CLC Atlantic Regional Report from Sept. 2019 – Nov. 2020



Profile

The Atlantic region, which includes NS, NB and PEI, has a total of 45 members - one is in diaspora, ~1/3 are male. More than 75% of our members are over 60 years of age. Twelve members, representing 8 communities, were able to attend our National Assembly in Winnipeg. 25 members have made permanent commitments and 15 members have made temporary commitments.

Here are the names of our nine Atlantic communities:

NB = Earthen Vessel, Living Water/Fishers of People, River of Life, JOY, Nativity, Potter's Clay

PEI = Ixthus, Companions on the Way

NS = Seeds of Transformation

Each community has a group guide, a group contact and 1 or 2 group coordinators. The sizes of the communities range from 7 to 2 members. Two communities have been in existence for more than 30 years and our youngest community has been together since 2011. Over the years, many communities have lost members and, along the way, some discerned to join other existing communities creating something new.

During the spring Covid lockdown, 8 communities were able to continue meeting regularly on Zoom, Skype or Facebook Messenger. Often groups shortened their meetings to make the time online more pleasant. Some members used their phones to connect to meetings and some found this challenging. Most communities continued, with modifications, their regular meeting format, prayer material and missions. After the summer break, some groups have continued to meet online while others went back to meeting face-to-face.

Formation and Community Development

We hold regional gatherings twice a year, in the spring and the fall, and usually each community is represented by at least 1 member. At these gatherings, formation takes place, information is given and members connect. Because of the National Assembly last fall, our regional fall gathering was cancelled. We had planned a spring gathering for May 1 & 2nd, but because of Covid – 19, it was cancelled. Then our Regional Assembly, which is held every 3 years and was scheduled for August 28- 30, was postponed.

So as you can imagine, Atlantic communities are very much looking forward to gathering together virtually on October 16 & 17. Our theme will be **"**Finding God in the Midst of These Uncertain Times" and our focus will be on seeing where the National Priorities are unfolding. We will also celebrate mass together.

In the fall of 2019, a number of CLCers and many lay people in NB completed the 1st module of the First Spiritual Exercises. Since then, they have been meeting virtually for spiritual conversation in small groups. This has enabled them to stay connected until they will continue their journey face to face next year.

Over the past few years, 7 CLCers have been meeting together irregularly for a Group Guide Formation/Renewal process. 6 members live in PEI and 1 is in NS, so the meetings have been held on Zoom.

In connection with our nationally discerned priority regarding sustaining CLC into the future, the NB Group Guide community has been providing training and mentorship for two Atlantic CLC members who have answered a discerned call to become a coordinator of a new group, accompanying it through the first 18 weeks of the Phase 1 Manual. Their training began this September under the guidance of Pam Daigle.

The Atlantic Region recently held our first Virtual Zoom gathering on October 16th and 17th over three sessions: Friday evening, Saturday morning and ending Saturday afternoon with a Virtual Mass. There was a total of 24 attendees. The theme of the weekend was: "Finding God in the Midst of These Uncertain Times." Our Grace for the gathering was: "We ask for the grace to discover more fully, who You, Jesus, are calling us to be, in relationship with You, with one another and will all creation during this global pandemic." On Friday evening, participants engaged in three rounds of sharing on: "As CLC Atlantic continues to journey throughout this pandemic, we invite each member to reflect upon how you feel this experience has been affecting you, your community and mission. Name one or two graces that have surfaced." Saturday morning, we heard from our President, Michelle Mahoney, who gave an inspiring update on the many wonderful things happening at the World, North American, and National levels. Next, Jane Abernethy-Parker gave a moving presentation on the unfolding of the National Priorities. Following the presentation, attendees were asked to share on: "From what you've heard today and experienced yourself, what energizes/challenges you about our National Priorities? Are there any of these National Priorities that you fee drawn to or that you see ourselves as a community working together on?" Overall, those who participated felt it was a very positive, and community-bonding experience.

Mission

In the fall of 2014, after a 2 year communal discernment process, the Atlantic region reached a consensus on our Common Mission > '***As the Christian Life Community {CLC} Atlantic Region we are called to place our gifts at the service of the poor, assisted by CLC development for this mission.'*** Since then, this mission has been inspiring, strengthening and has given us direction. Every spring gathering, each community submits a report which includes their communally discerned and personal missions. This spring, although we didn't hold

a gathering, we did ask groups to submit their reports which were shared throughout our membership. The following are some of the groups' communally discerned missions: to support the building of public affordable housing; to support members who have roles on the Atlantic Exco or National GC; to support a member who is working with the food bank; to be an intentional intercessory prayer group for CLC, its mission priorities and all those who give and receive the gift of Ignatian spirituality; to support a drop in center for women; to minister with a nonprofit Christian based charity called Chalice; to collaborate with other organizations for the eradication of poverty; to continue to be part of the National Working Group for the Frontier on Ecology.

The following are some examples of members' personal ministries: family life, hospital ministry, local church ministry including collaborating with others in parish outreach programs to the poor, supporting others who are suffering, supporting the activities of other social groups, speaking roles, teaching in public and university settings, guiding/ mentoring roles in CLC, working with seniors, working with refugees, retreat ministry, leadership roles in CWL and the Knights of Columbus, intercessory prayer, guiding others in AASEA/Ignatian spirituality and formation in the Spiritual Exercises.

Some other notes of interest in the Atlantic Region

- Karen Reeves began her role this September as the new Regional Representative for Atlantic.
- We are still waiting for someone to take on the role of secretary.
- Jane Abernethy-Parker from NS is the new group guide for a PEI CLC. She joins them on Zoom.
- Fr. Charles Pottie has moved to Newfoundland and continues to be our regional Ecclesiastical Assistant as Fr. Trevor Scott has taken on a role away from CLC.
- Julia Donahoe Macdougall is our formation coordinator and she is part of the Formation WG.
- Gerri Tingley is our treasurer and she is part of the Communication WG.
- Our region discontinued distribution of our newsletter Colloquy last year, because we felt it would be better to put our energy into the National Update.

Submitted by,

Jane Abernethy-Parker [outgoing Reg. Rep]

and Karen Reeves [current Reg. Rep.]