

Excerpts on Team Life from the Regnum Christi Member Handbook



REGNUM CHRISTI

64 Ordinarily, you do not live your calling and membership in Regnum Christi in isolation. The Movement is above all a true, spiritual family in the Church. Therefore, the life of its members unfolds in the framework of spiritual communion and fraternal charity, as happens and has always happened in the Church since early Christianity. This reality takes concrete shape by belonging to a team, which is a small group of members who mutually help and encourage each other to live a better life, persevere in their Christian vocation and be more effective in their apostolic activity.

321 A team is a number of members that come together to help each other in their holiness and perseverance, formation and apostolate, like the first Christian communities. Ideally, the team is made up of eight to fifteen members so that it facilitates everyone's participation and fosters interpersonal relationships. It comes together in a natural way through friendship, affinity or common interests. The team is not an end in itself, but rather a means for the members to help each other carry out fully their vocation in the Church, through the Movement. Team life teaches us to work in collaboration with others leaving aside individualism, and it enhances the possibilities of each member by utilizing and combining their individual qualities and abilities.

322 For a team to be able to fulfill its purpose, its members must keep in mind —and strive to acquire, promote and strengthen— the following attitudes, which contribute greatly to the team's activity and internal cohesion:

A. True esprit de corps that brings each member to accept the others, cooperate with, support and help them in every way possible, and which creates an atmosphere of appreciation and esteem around them by speaking highly of their qualities, successes and virtues, and never unnecessarily mentioning their defects and shortcomings.

B. Work full of optimism; maintaining a joyful, sincere and positive climate both in our internal activities and on the apostolate, and fostering a balanced and healthy joviality.

C. Concern and interest for those members who temporarily need to withdraw from team life due to work, studies or travel. This same attitude should motivate you to invite back those members who for one reason or another may have distanced themselves from the life of the Movement.

D. An attitude of openness and growth, avoiding all cliquishness. By reason of its very vitality, the team must always be seeking new members and multiplying itself.

E. A healthy realism regarding the diversity of temperaments and dispositions of the team's members. The team is a human group, made up of people different in temperament, reactions, formation and skills. All this enriches the team, but it can also be a source of friction and

difficulties. You must always keep this in mind, and strive to harmonize this diversity with charity.

F. A sincere wish to foster friendship among the members, expanding it into other areas and activities by spending time together, family gatherings, spontaneous meetings and mutual support.

343 Christianity was born and spread throughout the world in the form of prayerful, charitable, apostolically effervescent, small communities. In these, Christians encouraged each other to grow and persevere in the faith, sharing Christian joy and swapping news of the Gospel's progress as it spread. This community life of faith and love intensified even more as the dangers and persecutions against Christians grew more severe. It became the fertile earth from which sprang the first martyrs of the Church, as its mature fruit, and it has also been the source of Christian renewal during times of crisis and darkness in the practice of faith and morals.

344 Team life is how Regnum Christi seeks to perpetuate this same historical and lasting condition of Christianity in the vocation and mission of its members. That is why team life is not simply a style of work; more importantly it is grounded in a reality proper to Christianity, which is a community of faith, hope and love in Christ. Today, just as at the dawn of Christianity, the Christian renewal of society will come from small groups of prayer and action which, like sparks spread throughout the world, will be capable of creating a great blaze. Small groups which, by encountering Christ, being in communion with their Shepherds and by being there for the neighbor in need of love, will discover the precious pearl of the Gospel and live their Christian life in a convincing and contagious way.

345 For each member, the team is a tangible and immediate reality that helps you to understand and live in a practical and effective way your co-responsibility and solidarity in relation to the Church and the Movement. Furthermore, it is meant to help you to live a life coherent with the demands of the Gospel, and to commit yourself to some missionary and apostolic activity.

346 Moreover, the team is an effective formation tool for its members. It is a catalyst for your dedication to holiness, it helps awaken your creativity and apostolic initiative, and it is a means to promote and accomplish works of apostolate by combining the efforts, talents and abilities of every member.

The Encounter with Christ

404 The Encounter with Christ is an activity that is spiritual, formative and apostolic in nature. Through the Gospel reading and reflection, and the review of a fact from life and of their apostolic commitment, the Encounter with Christ is an extraordinary means for members to grow and mature in their spiritual sensitivity, their knowledge of the Gospel, their Christian sense of life, their availability to the needs of others, their sense of the Church and their team

life. It ought to be a true encounter with the person of Christ the Lord: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in their midst” (Mt 18, 20)

405 Thanks to its own dynamism, the Encounter with Christ is also an apostolic springboard which stimulates enthusiasm, creativity and commitment in the face of the needs of the Church and mankind.

