

## **THE CLC GROUP MEETING**

The regular weekly group meeting is the most important means of formation in our way of life. It provides a safe atmosphere of unconditional acceptance, where we learn to open our hearts to Jesus and his love, gradually learning to sift through the various layers of our experience. It is here that we experience "community" – the small community of a group as a taste of the wider Christian Life Community. In this way, our relationship with God becomes an ever-deepening and challenging encounter, bringing healing and freedom - a real experience of love for God, myself and others, in the context of my daily life.

A group leader/coordinator facilitates the meeting. He/she is an integral part of the group - sensitive to the other members and to the dynamic of the group. A guide usually assists the process by coming into the group from time to time to help with evaluations or any particular needs or problems.

The structure of the meeting is clear and consistent, with simple rules, giving a secure framework to support various creative exercises/programmes.

### **EXAMPLE**

1. **Arrival time and Tea** (about 20 minutes)

2. **AWARENESS/PRESENCE.** (10 minutes)

A lighted candle signifies Jesus in our midst. We sit together and gradually come to quiet, relaxing and opening ourselves to God's presence in the silence. This is a preparation time. We close our eyes or focus on the candle, checking posture and breathing, relaxing any stiff muscles. We acknowledge any distractions, anxieties and tensions we brought with us and let go of them. Our attitude is one of generous surrender to the warmth of God's loving Spirit

### 3. **INPUT.**

A short input/explanation of the programme for the meeting is given and any hand -outs, scripture references and questions for reflection.

### 4. **PRAYER AND REFLECTION.** (see CLC document on Prayer).

The leader prays for a **grace** and we begin the prayer or exercise for the meeting. About 30 minutes is usually given for this time.

### 5. **JOURNALING.**

As the prayer time draws to a close, members write down the 'fruits ' of their prayer and their dialogue or conversation with God in their journals.

### 6. **SHARING.**

This is a vital part of the CLC meeting and completely confidential. Our sharing is an extension of the prayer – our gift to one another. However, there is no pressure placed on a person who does not wish to share. Most of us have a deep need to be 'heard' and each person's sharing is received with respectful, attentive listening, **without** any comment or discussion. This experience of being given "space" and listened to in an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance, without comment, verbal comforting or counselling is extremely healing.

### 7. **REVIEW OF THE MEETING.**

An informal, short review is helpful. In silence, after the sharing, we ponder and savour the gifts and graces, as well as the difficulties of the meeting. (From time to time, we have a full evaluation and sharing, usually with the Group guide).

### 8. **We close** with thanksgiving prayer and intercession.