

Up Sails!

The international letter of Faith and Light N. 60, April 2024



Christ is risen!



Hallelujah! Hallelujah!



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Raúl Izquierdo

International coordinator

We are sons and daughters of Easter

Stay with us, for it is nearly evening... Lk 24, 29

Yes, we are sons and daughters of Easter, because our faith was born of the Passion of Jesus on the Cross and the experience of the Resurrection, which changed the lives of the first disciples, just as it has changed ours. Our communities are Easter communities, born out of the experience of pain that does not remain in itself, but precedes Life. The darkness and suffering, real and palpable, that herald the coming of the eternal Light.

How often do we say in Faith and Light that we are communities where suffering is present but that we celebrate with great joy and intensity? Of course we celebrate, not because we are naïve or because we like to suffer, but because Christ is risen and has conquered death. Isn't that a reason to celebrate and sing until we lose our voices?

We are communities of **Faith** and of **Light** :

Faith, because we believe in Jesus, we believe in God who is father and mother, we believe in the Holy Spirit who gives us strength, courage and joy. And even if our faith is sometimes poor and weak, we want to move forward!

And **Light**, because we are illuminated by the light of Jesus' resurrection, the light of God's unconditional love for human beings. A light that has been given to us so that our communities can show it to the world, without fear or complexes. Light is meant to be shown and to illuminate, not to be hidden in a closet or under the bed.

Editorial

I would like to share this prayer with you, my brothers and sisters of Faith and Light:

Jesus,
Stay with us, for evening is drawing near.
Stay close, very close, because darkness is already looming.
Don't go far away, we need you, sometimes fear invades our heart
and everything becomes a heavy burden.
Stay close to the mothers and fathers of our friends with disabilities,
comfort them with your embrace.
Stay close to our young friends.
Touch their hearts so that they follow you with courage and joy.
Stay close to our friends with intellectual disabilities.
Follow the deepest desires of their hearts and bless their smiles.
Stay in our communities, continue to walk beside us as you did
with the disciples on the road to Emmaus.
And when we can't see you, blinded by our problems, our burdens
and our worries, help us to discover you in small gestures
and in the warmth of the Bread and the Word.
Stay with us, for evening is drawing near.

Raúl Izquierdo
International coordinator

Happy Easter



Testimony



THE ENCOUNTER OF BENJAMIN COSTE

Éric Signoret

Heart of Pierre

New President of Faith and Light France, he was "converted" by his son Pierre, who suffers from a severe disability.

Éric Signoret laughs very often. Talking about himself before the birth of Pierre, the youngest of his seven children, he laughs: "I was a careerist, always looking for my marshal's baton! Ambition took him to the four corners of France, with his "holy" wife Elisabeth agreeing to follow him from Marseille to Picardy, before the family finally settled in Lyon in 1991, his birthplace.

At each stage, the family grew while he turned around companies in difficulty, trying to satisfy their shareholders. In 1996, Pierre was born. It took six years for the medical profession to diagnose his "difference": he had Angelman syndrome, "a very severe mental deficiency", explains his father. Soon to be in his thirties, Pierre has "the cognitive abilities of a child of only 2 or 3 years of age", continues Éric Signoret.

Faced with his son's illness, he explains that for a long time he was in denial.

« You can be happy despite the disability : be authentic, just as you are. »

"He was our youngest, his behavioural problems weren't yet a problem. My wife carried everything during those early years," he confesses, paying tribute to the woman to whom he has been married for forty-two years.

For a long time, performance was his obsession. "I used to ski competitively. Mountaineering too, so much so that my wife used to tell me I had a mistress: the mountains!" laughs the lively septuagenarian, honed by the hour-long run he puts in every day. "I always have to try to do better than the last time. Even at my age!" laughs the man whose tendonitis is forcing him to rest these days. With regard to Pierre, Éric Signoret says he has "gradually come out of denial. And Foi et Lumière has had a hand in that". Once again, his wife put him on the right path: to Lourdes for the last Faith and Light international pilgrimage, in 2001. "To say I went there without enthusiasm would be an understatement," recalls the father of the family, then aged 47, sacrificing another mountain run for the occasion. "Lourdes was at odds with my

values at the time. During the pilgrimage, however, he was to experience the three stages described by Mother Teresa in relation to the disabled person: "repulsion, compassion and then wonder", he quotes. He also became "aware that we can be joyful despite our disability: we can be authentic, just as we are". The result was a fatherly bond that was finally established: "Pierre became my son again, and I his father," he says, suddenly serious.

