



Constitution

Introduction

Most CLC members will know that legally we are a Registered Charity operating under a Constitution, and they will also be aware that in recent years charity legislation in England requires us to check that the aims and objects in our Constitution follow the Charity Commission Guidelines on Public Benefit. Since it is sixteen years since any amendment has been made to the Constitution it is also time to amend other details which no longer apply. In this light the National Team after initial consultation with the Charity Commission proposed changes to the 1996 Constitution at the AGM during the National Assembly at Loyola Hall, 17th June 2012. The AGM accepted such changes.

Since it is no longer sufficient to have simply 'the advancement of the Christian Religion' as the prime object of a Charity, this revision adds some ways in which CLC strives to do this - briefly the recruitment, support and formation of members in the CLC Way of Life and Ignatian Spirituality, the maintenance of links with international CLC and a discerned response to issues of deprivation and social justice. These somewhat expanded examples form the major proposed change to the text.

In addition, there are a few minor changes; nomenclature is changed to reflect current usage, for example 'National Executive Council' becomes 'Extended National Team'; the AGM is given the power to vary fee dues; Trustees of the Charity are identified by role for the first time; reference to a redundant arrangement with the CLM Trust is omitted; and an intrusive comma removed.

Constitution

of the

Christian Life Community

in England and Wales

Registered Charity No. 1056891

New constitution adopted on 21st May 1995,

amended at the AGM on 26th May 1996

and again at the AGM on

17th June 2012.

1 Objects

- a To assist in the advancement of the Christian Religion in accordance with the principles laid down in the current statement of General Principles and General Norms of the World Christian Life Community and
- b to carry out such other charitable purposes for the advancement of the Christian religion as shall be agreed by the Members.

2 Furtherance Powers'

- a To promote and support the Christian Life Community (CLC) as a way of life both for existing members and for those who are interested in becoming members, and to provide suitable opportunities and materials to this end.
- b To assist individual members and local CLC communities to grow in an appreciation of the CLC way of life and in their mission for the glory of God and the common good and to deepen their experience of Ignatian Spirituality, providing support, training and formation at national and regional levels.
- c To maintain and strengthen links with European and world- wide CLC communities and to foster links at a national level in England and Wales.
- d To respond to issues such as the dignity of the person, the welfare of families, and deprivation or social justice, either in this country or in the wider international community as may be discerned by the National community.

3 Membership

- a The Christian Life Community in England and Wales ("National Community") is a part of the World Christian Life Community ("WCLC"). Membership is open to any Christian who:
 - i accepts the General Principles and General Norms of the WCLC.
 - ii abides by this Constitution of the National Community
 - iii pays the membership fee prescribed by the National Community at a General Meeting, unless exempted by the same Community.
- b A local group of Members may be approved as a Christian Life Community by the National Executive Council ("Extended National Team"), in accordance with criteria which have been adopted by a General Meeting and are in harmony with the General Norms of WCLC for approval of local communities.
- c A local Christian Life Community may, at its discretion, temporarily include people who are not members of the National Community.
- d Membership may be withdrawn from any person who is in breach of the above conditions in the opinion of at least two-thirds of the Executive, provided that the individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Executive, accompanied by a friend, before the decision is made.

4 Government

- a The Christian Life Community in England and Wales is governed by the Members in General Meeting. The National Executive Council is responsible for the implementation of resolutions approved at a General Meeting and for the management and administration of the National Community.
- b The Executive shall have the power to collect and receive donations, to employ and pay staff and to pay out-pocket-expenses of members of the Executive but no remuneration shall be paid or benefit be made available to any member of the Executive.

