



Small Christian Communities Global Collaborative Website

PowerPoint Presentation by Caroline Adams, Joe Healey, Bob Pelton, Belza Ramos and Xavier Thelakkatt

**National Alliance of Parishes Restructuring into Communities (NAPRC)
Conference**

Erie, Pennsylvania, USA

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Our website address:

www.smallchristiancommunities.org

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I. A Short History

San Antonio, Texas and After: 2002 National Convocation of Small Christian Communities

A website setup: *Small Christian Communities in North America Collaborative Website*

- Funded by RENEW International.
- Designed by Jennifer Lyden who worked with Barb Darling.
- Copyright by RENEW International in 2004.
- Set up on a voluntary basis.

I. A Short History

Follow up:

- Committee from San Antonio did not seek funding from Lilly Endowment to pay for website's maintenance.
- New materials were not posted.
- Common SCC Calendar of events didn't appear on the site.
- No webmaster or any volunteers to update the site regularly.
- A new section called "What's New in SCC Resources" was added in 2005.

I. A Short History

2007 National Joint Convocation of SCCs - St. Paul, MN:

- The website was not used to promote it.
- An International Gathering at the convocation proposed:
 - ❖ Reviving the website.
 - ❖ Having an “International Section or Page” for international stories.

I. A Short History, Cont.

New Improvements:

- **Volunteer team:** formed for site development and maintenance including Charles Gikera, Joe Healey, Caroline Adams, Jennifer Ehrentraut, Xavier Thelakkatt & Belza Ramos.
- **Change of scope:** from North American to a global international website, after consultations with Terry Richard, Executive Director of RENEW International.
- **Conference Call:** with Deirdre Malacrea, Web Minister of RENEW International and with Chuck Bary of Veraciti Hosting Service, on Sept. 2007 resulted in:
 - ❖ Transfer to a new hosting system - CNET Global Inc.
 - ❖ New web address: www.smallchristiancommunities.org
 - ❖ Different Continental sections.

II. Our Vision and Mission

Vision:

Acts: 1:8 "...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

- To become a global collaborative communication network for Small Christian Communities (SCCs) worldwide by
 - ❖ Sharing information, events, stories,
 - ❖ Sharing resources, materials,
 - ❖ Sharing news from each of the six continents.

- To come together as a universal community of prayer,
 - ❖ Nourished by the word of God,
 - ❖ Guided by the Holy Spirit, and
 - ❖ Witnessing to God's presence in our lives.

MISSION

"At the heart of the mission of Jesus Christ and of every Christian is the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. Proclaiming the Kingdom in the name of Christ means for the church, the priest, men and women religious, lay people, for all the baptized, a commitment to be present in the world as His witness." Benedict XVI

- To provide meaningful collection of inspiring stories and information about SCCs around the world.
- To foster our witness, proclaiming the kingdom of God with one another, as we encounter God in our everyday life experiences through the information SCCs share.

MISSION (Cont.)

- To encourage usage and development of unique charisms throughout the world.
- To share prayer, faith, spirituality, and give witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ.
- To encourage global “SCC Twinning” so as to form mutual, reciprocal relationships.

Appendix 1

LATIN AMERICAN BASIC ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES TODAY

ROBERT S. PELTON C.S.C.

Comunidades Eclesiales de Base **In Latin America (CEB)**

- They are alive, thriving, and continue to fulfill a multiplicity of vital roles.
- Some have transformed themselves considerably from their beginnings in 60s and 70s and some continue to change.
- Both are fulfilling the intended roles as perennial works-in-progress meeting particular needs.
- In summary: *"The CEBs continue to play an active role in society, from supportive activities to mobilizations and involvement in associations, syndicates, and parties as well as in national campaigns."* Dom Luiz de Souza (Do Vaticano II a um novo Concilio 2004).
- Vatican and Latin American Bishops:- Have provided instructions, constructive criticism and guidance which indeed are strong statements of the commitment of the Church.

