

*Come to
the
Waters !*



Guidelines 2000-2001

FAITH and LIGHT

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***Welcome to a very special year
in the history of our
Faith and Light Family!***

“Come to the Waters”

At this time thirty years ago, Jean Vanier, Marie-Hélène Mathieu and many others were making the final preparations for what everyone thought would be one pilgrimage to Lourdes. Great encouragement was given, inviting people with mental handicaps, their families and friends to “Come to the waters”. Yes, they were invited to the waters of Lourdes, but to more than that, to the waters of God’s love.

What surprises were in store for the thousands of pilgrims at Easter, 1971! Acceptance, community, the gifts of those with mental handicaps... all these and more were the gifts they found. And what surprised everyone was the discovery that this Lourdes 1971 was not the end of their journey. Instead, they discovered they were pioneers of many pilgrimages to come - pilgrimages not only to holy places around the earth, but to the hardened and darkened places in the hearts of each of us!

So, you are warmly invited this year to “Come to the waters” again and again. With the whole family, come and drink of the abundant sources of growth for our spiritual lives, individually and as a community.

Keep in mind that:

- Wednesdays are Faith and Light days in which we specially hold one another in prayer...
- We are invited to deepen in little groups, the *pilgrimage Charter* which is in the appendices.

- Also in appendixes, you will find beautiful texts of meditation and a help from Fr. Jozef Larsen to deepen our spiritual lives through little groups. He has also given little fioretti for spreading Faith and Light into our everyday lives.
- Finally, we are called to be more and more **Jubilee** people: Marie-Hélène Mathieu provide many ways for you and your community to live that clearly.

You are not alone!!! Please take a little time to “walk” through these *Guidelines*, to find that it can be water, refreshment for you and all your community. Some suggestions are specially given for child, but the most important is to adapt each suggestion to the possibilities and needs of your community.

A special gift of this year’s *Guidelines* is that so many people from the Faith and Light family have had a hand in preparing them. Month by month, different teams from **Ukraine, Lebanon, Australia** and **Mexico** have all contributed wonderful practical suggestions. Jean Vanier has written truly nourishing reflections to begin each month, introducing us to many Scripture passages which may be new to us, all full of living water!

So, these are *Guidelines* from the family, for the Family of Faith and Light. Thank you so much, each one, for your fidelity, your hard work in this year of pilgrimages. May we journey with Jesus!

Maureen O’Reilly
International Coordinator
July 2000

The mystery of pilgrimage

This year Faith and Light is setting out on a pilgrimage to the source of its foundation. Obviously not all the members of our communities will be able to go to Lourdes, but all of us can in one way or another make a pilgrimage even if some of us are not familiar with this tradition. These Guidelines want to help us enter into the mystery of pilgrimage. Whether we go on a pilgrimage or whether we remain where we are, we all need to reflect on this mystery. Our life is in fact a pilgrimage, from the moment of our conception to our final meeting with God at the time of our death, when our soul leaves our body and we find ourselves in the arms of God, our Father.

The Jewish people made a pilgrimage from Egypt to the Promised Land. It was a long pilgrimage that lasted 40 years. Forty years of walking across the desert, experiencing many difficulties and privations but also the presence of God, who was nourishing them, guiding them and was present among them.

Finally the Jewish people settled in the Promised Land. But every year and several times a year, those who could, went to the Temple of Jerusalem, the 'Abode of God' amongst his people. Jesus himself often went to Jerusalem for the feast of Tents and the feast of the Passover.

Hindus regularly make pilgrimages. The best known is that at Benares in the Ganges. Hundreds of thousands of men and women plunge into the river waters to purify themselves and to meet God anew. Muslims are also invited to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, a holy place.

Christians throughout the ages have always wanted to go to the places where Jesus was born, lived and died, or where the first apostles lived

and died, or where the first Christians were martyred or to other places closer to us which have been marked by the presence of God or by a person close to God.

Faith and Light was born with a pilgrimage

Faith and Light started with a pilgrimage to Lourdes for people with disabilities, their families and friends, joined together in a community. This pilgrimage was born out of the sufferings of Gérard and Camille Proffit and their two sons, Loic and Thadée, who both have severe mental and physical disabilities. They had been excluded from a diocesan pilgrimage and had gone to Lourdes as a family but felt excluded there too. They met Jean Vanier and Marie-Hélène Mathieu. This meeting was like a spark of life which became truly a call of Jesus. It was as if this pilgrimage was the response of Jesus to the cry of pain of so many parents and of many persons with disabilities who were shut up in institutions and could not find a place in society or in the Churches. In 1971, a large number of people went on this pilgrimage which was truly blessed by God. It was like a wonderful song of joy and thanksgiving and a sign for the Church. We had originally thought it would just be one important moment in the life of the families present, but God decided otherwise: it was the point of departure for a new, community movement. Faith and Light was born and over the years God has given it much life and growth. Today, there are 1400 communities throughout the world, where persons with disabilities, their parents and friends regularly get together. Little by little Faith and Light has also become an ecumenical movement with Catholic, Anglican, Protestant and Orthodox communities.

The theme for this year is around water: “Come to the waters!”
Come and drink and refresh yourselves!

**“Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty;
though you have no money, come!
Buy and eat; come, buy wine and milk without money, free!
Why spend money on what cannot nourish,
and your wages on what fails to satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and you will have good things to eat
and rich food to enjoy.
Pay attention, come to me;
listen and you will live.” (Is 55:1-3)**

**We are often tired, carrying a lot of stress and living moments of conflicts. Where can we find a little peace, joy and deep relaxation? We often look for compensations in food, drink, amusements, television, instead of turning towards the love of Jesus and the Word of God. The prophet Jeremiah cried out in the name of God:
“For my people have committed two crimes:
they have abandoned me,
the fountain of living water,
and dug water-tanks for themselves,
cracked water-tanks that hold no water.” (Jr 2:13)**

**It was during the festival of tents that Jesus stood up and cried out:
“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink!” (Jn 7:37)**

Let us prepare ourselves to go to the Waters of Life, to quench our thirst.

Jean Vanier

In these Guidelines there is no special meeting on the place of pilgrimage. Certain communities or members of communities will join the International pilgrimage to Lourdes while others will go to a place of pilgrimage closer to them. Time should be set aside in each monthly meeting to talk about the place we have chosen, why we chose it and how we are going to prepare for that particular pilgrimage.

September 2000

***The call of God: our
journey begins***



The Lord said to Abraham
“Leave your country and
your kindred and your
father's house for the land
that I will show you. And I
will make of you a great
nation, and I will bless you
and make your name great,
so that you will be a
blessing.” (Gn 12:1-2)

“Leave your country... for
the land that I will show
you...” Don't we all hear
these words whenever we
discover the Gospel and the
message of Jesus? Doesn't

Jesus say to each one of us: “Come and follow me.”

We are all called to leave our personal projects, our self-centredness, our closed hearts and to follow Jesus on the path of love. Jesus

promises us the Holy Spirit so that our hearts can be more open and so that we learn to love our enemies and to be pilgrims of peace, unity and reconciliation.

This calls for faith and trust. To believe in God's call to change our lives and to let the Holy Spirit transform us. This means we must leave behind certain false values, which prevent us from living trust in Jesus and the beatitudes.

Our societies often reject persons with disabilities and shut them away in institutions. Those who are weaker cannot find a place in society because they are too slow and do not always understand what is going on around them. Faith and Light was founded to create communities of welcome where each person finds his/her place.

Each day, and day after day, we must listen to this call of Jesus to leave behind a culture of rejection, a culture where everyone is obliged to climb the ladder of human promotion, to become stronger and stronger, and instead to enter into a culture of welcome, of hospitality and love: the culture of the Gospel.

God's call begins with the waters of baptism, for Jesus says to us: "In all truth I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born through water and the Spirit." (Jn 3:5)

These waters give life, wash, cleanse, refresh, and transform us.

Let's listen to this call of God to begin our journey, like pilgrims, walking together towards the waters.



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Welcome

A small welcoming committee can be asked to greet each person on their arrival. We will specially welcome the new friends and families who have joined our community to walk with us during this year of pilgrimage. When everyone is gathered together, the leader will make a little speech of welcome. Then each person is invited to share what he or she has experienced during those weeks when the community has not met together. The community leader then introduces the theme for the year. This time of nourishment is essential (see appendix n° 1). This year is a special year; it is the thirtieth anniversary of Faith and Light. We shall depart on pilgrimage to Lourdes to the very source of our origins. Perhaps at this time of welcome someone could tell our Faith and Light story again to remind each one of how we were born.

It is true that not all the members of our communities are able to go to Lourdes, but we can all make a pilgrimage in our region or in our country with our community. This is a year for us to prepare to follow Jesus, to hear his voice calling us "Come to the waters."

Today, we shall reflect on the meaning of "depart" and think about Abraham's answer when he was called to leave everything that was familiar and safe for him and trust the Lord to lead him in safety.

“Depart” implies: to listen carefully, to leave behind, to prepare oneself, to equip oneself and know the direction, the aim.

To listen carefully:

Someone is calling us? Who is this person? What is his language? Is it understandable for me? Through whom does he speak to us? What does he want from us? Should we silence all other voices?

To leave behind:

Our fears, our hesitations, our being closed in on ourselves, our false values, our covetousness, our preconceived ideas, our discouragement, the “me” which drags me down.

To equip oneself:

With evangelic values, with a backpack full of love, with walking boots made out of perseverance, with a walking stick of truth and uprightness, with a hat of humility, spectacles to always see the most beautiful things.

To know the direction, the aim:

We do not depart just like that, not knowing where to go. We follow Jesus with the aim of living in communion with the Father by loving our brothers.

Sharing in small groups

The theme of our meeting today invites us to listen carefully to the call of Jesus to follow him on the path of Love.

We can divide ourselves into small groups to share about one of these questions:

1. Jesus invites me to leave everything and to follow him; what is it that hinders me from following him?
2. To leave and become a blessing as Abraham; have I already lived this experience?
3. To depart alone or in a community? How shall we support one another?
4. How can we heal the wounds caused by leaving home?

With small children

Jesus calls you to follow him so that you can do beautiful things with your life and bear much fruit. He needs you, your love and your light. Let Jesus live in you and advance with Him! (cf. Book "I meet Jesus", p. 3)

In a workshop, on thin cardboard, you can draw a heart or a beautiful flower which will be cut out and placed afterwards in the prayer corner, as a sign that one is to love Jesus and follow him. You can also help the children to choose from various symbolic objects, brought on that day, the ones they would like to put in their backpack in order to follow Jesus better. Each child will then show the whole community the object he has chosen.

Reliving the Gospel

We can read the story of Abraham (Gen 12:1-9) or mime the call to the disciples (Mt 4:18-22).

Game

We shall need pieces of paper and cardboard. Firstly, we can write or draw on the pieces of paper the things we must leave behind and on the pieces of cardboard the things we need to depart with. These latter are placed in the centre of the room. The pieces of paper are given out to each one. The whole community is then scattered in the room. Everyone and all at the same time shout out: "Come, follow me". There is a great noise, a sort of confusion, then a moment of silence and a voice is raised, calling: "Come, follow me". It is the voice of Jesus.

We leave our papers in a bowl and go to gather at the centre. Everyone receives a piece of cardboard and says in turn what it is written or drawn on it.

Prayer

We gather together in a prayer corner. On the table we have placed the signs of baptism. We are going to renew our baptism, where Jesus called us for the first time. The chaplain could call each one of us in turn to renew his/her baptismal promises, to dip his/her hand in the water and to make the sign of the cross with a lot of respect and love.

The children bring to Jesus their drawing or an object from their backpack.

Celebration

We can play games or sing songs. Afterwards, we can share a good snack together.

***Before next gathering:
The time of fidelity and mission.***

- We are invited to leave our home and our activities to go and visit a family in the community and to pray together with them.
- There is still time to invite new friends or new families to join us to live through this year of preparation for the pilgrimage of Easter 2001 at Lourdes with us (registrations urgent before mid-October!).
- Perhaps young people from your parish who have participated in the WYD in Rome are today looking for a practical way of committing themselves? Why not meet them and suggest to them joining together in the activities of your community during this year?
- This year, let us keep carefully the symbols used at each meeting. We shall need them again at the May gathering.
- During the whole of this year, in order to prepare ourselves to drink at the Source, we could, each month, meditate on a small passage of "I thirst for you!" (appendix n° 10), at our meetings of the co-ordination team, in the community, at what appears to be the best moment, and also alone, or with several others, during the time of fidelity...

God is with us on the way



For forty years, the Jewish people, no longer slaves, were like a people of pilgrims, marching towards the Promised Land. Forty years living in tents, forty years of precarious existence: forty years of slow progress, at the rhythm of the weakest, towards the place, which God had prepared for them.

This was also forty years of protection by God. Forty years of being nourished by God. Forty years of being guided by God. God was always there in the midst of his people. God had asked Moses to consecrate a tent on the edge of the camp, which would be the tent of the Tent of Meeting, the “Abode”, the place where God would reside in the midst of his people.

Once installed in their land, the Jewish people celebrated this protection of God. The whole people went to Jerusalem, where the Temple was, at that time, the new “Abode.” John, the evangelist,

speaks of Jesus going to the Temple for the feast of Tents (cf. Jn 7). During this feast, in September, everyone would leave their houses and put up tents, where they would live for a week, in remembrance of these forty years.

How important it is for us to remember how much God has protected us. He has protected each one of us, our families, Faith and Light. In our lives we have all suffered; we have all lived through difficult moments of insecurity and uncertainty. But on rereading our stories, we realise how Jesus has been guiding us and protecting us. He has led us to a community life, which is simple and loving. Through Faith and Light we have found a new life. Yes, Jesus guides us and watches over us.

