

Up Sails!

celebrating 10 years



THE INTERNATIONAL LETTER OF FAITH AND LIGHT N° 39, MARCH 2019





Contents

Editorial

- "Up Sails!" celebrates 10 years 3

International news

- First meeting for the new board of directors 4
- The delegates of the Churches 6

Reports

- France: Back from formation 8
- Italy: Back to meeting celebration 9
- France: Not like before 10
- France: Saints for everyone, everyone saints 11
- Syria: Straight ahead 12
- Belgium: In the footsteps of Jesus 13

Testimonies

- The Fraternel 14
- Arlene 15
- With Jesus, everything is small 16
- On the way to the future 17
- The beautiful Kimata province 19
- Happy Coffee 20

For our reflection

- A lasting happiness 22

Family album

24

International Agenda

26

The Mysteries of Faith and Light

26

Marie-Hélène's letter

27

- Can our child with multiple disabilities receive the Lord?

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Editorial

Corinne Chatain
General secretary



"Up Sails!" celebrates 10 years

It is just ten years since the first issue of "Up Sails!" came out. This international newsletter was the dream of Ghislain, our former International Coordinator. As soon as he was elected, we got to work to realise this dream. (Marie-Hélène Mathieu talks about its birth in "Never again alone" page 264.)

So, in ten years, I believe that we have travelled the whole world... And we have brought out four special issues. The first on the Coordinating Council meeting in Lourdes in 2011, which launched two years of pilgrimages around the world to celebrate our 40th anniversary. The second on the International Meeting in Leeds. The third on the International Youth Meeting in Guardamar. A wonderful meeting that breathed a breath of youth into our movement. Finally, the fourth on the International Meeting in Lebanon that saw the face of Faith and Light change with a new International Coordinator, a new team of Vice International Coordinators and a new Board of Directors.

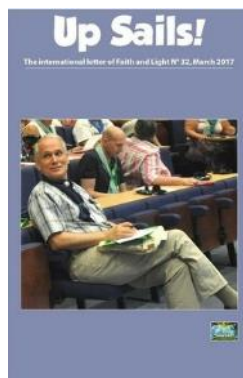
I recently delved into the old issues to get the testimonies from them. I was very touched by the amazing diversity of our movement and at the same time by its amazing unity. Exactly 1416 communities, spread over 86 countries that experience, despite the variety of cultures and religions, the same spirituality, the same friendship and the same loyalty even if the nature of the meeting is perhaps different. We do not meet in the same way in Europe, Africa, America and the Middle East...

Sometimes, I have had the pleasure of taking part in community meetings abroad. I remember one meeting in the Ukraine where

the culture and the customs are very different to those in France. I felt truly at home, even if I did not understand anything, I was at home, in my family.

"Up Sails!" is the mirror of this beautiful face of Faith and Light across the world. Yes, you are beautiful.

Thank you for you. I give thanks to God for each of your communities and each of you... Long live "Up Sails!"





First meeting

FOR THE NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

F*aith and Light is a treasure, it is a missionary movement, many people still do not know about it.* It was with these words, so simple and so beautiful, that Jean Vanier welcomed the board of directors at its first meeting in Trosly-Breuil from 16 to 18 November 2018. Marie-Hélène Mathieu re-affirmed it at her meeting with the board.

This is our mission for the next five years. Make Faith and Light more visible in the world, go to those who do not know about us and those who are waiting for us, as you pointed out to us with the priorities voted on in July during the general assembly in Lebanon. Once again, I would like to thank the Lebanese team, the international secretariat and the outgoing Board for the success of this assembly.

The impetus and energy created at this Assembly has been felt not only in the communities but also by the Board at this first meeting in Trosly. Together, we have reflected on the way in which we organise ourselves, on leaving the well-trodden paths and thinking big so as to make Faith and Light more visible in the world, on going to those who are awaiting the good news, on creating better links primarily with the communities, but also with the organisations that work for the dignity of the person with disability.

Bearing in mind that the purpose of all this work is the communities, the Board intends to be a place to live as a community. To do this, we have decided that at each meeting, we live the four times of Faith and Light, and we will invite, wherever possible, a person with disability to join us.

We have also decided to live in union with the large Faith and Light family. Each month, Faith and Light in the world will pray for the provinces accompanied by one of the twelve Vice International Coordinators. At the end of the year, we will have prayed for all the provinces.

In 2021, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Faith and Light. *Faith and Light in 2021 is no longer the Faith and Light of 1971*, as Jean told us. Many ideas were put forward at this meeting for this celebration, a jubilee year, an international pilgrimage to Lourdes, province and inter-province activities, marathons, contact with Church leaders. We will continue to reflect.

In order to do all this work and building on the priorities voted for, the Board has decided to create project teams in conjunction with the International Coordinating Team. We will need your talents and your availability to work on the vision, communication, finances, 2021 activities, ecumenism and formation. Do not

hide your talents, Faith and Light is relying on each one of us.

The international coordinating team is also gradually taking shape. A number of nominations have been approved by the board of directors, We have now a complete team for the March 2019 meeting in Salamanca. We thank Angela Grassi, Urszula Czynzcka, Marie-France Violette, Elvira Gomero, Ann Emmott, Amgad Edward, Valérie Jacques, Helena Escribano and Solange Ménage, for agreeing to take over or renew their mandate.

The board has started, we will do our best to meet the challenge that you have entrusted to us. For that, we are relying on your collaboration and especially on your prayers.

Kind regards.

HODA ELTURK
President



Philippe de la Chapelle, Céline Doudelle, Guénaël Reynaud, Gérard Chaurand, Alice Cabral, Joséphine Yamaki, Maria-Silvia de Jesus Tavarez, Judex Violette, Corinne Chatain, Father Isaac Martinez, Raúl Izquierdo, Marie-Hélène Mathieu, Hoda Elturk

The delegates of the Churches

FOR FAITH AND LIGHT,
WHO ARE THEY? WHAT DO THEY DO?

We share a similar set up to l'Arche with regard to the Christian Churches. Four delegates represent these Churches in our movements:

- one for the Anglican Communion, appointed with the agreement of the Archbishop of Canterbury,
- one for the Fellowship of Churches that are members of the World Council of Churches, appointed with the agreement of the Secretary General of the World Council of Churches,
- one for the Orthodox Churches, appointed with the agreement of the Patriarch of Constantinople,
- one for the Catholic Church, appointed with the agreement of the Pontifical Council for the Laity (now integrated into the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life).