406 The Encounter with Christ implies the application of team life in one of its highest expressions, in a climate of support and reciprocity. The Regnum Christi center is the normal venue for the Encounter with Christ, but other appropriate places are not excluded. It lasts an hour or at most an hour-and-a-quarter. It is directed by a moderator who may be the team leader or one of the participants chosen by him. In agreement with the team leader, the members may occasionally invite friends to take part in the Encounter to give them the opportunity to see what it means to be part of a community of Christian life where people pray, receive formation and place their talents at the service of their neighbor and the Church.

Gospel Reading

407 The first part of the Encounter with Christ is the gospel reading and reflection. The reading is ordinarily taken from the liturgy of the day or the Sunday previous to the Encounter.

408 The purpose of the gospel reading and reflection is to strengthen the team spiritually in preparation for the case study. In addition, the gospel reading and reflection are an excellent means to unite ourselves to Christ, to assimilate his standards and, enlightened by these, learn to view and evaluate every person, situation and event through Christ’s eyes. The gospel reading and reflection also help us gain a deeper understanding of the apostolic dimension of our own commitment with Christ.

409 The participants take turns reading the gospel passage. All stand for the reading, and follow it in their own copy of the Gospels. When the reading is ended, all kiss their gospel and sit down.

410 The reading is followed by a few moments for personal reflection.

411 When the moderator gives the sign, participants freely and spontaneously, but briefly, share their reflections on the text.

412 The moderator ends this first part of the Encounter with Christ with a short summary by him or the secretary of the observations and commentaries that surfaced during the reflection.

413 This first part takes approximately 15 minutes.

Review of “My Commitments to Christ”

414 The second part of the Encounter with Christ is the review of the commitment card.

415 The commitment card is the card members receive on their incorporation day. The members of individual teams may add to this card some extra means of their own, giving it a special character for each team.

416 The team's moderator or secretary may read out each point, leaving a moment of silence for members to reflect before God if they have fulfilled it.

417 Regularly reviewing the commitment card in Christ's presence moves you effectively to solidify your gains and make resolutions to remedy your weaknesses.

418 This second part ends with a brief, spontaneous prayer made in the name of the entire team by a participant previously chosen by the moderator. In it, we thank God, we implore his help, light and strength, and we place the intentions of each member in his hands.

419 This part takes approximately five minutes.

Case study

420 The third part of the Encounter with Christ is an examination of our lives and it takes the form of a case study: taking some event, viewing it in the light of the faith, examining its true causes and consequences and, above all, discovering God's plan there, even when it seems opposed by evil. The fruit of this part is the assimilation of a new view of life that is enlightened by human and gospel values, and a positive attitude of commitment and cooperation in the great work of redemption.

421 Each and every participant proposes briefly and spontaneously a fact or event taken from the social, economic, moral, political, family, religious, human or other arena of life. It should have a certain relevance because of its currency, significance, value or importance. The facts can be of a positive or negative nature. The resources Regnum Christi makes available to the moderators may be used to help make the Encounters more interesting, formative and relevant.

422 Participants choose by vote one of the cases proposed, and then study it following these steps: Look, Judge, Act.

A. Look: consists in studying the case: What problem does it bring up? What are its causes and consequences? How representative is it? What is its social impact? As you examine it, it is best to move right away from the individual and concrete context to a more universal and general view. You may also enrich the examination by referring to similar cases. You are not looking for an exhaustive analysis but rather to study the fact or situation through the prism of its principal implications.

B. Judge: this means turning over the case under the light of the Gospel, quoting the behavior or words of Christ that might help to interpret and evaluate the case. It is not about judging people or assuming attitudes contrary to gospel charity. The value of the gospel judgment is that it allows us to demonstrate or get a sense of Christ's attitudes regarding life's different situations. Moreover, it is also important to detect and judge the values and anti-values present in the case from the angle of Regnum Christi spirituality and from the human perspective.

C. Act: the purpose of this part is to align your conduct with the standards and values brought up as you examined the case, and to come to practical resolutions. To do so, it is good to follow three steps: take personal action, rectifying what you need to correct in the light of the Gospel; take action on the causes that are at the root of the case so as to foster good or combat evil; take action on the case itself whenever the participants are in a position to do so.

423 The case study takes around thirty minutes. It is very important for the moderator to help everyone take part, in an atmosphere that is natural and spontaneous, allowing flexibility in each part and in the method.

Review of the Apostolic Commitment

424 The fourth part of the Encounter with Christ is the review of the team's apostolic commitment, in order to stimulate and promote apostolic zeal. It is done in two steps:

A. A team review of the resolutions made in the "Act" section of the previous Encounter with Christ to check the progress of the team's apostolic commitment.

425 The review of the apostolic commitment takes approximately ten minutes.

Final Observations

426 The Encounter with Christ concludes with the thanksgiving prayer we use in Regnum Christi.

427 Given the high spiritual, formative and apostolic value of the Encounter with Christ, all the members ought to strive seriously to participate regularly and to live it in a climate of deep interest, cordiality and simplicity, in such a way that they can benefit from the insights and graces that Christ unfailingly grants to those who gather in his name.