During their pilgrimage across the desert, the Jewish people found themselves in a place where there was nothing to drink. They thought they might die of thirst. They rebelled against Moses who had led them to this place where there was no water. God commanded Moses: “Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock; and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, that the people may drink” (Ex 17:6). Paul tells us: “This rock is Christ.” (1Co 10:4)

Jesus himself participated in the feast of Tents, and on that great day, He stood up and proclaimed:

**“Let anyone who thirsts,
come to me and drink.” (Jn 7:37)**

Yes, let us go to Jesus:

**“Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.” (Mt 11:28)**

Yes, let us go to Jesus. Let us prepare ourselves to set out on pilgrimage to find Jesus in a new way. He will give rest to our hearts.



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Welcome

A few could meet together beforehand to put up a tent in the meeting room. It is the “Meeting tent” where will be placed an icon or a picture of the Trinity (see appendix n° 7, picture A). Each person can meditate for several moments, (all together, individually or as soon as people arrive; each community will feel what is the best for them...).

The group leader can explain the meaning of the tent: it is the presence of God among his people to guide them to the Promised Land.

Today, it is Jesus who is with us.

Reliving the Gospel

Jesus accompanies us as he accompanied the disciples at Emmaus. He walks with us and opens our eyes to make us understand his mystery.

Our mime can take its inspiration from the passage in the gospel of Luke 24:13-35.

Then we could try to mime the parts of our life where we have seen Jesus among us, guiding and protecting us...

Sharing in small groups

We can form small groups of parents and other groups gathering the other members of the community. We shall share together about what we have experienced by doing this mime:

1. How does God protect each one of us?
2. How can I be with the person who needs me?

With small children

We can explain the parallel between the presence of God who guides us and protects us and the presence of parents with their children.

- How do our dads and mums protect us?
- How does God comfort us?

Prayer and Celebration

In the "Meeting tent" with flowers, background music and little candles...:

We can become aware, in our prayer, of the presence of Jesus in our life.

Let us sing together the songs, which express our joy.

*"You are there at the heart of our lives
and it is you who gather us together,
You are there at the heart of our lives,
Truly alive, O Jesus Christ."*

The time of fidelity

- We could exchange news with each other by telephone, or visit people who need our presence, and pray with them. If a family or a friend is missing at this gathering, we could ask someone present to contact them and tell them all about our gathering.
- During all this month of October, we can live through a Jubilee experience with two or three members of the community. The suggestions of Marie-Hélène in appendix n° 3 can help us. We can also think of living through a Jubilee experience with the whole of the community at the November gathering, when the theme will be “Go and wash in the pool”
- The icon or picture of the Trinity can be entrusted to a member of the community at whose home several persons will get together, during the coming month for a moment of prayer together.

November 2000

Go and wash in the pool

After having anointed with clay the eyes of the man born blind, Jesus tells him “Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam” (Jn 9). The man has confidence in Jesus and goes to the pool as on a pilgrimage. He comes back, having regained his sight. Jesus has opened his eyes.



We need water to drink, to refresh ourselves, but also to wash ourselves. Water takes away all that is dirty. The night before he died, Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. It is a gesture of communion but also a gesture of pardon. He washes their

feet to show that he is also washing their hearts. He wants to purify them: “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.”

A pilgrimage is a time of renewal, a time of purification, a time when

we become more conscious of all that is dirty and dark in our hearts. It is a time when we ask God to wash us. That is why Hindus go down into the waters of the Ganges and the Jewish people were invited by John the Baptist to go down into the river Jordan. We have all, at one time or another, received the waters of baptism. At Lourdes, Bernadette scraped the ground and a spring of water flowed forth. Many pilgrims like to go there, to wash themselves and to ask for purification of their hearts.

The most important thing is not to plunge into the water, but to want to be purified, to see more clearly who we are, how we live, the vocation and mission Jesus has given to us. The man born blind washes himself and sees clearly.

We all need to see clearly, that is to say, to walk in the light. That light is love.

**“If we walk in the light,
as he is in the light,
we live in communion one with another.” (1Jn 1:7)**

**“Whoever loves his brother abides in the light,
and in it, there is no cause for stumbling.” (1Jn 2:10)**

And Jesus warns us:

**“Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye
but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?
...First take out the log that is in your own eye, and then you
will see clearly
to take the speck out of your brother's eye.” (Mt 7:3-5)**

We are all blind in relation to ourselves. We judge others so easily and do not recognise our own failings and faults. We all need to be washed and purified, to live more fully in the light of God.



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Welcome

After each one's welcoming and news exchanging, the leader or the chaplain introduces the theme of the month. Then, each one stands up, moves away from his place, puts a scarf over his eyes and tries to find his place by himself. It is difficult to live in darkness! Then each person accepts to be guided by a member of the welcoming team to his place.

In the dark, we need a friend to guide us... The leader explains the aim of the game according to the theme of the month.

Sharing

Let us share together what we experienced during the welcome:

1. Experience of darkness and light.
2. What helps me to trust when I feel I am in darkness? What do I need at this moment?
3. What are the shadows in my life, but also the lights?
4. Who is my true light? Did I ever experience that Jesus is the Light in my own life?

Each group or each person can express by a plain or coloured

drawing their experience of darkness and light. Children are invited to tell us or to draw how they are afraid of the dark...
The community leader summarise everything shared.

With small children

The whole of this gathering can be spent with the children, separating them up into each small group.

A little game:

To recognise each other blindfolded is not easy! We need to be able to see clearly.

A little sharing:

- Are you frightened of the dark?
- Are you frightened of water?
- What frightens you the most in life?

Reliving the Gospel

The whole community joins in the mime of the man born blind (Jn 9:1-7). There is room for everyone to participate! Afterwards, each person can say what seems to him or her to be soiled or dark in his/her heart and express what touched him/her in the Gospel that he/she has just relived.

Prayer

In the centre of the space provided for prayer, we can bring the bowl of water used in the mime. Someone can read slowly the prayer in appendix n° 2 "Come to the waters". Then, those who

want to will come and wash their faces or their hands while we sing and pray together:

We ask Jesus to wash us, to open our eyes to see more clearly and to walk in His light.

We can then be reconciled with each other and finish with a joyful song, because Jesus opens our eyes and asks us to follow him.

Before next gathering :
The time of fidelity

- We could meet in the home of one or other of us to prepare what we shall need to celebrate Christmas and entrust several persons with the making of Christmas cards to send to our friends at the Christmas meeting.

Living in trust



“Joseph went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.” (Lk 2:4)

This long journey, on foot, from Nazareth to Bethlehem must have been hard for Joseph and Mary. It was not really a pilgrimage. They were obeying the order of the Emperor, who wanted to know how many people were under his rule. Many people were on the roads. So, many arrived at Bethlehem to be enrolled at the same time. There was no more room at the inn. And yet, Mary was about to give birth. How did Joseph cope in this situation? In panic? Anger? Or depression? No. He must have coped by having trust, inner peace, creativity, and the certainty that the Father was with them and would find them a shelter. Mary and Joseph both lived in a great inner peace. At the same time, they were very open and attentive to each moment and to what the Spirit seemed to be showing them; there was no time to lose. Perhaps Joseph had spent his youth in Bethlehem. Perhaps he

had been a shepherd like his ancestors, for example like his great-great-great-grand father David. He thus knew the caves in the region. The Holy Spirit inspired him to go there. They went there peacefully, quietly, giving thanks to God.

Christian wisdom lies in the certainty of faith that God is watching over us and walking with us in all our daily situations of our lives. Without panic, or anger or depression, but with trust and creativity, remaining open and attentive to what is given at each moment and to what should be done. To remain peaceful, listening to God. Today we have a tendency to try to plan and to control everything. When something escapes our control, we panic. Jesus wants us to discover that faith is not only praying and going to church, but, also believing that the Holy Spirit is given to us every moment to guide us and inspire us.

Things must of course be well organised for the pilgrimage. Places have to be reserved in trains or planes. We must prepare carefully everything that is necessary for the trip and be careful not to lose the tickets! But once everything has been organised and programmed, there is always the unexpected. And that is where God awaits us. Are we going to panic, get angry or become depressed? Or will we receive these events as a visit from God to which we must respond with trust and resourcefulness?

And this is not just a question during the pilgrimage! It concerns our daily life which is so often full of unexpected events. How to live each event, to meet each person with a peaceful heart and to react to situations in truth and humility, as God would wish us to do?

We want this pilgrimage to be a time where we are renewed in the spirit of the Gospel. Let us pray for this gift at Christmas: to welcome Jesus in all the events of our daily lives.



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Welcome

We can greet each other by listening to each other's news. Let us ask how the month went when we didn't see each other. Let us play and sing in order to relax in each other's company.

Sharing in small groups

We can get together in groups of three to seven persons, in which there is at least one person with a handicap, a parent and a friend. Let us meditate on the long journey that Joseph and Mary must have made to go and be registered. The sunny days, the rainy days, the dust and the fatigue. Some can share with us a similar experience they could have lived on a journey or a pilgrimage; how they succeeded in overcoming all these obstacles. After having chosen a group leader, we can reply to the following questions. (The leader will make sure that each member of the group gives his point of view, so that everyone feels he or she has been listened to).

- What have been the main difficulties met during the course of my life?
- What helps me to overcome the difficulties met in the course of the pilgrimage which is my life?

- In what way does Faith and Light help me to find the necessary strength to overcome my difficulties?

Sharing in community

After this sharing in small groups, each leader tells the whole community about the fruit of this sharing. At the end, the community leader or a volunteer can make a summing-up of all that has been said.

With small children

While the adults are sharing, the children could wrap up pebbles in different coloured paper and put them in several little baskets (1 for each child). These will be brought by the children when we relive together the scenes of the Nativity and the Adoration of the shepherds. After this, they can dress up as shepherds and come back to the community.

Prayer

We should like to share with you a tradition which takes place in Mexico and which makes us think of the pilgrimage which Joseph and Mary made. We call it "The Inns".

In our country, this begins with the Roman Catholic rosary prayer. It could also begin with a reading from Luke 2:1-7. After having prayed or meditated, the community divides up into two groups: those who remain inside the meeting place, and those who go out. These latter form a little procession, all round the block or simply

round the room where the gathering is being held. They represent Mary and Joseph. Three persons with a handicap can dress up as Mary, Joseph and an Angel. They lead the procession. Those who have stayed inside represent the innkeepers on whose doors Mary and Joseph will knock in order to find a little rest after such a long day.

Mary and Joseph try to find shelter in three different inns. It is only in the last inn that they can at last find rest.

Each request for shelter can be formulated with the following verses:

VERSES FOR ASKING FOR SHELTER

FIRST REQUEST

Outside:

After a long day
We arrive tired out
And we ask for shelter
So that we can rest.

SECOND REQUEST

For pity's sake, we ask you
Please give us shelter;
Heaven is the witness
To our distress.

Inside:

On this inclement night
Who dares to approach
Our doors, without fearing
To disturb us?

What is the cause of this grief
Of this crushing load,
Which leads you to beg
For such relief?

O.: Poor pilgrims
Who in a strange land
Wander desolate
Seeking a home.

Those who beg for relief
Are travellers,
Wandering on foot
Finding no comfort.

I.: There is no refuge here:
The hour is late
And there is not one place
Where you can be sheltered.

Here there's not even
A small empty corner
An enormous crowd
Has come to fill it.

O.: Since you are merciless
To our appeal,
We shall go to another house.
Come, let us knock.

God be praised
In spite of our difficulty
May the greatest delight
Come to overwhelm us.

THIRD REQUEST

O.: Open your doors
To two unfortunates
Who arrive tired out
Looking for rest.

I.: Who is it at this hour,
On this icy night,
Implores so loudly
To find a lodging?

O.: A poor young married couple,
Joseph and Mary,
Sent by God
To beg for your pity.

It is now that those who are inside let the pilgrims enter, reciting the following verses:

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. Enter now, young man and wife! Chaste and innocent We shall do you homage. Come now and accept. | IV. Enter with your husband And rejoice the hearts Of all these poor people Who are in this house. |
| II. By your protection And help divine, May we walk On the path to Heaven. | V. Hell is trembling The devil weeps For the King of Glory Is about to be born. |
| III. Mary, you are beautiful, Holy dove, A tender refuge Our souls will give you. | VI. Walking on frost Melting the ice The Queen of Heaven Goes to Bethlehem. |

At this precise moment we can light a firework display or candles symbolising our joy at having received them.

Reliving the Gospel

We could now relive the Nativity and shepherd Adoration scenes with children. They will bring their little baskets. Then in an atmosphere of meditation, every one will come to adore Jesus in the crib.

Celebration

In Mexico, after “The Inns” we break what is called “la piñata”. La “piñata” is a cardboard box or an earthen pot which is covered in multicoloured paper. Inside, we put sweets or fruits.

“La piñata” should be hung from the ceiling. It symbolises the demon who tries to enter in our hearts and take the place of the little Jesus.

Everyone in turn, starting with the youngest, will try with a scarf over his eyes to break “la piñata” with a crook.

Finally, we can turn on some music, dance, sing and play games which form part of the Christmas tradition of our own country. We could sign and send a greeting card to absentees, to people which were closed to us during this year, to those who are involved with us for solidarity...

The time of fidelity

The date of the pilgrimage to Lourdes is getting near...

Among the leaders, the pilgrimage correspondents and the delegates from your countries, many are certainly going through moments of stress, of overwork, discouragement. There are so many things to think of still! Practical problems to resolve, visas difficult to obtain, money problems which have not been solved...! How can we support one another? If we cannot help in a practical way, those who have a precise task to fulfil, each person in the community can help so much by prayer, in accepting with love and patience everything unforeseen, difficult, irksome, in his own daily life.

Let us ask Jesus to give us his peace in spite of our cares... Let us live in trust, like Mary and Joseph, praying for each other during this time which leads us from Christmas to Easter. Let us again ask the contemplative communities near to us to pray a great deal for all the pilgrimages which are being prepared throughout the world.

