

Faith and Light international  
**2005 - 2006 Guidelines**



A year  
for  
peace

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*Dear friends,*

*A year dedicated to peace ...*

*Peace in families, between nations, and for the whole world : it is our heart-felt desire and wish ... but peace can only truthfully take root in people's hearts. This year's theme is given us so that the desire for peace takes root more and more deeply in us and that we look to work at it together*

*In our small Faith and Light communities, we have an extraordinary opportunity : that of learning together how to welcome the most humble, to attend to the person that suffers, to discover the beauty and gift of each person, to humbly serve and forgive one another, to walk together on the way of communion.*

*To become peacemakers and love each day in our homes, our workplaces, our families and places where we live, our districts, our local church : these are the continuation of our mission. If we are faithful to it, Faith and Light will be a « house of peace » for all who become close to our communities !*

*Would that we welcome peace as a gift from God while at the same time working tirelessly at it, as if it depended essentially on our love, our faithfulness, the quality of our presence to one another, our capacity to forgive.*

*I am certain that each community will find valuable assistance, month by month, while it adapts as best it can the suggestions of the guidelines that*



*were prepared again this year by Corinne surrounded by a wonderful team!*

*Our thanks go out to each one of you, Aslaug, Father Jean-Marc, Isabelle, Marina and Father Joseph. And we thank you also, Jean, for your meditations that will help us month by month to forge ahead on the road to Peace.*

*Wishing each one of your communities a happy journey, in the confidence of Jesus!*

*Viviane*

Viviane le Polain  
International Coordinator



## **Letter from the guidelines team**

Peace ! What a beautiful year we will live together !

First, I want to thank those of you that sent us an evaluation of last year's guidelines : « *Together in Community with the Gospel of John* ». They are of great value to us. What a joy to receive your comments, your words of encouragement, your suggestions ! We can thus better attempt to respond to your expectations and your needs, attempt to better satisfy the different denominational and cultural realities of our communities. I am quite aware that we are not perfect and, again this year, I ask for your understanding.

As you know, what is proposed for the different parts of the meeting is only given as suggestion. Do not hesitate to adapt to the personality of your community, to your religious tradition, to your culture ...

This year, you will find two new short headings : a meditation for the chaplain whose role is so important in the community, and a short quote from the Faith and Light Charter to be reflected upon and deepened either alone, as part of a team effort or in community ... In the appendix I, page 88, you will find one dedicated to communities built around families having young children with an intellectual disability. This is one of Faith and Light's priorities. Each community is invited to carry in its heart and prayer the desire to see such communities take root in its country or region.



We also propose that, as of September, you make a white scarf or sash for each member of the community. White is the symbol of peace. We can wear it at each meeting and we will be decorating it during the course of the year. Made of cotton, it could have the dimensions of a regular scarf/sash (1.80 meters by 0.35 meter, or 72 inches by 14 inches). Let your imagination and creativity make it as beautiful as you can !

Peace and joy to each of you !



*Corinne*

*For the guidelines team  
Corinne Chatain  
General Secretary*



## **To you, members of the coordinating team**

### **To prepare the year**

⌘ A new year is starting for our community ! Let us take the time needed to restart the journey.

The «*Day for a Renewal in the Community*»<sup>1</sup> that we have lived through during these last months, or that we will live through shortly will help us to identify our gifts, our areas of growth as well as the expectations of the members of the community. This exercise will give direction to our priorities throughout the year.

⌘ This year 2005-2006 will be marked by two important events : Faith and Light's 35th anniversary and the international meeting that will bring together, as every four years, the great Faith and Light family from around the world. 300 delegates will travel to Madrid in July, 2006.

⌘ The «small friendship groups» are of great value for each community member. (See appendix 2, page 90). Let us constitute or reconstitute these small groups being aware of geographical proximity, of balance (core members, family members, friends) and the possibility of having a coordinating team member as leader. It is good to renew the composition of the groups each year so that all the community members have the chance to know one another better. This is a task that can be done by one or two people and will be revised by the coordinating team. We'll make copies of the small groups' list and will distribute it during the September meeting.

⌘ As of today, we should foresee planning out the year's activities, proposing community projects : preparing the Feast of Light (see appendix 3, page 92), the Announcement and Sharing Day (ideas are put forward for

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<sup>1</sup> Free document available at the International Secretariat.



Lent, see appendix 4, page 93), a thanksgiving pilgrimage for the 35th anniversary of Faith and Light, a vacation camp ...

⌘ As a symbol of peace, we will make a white cotton scarf/sash for each member of the community. During the year, at each meeting, we will decorate it with a symbol reflecting the monthly theme.

⌘ If you can access the Internet, there are two websites of great value that can be of help to you. The first is the Taizé website translated in more than twenty-five languages. It has a subheading «Prayer and Song» where one can find all the reflective songs, the words, the different voice parts and a recording so that you can learn it directly !

The second unfortunately exists only in French. It is the Faith and Light Canada East website that has many games, ideas for mimes ... The URLs are in appendix 14, page 104.

⌘ You could also assemble in a small notebook a few beautiful songs, sung in your country, on the theme of peace ...

In order to introduce this year's theme or for a more focused deepening of the theme during the year, the English-speaking communities and others could come together to view together the video «*Quest for Peace*». As its title indicates, it is on the theme of peace and is commented by Jean Vanier (available at «La Ferme-Diffusion», B.P. 19 - 60350 TROSLY-BREUIL - [HTTP ://www.lafermediffusion.com/](http://www.lafermediffusion.com/) or at the International Secretariat).

### **To prepare the month of September meeting**

We can cut out from cardboard or poster board sheets the different parts of creation : sun, stars, animals, flowers, silhouettes ... We could also fashion small clay figurines.

We will find a large enough box with an opening to the front to form a small theater or setting. This box will be the stage or setting in which each community member will place the part of creation they'll have received upon their arrival on meeting day. At the center, in order to symbolize God, we will place an icon of the Blessed Trinity or a cross.





# A year for peace





## Welcome and gathering anew

Upon arrival, each person receives his/her white scarf/sash with a word of explanation (see pages 4 and 6) and a piece of creation. We could also each bring a vacation souvenir such as a rock, a seashell ... Each person goes and places his/her piece of creation in the setting prepared for that purpose.

We will take some time to explain the small friendship groups : the people with whom we will be closest, what we will attempt to do between meetings to stay in touch (see appendix 2, page 90).



## The Word

***In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, we read that God created our universe of light, life, water, earth, fire and air. At the heart of this universe, God created man and woman who lived harmoniously together, with God and with all of creation.***

***Then, Adam and Eve separated themselves from God.*** They refused to live in harmony with God. The harmony that existed between them and with the universe was broken. Instead of living a certain fullness of peace, ***they discovered their poverty***, their mortality, their nudity, their vulnerability and ***they became frightened***. When God went looking for Adam, Adam answered: «I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid myself» (Gen. 3, 10).

The dread of one's vulnerability and the desire to hide oneself entered the heart of mankind. ***The hatred and the desire to humble and eliminate others entered the world. Instead of communion among brothers, there was violence*** : Cain killed his brother, Abel. Walls went up between human beings. Suspicion took the place of confidence and trust. ***Instead of cooperation, there was rivalry and competition*** : each person wishes to prove he/she is better than the next person. They started to fight among



themselves. They cultivated might and the knowledge needed to gain power. Weak people were crushed, put aside.

A few chapters later in Genesis, we find that «in the eyes of God the earth was corrupt and full of lawlessness» (Gen. 6, 11). **But God kept watch over humanity.** He chose a man, Noah, in order that a small lineage of peace could be born amidst this world of violence. **God made a peace pact with Man.**



There have always been wars, oppression and crushing of the weak. But there has also been a lineage of peace, chosen by God, the sons and daughters of Noah, then the sons and daughters of Abraham, and other men and women - prophets and wise men - chosen to announce peace and to work for truth, justice and friendship.

**Finally, at the fulfillment of times, God sent His Beloved Son, the Word of God, who is God, Jesus, born of a woman, to announce the gospel of peace. He came into the world to announce a new order where peace will spring forth from small communities based on trust in Him, in weak people, chosen by God.**

Today, our world remains a violent place where one must become stronger and stronger, and develop knowledge in order to gain and maintain power. But at the same time, small communities are springing forth from the gifts of Love and the Holy Spirit that change men's and women's hearts of stone into hearts of flesh.

This year, we will discover that Faith and Light communities are among these communities arising in the Church to be signs of peace and to work for peace.



## Sharing

### ▶ Together

We are seated in a semi-circle around the stage/setting representing the marvels of creation. A lamp is lit. We admire the marvels of God. We can reread the first chapter of Genesis.

Then, we close down the stage/setting, extinguish the lamp. We read a few passages from the words of Jean Vanier : « **God continued to watch over humankind.** He chose a man, Noah, so that a small lineage of peace began in this world of violence. **God made a peace alliance with humanity** ».

We can live the call to enter the Ark with Noah (with ample gestures) or choose a few extracts :

*Hammer, hammer !  
We're hammering in the nails.  
We're building an ark with Noah.*

*Roar, roar !  
We're looking for the lions.  
We're rounding up the lions with Noah.*

*Chirp, chirp !  
We've found two little birds.  
We're taking them into the ark with Noah.*

*Jump, jump !  
With Noah and all the animals  
We jump on board the ark !*

*Splash, splash !  
It's starting to rain.  
With Noah we feel the rain.*



*Rock, rock !  
The water is rising.  
With Noah we're sailing the oceans.*

*Flap, flap !  
We're sending a dove.  
With Noah, we send her to look for land.*

*Clap, clap !  
The dove's brought back an olive branch.  
With Noah, we've found dry land.*

*Thank you my Lord ! Thank you my Lord !  
You are so great.  
With Noah, we have found peace.*

(Adaptation from «Come into the Ark with Noah», Stephanie Jeffs)

We reopen the stage/setting, relight the lamp and admire the marvels of creation !

### ▶ In sharing groups

During this first meeting, the small sharing groups will be the small friendship groups so people will get to know one another and to see what bonds they can create. Each person receives his/her friendship group member list prepared by the coordinating team (see page 5). How can we help one another stay in touch in our small groups : telephone numbers, monthly meeting, quarterly get-together ?

God told Noah that mankind, because of its malice, had destroyed all He had created that was beautiful and good. Noah listened to God and did what God asked of him. He worked for peace.

We, too, can sometimes be very bad.

- How can we change ? How can we recover peace ?
- How can we be at peace with ourselves ? With our family ? With our neighbors ?
- How can we live in peace with nature ? With God ?



## PRAYER

We are seated in a semi-circle. At the center of our prayer corner is found our representation of creation. We can add a picture of Jesus, for example the picture painted by Rembrandt (see appendix 5, page 94).

« *God made a peace alliance with humankind.* » When peace is in us, it is contagious. We give our neighbor peace by tracing the sign of the Cross on his/her forehead, or by giving a simple kiss or still as Maronite Christians do : the chaplain takes into his hands the joined hands of his/her neighbor who does to same to his/her neighbor ...

To finish, we can say or sing Saint Francis of Assisi's prayer :

### **Make me an instrument of your peace**

*Where there is hatred, let me bring your love,  
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord,  
Where there is error, the truth,  
And where there's doubt, true faith in you,  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope,  
Where there is darkness only light,  
And where there's sadness ever joy.  
O Divine Master,  
Grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand  
To be loved as to love with all my soul.  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
In giving or ourselves that we receive,  
And in dying that we're born to eternal live.*

Or sing another peace song.



▶ **And/or the prayer of a poor person** (see appendix 6, page 95)

A reflective piece of music allows the peace of Jesus to come into our heart. We can sing a song to the Holy Spirit.

While meditating on the marvels of creation, the face of Jesus, we repeat our word of love : « *Jesus, here I am* » or : « *I am here, Jesus* ».

Let us allow this word of love to resonate in our heart.



## Fiesta

On our white scarf/sash (see pages 4 and 6), we can draw a small rainbow to that will remind us of the peace alliance that God has made with us.

### **Animal imitation game**

We stand single file in groups of six. One person is chosen to imitate an animal. The person alone knows which animal he/she will imitate. Six community members stand single file in front of the person turned away from him/her. One after the other, they do the imitation. The first person in the row turns around, looks at the mime and does the imitation. Then the next person, and so on ... Surprising results at the end !

