith sharing. The cost will be \$300 for the full program. Some scholarships will be available.

At the 2019 CLC National Assembly in Pittsburgh, we agreed to make the Spiritual Exercises more available. We wanted to have many more CLC USA members have the experience of the full 19th Annotation retreat. This experience will be the third time that CLC USA is offering the 19th Annotation to its members.

Fr. Sosa reminded us to continue "to allow the Lord to work on our conversion. We ask for the grace to be renewed by the Lord. We wish to discover a new apostolic enthusiasm inside ourselves, a new life, new ways to follow the Lord." (Message of Fr. Sosa, July 30, 2020).

We want to continue to open ourselves to the Holy Spirit, so that our members deepen their relationship with Christ.

Christine Cichello, CLC-USA President

Click here for the [Invitation Letter in English - Korean - Vietnamese](#)

# CLC IN USA ANNOUNCES THE 2026 MINISTRIES GRANT CYCLE

## What are the Ministries Grants?

CLC-USA has set aside a modest amount of funds (**total** of \$5,000 for 2026 cycle) to make available to local communities. It is the hope that these funds will assist in the execution of projects consistent with our mission and purpose. This year's funding will continue to seek to meet the challenges that our communities identified in response to the priorities established at the 2024 National Assembly. Specifically, we ask that you concentrate your efforts in one or more of these key areas:

1. Developing Ignatian informed programs that are directed at the spiritual needs of our community along the continuum of life. Programs that read the signs of the times in our current world and minister insightfully to young adults (ages 25-35), families and/or older adults. Collaborative programs with the Jesuits and other Ignatian (or non-Ignatian) organizations are highly encouraged.
2. Implementing programs aimed at increasing the number of community members under the age of 35 (young adults). This could include enhanced opportunities and pathways to incorporate the CLC college alums into regional and cultural groups.
3. Creating programs that celebrate our diverse communities, across the spectrums of age, region and cultural group. These could include creative modes of experiencing formation in the CLC charism including the practices of discernment and the Spiritual Exercises.
4. Enhancing the goals of the frontiers identified at the last Assembly: Family, Globalization and Poverty, Youth and Young Adult, and Ecology.
5. Improving local communities' sense of connection to Regional, National, and World CLC.

## What should we do now?

**This is the time for dreaming.** We ask that you pray over the key areas above and consider what you and your community might be called to address. **We also encourage discussions across regions and cultural groups** to enrich the project outcomes through our blessings of diverse circumstances and cultures. Now is the time to PRAY, dream, envision and DISCERN!

**What are YOU called to do?**

## Do you have Questions?

Contact Al Yarzebinski, CLC Treasurer, at: [yarz1@verizon.net](mailto:yarz1@verizon.net)

## What happens next?

Keep tuned to e-mail! A tentative timeline looks like this:

Applications and instructions e-mailed **May 15<sup>th</sup> to NCC**

Applications due by **June 30<sup>th</sup>**

Awards Announced by **July 15<sup>th</sup>**

# Anchorage, Alaska Are You Listening?

By Paula Burgen, Anchorage, AK – Discipleship, NW Pilgrims, Northern Lights

***“For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission.”***

As CLC, we experience the gift of unconditional, active listening to one another. It is rare for most people to feel truly listened to, and even more rare to express thoughts and feelings without interruption. How might we encourage active, unconditional listening beyond CLC?

Pope Francis recognized the value of listening when he inaugurated the Synod on Synodality. “What’s that?” you ask? In 2021, the Pope announced a worldwide effort to improve listening in the Church. In parishes everywhere, people gathered with facilitators to listen to one another’s ideas. *What is Church? How could we do it better? What is the role of the layperson?* Responses were recorded, synthesized, and reported to the dioceses, who in turn synthesized them and reported the results to regional, then national representatives, and finally to the international Synod officials in Rome. A huge undertaking.

Unfortunately, only about 1% of Catholics chose to participate. Why?

The COVID epidemic had discouraged Church involvement. The degree to which the Synod was communicated, and whether all were welcomed and encouraged by the diocese, had an impact. Some Catholics don’t read parish communications, so they didn’t know about it. Some didn’t take it seriously, thinking no one would really listen. And I am sure there were many other reasons.

But Pope Francis wasn’t through. In 2023, he invited representatives of all countries –lay people, clergy, bishops, and even some students–to come to Rome for the whole month of October to discuss the reports and to really LISTEN to each other. Seated at round tables of ten, participants did just that. Can you picture a Cardinal and a student exchanging ideas about women in ministry?

At the end of the month, these people went home, talked to their fellow Catholics and others, and then returned to Rome for a second session in October 2024. A final report from that gathering is available on the internet: *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission*.

Pope Francis died April 21, 2025, but Pope Leo XVI is continuing the dialogue with his people. A new document published by the General Secretariat of the Synod, entitled *Pathways for the Implementation Phase of the Synod* (also available online), encourages dioceses to put the listening principles into practice in parish boards and organizations. **THIS IS IMPORTANT!** It could mean a new way of being Church.