A pilgrimage of unity



“Every Jubilee Year is like an invitation to the wedding feast. From our different churches and ecclesial communities throughout the world, all of us hasten to the celebration that is now being prepared. Let us bring with us everything all that unites us already, and by fixing our eyes firmly on Christ alone, let us grow in the unity that is the fruit of the Spirit.”

John Paul II, Bull of Indiction

January 1st is for many the “World Day for Peace.” During the course of the month, there is the week of prayer for Christian unity. Our pilgrimage, whether it be to Lourdes or to another place of prayer, or a special day for communities in our town or region, is called to be a sign of unity for the Churches.

Faith and Light is an ecumenical movement. We are becoming more deeply aware of the desire of Jesus for the unity of all those who are

baptised. Differences exist in the ways our churches celebrate and live the Eucharist or the Communion Service. Differences also exist on the level of theology and the interpretation of Scripture. However, that which unites us is stronger than all that divides us. We all believe in the Gospel. We all love Jesus and want to follow him. We have received the gift of the Holy Spirit and want to work together for unity and the respect of our differences. We want to respond to the prayer of Jesus:

**“May they all be one,
just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you,
so that they also may be in us,
so that the world may believe it was you who sent me.
I have given them the glory you gave to me,
that they may be one as we are one.
With me in them and you in me,
may they be so perfected in unity
that the world will recognise that it was you who sent me
and that you have loved them as you have loved me.” (Jn
17:21-23)**

Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians:

**“Jesus is our peace,
who has made us both one,
and has broken down in his flesh
the enmity which stood like a dividing wall between them.”
(Ep 2)**

The last millennium was a time of great divisions between Christians, terrible wars between countries and religions and rivalries between the great powers in the West. The third millennium will be one of reconciliation or it will perhaps not exist. Today,

armaments are terribly dangerous and their capacity for destruction colossal. This reconciliation begins in our own families, in our Faith and Light communities and in our places of work; we are also called to live this reconciliation in a particular way between Christians of different denominations and with other religions. There needs to be a reconciliation on the theological level, but that is the work of theologians appointed by our churches. We are asked to enter into relationships with our brothers and sisters of different denominations, to listen to them, to respect them, to marvel at their growth in Jesus and their love for those who are in pain and in need.

During this month, it would be useful to re-read the documents of the International Council, of the International Ecumenical Commission, and the brochure by Jean Vanier: “Pilgrims together: a vision of ecumenism.”



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Welcome

It would be good to start the New Year with a little procession in the parish welcoming us. We could talk about this with our community chaplain and the priest or minister of the parish, so that he or she can receive us before the Eucharist or Prayer Service and so that we can share our joy afterwards with the parishioners present. Some communities will choose to do this initiative of opening to the parish during the feast of Light. Each community will know which way is best within its own parish.

We have not seen each other for a month. Since then, the baby Jesus has been born in our hearts. Perhaps some of us have been absent, we have been visiting the family, or the family has come to see us. Let us talk about our experiences and express our joy at meeting together again by singing.

Celebration

Each member of the community could make hats or crackers or other party things to welcome our first gathering of the year 2001. The community could divide up into small groups and each group

could make up a song, dance in a circle or prepare a game, in which everyone can participate.

After this, we can have tea together or share a meal which everyone has prepared. It is important to remember that our relationships become deeper when we share something of ourselves with others. Others are giving us a bit of themselves; let us learn how to give and receive joyfully!

Reliving the Gospel

Let us remember the way in which Jesus sent his disciples on a mission to testify for him. Perhaps they were afraid, but Jesus gave them the confidence they needed, so that those who went to listen to them saw in them the presence of God: Lk 10:1-9. We could relive this passage of the Gospel.

We also remember that this month we pray in a special way for Christian Unity and so perhaps we could highlight at this point of our meeting the prayer of Jesus in John 17:21-23.

The community leader or the chaplain could give us a little nourishing word taking into account the theme of unity.¹

¹ We could have a look to Jean Vanier's booklet "Pilgrims together" or to Faith and Light documents concerning ecumenism. They are available through your national leader or the international secretariat. Some extracts will be available this month, in French, English and Spanish, on the website of International Faith and Light.

Sharing in small groups

Let us share together what has touched us in this gospel; how can we apply it in our daily life?

- What is the testimony of Jesus that I give to others?
- Does testifying cost me something?
- How do my daily activities testify to my travelling with Jesus?
- How can I travel with a friend with a mental handicap?
- How can I, as a member of my Faith and Light community, respond to the prayer of Jesus in John 17:21-23.

It is important that everyone can participate, in order to enrich ourselves more fully through the commentary and past experience of each person.

With little children

We can make, with an adult's help, a drawing or a collage with cutouts from journals, in order to try to show that the life of our community is a pilgrimage with Jesus; that we are his witness and unity maker.

Prayer

The members of the co-ordinating team will have prepared beforehand a prayer corner with an icon or an image of Jesus, any other inspirational symbols, a photo or the emblem of the community; candles, flowers... This must be a very intimate place where we can pray together for all those who are present, but also for all those who will go on the pilgrimage. We can pray for all those Faith and Light pilgrims from all over the world who prepare to go to Lourdes and whose faith or denomination does not include the

custom of pilgrimage to Marian shrines. We pray that all who travel will feel welcomed and supported at home and in the heart of their Faith and Light community.

We can express our community or personal intentions; then let us lay down the drawing we have made signifying our pilgrimage with Christ. To close this time, let us hold each other by the hand to recite the Our Father and say the Faith and Light prayer (see appendix n° 11), in communion with all our brothers and sisters of different denomination.

The time of fidelity

- It would be good to visit or telephone a member of Faith and Light who did not come to the gathering, either because he is ill or for another reason. Let us go and tell him what we have discovered at this gathering! Can we entrust this mission to a friend who has recently joined the community?
- If the celebration of the Feast of Light takes place next month in the parish, contacts will be made a long time in advance so that this mutual welcome can be well prepared and the parishioners associated with the arrangements for the pilgrimage, which we are perhaps preparing in our town or our region.
- If we can, why don't we arrange for the 2 February, a little evening prayer celebration, very simple, "open doors" in one of our houses or in our usual meeting place, ... in special communion with the communities of the whole world!
- To prepare the next gathering, we could suggest that several persons could meet together to decorate candles or to make "cones for candles" (see appendix n° 8).

- Faith and Light and l'Arche share the same treasure: the revelation that persons with a handicap can open our hearts and lead us to the essential. Many members of l'Arche are going to participate in their communities in the Faith and Light pilgrimage to Lourdes.

If an Arche community is near us, let us invite them, for example, to share with us the experience of the Feast of Light or another gathering between now and Easter...

This would be a way of acting out our unity together more consciously...!

February 2001

***The pilgrimage,
a witness to the value
of each person***



Joseph and Mary go with the child Jesus to present him in the Temple. Simeon takes the child in his arms and proclaims that he is “the light to lighten all nations”, and he adds that this child will bring the fall and rising of many. Then he says to Mary: “A sword will pierce through your own soul” (cf. Lk 2:32-35).

This event which took place in Jerusalem, is celebrated in many Churches on February 2nd, as the “Celebration of

Light.” It has become a special feast day for all our Faith and Light communities. It is a celebration of Light because Jesus was proclaimed as “the light to lighten all nations.” It is a celebration of Faith, because it prophesies the sufferings of Jesus and his mother. It is also a special celebration for Faith and Light because it helps us to discover how a person with a disability is also both a light and sign of contradiction in the world.

Paul tells us that the cross of Jesus, like the weakness of God, is a scandal. The Son of God, King of the universe, was rejected and

crucified. What a scandal! And the heart of Mary, standing at the cross, was pierced by a sword. She is the woman of compassion.

The birth of a child with disabilities can be for many a scandal. Parents were hoping for a beautiful baby, who would be the prolongation of their own lives. Then they discover that their child will never be able to walk or speak, what a scandal! The word “scandal” in its Latin and Greek roots means “that which causes to stumble or fall”, which provokes a crisis which can lead to revolt or depression, or, on the contrary, to a new life.

Childrens with disabilities can be a source of pain as well as a source of new life for their parents. They can bring the “fall” or the “rising” of their parents. At times parents feel like they are “falling” under the pain, the fatigue, the sense of rejection by the churches and by society at large. At other moments, they realise the gift of their child, how he/she can be a path to human and spiritual growth, how their own hearts have been opened to compassion, to other parents and to other people in pain.

The Easter pilgrimage should be a time when the communities bear witness in a visible way to the value and importance of every human person whatever his or her handicaps or limitations. A society is truly human when it is open to its weakest members and helps them live in dignity.

Simeon spoke of Jesus as a light to lighten the nations. Do we dare to say that weak people are also a light for our world? In a mysterious way, they reveal to the nations that which is essential and precious in each human being. To be human does not mean to be clever, more capable and efficient, and successful than others; it means to love. Most often the weakest people desire only one thing: to live a relationship of love and of trust. They reveal the value and tenderness of love.



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Welcome

This month we celebrate the feast of Light. In this year, when we celebrate the birth of Faith and Light at Lourdes, it is important to make a beautiful celebration of it. For the communities who are making a pilgrimage or a special ceremony on 2 February, it is good to start to organise it first at the previous meeting, so that the greatest number of people can take part. In most of the communities, those who can will have a meeting in someone's house, in the evening of the 2nd of February, to pray together especially for all Faith and Light communities over the world.

At the community gathering we can ask those who have taken part in a special event at their parish on the 2 February (a pilgrimage, a Eucharist or a service) to share the parts of the liturgy or prayer that have affected them.

Perhaps this month, the community could request their local parish to involve them in a parish service or liturgy so that the parish can "send forth" the community from their parish roots on pilgrimage to Lourdes. This could be an opportunity to tell once more our Faith and Light story, to share our gift of celebration and to thank the local people for their help in our fund raising efforts. The parish prayer intentions could be given to Faith and Light pilgrims who will represent your country at Lourdes.

Sharing

When we are in the dark we do not know where we are going. It is easy to bump oneself and to fall. The darkness does not allow us to see the beautiful or bad things around us. The light makes us discover the beauty which surrounds us and helps us to see all that we must purify or improve. Jesus is the light which lightens our road and which helps us to change in all that distances us from God.

We can divide ourselves into teams of two persons: one with his eyes bandaged, the other, the guide in the room. Then roles are changed. The person who is guiding is the light for his brother or sister. The other person must let him or herself be guided in complete confidence.

After this, we can reply to the following questions:

- When have I been a light for others?
- Who has been a light for me?
- What has Faith and Light brought as new light in my life and what has this changed in me?
- By our baptism we have committed ourselves to being lights for others: How to be more faithful to the grace of my baptism?

With small children

While the adults are sharing, the children could finish off the decoration of the candles or the cones which have been brought to celebrate the Feast of Light. These cones can be coloured, decorated, marked with each person's first name, etc... (cf. model in appendix n° 8)

Reliving the Gospel

We shall re-live together the passage of the Gospel, where Joseph and Mary present Jesus at the Temple. Jesus is recognised by Simeon, who has waited for him, with his heart full of hope. He proclaims him as “the Light of all nations”.

We can act this mime (Lk 2:29-35) in the church or in a special place prepared for the prayer, making sure that all the members of the community take part in it. Besides the principal characters, all the others can be considered as Jews who have come to the Temple.

Prayer

Just after the mime, we can make a little procession of the light with the candles brought by each one or decorated together. These will be placed near the icon or the cross, in a sand box or in another suitable support. Then we will pray together in an atmosphere of meditation and silence. We can reread slowly the Gospel for 2 February. At one time, the chaplain could invite the parents who wish, to come and present their children to God, as Mary and Joseph did. The chaplain could pray with them and bless each child and his parents. Then, he could give a lighted candle to each member of the community telling him/her: “you must be a light for your brothers and sisters along the pilgrimage path towards the Heavenly Country”.

This time of prayer can be accompanied by songs which remind us that Jesus is the light of the world.

Celebration

The games and songs can be associated with the Feast of light. We can play at "Blind man's buff" or another similar game.

If it suits your culture, the meal and the feast can be associated with 14 February, Saint Valentine's day, day of friendship. A friend is a light on our paths. We can decorate the table with hearts. We can also write little cards and exchange them before leaving promising to pray specially for the friend who gave us his/her card during the month.

The time of fidelity

- Between now and the next gathering, we can visit a member of the community who was not present at this gathering, and bring him one of these cards as a sign of friendship.

The essential thing is that no one should be forgotten!

- On 11th February it is the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes in the Catholic Church: it is also the world day of prayer for and with ill and handicapped persons.

The poor heal us



Isaiah was a great prophet. Like all prophets he spoke in the name of God. And God was angry with the people who were austere, fasted ostentatiously and prayed in order to be seen, but were not kind to the poor. What is important to God is not fasting or sacrifices but love. The prophet asks in the name of God: “What sort of fasting pleases me?”, and answers:

**“Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me:
to break unjust fetters,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free.
Is it not sharing your food with the hungry,
and sheltering the homeless poor?” (Is 58:6-7)**

It is essential that we reach out to those who have less and are in pain; those who are hungry and thirsty, those who are alone, those who are oppressed. We are called to come to their help. Our God is the God of mercy. A disciple of God who wants to live for God is called to be merciful.

Jesus reveals to us an even greater mystery. By the incarnation, God became little and weak; he took on human flesh, he became flesh. And he died in littleness and weakness. Jesus did not come only to announce good news to the poor, but he himself became poor. Henceforth, this Jesus who rose from the dead, is hidden in the weak and the poor, just as he is hidden in the bread, transformed into his body.

Isn't that why Jesus tells us in Matthew's gospel that whatever we do to the least of his own we do to him? (cf. Mt 25:40). To give bread to someone who is hungry is to give bread to Jesus. To visit someone who is ill or in prison is to visit Jesus. To welcome a stranger is to welcome Jesus.

It is then not only the strong or the rich who do good to the poor and the weak, but it is also the poor and the weak in whom Jesus lives, who open our hearts to compassion and give us a new freedom.