On their return from Lourdes, the Signorets approached a Faith and Light community in their home town of Lyon. "We just wanted to thank them... and we never left them!" says the father of the family. He and his wife were seduced by "the joy, the games, the possibility of letting go" of the monthly meetings. Without idealising disability, which "remains a source of suffering", the new president of Faith and Light France (1) now believes that "the fragility of our children shapes us. Sometimes I feel like Zacchaeus: my Peter is Christ saying to me, 'Today I want to stay with you.

(1) *foietlumiere.fr*

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Claire, my sister...

My sister Claire, you are 40 years old.

It seems we look alike. I must admit that I have often wished that we were more similar. I wish you could climb the cherry tree with me.

I would have liked us to tell each other stories and confidences in cabins made of cushions and fabrics.

I wish we would have run away through the streets and hills until the sun went down. I would have liked us to play for hours with cards, dice and pawns of all colours.

But you, my sister, are not like the other little sisters. With you, I grew up differently than the other big sisters. We spent more time playing cards, with clubs, spades, hearts, than playing monopoly!

Claire, I'm grateful to you for developing this passion. A collection with endless variations, gifts that are easy to make and attention that is easy to capture. It's a fun way to connect with you. Games and good times are at the heart of life.

So thank you ! You taught me that you could invent the rules of the games yourself. And life is much funnier when you know that.

With you, I learned to denounce the norm before I was even aware that it existed. It started with the common

mockery in the playground, which was totally incomprehensible to me. Excluding for a lock of hair, for a brand of clothing, for an accent was already a complete absurdity for me, your big sister. It's obvious that we are all different, right? Why do you want to be normal?

With you, between two climbs, I also learned to lay down under the cherry tree. Who has ever looked at a tree from below? Observe the wonderful and fascinating world of changing light, rustling leaves, infinite variations of blues and greens.

I thank you for each of these magical moments. I thank you for the contemplation.

What a walk we took together ! You in front, me behind. Your pace is much slower than mine. I tune into your tempo and I pay attention to what catches your attention. You rarely look in the expected direction.

A detail in the architecture, a half-torn poster, the flight of a bird or something invisible. Sometimes I have wondered for what captured your gaze so intensely. At home, they said that you saw angels. It made me proud. My sister has superpowers. You can see things that are invisible to others.

Maybe it's an angel? My sister has superpowers! You can see things, that is invisible to me. I want you to know that I

am still walking around with my nose in the air, looking for a detail that might grab my attention.

With you, I learned that we don't always need words to understand each other. Take hands. Look at each other. A long time. Eye to eye. Be fully connected. Watch the world. Observe. Without ever judging. Words sometimes distract us from what is essential. I feel that you are very close to the essential.

Claire My sister, you are 40 years old. And I know that I am not the only one in this beautiful assembly that you have made grow. I'm not the only one you taught essential things. The ones that really matter, all those beautiful things in us, the ones that make us all the same.

Joëlle
Belgium

Claire's commitment

On the occasion of her 40th birthday, Claire, a member of our community, made a commitment. She writes in facilitated communication, here is her moving and enlightening message about her state of life.

40 years old, Claire.

February 11, 2024, my commitment.

My name is Claire, I really like Saint Claire and I would have liked to become a Poor Clare. But when you are disabled, many doors close.

I long for Heaven, I know that one day Saint Clare will take me in her arms and all disability and suffering will end. In the meantime, how can I live my desire to be a nun without living in a convent?

It is in my great solitude, in this space that I receive Jesus. He consoles me, he doesn't want me to be sad or angry about my damaged condition and says to me: "you are my friend. I can join you in your difficulties, I too have experienced a lot of rejection and incomprehension. » My loneliness is diminished by His faithful presence at my side. And then, I have the grace to converse with loved ones who have already left before me: my brother Pierre, my boyfriend Pascal, my friend Rémi and my old friend Valère who gave me the icon of Mena and Jesus.

My space of solitude has not become a convent, but rather a hermitage. The educators turn on my computer, with mass in the morning and the rosary with Our Lady of Light in the evening.



Two moments that immerse me in prayer and strengthen my friendship with Christ. So today, I commit to this life of mine, with the help of God.

I no longer want to endure it, but to consent to this life and perhaps one day love it. I sometimes feel so weak and depressed that without God I could no longer smile.

Today I want to repay Him for all the good He has done for me, by getting closer to Him with devotion.