It was the wish of Jean Vanier to not have statutes linking us to one Church more than another. To be truly ecumenical, it was vital to remain neutral and equal distance from all of them. This was not easy to explain, and it has needed time for this principle to be understood and for the delegates to be appointed. Jean Vanier tells us in the foreword of Marie-Hélène Mathieu's book, *"Never again alone"*: Cardinal Rylko, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity in Rome, was able to say, after knowing us for many years: *At l'Arche and Faith and Light, you have created a true Copernican Revolution, it is no longer you that do good for disabled people but you say that they do you good!*

Jean Vanier experienced a particularly moving moment in 1998 at a meeting of the World Council of Churches during which a liturgy of the washing of the feet had been organised. An Orthodox bishop knelt and washed the feet of a female American Baptist minister. On reflecting on this event, Jean Vanier was able to

say that *sometimes, gestures speak much louder and for much longer than words.*



Today, the team of Church delegates is once again complete and can fulfil its mission, which is mainly to help us to really live the ecumenism to which we lay claim. In real terms, they must:

- ensure that we remain faithful to our Charter,
- help us to really experience the ecumenical side of our spirituality,
- help the Churches that they represent to recognise Faith and Light's own spirituality and to benefit from it: testify that to confuse the powerful and strong of this world, God really chose the mad and the weak; that the latter invite communion of the heart and are a source of unity between Christians.

A meeting should take place every two years for this. However, unfortunately, a meeting of

this sort has not taken place for quite some time, due to lack of members...

- The former delegate from the Orthodox Churches, Bishop Georges Abou Zakhem, who had been very welcoming for the meeting of the International Council in Syria in 2004, was not able to carry on when the situation in his country worsened... and it has taken a few years to find a replacement for him; and it was only at the beginning of 2017 that Archbishop **Job de Telmessos**, who I met in November 2016, could be appointed.
- The former delegate of the Catholic Church, Bishop Guy Harpigny, the bishop of Tournai (Belgium), was replaced at the beginning of 2015 by Monsignor **Michel Aoun**, the bishop of Jbeil in Lebanon. I was able to speak with Cardinal Rylko a few months before and I observed for myself the goodwill that he had for our movement. Monsignor Michel Aoun took part – living nearby – in the International Meeting in Lebanon in July 2018.
- Bishop Patrick Rooke, appointed just before the international meeting in Leeds in 2013 which he attended, did not wish to continue as the delegate of the Anglican Communion, even if the contact had been excellent and he himself was the father of Susanna who has Down Syndrome. He has been replaced quite recently by **Bishop Mouneer**, the bishop of a very large diocese covering Egypt, North Africa and the

Horn of Africa. He did not attend the meeting in Lebanon in July 2018, but he sent a delegate, Father Hamdy. Amongst the ministries in his diocese, there is an education centre for disabled children, the Menara Centre (the Lighthouse), which gives hope for the starting up of Faith and Light with the Egyptian Anglicans.

- Reverend Ruth Patterson shared her role of delegate for l'Arche and for Faith and Light. When I met her in June 2018 at the International meeting of l'Arche, she told me that she could no longer continue to carry out both missions and that it was necessary for me to find a replacement. Fortunately, Bishop **Stein Reinertsen**, from the Lutheran Church of Norway, who was recently appointed reference bishop for Faith and Light in Norway, took part in the Lebanon meeting and willingly agreed to replace Ruth Patterson. The Secretary General was a little surprised that I asked permission to appoint him when Faith and Light was not part of the World Council of Churches, but he quickly understood what I was asking him.

With this new team that is full of enthusiasm, good work is going to be carried out. My head-hunting mission for Church delegates has finally ended, now to take action!

GHISLAIN DU CHÉNÉ



Bishop Job



Bishop Michel



Bishop Mouneer



Bishop Stein

Back from formation

NOTRE-DAME DU CHÊNE

I was looking forward to this formation at Notre-Dame du Chêne in Sarthe. Because even if I have been part of the large Faith and Light family since 2006, I have only been coordinator of my community for a year... And then it was announced on the news that the roads were blocked by gilets jaunes (yellow jackets) ...

NOT A PROBLEM, I left the evening before. I was not alone in having erred on the side of caution... So, I was happy to meet, from Friday evening, some wonderful people. In fact, this would be the case throughout the weekend because, at Faith and Light, we don't ask "What do you do in life?" but "How did you come to Faith and Light?", in other words: "Tell me who you are..."

During this session, Anne reminded us of the origins of our movement, Solange, its operation and Ghislain its spirituality... Everything is in the Leader's Pack repeated Evelyn tirelessly!!! It is important to review these fundamentals in order to remain faithful to the spirit of our movement. We sang a lot, danced, of course, prayed too because we draw our strength in the passion and the resurrection of Christ. It is our common identity. YES, we go through hardships, sometimes very painful, ones but with Christ and in the community, we are



already tasting his resurrection with this joy that does not leave us, which dwells in us, transfigures us and shows us the glory of God.

We believe Faith and Light was born of the Holy Spirit. At the end of this weekend, we were all therefore sent on a mission – people with disability, parents, friends- with a card upon which was written a gift of the Holy Spirit. I received meekness... It will therefore be "through" and "with" meekness that I will continue, in the community, to walk and announce the good news of Faith and Light. We sang our heads off throughout the two days: "Messengers of joy", this is what we are. Incidentally, at

our next community meeting "Come and mix your colours" will be sung with actions during an ecumenical evening at the Our Lady of the Rosary Church.

Yes, we will have to carry on making Faith and Light known so that the Spirit can call other people to come and join us and experience being "never again alone"!!

DOROTHÉE PINON
"The Hope"
France Sparkling East

The province
"France Est Pétillant"
is made up
of 28 communities.

Back to meetings celebration in Italy

EVERY YEAR, THE ITALIAN COMMUNITIES MEET AT THE START OF THE YEAR TO INTRODUCE THE THEME OF THE GUIDELINES AND TO EXPERIENCE A TIME OF CELEBRATION TOGETHER! THIS TIME, THE CELEBRATION WAS PUNCTUATED WITH TESTIMONIES ON THE IMPORTANT TIMES THAT HAVE MARKED OUR RECENT HISTORY.

A splendid start of year celebration at Saint-Joseph of Peace in Milan. Two hundred people met to rediscover that God makes all things new in our lives despite the struggles and problems in daily life and in our Faith and Light communities.