We touch here the mystery of the Gospel, the radical novelty of the message of Jesus: the weak person, excluded from the life of society, can become the way for renewal of society. If we open our hearts to those who have been rejected, they will heal us from our fears, our prejudices and our compulsive need for success.

One of the aims of our pilgrimage is to be a sign that people with disabilities are not only important, children of God, fully human, but also that in their poverty and fragility, they can lead into a

deeper communion with Jesus.

Isaiah continues by saying to those who enter into a relationship of kindness with the poor and weak:

**“Yahweh will always guide you,
will satisfy your needs in the scorched land;
he will give strength to your bones
and you will be like a watered garden,
like a flowing spring
whose waters never run dry.” (Is 58:11)**



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Welcome

Let us give time to meeting one another before inviting everyone to come and sit down in a circle. Then we count the number of persons, asking 1 person in 5 to go back a metre and to sit down again outside the circle facing it.

Only with those remaining in the circle, we pass on a little message relating to the theme of the month: the leader whispers into the ear of his neighbour a little phrase which the latter repeats to his neighbour. The last person repeats aloud what he has heard. Those who are not in the circle will watch without participating.

Sharing

We come back in groups of five and share for a few minutes:

- How it felt to be in the circle with some people facing out?
- How it felt to be facing out of the circle?
- How it felt when the person(s) facing out joined the circle?

Then, the leader makes the link between what we have just lived, the theme of the month and the Word of Jesus: "As you did it to

one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” Mt 25:40.
In larger group we could share:

- Who are the people rejected and in need of welcome in our community, our region or country, our world?
- What happens when we put out our hand in welcome? – For the person rejected and for us.
- “The poor heal us”: Can we share little fioretti from our personal experience? (See appendix n° 4)

With small children

When I walk with Jesus, He always leads me to the poorest and the most rejected people, for me to open my heart to them (cf. Book “I walk with Jesus”, p. 74).

“Jesus, open my eyes to the world, my hands to serve it, my heart to love it better.”

This month, we can tell the children the story of Bernadette of Lourdes; taking as inspiration the “pages for you” of the journal “Ombres et Lumière” n° 96. ²

Activity

Each person will trace their hand on cardboard and cut it out. We could decorate them with coloured paper one side and the Faith and Light symbol on the other. We could also write our name and country name; a message, a prayer intention... These hands will be taken by country delegates to Lourdes.

² Special number of Faith and Light Pilgrimage, Lourdes 91. You can obtain this n° from the international secretariat. These updated “pages for you”, will also be circulated this month on the Internet website of Faith and Light international in French, English and Spanish.

Prayer

We gather in a circle.

Let us read or mime Matthew 25:34-36.

Jesus proclaim:

When I was hungry – you gave me something to eat.

When I was thirsty – you gave me something to drink.

When I was rejected – you welcomed me.

When I was cold – you gave me clothes to wear.

When I was sick – you took care of me.

When I was lonely – you visited me.

After each mime or each proclamation, we hold out the hands made during activity saying: “God, it is you who help us to always give a helping hand to our neighbour.”

At Easter we celebrate our Faith and Light gift given thirty years ago: The poor heal us. Loving rejected people, we love Jesus.

Jesus calls Faith and Light all over the world:

We could use a song about the water to call each Faith and Light zone. As soon as you name a zone, take a shape or something else which represent it and put it near a symbol which remembers Lourdes (example: a picture or a drawing of the Grotto, water, a candle, some rocks, Mary, etc...) saying:

“Come to the Water”:

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| North America, “Come to the Water...” | Central Africa... |
| Central America and the Caribbean... | Capricorn Africa... |
| South America... | Middle East... |
| Northern Europe... | West Asia... |
| North Atlantic Europe... | East Asia... |
| Mediterranean Atlantic Europe... | Southern Cross... |
| Central and Baltic Europe... | Alps and Danube Europe... |
| Carpathians Ural and Caucasus Europe... | New African countries... |

Jesus calls our community, our country:

Name one by one people from community going to Lourdes – (they stand and come in the middle as they are named) – if there is no one going to Lourdes, name your country:

“Come to the Waters”.

Prayer:

“Jesus, we ask you to be with – name people from your community, country or zone – as his/her journey to Lourdes to celebrate the gift of Faith and Light you gave at this place of healing waters thirty years ago.”

Then –name people–:

“We ask you to take the hands we have made and give them as gifts to those you will meet as a sign of our communion in the prayer and our thirst to follow Jesus by loving our brothers and sisters.”

Each pilgrim receives “the hands”. All the community send him forth and bless him.

(If no one from the community is going to Lourdes, we could mail the hands to our country delegates.)

Jesus calls each one:

“Come to the Waters.”

We finish with a nice song.

At the end of the meeting, give each person “a hand” prepared by core team with a name of person, country or zone who are making the journey to Lourdes asking him/her to pray for this delegate.

The time of fidelity

- Let us pray for those who will be travelling to Lourdes, that all the pilgrimages that we are preparing should be sources of blessings and testimonies of hope for our world.
- The adults could get together between now and the next meeting, for a time of deepening and sharing based on the text “Bernadette: One would have said that she carried all the sorrows of the world” (appendix n° 5) or the Charter of the pilgrimages of the whole world (appendix n° 6); this is a treasure!
- If we are not going to Lourdes, could we get together in community to pray, to act out the washing of feet, or participate together in a service in our parish during these holy days?
- We can also arrange to pray together at a precise moment during the pilgrimage at Lourdes...

The pilgrimage: a time of resurrection



The death of Jesus on the cross was also the spiritual death of his disciples. They had hoped so much that he would be the Messiah-Conqueror, the strong and glorious Messiah, King of the universe. They had sacrificed everything to follow him. And now he was dead. Everything was finished. Their ideal for Israel and for the Kingdom had collapsed. Judas had committed suicide. Peter had denied Jesus. Nothing was left but tears, anger and depression.

But three days later, Jesus appeared to them. He was alive, fully alive! So everything was true! He had conquered darkness, through love, a love which led him into total weakness. The disciples could not have imagined that Jesus was opening the doors of Heaven to them by descending into the depths of human poverty, by identifying himself, through love, with the most excluded, the most rejected members of society. The power of God never crushes. On the contrary, it is a power of love by which Jesus gives himself totally to each one of us. The weakness of God reveals a God who is in love with each one, with an

impassioned love. “God's folly is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.” (1Co 1:25)

The resurrection of Jesus is also our resurrection:

“You were buried with him in baptism; in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, God made alive together with him.” (Col 2:12-13)

In an instant of eternity, the Father raises up his beloved son from death to life. Our resurrection is an inner experience; it is a seed sown in our hearts which is called to grow. It will grow through our gestures, our actions, our struggles, our temptations and even through our failures. This growth means we have to be vigilant; we have to learn how to let the Holy Spirit guide and how to let the love of the Father and the will of the Father nourish us. This resurrection is offered to all of us, whatever our culture, our limitations, or our handicap. It is first of all, a resurrection of the heart, which gradually breaks down the walls which close us up in ourselves. It is the power of the love of God which enables each person to break through the walls of self-centredness, to reach out to others and to live in communion with them. It is also a resurrection that leads us into the light of God, so that we can see all things in this light. This resurrection is individual, but at the same time it is communal. The Church is the Body of Christ. We are the Body of Christ, inspired by the same Holy Spirit. If each one of us lives from this resurrection, our communities will be witnesses to the Resurrection.

“It is by your love for one another, that everyone will know that you are my disciples.” (Jn 13:35)

Yes, the pilgrimage is given to us as a time of renewal of our hearts and lives, it is given to help us to become a people of the resurrection.

Easter is a call for each of us to rise up to new life and to say with Paul: “It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.” (Gal 2:20)



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

The meeting of the month of April will have to be adapted:

- to the date (before, during or after the celebrations of Easter),
- to the presence or not of certain members of the pilgrimage at Lourdes,
- to the fact that perhaps our community, region or country has decided during these months to live out their own pilgrimage?

At any rate, the theme of the month could be used by us as a main thread, and we shall be in very strong communion with one another, wherever we are!

Welcome

30 years of Faith and Light! It is an anniversary for us all!

At the start of the welcome, we make present all our Faith and Light brothers and sisters of the whole world, for example by taking up the forms of the zones used last month and by reconstructing together the map of the world...

The theme of the month is introduced:

Before he died, Jesus cried: "I thirst". And just after his death, his heart was pierced by a soldier: water and blood flowed forth. It is Jesus who is the Source of Living Water. He gives us the Holy Spirit which flows from him in abundance.

Let us be conscious that, thanks to Faith and Light, for 30 years, so many bruised families have passed from suffering into joy; from death to Life. Each one of us is called to this passing. That is it, to become resurrected!

Sharing

- How do we feel when we lose a friend? When something is broken in our life?
- How did the disciples feel at the death of Jesus?
- "I was thirsty and you gave me to drink." When have I given drink to Jesus?
- Jesus says to me "I thirst for you". What does that mean to me?
- What is my thirst? What is the thirst of our community today?

With small children

Outside, we can pick small branches of trees and also make a beautiful cross for our prayer.

Activity

The water which flows from the heart of Jesus is the source of new life.

We can search together for all the gifts of water that are a source of life.

We can write down these gifts on paper banners which we will carry like scarves on our shoulders.

Prayer

The community sits in a circle round the map of the world, each person carrying a decorated banner on his shoulders. In the centre, a beautiful cross, a basin full of water and little branches of trees. The meditation "I thirst for you" (appendix n° 10) can be read slowly, by different readers, with very soft background music.

The chaplain or the leader then reminds us of the sign of baptism (Col 2, 12-13);

Reader 1: We are invited to overcome the waters of death, to come out of the shadows.
We are invited to let flow the source of the love of God in our heart.

We pray for those of our community and zone who are at Lourdes with the great international family to celebrate Easter.
We can name different persons. On the map of the world we can link each zone to Lourdes with a ribbon or a banner; we sing a beautiful song.

Reader 2: We have been plunged into the waters of baptism and raised with Jesus.
God makes us live together with Jesus.

We sing again.

Reader 3: Jesus invites us to "come and drink from the Source" of his pierced heart, to be healed and to grow in his Love.

We bless one another with the waters of new life.
We can come, two by two, to plunge our little branches in the water
bowl and sprinkle each other with the waters of new life.

Celebration

Let us sing joyful songs or Alleluias, if we are already in
Eastertide... Then let us dance and celebrate the 30 years of Faith
and Light with joy!

The time of fidelity

Let us exchange our banners and take them home with us.
Let us each pray for the person who has given us his banner.
Let us pray for our international Faith and Light family.

***"Go and tell my brothers
and sisters"***



Jesus appears first of all to Mary Magdalene and says to her: “Go and find my brothers and sisters and tell them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God” (Jn 20:17). She is overwhelmed, transformed. She who was plunged in despair is now radiant with joy. She runs to the disciples, unable to contain her joy. Jesus, her

beloved, is alive! He is truly alive! His message of love, his presence, his call to follow him are really true!

We have now returned from the pilgrimage. We have good news to bring to others, through our lives, through the quality of our love for each other, and also through our words. Only love can break down the frontiers which keep us separated from each other, indifferent to the fate of others in prison, hospitals, etc... United in

love, in our communities, we shall no longer be alone; we shall be there to help each other, especially during difficult moments and crises. This love is not possessive or controlling. It is given so that each person becomes more fully him or herself, free from fears, prejudices and selfish needs. So that each person can become more free to love. Isn't the community good news we can bring to others?

Faith and Light contains a treasure: the revelation that persons with disabilities are important for God, for our Churches and for our societies. The revelation that the weakest persons can open our hearts and lead us to what is essential: love. In both l'Arche and Faith and Light we have been entrusted with a treasure. Let us live out our basic unity with l'Arche with more awareness and nurture a desire to learn from and to support one another, to grow together in greater love. So many men and women in this world ignore this treasure. Often they reject the weak or pity them. How can we share this treasure with other persons who feel alone? How can we share it with others wherever we live?

Jesus sends his disciples as missionaries of love and light: "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (Jn 20:21). They are then the bearers of this good news: God is present in our world; God loves us and wants to give us his Holy Spirit. Jesus says to us today what he said to his first disciples. He sends us forth as individuals and as a community to be bearers of the good news of love.



Australia

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Welcome

This month, many community pilgrimages will take place in the whole world. Each one will have the same aims as those described in the Charter of pilgrimages (appendix n° 6). Let us pray that the “grace of Lourdes” will be also given to each of these pilgrimages. Those who were at Lourdes will welcome the community in a special way.

Each one is called by his name.

Sharing and Activity

We were invited by Jesus to “Come to the Waters.”

As we have gathered each month, since September, we have learnt about what Jesus’ call means for us:

- For example: Leave what we do each day and go as Abraham to a new place, etc.
- Distribute symbols of each of the previous months (September until now) and ask people to share how we have journeyed through this year.

To reply to Jesus’ call, name members from community who went to Lourdes or if no one went, name people from your country/zone who went to Lourdes.

One person tells the story of the gathering of the International Family in Lourdes to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of Faith and Light.

Another person could teach us a new dance, an activity or a song learnt at Lourdes.

All those who went to Lourdes, could share fioretti, pictures and the gifts of the international family meeting that touch them.

(Note: It is hoped that each community will receive a little card, a photo or some fioretti of Lourdes from those who represented their country.)

Those who stayed at home could share how they were in communion with Lourdes pilgrims. It is important that each feel they have something to contribute. If no one from the community was able to participate at Lourdes, let us emphasise that we have been preparing our pilgrimage together for a year now.

Then, we could share in little groups:

- What are the blessings of God specially received in our community?
- “Community is a good news to announce”: Do we believe it? How can we testify about it?

Let us record the ideas of this sharing... and thank God for all we have received.

Remembering the fioretti shared, let us write or draw the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of Faith and Light.

Prayer

We gather in a circle around all the symbols used during the year:
we sing and thank God between each sentence.