Forty years is a step, a turning point and I want to say: yes Lord, here I am! ■



The Feast of Light in different countries



Together we form a big international family



The day began with a religious service after which our community gathered together. A little over twenty people with disabilities as well as families and friends were present. We formed a circle in the center of which was placed a beautifully embroidered white lace veil on which we placed a few rose petals around the great light of Christ. All around were candles.



After the welcome song, we mimed the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. Jan Torvald (the host) had put on his tunic and stole to become the character of Simeon, the one who was waiting for the Messiah. Seeing and listening to them, we were all immersed in the story. At the end of the mime, Jan concluded with these few words: "Now I carry the one who carries me." Simeon carries the child Jesus who carries us all. And we sang the song "Jesus, son of God, light in me".

Then Kristin reminded us that the Feast of Light was celebrated at the same time all over

the world. Together, we form a large international community born 53 years ago and which has grown over the years. Then she took a glass full of marbles and gradually spilled them. We watched them fall and dance, we heard them hit the ground, spilling out and scattering in all directions. 86 beads representing the 86 countries where Faith and Light communities are present, as many beads as there are lit candles. This very symbolic moment really allowed us to feel that we belong to the great international community.

During prayer time, we shared intentions by circulating light among us, then we sang the song "Walk in the Light."

We then shared a beautiful cake prepared in honor of this very special day. It was really a great party! ■

Lillesand Community, Norway



Candlemas in Estonia



On 4 February, the Kuressaare community celebrated Candlemas.

On this occasion, our new coordinator Krista Mändar spoke to us about gratitude, a simple practice that makes us happy: becoming aware of the benefits we have received, acknowledging that we are touched by them and giving thanks...

We wished happy birthday to our friends with disabilities and prayed for the communities of Follo (Norway), Lund (Sweden) and Rakvere (Estonia). On 17 February, our coordinating team visited the Rakvere community. They showed us around a work centre adapted for people with disabilities, supported by the Trinity Church in Rakvere. To thank them, we offered them a floral arrangement depicting Noah's Ark. Then, with the new coordinator of the Rakvere community, Kaidi Ojasoo, and its chaplain, Tauno Toompuu, we set a few dates for our two communities to meet again. ■

Kuressaare Community, Estonia



Jesus is our light



The candle is one of the most important symbols of the Feast of Light. It gives light, whatever its size, color or shape. It shines without compensation, on the contrary, it gives itself and its light shines without her making any additional effort. For me it is an opportunity to remember that I am a light in this world where so many people feel left out. Through the message of Faith and Light, we try to keep the candle lit so that it continues to light the paths to integration. ●

Vera Abdallah
Halleluia Jiita Community Coordinator,
Haut Kesserwan Zone



The Feast of Light is our celebration and Jesus is our light! Accompanied by the priest who carried the Blessed Sacrament, we went to place our candle near the emblem of Faith and Light, then mass began in the presence of the village inhabitants of Achkout (Haut Kesrouan) and of our friends with disabilities. After the time for greetings and meeting, we experienced a time of celebration with music and several dances, then we took a souvenir photo around the delicious almond paste cake prepared especially for the occasion and decorated with the new Faith and Light logo! The smile was on everyone's face. What could be more beautiful than experiencing joy and fraternity together. This is Faith and Light. ●



Jocelyne Moubarak
Holy Spirit Ashkout Community

Formation, a treasure to share



At the end of January, a formation for coordinators and members of the community coordinating teams took place in Issy les Moulineaux, very close to Paris, led by the Faith and Light France formation team.

Around sixty people from different provinces responded enthusiastically to this call. They were invited, upon their arrival, to enter the village of Bethany and accompany Jesus to Martha, Mary and Lazarus. We all took our seat in silent reverence, in the light of the Gospel. In view of our commitment, we recognized ourselves in Martha, Mary or Lazarus. With this introduction, inspired by the workshop led by an Italian team in Strasbourg, we entered the heart of the subject of the formation. Throughout the weekend, we were able to hear what the mission of the coordinator and his coordinating team was, discover the establishment of a commission around the code of conduct, deepen the spiritual dimension of Faith and Light, have answers concerning finances, announcement and sharing days, experiences of family stays and retreats in the provinces, opening up to the international dimension, knowing how to access the Faith and Light France and international sites, discovering the different documents on which lean.

