



**Ann Marie Brennan, Promoter of CLC for Metro NY**

Dear Friends in CLC,

As I write this letter, the sun is rising early, the forsythia are still in bright bloom and the birds are actively chirping. For us in the New York area, spring carries a newness of life and promise, and we can see more people going outside to enjoy the wonder of creation being released in all its color, sound and smells. This setting provides a beautiful context as we celebrate this Easter Season and the magnificence of Christ's Resurrection. Even though the daily news provides a backdrop of political wrangling, world conflict, droughts, environmental disasters, forced migration, illness and many other injustices, this season offers many wonders of new life and hope. Christ has shown us that through humiliation, betrayal, torture and even death, He triumphs to new life. God's life and love prevail.

As an Ignatian people, as CLC, we strive to see God's life and love in all things—in the depth of our own being, in our daily activities, in our relationships, in our family, in our work, in our communities, in all creation. In this practice of seeing God in all things, we join with Christ in the mission of giving witness to the Good News of the kingdom of God.

This summer, our world community will hold a General Assembly in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Delegates from over 70 countries will join together at this gathering, which is held every five years. While not everyone can attend, all CLC members have been invited to join in prayerful preparation that we, as CLC, may receive the grace of a *“greater depth and integration in living out the CLC charism in the world today.”* I encourage you to read the recent world documents which highlight the assembly themes and reflections. You can find these on the World CLC website: [www.cvx-clc.net](http://www.cvx-clc.net). Look for Projects 168 and Projects 169, as well as the letter from our World CLC President Mauricio Lopez which highlights a few of the major points of the assembly. Each of us is encouraged to embrace the gifts of CLC—our spirituality, our community, our mission. We are called to use these gifts to respond to the cries and hopes in the world around us, as our theme expresses: *CLC, a gift to the Church and the world.*

While we cherish this gift, we also recognize how important it is to share it with others. Each of us may have friends or family for whom the gift of CLC may also resonate. Consider extending a personal invitation to a meeting or sharing some of our CLC documents. I am also available to help with resources for starting new groups: information nights, Come and See programs, and more.

*Laudato Si'!*

Ann Marie Brennan

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## ST. CATHARINE CLC

We are delighted that four of our members made their permanent commitment at the Lenten Day of Prayer: Joan and George Carbone and Lynn and Peter Mayer. This was a wonderful day of rejoicing!

This year we have been reflecting on the *General Principles* using a program by Eileen Burke-Sullivan. We are finding it to be very rich with accompanying scripture readings, supplementary readings and suggested questions. We finished our parish ecological film series in April to educate and inspire action on *Laudato Si'*. The three films were: "Before the Flood" with Leonardo DiCaprio, "A Plastic Ocean" and "An Inconvenient Sequel" with Al Gore. We invited people to these films from the local Glen Rock Environmental Commission, as well as a biology professor from a local college, to discuss concrete ways for action.

CLC members continue to be active in parish ministry. George Carbone is a deacon who also leads the parish RCIA program. Peter Mayer is on the Pastoral Council. Pat Brennan is chair of the Buildings and Grounds committee, and he livestreams the weekend Masses. Lynn Mayer and Ann Marie Brennan lead the Peace and Justice committee, including the ecological initiatives. Joan Carbone continues her work in elder care, and Ed McCarthy is very excited that he will be a grandfather this year! Nicholas Kim spends many weekends in Sussex County working at the farm run by a Franciscan priest. Ann Marie will be heading off to the World CLC Assembly this summer in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

### + REST IN PEACE +

Virginia C. De Castro, mother of Lourdes De Castro, St. Aedan CLC, January 14, 2018

Bernadette Viray, sister of Rosabella Velo and sister-in-law of Luis Velo, San Lorenzo CLC,  
March 9, 2018

Thomas Macaluso, brother of Peter Macaluso, North New Jersey CLC, March 15, 2018

Marie O'Donnell Garcia, member of NY Professional Sodality, sister of Marianne Cummins, North  
New Jersey CLC, March 30, 2018

Edward McCarthy, father of Ed McCarthy, St. Catharine CLC, May 11, 2018

## SAN LORENZO CLC

### THE WAY TO COMPOSTELA DE SANTIAGO A Pilgrimage of Faith, Fitness and Food by Nanette Jongco,

It had been on our bucket list for years and the stars finally aligned. In May 2017, at the invitation of a friend, Angie Cruz, we joined a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. Since the dates coincided with the centennial celebration of the apparitions in Fatima, that became our first destination. Our 3-day visit to Fatima was a perfect prelude for what was to follow. We were raring to go on our walk along the picturesque Portuguese way.