Reading 1: Jesus said: "Come to the Waters"

Reading 2: Jesus said: "As the Father has sent me even so I send you."

Reading 3: Jesus said: "Go and find my brothers and sisters and tell them the Good News of my love."

Each person who has been to Lourdes places a picture, a symbol or gift from their time in Lourdes near the others symbols.
All who wish can express their thank to Jesus.

Leader: Thank you Jesus for all we have received.
Thank you for the gift of Faith and Light and the life of our community.

All: Thank you Jesus for all we have received.

The chaplain sends us all together in mission. The symbols could eventually be given to a community member. We shall finish with the prayer of Faith and Light (see appendix n° 11).

With small children

This full meeting can be experienced with children. If some children in the community were with the pilgrimage at Lourdes, it would be good to let them tell us what touched them most.

Celebration

At the same time as the birthdays of the month, we can blow out the thirty birthday candles of Faith and Light if we have not done this last month, then sing and dance together!

The time of mission

Share the fruit of the pilgrimage with your neighbours, your friends, those who have worked with you for solidarity:

- by publishing fioretti, photos, in the parish journal and/or the local newspaper,
- by talking about them at parish or regional meetings and to the contemplative communities who pray so much for Faith and Light...

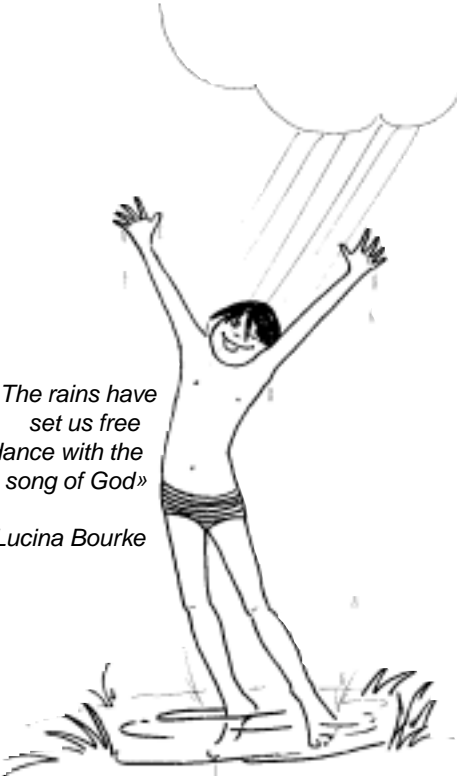
Before next gathering

All those who are able, and especially the children, will be asked to bring a photo of their baptism for the next meeting.

Water which symbolises the Holy Spirit

*«The rains have
set us free
to dance with the
song of God»*

Lucina Bourke



John tells us that Jesus cried out: “Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink.” Then the evangelist adds “Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” (Jn 7:37-39)

On the day of Pentecost, while the disciples were praying with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, they received the Holy Spirit which Jesus had promised them.

This promise of Jesus is addressed to each one of us. It is realised at the moment of our baptism when we are born again by the water and the Spirit. It is renewed in each one of us every time we ask him

for it. The Holy Spirit comes to strengthen us, to enlighten us, and above all, to give us a communion of love with Jesus.

In Faith and Light, we need this strength and this promise of the Spirit in order to be faithful to our community life. We are often discouraged when community life becomes difficult. We all need the Holy Spirit to discover the presence of Jesus in the weakest and smallest, to live out the invitation of Jesus: “Anyone who welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me.” (Lk 9:48)

We need the gift of the Holy Spirit in order to be patient and kind, to serve others and not to look for our own interests, in order to be able to excuse all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things (cf. 1Co 13:4-7).

It is the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, who will help us to remain faithful to the mission of Faith and Light and who will change our heart of stone into a heart of flesh (cf. Ezk 36:26)



Ukraine

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Preparation

For your meeting, you can prepare little coloured pieces of cardboard in the form of a dove or a flame, an icon of the Holy Trinity or a picture of Pentecost which could be photocopied (see appendix n° 7), a candle and a vessel of water. How to relive the chosen gospel should also be carefully prepared.

Reliving the Gospel

After welcome and the presentation of the month, we relive the "Baptising of Jesus" – Mt 3:13-17 or the story of Pentecost – Acts 2:1-5.

(Be sure that each person in the community is involved. This is not a drama, where some are actors and everyone else is the audience.)

At the time of our baptism we were re-born with water and the Spirit. We are full of God's new life received through the water sign. As our body has need of water for life, so our heart and soul have need of the Holy Spirit.

Sharing

1. When did I feel the need to receive any of the promises of the Holy Spirit?
2. How does the Holy Spirit help me in “Faith and Light” to believe that I am the beloved son or daughter of God?
3. Is there a particular gift of the Holy Spirit which could help me in my life today? At the end of sharing, each one will write this gift of the Holy Spirit on a little coloured cardboard cut out in a form of a dove or a flame.

With small children

While the adults are sharing, the children could colour the picture of the Pentecost, the doves or the flames representing the Holy Spirit. We can look with them at the photos of their baptism, and talk about them, or ask them to tell us what has touched them at a baptism they have attended.

Prayer

Near the icon or the chosen picture place the little cardboard cut-outs, our baptising pictures, a lighted candle and vessel with water. After a nice song to the Holy Spirit, read the Gospel of John 14:15-18.

Each of us, dips our hands in the water in turn, at the same time, the chaplain (or community leader or handicapped person) puts his hand on the head of the person and says:

“(the name of person), let your heart be at peace. You are God’s beloved son (daughter)”.

Then, we could read all together the Holy Spirit invocation prayed in orthodox liturgy:

(.../...)

Come Holy Spirit, Creator, come
From thy bright heavenly throne.
Come, take possession of our souls,
And make them all thy own.

Far from us drive our daily foe;
True peace unto us bring;
And through all perils lead us safe
Beneath thy sacred wing.

Thou who art called the Paraclete,
Best gift of God above,
The living spring, the living fire,
Sweet unction and true love.

Through thee may we the Father know,
Through thee the Eternal Son.
And thee the Spirit of them both,
Thrice-blessed Three in One.

Thou who art sevenfold in thy grace,
Finger of God's right hand;
His promise, teaching little ones
To speak and understand.

All glory to the Father be,
With his co-equal Son:
The same to thee, great Paraclete,
While endless ages run.

O guide our minds with thy best light,
With love our hearts inflame;
And with thy strength, with never decays,
Confirm our mortal frame.

(.../...)

*O heavenly King, O comforter, the Spirit of Truth
who art everywhere and fill all things,
the Treasure of Blessings and Giver of Life: Come
and abide in us and cleanse us from all impurity and,
of Thy goodness, save our souls.*

Then all together we thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the gift of God's life in us. Each one receives a little cardboard with a gift of the Holy Spirit. We could finish by reciting the Lord's Prayer.

Celebration

For this meeting, we could go outdoors to the bank of a river, lake, fountain or near a spring, which is nearby. Perhaps we will find a place which will be specially adapted to relive the Gospel... At the end of the meeting, we could celebrate with a picnic, sing, dance, see our baptising pictures and have fun together!

The time of fidelity

- And what if we organised a holiday camp this year? To go away together for several days, there is a unique chance to strengthen the bonds which unite us...! Let us throw ourselves into the water! ³

³ Ask advice from those who have camps regularly... The booklet "On holiday together" can also give you ideas!

After the pilgrimage: the time of fidelity



In Luke's Gospel, we read how Mary and Joseph experienced anguish. On their return from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, they lost their child, Jesus, who was then twelve years old (cf. Lk 2:41-51).

Perhaps we too, on our return from the pilgrimage, have the feeling we have lost Jesus. During the pilgrimage, our hearts were full of joy; we may even have felt like they were burning inside us. We

had time to pray, we felt the warmth of the community and of the wider family of Faith and Light. On our return, we are back to our daily routine. There are so many things to do, as well as the strains, fatigue, conflicts and problems that arise in our relationships. We become quickly discouraged. We forget the essential.

Mary and Joseph looked for Jesus in anguish. Sometimes we too look for Jesus in anguish or anxiously await his return. We often forget that there are seasons in life: summer, with all the fruits and the harvest; autumn when the leaves begin to fall; winter when everything appears dead. And then comes spring and the renewal of life. We forget that friendship too has its seasons and implies both presence and absence. There is the joy of being together, then the times of absence when desire digs into the heart and deepens our love in fidelity. When our friend returns, love is stronger, deeper. It is a time of meeting, of blessing, a time of grace. The pilgrimage is one of these moments.

When we return home from the pilgrimage, it is often a time when we are called to fidelity. Is it not the same thing in friendship, in marriage? There is a honeymoon, where there is perfect harmony. Then comes the time of fidelity. This is an important time in our commitment in Faith and Light. Maybe the people who can teach us the most about fidelity are those in our communities who are aging. We can look to them for wisdom and ask them to pray for us. They have this gift for faithful prayer. It is easy to live community when all is going well, when there is a lot of harmony. It is more difficult when conflicts and fatigue arise, when no one wants to shoulder responsibilities. At moments like that we need this grace of fidelity in trust, in order to become artisans of peace.



Ukraine

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

During our gathering we shall try to renew in ourselves the spirit of the pilgrimage which we have lived through at Lourdes or in our region, our country. If friends or families have accompanied us during the whole of this year because of the pilgrimage, it is perhaps the moment to call them now to follow their path of fidelity in relation to our community... It is good, once a year, on the occasion of a little celebration, that the old as well as the new members should all be invited to repeat their "yes" to the community, knowing that the commitment and fidelity can be actually different for each person according to his or her situation. This month is a good occasion on which to either prepare together or to live out this commitment. But if several members are absent, because of the holidays, it would be better to choose another moment, (for example, the date of the anniversary of the recognition of the community, the camp, the beginning of a New Year, the Christmas Eve celebration...)

Reliving the Gospel

We could use the passage from the Gospel of Luke 2:41-51. After the pilgrimage we can have a feeling of Jesus lost. On pilgrimage we had time for prayer. We felt in communion with each other, but when we return to our day to day duties, filled with conflict and exhaustion, sometimes we can have the feeling of Jesus lost. If we want to re-find Jesus, we must make a conscious effort to do

so and we must trust that he will help us. It is our responsibility to search and find him again.

Sharing in small groups

- What is my place, my gift, in our community and how do I feel I can carry the responsibility of finding Jesus when he seems to be missing?
- To be faithful to Faith and Light: Is it difficult for me? Why?
- Is Jesus absent just because we don't FEEL his presence? Name a time when you felt God was not there for you, but later discovered He was there all the time, close to you.

Afterwards, with the whole community:

Each leader, on behalf of his group, can repeat several main points of their sharing. Then someone can tell this parable:

“One day, a man had a dream... he relived, one by one, all the events of his life, like a long path beside the sea. Along the whole way, he saw footsteps in the sand; his own footsteps, and just beside them, the footsteps of the Lord who was accompanying him. Then suddenly, at the most difficult moments of his existence, he saw only one set of footsteps.

So he said to the Lord: “You know, Lord, I really do not understand... Why did you leave, just at the most difficult moments of my life? You left me all alone! You abandoned me at my worst moments!”

The Lord replied to him: “My child, I never left you all alone! The footsteps that you see there are mine. When the path was too difficult for you, I carried you in my arms.”

Prayer

Read Gospel of John 15:11-17.

Ask Jesus to help us to be responsible, to be faithful in Love to the end. Thank Him for his presence in our hearts even in that time when we don't feel his nearness.

Each of us can hold a candle and together the community can pray asking the Holy Spirit to help us to carry our responsibility in Faith and Light: to look for Jesus tirelessly and be faithful one another.

Celebration

If a little celebration of renewal of our commitment in the community is proposed for to day it must be well adapted to the persons and allow each one to express, in one way or another, in which aspect he would like to become more faithful during the coming year.

We can end by reciting the prayer of Faith and Light.

The time of fidelity

It is time to become friends! All we will invent during the gathering will help us...

August 2001

The waters of the temple which heal and give life



The prophet Ezekiel speaks of a vision he had of the new Temple (Ezk 47). The water poured out on the right hand side of the Temple. At first, the water came up to a man's ankles, then to his knees, then to his loins, and then became a river impossible to cross. And wherever it went, this water gave so much life and on its banks the fruit trees produced fruit every month, and their leaves had the power of healing.

In John's gospel, Jesus said that if they destroy the temple, in three days he will raise it up (Jn 2). The evangelist notes that Jesus was speaking of his body. It is the body of Jesus, which is the New Temple from which the waters of life flow forth. That is why at another

moment, he stood up in the Temple and cried out: “Let anyone who thirsts, come to me and drink” (Jn 7:37). And the evangelist adds: “He was speaking about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus had not yet been glorified” (Jn 7:39).

On the cross, the heart of Jesus was pierced by a soldier and blood and water poured out (cf. Jn 19). Jesus is the source of Living Water; he gives us the Holy Spirit, poured out in abundance from his love. We are invited to come and drink from this source. The Holy Spirit reveals to us the presence and love of Jesus; he frees us from our fears, our prejudices and our compulsive desires for success, recognition and power; he gives us insight and teaches us all things.

Jesus is the New Temple. However, the New Temple is also the assembly of believers, the Church, because the Church is the Body of Christ, and we are this body. Thus each one of us is this Temple: “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that God's Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Co 3:16). And a little further on, Paul says: “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you?” (1 Co 6:19)

Here, we touch on the mystery which Jesus disclosed to the Samaritan woman when he said to her: “The water that I will give you will become in you a spring of water, welling up to eternal life.” (Jn 4:14)

Jesus is this source of life, but each one of us, in Jesus, is also this source. The gift of the Holy Spirit flows out from the heart of Jesus, but also from our hearts.

Can we believe that each of our communities and each of us individually, are called to be a source of life for our world?



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GATHERING

Welcome

At the beginning of the gathering, let us take the time to welcome one another. We can ask each person to share a joy, a trial, or an important event experienced this month, and how he/she feels today, arriving at the gathering.