We also shared in small



groups how each of us lives the call to the coordination mission, and exchanged on our experiences, our questions and our reflections. We experienced this time of formation in a fraternal atmosphere through the exchanges and services rendered during meals in the image of Marthe, in a collected atmosphere during times of prayer and the Eucharist, in an atmosphere of joy during mimes, gestured songs and relaxing evenings.

Sometimes coming as several members of the same coordinating team, the diversity of the members allowed us to fully experience the community dimension and the attention paid to each other, a

treasure of Faith and Light. We left confident, happy, nourished by the various contributions, with the feeling of not being alone in the mission and of being members of a large family, that of Faith and Light. ■

The formation team:
Armelle and Dominique Pfeffer,
Solange Ménage, Anne Cronier,
Evelyne Laure, André Haurine
and Marie Odile Frey.

The same formation will be offered in January 2025 in Lyon to all those who were unable to come this year.

Meditation with clay



Thanks to the experience of two members of our community in Lourdes, we have been able to organize a time of meditation with clay. The coordinator presented the workshop “4 times in silence”. The participants made gestures with a piece of red clay and spoke to Jesus, sometimes singing. The leader reads what God and Jesus do for us.

The **coloured phrases** are said or sung together. Each person goes through the **4 steps** and comes to place what they have done in front of the icon of Christ of Manoppello.



Bernadette community
Vichy, France

1 **Look at** the clay with your eyes, caress it with each of your fingers; **knead it** gently between your hands.

In the Bible it is written that the Lord God took from the earth to mould man (and all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air.)

Jesus, you are the potter who moulds me. (x3)

2 **Feel** the softness of your palms; **Run** your hands over your face.
Jesus laid his hands on the sick to heal them.

Jesus, fill me with your gentleness, (x3)

Fill me with your peace.(x3)

3 **Give** shape to your clay, **Look at it**, admire what you have shaped.

Just as this clay has a unique shape, so each of us is unique in God's eyes.

And God says to each one:

I have called you by your name, (x3)

you mean a lot to me, (x3)

you are precious to me because I love you (x3)

Jesus, you are the potter who moulds me (x3)

4 **Take** your clay object and place it before Christ, singing,

I come to you, Jesus (x times)

Final song

**As clay is moulded by the potter's skilful hands,
so my soul is made,
and my heart is looking for you, my God.**

Chorus:

I come to you, Jesus.

I come to you, Jesus.



Formation in the Puglia and Basilicata regions



From Friday 2 to Sunday 4 February, the communities of Puglia and Basilicata gathered in the oasis of Santa Maria dell'Isola for a formation weekend "in the company" of Martha, Mary and Lazarus who had such a deep bond of friendship with Jesus.

The seven communities from the two regions were present with large or small delegations and reflected on the value of relationships, the foundation of Faith and Light. A young seminarian, chaplain to one of the Monopoli communities, an expert in conflict mediation and, for the final celebration, the bishop in charge of Faith and Light in Italy, Monsignor Giovanni Intini, took turns as speakers. The welcome from the sisters on the island was perfect, and we really hope that these two wonderful days will be shared in the communities and help to strengthen the friendship between us even more. ■



Joys and Light in Togo

A Faith and Light community has existed for several years in the parish of Saint Paul the Apostle in Nassablé, northern Togo. It has worked hard to help people with intellectual disabilities and their families rediscover the joys of life and move forward in hope.

In order to widen their field of action and make the movement better known, several members of the Saint Paul Apôtre community wanted to start Faith and Light meetings in other parishes in the diocese, an opportunity to get closer to people with disabilities and their families to facilitate their participation.

So, on 25 November, it was possible to bring together a dozen people with intellectual disabilities living in the parish of Sainte Monique de Kombonlouaga. After talking to each person and getting to know them, we suggested some activities.



St Monique Church of Kombonlouaga

Before leaving, we wrote down their names and addresses, drew up a calendar of meetings and planned this year's activities with them. We will try to meet on the first Saturday of every month.

This time of sharing and preparation brightened up our lives and gave us a lot of joy and enthusiasm. We parted with the hope of meeting again next month. ■

Odile YANGNENAM
Dapaong, Togo



The Szczecin community celebrates its 40 years.



Dear friends,
Last year, the Faith and Light communities of Northern Poland in Szczecin celebrated their 40th anniversary.
The prelude to this joint celebration was the participation of the entire province, from 19 to



21 May 2023, in the pilgrimage to Jasna Góra, the beloved Marian shrine of Saint John Paul II. Another note of this wonderful anniversary concert was the celebration in Stare Łysogórki, with the inhabitants of the village where the Szczecin communities have been spending their holiday camps since 1989. The Jandzejówka house, which is located there, was bequeathed to the community many years ago by priests who are friends of Faith and Light. A foundation was set up to manage it and it continues to serve the community of the faithful.