The Camino de Santiago or the Way of St. James is a large network of ancient pilgrim routes across Europe that come together at the tomb of St. James the Great in Compostela located in Galicia, Spain. The most common routes are the Camino Frances, the Camino Ingles and the Camino Portugues. The history of these pilgrimages dates back to the year 814 at the time of the discovery of the tomb of the evangelical apostle, St. James. During the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the resurgence of the pilgrimages started and continued to peak to its present-day popularity.

Along with 20 fellow pilgrims and a Jesuit priest, Fr. Joe from Boston College, we spent a night in the UNESCO heritage city of Porto, where we started our Camino. With a pair of walking sticks, good walking shoes, thick socks worn inside out and feet rubbed with Vaseline, we were set for the long trek. Our itinerary was cramped into 5 days instead of the more common 10 day schedule. It required walking 15-25 kilometers every day in order to complete the final 100 kilometers leading to the Cathedral of St. James. We walked through a mixture of forest and countryside trails, passing farms and vineyards, stopping at historic sites and quaint chapels. Occasionally we navigated wide thoroughfares, long bridges and narrow city streets. Of course we partook of local specialties - empanadas, vino and churros y chocolate. In order not to go astray, there was one rule - follow the yellow arrows.

Unlike traditional pilgrims, we were spoiled since we had a bus that carried our luggage, and we spent nights in comfortable hotels! No, we did not carry bulky packs on our back nor set up tents at the end of the day. Just the same, our experience as we hailed "Buen Camino" to the pilgrims we met along the way challenged us not just physically but also spiritually. We not only saw and felt God in the beauty of nature but also in the kindness of the locals who greeted us. As an added bonus, Fr. Joe celebrated Mass every day and gave us reflections based on the *Spiritual Exercises*. We had great gastronomical experiences both for our bodies and our souls.

It wasn't a race, but as is always the case, the last lap was the hardest to tackle. Our guide Maria patiently waited for us, the slowest walkers, and pointed at the steeple of St. James Cathedral to egg us on. She took a video of our entry into the plaza and documented our arrival as we stomped our feet on the ZERO marker. We have proof that we earned the Certificate of the Camino to Santiago de Compostela. The icing on the cake was Mass at the Cathedral where we witnessed the famous giant censer, the Botafumeiro. With bodies drained but spirits high, we took time to put our feet up and catch up on rest at a monastery transformed into a hotel.

We toured Compostela, another UNESCO Heritage site and then proceeded to Finisterre, believed to be the end of the world in Roman times. It was breathtakingly beautiful - it was not the end of the world but a fitting end for our trip. This was truly a walking retreat pilgrimage, a pilgrimage of faith, fitness and yes, of food - one I would highly recommend to family and friends.



## **NORTH NEW JERSEY CLC**

Dennis Cummins has returned to his law practice in Fair Lawn, following successful by-pass surgery and rehab. In February Dennis and Marianne's son, Martin was married to Stefanie White at St. Anne's Church, Fair Lawn. Marianne continues to serve on the board of the Faith Center at St. Anne's. In the spring they will be showing "An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power," a sequel to "An Inconvenient Truth." Both films deal with climate change. Marianne and Dennis are grieving the loss of Marianne's sister, Maria O'Donnell Garcia.

Florence Horgan will celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her graduation from the Academy of Holy Angels. She is looking forward to meeting some former classmates and sharing memories. Florence drives seniors to doctor's appointments and to church. Her granddaughter, Michele, is graduating from Sussex County Community College in May.

Vivian Stepanian recently toured the Amish country in Pennsylvania with her husband, Bob. She continues to be challenged by the sixth graders in her Religious Education class at St. Joseph's, Oradell.

Mary Ann Cassidy has trained a team of adults to facilitate Children's Liturgy of the Word at her parish in Mt. Vernon. She visited grandchildren on the West coast in February, and will soon attend the First Communion of her grandson, Patrick, in Yonkers. She continues to advocate on issues such as gun-control and climate change.