The friends of Pontelambro were superb as usual with a mime about the Gospel of the wheat and the tares.

Thank you to Liliana, the leader of the "Fiume di Pace" province and to Don Mauro for telling us about the International Meeting in Lebanon. Thank you to the young people from Fano who testified about how much the international youth meeting in Guardamar had transformed them. I am proud of these magnificent young people!!

ANGELA GRASSI
Vice International Coordinator



Liliana Ghiringhelli
Provincial coordinator "River of Peace"



Not like before

RETREAT IN PORTIEUX, FRANCE

The Faith and Light communities from "France Est Pétillant" met in Portieux in the Vosges for their annual spiritual retreat. They were welcomed by the Sisters from the Providence of Portieux with whom they have friendship and spiritual bonds.

What a joy to meet with some fifty people on the retreat, friends, families and disabled people, to experience together a time of spirituality and friendliness on the theme: "Heart to heart: the kiss of love of Jesus".

Each day, a morning time of prayer brought us together to share the Lauds with the whole Church, then came the teaching of Father Jérôme Richon, the province chaplain, and times of sharing in small, warm groups. The songs of Faith and Light brought this retreat to life. The meals, as it should be, were tasty, both through the good little dishes prepared by the Sisters and through the meetings and discussions between the participants

The theme of each day made us deepen our relationship with Jesus:

- day 1: Jesus is the Word;
- day 2: Jesus gives himself;

- day 3: Jesus is the Way;
- day 4: Jesus is the Light.

The daily Eucharist was the mainstay of our heart to heart with Jesus. The sacrament of Reconciliation allowed those who wanted to, to celebrate the joy of forgiveness more specifically. The washing of the feet in sharing groups completed this beautiful time.

This retreat was a welcome interlude in our hectic life: the songs, the vigils, the music led by the trumpet and the djembes, the exchanges, the giggles, the creative workshops that highlighted each person's talents, the friendliness and tenderness of the meetings, the welcome of the Sisters, the beauty of their garden, the snow that had fallen a bit before, have been much needed breaths in our life on the retreat.

So much tasty fruit and seed full of promise thrown into the mystery of hearts... We did not return home "as before", but full of joy and hope, certain that Jesus loves us as we are...

VÉRONIQUE THÉPOT
Provincial coordinator





Making the most of the long All Saints weekend in 2018, when many people in France are on holiday, the "Paris and le Levant" province organised a large four-day retreat at Orsay, in the southern suburbs of Paris, with a catchy title: "Saints for everyone... everyone saints".

An extensive programme: building on the Encyclical letter from Pope Francis about the Beatitudes and examples from the lives of great saints from all ages like St Theresa, St Martin or St Mother Teresa, Fathers Gambart and de Fombelle helped us to meditate on this beautiful theme of Holiness.

All the ingredients were there for each person to leave a bit closer to holiness than they were when they arrived: teaching, sharing groups, a beautiful time of

washing of the feet followed by the sacrament of reconciliation for those who wanted it, craft with each person making an image of their patron saint, which was used for the procession to Sunday mass, a beautiful mime in three scenes about the life of St Martin of Tours, songs with actions and most importantly full of friendship in a beautiful atmosphere of mutual aid.

The icing on the cake: Marie-Hélène Mathieu honoured us with her presence by taking us back to Easter 1971 with the organisation of that unbelievable pilgrimage to Lourdes, at the start of our movement and that she tells of so well in her book "Never again alone". The famous song "My friends, let's sing all our joy" resonates again in the room in 2018 and there is no doubt, even after all these years, that the Holy Spirit continues to breathe not only



in Paris, in France, but also on the five continents, as we were able to see this summer in Lebanon.

VALÉRIE AMICE
Provincial Coordinator

The province
"Paris et le Levant"
is made up
of 31 communities

Syria: straight ahead!

Straight Ahead was the title of our formation which has been held from 11 until 14 Oct 2018 at Deir Mar Thoma in Saidnaya, Syria for new friends in Faith and Light communities in Syria.

We have finally met together from all around Syria (Damascus, Daraa, Homs, Hama, Aleppo, The coast, even from Al-Hasaka). It was the first time after 10 years and the total participants were (130) friend.

This formation was organized by Alaa Khlaf (coordinator of Faith and Light Syria), Fr. Nicola Hada (provincial chaplain and the provincial team. Together with the Holy Spirit we lived and shared moments we will never forget (learning , praying ,

sharing....), we learned about the invitation of Faith and Light, the true meaning of friendship in Faith and Light in addition to the positive and negative to help communities grow.

A big thank you to everyone who helped us financially! Thank you.

CHRISTINE SAROUKHAN
Provincial secretary

The province Syria
Is made up of
37 communities



In the footsteps of Jesus

A PROVINCIAL MEETING IN BANNEUX BRINGS TOGETHER 300 PEOPLE

An unforgettable weekend that will remain etched in the hearts of many. Marked on calendars for a long time with regular reminders to register and get involved in the realisation of the project... this monument of reflection and work for the team inspires only admiration and gratitude.

Gratitude to Caroline, Laurence and Kahina for the joy of sharing what drives them, and which sparkled like a celebration candle in our hearts.

Thank you to everyone who worked with you to make this weekend a good one for everyone. Gratitude to the Vierge des Pauvres (Virgin of the Poor) who welcomed us to this place of pilgrimage. The warm welcome with music from the group Totem, this walk in the footsteps of Jesus that sometimes stuck to our soles and the joy of meeting up with many friends from other communities, met thanks to regional days, the Rainbow province retreat, New Year's Eve and many other occasions... were already bearers of an intense joy in the hearts.

What a lot of talent discovered during these two days, beginning with some gymnastics that used almost every muscle though with a priority for the zygomaticus. The tal-



ents of the people who led the prayers and introduced the different mimes that reminded us, thanks to these fishers of men that were the apostles, that Faith and Light caught us a beautiful day to integrate our community and let us become, in our turn, fishers of Men and invites us to stay here... and elsewhere.

We experienced this other place intently thanks to the magnificent testimony from our three ambassadors in Lebanon. Thanks to an original play and a captivating story, they opened our hearts to the vast Faith and Light family spread across the world. The Emmaus disciples reminded us of how Jesus is always there with us to accompany us in the difficult times of our respective journeys, and that he invites us to his table just

like Levi who invites to his table to celebrate his meeting with Jesus. There, Jesus reminds us that he came primarily for the sick, the disabled and all those who are suffering!