### **Or pin an animal on a person's back**

We pin the picture of an animal on the back of each member of the community. The person, of course, does not know which animal is there. In order to discover which animal is there, the person must ask other members to imitate the animal, if it has feathers, hair, if it is white or maroon ...

### ▶ **Meal or snack**

The table is decorated with things that we are found in nature : flowers, branches, seashells ... The meal or snack will include the most simple things found in creation : vegetables, fruits ...



### Chaplain's corner

The prayer of a poor person is very important for those wanting to let themselves be transformed into an icon of Jesus. Praying each morning the prayer of Cardinal Newman (appendix 7, page 97) will be a strong incentive to live this prayer of the poor. We can bear witness to Jesus, not by preaching in words but by our example. It is only after many years of faithfully praying the prayer of a poor person that results will become visible.

### Charter

*«Faith and Light is a community movement. At the heart of these communities are people with a more or less serious intellectual disability : children, adolescents or adults. They are surrounded by their family and friends, especially young people.»* (Charter, 1)

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## FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS

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### The time of fidelity



#### ▶ In our small friendship groups, if we can meet

It is the start of a new year of meetings. Let us reflect together on our objectives. We prepare ourselves for the celebration of the washing of the feet that we will live during the October meeting : how to let Jesus transform our hearts, how to become a peacemaker.



#### ▶ In our personal life

Each morning, or in the calm of night, we will think of someone to whom we wish to give a sign of peace, tomorrow : a smile, a word, a simple gesture ... We can live the prayer of a poor person every day for a few minutes.





**In the coordinating team  
to prepare the month of October  
meeting**

The celebration of the washing of the feet must be prepared with great care. The sequence of events is explained in appendix 8, page 98. To get our hearts ready, we could already live this celebration with the coordinating team.

We assign who will welcome each person in the name of Jesus at the next meeting. We prepare small hearts on which is written : « *(First name), you are unique and I love you* ». A light cord will allow us to wear the heart around the neck.

We remind each one to bring their white sash/scarf.



To work for peace  
by washing  
one another's feet





## Welcome and gathering anew

The members of the community are welcomed by a person who symbolizes Jesus. Wearing a white alb, he has a cross around his neck. To each person, he gives them the heart on which is written : « *(First Name), you are unique and I love you* ».



## The Word

During the long years before the coming of Jesus, God showed human beings how to live in order to be happy, how to realize their humanity and to remain in harmony with God. He gave them commandments : love God and your neighbor, work for justice, respect the earth. Those commandments are still to be followed. But Jesus, in coming on earth, wanted to give **His** commandment :

**« I give you a new commandment :  
Love one another.  
As I have loved you,  
So you also should love one another.  
This is how all will know that you are my disciples,  
if you have love for one another. »**  
(John 13, 34-35)

Just prior to giving this new commandment, **Jesus knelt and washed the feet of His disciples**. As He often does, when Jesus does a gesture, he explains it : **He gives this gesture as an example and asks us to do the same if we want to be His disciples.**

Within Faith and Light, we wash one another's feet during the Holy Thursday celebration. We sometimes risk forgetting that **if Jesus asked us to wash one another's feet, it isn't only for that day, but it is each and every day that we are called to be servants of one another.**



To wash one another's feet symbolizes the way in which we are called to live Jesus' new commandment. **To live the Gospel of peace, to work for peace, begins in the community. And that community is made of people who trust Jesus, and who wish to follow Him and be His disciples. In fact, it is not only a question of loving others but to love them as He loves them ! Jesus is not only the model but also the source of this love. We can only love as He loves us because He loves each one of us personally.**

What is the meaning of the washing of the feet ?

- With Jesus : no more rivalries, no competition, but service. Each one is there **to serve others**, to help them live and develop their human potential, to know Jesus better, to grow in maturity and wisdom, and to be happy.
- To love them not by first telling them what they must do, controlling and lording it over them, governing them harshly, but by treating them with goodness and tact, and by respecting each one as he/she is, with his/her gifts, his/her problems, his/her handicaps. Each person is different. Each has his/her bright and dark sides. To love **is to reveal to each person that he/she is unique**, important and precious.
- To love is to **be humble** before the other ...
- To love is to **commit oneself** to the other as Jesus committed Himself to each one of us. There is a pact between the heart of each one of us and the heart of Jesus. There is an alliance between us.
- But to love as Jesus loves, we must look to **live as much as possible with Jesus**. Only He can give us the strength, the love and wisdom to love each person as He loves him/her.

**In order to live the Gospel of peace and to work for peace in our world, Jesus reminds us that we must start by working for peace in our family and in our Faith and Light community. It is there that our hearts will be transformed. It is there that we learn to welcome and love others different from ourselves, and to forgive. It is there that we**



**can deepen our understanding of the Word of God and that we are a part of the Church of Jesus. It is there that we find the strength to spread this love to others in society. Jesus, we ask for the grace of humility.**



## SHARING

### ► TOGETHER

Let us reflect together on the word of Jean Vanier : what is the meaning of the celebration of the washing of the feet that we will live together ?

What seems most important in what we have heard :

- Each one is there to **serve others** ...
- To love is to **reveal to each one that he/she is unique**, important, precious ...
- To love is to be **humble** before others.
- To love is to **commit oneself** to others as Jesus is committed to each one of us.
- But to love as Jesus loves, we must look **to live as much as possible with Jesus**.



## PRAYER

### **Celebration of the washing of the feet, or of the hands**

This celebration will be our prayer time today.

Decorate the center of our circle with flowers. Play or sing soft, reflective music.

Following an explanation of what we are about to do, we start the celebration following the sequence of events as proposed in appendix 8, page 98.



The community coordinator or the chaplain reads the Gospel according to John (13, 1-17), gives a short explanation insisting on the ecumenical importance of this gesture.

After having washed and dried the feet of our neighbor, kneeling in front of him/her, we can say : « *(First Name), I love you as Jesus loves you* ».

### ◆ In sharing groups

Why does this gesture of washing feet bring us together, unite us ?

- What are the gestures, words, attitudes in my daily life that can build peace and unity ?
- When I find myself before a person who is very different from myself, before whom I feel a mental block or whom I find unpleasant, can I imagine in my heart kneeling before this person to wash his/her feet and, in turn, he/she washing my feet ?

### ◆ And/or the prayer of a poor person

We remain in silence for a few moments while saying in our hearts : « *Jesus, here I am, very poor* ».



## Fiesta

This gesture of washing feet makes us know others in a more personal manner.

On a large sheet of paper, we draw the face of the person whose feet we have washed and write the person's name on the drawing. It is not necessary to know how to draw, besides, we can always ask for assistance !

On the white scarf/sash, we write Jesus' commandment : « *Love one another* ».



## ▶ Meal or snack

Each person will bring their favorite meal or snack and give it to the person that washed their feet.

### Chaplain's corner

To be aware of a person's bare feet is to become aware of one of their weaknesses. Our feet often portray the distinguishing marks of our history. To know all is to forgive all. In our ministry, we see that people have such a need for God's forgiveness. Faith and Light transforms our hearts into hearts full of warmth. We wish to be thus known in the community and in our ministry.

### Charter

*«Each meeting includes a time of getting together to talk and to listen to one another. The essential thing is to form personal relationships within which we discover the suffering and the gifts of one another, where we learn to know someone else by name.»* (Charter I, 1)

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## FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS

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### The time of fidelity



### ▶ In our small friendship groups, if we can meet

For Catholics, the month of October is Holy Rosary month. We can pray together the Mysteries of Light as meditated by Jean Vanier at John Paul II's request during the Pope's pilgrimage to Lourdes in August, 2004. (Faith and Light International website : [www.faithandlight.org](http://www.faithandlight.org),

under the «Current Events» heading, «2004»).

We can also share the salient points we lived together during the ceremony of the washing of the feet. What fruits has it produced ?



### ► In our personal life



We pray for the person whose feet we washed while saying his/her name softly. We can pray the prayer of a poor person for a few minutes each day.



### In the coordinating team to prepare the month of November meeting

The coordinating team shares the task of making a small calendar reflecting the dates from the November community meeting through the December meeting. You can either make a page per day stapled together or draw squares on one sheet of paper. For each day, write in the word «Peace» to remind us that we must work for peace. The month of November is All Saints and All Souls month. Together, we can pray for those we love and have already gone to the Father's House. Ask each member to bring a colored scarf for the holidays and their white sash/scarf.





To work for peace  
is a daily struggle





## Welcome and gathering anew

Each person receives a small calendar for the coming month with an explanation : each day, next to the word « Peace », we can write down the name of a person, on earth or already in heaven, for whom we will pray more especially.



## The Word

*We all love peace. It is difficult to work for peace. **To work for peace is to struggle against all the selfish tendencies in us and to open ourselves effectively to others, even to those that disturb us, those that awaken anxiety and aggressiveness in us.** To work for peace is a struggle that shows up clearly in community life.*

**The community is a living body made up of many members.** If a member is against the body, if he/she only pursues his/her own interests, he/she tends to cut him/herself off from the body. **Each member of the body is there for the benefit of the whole body. Each member must transition from « the community for me » to « me for the community »,** from selfishness to altruism. Clearly, each person must be in good spiritual form, fed and rested in order to be more present to others.

The aims of Faith and Light, written in our Charter, are clear. Our organization, our reporting structure are defined in our constitution. **But to live these aims, we must be fed by this spirit of love. To live of this love is a daily struggle. This implies a conversion of the heart.** We can so easily be self-centered, and think only of our own interests and comfort, satisfy our need for power, hide behind our laziness or the law of least effort.

What is true of a Faith and Light community is also true of family life. How can we maintain open communication between husband and wife, parents



and children? How can we be present to the other, to others? How can we create a festive atmosphere that encourages true community life? Each person can so easily and quickly pursue his/her own petty business. **What this means is that each member of the body, and the entire community must find places and times to recharge the batteries, to help restore that spirit of love and sharing.**

In community life, it is important that each member be open to each of the other members. Communication with this or that person can quickly close down. Barriers appear between them, jealousies and dissension are born. **Community life implies not only that we travel in the same direction, toward the same goals, but it also implies that there is a growing love between members, affection and mutual trust.**

**The community and the family are schools of love.** In that setting, we learn to love those near us, but with whom we have problems. They require that we work at them: to never say a bad word about somebody; to try to approach those we find difficult; to do little things for them; to pray for them and ask the Holy Spirit to help us be sincere and at the service of others. Let us ask Him to change our hearts of stone to hearts of flesh. When we have problems with a person, it might be wise to seek out a person of wisdom to accompany us, to help us understand which part of the problem is ours and which belongs to the other. It is a question of accepting that the situation is not an easy one while making efforts to find the means of a better understanding and progress to unity.

In her journal, Etty Hillesum says that for peace to exist, each person must work to uproot the seeds of hatred and dissension within. **Only the Holy Spirit can accomplish in us this work which is delicate, painful and marvelous.**



## Sharing

▶ **Together**, a suggestion from Jean Vanier.

«Each person can say, truthfully and simply, what makes them happy in community, what their pro-



*blems and hopes are, and what they need to grow in love. Such a sharing can unite and stimulate our hearts. It must be done in a spirit of silence and prayer, where we place ourselves in the presence of Jesus. We ask Him to help us grow in the spirit of wisdom, truth and love.»*

### ▶ In sharing groups

November is All Saints and All Souls month.

In our small calendar, each person writes down the name of the person for whom he/she will pray today. We will write a name down each day.

The sharing group leader can relate the following story in his/her own words, or read it slowly.

*«I know that my grandmother will not come back. She is dead. But it is OK to wish her return. In my heart, I know that it is not possible. But it is OK to hope for miracles.*

*I can say why I wish her return. My grandmother took very good care of me. Every day she took care of me and spoke to me.*

*If I were to relate all that she did for me, I'd have to write a book with many chapters.*

*I loved my grandmother so much. She gave me coffee and cakes. She would wash and dry me with a warm towel.*

*I so wish she would come back.»*

(«Autonomy and Solitude», Gjermund Jensen,  
Norwegian Faith and Light member)

Slowly, Gjermund will undoubtedly discover that his grandmother is still present, but in a different manner, and that she can speak to him in his heart.

- What souvenirs does this account evoke in me ?
- I can relate one of my life's difficult moments.
- How did the community help me find peace once again ?



## PRAYER

When we pray for our enemies or simply for those that irritate us by their ways, we are faced with a struggle.