Peter Macaluso has been using his scholarly research skills to present talks on "Liberty and Equality" and "The Miracle of our Nation's Birth." His talks connected the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of World War I and the liberty of Christ expressed in Joyce Kilmer's poems. He also facilitated an evening on St. Lawrence of Rome through a you-tube by Father John Coughlin, OFM, at St. Anne's Church. Both he and Mary Ann are grieving the loss of Peter's brother, Thomas.

Terri Mierswa continues to participate with the St. Francis Metuchen group as guide. The group, although small, is filled with many consolations as we share our spiritual and personal missions. The community mission at Elijah's Kitchen is a reminder that unforeseen circumstances can place any one of us on the food line. We are grateful to be in Christ's hands. Terri's parish Peace and Justice group has been focusing on racial disparities, hosting speakers from Black Lives Matter, NAACP and a Rockland County group that advocates for criminal justice reform.



## ST. AEDAN CLC

“Caring for our Gifts worth passing on to the next generation.”



In joy and gratitude our community focused on our communal mission in living *Laudato Si'*, treasuring our moments to care for our gifts and passing them on to the next generation. We have done three major outreach projects for the past few months; **Project Puerto Rico**, where Sanet sent boxes of goodies; **Project Mayon**, where all members collaborated with Fr. Thomas of the Archdiocese in Naga, Philippines and donated goodies for the victims; **Project Tree Planting** in Newark, New Jersey together with the new kids on the block in collaboration with the NJ Tree Foundation.

On our personal journey, Francis volunteered for UN Habitat in Queens and attended the Our Lady of Divine Mercy Pilgrimage on April 8, 2018. Sanet continues her advocacy in Health Ministry at St. Aloysius Parish. Liway is very active in her Feeding Program Project for the less fortunate children and has hosted various events for them. Susan and Delfin continue sponsoring the 2000 Hail Marys devotion. Perry shared in various programs of the Columbiettes of St. Aedan. Lorna participated in the *Spiritual Exercises* directed by Fr. Andy, S.J., at the Convent Hall and joined the Divine Mercy Pilgrimage. Tina attended the class reunion of her husband Augusto in the Philippines. Gina went on vacation in Oregon with her friends from college, a mini reunion. Cynthia and Tim were busy with their family gathering in Toms River. They hope to form a CLC in Toms River. Lourdes joined with St. Aloysius Parish's Divine Mercy Pilgrimage in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. She continues attending her personal counseling and therapy after her Mom's death.

## **FORDHAM PREP CLC**

Fr. Ray Sweitzer enjoys celebrating Mass two weekends a month at Holy Cross Parish in the Soundview section of the Bronx.

When Fr. Joe Billotti isn't tutoring students struggling in mathematics at Fordham Prep, he can be found at his easel painting original works. He had his first exhibit this spring.

Martin Carney "ran the table" of retreats this year—having served on at least one retreat for each of the four divisions at the Prep.

Paul Homer enjoyed his first stay in Atlanta attending a regional meeting of Jesuit high school service directors.

This past Thanksgiving, Trish Morris visited Clongowes Wood College, a Jesuit boarding school near Dublin, Ireland with another Prep teacher and six students on the first leg of an exchange. She also got in a side visit to Galway. Fordham Prep hosted the Clongownians before February break, and we're all excited about this new relationship. What a wonderful experience for the students and the chaperones. More recently, Trish and her siblings have been spending lots of time with her parents who have recently moved to an apartment in an assisted living home. All is going well! She has no plans to travel abroad in the coming months, but may do a little exploring domestically. Being with the students is always a blessing, but she, like all of us, is starting to dream of summer!

### **Directed and Private Retreat Schedules**

**Linwood Spiritual Center – (845) 876-4178 ext. 301 or [www.linwoodspiritualctr.org](http://www.linwoodspiritualctr.org)**

Private Retreat Week – July 23-July 28, 2018

Ignatian Guided Retreats – May 11-18, June 22-29, July 13-20, Aug. 3-10,  
Aug. 20-27, 2018

**Loyola Retreat House – (973) 539-0740 or [www.loyola.org](http://www.loyola.org)**

Directed Retreats - July 6-13, July 30-Aug. 6, 2018

Summer Preached Retreat July 14-20, 2018



## LOCUST VALLEY CLC

The Locust Valley CLC members, Nancy Head, Carol Meringolo, George Willett and Dorothy Zambito continue to meet and serve in their parish, St. Gertrude's. They are just finishing their reading and reflection of Pope Francis' *Amoris Laetitia*. The community is looking forward to delving into Pope Francis' *Gaudete et Exultate* (Rejoice and Be Glad).