On 18 November 2023, the high point of this anniversary, representatives of the four Polish provinces gathered for the Eucharist in the church of Our Lady Queen of the Polish Crown. The provincial chaplain, Father Andrew, solemnly consecrated the icon of the "friendship of Christ and the Church", representing Christ embracing his bride, the Church. This icon underlines the unique place held by Faith and Light in the universal Church. The second part of the ceremony took place inside the 19th-century Villa Lentz. People with disabilities from the Naive Song Ensemble gave a beautiful concert and refreshments were served.

We can repeat the words of St Paul: *"God chose what is foolish in the eyes of the world to confound the wise..."*.

A big thank you to everyone for this beautiful moment, for the gift of Faith and Light and for all our friends. We send our greetings to all the communities! May God bless you, may the Holy Spirit guide you and may the Blessed Virgin protect you!

"And I was there among the guests, I drank honey and wine" (a quote from the Polish writer Adam Mickiewicz), and I told you what I saw. ■

Marcin Wierchosławski

Chinese New Year



On 25 February 2024, over a hundred people from the four Hong Kong communities gathered with friends at St. Margaret Mary's Church to celebrate the Chinese New Year and share a cake on the occasion of Father Bonzi's 84th birthday.

Faith and Light communities in Hong Kong used to hold a Chinese New Year celebration every February, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has not been possible to hold this celebration for four years.

We are all very happy to be able to celebrate this holiday together again. We welcomed the friends with disabilities of Caritas who always join us for our Chinese New Year celebrations. We also welcomed the new Faith and

Light community of Ste Anne (2023).

After lunch, members of each community sang, danced and played music. The festivities ended with a Mass celebrated by Father Antonius David Tristiano (chaplain of the St. Ann community) and concelebrated by Father Giosue G. BONZI.

Everyone was very delighted to be together. ■

Gracy Tong,
Vice provincial coordinator





For our reflection, Ghislain du Chéné

When should you wish the Faith and Light's anniversary?

This Easter, we celebrate 53 years of Faith and Light. It's no secret that we love celebrating anniversaries in our communities, but what day should we choose for our movement's birthday?

It is often said that Faith and Light was born during a pilgrimage to Lourdes from 9 to 12 April 1971, from Good Friday to Easter Monday. Our founders told us that on the last day they answered a question from the pilgrimage leaders, who were worried about what to do next: "Continue to meet up in your community, and we'll see where the Holy Spirit wants to take us".

So should we be wishing ourselves a birthday on the day after Easter, rather than on Easter Day? Or on 12 April?

But there was another event during this pilgrimage that really struck a chord; on Good Friday, at the end of the first large gathering, the pilgrims enthusiastically sang the pilgrimage song, which had not been planned before the Easter Vigil, because it was full of alleluias. And the word "alleluia" became a password for all the pilgrims until the end of the pilgrimage. (See Marie-Hélène Mathieu's book "Never again alone").

A few years ago, I was reminded of the beautiful story of the "alleluias" that burst forth spontaneously on Good Friday, when we should have reserved this acclamation to celebrate the resurrection of Christ at the Easter Vigil, an acclamation all the more beautiful for having prepared it by concentrating our energy during the 40 days of Lent. Five years ago, someone in my community, who is used to experiencing the Passion narratives read on Palm Sunday and Good Friday with rare intensity (so much that a priest in our parish was struck and reminds me regularly), said to me at the end of the Good Friday service with a big smile: "That's it, now he can rise again!" It's almost as if she didn't sing Hallelujah!

Jesus told the apostles so many times, as he



did after the Transfiguration, but they didn't quite understand: they wondered among themselves what it meant to "rise from the dead" (cf. Mk 9:10).

The birth of Jesus had already been celebrated nine months earlier on 25 March, the feast of the Annunciation, so why not start celebrating the Resurrection three days earlier? And recognise the prophetic nature of the inspired intuitions of Faith and Light?

The statue of the Pieta by Michelangelo, which can be admired at the entrance to the Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome, shows Mary holding the body of Christ on her knees as he is taken down from the Cross and laid in the tomb. Mary's face expresses no sadness, no doubt because Christ's face expresses no suffering. She is probably saying to herself: "That's it, now he can rise again", having understood the penultimate words of her Son on the Cross: "It is finished" (Jn 19:30).