After this, the community leader, a member of the co-ordination team or the chaplain can say a short nourishing word, which introduces the theme for this month.

Sharing in small groups

- How do I go towards Jesus? How do I ask him for his Living Water?
- How can I be source of life?

With small children

During the sharing of the adults, the leader responsible; will recite the gospel of the Samaritan woman to the children. Then they could construct Jacob's well with cardboard boxes.

Reliving the Gospel and Prayer

We relive the story of the Samaritan woman beside the well (Gospel of John 4:5-15). Jesus is the source of Living Water poured

in abundance into our hearts; He gives us the Holy Spirit. He invites us to come and drink from this source.

During the mime each person goes towards Jesus and asks him "Give me, Lord, of this water so that I shall be never thirsty again." And Jesus (a person with a handicap can take on this role) then gives water to drink out of the jug used as a symbol throughout the whole of this year. Afterwards, we can pray that each of us and each of our communities will be a source of life for our world. After a moment of silence, those who wish it, may express their prayer spontaneously... then we shall sing and pray together "The Lord's Prayer".

Activity

To conclude with a flourish the theme for this year which is ending, we suggest creating together a fresco or beautiful drawings on the theme "We are called by Jesus to be a source of life."

These drawings could decorate your meeting place, or fill part of your souvenir album... If you wish, your drawings (or photos of your drawings) could be sent to the international secretariat before the closing date of 1st October 2001. (You can send several drawings from each community, indicating on the back the name of your community and your country.)

The best drawings will be published on the Faith and Light international website. You will be told if your drawing has been selected, but no drawing will be returned. Good luck and we thank you in advance for your contribution to making our international website international and beautiful!

Before next gathering

And what if we went together to plunge into the water of the river or the swimming pool?

Notes

Appendix 1

The word of the leader during community meeting

" ...He will speak truly as a shepherd, as a guide to explain where the community is heading, which areas of community life need to be given priority. He will teach for a short time on community life, the mission of Faith and Light, the call of Jesus to live amongst the weakest. He will explain the Word of Jesus, he will use the meditation of Jean Vanier each month or he will speak freely, guided by what the Holy Spirit places in his heart.

In ten minutes, he will have fulfilled a major part of his role as community leader..."

François Bal

(Extract from the 94-95 guidelines)

Appendix 2

COME TO THE WATER

Come to the Water

Come from the desert to the place of still waters
Come from all places of the earth to the cool water hole
Come that the refreshing water may overflow to throw back the drought – to bring healing.

Come to the Water

Come through the rushing rivers of our daily lives
Come through the muddy waters of our blindness
Come to the place of still water that the fountain of God may explode within ourselves and neighbour.

Come to the Water

Come pilgrim people from brown earth fallow
Come hearts ready waiting for rain - for life giving waters
Come through the waters divided a pilgrim people lead by God to be free from the darkness of slavery.

Come to the Water

Come to the upper room put dirty worn wounded feet into the basin to be washed. To be cleansed by a God with human hands.

Come to the Water

Come drink from the cup broken. Come to the waters muddy. Take the cup of muddy waters. Don't listen to the cry – "God is lost, where is their help now?" Plunge into the heart of the muddy mater. Be immersed in the heart of God.

Come to the Water

Come to the still water place. Stop. Listen to the silent story shared.
Dare to Dream that in the exchange of cup with neighbour we will
hear the flowing water welling up inside.

Come to the Water

Come let the waters run...
over the fires of hate
through the hearts of ice
into throats parched dry
and find the rainbow of abundant beauty revealing the God of love
beyond belief.

Come to the Water

Come into the Jordan with Jesus.
Be touched by the Spirit that the seal of our darkness is broken.

Come to the Water

The rains have set us free to dance with the song of God. Open
the mouth of the heart wide to drink deeply of God's living waters.

Only God could make it happen this place of celebration where
the clouds are transformed by the Sun and every heart is a fountain
of life giving water.

Come to the Water

Get into the tiny boat go together to find in the mighty waters - the
refreshing life giving water where the rainbow is held announcing
to all the nations the life giving presence of God
the Covenant of Love

Lucina Bourke

Appendix 3

Taking part in the major initiative of



In this year of grace with which the Lord has blessed us, we are invited in a very special way to receive the absolute gift of his forgiveness in different ways or modalities in accordance with different Christian denominations. Many members of Faith and Light have opened themselves up to this grace individually or with their family or in their parish, their diocese, their movement or in their professional environment.

A number of Faith and Light communities also wanted to experience this special Jubilee moment **within the community itself**. They have gained a lot from this, either for themselves, or for other people, in particular those who have already left us. **Other communities in turn would like to get involved and would like to know what is required of them to benefit from this “over abundance of grace”** which is

also referred to in the Roman Catholic tradition as “indulgence”.

First of all, it is clear that we cannot receive forgiveness from the Lord simply by carrying out external gestures. These gestures are the **paths of conversion** which help us to change our heart, to truly believe that God can forgive us all of our sins, from the most trivial to the most serious, that He can allow us to live in the wonderful communion which Jesus came to fulfil with each of us, and between us all.

Our hearts are open to forgiveness, what is actually being asked of us?

- We make a **pilgrimage** or a spiritual journey to sacred places indicated by Church leaders.

- We take part in a **Eucharist** or a service of worship. We could also follow the Way of the Cross, say the rosary or use other devotional prayers in accordance with our particular denomination. For example, the orthodox could sing the Acatist Hymn in honour of Mary, Mother of God...

- We will end the event of pilgrimage or spiritual journey by praying **for the intentions of the Church leaders which are the intentions of the Heart of God himself.**

- During our pilgrimage or in the days surrounding it, **we will ask for God’s forgiveness in a very special way.** According to our Christian tradition, in the deep desire that God will change our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh, we will receive **the sacrament of reconciliation** or we will seek reconciliation in whatever way our ecclesiastical beliefs empower us.

If God forgives us, we are also called to forgive others. Perhaps we have quarrelled with a member of our family, a friend, a neighbour, a work colleague, a member of the community; a wall, however high, comes between us. Jesus calls us to reconciliation and if we feel incapable of this, let us ask him for the will to forgive; so that he himself achieves in our hearts that which our nature is incapable of achieving.

During the year, in some parishes, people are encouraged to do what is done each year, according to the Orthodox tradition, at the beginning of Lent: in the church, the clergy then the faithful ask each other for forgiveness, then everyone is invited to accompany this gesture with a concrete act, for example, renewing contact with a person who has hurt us or whom we have hurt. Sometimes this will simply be a post card from our holidays, or a Christmas or birthday card... To recreate unity, the Holy Spirit makes us resourceful.

- For the first time in Christian history, another path than the pilgrimage is being proposed to receive the fullness of forgiveness, that of **approaching people in difficulties**, to make this a **“pilgrimage”** towards Christ who is present in our brothers and sisters, people who are ill or handicapped, prisoners... is another way of evoking **commitment to activities of a religious or social nature**. We will, of course, also take part in the other initiatives asked of us above.

- **Those amongst us who are not able to travel**, can make their pilgrimage or spiritual journey in a church or holy place close to home. Or if they are not able to leave their house at all, they will

become one in their hearts and in prayer with the members of the community who are making a journey, offering with them their life with all of the pain it brings and all the aspects for which they can give thanks

The overabundance of grace which is offered to us this year is the grace of forgiveness, of reconciliation which extends across all aspects of our life so that we will be truly healed, to the very core of our being, from our pervasive sins which may have disrupted, broken down our human and our relational being. This grace restores the New Person within us.

Marie-Hélène Mathieu

Appendix 4

The Faith and Light spirituality in Daily Life

We often say to ourselves: Faith and Light has changed us, Faith and Light has transformed us. Or better still: our friends with a mental handicap have changed us, have even made us into better followers of Jesus.

Many of us may have felt this, but maybe not so many of us may have been able to say how they have been changed; even still fewer of us may have decided to consciously work for this transformation. And yet working for this could mean a real way of deepening the Faith and Light spirituality in our daily lives.

This is why we propose a simple method to help each other in this deepening. It is a way of sharing in small groups. These groups could come together regularly or they could write each other regularly, for instance once a month. Having partners can make us more disciplined and faithful, while at the same time it may enrich our understanding of the Faith and Light spirituality.

The following is what they could do at every encounter or in every letter:

1. Share with each other a small experience from their daily lives in which they feel that Faith and Light has changed them. This may make them more conscious of the change in themselves and more motivated to work for this change. Faith and Light may thus become a “school of holiness” for many of us.

2. Share with each other a text from Scripture that reminds them of our Faith and Light way of life. This will encourage them to be regular bible readers. The bible, specially the New Testament, is the source of spiritual growth for every person who seeks to be a better Christian. They could keep a little diary in which they write the words that have struck them in their daily readings.
3. Share a little spontaneous prayer that expresses their feelings about the text and the little experience. These three elements are pillars of every spiritual growth: sharing, bible meditation and prayer.
4. Another element could still added: a daily blessing of each other. In many families in the past, the children used to go to their parents before sleeping in order to receive a blessing, the sign of the cross on their foreheads. We could send every night a blessing to our prayer partners as a sign of our faithfulness to each other in following Jesus.

The following is an example of a monthly letter:

Sharing:

The other day I heard some people whispering about me behind my back. It hurt me a lot. But then I felt my solidarity with our friends with a mental handicap who are often talked about in their presence. And I decided to be peaceful about it.

Bible text:

Mt 27:13-14. "Pilate said to Jesus: "Do you not hear all that they are saying against you?" But Jesus gave no answer on anything so that Pilate was very amazed."

Prayer:

Jesus, silence can be so meaningful. I still have to discover this in my daily life. Thank you for my friends with a mental handicap; they are my teachers.

Fioretti

The lady who was sitting beside me in the train, was terrible: dropping things, shifting things, removing things, in the process nudging me, disturbing me, overwhelming me. I was getting furious. Right when I wanted to address myself to her, a word popped up in my mind: hyperactive! And I remembered my hyperactive friends in Faith and Light with whom I was always so patient. At once my anger subsided. Handicapped people are around me anywhere and any time. They all need my patience.



The day after our Faith and Light meeting one of my colleagues tells me: “Your energy is so ebullient today.” In my heart I know that this is still the effect of the previous day, the Sunday afternoon of Faith and Light.



I am a nurse. In my work I meet with so much suffering. I used to feel helpless, not knowing what to say or what to do. Now that I am in Faith and Light, I know. I lay my hand on a shoulder, or give a simple smile, or I just hold a person in my arms for a brief moment. My friends with a mental handicap have taught me this. I call it “the Faith and Light effect”.



I was a university lecturer. I had to give up my job and move to another country. Now I am working in a classroom helping children with difficulties in learning, under the direction of a teacher with much less experience and knowledge than I have. It has not at all been easy. But

then, how many of our friends with a mental handicap have no jobs that others will admire and that they can be proud of? Jesus, help me to live as a little one, day by day.



I had a period of tension with someone. We both tried to overcome our friction. In order to help the other person I revealed my own particular brokenness. I could not have done this before I knew Faith and Light which -has taught me that we are all broken-.



We all know that fatigue makes us irritable. This can make us feel bad and ashamed about ourselves. It is not nice to be confronted with our limitations. But right then, through Faith and Light, I am reminded that being handicapped is normal, and I begin to feel more calm and peaceful about it.



When people come to share with us their difficulties, we are so eager to offer solutions and advice. The reason is that we cannot accept the presence of pain and always want to do something to get it out of the way. Faith and Light has helped me to just be present to the person in pain for whom no remedy is available and bear the pain together with him or her.



I had -for a change- made my Christmas wishes in the form of a handwritten letter, to be multiplied in photocopies. I tried to produce my most beautiful handwriting. When I had made a mistake, I started it all over again. Until I said to myself: Should I be afraid of making mistakes? Should I be afraid of showing myself as I am: far from perfect? I did not rewrite my letter anymore. This was a Faith and Light reflex, I would say.

There is something that amazes me. I am a very quiet person when I am in a big group of people. I often feel so little when I cannot participate in the lively conversations around me. And yet every now and then somebody wants to talk with me about a serious question. At such moments I think of my humble friends in Faith and Light who seem so unimportant but who, in their littleness, can have such a great influence on others. The mystery of littleness.



Because of my particular work, I am look upon as a person of a certain dignity by those who I get in contact with. Through Faith and Light I have come to see the vanity of this. I am just like all the others: a simple vulnerable person. Recently there was an occasion to show the real “me”: at a friendly gathering I taught them a silly dance. It was good for me and for everybody.



For quite some time I have been living in a foreign country. Of course, I have tried to learn the language. But when people speak in their local dialect, I cannot follow. It is frustrating. But when I think of my friends with a mental handicap, I cannot help smiling: most of the time they, too, “cannot follow”. So what?



Above all Faith and Light is for me a place where my norms and my values are put upside down by our friends with a mental handicap: what is small and vulnerable... this is what God has especially chosen.

Fioretti gathered by Father Joseph Larsen

Appendix 5

Bernadette: “ One would have said that she carried all the sorrows of the world...”

On Thursday 25th February, Bernadette arrives in the early morning in the mist. Then she was seen to remove her cowl, put away her candle, walk towards the Gave, and finally, go on her knees, on all fours towards the end of the grotto, to the left of the rock.

When she gets up and turns towards the crowd, what do we see? An unrecognisable face smeared with mud. Is she not chewing the grass which she has gathered from this miry earth, and which she has put in her mouth? What is Bernadette doing?

If we want to listen to her, she explains the reason for this surprising behaviour. Yesterday she cried, “because the Lady was sad” when speaking of sinners. Today, the Lady also said: “GO AND DRINK AT THE SOURCE AND WASH YOURSELF THERE”

And Bernadette relates “I went first of all towards the Gave. She said it was not there, she beckoned me with her finger. I was there. I saw only a small amount of dirty water; I put my hand in it. I could not get any of it, I started to scratch; then I was able to take some. Three times, I threw it away; at the fourth time, I was able to drink some. She added that I should pray for sinners.”