# Anchorage, Alaska Are You Listening?

Will you help? Many Catholics still don't know what the Synod is, and many dioceses are not actively making plans. As a CLC'er, you have the experience of listening and being heard—and particularly listening for the Holy Spirit. You can help spread the word to everyone you talk to. You can call your diocesan office and ask what is happening. You can tell your pastor you are interested in hearing more and potentially offer to help. Then, if invited, you can participate in the listening sessions and model great unconditional, active listening.

Please don't let this be a repeat of the first round. Let's get people involved. Let's spread the word.



# MISSOURI REGION SHARING LIVED EXPERIENCES THROUGH CLC

Members of five MO Region CLC communities gathered at Yvonne DeHart's home in St. Louis on **February 28, 2026** for prayer, singing, sharing, and lunch.

Here is an excerpt from **Ron Nimer's Prayer of Gratefulness**:

*"Loving God, we thank you for where we have been, for all we have learned, for the communities we have been a part of... We thank you for your presence with us now as we navigate the circumstances of our daily lives. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our suffering world in its needs for justice, peace, and love. We know, Lord, that you are hearing us better than we are speaking as we offer these hopes in our prayers and personal intentions today."*



# South Florida Region

## *A Gift of Grace: Living the Message of Amoris Laetitia*

Our CLC World Day began with a community walk to the tree we planted last year as part of Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* initiative. Seeing it standing tall—green, healthy, and flourishing—filled us with joy and reminded us of our shared responsibility to care for our “**common home**.”

We opened the morning with a Circle of Gratitude, each person bringing an object that represented family. Photos, stories, and heartfelt memories revealed how our CLC communities often become extensions of our own families. The sharing was warm, joyful, and deeply connecting.

The video prepared by the Middle East Region was a powerful and sobering moment. It opened our eyes to the suffering of our brothers and sisters living through war, displacement, and exile. Their witness moved us to prayer and stirred a desire to seek concrete ways to help. The guiding question—“*How do I see myself in God's presence?*”—invited us into surrender, trust, and the awareness that God's presence is the one promise that never fails. Like Mary, we reflected on what we are called to treasure in our hearts and what we are invited to release.

**Gratitude is a choice.** When we choose thankfulness, we root ourselves in the present moment and in the presence of God.

Fr. David Pantaleon, SJ, offered an excellent presentation on Pope Francis' *Amoris Laetitia*, synthesizing its nine chapters with clarity and pastoral insight. He reminded us that both clergy and lay people are called to accompany today's families with love, compassion, and fidelity—adapting to the needs of our time without losing the moral grounding of our faith. This experience was truly a gift from God, renewing our commitment to serve our families, our communities, and ourselves as we grow in God's love.

During Mass, presided over by Fr. Marcelino García, SJ, three members made their temporary commitments and one made a permanent commitment. It was a blessed and grace-filled moment for CLC in South Florida.

### Upcoming Events

- **April 11** – *Diary of Saint Ignatius of Loyola*: A workshop on cultivating your inner spiritual path
- **May 22-24** – *Spiritual Exercises* guided by José Lopez, SJ

# South Florida Region *A Gift of Grace: Living the Message of Amoris Laetitia*



# PRAYERS FOR OUR PRESIDENT-ELECT AND AT-LARGE MEMBER NOMINEES

Nominations for **President-Elect** and **At-Large Members** have now been submitted, and all nominees have been notified. As they enter this period of discernment, we invite our entire CLC-USA community to surround them with prayer.

These members are taking time to listen deeply to the needs of CLC-USA, to reflect on how God is calling them to serve, and to consider the gifts, talents, and faith they can offer for the good of our national community.

***May the Holy Spirit guide their discernment with clarity and peace. May the Risen Jesus bless them with courage, wisdom, and joy as they listen for God's call. May their "yes" – whatever it may be – strengthen our shared mission.***

Let us hold them close in prayer during this important moment for our community.



# Gratitude for Mimi Parks – Our Ignatian Spirituality Frontier Team Leader

As the Ignatian Spirituality Frontier Team forms, we express our gratitude to **Mimi Parks** for her humility, patience, and steadfast commitment to guiding the group. We look forward to officially “sending” Mimi and her team at our **Feast Day of St. Ignatius Celebration on July 31.**



# Walking With Refugees: JRS Lebanon's Mission of Presence and Hope

JRS Lebanon continues a deeply Ignatian mission of accompaniment, walking with refugee families facing displacement, economic collapse, and daily uncertainty. Their presence offers education, protection, and hope in circumstances marked by profound vulnerability. As we hold our global brothers and sisters in prayer this Lent, we remember the quiet, steadfast work of those serving on the margins.