5 General Meetings

- a An Annual General Meeting ("AGM"), open to all Members, shall be held once a year at a place and date decided by the Executive, who shall give a minimum of three months notice to Members.
- b Business at an AGM shall include approval of accounts, election of national officers and approval of membership fees. Other motions for discussion must be sent to the Secretary not later than eight weeks before the meeting.
- c The Executive shall prepare an agenda and an annual report to be sent to all Members at least two weeks before each AGM, together with names of those nominated for election.
- d At the request of ten members of the National Community the Executive shall call an Extraordinary General Meeting and give one month's notice, with details of motions to be proposed, to all Members.
- e The chair at a General Meeting shall be taken by the President. In the absence of the President the Members present will elect a person to chair the meeting.
- f A quorum shall consist of ten Members present in person or by proxy.
- g Members unable to be present may vote by proxy provided a signed appointment is received by the Secretary 48 hours before the time of the meeting. A simple majority of those voting in person and by proxy suffices to pass any motion, with the exception of amendments to the Constitution, which require approval by a majority of two-thirds of those voting.
- h Notice may be given by inclusion in a newsletter sent to all Members.



6 National Executive Council 'Extended National Team'

- a The aim of the National Executive Council 'Extended National Team' is to ensure the provision of structures and programmes necessary for the harmonious development of the whole National Community, and for effective participation by its Members in the mission of the Church.

The Executive will consist of:

Voting members:

Elected:

National Officers:

President

Secretary

Treasurer

Regional Representatives

Appointed:

Ecclesiastical Adviser

National Chaplain

WCLC Euro-link

Liaison members

Non-voting:

Co-opted members.

The above elected voting members function as the **trustees of Registered Charity No 1056891. These posts are: President; Secretary; Treasurer; Regional Representatives**

- b **The National Officers** are elected at an AGM.
- c **A Regional Representative** is elected by Members living in a distinct geographical region. The method of election shall be decided by the Executive.
- d **The Ecclesiastical Adviser** is appointed by the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales ("Bishops' Conference").
- e **The National Chaplain** is chosen by the Executive and will normally be a priest of the Society of Jesus appointed for an agreed term after consultation with the Executive by the Provincial Superior for Great Britain. In exceptional circumstances the Executive may choose another person for approval by the Ecclesiastical Adviser and appointment, if appropriate, by the person's religious superior. The National Chaplain fulfils the role of **Ecclesiastical Assistant** prescribed in the General Norms of the WCLC.

- f **The WCLC Euro-link** acts as a link with other National Christian Life Communities in Europe and Liaison Members represent the National Community on organisations such as the consultative bodies of the Bishops' Conference. They are appointed by the Executive after seeking nominations from Members.
- g The number of elected members shall at all times exceed the number of appointed members of the Executive.
- h The Executive may co-opt up to **four non-voting members** for a period of a year, which can be renewed.
- i **All voting members** of the Executive except the Ecclesiastical Adviser and National Chaplain shall be appointed or elected for a fixed period of office of not more than four years. No person shall serve more than eight consecutive years in the same office except the Ecclesiastical Adviser, the National Chaplain and the Treasurer.
- j The Executive may elect one of its members to be **Vice President** to take the chair at meetings of the Executive in the President's absence, and shall do so if the President resigns prior to an AGM.
- k **The Executive** shall meet at least once a year and shall otherwise conduct its business in accordance with standing orders adopted from time to time.

7 Links with the Church

- a The Church authority which grants approval to the National Community is the WCLC, canonically established by the Holy See.
- b The National Community's link with the Bishops' Conference is maintained by the Ecclesiastical Adviser appointed by them.

8 Finance

- a The Executive shall propose annual membership fees for approval at each AGM for effect from the start of the next financial year.
- b Bank accounts in the name of the National Community shall have not less than two signatories of whom at least one must be a voting member of the Executive.
- c Accounting periods shall expire on 31st December each year, commencing 31/12/95, and accounts must be presented to the next AGM following the end of each financial year, after examination by a suitable person appointed by the Executive but not a member of the Executive.