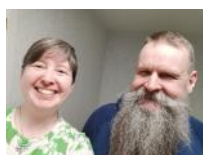
So, happy birthday, Faith and Light! And as we like celebrations that last several days, let's not hesitate to celebrate our birthday from Good Friday until Easter Monday, with lots of Alleluias!



International news

Nomination of several vice international coordinators

Following the work carried out by the international nomination committee and on the proposal of international coordinators Raúl Izquierdo Garcia and Maria Silvia de Jesus Tavares, the Board of Directors has approved the appointment of the following new vice international coordinators:



Michael et Karin LILIEQUIST (Sweden) are taking over from Ann EMMOTT. They will accompany the provinces of Beacons of Light, Ireland and Northern Lights.

Izabela RABIASZ (Poland) succeeds Urszula CZYRNECKA. She will accompany the provinces of Poland North, Poland South, Poland West and Poland Central East.



Antoine-Marie IZOARD (France) succeeds Didier OVAZZA. He will accompany the provinces Ile de France Ouest, Paris et le Levant, France Nord, France Est Pétillant and Belgium.

Souleiman KASSOUHA (Syria) succeeds Amgad EDWARD. He will accompany the provinces Holy Family, Egypt Central, Egypt South-Kuwait, Lebanon South-Jordan, ILA Trinity and



Seongmi KWAK (South Korea) and **Adeline KHU** (Malaysia) are taking over from Valérie Jacques. They will accompany the provinces Light of the Orient, Colors of Asia and Southern Cross.

News from South Africa

During my visit to the Johannesburg communities, we had a special moment of homage at Edenvale, dedicated to the memory of Rev Gray, their chaplain, who has joined Jesus in heaven. "We miss him enormously, but his memory will always be engraved in our heart". Then the community experienced a time of prayer and discernment, following which Gill was elected as



Lynn and Gill

the new coordinator. "We thank Lynn for the many years she has spent sharing her yes with the community."

We look forward to a wonderful year ahead as we work together to grow, revitalise and celebrate all Faith and Light communities in Capricorn Africa.



Gill and Jacinta

Jacinta Munro
Provincial Coordinator
of Capricorn Africa

International agenda

- Provincial meeting in Belgium, 5 to 7 April 2024, Banneux
- Beacons of Light provincial team meeting, The Birery, Ilkly, North Yorkshire
- France "sparkling east" provincial meeting, 11 April 2024, Zoom
- Annual dinner organised by the ILA Trinity province, 12 April 2024, Lebanon
- Retreat at the Ferme de l'Arche Spiritual Centre "A meaning to my life", 19 April 2024, Trosly Breuil
- National pilgrimage to North and South Lebanon, 12 May in Bkerki, Lebanon
- Meeting of the communities of the province of France Est Pétillant, 25 May 2024, Notre Dame de Sion
- Disability Night (in more than 30 towns in France), 15 June 2024

International solidarity

Projects to support

- In Georgia, from 4 to 8 July for 35 communities from 5 countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania, Georgia and Russia) on the theme "Let us be joyful in hope". Support needed: €6,450.
- An international meeting for young people from Latin America, the Caribbean, the United States and Canada is planned for 15-17 November 2024. Funding sought for 10 young people from Brazil. Support needed: €3,700

What has international solidarity been used for?

- Retreat in Ukraine for around a hundred participants (families and people with disabilities) in March 2024: €4,200

Would you like to make a donation ?

Online on our secure website

<https://www.foietlumiere.org/en/donate>



Family album

Remembering the life of Reverend Gray ROBERTSON



It is with great sadness that we had to say goodbye to our very loved member of Faith and Light, Gray.

Gray left this world to be with his beloved Saviour on January the 10th 2024. He had been battling cancer for a year and finally our Lord took him home to be with Him.

Gray was ordained as an Anglican priest and then spent many years at the Edenvale Methodist Church on the staff as a dedicated pastor. Gray had been a committed member of the Edenvale Faith and Light community in Johannesburg South Africa for very many years. He was our dedicated chaplain and always demonstrated his deep love for those with disabilities. He was gentle and deeply spiritual, leading our community in the ways of Jesus with great understanding. He was a beloved friend to so many and he was loved by all.

Gray accompanied me to Faith and Light's General Assembly in Beirut, Lebanon in 2018 when I was the Capricorn Africa Provincial Co-ordinator. He learnt so much more about Faith and Light and the wonderful international family that we are all part of. Many of you may remember him and his very gentle spirit and sense of humour. He was a wonderful companion to me in those days away from home.