Besides these times of meditation, prayer, celebration and communion, so many talents were discovered thanks to the various workshops and activities on offer. So much depth, naturalness and spontaneity in the meditation around the earth, that each person was able to perceive, knead, model and express an experience, a personal feeling.

Banneux 2018... a call to carry on walking in the footsteps of Jesus!

NAMUR-LUXEMBOURG TEAM
Extract from "Grand Large" N°15



EVERY YEAR IN FRANCE, THE FRAT ORGANISES A PILGRIMAGE FOR THE YOUNG TEENAGERS FROM THE CHAPLAINCIES OF ALL THE FRENCH DIOCESES. IN 2018, IT BROUGHT TOGETHER ABOUT 10000 YOUNG PEOPLE OVER FOUR DAYS IN LOURDES ON THE THEME: "DON'T BE AFRAID, HE IS CALLING YOU". A HUGE THANKYOU TO DIDIER FOR ANNOUNCING THE MESSAGE OF FAITH AND LIGHT WITH HIS LEGENDARY ZEAL!

These few days spent with the Frat in Lourdes seem to have been quite fruitful. The seeds were sown, it is now up to the Lord to make them (or let them) grow!

We had a stand from Wednesday to Saturday close to the l'Arche stand, which was useful for our two movements, all the time where young people could come. We were able to welcome and talk to them ("Do you know about Faith and Light?"), describing the movement to them, then suggesting that they leave with a few leaflets either for friends who may be interested or for their parish or for themselves. A few priests and adults stopped who had already heard of Faith and Light but wanted to know how to launch and bring a community to life...

We also had to testify five times for an hour and half in front of groups of one hundred young people; to do this, we began with the viewing of "*De ceux qui ne partent pas en*

pèlerinage" [Those who do not go on a pilgrimage] (produced for the "Rhône Loire Auvergne" Faith and Light pilgrimage in 2018). The young people applauded. Then Claire testified for 45 minutes about her experience of what the movement is and what it brings to everyone. This testimony ended with the video "*Je te donne*" (I give you) by Jean-Jacques Goldman for l'Arche in Marseilles. Several times, the young people sang and each time applauded. Followed 45 minutes of questions, sometimes more, sometimes less, which Claire, Vincent and myself answered taking into account our complementarity... Then we helped them to experience the spirit of Faith and Light by making them sing/do actions to "*t's me that build community*". The joy was there and the applause too!

Afterwards, some young people came to ask us questions suggesting their need or desire to join a community if

not talking about it to a brother or sister...

An adult attendant joined us when we walked to the station for the return to Paris and said to us, in addition to thanks, that if the young people were silent during the testimony, it was because they felt overwhelmed by what was talked about. On this return too, several groups of young people called us from a distance, some making big hearts with their arms...

It is really good to talk about Faith and Light with young people and we are already reflecting on going to testify at FRAT next year.

Again, a huge, huge thank you to the International Secretariat for your ideas, your support, your documents...

DIDIER OVAZZA
Vice-provincial coordinator
"Ile de France West"

The province is made up of 30 communities.

Arlene



Arlene's son Joseph, was born with Down syndrome. Arlene was a school teacher and a devoted catholic. When Joseph had to prepare for his first communion, she felt the parish, American Martyrs, needed to offer modified learning for kids with special needs. She felt that the liturgy was difficult for Joseph to follow. Always the teacher, she opened a ministry within the church to minister to kids with special needs. When I moved to California in 2003/2004 with my family, Arlene and I became friends, as my son Alessandro has Autism. We became like sisters very quickly. The ministry made a great impact in our community even if it went through several transformations. It was first called "Josma", then "Circle of Friends", and finally, in 2012/2013, it began to take shape as a F&L group that we chose to call "Lighthouse".

Arlene was diagnosed with a lethal form of cancer back in 2012/2013, and was given 7

months to live. The Lord granted her prayer to extend her life, and she lived fully, and full of joy for over five years after that. While she was very ill in 2012/2013, Linda Rapp and I formed the Faith and Light community inspired by the initial intention of Arlene. Arlene participated in our community, and was nourished by the support of our group. Our friendship became closer than ever, and she enriched us with her unique sense of humor. Many in the group could scarcely believe she was ill, as she was always quick to make a joke or a witty remark. Most of our community did not know that her attendance often meant that she was coming from immunotherapy treatment and a long drive from hospital.

She sent us an email November 8th excusing herself from the meeting the following day, saying she was a little tired. Two days after, she passed away. She was giving, and joyful up until the last moment of her life. It was a real shock for many of us, and we are still grieving her loss.

Our community is now called "Arlene's Lighthouse". The change of name will ensure that Arlene's legacy receives the recognition it deserves. She was the kind of saint that goes unnoticed, but the world is better because of her.

REGINA DELL'ORO



¹ Manhattan Beach, Los Angeles, USA

With Jesus, everything is small

With Jesus, everything is small. I heard these words from the mouth of Jean Vanier.

Our Faith and Light communities experience this smallness from one day to the next. This is why we are able to become like small cribs in the world.

However, small does not mean invisible. God is visible in the smallness, he is visible in our communities.

What is small does not impose but invites. Jesus in the crib and in his life will always invite us to the meeting without ever imposing. Our communities are not called to be great and to have a high profile in the eyes of men. They must continue to question the world, to invite it to love, to invite it to rediscover the taste for the simple meeting and the joy it brings. It is this treasure that carries in it the person with an intellectual disability. They invite us to love and help us to love without a hidden agenda.

If we have the opportunity, like the shepherds and the wise men, to be able to respond to the invitation, we can then become closer to God and the Love.

It is on this path of love that he calls us through our communities. A path on which we should always agree to change our hearts so we can respond.

We do not know where this path will take us, taking it invites us to trust. Like the wise men, let us follow the star of the invitation to the meeting, knowing that any meeting requires us to trust in the Lord more than ourselves.



This path is strewn with obstacles that we believe to be insurmountable, but each obstacle invites us to dare to go back by a road other than the one that was expected or planned. The wise men did it when they set off on another path after meeting Jesus. They were not afraid because they knew what mattered, they were not alone, now God was with them. God accompanied them on the path.

The paths are not all mapped out at Faith and Light, it is vital to accept the unexpected, accept letting ourselves be disturbed by the meetings, by life and dare to trust in the Lord. He is with us, he walks with us and trusts us.