We can pray this intercessory prayer together for those we find hard to love (or another prayer of our composition) :

*For those who constantly humiliate me,  
Lord, let them be loved by all.*

*For those who succeed better than I,  
Lord, let them be loved by all.*

*For those who see me as good for nothing,  
Lord, let them be loved by all.*

*For those who have hurt my best friend,  
Lord, let them be loved by all.*

*For those who have lied about me and my family,  
Lord, let them be loved by all.*

*For those whose bad deeds I know,  
Lord, let them be loved by all.*

*For those leaving prison,  
Lord, let them be loved by all.*

*For those who are unpleasant,  
Lord, let them be loved by all.*

*For those who are ugly,  
Lord, let them be loved by all.*

### ▶ **And/or the prayer of a poor person**

To pray the prayer of a poor person implies acknowledging that we are not perfect. But we are the beloved of God. We abandon ourselves to Him saying: «*I am here for you, Lord*».



## Piesta

### **The scarf dance**

To the accompaniment of lively background music, we form a large circle where all wave their scarf. A person moves to the center and invites two others to join him/her. They tie their scarves together and invite two more to join them ... and eventually form a big farandole.

On our white scarf/sash, we write the word : « Peace ».

### ▶ **Meal or snack**

We are often attached to the food we bring. After having placed our food on the table and sung the blessing, we move one space to the right ... or we simply exchange part of our meal or snack as a sign of sharing.

### **Chaplain's corner**

We, chaplains, are called in a special way to be peacemakers in the community. We cannot be peacemakers without having experienced wounds in our hearts and healing. We are « wounded healers » (Henri Nouwen) and accept to be thus recognized.

### **Charter**

*« From faithful friendship springs the joy characteristic of the Faith and Light community. It is God who calls us together and enables us to discover the covenant that unites us : we are no longer alone. Meetings are characterized by moments of joy when we sing or dance or share a meal. From time to time a day of celebration enables us to invite guests who are moved by the discovery of the capacity of someone with an intellectual disability to create this joyful atmosphere ... »*

(Charter I, 2)




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**FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS**


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## The time of fidelity



### ▶ In our small friendship groups, if we can meet

We can share our stories of conflict and dissension as well as our victories over hatred of peace. The newspapers are full of bad news. We could create a «journal» (or a large poster) with peace messages. We could also prepare different decorations for the Christmas meeting: decorated candles, paper garlands ...



### ▶ In our personal life

We all know persons that inconvenience us, persons that we don't like. That aversion can become a real cancer in our hearts. It is good to take care of our hearts at the start of each day by telling ourselves that God loves them even if they have committed grave sins (John 8, 1-11). Each morning, let us try to see one of them with the eyes of God. This new look can make miracles happen.

Our little calendar for November reminds us that each day, we are working for peace. Have I been a peacemaker today ?

We could pray the prayer of a poor person every day for a few minutes.



**In the coordinating team  
to prepare the month of December  
meeting**

Each year, either at Christmas or at the Feast of Light, Viviane le Polain (the international coordinator) and the international chaplain

write the communities a letter. Let us reflect on these letters as a team, and prepare copies for each community member.

Each person will bring a photograph of a loved one that they wish to entrust to Jesus' care in a special manner.

If we choose to have crafts (modeling clay ...), we need to foresee all that is needed. We can utilize the Google search engine to find on the web some craft sites. There are many !

We prepare with care the mime that is suggested for the sharing : Mary and Joseph arrive at Bethlehem, the birth of Jesus, the angelic acclamation ... (Luke 2, 1-14).

In order to give our Christmas meeting a special festive character, we could meet at night and ask each person to dress in their sunday best.





# Celebrate the birth of Jesus, Prince of peace

« Glory to God in the highest  
and peace on earth  
to the people He loves »





## Welcome and gathering anew

Each member of the community arrives with the picture of someone they love as a gift for Jesus. It can be prettily wrapped up, decorated or framed. The photo will be placed in the prayer corner at the start of prayer time.

Together, we prepare the manger, we decorate the meeting hall, the Christmas tree ...



## The Word

Yes, **glory to God who created our beautiful universe**, so diverse, with the sun, the moon and all the stars, with the earth, the ocean and all living beings : plants, animals, birds, fish, and especially each man and woman

**Glory to God who became flesh**, who became a little child to lead us all to peace, to free us from the powers of pride, of fear, of hatred and give us a heart of flesh, open to the action of the Holy Spirit.

Yes, **glory to God for the birth of Jesus**, for Mary His mother, for Joseph his loving papa.

Yes, **glory to God for this small family** that is the source and model of all Christian communities, and thus of the Faith and Light communities.

**The Holy Family was a small loving community.** Each person had his/her place : Mary loved Joseph ; Joseph loved Mary and both of them loved Jesus whom they let lead them and shape their hearts. Through Jesus, the smallest, during this Christmas night, they learned to love God, each and every neighbor and all human beings



Jesus wanted to spend thirty years of his life in this family, living simply and poorly in an obscure village to show us the importance of family and community life. To live, work, pray, share meals together, to be close to the neighbors, especially those that have most need ; to attend synagogue with others on Saturday. He wanted to be a small sign of love, welcome, goodness, compassion. **The life of the Holy Family is a model to remind us that we are not necessarily called to do great things, but to live small things with an extraordinary love. This community that was the Holy Family lived under the sign of love, peace and unity.**



**This does not mean that the family of Jesus did not experience hardships.** To the contrary, this life together even started in suffering : King Herod wanted to kill the small child. He sent his soldiers to Bethlehem with the order to kill all the children less than three years old. Alerted in a dream, Joseph took Mary and the child and fled to Egypt leaving under cover of darkness. They must have had to travel long days experiencing the cold, fatigue, and lack of food and water. They became refugees and beggars. These hardships tempered their mutual love. Peace must have surely radiated from their oneness.

**Even today, how many families, communities, people will pass Christmas in pain and anguish ?** So many people, sometimes close to us, won't be able to celebrate Christmas with peace and joy.

**Our communities also pass through times of crisis and hardship.** We experience fatigue, weariness. We must look for help and support. **Hardship** can bring about anguish and even divisions in our communities. But it **can also firm up unity, call each one to work for the benefit of others, and to live with greater trust in one another.**

Through their hardships, Mary and Joseph listened more intently to God in order to do what he wanted. They paid close attention to God's signs. The danger we face when in crisis is to worry, to scatter our efforts, to be trou-



bled. We can then lose our focus and no longer be centered in God. **Amid the violence and rejection of the world, Faith and Light can become a sign of God's presence.**



## Sharing

### ▶ Together

« The life of the Holy Family is a model to remind us that we are not necessarily called to do great things, but to live small things with an extraordinary love. This Holy Family community lived under the sign of love, peace and unity ... This does not mean that they did not experience hardships. »

Together, let's relive the mime, the time when Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem. They are looking for shelter but there is no place for them. They finally find a stable ... Jesus is born. We can end the mime singing the Gloria the angels sang announcing the birth of Jesus (Luke 2, 1-14).

### ▶ In sharing groups

Here is a short account from Adeline, the correspondent for one of the communities in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), on her sister Mary :

« It was the Feast of the Holy Family : we were in the front row, near the prettily decorated manger. All of a sudden, Mary stood up, went toward the manger and started to clap her hands. My first impulse was that she was attracting too much attention. I wanted her to stop. After clapping her hands two or three times, she went yet nearer and took up the Infant Jesus in her arms. My mother and I were both a bit worried. I approached Mary and asked her to return Baby Jesus to the manger.

When I asked her why she had picked up Baby Jesus, she answered me : « nyamuk banyak » (many mosquitoes). There were too many mosquitoes



around Baby Jesus. She had clapped her hands to shoo them away, then had picked up Baby Jesus in her arms to protect Him. For Mary, things are very simple : Jesus is her friend, and she wants Him to be comfortable. That is all she is asking. »

Mary made a tender gesture toward Jesus.

- And me, what gesture of tenderness can I make, what tender word can I say to Jesus in the manger ? We will one after another tell him.
- During this time leading to Christmas or on Christmas Day, what small thing(s) can I do with an extraordinary love ?



## PRAYER

Each nears and places next to the manger the photograph he/she brought while saying : «Jesus, bless (First Name) ».

We can read again the first four paragraphs from the Word prepared by Jean Vanier while singing the Taizé « Gloria » after each sentence (from the Taizé website, page 104). Or we can read the very inspiring message of John Paul II at Christmas, 2004 (see appendix 9, page 100).

« **Gloria to God who has created our beautiful universe so diverse**, with the sun, the moon and all the stars, with the earth, the ocean and all living beings : plants, animals, birds, fish, and especially, each man and woman.

**Gloria to God who made Himself flesh**, who became a small child to lead us to peace, to free us from the powers of pride, fear, hatred and to give us a heart of flesh, open to the workings of the Holy Spirit.

Yes, **gloria to God for the birth of Jesus**, for Mary his mother, for Joseph his loving papa.

Yes, **gloria to God for this small family** that is the source and model of all Christian communities, and thus of the communities of Faith and Light. »



Each person can offer Jesus a prayer intention. We pray especially for all those who can't celebrate Christmas in joy and peace.

### ◆ **And/or the prayer of a poor person**

This prayer is simple, deep and full of love. Let us not fear to stay completely still : it is the gift of our person. We tell Jesus : *«Jesus, I am here for you»*.



### Fiesta

We sing the traditional hymns of our country and/or we dance.

We can fashion small sheep in «play dough» or clay ... and choose the one to replace us near the manger.

On our white scarf/sash, we draw a small manger.

### ◆ **Meal or snack**

We share a meal or our country's traditional holiday fare. We can invite to the meal or snack or to the meeting, former members of the community, potential future members, or friends from the nearest l'Arche community ...

### **Chaplain's corner**

One can ask : What is the place of Faith and Light in the Church or in the parish ?

What is done at Faith and Light is without glamour and has no noteworthy repercussions. But the acts shine with the glory of love. The love of God is at the origin of the universe and works for the coming of universal harmony and peace. How can we make it known ? How can we spread this peace and love that emanate from God at the heart of our ecclesial communities ?



### Charter

*«Jesus came to announce the Good News to the poor. They are loved by the Father. Jesus gave His life for his flock. He feeds them with His Body. That is why the personal meeting and the celebration find their culmination in prayer, in union with God and in the celebration of the Eucharist and/or in other religious celebrations.» (Charter I, 3)*

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## FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS

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### The time of Fidelity



#### ► In our small friendship groups, if we can meet

We can make a list of three simple things that we do every day. We examine how we can do them with love so they can do good to the people around us and foster peace.

May this meeting be also filled with Christmas spirit, with childlike simplicity, with peace. We will be especially mindful that nobody in the community or in our immediate circle be left alone Christmas Day by opening our homes and our hearts. Together, we can read this passage from the Gospel :

*«When you hold a lunch or dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment. Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.» (Luke 14, 12-14)*

We make glasses out of colored cardboard or wire. These will be given each member at the start of sharing. (See the model appendix 10, page 101)



### ► In our personal life

We read again the list of three simple things that we put together in our small friendship group and that we want to do today with love.

We can live the prayer of a poor person every day for a few minutes.



### In the coordinating team to prepare the month of January meeting

We'll try to get a big cross that will be placed at the center of our prayer corner. We will make small crosses of different colors that we will give to each member as they arrive.

These crosses symbolize the different christian Churches.

We prepare carefully the mime of the torn poncho.

We look for ways of sending messages of peace and unity written during the Christmas season ...





To work  
for unity and peace  
in our different Churches  
Repair the divisions among Christians





## Welcome and gathering anew

The group charged with welcoming gives each person a cross with a word of explanation as they arrive. The crosses are then placed along the walls all around the room to illustrate disunity



## The Word

***There are divisions between our Churches as in our families.*** History shows us tragic scenes where Christians fought against one another, killed and persecuted one another. We are the heirs of these catastrophic divisions ***the source of which has always been an unfaithfulness in relation to Jesus and his message of humility, peace and love inscribed in the Life Charter that are the Beatitudes.*** The will to power, wealth and the refusal to welcome others dominate.