Gray leaves behind his wife, June and his daughters and grandchildren. Our Faith and Light community has been left with a big hole and that chair that he sat in is now empty. He is in a better place, and we will remember him forever.



Faith and Light Edenvale honours Gray's life and commitment to those with disabilities.

You have flown home, dear Gray.

Kathryn Morgan
Former provincial coordinator for Capricorn Africa,
member of the Edenvale community



Family album

Lorenzo JULIEN, rest in Peace

It is with deep sadness that I announce that Lorenzo Julien has been taken to heaven by Jesus to meet God the Father. From there, he will bless his family and his spirit will be a burning light to guide, illuminate and strengthen the life of the Faith and Light communities in Latin America that he loved so much.

A man of faith, who gave love and peace, has left on a journey of no return, far from his family and his beloved daughter Lorena, so special to God, whom he cared for, held by the hand and loved, faithful to the mission of Carmen, his dear wife. He has left loneliness and a huge void in his community of Santa Ana and in the communities of the province of Santa Maria de Guadalupe. Faith and Light has been blessed by his life and his generous dedication. Even in the most difficult times, he was a pillar of union, peace and hope, putting his gifts, his work, his wisdom, his hands and his enthusiasm at the service of the mission, his heart and his friendship since the birth of the first communities in Mexico. Lorenzo exercised all his skills as Coordinator and Vice-Coordinator of the Heart of America and Caribbean Province.

We unite in prayer for his eternal rest, for his beloved daughter Lorena and his family, that the Lord may strengthen them with His love, in the certainty that Lorenzo will continue to love and care for them from heaven.

May the Lord receive him into his arms for all the good he has done in his life.

We still have his peace, his kindness, his

friendship and the example of his faithfulness in all circumstances.

Lorenzo, my old friend, rest in peace, companion on so many journeys, thank you for what we shared and walked together, thank you for everything I learned from you. We will never forget you, you will live forever in the hearts of your Faith and Light family.

"In life as in death, we belong to the Lord.

Elvira Gomero
Vice International Coordinator



Night is a celebration!

On Saturday 15 June 2024, people with disabilities are inviting the public to a major celebration that is completely free and open to all. Now in its 7th year, The Disability Night will be celebrated in over thirty towns and cities. and will be sponsored by the young comedian Valentin Reinehr.

While disability directly affects 12 million people in France (80% of whom are invisible), the gap between people with and without disabilities is still very wide. The Disability Night is a festive and friendly way of breaking down these barriers. Bringing people together, breaking down stereotypes, revealing the talents and richness of people with disabilities... These are the aims of the Disability Night, modelled on the Festival of Music. For a few hours, hundreds of anonymous people showcase their cultural, artistic and sporting talents... The difference is that it is people with disabilities, who are all too invisible, marginalised and isolated for the rest of the year, who are inviting the public to celebrate with them.

Valentin Reinehr, a young comedian with a stammer whom the public discovered on "France has a big talent" and sponsor of the Disability Night 2024, shares this sentiment: "As stammering is considered a disability, I'm very sensitive to this cause. The Disability Night should happen every day, not just once a year". The first edition in 2018 was a huge



Some highlights

- Shows for persons with and without disabilities: dance, concerts, theatre, sketches, etc.
- Wheelchair race, white cane run, blindsoccer, dance, adapted sports
- Demonstration with trained dogs
- Escape game to raise awareness of disability
- Construction of a fresco
- Introduction to sign language
- Introduction to Braille writing
- Art exhibitions
- And throughout the day, testimonies, refreshments and musical entertainment...
(detailed programme and list of participating towns coming soon on www.nuitduhandicap.fr)

success, and the event was quickly adopted by many towns in France and overseas. In 2023, the Disability Night welcomed almost 50,000 people in 35 towns and cities. On Saturday 15 June, the 7th edition of this event will be held in some thirty towns and cities across France.

Each town will have its own programme, with a single watchword: celebration! Workshops, events, shows and drinks, the public can meet up, chat, get to know each other, create links and contribute to a more caring world.



Marie-Hélène's letter



Reconciling isn't easy

First of all, we need to reconcile ourselves with reality. We are more or less at odds with it, since it no longer coincides with our legitimate plans. Reality is the little child we're holding in our bodies or minds, a child who doesn't conform to the one we'd dreamed of, who was full of life and resources, capable of achieving everything that events and our limitations have prevented us from doing in our lives.