May we have the faith that will allow us to discover this path of meeting throughout this year of 2019.

XAVIER NYS
Provincial chaplain, Belgium

On the way to the future

Hello dear friends of Faith and Light! Like you, we passionately read issue 37 of "Up Sails!" with the magnificent testimony about Angelo! Congratulations and a huge thank you to all the production team of this magazine and to those who allow us to "taste" the life, throughout the world, of our large family with a lot of young and active communities as well as several communities that have existed since the first day!

"Heart of Europe" is the name of our province that is made up of the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Luxembourg and the majority of whose communities have been in existence for a very long time. A lot of you have already met Hetty Gommans, our very first province coordinator. She has, amongst other things, taken part in the international meetings in Lourdes, Leeds and Warsaw. She has guided us for nine years with a lot of wisdom, charisma and with a large heart. We are going to miss her, not only for her musical talents but also for her friendship and her willingness to share. As she had completed her second mandate, she asked us to look for a replacement.

Her replacement was not obvious! In October 2017, our nominating committee launched the search for people to succeed Hetty. At a large celebration in Banneux where the communities from the Netherlands celebrated their Faith and Light 25th anniversary, they had invited the communities from Germany, Austria and Luxembourg to celebrate with them.

At that time, our hope to find a successor to Hetty was great. In Banneux, we received several names and the whole nominating committee started to contact the people proposed. There were many very qualified nominees, but after a time of discernment and prayer, none



Hetty



Sam and Bert

of them felt in a position to respond to this call. All had good reasons to refuse.

With just a few weeks to the election at Weisendorf, we did not have a single name on the list. The team reflected a lot and also prayed for the Lord to show us the way. Everyone began to look at new avenues to find a new coordinator for our province but in vain. Our last hope, a very qualified person, also fell through. So, at that moment, we felt our great poverty and we asked ourselves the

question: "What does the Lord want for our province?"

During our penultimate telephone meeting, Georg explained his Plan B: "So, Sam and Bert! We have not found anyone, but would it not be an option, for you, as grandparents, to agree to allowing your names to be put on the list of people to replace Hetty?"

We could not believe what he was suggesting. Sam was quite afraid, and I just shook my head. Indeed, the statute says that it is not possible for a member of the nominating committee to be elected and that there is an age limit of 70 years old that I had reached. We were astonished because, in addition, we were also members of the nominating committee.

We were overwhelmed, Sam has been of the opinion for some time that the time had come to reduce our commitment in the province and reacted spontaneously with a "no". We replied pray for us and give us time to discern.

For three weeks we reflected a lot and spoke with our children, friends from Faith and Light and trustworthy people. It was a difficult journey, especially for my wife, who was afraid of saying yes. She would have preferred to say no but, having been married for 50 years, she wanted to continue our commitments together.

On the day of 1 June, the province general assembly was informed of all the processes that the nominating committee had undertaken and the fact that the normal path of the proceedings had not been successful. Everyone was very worried. So, Georg had to get rid of all the concerns of our friends by presenting his "plan B" to them.

After a night of silence and discernment, our community leaders voted. Seating in front of the audience, hand in hand, Sam and I agreed, with tears in our eyes, to our nomination. Relief for our members, a new challenge for both of us.

The following day, we spent a night with one of our daughters in Switzerland to continue our journey to France. Our daughter ad-

vised us to not take the motorway directly, but to go on the secondary roads to get to Bern.

However, on leaving one village, a fireman signalled us to turn back. A bit upset by the blocked road, we took another secondary road. I carried on driving and Sam gazed at the scenery. Suddenly a large hoarding at the side of the road caught her full attention. Overwhelmed, she read what was written on a green background: "Fürchte dich nicht ! Die Bibel", (Do not be afraid! The Bible). Was this a sign from "on high"? We could not believe our eyes! I believe and hope so or... I hope that I believe it!

Let us continue our journeys, because God is truly on our journey, especially at difficult moments when we are not expecting it!

SAM AND BERT COLYN-SERTYN
Provincial coordinators "Heart of Europe"



Beautiful meeting at Notre Dame du Laus (France) between Julie and Mgr de Jong, Auxiliary bishop of Roremond. Two great friends of Hetty.

The beautiful province Kimata

LETTER FROM PIETRO VETRO, PROVINCIAL COORDINATOR

Beloved, the fourth year since I was given the gift of becoming Kimata's provincial coordinator has just come to an end.

When I met Angela Grassi (our new international vice-coordinator who came after Lucia, whose long and fruitful work we 'll never thank enough) to talk about us, the first thing I told her is that Kimata is a beautiful province: four countries (Italy, Greece, Cyprus and now Albania), three languages (Italian, Greek and Albanian), three confessions (Catholics, Orthodox and some Protestants in Albania), two religions (Christians and members of the Albanian Muslim communities, Sunnis and Bektashi), so many different communities (from the numerous communities of Rome to the nascent community of Tirana) and many people, with incredible stories behind them.

I now feel Kimata as a great family made up of faces, hugs, discussions, joys and sorrows, even misunderstandings, because that's what happens in each family, together with so much affection. It is as if we all carry the same surname. Kimata, and more in general the whole Faith and Light, has been for us a gift from God and continues to be so day after day.

Mariangela Bertolini, our Italian foundress, in one of her writings in 1979 (almost forty years ago) said that we call ourselves "Faith" because "we are all loved by God as we are" and we call ourselves "Light" because the "little ones" put a light inside us that reveals our true person in place of the character we think we are.

In these simple sentences, in that brief writing of the foundress of Faith and Light in Italy, there is all our essence. There we can find all the joy of being together, all our roots, which lie in our little ones, in our



communities and in Jesus who, coincidentally, as entered our lives as a small child in a small family. He spent all his life in a small community, with twelve people, very different from one another, coming from the most diverse origins and convictions, and who then made the Church spread throughout the world.

Just a few days before Christmas, many communities have already experienced the joy of being together waiting for December 25th. Let us then gather all together around this little Jesus, who comes every year to remind us that he loves us just the way we are. He comes to tell us that we must not remain within our borders, but rather transform ourselves into a gift for our Churches and for the world.

Merry Christmas, dear ones, to us, to our "ragazzi" and to our families.

I love and hug you, one by one.