*In such a way, that, today, throughout the world, many Churches are not united as one. The persecution and hatred of yesteryear might no longer be present, but the divisions remain in how to understand the words of Jesus, in the theologies and different structures as well as the way of understanding some sacraments especially the Eucharist or the table of the Lord. We must also acknowledge the serious divisions existing in each Church. Some are rigid in their theological interpretation and the rules of their Church, others are very liberal. There is often tension between the two.*

***Jesus prays that « all be one ».*** Unity does not come first from the same theology or even from the same faith. Unity comes especially from Jesus living in each person. It is a unity founded in holiness and in the way we live the Beatitudes. Jesus prays :



**« So that they may all be One,  
as we (the Father and Jesus) are one,  
I in them and you in me,  
that they may be brought to perfection as One. »**  
(John 17, 22-23)

**We make ours his entreaty.**

Unity comes from the union of each person with Jesus, and through Him, to the Father. This pursuit of unity implies many things. **We must first start to know one another, members of different Churches, to share our love of Jesus and His Gospel of peace,** but also our difficulties in remaining faithful to the charter of the Beatitudes. It also implies a dialogue between Church leaders, discovering together what Jesus wishes. For us **in Faith and Light, to pursue unity means to share our lives - to welcome the weak that help us live with Jesus, to work together for the Kingdom of God, to pray together.**

In pursuing unity, peace and the mending of our historical breaks, **each one should love his/her own Church even more, should live its essential teachings while at the same time respecting the different theologies and other Church structures. In thus growing in the love of Jesus and of our Church, we will become more and more united. We discover the gift of each one of our Christian traditions and we can celebrate our mutual love. With one heart, we can beg God : « Father, unite us all so that the world may believe ».**



Sharing

➤ Together

The leader explains in simple words the prayer of Jesus : **« I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them as you loved me »** (John 17, 22-23).



To illustrate this word, we can live an evangelical mime : Jesus sits in the middle of our circle. He is wearing a white poncho. He is surrounded by four of his disciples. The disciples start to argue among themselves : who is the greatest among them ? Who is the one who best understands Jesus ? ... Then, they take Jesus' poncho, tear it into four parts and head off into four different directions. Jesus sits on the ground and cries. Under his cotton poncho, he is wearing a white alb, a robe without seams. The community then starts to sing : « *Father, make us one* ». The four disciples slowly, timidly make their way back to the circle. They start praying together while holding hands.

Jesus is happy. He hugs each of the four disciples.

### ► In sharing groups

- What touched me most in the mime of the poncho of Jesus ?
- Why did Jesus cry ?

In order to be peacemakers and builders of peace, we must change our outlook. The leader gives each person a pair of glasses put together by the friendship groups. He/she explains that this symbol helps us understand how important the outlook we have on our brothers is and how it can change hearts.

- What are the glasses used for ?
- How can we see in each of our brothers the presence of God, His beauty ?
- How can we learn to love ?



## Prayer

We each go to fetch one of the crosses that are still scattered around the room. We form a procession to bring and deposit them around the big cross that is at the center of the prayer corner. We sing : « *Father, Make Us One* ».

We can choose to say together one of the following prayers while placing our hand in the palm of our neighbor :



**A unity prayer, from the « Chemin Neuf » community :**

*«Lord, Jesus Christ, you told your apostles : «I leave you peace, my peace I give you». Do not look at our sins but at the faith of your Church. So that your will be done, give it your peace. Give your peace to the Eastern and Western Catholic Church and to its Pope. Give your peace to the Orthodox Churches and to their Patriarchs. Give your peace to the Reformed Churches, to the Anglican Church, to the Evangelical Churches. Give your peace to all the Christian gatherings that invoke your name and to the leaders of those Churches.*

*Put an end to our separation and lead us to perfect unity, You who reign forever and ever. Amen ! »*

**Or Martin Luther King’s prayer :**

*«Eternal and merciful God, you who are a God of peace, love and unity, we ask you, Father, and we implore you to bring together, by your Holy Spirit, all that is divided. Grant us also to convert to your unity, to search for your one and eternal truth, and to abstain from all dissension. In this way, we will have one heart only, one will only, one knowledge only, one spirit only, one reason only. And entirely turned toward Jesus Christ, our Lord, we will be able, Father, to praise you with one voice, and to render thanksgiving through our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Amen ! »*

**▶ And/or the prayer of a poor person**

We are seated with a very straight back, with hands open on our knees, and with closed eyes. We repeat softly our word of love, for example : *«Here I am, Jesus, your faithful friend».*



**Fiesta**

We each write a message of peace and unity on a small piece of cardboard. How can we send a message of peace and unity to our christian brothers and sisters ? If possible, we can tie them to balloons and let them go ; we can place them in bottles and throw them into the sea or into the river ; or we can distribute them at the door of a church ...



On our white scarf/sash, we can draw a multicolored cross that symbolizes that we are all one in Jesus.

### ▶ Meal or snack

All the tables are separate. On one, we place the bread, on another, the vegetables or the rice, on yet another, the ham, on another, the water, on another, the fruits ... We come to the realization that we cannot have a fiesta meal in this manner. We all come together and sit together after singing : « *Father, Make Us One* » while holding hands.

### Chaplain's corner

In Jean's word for the month of January, we read that it is our union with Jesus that makes of us instruments for the unity of Christians and that it is weak persons that help us to live with Jesus. How important Faith and Light is for ecumenism ! How can we deepen in our community our knowledge of other Christian Churches and our relationship with their members ?

### Charter

*« Faith and Light takes great care in integrating its communities and their members in the activities of society, their Churches, Christian communities, parishes ... This vocation for taking root, which lies with every person and every community, leads us to discover also our ecumenical vocation and mission. »* (Charter I, 5)

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## FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS

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### The time of fidelity



### ▶ In our small friendship groups, if we can meet

It happens that, between members of a same Church, there can be sensibilities or different practices in regard to prayer, way of doing things. It is good to acknowledge them and to speak about them in our small group,



to learn to respect one another with our differences as members of the same Church.

For the next meeting, we can prepare strips of white tissue paper that we'll use during the holidays as the wings of doves.



### ► In our personal life

How can we learn to better know the Churches and to discover in them Jesus' great love? We could look up their Internet websites.

It could be that we have prejudices. Let us ask to be cured of them. We can pray daily for this healing.

We could live the prayer of a poor person each day for a few minutes.



### **In the coordinating team to prepare the month of February meeting**

Aside from the community's participation in parish life, do we encourage each member to participate in the celebrations and activities of their own Church ?

We make a dove for each member of the community (see appendix II, page 101). It will be used during the mime of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple that we will prepare with care.

For the fiesta, we will need two strips of cloth or white crepe paper along with safety pins in order to make wings for each person..



# Growing together

To become  
men and women of peace







## Welcome and gathering anew

It is the feast of the Light ! Upon arrival, each one receives a small lit votive lamp and the dove that has the person's first name : « *(First Name), receive the light of Christ !* » If possible, we wait for all to arrive before entering. All of a sudden, the door opens and the hall is totally lit up with the votive lights !



## The Word

*In Luke's Gospel (2, 22-38), we see how Mary and Joseph, in order to comply with the law of Moises, bring their child to present him at the Temple. There, they meet Simeon, a man of God, a man of peace, on whom the Holy Spirit rests. **To be men and women of peace, we must allow the Holy Spirit to dwell in us. We must deepen our understanding of God's Word. We must conquer our inner aggressiveness and our fear.***

*To physically and biologically live and grow, we must know to eat well, to relax, to rest. Too much work without proper nutrition brings along a loss of energy and even sickness. It is the same at the intellectual, emotional and spiritual levels. We must take the time to feed ourselves. It isn't surprising then that in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus multiplies the loaves and fishes for the people were hungry. **But the multiplication is also the sign that we must feed our hearts and our spirits if we want to follow Jesus.** Jesus is the real bread from heaven. At each Eucharist, he wants to give us his body to eat and his blood to drink. He wants to live in each one of us.*

*The prevailing values espoused by our societies are seductive : knowledge without limit through the Internet and television ; the attraction of material things, the desire for riches, comfort, power, for travel ; the rejection of the law that seems to crush our freedom. To obtain money, we must work, at*



times in inhuman conditions. We can very quickly forget the spiritual. **How shall we feed ourselves in order to become men and women of peace?**



## Sharing

### ▶ Together

The leader explains how the mime will go. We read the text of the presentation of Jesus at the Temple (Luke 2, 22-38) and we relive together that event. We surround the Holy Family, Anna and Simeon. We each hold our dove in our hand. We finish with the singing of a song of praise.

### ▶ In sharing groups

Simeon is a man of peace.

- What does the Gospel tell us about him ?  
He makes a peace gesture : he takes the child Jesus in his arms and blesses him. The presence of Jesus fills him with peace and he announces this peace to the entire world. How do we recognize Jesus ?
- When have I met him ? Through what person ?
- What food do I need in order to grow in peace ?



## PRAYER

In order to be fed, we must be far from life's hustle and bustle, its disturbances. We must create a climate of interior peace as in the prayer of a poor person.

It is good to pray with closed eyes, or try contemplating a cross, or an image of Jesus.

In union with our Orthodox brothers, we can murmur Jesus' Prayer, also called the Prayer of the Heart<sup>1</sup> : «*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have pity on me, a sinner.*»

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<sup>1</sup> Through the Prayer of the Heart, you already have the prayer of a poor person, that is why we do not propose it this month.



In silence, after the prayer, each one in turn goes to the middle and lights a votive lamp while saying the name of a person that has made him/her meet Jesus. We finish with a song of thanksgiving or of praise.



## Fiesta

All the communities the world over are celebrating. With three small safety pins, we place the dove wings along our arms and we dance, we sing, we turn while beating our wings !

We draw a small dove on our white scarf/sash.

### ▶ Meal or snack

On one table, we place the symbols of our spiritual food : an open Gospel, the cross, candles ...

On another table, we prepare the meal or snack.

### Chaplain's corner

How do you describe peace ? We can feel it or guess at its presence. It's more of a climate. It emanates from a person, a place. We might know people that radiate peace ? Do we have friends that help this peace grow in our hearts ? What about in our parish ? What about me ? Am I a peace person in the community ?

### Charter

*« Faith and Light also believes that every person, able-bodied or disabled, is equally loved by God and that Jesus lives in them, even if the person concerned can barely express this. Faith and Light believes that every person, even the most disabled, is called to deepen his or her life in Jesus, to receive all the spiritual richness from his/her Church, sacraments, liturgical tradition ... He/she is called to be a source of grace for the whole community, and also for the Churches and for all humanity... » (Charter II, 1).*



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**FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS**

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## The time of fidelity



### ▶ In our small friendship groups, if we can meet

We can share our experiences of inner peace. We can read together the passage from Matthew's Gospel (6, 7-15) where Jesus teaches us the true prayer, the Our Father.

We can also choose to do a peaceful activity : go fishing, take a leisurely walk, admire a beautiful vista, do some sewing or play cards while having coffee or a snack..



### ▶ In our personal life

Can we start our day with soft music or a song of peace in order to prepare our day ? Or can we visit each day a uniquely peaceful or silent church ? Or can we withdraw to our prayer corner where people will know that we wish to be left alone ?

We could live the prayer of a poor person every day for a few minutes. It can become more and more necessary in our life. Let us breathe slowly, softly. Our word of love can be : *«Jesus, where are you hiding?»* or *«Wherever you are, I also want to be there.»*



### In the coordinating team to prepare the month of March meeting

If we've scheduled the Announcing and Sharing Day for March, it is time to complete the preparation.

Let us prepare the Gospel mime (Lazarus, Luke 16, 19-31) very well. We can also imagine another scenario where the rich man approaches Lazarus, invites him over to his house and the two become friends ...



# God's presence in the poor

Bridge the rift between rich and poor





## Welcome and gathering anew

Two or three people arrive early, before the others. They welcome each person with a song of welcome where their name is said.



