

# CATHOLIC LIFE COMMUNITIES (CLC)

## SECTION I

### AN OUTLINE OF WHAT WE ARE

#### ***What are Catholic Life Communities?***

Committed, parish-based, single-sex high school communities of faith for guys and girls, that promote their spiritual, emotional and social development in an atmosphere of Christian values and friendships.

#### ***How are CLCs established?***

CLCs are organized and led by one or more adult moderators, approved and supported by the Youth Apostles Institute. They function within a particular parish with the approval of the Pastor.

#### ***How do CLCs function?***

The community meets weekly throughout the year. The meeting opens with a prayerful reflection. There is an inspirational talk or activity followed by group sharing. Time is also allotted for formation, business and fellowship. Once a month the meeting consists of participating in the parish Holy hour to spend time in community with parishioners of all ages. Meetings take approximately 2 hours.

#### ***What important Christian values and virtues are emphasized in CLC?***

**TRUTH:** Honesty, openness in communication and mutual trust are integral parts of the CLC commitment. By following the truthfulness and radical openness of Christ, members are inspired to a deeper **FAITH** in God and a greater sense of accountability to one another.

**FREEDOM:** Responsible choices, achieved through a strong personal discipline, are the foundation of true freedom. This freedom enables members to make a commitment to Christ, and

to live a life filled with **HOPE**; the same hope that is destroyed by impulsive and irresponsible choices.

**CARE**: Care embodied in warmth and friendship fosters unconditional love and Christian charity. Inspired by Christ's sacrificial love, CLC members are challenged to outwardly show their support and **LOVE** for God and for each other.

### ***What are the most important elements of the CLC spirituality?***

**EUCCHARIST**: Jesus, truly present in the Eucharist, is the main source of spiritual strength. CLC strives to inspire its members to a deep love for the Eucharistic Christ. The Mass is the greatest expression of our union with God and one another and CLC stresses the importance of frequent and active participation in the Mass. In Mass we recognize our failures, ponder God's Word and become united in the Body of Christ.

**PENANCE**: We are reunited in the Body of Christ through the healing power of the Sacrament of Penance. It is through this Sacrament that the members confess their sinfulness and accept the Lord's forgiveness. It is also through this Sacrament that they recognize their connection to the Church as a whole and, in particular, to the community members. This experience of God's mercy gives them the **FREEDOM** to **CARE** for one another in a Christ-like manner.

**PRAYER**: A personal relationship with God needs to be based on prayer. It is through prayer that we can develop an intimate relationship with Christ. CLC hold up for youth the beauty and value of prayer, giving instruction and encouragement on the practice of daily prayer.

**MARY, HELP AND MODEL OF CHRISTIANS**: Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother, is the perfect example of a Christian. In imitation of her response to God, her "radical yes", CLC members are encouraged to commit their lives to following the will of God. The commitments of CLC members facilitate this consecration of their lives to Christ. As humble servants, through which the Spirit's light shines, our purpose, like Mary, is to bring Christ into the world.

**THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES**: Just as the body needs physical training to stay in shape, the soul needs spiritual training to grow closer to its creator. Our Retreats are based on The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. They are designed to help the members discern God's will in their lives. The Exercises promote openness to God, self and others, and lead to the responsible choices which increase our freedom.

### ***What are the activities of CLC?***

As Catholic communities of faith, CLCs are centered on the Eucharist. In addition to our communal monthly Holy Hours of Eucharistic Adoration, the CLC members participate in other weekly Masses, go to Confession regularly, and develop a life of personal prayer and spiritual devotions.

The CLC members are drawn closer to Christ and to one another through our Annual Community Retreat, Full Member Workshop and Retreat, Election Workshop and Summer Fun Workshop.

Also a number of more informal overnights and day workshops may also be organized through the year.

Recognizing Christ's call to service and love of neighbor, the community helps the parish in whatever way it can. The members serve as acolytes, lectors and ushers; they assist in the religious education program, and they volunteer to serve at parish activities. Mindful of the needs of the poor they also volunteer to serve in special projects and service activities.

Friendship is one of the most important elements in CLC. Rooted in the unconditional love of Christ, the members accept and support their peers as brothers or sisters, through open sharing, mutual acceptance, and quality fun experiences. Social activities are organized to facilitate friendships. Fun workshops, outings, and other social events, all serve as community builders.

### ***How are CLCs governed?***

Under the guidance of its adult moderators, each CLC chooses its own Board of Directors. This Board meets regularly to discuss and plan community events and to reflect on the overall spirit and direction of the community. The members of the Board offer Christian example and leadership, and inspire the members of the community to live their promises.

### ***How is commitment achieved?***

CLC members are instructed and encouraged to live a more intense religious, apostolic and moral life, beyond usual Sunday Church requirements. Their formation helps them develop a lifestyle where Christian values are adequately understood and lived. It is achieved by challenging members to heed God's call to live a Christ-like life and supporting them in their efforts. It is our hope that the Christian example and the commitments of the adult moderators may serve to inspire the members to make similar commitments to their faith. Practically, it is achieved through a series of commitments involving specific standards of Christian living.

### ***Why is commitment emphasized in CLC?***

Commitment is at the core of our community. It is a covenant between God and the CLC member, made publicly and witnessed by the whole community. This freely accepted commitment encourages a spirit of perseverance and fidelity to live the Christian life in the Catholic Church, and within a CLC.

### ***What are CLC standards and promises?***

They are levels of personal commitment made within the community to express the desire to follow Christ more closely. At each level a Promise is made, which states the member's intention to live according to specific Christian standards. The promise is read in front of the community, if possible during a commitment liturgy, and the member receives a Cross that symbolizes the commitment made. These commitments are only made after serious consideration by both the member, the Board of Directors and the adult Moderators.