PIETRO



"HAPPY COFFEE", SERVED WITH HEART

INSPIRED BY JEAN VANIER, AFTER A FIRST OPENING IN RENNES (FRANCE) IN DECEMBER 2017, YANN BUCAILLE LANREZAC, A BRETON BUSINESSMAN AGED 48 YEARS, OPENED A "HAPPY COFFEE" IN PARIS. UNIQUE SELLING POINT: HE EMPLOYS WAITERS AND COOKS WHO HAVE VARIOUS DISABILITIES.

Seven years ago, I created a foundation (Émeraude Voile Solidaire) and had a large yacht built so as to take on board during the day, once a week, people who are different: disabled, prisoners, prostitutes. I therefore did about seventy sea trips a year off the coast of Dinard. This activity allowed me to get to know some extraordinary people who astounded me with their generosity. Nurses, doctors and all those people who work tirelessly at the service of others made me want to go further.

On one of these outings, I also met Théo, a young man aged 20 years old, who is autistic. After the day of sailing, he asked me: "So Captain, you wouldn't have a job for me?" I answered first of all: "No, alas..." Angry, he then shouted: "But I want to be useful in this society!"

His cry challenged to me. For two years, I wondered what I could do as an entrepreneur...

The disabled world has three times more unemployment than elsewhere! I then dreamt up the first café Joyeux, in Rennes because I am Breton. The idea is to employ disabled people according to their abilities by offering dishes and drinks of good quality to the public.



Yann (at the right) with his team

The employees? I call them "our happy cooks and waiters", as they are happy to come to work for a decent salary.

We don't want to be pitied but envied! I also recruited a "happy" assistant (who has Down syndrome) in my office. He works there one day a week. And I swear to you that he adds to the ambiance. When he isn't there, there is a void.

The balance sheet of this first café restaurant, opened last December in Brittany, is super positive after several months of operation. A mother confirmed to me that her disabled son was so happy to have a job that he runs there in the morning. This warms my heart

even if I know that this is only the beginning and that not everything is that simple.

The team from Rennes (made up of two managers and eight waiters and cooks) is a close-knit team. The peer support is genuine. And I see the employees giving the best of themselves. They are no longer ashamed or afraid to say there, for example, they don't know how to do.... And the restaurant is always busy. But we have to see it long term.

On 21 March last year, the first day of Spring and also World Down Syndrome Day, a second bistro opened in the capital. The Bretons have landed in Paris! We hired twenty-one "happy" waiters and cooks managed by three managers. But this is only the start of this Parisian adventure and some finetuning is still needed.

It is like a small start-up made up of people who have different abilities: some work twenty-five hours a week, some are more comfortable with fifteen hours. We adapt to the abilities of each person.

Already the Parisians are answering the call and I love hearing the bell of the building ring which means that someone has left a tip.

I plan to open another café in Paris then in Lyon, Lille and Bordeaux. I really feel that it is expected. But it is necessary to do it gradually. I have a great responsibility to my new employees who I really do not want to disappoint.

The business and the logo are owned by my foundation. However, continuing this adventure in the large cities of France requires caring partners and financial investors.

Deep down, I am a Christian entrepreneur, I do not hide it. It is my faith that motivates me. It burns in the depths of my heart. And it is in prayer that I nourish myself. As I sometimes say, I am not the hero, it is all these different waiters who astound me every morning. Their wish, their joy, their determination to work in our society overwhelms me...

YANN BUCAILLE LANREZAC
"France Dimanche" September



Rendez-vous on the site :
www.joyeux.fr/

For our reflexion

A lasting happiness

IN A SPEECH ON THE OCCASION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROMULGATION OF THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ROME, THE POPE ENCOURAGES THE TESTIMONY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.



Dear brothers and sisters, I rejoice at meeting you, especially because in these days you have considered a theme of great importance for the life of the Church in her work of evangelization and Christian formation: Catechesis and Persons with Disabilities. (...) We know has taken place in relation to disability. The growth in awareness of the dignity of every person, especially the weakest, has led to courageous positions being taken for the inclusion of those who live with various forms of handicap, so that no-one need feel like an outsider in their own home. However, at cultural level there persist expressions that harm the dignity of these people through the prevalence of a false concept of life. A vision that is often narcissistic and utilitarian unfortunately leads many to consider as marginal people with disabilities, without recognizing in them the multifiform human and spiritual wealth. An attitude

of denying this condition, as if it prevented happiness and the realization of the self, is still too strong in the common mentality. This is shown by the eugenic tendency to suppress unborn children when they are shown to have some form of imperfection. In reality, we all know many people who, with their fragility, even in serious cases, have found the path of a good life rich in meaning, if with some hardship. Just as, on the other hand, we know people who are apparently perfect and desperate! Besides, it is a dangerous deceit to think we are invulnerable. Just as a girl I met on my recent trip to Colombia said to me, vulnerability is part of the essence of man.

The answer is love: not the false kind, overly sentimental and pietistic, but the true kind, concrete and respectful. To the extent in which we are welcomed and loved, included in the community and accompanied to look to the future with trust, the true path of life is developed and we experience lasting happiness. This, we know, is valid to all, but the most fragile are the proof. Faith is a great life companion when it permits us to touch with our hand the presence of a Father who never leaves His creatures alone, in no condition of their life. The Church cannot be aphonic or tone-deaf in the defense and promotion of people with disability. Her closeness to families helps her overcome the solitude in which they often risk closing themselves up due to a lack of attention and support. This is even more valid for the responsibility she possesses in the generation and formation of Christian life. There can be no lack in communities of the words and, above all, the gestures to en-

counter and welcome people with disabilities. The Sunday liturgy in particular must be able to include, so that the encounter with the Risen Lord and with the same community can be a source of hope and courage in the not always easy path of life.

Catechesis, in a special way, is called to discover and experiment with coherent forms so that every person, with his or her gifts, limits and disabilities, even serious, may encounter Jesus on the way and abandon himself to Him with faith. No physical or psychic limit may ever be an obstacle to this encounter, because the face of Christ shines in the intimacy of every person. In addition, let us be careful, especially us, as ministers in Christ's grace, not to fall into the neo-Pelagian trap of not recognizing the need for the strength of the grace that comes from the Sacraments of Christian initiation. Let us learn to overcome discomfort and fear that at times can be felt with regard to people with disabilities. Let us learn to seek and also to "invent", with intelligence, suitable tools so that no-one lacks the support of grace. Let us form – first of all by example! – catechists who are increasingly capable of accompanying these people so that they may grow in faith and make their genuine and original contribution to the life of the Church. Finally, I hope that in communities, people with disabilities may too be catechists, also by their witness, to transmit faith in a more effective way.

