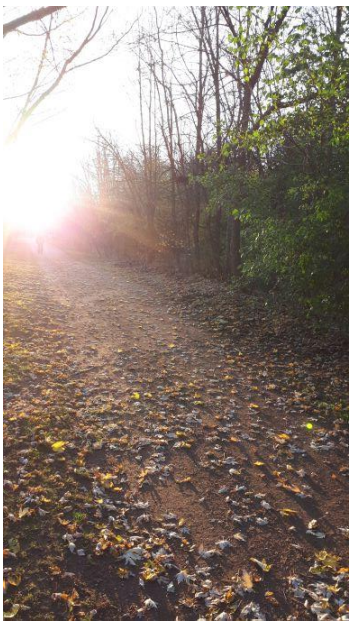


A CHRISTMAS REFLECTION: THE GIFT OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

Our Yes to the Holy Spirit: In 1979, the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius were offered to five members of Emmaus community by our then Bishop Remi De Roo who, having participated and been inspired by Vatican 2, was implementing lay involvement, spiritual training, and leadership in Victoria Diocese. We accepted that invitation.

The Wise Men Came: At that time, Fr. John English SJ was one of the spiritual directors implementing a prayer companions training program in the diocese. We like to say he "discovered us!" We had already completed a year's study of a Jesuit program called The Followers of Jesus. He declared we were well into C.L.C. formation and he invited us to officially join the national C.L.C. of Canada. Having done the spiritual exercises made this transition a natural one.

The Birth: Not only did we say yes and join, but using the discernment process we were led to become a covenanted community with economic sharing, and in fact we as a community, built an extra suite for service. We have now lived together as CLC Community, practising Ignatian prayer forms learnt in the exercises, since 1988.

The Flight into Egypt-Jesus was a refugee: Around this time the horrors of the Vietnam war challenged us as a community. Having chosen to follow the standard of Jesus and his example of a preferential option for the poor and marginalized, we as a community began a long history of ongoing sponsorship and accompaniment of refugees, from different wars zones. This continues to this present day.

Jesus's public ministry

God in all things: Mission outreach, education, social justice actions, advocacy, birthing of L'Arche Comox Valley: the call was to listen to Jesus and respond. In 2020 we facilitated 2 groups who completed Annotation 19 and who are at present discerning future CLC participation.

The Passion and Death: Now, as an aging community, we have suffered through the desolation of the passing of seven of our members and the ongoing movement of us all aging and becoming elders. Our consolation is God with us.

RESURRECTION: With the approach of Christmas, we revisit our contemplation of the nativity with it's promise of new life. We celebrate with great joy the gift of all our grandchildren and the new groups of C.L.C. that are beginning to flourish. Christmas is a time of new life and as

people of Faith we embrace the hope and promise that is the Paschal Mystery laid out so beautifully in the Spiritual Exercises.

Submitted by Susan Ranbow, CLC Emmaus Community