For Bernadette, all this has a meaning and a purpose. A few people have a premonition of the importance of the moment: “One would have said that she carried all the sorrows of the world.” But most people, unthinkingly, behave in the same way as the crowd of Jews, who, on Good Friday, abandoned a certain Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had admired and acclaimed several days previously. It was that He who had

had the crowds running to him, appeared to them, that morning, as disfigured, beaten, flagellated, crowned with thorns. Even his friends did not understand that “it was our sins that he bore, and our sorrows with which he was afflicted.”

Bernadette, without knowing it, and even without understanding it, had mimed the Passion “for sinners.”

All her life, Bernadette will meditate and deepen this discovery of the Passion of Christ, begun on this 25th February, at the ninth Apparition. All her life, fraternal compassion and prayer “for poor sinners” will become more and more profound up to the precise moment of her death, where her last words will be: “Pray for me, a poor sinner!”



**This 9th Apparition is really the
culmination of the message of
Lourdes**

The stagnant water at the end of the Grotto will take on an unimaginably profound meaning. It is more than a purifying water, or even a water which sometimes produces miraculous cures. It will be the mystic sign of that water which flowed with the Blood from the side of Christ, pierced by the lance of the soldier.

The true miracle of Lourdes

Here, continents, races, countries and cultures, old and young, those in good health and those who are ill meet together peacefully and fraternally. Here you hear all languages, all instruments are played: classical organ and the guitar, the African tam-tam and the Gypsy violin sound one after another in rhythm with the ebb and flow of the pilgrims come from North and South, from East and West. This could be the Tower of Babel; in fact it is more like Pentecost.

(Extract from the book LOURDES, in the footsteps of Bernadette, by Father Joseph Bordes.)

CHARTER

Easter international pilgrimage to Lourdes and for pilgrimages in other countries

" Come to the waters "

The year 2001 marks the 30th anniversary of Faith and Light. To celebrate this event all Faith and Light communities are invited to take part in a pilgrimage. This could be in their country, region or town, or at the International Easter Pilgrimage in Lourdes, where Faith and Light first began in 1971. The theme of all these pilgrimages will be: " Come to the Waters "

New life for our mission

As we set out on our journey, in the spirit of the Jubilee Year, we want to renew the way we live the charisma and mission of Faith and Light.

We believe that God inspired Faith and Light and entrusted it with a mission:

- **to announce the good news to the poor**, by showing those who are often rejected because of their disability that they have value and are important to God, the churches and society.
- **to give support to parents** who suffer, feel alone and excluded, because of their child with disabilities; to help them to discover the mission God has entrusted to them and to enable them to see the value of their child.
- **to reveal to friends** a different way to form relationship and to live the spirituality of the Gospel.

Inspired and upheld by the Holy Spirit, we want to renew our faith in Jesus. He called us to this mission and invites us to work in our churches with renewed love, strength and wisdom. Thus, our communities will become more integrated in our local churches and will correspond more fully to Jesus' commandment: *"Love one another as I have loved you"*.

A sign for the world

We would like each pilgrimage to be a sign and a witness in our churches and our societies that:

- all human beings, whatever their differences (of culture, religion, gifts, limitations, weaknesses) can be **bonded together in a common humanity** and in a desire to work for justice and peace.
- people with disabilities, often marginalised and considered inferior, are of unique and sacred value, and loved by God; they reveal in a special way **the values of the heart and of love** which are so often lacking in our world.

- in order to grow spiritually as human beings, **we need to belong to a community**, where we are bonded together in love, mutual trust and a common vision. In community we learn that reconciliation is the first step towards peace, that it is more important to work together than to be in competition and that difference is not a threat but a treasure.

Come to the waters

The International Pilgrimage to Lourdes takes place during the Christian celebration of the Cross and the Resurrection of Jesus. Whatever the date of our pilgrimage, the aims of each one are:

- **a spiritual renewal of each pilgrim**, and the possibility for each one to meet Jesus in a way that will help them to live more fully the gospels.
- **a renewal of each community** as its members deepen in their commitment to each other with renewed love, faithfulness and wisdom.
- **the growth of Faith and Light**, in order to respond to the needs of many people with disabilities, their parents who feel alone and need a loving community, and friends who are unaware of the gifts of people with disabilities.
- **a time of thanksgiving to God for the gift of Faith and Light** and for the way God has enabled the movement to deepen and develop over the last 30 years.
- **to manifest the value of people with disabilities and how they can be a source of life** and of human and spiritual growth and how we meet and know Jesus better through them. In the

preparation, as well as during the pilgrimage, people with disabilities will have an active role, according to their abilities.

An experience and a sign of unity

The international pilgrimage to Lourdes will bring together communities from some 75 countries. Pilgrims will experience a sense of belonging to the wider **international family**. The meeting of different people and communities will be a source of enrichment for everyone involved. While some countries will have the opportunity to share their experience, their professionalism and their financial resources, others will be able to share their simplicity of heart, their openness and their faith. Older communities will bring the testimony of their wisdom and fidelity. Younger communities will bring their thirst for togetherness, their enthusiasm and their vitality. We will experience unity; thanks to the presence of the poor at the heart of the pilgrimage.

This pilgrimage aims to signify in a particular way:

- the unity that pilgrims from different churches are living. In a providential way, in the year 2001, the date of Easter is the same for the Orthodox Church as well as for all the other Christian churches.
- the unity between **I'Arche and Faith and Light**, and their specific and complementary vocations.

Like a family, we all want to express our solidarity for each other and to show our mutual support. Therefore, it is important to remember that whether we are going to Lourdes, participating in a national or local pilgrimage, or unable to join in any Faith and Light event, we will all be united in **communion of the heart and prayer**.

A look to the future

Every pilgrimage is an opportunity to call forth **new friends**. After all, Faith and Light's future depends on young people who are willing to commit themselves in fidelity and love. They will be invited to play an important role during the pilgrimage.

A special place will also be given to **young parents and their children with disabilities**. Many parents have been put under enormous pressure to get rid of their child, either before or after birth. Their decision to respect their child's right to live is in itself a sign and a call to all those who have lived or are living a similar experience. At the same time, a pilgrimage can be a time of healing and of reconciliation for those who felt they could not accept their child and his/her disability.

The pilgrimage to Lourdes and to other parts of the world, is an occasion for us **to enter into the new millennium with our hearts and spirits open to learn from the weakest amongst us**. As we walk with them, we will ask for the grace to become bearers of hope in the midst of human suffering and to work for reconciliation in our broken world.

**“ Let anyone who is thirsty come to me,
and let him drink” Jn 7:37**

Appendix 7

A



B



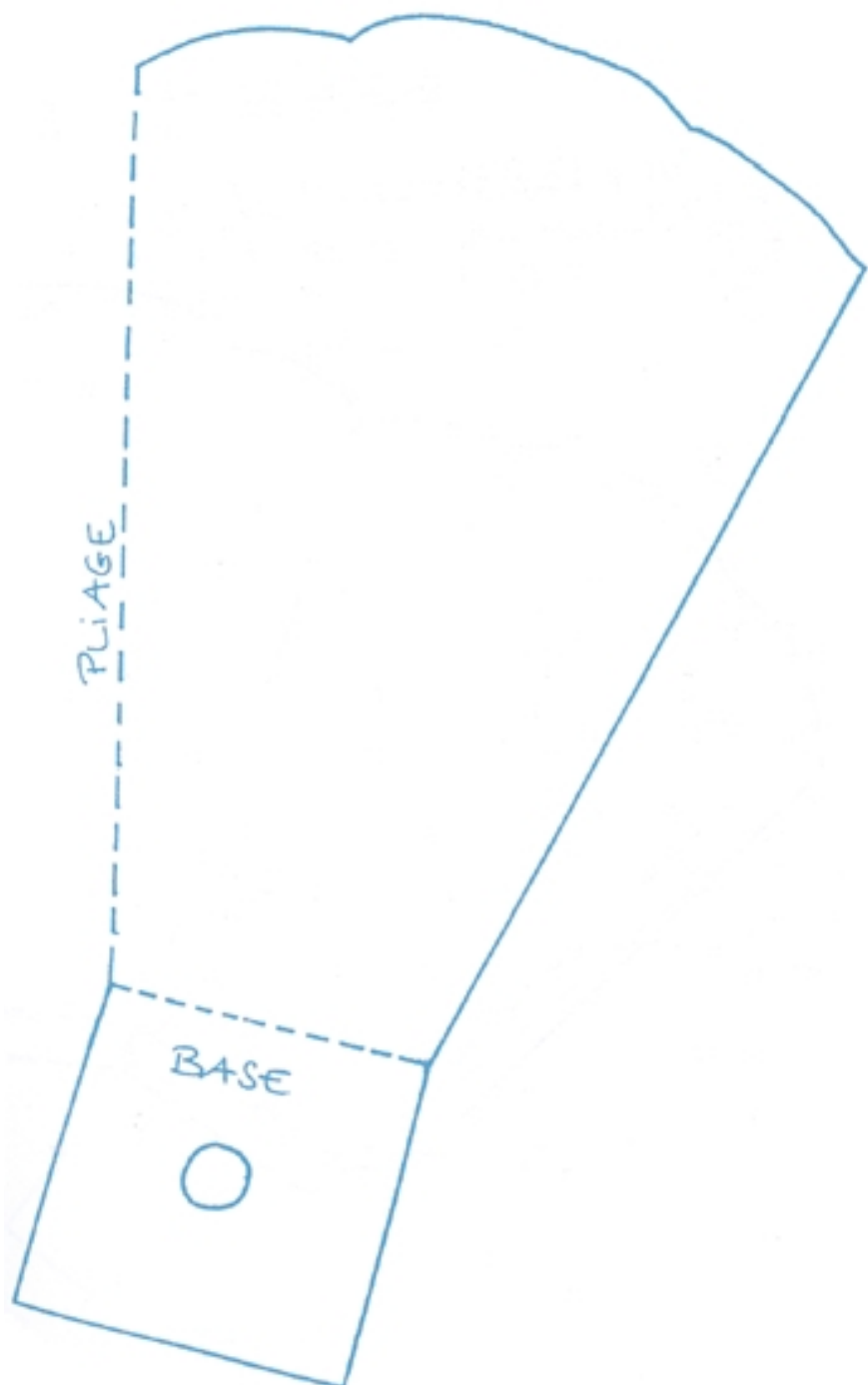
MODEL OF PAPER CONES TO PROTECT THE LIGHT OF THE CANDLES FROM THE WIND !

Using a photocopier and the picture of the model cone which you will find on the next page, you could enlarge the paper cone A4 size to A3 size before using it as a template to cut out your cone. Alternatively you could simply redraw it making it real the size (see it at the end of this appendix).

When you have the template ready, cut it out, fold down the dotted line and stick the flaps.

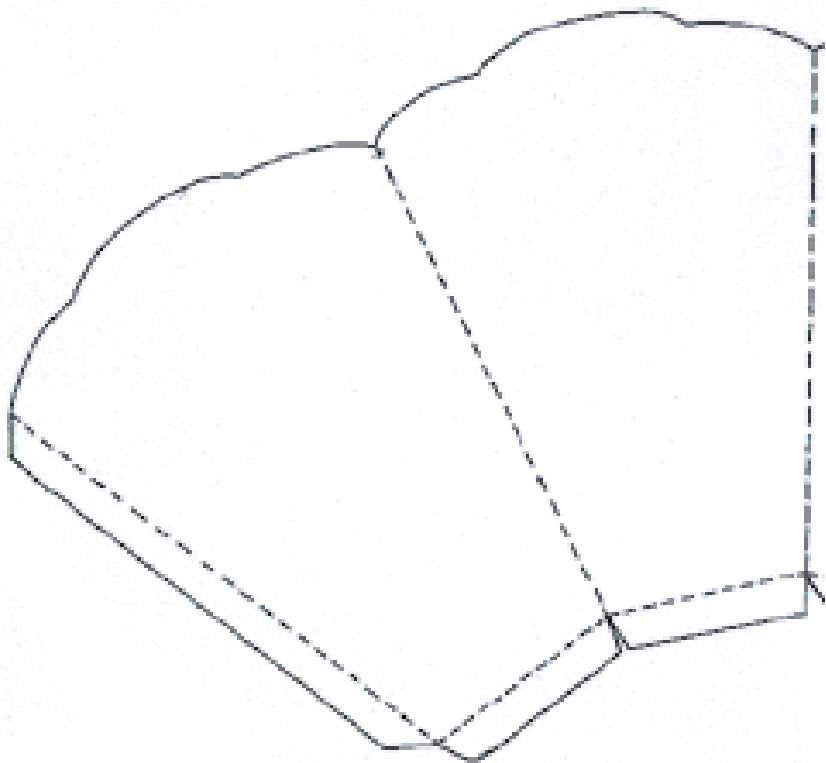
Make a second squared base -same sizes- with a hole in the middle using cardboard and stick it on the paper base. It will support the candle.

If you wish to decorate the paper cone, it is easier to do it before cutting it out.