## The Word

*In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus tells the parable of the beggar named Lazarus and of the rich man without name. Upon dying, Lazarus enters into the bosom of Abraham and while at the rich man's death, he enters into a place of torment. This distance or discrepancy between rich and poor is becoming greater and more dramatic today. It has become a source of envy, of hatred and of armed conflict.*

*During Lent, it is good to remind ourselves that each of us, each of our communities, according to our means, are called to work at filling that void. In speaking through the prophet Isaiah, God tells us which fast pleases him:*

*« Sharing your bread with the hungry,  
Sheltering the oppressed and the homeless,  
Clothing the naked when you see them. »  
(Isaiah 58,7)*

***It is good to read once more that whole passage (Isaiah 58, 6-12) to see how he who opens his heart to the poor is himself healed, strengthened, consoled, sustained and blessed by God.***

***Jesus calls his disciples to fill the void between the rich and the poor. The story of Lazarus plays out yet again today. Rich people don't often care about poor beggars like Lazarus. But Jesus makes us discover that if we***



***become the friends of Lazarus, Lazarus will change, and we also will change. Powers of love and compassion will awaken in us, transform us and heal us. We will then discover that Lazarus is not only a poor beggar ; he is a human being with a sensitive heart who is loved by God ; he is a person who has suffered, a person with whom we can live a deep communion of hearts.***

*Let us remember that Faith and Light exists in rich countries, but also in poor countries. The last time I went to Zimbabwe, there was a day of celebration for all the Faith and Light communities in Harare. I was so touched to meet community members that had piled 120 strong into a bus built for 50 ! They had traveled many hours with hardly anything to eat in order to celebrate Faith and Light !*

*To work for peace means also to be in solidarity with the poor. It means to remember that each human being regardless of race, religion, nationality, culture, capabilities or disabilities is our brother, our sister in the human race.*



## Sharing

### ▶ Together

Together, we listen to the reading of the parable of Lazarus (Luke 16, 19-31). We relive the text of the Gospel as Jesus told it to us. Then, we will imagine a different ending, for example, where the rich man and Lazarus become friends.

### ▶ In sharing groups

- Have I ever seen somebody in pain ? What was his pain ?
- What did I do ?
- How do we know when somebody is struggling in the community ?
- What do we do for him/her to find peace ?

We can mime a meeting with somebody who is suffering, a person in the hospital because of an accident ...



## PRAYER

We can celebrate the Catholic Ash Wednesday liturgy. We can also celebrate together the Orthodox liturgy of Forgiveness Sunday which takes place the last Sunday before the start of Lent. We ask forgiveness to the whole assembly for our sin by prostrating ourselves on the ground with love and humility : each in turn, touches the ground with his/her hand while asking the brethren's forgiveness in silence.

We can recite and add gestures together to this prayer of Mother Teresa, or only choose parts of it :

*Lord, when I am hungry,  
Give me someone who needs food.*  
*When I'm thirsty,  
Send me someone who needs water.*  
*When I'm cold,  
Send me someone to warm.*  
*When I'm hurting,  
Send me someone to console.*  
*When my cross becomes heavy,  
Give me someone else's cross to share.*  
*When I'm poor,  
Lead me to someone in need.*  
*When I have no time,  
Give me someone I can help a moment.*  
*When I'm humiliated,  
Give me someone to praise,*  
*When I'm discouraged,  
Send me someone to encourage.*  
*When I need someone's understanding,  
Give me someone who needs mine.*  
*When I need someone to care for me,  
Send me someone I'll need to care for.*  
*When I think only of myself,  
Turn my thoughts to others.*





## ▶ And/or the prayer of a poor person

The Lenten season is a special time for contemplative and reflective prayer, conducive to discernment and to a deeper conversion. We can say : «*Jesus, show me the way*», or «*Jesus, in my heart you are the poor person*». We pay attention to the position of our body as a sign of our receptiveness, of our welcome.



## Fiesta

With soft background music, we can learn to make folded articles such as origami, or votive lights, or any other peaceful manual activity that fills our hearts with peace and silence ...

On our white scarf/sash, we draw two small silhouettes that are holding hands

## ▶ Meal or snack

Each person will have brought something for the meal or snack which we want to be frugal being that we are starting Lent. We might have a simple bowl of rice. We could eat in silence, or, at least for a moment while listening to some nice reflective music. The price of our meal could be donated to a charity or added to our solidarity donation.

## Chaplain's corner

The topic of poverty is always a delicate issue in our lives. There are many types of poverty. Thanks to our education and erudition, we are among the privileged. We can at least seek out the companionship and friendship of people that are less favored as Jesus did (Matt. 11, 18-19). Jean Vanier speaks about a deep communion of the hearts. That is what Faith and Light does.



**Charter**

*«In order to live his/her faith, everyone, even the person with the most severe disability, needs to meet real friends in order to create together a warm environment in which each one may grow in faith and love. Those who come to Faith and Light to meet people with intellectual disabilities must come in a spirit of receiving from them their specific gifts while sharing their own gifts with them ...» (Charter II, 2)*

**FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS**

The time of Fidelity



▶ **In our small friendship groups,  
if we can meet**

Charitable initiatives (for example, to help with parish or area activities) are important, as well as moments of friendship among us. In small groups, we can live both. Together, we are more creative and have more means.

Our most important contribution, however, is our faithfulness.



▶ **In our personal life**

When a friend is distressed, we can send short notes, place his/her picture in our prayer corner. We can do things to better his/her situation and provide him/her with a breath of inner peace. We must also show interest in people other than those close to us and go to them.

We could live the prayer of a poor person every day for a few minutes.



### **In the coordinating team to prepare the month of April meeting**

If possible, we'll ask everyone to dress in white to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus. We will prepare carefully the mime of Jesus' apparition to the disciples : John 20, 19-23.

We will also celebrate the 35th birthday of Faith and Light !

We make a crown that we will decorate with flowers during the time of prayer.

### **Evaluation of the guidelines**

An evaluation questionnaire of the guidelines is proposed in the appendix 13, page 103. Your reflexions, remarks and suggestions are essential for the little redaction team of the guidelines of next year.

Can you please take times to work together and to send it to the International Secretariat for the 15<sup>th</sup> April ? Thank you !



The death  
and Resurrection of Jesus,  
SOURCE OF life and peace  
FOR each of us





## Welcome and gathering anew

Those responsible for the welcome trace a heart with a cross on top in the hands of each person or they write the word «Peace» while saying : «(First Name), *peace be with you!*»



## The Word

*«For (Jesus) is our peace,  
he who made both (Greeks and Jews) one and  
broke down the dividing wall of enmity,  
through his flesh ...  
that he might reconcile both with God.,  
in one body, through the cross,  
putting that enmity to death.»  
(Eph. 2. 14-18)*

**Jesus walked the talk to the end, offering himself as sacrifice on the wood of the cross, to destroy hatred and give us life.** Through the cross, he has brought everybody to Himself, reconciling each one to God and to one another. As Adam and Eve, through opposition to God, let hatred into the world, Jesus in his union to the Father, has opened a path to peace and universal love.

The death of Jesus was upsetting for the disciples. He had tried to warn and prepare them for his death that would be followed by his rising from the dead, said he. But they were incapable of understanding this declaration. His death plunged them into utter confusion.

**But that Sunday evening, he appeared to the ten disciples** (Judas had committed suicide and Thomas was absent) who had taken refuge from the Jewish authorities in a well locked room. **He told them : «Peace be with you»** and he showed them the wounds in his hands and in his side. Then, he told them once again : **«Peace be with you».**



**The disciples were then overjoyed. They were transformed. From a bunch of lost individuals mad at life, at God and at one another, they became a community of men filled with hope and life. In the end, all was not finished. It was the beginning. For all that Jesus had said was true. The liberation and peace that Jesus had promised would start to spring out in the world, through their words, their presence, their prayer, their unity.**

Then again what is the meaning of these first words of Jesus spoken to his disciples after his Resurrection : «Peace be with you»? It is not simply a greeting to wish their hearts well. It is much more. In his address at the Last Supper, Jesus had told them : «Peace I leave with you ; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you» (John 14, 27). To Jesus, peace is not only the absence of war, or harmony and order. **The peace that Jesus brings is the announcement of an alliance, his presence to each one of us. It is the realization of his promises.** To be anguished is to feel alone, lost, away from others, not knowing what to do ; the invasive feeling of fear, of death, of non-existence, of being nothing. «Peace be with you» means : **«Do not be troubled. I am there for you. I will keep you in my love. I will always look after you. I will show you the way. You'll never be alone. Death will have no hold on you for I remain in you.»**

**The peace of Jesus is fullness. We will of course still experience fears, anxieties, but we have confidence that Jesus is with us. Let us trust for he is always there.**

**Let us listen to Jesus as he says to each one of us : «Peace be with you».**



## Sharing

### ▶ Together

Together, we reenact the apparition of Jesus to his disciples (John 20, 19-23).



Risen, Jesus shows his disciples his hands. The hands of Jesus have blessed, healed the sick, offered bread and fish ; on the cross, they presented themselves to the nails that pierced them. Today, Jesus shows his hands to his disciples. They are sign of his love, of his suffering for us, of the Resurrection. The wounds in his hands tell us : « *Peace be with you* ».

Let us look at our own hands.

- What do we use them for ? For good ? For evil ?
- How can our hands bring peace ?

We trace the outline of our hand on a large sheet of paper and we write in its center : « *Peace be with you : (First Name)* ».

### ▶ In sharing groups

Jesus tells us : « *Do not be troubled. I am with you. I will keep you in my love. I will always look after you ...* »

When I first came to the community, was I scared ? And now ?

Do I have enough of a sense of security and affection ? Who is it that gives them to me ? How ?



## PRAYER

We are seated in a circle. At the center of our prayer corner, we have placed a cross. At the foot of the cross, there is a crown and a lighted candle. We have

also prepared a flower vase.

We can reread the passage from John's Gospel (20, 19-23).

We can read the following prayer punctuated with an Alleluia and a hand clap. Between each stanza, we approach in small groups of three or four to place flowers in the crown found at the foot of the cross.

*Christ is arisen from the dead. By his death he vanquished death.  
to those in the graves, he gave life !  
Alleluia !*



*Let us rejoice on this day of the Resurrection  
for Christ who yesterday was overwhelmed with mockeries,  
crowned with thorns,  
hung from the wood,  
Today he rises from the grave.  
Alleluia !*

*Let us rejoice for Christ bathes in his light  
Those that the darkness of hell kept captive.  
Alleluia !*

*Let us rejoice in this spring time of life,  
For hope has sprung among the victims of war, of earthquakes,  
Among the afflicted in body and soul.  
Alleluia !*

*Let us rejoice,  
For by the cross all sadness has been abolished,  
and joy floods the earth.  
Alleluia !*

*Let us rejoice, for the Lord has descended to the depths of the earth,  
Has descended into the depths of men's heart where anguish hides.  
Alleluia !*

*He has visited them, enlightened them, has annihilated,  
engulfed anguish and hell  
In the abyss of love of the Lord's pierced heart.  
Alleluia !*

*Let us rejoice, for Christ has risen, Eternal joy.  
Alleluia !*

(Father Michel Evdokimov, Orthodox priest)

### ✦ **And/or the prayer of a poor person**

We can imagine the face of Jesus transfigured by the glory of the





Resurrection and we repeat our word of love : «*Jesus, you are so handsome !*» or «*Jesus, thank you for being there*» or «*Jesus, you are my peace*».



## Fiesta

We can celebrate the 35th birthday of Faith and Light by telling the story of its birth. We can find information, pictures, at the official Faith and Light International website : [www.faithandlight.org](http://www.faithandlight.org), (heading: «*Who are we ?*», History), or at the International Secretariat.

### **A game from Slovenia**

We form small groups of about ten persons. We stand in a circle our right hand open on the left hand of our neighbor. Our left hand is open beneath the right hand of the other neighbor. Lively music starts. Our right hand must clap the right hand of our neighbor and so on, as fast as possible. When the music stops, he who is clapping the hand of his neighbor shouts : «*Alleluia !*».

On our scarf/sash, we draw the picture of the sun !

### **▶ Meal or snack**

If the feast of Easter has passed, we try to have an all white meal : rice, hardboiled eggs, yogurt, camembert cheese, lychees, meringues, small cakes coated with white frosting ... We can decorate the table with boxwood or olive tree branches, votive lights. We can also make a big birthday cake and blow out the 35 candles to celebrate Faith and Light's birthday !

### **Chaplain's corner**

The mystery of the cross and Resurrection, the mystery of Jesus' love (John 13, 1) that goes to the very limits is each year a supreme challenge to our faith. Our friends with an intellectual disability bring this mystery even closer to us. How they have earned our friendship and our faithful presence !

**Charter**

*«In spite of and through suffering, the community is a place of peace and joy, mediator or revealer of the gifts that God has given to those with an intellectual disability: that is their capacity for welcome and for love, their simplicity and their rejection of conventions. In a society based on usefulness and power, people with disabilities may not be efficient but they are nonetheless prophetic in the area of the heart and of tenderness, and in what is essential in the human person. And so those who are poor evangelize the rest of us ...» (Charter II, 2)*

**FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS**

## The time of fidelity

**▶ In our small friendship groups,  
if we can meet**

We celebrate together the love of God that has loved us to the end. Let us create a moment of marvelous wonder! For example, let us consider a child. If possible, wherever we are in the world, let us go into nature to admire the first buds, the flowering hibiscus, the little chicks, the sand of the desert, the colors of autumn or the first snowflakes in the Southern hemisphere ...