Bible Study in the parish has been completed for now. Early in the fall, the community and other parishioners will confer and choose a new Scripture to consider.

Carol and Dorothy continue to be busy at the local soup kitchen. There has been a reorganization which has led to many meetings. With that almost completed, the focus is on a big fundraiser. Monies needed to operate the North Shore Soup Kitchen three days a week come from donations from individuals, congregations, foundations, organizations and fundraisers. The soup kitchen is not supported by government agencies.

Nancy and Dorothy attended a weekend retreat of "Fordham Alumni and Friends." They qualified as friends. The retreat was held at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington. The presenter for the retreat was Father Brendan Horan, S.J., presently teaching at Fordham. Father did a wonderful job in combining the spirituality of Pope Francis with Lenten themes.

Nancy, George and Dorothy attended a program at the seminary called 'Desert Bread.' It was offered by Annabelle Moseley, a poet and relative of George. On the celebration of Good Shepherd Sunday, the poet led the group in reflecting on the theme of shepherd, using scripture, art work, music and poetry. The program ended with a light lunch and informal sharing.

Nancy enjoyed a weekend away in Connecticut with her daughter's family. The gathering that took place was to participate in and celebrate her Grandson George's Confirmation.

## MANRESA CLC

At a recent meeting Mary Ann Parise shared an insightful Holy Thursday experience. "On the Feast of the Lord's Supper I attended Mass hoping to pray with a beautiful contemporary Communion meditation hymn which I had heard at that church several times in recent years. Its words take us from the Incarnation to the Resurrection – our Lord as the 'Living Bread of Life' and his Mother as the 'Baker Woman' (the hymn's title). My disappointment was profound when post-Communion time came and went without my specially loved song. After Mass I told of my letdown to the choir member who had always sung this solo. She acknowledged and understood my angst with such graciousness that I was brought to an important realization. What is important is reverence and participation; meeting the Lord in the present Liturgy, not holding on to something from the past, as special as it may have been to me at the time. In fact, in the first event (the Incarnation) recounted in that hymn, Mary's response was to say yes."

Bob Giardina and wife, Karen, have continued their meals-on-the-beach ministry through the unpredictable winter-spring weather. Each Saturday Karen cooks up a storm, then Bob transports the hot meals to Coney Island. Here he joins others from this ministry who serve the homeless and desperately poor lined up in one of the beach parking lots, anticipating what will most likely be their best meal of the week.

Evelyn Codd has recently returned from yet another trip to Arizona. Unfortunately, this was not a "snowbird" vacation. When her grandson, Matt, was again hospitalized with serious kidney problems, Evelyn flew out to be the moral, spiritual and physical support for both him and his family. For 3 weeks she cooked and cared for grandchildren, visited with Matt and eased the pressure for his wife. Matt is home now and doing well and Evelyn is thankful for the prayers that have carried them through the past tough months.

There just might be a bit of envy tingeing some of our good wishes for Liz Nelson and her husband who sold their Staten Island home, and moved into the pleasures of retirement life in upstate NY. We already miss Liz's insights and lively participation.

Dolores Celentano had an especially meaningful Holy Week at her parish, participating in the Holy Thursday Festival Choir, the re-enactment of the events of Holy Thursday and the Good Friday Way of the Cross. This has become a parish/neighborhood venture, from Jesus being dragged before Pilate to his placement on a cross. There were dozens of costumed participants as well as onlookers – from Roman soldiers to people along the way, as the Stations played out. Then on to the church for the Good Friday Service. It was even more touching for those parishioners who had been fortunate enough to participate in the parish trip to Israel and had made the Way in Jerusalem. The Easter Vigil, as always, crowned the week.

The season of spring may be dragging its heels as it approaches, uncovering only an occasional crocus or onion weed, but we are nonetheless filled with the wonder of Holy Week and the glory of Easter Resurrection. We pray that the graces and benedictions abounding in this incomparable time of year bless you all.