

## CLM INTERNATIONAL MEETING 2024

### REPORT OF CLM-PHILIPPINES

CLM-Philippines is like a river: it is flowing; it is not stagnant; it is not stopping. It continues to flow along its paths and finds and pioneers new paths so that it can continue to flow without stopping even if it encounters obstacles along the way. The river comes from a bigger river, flowing water plays various roles by reaching various places where it is needed, such as flowing into a small stream or a lake, giving life to nature and people while flowing into the ocean.



CLM-Philippines keeps finding new ways to continue to flow/sustain/thrive without stopping even though we were not able to secure a CLM regional coordinator, CLM-Philippines as a sending and receiving region, we continue with our vocation and mission promotion activities as well open to receive new LMs; and LMs are involved in the mission priorities of the society, each one taking on multiple roles/ministries with some taking on regional responsibilities.

The reason why CLM-Philippines can continue to flow without stopping is that the structures in place are supportive of the mission, and partnership and collaboration are well-lived and carried out in the region among LMs, the ordained, students, co-workers, mission partners, and the local church. There is an atmosphere of trust, mutual support, and good relationships from and among the priests, LMs, students, and co-workers. LMs' potential, skills, and talents are recognized, appreciated, and given the opportunity to develop it. LMs are engaged in regional responsibilities (JPIC regional coordinator, regional finance officer, communication team, FMA pastoral advisor, members of LMLT) and regional ministries (JPIC, Mission Promotion, Vocation, FMA): it is an example of synodality. We appreciated each other's gift, presence, sharing of life: we feel a sense of belonging.

The most urgent area we need attention in CLM-Philippines is personnel. There are 5 LMs present in the region, which will soon become 4 LMs. The number of LMs has decreased in half from 8 LMs to 4 LMs in two years: numbers are becoming smaller for a sending and a receiving region. 2 LMs have been assigned to other regions (one to be CLM coordinator of that region), whereas the Philippine region has not received any LMs even if we have been requesting this for a long time.

CLM-Philippines is both a sending and a receiving region: we need a coordinator who will be working full-time on vocation and mission promotion, accompaniment, orientation, house manager and other regional activities. All LMs in the region are already fully immersed in their respective ministries, we are involved in more than one ministry. However, we continue working, sharing the work of the coordinator, and assuming different responsibilities as a CLM in the Philippine region. The danger of reducing the number of LMs in the Philippines is an issue of the Philippines only. That is why we insist on requesting personnel to keep the balance between running a program and taking up key roles in the region.

Recently, we have been encouraged to reflect on "having a new model of leadership structure rather than requesting a Filipino LM from another RMU to maintain an old structure". If we are asked to work it out among ourselves then we need to change the structure; if it will be changed to have a Contact Person instead of the

Coordinator then there will be a change in role description; no longer a Caretaker structure. 'A New Possibility of a New Structure': one LM will become the contact person, if there is an orientation, another LM will be assigned to the orientation full-time (while probably doing another ministry whenever/if ever possible). The LM will leave her/his ministry during the orientation and will go back to the ministry after it is finished. As we are doing now, all LMs share some of the coordinator's work: 2 LMs from each area are in charge of Come and See, accompaniment program, taking part in vocation and mission promotion (although all LMs take part on these roles whenever possible).

Another area we need attention to is the recommendation of suspended vocation and orientation. We believe we will share this concern in the upcoming CLM International Meeting for a definite response. It is not just an issue solely for the Philippine region.

Another possibility that emerges in CLM-Philippines is that LMs can continue to carry on the key Columban ministry in the diocese where we work.

Our hope is that CLT and GC will recognize that the Philippine region has been sending missionaries to mission faithfully as well as receiving LMs, too. Given the small numbers of both LMs and the ordained in the big region, we see the need for additional personnel. Considering the current situation, we also have to rethink the leadership at the central level in terms of numbers and location and maybe its need. In addition, the issue of imagining the future of the CLM cannot be left solely to each RMUs that has LMs. By nature, CLM is part of a bigger whole the Columban Society and the whole earth community. Thus, there is a need to engage with each RMU considering the region of the Philippines as a sending and a receiving region.

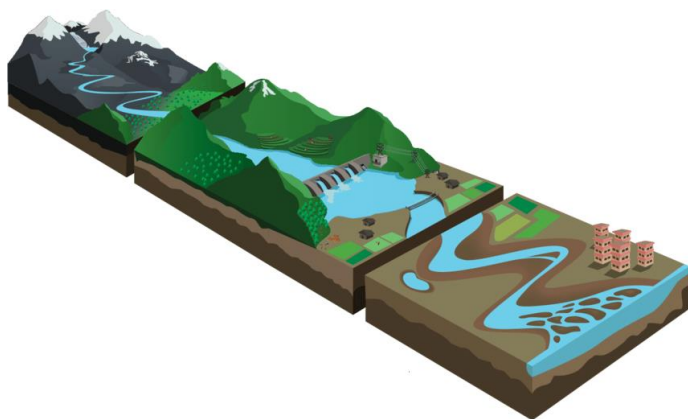


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