I thank you for your work in these days, and for your service in the Church. May Our Lady accompany you. I heartily bless you and I ask you, please, do not forget to pray for me.

Thank you.

Pope Francis



Family album

Marianne Abrahamsson



Dear friends,
I am sorry to have to tell you that Marianne Abrahamsson died yesterday morning in Uppsala where she lived since many years. She suffered from dementia during her last years and I am sorry to say that she did not remember me when I was in contact with her.

Last time I saw her was when she took part in a Faith and Light camp in Sweden, already then it was another person then the one I knew.

Marianne brought Faith and Light to Sweden some 40 years ago, she used to be the leader of Faith and Light in Sweden and she also was the zone coordinator for Northern Europe zone, (England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden) for a while.

We will remember her with gratitude and love.

Love to you all

Berit Keszei

Ivan de Andrade Vieira

Dear Ivan, go in peace. We all loved you so much. It was an honour to have lived with you. You are already a star in the sky for us all.

Maria-Silvia Tavares
Deputy international coordinator

Ivan was part of the "Saint Sébastien" community in Sao Paulo, Brazil.



munity went to him, wishing to pay homage to him. We are comforted by the thought that one of his last jobs in this life was to prepare the chapel, the meeting... to take care of us, as he has done so many times. He was a man who knew how to care for others.

We prayed in the chapel under his house, while he was on the path to Heaven. We felt like we were accompanying him on his last voyage, so that he did not feel alone, so that he was not afraid. And we gave thanks for all that he has given us.

Nacho was an important person, at the same time a priest, psychiatrist, university professor, superior... but with us he was quite simply Nacho. He was very relaxed and at times, he really made us laugh. One Christmas, worshipping the Infant Jesus, the Santon fell and broke. That is how we ended up talking about everything that was broken in us and the way in which Jesus came to inhabit this vulnerability and fill it with hope.

Nacho was vulnerable and, like St Ignatius, he had the gift of tears. Together, we cried with joy, emotion, comfort, pain, all sorts of tears. He had a tender and compassionate heart. At times, in the midst of the tears, he said that we were his Bethany, that the whole world needed a Bethany.

I need you the magic words that we learnt from Jean Vanier at Trosly and which we recall again and again... Community, I need you; friend, I need you; Jesus, I need you. Nacho, we need you, we love you, we mourn you. You are

Padre Nacho Boné



Nacho Boné, Jesuit priest, chaplain and great friend of the Ruah community in Madrid, has gone to heaven. He was 51 years old. All the com-



now in the presence of the one who created you, of the one who has never forsaken you.

The Ruah community

Births

In the last issue of "Up Sails!", Ernestine announced the birth of the "Saint Charbel" community in Douala (Cameroon). Here is a photo of their second meeting.



- Two new communities in Lviv (Ukraine), "The Well of Jacob" and "Love"
- One community in formation in Buenos-Aires (Argentina).
- The "Children of Mary" community has divided. They are now "The Children of Mary" Nanterre and "The Children of Mary" Asnières (Ile de France West).

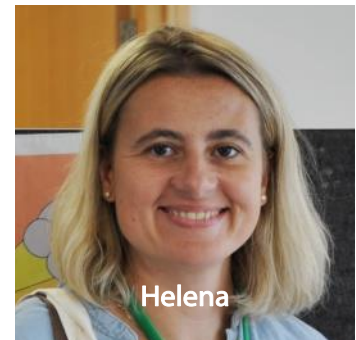
Vice-international coordinators

The international coordinating team is now complete. **Solange Ménage** (France West) replaces Ludovic de la Quintinie. She will accompany the provinces in the south west of France.

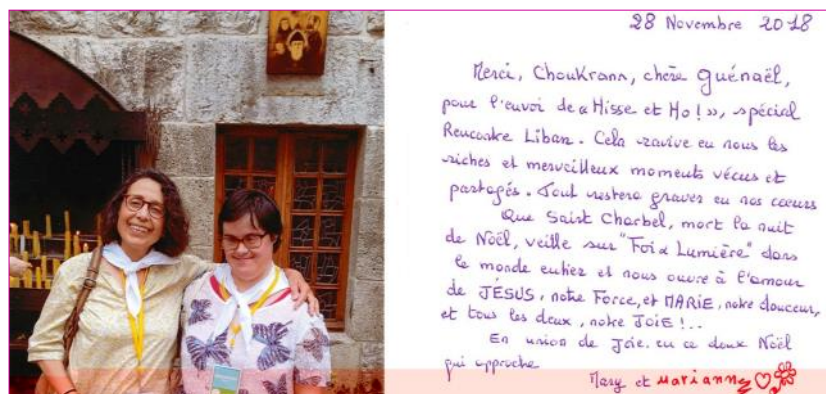
Hélène Escribano (Spain) replaces Raúl Izquierdo. She will accompany the provinces on the Iberian Peninsula. The Team is now made up of Kirt Bromley (USA), Elvira Gomero (Peru), Uliana Roy (Ukraine), Angela Grassi (Italy), Valerie Jaques (Malaysia), Amgad Edward (Egypt), Urzula Czyrnecka (Poland), Ann Emmott (England), Dominique Pfeffer (France) and Marie-France Violette (Mauritius).



Solange



Helena



*Thank you, Choukran, dear Guénaël, for sending me the special issue of "Up Sails" about Lebanon. This rekindles the rich **and** wonderful moments lived and shared together. Everything will remain in our hearts. May St Charbel, who passed away on Christmas eve, watch over Faith and Light around the word and open each other to the love of Jesus, our Strength, and Mary, our Sweetness, and both of them, our JOY !*

Mary and Marianne

International agenda

- **7-11 March:** "Southern Cross" (Australia, New Zealand) province assembly, Canberra, Australia.
- **11-19 March:** meeting of the international coordinating team and board of directors, Salamanca, Spain.
- **15-17 March:** formation session for the communities of "Our Lady of Guadalupe" province, Mexico.
- **29-31 March:** Lent retreat for the "communities of "Poland North" province, Wisła.
- **29-31 March:** formation session for the communities of "Fiume di Pace" province (Italy North, Galilee) Milan, Italy.
- **30 March:** general assembly of the "France Sparkling East" provincial association, Nancy.
- **5-8 April:** retreat for the communities in the north of the "France Centre" province, abbaye St Martin de Mondaye.
- **7-8 April:** Lent retreat for the communities of "Poland South" province, Krakow.
- **13-14 April:** "Light of the Orient" (South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan) provincial assembly, Busan, South Korea.
- **11-12 May:** council meeting, "Poland West" province, Poznań
- **24-26 May:** formation session for the communities of "Our Lady of Guadalupe" province, Chihuahua.
- **25-30 May:** provincial meeting of "Jesus, Light of the Andes" (Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru), Bogotá, Colombia.