**▶ In our personal life**

If possible, we light an incense stick in our prayer corner and say the Our Father insisting on the phrase: *«Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us»*. We could pray the prayer of a poor person every day for a few minutes.



### **In the coordinating team to prepare the month of May meeting**

The Holy Spirit sends us all in mission. Next July, delegates from each country where Faith and Light is found will meet in Madrid for the international meeting that takes place every four years.

We will make a badge for each person : a world globe, with a small heart to locate Madrid and an arrow linking our country to this heart. We will thus feel more united.

The meeting room is decorated with the word « Peace » written in different languages.

(Internet website : [www.freelang.com/traduction/toutes/paix.html](http://www.freelang.com/traduction/toutes/paix.html)).

We can also prepare a world map where are indicated in a special manner the countries where Faith and Light is found, and Madrid. (See the list of countries where Faith and Light is found on the Faith and Light International website « Who we are », « Faith and Light in the World », « Outline of Continents, Zones and Countries »).

We try to find grains of wheat, rice or seeds. We make a small cloth bag (15 x 10.5 cm or 6 inches by 4 inches) with the name of our community and country on it. This small bag is filled with grains and seeds during prayer time and will be brought by your country's delegates to Madrid.



The Holy Spirit descends  
on the growing Church  
to make of its disciples  
messengers of peace





## Welcome and gathering anew

Upon arrival, each person receives a badge prepared by the coordinating team signifying the international meeting. We'll wear it throughout the meeting.



## The Word

**Each disciple is filled with a new strength to proclaim with vigor the Gospel of peace.** From here on out, each person, each group can break the vicious circle of depression and violence. The Holy Spirit inspires the disciples to speak in different languages so that men and women of each culture can hear the message in their own language. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the disciples

will find words and means to express themselves that will allow those that are different to welcome Jesus.

**Jesus sends his disciples throughout the world to have stricken down the barriers that keep cultures and human beings apart.** These barriers prevented people from coming together : each culture was governed by a hierarchy. Each had his/her place in this hierarchy, each gave or received orders. There was no communion among them.

There is a difference between generosity and communion. A generous person gives of his/her belongings, time, knowledge, to a person in need of something. It is often the gift of a superior to an inferior. The superior, however, keeps control and decides how much to give, when to give ... **In the communion of hearts, each person gives and each person receives. It is the mystery of friendship.** Generosity can surely lead to communion, but at that moment, there is no longer a « superior », an « inferior » : there is friendship.

**The Good News of Jesus is the revelation of the communion of hearts.** Jesus calls his disciples to become his friends, to enter into a relationship



of communion with him and, through him, with one another. Jesus wants to establish a society of communion which will be like a body where each has his/her place. The barriers of hierarchy and cultures will give way to the power of communion that will unite hearts. **Jesus wants that his disciples see each person** not under the label of culture, religion or social class, or according to his/her capabilities or handicaps, but **as a brother, a sister in humanity, as persons tied together by and in the same divine fatherhood.**



**After the Resurrection, after having told each of his disciples : « Peace be with you », Jesus told them : « As the Father has sent me, I also send you » (John 20, 21).**

**The peace that each one receives from Jesus is not a treasure to be hoarded.** Jesus does not want his disciples to remain in a sort of self-satisfied or peaceful happiness, in a sort of interior well-being. **He sends them to the weak, the poor, to places of conflict, to the world of suffering in order to bring the good news, to give the peace they have received.**

We too have a treasure : our family and our Faith and Light community. We must work at deepening the peace and unity of these communities. They are sources of peace and human and spiritual growth. We cannot live without them. But we also have the mission of communicating this treasure to others. **At Pentecost, the Early Church received the gift of the Holy Spirit in order to spread the gift of the Spirit. We also each have our mission with the people of our district, our workplace, our Churches.**

This mission is a life mission. **We are called to spread life, the zest for life, hope.** This is primarily done through the quality of our love, **of our tenderness,** of our ability to listen and of our understanding. We are called to preach, not primarily through words, but by our life. **We are called by Jesus to give the peace we have received.**



## Sharing

### ▶ Together

« **We are called to spread life**, the zest for life, hope. This is primarily done through the quality of our love, of our tenderness, of our ability to listen and of our understanding. We are called to preach, not primarily through words, but by our life. **We are called by Jesus to give the peace we have received.** » To illustrate this word of Jean Vanier, we can tell the following story :

« I am a nurse. In my profession, one takes care of sick people who suffer, who need comforting, who are in the process of dying, who have lost a dear one. We could continue the list for a long time. In the business world, there are few books that teach how to comfort someone. This is also not learned at the university, or in any school. But I am learning it little by little as a member of a Faith and Light community. I call this the « Faith and Light effect ». Before, I did not know the words to say. Now, I know how to hold the hand of someone in pain, how to touch a shoulder or give a smile. I have learned how to take someone in my arms for a moment. I am succeeding better and better to overcome my limitations and my awkwardness, not through words but through gestures. At Faith and Light, it is our handicapped friends that are my teachers. »  
(Fioretti Booklet, Faith and Light International)

We can reflect on a few scenes of daily life showing the peace we received, or the peace we gave, and mime them.

### ▶ In sharing groups

- Who was for me a « sower of peace » ?
- How do I try to be a « sower of peace » in every day life ?
- Has Faith and Light changed something in me ? What ?



## PRAYER

We are seated in a circle, ready to go to the ends of the earth. Our hands are open on our knees.

We listen to the parable of the grain that grows alone (Mark 4, 26-30). Then, the chaplain places seeds or grains of wheat or rice in the palm of our hands. We sing a song to the Holy Spirit. Then, we process to our prayer corner and deposit the grains in the little bag placed at the center of our prayer corner.

This little bag on which is written the name of our community and country will be brought to Madrid by our country's delegates who will represent us at the international meeting.

We can finish with a prayer of intercession.

### ◆ **And/or the prayer of a poor person**

In the prayer of a poor person, we give ourselves over to the Lord so that love reigns everywhere. With an open heart, we repeat our word of love : *«I am here for you, Jesus»*.



## Fiesta

The players are seated in a circle. Each one says which indispensable object he/she would bring if they were going to Spain. Then, the first player would say what he/she would do with his/her object. For example, if a hat was chosen, he/she would place it on his/her head. Then, the players would say that they would do the same thing with their object : *«I would place my airline ticket on my head»*... *«I would place my dog on my head»*, ... We then pass to the second player's object ... To make it a fun game, we should encourage the participants to choose novel objects.

On our white scarf/sash, we draw a blade of wheat.





## ► Meal or snack

We can prepare a Spanish meal or snack, or that of a country in our twin zone.

### Chaplain's corner

The chaplain is called to be the link with the Church and through it with the world. His perspective is more easily turned to the outside. How can we create this opening, especially in the coordinating team ?

#### Charter

*«Faith and Light communities across the world form the branches of one big international family. Within each continent, zone, country, we carry one another's burdens, sufferings and joys. Solidarity is expressed by sharing financial support for the life of Faith and Light but also by sharing the benefits of their particular gifts, their friendship, the wisdom of their experience, and their faithfulness in prayer» ... (Charter III, 4)*

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## FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS

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### The time of fidelity



#### ► In our small friendship groups, if we can meet

We can speak about the need for peace that is evident everywhere around us. How can we, wherever we are, be peacemakers ? How can we, at our level, be sowers of peace in political and social life ?

We can prepare well decorated cards carrying the phrase : *«Happy the peacemakers, they will be called sons of God»*. We will welcome each member of the community with a card.

For Catholic and Orthodox members, May is Mary's month. We could pray together a decade of the Rosary.



### ► In our personal life



Jean Vanier tells us « *We are called to spread love, zest for living, hope* ». For that to happen, we must work on ourselves. Our hearts must be transformed. Our Faith and Light experience can help us. Every morning, we can take the small international badge in our hands and ask Jesus to bless our delegates and all the Faith and Light communities of the world. We could pray the prayer of a poor person for a few minutes.



### In the coordinating team to prepare the month of June meeting

As the year nears its end, this is an ideal time to evaluate the life of the community. We can do the evaluation all together, or at the coordinating team meeting. The booklet

« *Day for a renewal in the community* » can help us. Here are a few thoughts :

Each person answers these questions :

- What did I like best in the community ?
- What did I least like ?
- What is my wish for next year ?
- Has peace grown this year in my family, our community, our neighborhood, our parish ?
- Have I personally been a peacemaker this year ? How did our Faith and Light community help me ?
- What peace dividends has Faith and Light brought this year ?

If we choose to do this as a whole community, we will divide into small groups. The leaders will note what each person contributed. The evaluations will be reviewed by the coordinating team in order to prepare the next year.

Some communities take a weekend, a day or a half day away, often at the house of a religious community with whom they are paired, in order to have the time to reflect together in a relaxed atmosphere of friendship.



Blessed are  
the peacemakers,  
they shall be called  
children of God

(Mt 5, 9)

A peacemaker is a person of prayer





## Welcome and gathering anew

Upon arrival, each member will receive a card prepared by the small friendship groups. The card contains the following inscription : « *Happy the peacemakers, they will be called sons of God.* »



## The Word

**Jesus is our peace.** *He leaves us and gives us his peace. His first words to the disciples after the Resurrection are «Peace be with you». Jesus has come to assemble in unity all the dispersed children of God (John 11, 51). In this peace mission, those who follow Jesus who is the Son of God par excellence, will be called sons of God. Let us see what the characteristics of a peacemaker are :*

- *Violence and enmity entered the world because our first parents, Adam and Eve, turned away from God. By cutting themselves off from the source of their unity, they parted ways, each one looking out for himself ; it is «each man for himself».*
- *To be a peacemaker, we must turn back to God, to open ourselves up to Him. It is no longer «each man for himself, looking out for himself», but it is now «each one for God and for others».*
- *To be linked to God means to let oneself be loved by God and to let God live and act in us. Too often, human beings protect themselves with force and tenacity behind the barriers of nationalism, culture, religion. In order to bring down these barriers that separate them, God's soft and powerful strength is needed.*
- **To be peacemakers means to become men and women of prayer.** *To pray doesn't mean to just say a few prayers - albeit this may be impor-*



tant ; **prayer is a path that leads us to communion with God – but it is first and foremost an attitude of the heart where we spontaneously open up to God and let God come into us. Prayer is the child who trusts in his Father and lets himself be led by Him. To pray is to say « thank you » to God ; it is a hymn of thanksgiving. It is also asking for help. It is only with God and in God that we become men and women of peace.**

- **A peacemaker is a person of desire.**

If God lives in us, if we are tied to God, God's desires will grow in us. God « so loved the world that He gave His only Son ... so that the world would be saved (healed) by Him » (John 3, 16-17). God's desires are desires of unity and peace. The more these desires live in us, the better we will work with audacity for unity and peace.

**Let us ask Jesus to give us his desires for peace.**

- **A peacemaker knows how to work on him/herself.**

He starts to discover his areas of shadow and darkness, his tendency to control or crush others instead of picking them up ; to judge instead of forgiving ; to flee conflict situations instead of entering them with Jesus ; to make compromises out of fear rather than being a witness to truth. He discovers how he can be a source of conflict rather than a source of reconciliation. He discovers how he often puts himself first, looking for his own glory rather than that of God. **Acknowledging all these areas of shadows and darkness, the peacemaker will look for help, a good accompanier, a true support, so that these elements don't run his daily life.**

- **A peacemaker is called to learn how to listen and understand others, especially others that are different** from him/her and to enter the ways of wisdom. Relational life, community life, family life are not easy. We quickly react to the faults of others ; we judge them and condemn them instead of understanding them with kindness and compassion. Life is never long enough to let us be shaped by human and divine wisdom. We learn this wisdom from wise men and women. It is a question of finding them and humbly letting them teach us. **The peacemaker is essentially a humble man or woman.**



## Sharing

### ► Together

*«To be peacemakers means to become men and women of prayer. To pray doesn't mean to just say a few prayers - albeit this may be important ; prayer is a path that leads us to communion with God - but it is first and foremost an attitude of the heart where we spontaneously open up to God and let God come into us. Prayer is like the child who trusts in his Father and lets himself be led by Him. To pray is to say «thank you» to God ; it is a hymn of thanksgiving. It is also asking for help. It is only with God and in God that we become men and women of peace.»*

We can illustrate this word of Jean Vanier by telling the story of Simon :

*A pastor, somewhat preoccupied, was telling the sacristan of his church : «Have you noticed the old man in threadbare clothes who, each day at noon, enters the church and comes back out almost immediately ? I watch him from the rectory window. This worries me somewhat for there are valuable objects in the church. Please question him.»*

*The very next day, the sacristan waits for the visitor and nears him :*

- *«Say, friend, what is it that you come to church in this manner ?»*
- *«I come to pray», was the old man's calm reply.*
- *«Tell me another ! You don't stay there long enough to pray. You simply approach the altar and leave. What is the meaning of this ?»*
- *«That's true», answered the poor old man. «I don't know how to make a long prayer so I simply come each day at noon and tell Him simply : «Jesus ! It's Simon !»*

*It's a small prayer, but I know that He hears me.»*

*Soon after, old Simon was hit by a truck and was taken to the hospital.*

- *«You always appear happy in spite of your misfortune», a nurse told him.*
- *«How can I not ? It is due to my visitor.»*



- « *Your visitor ?* » said the nurse in surprise, « *I don't see any ... And when does he come ?* »
- « *Every day at noon, he stands there at the foot of the bed and tells me : « Simon ... It's Jesus !* » ».