Our child is there, different, disappointing, but a unique person whose destiny hangs in the balance. Will the call of his heart make the ghost that stands between him and us and prevents us from meeting disappear?

The reality with which we are also invited to come into harmony is those around us. All those close to us: the one who doesn't support us as much as we need and the one who has let us down completely; the one who has offended us and the one we have offended and no longer dare to look at. Jesus even asks us to start with him: "If your brother has something against you, go and find him...". He also tells us: "Love your enemies, for if you love your friends, you do nothing extraordinary, just as the pagans do. But if you love your enemies, you will be perfect, like God your Father...".

Reconciling with ourselves is not the easiest thing. We are so unhappy about our weaknesses, our limitations, our handicaps, our pride, so prone to condemn ourselves and to imagine that the trial is only the price we have to pay for our faults... We have to learn to bear with ourselves patiently as a "poor suffering member of the Mystical Body". And we must also reconcile ourselves with the small resurrections of our lives, because sometimes we are in such a state of sulkiness that we do

not accept the slightest improvement, the slightest progress, because it is not total enough and not what we expected.

"If your heart condemns you, God is greater than your heart". To accept this mercy and tenderness of God for us... Finally, it is with him that we must first reconcile ourselves. We tend so easily to distance ourselves from God in times of trial, as if he were ultimately responsible for them. We need to relax. Relax in him. For it is he who first loved us, and it is he who always takes the initiative in love and reconciliation. His patience is tireless, but to reconcile, both parties must agree. Dialogue must therefore be accepted. Even if it's in the manner of Job, by crying out our distress and bitterness. God will take care of the rest. One day, he will make us understand that our heart was made for him and that it cannot find peace until it rests in him.

Reconciling with our child as he is, as he can become. With ourselves, weak and sinful but saved and called to be saints if we respond to the Lord's call. With our lives, which, like Jesus', are marked by death and resurrection.

Better light a lamp than curse the darkness", page 81



Easter : Message from Don Marco Bove

« Why do you look for the living among the dead?
He is not here ; he has risen. » (Lk 24,5-6)

On Easter morning, near the tomb, the angels of the resurrection said to the women: Why do you search among the dead...? In the course of our lives, there are many situations in which we too run the risk of searching among the dead : when we no longer know what to do and have lost all hope, when something important for us suddenly ends or someone has left us forever.

Searching among the dead means looking in the wrong place or in the wrong way for something or someone we can't live without...

The angels of the resurrection, on the other hand, announce in a surprising and unexpected way that Jesus has risen, that he is alive forever, that he will never die again. Death is not the last word in our lives, even if it continues to frighten us.



So here is the Easter proclamation that reaches us once again: Jesus is alive, life is stronger than death. There is hope for us and for all those who are suffering at the moment, for those who have lost faith in their present and their future, for those who are victims of hatred and war, and for those who are faced with loneliness and anguish.



As our Faith and Light communities move forward, let us ask the Lord to be like the angels of the resurrection, to proclaim hope and to be witnesses to the prophecy of love, especially in the most difficult and hopeless situations.

The Lord is risen, death is conquered, life blooms anew.

Don Marco Bove
International chaplain

**Happy Easter
of the Lord !**

Easter drawings

Thank you my friends
for your beautiful drawings!



Jos Santos
Philippines



Oleksyn Andriy
Ukraine



Justine
Philippines



Ela
Philippines



Wesni
Philippines



Kuharskyi Andrii
Ukraine

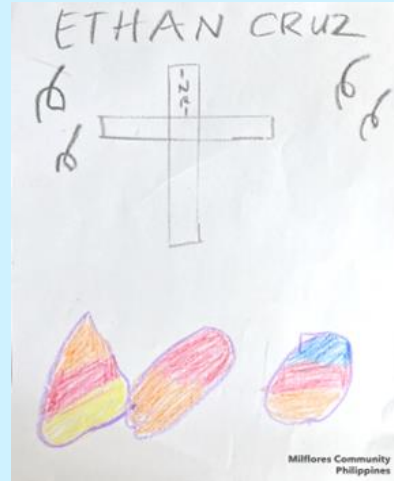


Havtur Ostap
Ukraine

Easter drawings



Olya Babii
Ukraine



Ethan
Philippines



Yulia Kurylyak
Ukraine



Victor M. Baldovino
Philippines



Gael Villegas
Philippines



Ninia
Philippines



Jayzell
Philippines