9 Alterations to the Constitution

- a Subject to the following provisions of this clause the Constitution may be altered by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members voting in person or by proxy at a General Meeting. The notice of the general meeting must include notice of the resolution, setting out the terms of the alteration proposed.
- b No amendment may be made to Clause 1 (the Objects clause), or clause 10 (the dissolution clause) or this clause without the prior consent in writing of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales ("the Commissioners").
- c No amendment may be made which would have the effect of making the National Community cease to be a charity at law.
- d The Executive shall promptly send to the Commissioners a copy of any amendment made under this clause.

10 Dissolution

- a If the National Community ceases to be a branch of the WCLC for any reason or if the Executive decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the National Community it shall call a meeting of all members for the purpose of considering a dissolution of which not less than one month's notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed) shall be given. If the proposal is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those voting in person or by proxy the Executive shall have power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the National Community. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the National Community as the members of the National Community may determine or failing that shall be applied for some other charitable purpose. A copy of the statement of accounts for the final accounting period shall be sent to the Commissioners.
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World CLC



The legal status of CLC in the Roman Catholic Church

PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM PRO LAICIS

(THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE LAITY)

1620/90/A1C-50

DECREE

Having considered and carefully studied the text of the "*General Principles of the Christian Life Community*", approved by the World Assembly of that association of faithful in Guadalajara (Mexico) on 7th September 1990, and subsequently submitted to the Pontifical Council for the Laity for canonical approval,

Also bearing in mind the "*General Norms of the Christian Life Community*", approved in the same assembly,

Recognizing in the Christian Life Community the joint continuation of the Marian Congregations initiated by Jean Leunis, s.j. which still trace their origins to "those groups of lay people that developed after 1540 in different parts of the world through the initiative of Saint Ignatius Loyola and his companions" (General Principles, preamble 3),

In appreciation of a venerable association erected by the Bull *Omnipotentis Dei* of His Holiness Gregory XIII (5 December 1584), sustained and encouraged subsequently by numerous pontifical documents, particularly by the Apostolic Constitution *Bis Saeculari* of His Holiness Pius XII (27 November 1948) enriched by examples of holiness and apostolic fruits,

Taking into account the actual commitment of "men and women, adults and youth, of all social conditions who want to follow Jesus Christ more closely and work with him for the building of the Kingdom, who have recognized

Christian Life Community as their particular vocation within the Church" in accordance with their own charism and spirituality (cf. General Principles, part 1),
Recalling that the former World Federation of Christian Life Communities was recognized as an International Catholic Organization and that its Statutes were approved by the Holy See on 31 May 1971 after a period of three years *ad experimentum*,

Also considering the actual norm of the Code of Canon Law relative to Associations of the faithful within the Church,

THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE LAITY

CONFIRMS the Christian Life Community as a public international Association of faithful, of pontifical right, in accordance with canons 312 and following, of the present Code of Canon Law,

AND APPROVES its "*General Principles*" presented in their original form and deposited in the Archives of this Dicastery.

It is highly significant that this pontifical approval of the "*General Principles of the Christian Life Community*" occurs precisely in the Jubilee year which celebrates the 500th anniversary of the birth of St. Ignatius Loyola and the 450th anniversary of the founding of the Society of Jesus. Therefore all the members of the Christian Life Community should take to heart what has been written in the letter of Rev. Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach when he points out that "the Ignatian year has no other purpose than the renovation, in the Spirit, of the apostolic life, both personal and at community level", associating with this celebration in a special way "all those men and women who collaborate most intimately with the Society or who take their inspiration from Ignatian spirituality" while embracing "the Spiritual Exercises in all their rigour and authenticity". This we ask of the Lord through the intercession of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, to whom the Christian Life community regards itself as profoundly and traditionally united from its very beginnings and in whom it has always wished to inspire its fidelity to the Lord and its apostolic and missionary zeal "for the greater glory of God".

Given at the Vatican, on 3 December 1990, the feast of St. Francis Xavier.

Paul J. Cordes
President

Eduardo F. Card. Pironio
Vice-President