## ▶ In sharing groups

The leader explains that in Syria, when someone asks somebody else : « *How are you ?* » the person simply answers : « *Thanks to God* ».

When Jesus appears to his disciples, he starts by telling them : « *Peace be with you !* »

- Can we, in our heart or hearts, say the same thing at mass at the kiss of peace?
- When can I say : « *Thank you, Lord* » ?

We stay silent for a few moments asking Jesus to give us his peace. Then, one after the other we turn to the neighbor on our right and say : « *The peace of Jesus* » while shaking hands or embracing.



## PRAYER

In Orthodox Churches, prayer is a part of everybody's path. It is a path that makes us come back to God who is the origin of everything. That path has three stages : purification, illumination and perfection.

Together, we can live the first stage which is the purification of the heart. At the middle of our circle, we have placed a dirtied and no longer transparent glass. Inside, we light a votive light which can hardly be seen. After each stanza of Psalm 51 is read, we clean a part of the glass and we see light become more apparent little by little.

Refrain : Kyrie of Taizé

*Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness :  
in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense,  
Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me.*



Refrain

*For I acknowledge my offense, and my sin is before me always :  
Against you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight.*

Refrain

*A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me.  
Cast me not out from your presence, and your holy spirit take not from me.*

Refrain

*Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me.  
I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners shall return to you.*

Refrain

### ▶ **And/or the prayer of a poor person**

The prayer of a poor person is a prayer of union with Jesus. Therefore, we place ourselves before him and give ourselves entirely to him without holding back. This becomes for us a moment of transformation. Our word of love can be : «*Jesus, come and live in me*» or «*Jesus, I am yours*».



### Fiesta

We can do a big heart, painting with fingers on a piece of poster board either on the floor or on a wall. We draw the big heart and in it, we each draw our heart with our name.

### **The train stops**

A person is chosen to be the engine. The game is to follow and imitate the engine single file. The engine goes forward doing crazy things (duck walk, jump, hop, ...) which can change from one instant to the next. And when the engine stops and turns around quickly, every person must freeze in their position regardless how awkward it is. We guarantee wild laughter!

On our white scarf/sash, we draw a heart.

### ▶ **Meal or snack**

We can bake heart shaped cakes or make heart-shaped sandwiches





### Chaplain's corner

The theme for June is prayer. For Faith and Light, trust in God is an essential element of its spirituality. That is why we are encouraged to pair up with a contemplative community. If this is not already done, how can we help the community to understand its importance and to make it happen ?

#### Charter

«*But in the community we must not forget those who are not able to enter into the celebration and shut in with their sadness and their fears. They also have their place at the heart of Faith and Light. They need to receive special attention so that gradually they may know the joy of heart that Jesus came to bring us.*» (Charter I, 2)

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### FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS

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## The time of fidelity



#### ▶ In our small friendship groups, if we can meet

We could make a short pilgrimage to a chapel or church close to us and finish with a festive snack, or visit a friend of the community who is alone or is having problems bringing him/her peace.



#### ▶ In our personal life

Each morning, we ask Jesus for his peace. We also ask him to help us pass it on to another person. We can live the prayer of a poor person every day for a few minutes.



**In the coordinating team  
to prepare the month of July meeting**

In a rustic and somber burlap bag or tarp, we prepare for each member a small sac holding some gravel. We carefully prepare the mime of the Parable of the merciless debtor (Matt. 18, 21-35) and the sacrament of reconciliation if it is the tradition in our Church. We will request another priest to help our chaplain. Let's make an effort to meet in July even if many members are absent ...



« There is no peace  
without justice,  
no justice  
without forgiveness »

(Jean-Paul II)





## Welcome and gathering anew

We give each person a small bag of gravel while saying: «Jesus can free you from your fears and your sin!» Each person places the bag in the prayer corner.



## The Word

**When we are hurt by somebody's words or gestures, or by the absence of a word or gesture, our immediate reaction is to close ourselves up.** The wound caused by somebody else can fester. We can react with anger. If someone hurts us, we will also hurt others, «an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth». The desire for vengeance, forms of enmity can take form in us.

**How can we free ourselves from these infected wounds that can rule our lives and prevent us from enjoying the freedom of the children of God?** We hide these wounds behind large and solid walls.

**These wounds can have originated in our very tender childhood:** parents' possessive attitudes, their awkward love, their violence and injustice towards their children. **Since no love is perfect, we can all be affected with different wounds,** even if we had parents that did all they could to love us as best they could. A child can hide his anger and his depressions in a world unaware that prevents it from opening up to others. There are also family wounds. There are wounds that stem from social injustice or civil wars. These wounds make us feel that the other, the others, those that are different, the enemies of our class, religion, nationality have taken something from us and that prevents us from living. The unease in us is somebody else's «fault». That is how hatred starts.



**How can we stop this anger and hidden hatred from running our entire life ? How can we be freed from the gangrene of these hidden enmities ? There can be no peace unless a cure for this interior cancer is initiated.**

From the cross, Jesus prayed : « Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing ». Before dying stoned by men, Stephen, the first martyr, prayed that God forgive them (cf. Acts 7, 55-60). **Jesus lives forgiveness.** He speaks of the Father's forgiveness in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. And he tells Peter (Matt. 18, 21) to forgive not only seven times, but seven times seventy-seven times ... therefore ad infinitum ! **The Our Father reminds us that God forgives us as we forgive others. The Gospel is a constant reminder to forgive. Forgiveness is at the heart of the peace message.**

The Holy Spirit is of course at the beginning of the forgiveness process, but we also have our share to do ; **we have work to do on ourselves. And all forgiveness is established on the conviction that each human person is important, loved by God and that each can change and grow in love.**

Some suggestions to enter the forgiveness process :

- Become aware that there is anger, even hidden hatreds that prevent us from being open and free. Let these angers and hatreds surface in our consciousness and try to understand their origin.
- Ask Jesus to give us his Holy Spirit to free us little by little from the hold of these hidden hatreds.
- Try to never adversely judge these persons, never speak ill of them. Ask God to change our heart of stone into a heart of flesh.
- Find help to understand the people that have hurt us thus, and keep them in our prayers. If they have hurt us, they too have been hurt by others.
- In this way and with Jesus, we enter the forgiveness process, even if we can never meet these persons or dialogue with them.



## Sharing

### ▶ Together

The leader explains the suggestions given by Jean Vanier to enter the forgiveness process. To better understand what forgiveness is, we relive together the Parable of the merciless debtor (Matt. 18, 21-35).

### ▶ In sharing groups

During his entire life, Pope John Paul II never ceased to proclaim peace, to work for peace. We can tell the story of how on May 13, 1981 he was the victim of an assassination attempt in Saint Peter's square. He was very seriously wounded. Soon after, he visited the person, Ali Agca, who had wanted to kill him. They spoke for a long moment. John Paul II forgave him. We can show photos of the assassination attempt and of the two men meeting.

- Can I relate an occasion where I was deeply hurt, humiliated, angry? Why?
- How was I able to forgive?
- Who helped me? How?



## Prayer

If it is our Church's tradition, we can live the sacrament of reconciliation that conveys peace, or we can light a votive lamp for a person with whom we need to reconcile while saying softly the person's name.

Seated in a circle, we each hold in our hands the small bag of gravel that was handed to us upon our arrival. These stones are all our angers, all our fears, all our sins.

After singing a song, we can recite together Psalm 133 :



*Behold, how good it is, and how pleasant,  
Where brethren dwell at one !*

*It is as when the precious ointment upon the head  
Runs down over the beard, the beard of Aaron,  
Till it runs down upon the collar of his robe.*

*It is a dew like that of Hermon,  
Which comes down upon the mountains of Zion ;  
For there the Lord has pronounced his blessing,  
Life forever.*

Then, we will empty the small bag of stones in a container placed at the foot of the cross. The leader gives us each a small lit votive light, sign that we can grow in love. We repeat Psalm 133.

### ▶ **And/or the prayer of a poor person**

We are at the end of the year with our guidelines, a whole year in the presence of Jesus who has transformed us little by little. As word of love, we can say : « *Thank you, Lord Jesus* ».



## Fiesta

We can make many different games with balloons :

- All players have a balloon tied to their belt and are spread out over the play area. At the signal, each one tries to burst the balloon of others. The last player to be left with an inflated balloon is widely applauded. We can play the same game by tying the balloon to the player's ankle with a string.
- Trace a target on the floor and place the players at equal distance around the target. Give each player a balloon that they must inflate and let go in the direction of the target. The balloon flies away spinning round and round while losing its air. Give a point to the balloon closest to the target and fifteen points for any balloon on the target
- If it is hot and we are outdoors, we can organize a balloon water fight...



On our white scarf/sash, write : « *Thank you, Jesus* ».

### ▶ **Meal or snack**

The table is decorated with our small lit votive lights. If the weather permits in our country, we could have an outside picnic.

### **Chaplain's corner**

In Jean Vanier's reflection, there is a paragraph on the source of our wounds and it gives a few elements of psychology. We, chaplains, will be that much more helpful if we have some knowledge in that arena. Some will come to us telling us of their wounds in order to find healing. It will be good to know the paths of forgiveness.

### **Charter**

*« In families where there is long-standing disagreement, which has never been resolved, reconciliation is often brought about through a serious crisis. Grievances are forgotten and hard feelings break down. Communion in the Cross prepares a resurrection in rediscovered brotherly love ... »* (Charter I, 5)

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## **FROM NOW UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS**

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### The time of fidelity



### ▶ **In our small friendship groups, if we can meet**

We can celebrate the end of the year with a special meal or whatever else our imagination brings about.





### ◆ In our personal life

At the beginning of the day, we can be alone with our anger, our resentments that can poison our heart. We can copy the paths that Jean Vanier gives us to enter into the process of forgiveness and place it in our prayer corner.

We can read a sentence every day. That will make our day less heavy and painful.

The prayer of a poor person is a great treasure on the path to holiness. Let us remain faithful to these daily minutes.



### In the coordinating team

In many countries, long vacations are starting. To keep in touch with one another, we can organize a «flying» letter that will be passed from one family to another. We all have the membership list and people's addresses. The first family on the list sends a letter with its news to the second on the list ; the second family adds its news and sends it on to the third family ... and so on until the letter contains news from everybody.



## **I. Communities with families having a young child with an intellectual disability**

### **Some history**

In the early years of Faith and Light, we encouraged people to welcome persons with an intellectual disability of all ages in the same community. This diversity brings much richness<sup>1</sup>

But as years went by, real problems appeared.

- The activities and interests of adults with an intellectual disability are very different than those of children (0 to 12 - 15 years of age).
- Many parents of young children don't have the strength to find themselves with adults with an intellectual disability. The projection to the future is too difficult. It is only day after day that this capability will grow.
- Thus, little by little, communities made up of parents and their young children with an intellectual disability, often of brothers and sisters, young friends and families have come about. These more specialized communities have borne much fruit. But there are still too few in the world. We must make a great effort to establish new ones.