VATICAN DOCUMENTS

Instrumentum Laboris (1997): for the Synod of America in Rome

- Calls CEBs base ecclesial communities “the primary structures of the Church structure” and
- Views them as “responsible for the richness of faith and its expansion, as well as for the promotion of the person and development.”

Ecclesia in America (1999): Pope John Paul II’s post-synodal Exhortation recognized the CEB’s ability to

- Renew parishes by enabling each to become a community of communities (N41),
- Promote the interpersonal bonds within the Catholic Church (N73).

Latin American Episcopal Council

(CELAM V –May 2006)

Attendants: 50 Bishops, priests, religious and lay members of CEBs from 18 nations.

- Made a realistic assessment of the CEBs successes, failures and challenges and developed recommendations to:
 - Reduce dependence upon individual bishops who might or might not consider CEBs a priority within their dioceses.
 - Recognize that CEBs are and must remain work-in-progress and must be provided “missionary space” to take new forms and move in new directions true to their roots.
- Heightened respect for the works of the Spirit in the grass roots of the Church and for the prophetic role of CEBs.
- Increased awareness that CEBs are not merely mass movements, but are the nucleus of the present and future Church, as well as its ancestor.
- renewed support for CEBs, both as concepts and as fully functional entities that flow from the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and from the Medellin and Puebla Conferences.

Setbacks

Final language of Vatican approved document for CELAM V:

- Diminishes the vision of the Quito meeting.
- Makes no mention of CEBs prophetic role or recognition of their need for continued support, in fact expressed some fear.
- Fully respects the Medellin emphasis of CEBs as basic cells of the Church, but mixes them into an array of essentially unrelated ecclesial movements, not the nucleus, of the Church.
- Increases the risk that CEBs may lose their identity, and makes the fulfillment of the CEBs' mission more difficult.

Post CELAM V

Two very serious efforts to implement the major recommendations of the Quito report:

- Cardinal Julio Terrazas Sandoval of Santa Cruz, Bolivia sponsored a meeting of key CEB leaders in August, 2007.
- Key participants of SCCs met in Mexico, later that same fall, to continue reconsidering full implementation of the vital recommendations of the Quito meeting.

FINAL ANALYSIS:

“It is, of course, still too early to know just how fruitful these efforts will be, but I remain confident that the CEBs will continue to function as a model of the Church at the service of the poor.” Bob Pelton

IV Appendix 2

Our Future

Belza Ramos

Reaching Bilingual/Spanish Speaking SCC Members in North America

Through our Collaborative Website:

www.smallchristiancommunities.org

➤ **Audience:** North American citizens and immigrants who have Spanish as a first and/or preferred language and are deeply rooted in Hispanic/Latino Cultural and Faith traditions.

➤ **Goals:**

- ❖ To facilitate communication and transfer of information that will foster and/or enhance understanding between Hispanic/Latino and Non-Hispanic SCC members.
- ❖ To connect North American SCC/CEB members with their Latin American counterparts for sharing of information, inspiration and for building “twinning” relationships.
- ❖ To connect all SCCs/CEBs to each other globally.

PROPOSED CHANGES

- **On the *Home, Contact Us* and *Vision* pages:** add a link “**Cliq para Español.**” The duplicate page for these pages would be a Spanish translation or synopsis of the English page.
- **On the *Resources* page:** add a bold heading: “**En Español**” and include titles of books, study guides and courses, etc. written in Spanish.
- **On the *Book Reviews, E-Books* and *News* pages:** add a **bold** heading: “**En Español**” and import borrowed information from related informational and news articles, etc. from Spanish media in North America and suggest “**Cliq Latin America.**”
- **On the *Links* page:** actually list more Spanish language SCC/CEB related websites.
- **Recruit a Spanish Language Coordinator:** list in the “*Contact Us*” page. Solicit submission of articles, SCC stories, news, book reviews, etc. written in Spanish through this person.

Our team welcomes suggestions from the audience.



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