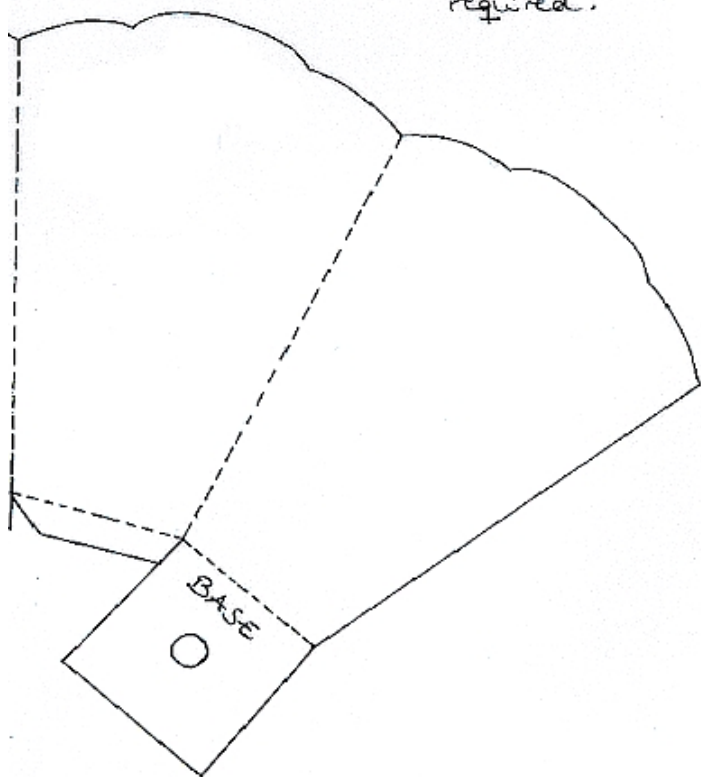


MODEL OF PAPER CONE to p

To make



protect the light of the candle from the wind
enlarge it at 1412 to have the real size
required.



Appendix 9

ÉCOUTE EN TOI LA SOURCE

Parole et musique : Louis-Marie GRIMAUD

REFRAIN É - coute en toi la sour - ce Qui te par - le d'ai - mer ... É - coute en toi la sour - ce de l'é - ter - ni - té, É - coute en toi la sour - ce Qui te fait pri - er. COUPLET Ton cœur est comme u - ne ter - re, Où le grain pour - ra le - ver, Si tu l'ouvres à la lu - mière, Si tu lais - ses l'eau cou - ler...

Écoute en toi la source qui te parle d'aimer

Écoute en toi la source de l'éternité

Écoute en toi la source qui te fait prier.

1. Ton cœur est comme une terre
Où le grain pourra lever,
Si tu l'ouvres à la lumière,
Si tu laisses l'eau couler.
2. On n'arrête pas l'eau vive,
N'essaie pas de la freiner.
En ton cœur elle ravive
La tendresse et la beauté.
3. La source devient rivière
Qui t'emmène à l'océan.
Écoute bien les prières
Qu'elle murmure en cheminant.
4. Avec Marie comme exemple
D'une terre qui attend,
Deviens toi aussi le temple
D'un Dieu qui se fait présent.

COME TO JESUS, LIVING WATER

Em
Come to Je - sus Come to Je - sus

spoken spoken

verse
Come to Je - sus Li - ving wa - ter
Coda

Coda (after last verse)
Come to Je - sus Come to Je - sus

Come to Je - sus Li - ving wa - ter
Coda can be sung as mantra without any verses

1. Come to Jesus, come to Jesus

Water flowing, swish, swish

(spoken) hands move from side to side

Water flowing, swish, swish

(spoken)

Come to Jesus, living water.

2. Come to Jesus, come to Jesus

Water raining, pitapat, pitapat

(spoken) hands like rain falling

Water raining, pitapat, pitapat

(spoken)

Come to Jesus, living water.

3. **Come to Jesus, come to Jesus**
 Water gushing, whooosh, whooosh (spoken) *hands pushing water*
 Water gushing, whooosh, whooosh (spoken)
Come to Jesus, living water.

4. **Come to Jesus, come to Jesus**
 Water dripping, dripdrop, dripdrop (spoken) *hands like drops falling*
 Water dripping, dripdrop, dripdrop (spoken)
Come to Jesus, living water.

5. **Come to Jesus, come to Jesus**
 Water sparkling, twinkle, twinkle (spoken) *fingers twinkle*
 Water sparkling, twinkle, twinkle (spoken)
Come to Jesus, living water.

6. **Come to Jesus, come to Jesus**
 Water washing, scrub, scrub (spoken) *washing action*
 Water washing, scrub, scrub (spoken)
Come to Jesus, living water.

7. **Come to Jesus, come to Jesus**
 We are thirsty, slurp, slurp (spoken) *drinking action and sound*
 We are thirsty, slurp, slurp (spoken)
Come to Jesus, living water.

VENID A BEBER DE LA FUENTE

Handwritten musical score for the song "Venid a beber de la fuente". The score is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes, and various vocal line notations (e.g., ReM, SolM, LA, FA#M, SiM) are placed above the notes to indicate pitch and rhythm. The lyrics are: "Venid a beber de la fuente, Venid a beber de la fuente de la vida y del perdón, la fuente de mi cuerpo y mi redención, la fuente de la vida y del perdón, la fuente de mi cuerpo y mi redención. Si os amáis los unos a los otros como yo os he amado a cada uno..."

ReM SolM ReM SolM
 Venid a beber de la fuente Venid a beber de la A..
 LA M
 mor la
 SolM ReM FA#M SiM
 fuente de la vida y del perdón la
 SolM Re LA M
 fuente de mi cuerpo y mi redención la
 SolM Re FA#M SiM
 fuente de la vida y del perdón la
 SolM SolM LA LA ReM
 fuente de mi cuerpo y mi redención
 SolM SolM LA LA ReM
 Si os amáis los unos a los otros
 Co mo yo os he a ma do a ca da uno... (A)

**Venid a beber de la Fuente,
Venid a beber del Amor,
La Fuente de la Vida y del perdón, }
La Fuente de mi cuerpo y mi resurrección. } (Bis)**

1. Si os amáis los unos a los otros,
como yo os he amado a cada uno,
en eso verán: sois amigos míos, }
en que dais la vida como yo la doy. } (Bis)

2. Os llamé a todos por el nombre,
y os junté en una comunidad,
id por todo el mundo, sembrad la paz, }
amaos unos a otros, amaos de verdad. } (Bis)

3. Nadie tiene más amor por otro,
que aquel que su vida quiere dar,
si el grano de trigo no muere ya, }
no puede dar fruto ni resucitará. } (Bis)

Appendix 10

I THIRST FOR YOU!

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock.”

*It is true! I stand at the door of your heart, day and night.
Even when you do not listen to me, even when you doubt it
could be me it could be me, it is I who am there.
I await even the smallest sign of a response on your part, even
the least whispered invitation that will allow me to enter.
And I want you to know that whenever you invite me,
I shall really come.
I shall always be there – without fail.
Silent and unseen I come,
but with the infinite power of my love.*



*I come bringing all the gifts of the Holy Spirit,
I come with my mercy, with my desire to forgive and to heal
you, and with all the love I have for you, a love beyond
comprehension, a love where every heartbeat is that which
I have received from the Father himself.
As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.
I come - yearning to console you, to give you my strength,
to lift you up and bind all your wounds.
I come to bring you my light,
I come to dispel the darkness and all the doubts
in your heart.
I come with my power, that I might carry you, yourself,*

*and all your burdens.
I come with my grace, to touch your heart
and transform your life;
I come with my peace, which will bring calm and serenity
to your soul.*



*I know you through and through - I know everything about you.
The very hairs of your head I have numbered.
Nothing in your life is unimportant in my eyes,
I have followed you throughout all these years,
and I have always loved you,
even when you were on the wrong paths.
I know every one of your problems.
I know your needs and your worries.
Yes I know - I know all your sins.
But I tell you once again that I love you - not for
what you have or haven't done - I love you for yourself,
for the beauty and dignity my Father gave you
by creating you in His own image and likeness.
It is a dignity you have perhaps often forgotten,
a beauty you have often tarnished by sin.
But I love you as you are,
and I have shed my blood to win you back to God.
If you only asked me with faith,
my grace would come and touch you and fulfil all your needs.
I will give you the strength to free yourself from sin
and all the destructive forces in your life.*



*I know what is in your heart.
I know your loneliness.
I know the wounds in your heart, the rejections,
 the judgements, the humiliations you have had to endure.
All this I carried before you.
And I carried it all for you,
 so that you might share my strength and victory.
I know especially your need to be loved.
I know how you are thirsting to be loved and cherished
 and how often you have tried to quench this thirst
 in a selfish love,
 striving to fill the emptiness inside you
 with passing pleasures
 with an even greater emptiness; that of sin.
Do you thirst?*



*Come to me all you who thirst, I will refresh you.
Do you thirst to be loved?
I love you more than you can imagine.
I have loved you to the point of dying on the Cross for you.
I thirst for you.
Yes, that is the only way even to begin
 to describe my love for you:
 I thirst for you. I thirst for your love.
I thirst to be loved by you.
That tells you how precious you are to me.
I thirst for you.
Come to me.
I will fill your heart. I will heal your wounds.*

*I will make you a new creature.
I will give you peace, even in the midst of all your trials.*



*I thirst for you.
You must never doubt my mercy,
my desire to forgive you, my ardent longing to bless you,
and to live my life in you.*

*I thirst for you.
If you feel unimportant in the eyes of the world,
that matters not at all.
For me, there is not anyone any more important
in the entire world than you.*

*I thirst for you.
Open to me, come to me, thirst for me,
give me your life
and I will prove to you how important you are to my Heart.*

*I thirst for you.
No matter how far you have wandered
no matter how much you have forgotten me,
no matter how many crosses you have had to bear in this life,
there is only one thing I want you always to remember,
one thing that will never change:
I thirst for you - just as you are.*

*You don't need to change to believe in my love,
for it will be your belief in my love that will change you.*

*You have forgotten me and yet I seek you
every moment of the day - standing at the door of your
heart, and knocking.*



*Do you find this hard to believe?
Then look towards the Cross,
 look towards my Heart that was pierced for you.
Look towards my Eucharist.
Have you not understood my Cross?
Then listen once again to the words I spoke on the Cross:
 I thirst ! Yes, I thirst for you. I thirst for you.
I have been seeking for somebody to satisfy my love
 and I have not found anyone.
Be this one.
I thirst for you - for your love.*



Meditation inspired of Mother Teresa

Appendix 11

THE FAITH AND LIGHT PRAYER

Jesus, you came into our world,
to reveal the Father to us, your Father and our Father.

You came to teach us to love one another.
Give us the Holy Spirit, according to your promise,
so that he will make us
instruments of peace and unity,
in this world of war and division.

Jesus you have called us to follow you
in a community of Faith and Light.

We want to say "yes" to you.

We want to live a covenant of love
in this big family you have given us,
where we can share our sufferings and difficulties,
our joys and our hope.

Teach us to accept our wounds, our weakness
so that your power may be revealed.

Teach us to find you in all our brothers and sisters,
especially in those who are the weakest.

Teach us to follow you in the ways of the Gospel.

Jesus, come and live in us and in our communities
as you lived first in Mary.

She was the first to welcome you.

Help us to be faithfully present, with her, at the foot of the cross,
near the crucified of the world.

Help us to live your Resurrection.

Amen.



GETTING TO KNOW BETTER FAITH AND LIGHT

The following documents are available through the International Secretariat of Faith and Light
3 rue du Laos - 75015 Paris - France

Tel: + 33.1.53.69.44.30 - Fax: + 33.1.53.69.44.38 - E-mail: Foi.Lumiere@wanadoo.fr

Website: <http://foietlumiere.free.fr>
or through your national coordinator

| * Building community | Contribution to expenses |
|--|---------------------------------|
| - Charter and Constitution (1998) | free |
| - Guidelines for the first year | 20 FF |
| - Leaders' pack handbooks for: | 20 FF each |
| - community leader | |
| - regional and national leader | |
| - zone leader | |
| - Sharing our responsibility in Faith and Light | 20 FF |
| - Annual guidelines | 25 FF |
| - Songs booklet – International Meeting Quebec 98 | 10 FF |
| | |
| * Deepening our life together | |
| - Deepening our spirituality in Faith and Light | 20 FF |
| - Morning and evening prayers: suggestions for their preparation | 15 FF |
| - Retreats in Faith and Light | 20 FF |
| - The ecumenism in Faith and Light | 20 FF |
| - Ecumenism: a gift of friendship | 20 FF |
| - Ecumenical guidelines | 20 FF |
| - Faith and Light fioretti | 15 FF |
| - " Launch out into the deep! " (Mini-album International Meeting Quebec 1998) | 5 FF |
| - Formation week-ends and sessions in Faith and Light | 20 FF |
| - On holiday together | 20 FF |
| - Finances in Faith and Light | 10 FF |
| | |
| * Getting to know us better | |
| - Leaflets | free |
| - Video (PAL) | |
| - Blessed are you who yearn and work for unity: 1991 International Pilgrimage to Lourdes | 100 FF |
| | |
| Further readings | |
| Marie-Hélène Mathieu (in French): | |
| - Mieux vaut allumer une lampe que maudire l'obscurité | 45 FF |
| - Dieu m'aime comme je suis | 89 FF |
| Jean Vanier : | |
| - Community and growth | 104 FF |
| - I walk with Jesus | 65 FF |
| - I meet Jesus | 65 FF |
| - The scandale of service | 58 FF |
| - Pilgrims together, a vision of ecumenism | 20 FF |
| - Letter to my brothers and sisters in l'Arche and in Faith and Light | 10 FF |

The postage expenses are not included in these prices.

The cracked pitcher



A water vendor goes to the river every morning, fills his two pitchers, and heads towards the town to distribute the water to his customers. One of his pitchers, which is cracked, loses water, the other, which is brand-new, brings in more money. The poor cracked pitcher feels inferior. One morning, it decides to confide in its owner.

“I am aware of my limits,” it says. “You lose money because of me because I am half empty when we get to town. Forgive me my weaknesses.”

The following day on the way to the river, our owner calls the cracked pitcher and says:

- “Take a look at the side of the road...”
- “It’s pretty, it’s full of flowers,” the pitcher replies.
- “That’s thanks to you”, the owner answers. “You’re the one that

waters the verge every morning! I bought a packet of seeds and I sowed them along the road, and without knowing or meaning to, you water them every day... Never forget; we are all a bit broken, but God knows how to make miracles from our weaknesses and imperfections if we ask it of him.”

*Parable narrated by Father Luc Lafleur
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