Visit this link for more information:  
<https://jrs.net/en/country/lebanon/>



# PRAYERS FOR PEACE AND AN END TO WAR AND VIOLENCE

As CLC in the USA, and in solidarity with Pope Leo and Catholics around the world, we pray for an end to war and violence. We especially hold in prayer our Christian Life Community and the Jesuits in Lebanon and Beirut.

**From Najat Sayegh – CLC Lebanon  
March 14, 2026**



What can be said about the situation in Lebanon? Everything is linked to political issues, but let us not discuss them here; the media already says enough.

**Lebanon, like the whole world, is thirsty for peace.**

In Lebanon, we are tired of enduring, for decades, the wars of others on our land. But this time, the situation is very critical. After more than a year of a certain return to normal life, the war resumed on March 2, 2026 – a war that the Lebanese people did not choose and never wanted.

The population is overwhelmed by a deep sense of anger and frustration. What is happening is very sad. In some regions of the country, evacuation orders are being issued, immediate alerts are announced, and families flee their homes at night without taking anything with them, not knowing where to go. Many are sleeping in their cars or in the streets. NGOs are mobilizing, public schools are opening their doors for displaced people, and solidarity can be seen everywhere. CLC in Lebanon, within the limits of its means, helps several families, striving to meet their needs as much as possible while providing accompaniment and spiritual support.

# PRAYERS FOR PEACE AND AN END TO WAR AND VIOLENCE

The inhabitants of a Christian village on the country's southern border – peaceful and deeply attached to their land – refuse to leave their homes. Their parish priest, who encouraged them, **Fr. Pierre Al-Rahi** (whose name means “shepherd” in Arabic), was killed by a shell while he ran to help parishioners wounded by the bombardments. His martyrdom only strengthened the villagers' determination to follow his example. The Pope himself paid tribute to this “true shepherd who always remained beside his people with the love and sacrifice of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. May the Lord grant that the blood he shed may be a seed of peace for beloved Lebanon.”

Despite everything, life goes on. “*Do not be afraid, little flock,*” the Lord tells us. We cannot allow ourselves to sink into despair, we who are children of hope. After sleepless nights because of the air strikes, the normal course of life resumes with every sunrise. People go to work, private schools welcome students. This resilience runs in our veins.

It is true that we are living a kind of Way of the Cross; we are passing through a dark tunnel. Yet we remain confident that Jesus carries the burden of the cross with us, helping us rise again and again. At the end of the tunnel shines the light of the Resurrection. **We hope for it.**



For more testimonies from CLC members in Lebanon, visit the link [here](#) and read our next Harvest edition. If you wish to contribute to either **La Cuisine de Mariam (“Mary’s Kitchen”)**, a ministry of CLC in Beirut, or to **Jesuit Refugee Services in the Middle East**, with whom CLC works closely, please email Christine Cichello at [chriskampcichello@gmail.com](mailto:chriskampcichello@gmail.com).

# Prayers for the Executive Council Gathering in Boston

This weekend, our Executive Council will gather in Boston for a time of prayer, discernment, and mission-focused reflection. As they come together, they will be listening deeply to the Holy Spirit, reviewing our priorities, discerning areas for growth, and meeting with several Frontier groups to strengthen collaboration across our national community.

They will also be carving out space for personal prayer, shared prayer as a Council, and quiet reflection – trusting that the Risen Christ continues to guide our steps as a national body.

We invite our entire CLC-USA community to hold them in prayer:

***May the Holy Spirit lead their conversations with wisdom and clarity. May the Risen Jesus bless their discernment with peace, unity, and renewed purpose. May their time together strengthen our shared mission and deepen our commitment to serve with love.***

Let us accompany them in spirit, asking God to bless their work and to guide our national community in the months ahead.



**CVX-CLC**  
Christian  
Life  
Community  

---

in USA

# PRAYER FOR PROTECTION AND MERCY

God of life and mercy,  
today I lift my heart for all your sons and daughters who are trapped in the midst  
of conflict, without choosing it, without provoking it.

You who know every tear before it falls, draw near to those who live in fear, to  
those who have lost their homes,  
to those searching for their loved ones,  
to those who simply hope to survive one more day.

I pray especially for the families who right now are under the thunder of  
bombings:  
for the mothers holding their children close to protect them, for the fathers  
seeking shelter without knowing where to go, for the grandparents, the young,  
the babies, for every household trembling, unsure if dawn will come.

Cover them with Your protection.  
Be a shield for the defenseless, comfort for those who weep, light for those  
walking in darkness.

May Your peace, the peace the world cannot give, break through the noise of  
weapons and touch hardened hearts, so that dialogue, justice, and respect for  
every human life may rise again.

Lord, stop the violence.  
Heal both visible and invisible wounds.  
Strengthen those who work for peace, and renew our hope so we never grow  
numb to the suffering of others.

Stay close to every victim and every family, like a whisper that embraces, like a  
refuge that cannot be shaken.  
Amen.