To meditate during this time of Lent,
alone or in community

THE "MYSTERIES OF FAITH AND LIGHT"

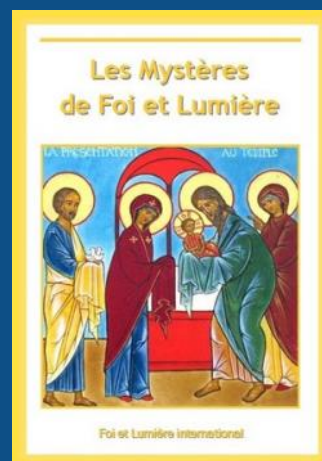
Ghislain du Chéné, former international coordinator, suggests that we each meditate alone or in our communities on these five "Faith and Light mysteries". This is an invitation to follow Jesus on the paths of the Gospel, to remain standing beside the cross, next to those who are crucified in our world.

Taking part in a vigil of prayer and meditation on Christ's passion at Paris' Notre-Dame cathedral, I was surprised to be meditating on the Passion during the time of Advent. Why recall the sufferings of Christ at this time of vigil and waiting for the birth of the Saviour? What is the "mysterious link" that connects the Immaculate Conception to the Cross?

As I continued in this time of reflection, I associated this "mysterious link" with members of our communities: people with disa-

bility, the Dads, the Mums, the friends, all of them were there at the foot of the cross with Saint John and Mary. The mysteries of Faith and Light are an invitation to pray all together, to learn to follow Jesus on the ways of the Gospel, to remain standing at the foot of the cross, next to those who are crucified in our world.

Pocket-sized format (A6), 0.50 €



Marie-Hélène's letter



Can our child with multiple disabilities receive the Lord?

"Ombres et Lumière" are asking me to return to an essential question about those with an intellectual disability especially when it is very severe: *Can they receive the Eucharist?* So, one mum feels that for her severely limited daughter, there is no question. *She has a pure heart. She is a little angel*". Other parents write to us: *Our daughter Jeanne, baptised and confirmed, has multiple disabilities, incapable of any degree of knowledge and is not able to distinguish between Sacred Bread and ordinary bread.*

For more than fifty years, the question has arisen as professionals discovered the "educability" of the children who, at that time were labelled "deficient" or "mentally retarded" and the means of communicating with the ones who seemed the most severely affected. Similar progress was made in the Church. Father Henri Bissonnier created the specialist catechesis (in France). L'Arche and Faith and Light were created. The spiritual abilities of these people were observed. For many of them, access to the sacraments, and particularly the Eucharist, was opened up. This was considered and encouraged by a number of bishops who expressed themselves personally or collectively.

With the Holy Seat, Paul VI and John Paul II, whilst testifying to their marked preference of love and trust for the intellectually disabled, did not give an opinion on the Eucharist. However, John Paul publicly demonstrated his thoughts. In 1987, in Rome, in front of eight thousand people gathered for the mass, he

gave communion to Sabina who was blind and who had a severe intellectual disability. Francesco and Olga, her parents, affirmed: *Today, no-one can say any longer that people like Sabina are not able to receive the Eucharist.*

CAPABLE OF AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP

In 2005, an important milestone! The synod on the Eucharist, then in 2007, the publication of a document from Benedict XVI "the sacrament of love", an apostolic exhortation on the Eucharist. The Pope picked up on one of the fifty proposals by the bishops and wrote: *Whenever possible, eucharistic communion should be made available to the intellectually*



Marie-Hélène at the Synod on the Eucharist

disabled people, if they are baptized and confirmed: they receive the Eucharist in the faith also of the family or the community that accompanies them. (Proposal 58)¹

Therefore, it was the first time that the Church, with its authority, had issued an official document on the Eucharist and the intellectually disabled people, and this without limits on the severity of the disability.

We must rejoice in it and not be astonished by it. This decision seems to respond so much to the wish of Jesus when he rebuked the disciples, who through respect for Him, their Lord and Master, wanted to dismiss the small children. He ordered his disciples: *Let the little children come to me and do not stop them.* Elsewhere Jesus confirms his preference: *I thank you Father, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants.* A great mystery of love where no-one is left out. A love that is communicated not by intellect and theological lectures but through the heart and even the body.

The deprivation of speech and any means of expression in a severely disabled person cannot prevent them from living by God's life, of being in an intimate relationship with Him, the child of God since his baptism, called to eternally share his glory. And so that this life is nourished, God has chosen this so humble means of the Eucharist.

UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS?

However, the Eucharist is not a magical rite. It normally requires the faith of the one receiving it. When this explicit act is difficult or impossible due to their intellectual limitations, the Holy Father tells us, the faith also of the family or the community that accompanies them. In setting out this approach, the Pope uses the expression: *whenever possible*. What does it mean? I would suggest three avenues: That the parents, the first educators of the

child, be called themselves to discern with the priest and the closest community (parish, Faith and Light, specialist catechesis) about the right time to suggest a first communion.²

2. That the persons with disability receives a preparation adapted to their abilities. The awakening of faith happens first of all in the family through the atmosphere of love and prayer, especially the evening one with the lighting of the candle, the icon or statue of the Virgin, a song of praise or intercession and the reading of a passage from the Gospel...

3. That the parish, a community of faith, joyfully welcomes the disabled person, whatever their limitations, like an especially precious member of their family. This is not an isolated individual but a member of the Body of Christ. It could even be said an indispensable member of this Body to which we should give the most honour, as St Paul said. The preparation to receive Jesus also involves liturgical celebrations that are full of joy and fervour. It is also the way in which the faithful receive "Jesus Host" in a deep reverence. Their attitude, much better than words, says that it is not just ordinary food but a meeting of person to person, heart to heart with someone invisible but very much there.³

¹ Proposition formulated by Marie-Hélène Mathieu, member of the synod on the Eucharist.

² Sometimes just by a parcel of Host or a few drops of precious Blood. To know how to respect those who seem to show a refusal. Believe in the freedom that is theirs.

³ Ombres et Lumière extract N°186