### **Why are they needed ?**

- Many parents are, often without knowing it, looking for this place of friendship, of sharing, of prayer where they can renew themselves and find hope in the capabilities of their child early on.
- Many are put under severe pressure when it is learned that the child in the mother's womb has an intellectual disability. They find themselves in tremendous anguish when considering an abortion. In our society in search of profitability and efficiency, Faith and Light would like to reach out to these parents and tell them : « *Your little child, however handicapped it may be, is a unique person, precious and sacred.* » Its presence, it is true, often elicits negative reactions toward it. Communities with young children with an intellectual disability are one of the rare places where parents can share what they live, feel that they are listened to attentively, understood and supported. They are also happy to find that their small child is a factor of unity ; it attracts young friends that we sometimes have a hard time « to call » to adult communities.

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<sup>1</sup> For sure, the communities with young handicapped children don't substitute the communities who have succeed to harmoniously welcome handicapped people of different generations.



## Some concrete directions

### ***To understand and go beyond people's reticence***

- In the so called developed countries, all the efforts are focused on integration, insertion in all the structures. Because of that, parents having a child with an intellectual disability are often reticent to take the first steps toward a community. They are afraid to be classified as «*parents of children with an intellectual disability*». These are important considerations, but they should not rule out the comfort that meeting families sharing the same hardship that they are, and families of friends.
- In developing countries where often there are no centers, no schools and where there is a shortage of food and medicine, the parents tend to see the birth of a child with an intellectual disability as an unbearable hardship. Their participation in a community breaks their isolation and their anguish, and gives them confidence in the worth of their small child

### ***To get started***

- Most often, it starts with a family that has a child with an intellectual disability and realizes the importance of establishing a community. To that end, this family finds other families, friends and contacts a priest or a pastor that is apt to support the initiative.
- Information can also be disseminated through the parishes and their social ministry, the day care centers, hospitals and clinics, (gynecologists, pediatricians, head nurses... sensitive to the spiritual dimension of all people), kindergartens, the early elementary classes at Catholic schools that welcome children with an intellectual disability ...

### ***To be supported***

- Mention the project to the provincial or regional coordinator so that the project will be accompanied by them and supported by the movement.
- Request the prayers of a monastery or of a religious community for the budding community. A stable partnership can be established at a later date.

In conclusion, here is the word of a mother : «*Many young parents, subject to many environmental pressures, often very much isolated, are looking to find a community for themselves. Go then and open wide the doors to Christ !*»



## 2. Small friendship groups

For some years now, the Guidelines encourage us to establish small friendship groups. They are foreseen in the Charter that tells us : «*Between the monthly gatherings the members of the community choose to spend time together in smaller groups or just meeting one-on-one. They share stories, fears, dreams, hope, prayer, fun, service with others, a meal, and other activities which nurture friendship : it is «the time of fidelity», also called «fourth time».* (Charter I, 4)».

### Why ?

In a community of twenty or thirty people or more, it is almost impossible to know each person's history, their occupation, their joys, their hardships. Some members might have more frequent contact with one another. But many must often wait a month to see, hear or meet a community friend.

**Each coordinating team member** is usually the «link» in a small friendship group, and takes responsibility for one. It might be an extra responsibility, but at the same time, it is a true grace to facilitate the interpersonal relations between five or six members of the community.

**For the community coordinator**, the small friendship groups greatly lighten the weight of his/her responsibility that is thus shared by the whole coordination team. As an example, news, information can be circulated within a few hours ... During the coordination team meeting, each one indicates how their friendship group stayed in touch. At the community meeting, during the time dedicated to news, each group gets some time.

### How to establish small friendship groups

It is truly work. Let's foresee time and ask the Holy Spirit to give us all his wisdom.

We must take into account as much as possible :

- geographical proximity,
- balance : persons with an intellectual disability, family members, friends,
- the possibility of having a leader.

During the first meeting of the year, the list of small friendship groups is



distributed to each member. The groups come together for the sharing and decide on their first activity.

### **The life of a small friendship group**

The friendship group tries to **meet** once between each community meeting. It has varied activities. **They can be :**

- simply coming together to share their activities, their joys, their problems. Some time is spent reflecting on the sharing theme proposed each month in the guidelines,
- participating in the parish celebration on a Sunday,
- having lunch or dinner at one or the other's place,
- having a meal at a pizzeria,
- seeing a good film,
- taking a walk,
- visiting the religious community with whom they are paired ...

When a group cannot meet physically, we can set a «spiritual rendez-vous». Such a community comes together in heart and prayer each Wednesday night by simply praying an «Our Father» and a «Hail Mary». The «link» **stays in touch** by phone, a note, a visit ... The «link» can remind people of the sharing topic set forth in the guidelines and invite people to think about it, and so on.

Those who live this experience, attest to its fruits. The friendship groups allow life to flow like a spring to each of its members, and to spread from it.

*Marie-Hélène Mathieu*

*Marie-Hélène Mathieu*





### 3. February, the feast of light !

Why was February 2<sup>nd</sup>, feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Candlemas) adopted as the feast day of all the Faith and Light communities in the world ? There was no great discernment or official decision. This day was given to us quite naturally.

The first pilgrimage in 1971 took place at Easter, and already in 1972 a community in France (Allier) decided that they would have their annual celebration at Candlemas, the day when Jesus was presented as the Light of the World and where the symbol of the lighted candles is so meaningful. The idea of this celebration spread world wide through Faith and Light communities like a blaze, the meaning was so obvious. At the Presentation of Jesus in the temple, like in Faith and Light, parents were gathered together with their small child, and some friends, a man named Simeon and a woman named Anna.

Parents who are members of Faith and Light have felt or often feel in their very flesh the sermon given to Mary by Simeon : « *A sword will pierce your heart* ». And we see, all too well, that their child is a child of contradiction. He reveals deep thoughts that are hidden in people's often ambivalent hearts, including our own. A weak person who is disabled, ill, dying or homeless, disturbs us deeply, but he/she can transform us if we allow him/her to take us by the hand.

The feast of Light takes place in many different ways according to the countries, regions or communities. If the Feast of Light can rarely be celebrated on February 2<sup>nd</sup> because it is difficult to get the community together on that date, we can nevertheless encourage that we pray « together » on that day regardless of where we are. Whether we are alone in our prayer corner, with a few others, our friendship group, or with the monastery or the contemplative community that prays specially for us, we are in communion with the Faith and Light communities all around the world. We form a great chain of prayer and thanksgiving for Faith and Light.

A Faith and Light community can organize its celebration with the parish or the ecclesial community to which it belongs. At the welcome, the priest



or the pastor, briefly presents the community. Faith and Light songs will have been specially chosen, for example : « *My friends, let's sing all our joy* ». The members of the community, parents, friends, persons with an intellectual disability will take part in the procession of offerings, or may take the collection. At the end of the celebration, the community leader or a member of the coordinating team will wholeheartedly announce Faith and Light and invite those present to a friendly drink or to a meal or even to a party. On their departure, we will make sure that each person receives a leaflet and a small note of the life of the community, its address ...

The Feast of Light can also be organized by two communities who will get together in one of the parishes or local Churches to which they belong. The preparations and actions are more or less the same.

Finally, the regional or national council can also gather all the communities for a meeting in common.

Whether we choose the one or the other way of celebrating, the Feast of Light must be prepared meticulously. The contacts with the parish or the local Church must be made already by the month of September. This celebration could be the occasion on which to invite new persons. If we lack new friends, for example, let us direct our efforts towards them.

On the Feast of Light we can also organize the « Announcement and Sharing Day ». As the announcing has been largely emphasized during the celebration, it is left to us to prepare activities which will allow a generous participation in solidarity.

#### **4. « Announcement and sharing day »**

The Lenten season is very suited to organizing the « Announcement and Sharing Day ». We can organize it in February during the Feast of Light, or in March.



The preparation of this day which will mobilize the whole community, will give everything a fresh boost ! Here are a few thoughts to help the process :

- Prepare together the main activity of the day.  
Either a show, mime, concert, (as in Japan and in France) or a sale : cakes, pancakes, jam in nicely decorated little jars, flowers, rummage sales, yard sales, bazaars, raffles ... calendars (as in Lebanon) or cards, which can easily be produced with a computer ! The International Secretariat can send you pictures of communities from throughout the world. Or you can even plan a meal or a dinner dance ... In the Philippines, soft drink cans, decorated with the Faith and Light boat are used as collection boxes where each person can put a few coins. They are called « Mumucans » ... Invite all your friends, relatives, neighbors, acquaintances ...
- Announce Faith and Light in the parish, on the local or Christian radio stations, in local newspapers ... Distribute the Finances leaflet widely.
- Everyone should be present that day with their best smile.
- When everything is over, the coordinating team should assess to see what was good and what should be improved next year. Write it down. We forget so quickly ! And finally, don't forget to send the money collected to the national coordinator.

## 5. Jesus, by Rembrandt







## 6. Prayer of a poor person

The «prayer of a poor person» is a prayer of simple presence. We are there. We are there for our friend : for Jesus, for the Father, for his Mother. We «are with» him. It is a prayer of love, of gift of self. It is a prayer that will make us more loving persons that want to grow in friendship. It is thus a typical Faith and Light prayer. But it can also serve those in the same situation as us : those in a situation of helplessness facing great poverty such as fatigue, old age, sickness, a mental handicap, the inability to think when facing a great sadness, the desire to joyfully welcome our smallness before God.

It is a prayer of the body : *«I am there because I love you. I am there because you are precious to me. I put aside everything else for you : you are more important than anything»*. Our presence becomes a sign, words without words. It is how friends show their friendship : *«I am happy to be with you. I want to stay with you»*. It becomes a prayer of faithfulness : *«I stay with you even if my interior agitation urges me to do other things»*. It is not easy to persevere in a concretely useless situation, one without results we can show off with pride. It is thus that the prayer of a poor person becomes a school of love. Little by little, our heart changes : we are no longer centered on ourselves, but on the Beloved. We become a person of love and that filters through in our daily life. We will spread something of beauty.

We can sit in the lotus position, or on a straight back chair, in a well-balanced position : this will prevent movements that would break our concentration. We place our hands palms up on our knees and we close our eyes ; this creates an interior space where nothing can enter. The back is straight. This is an attitude of presence and of gift of self. We breathe slowly and calmly. Our face is relaxed, as with a slight smile. And we remain there. We can help ourselves with a simple word, a word of love that we repeat ; we should choose it before starting to pray. It can be, for example : *«I love you, Jesus»*, *«I am here for you»*, *«Jesus, my friend»*, or simply *«Jesus»*.

For it to bear fruit, we should do this prayer every day for at least twenty minutes. At first, we'll have many distractions. Peace will only come after



a certain amount of time, maybe even at the very end. We must come to this attitude of gift of self and of abandon for it to become a true disposition of our soul which will spread over our whole day. That is why it must be a daily prayer. In the end, the objective of our human life is to live a life of love, a life that gives life to others. Jesus said of himself : *« I came that they might have life and life in abundance »* (John 10, 10).

The prayer of a poor person will change us slowly but surely. It is only after years of praying it that we can reap its fruits. They will, however, be fruits of astounding quality. They will be fruits of « Faith and Light » quality.

P.S. Experience demonstrates that our friends with an intellectual disability can also pray this prayer that might not last as long. Primary school children have experienced it ... It is a prayer of the heart.



Father Joseph Larsen



## 7. Cardinal Newman's prayer

*Dear Jesus,  
Help us to spread your fragrance everywhere we go.  
Flood our souls with your spirit and life.  
Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly  
That our lives may only be a radiance of yours.  
Shine through us, and be so in us,  
That every soul we come in contact with  
May feel your presence in our soul.  
Let them look up and see no longer us  
But only you, Jesus.*

*Stay with us,  
and then we shall begin to shine as you shine ;  
So to shine as to be a light to others.  
The light O Jesus, will be all from you ;  
none of it will be ours ;  
It will be you shining on others through us.  
Let us praise you in the way you love best  
by shining on those around us.  
Let us preach you without preaching,  
Not by words but by our example,  
by catching the force,  
The sympathetic influence of what we do,  
The evident fullness of the love our hearts bear to you.  
Amen !*



## 8. Living together the washing of the feet

### **The meaning of our action**

We will be washing one another's feet in an atmosphere of prayer, silence, knowing that it is a time of grace. Saint Bernard likes to say that the washing of feet was a sacrament, that is to say a moment where Jesus by his love touches us.

It is understood that the washing of feet is a symbol. It does however reveal our desire to forgive, to be forgiven, to serve humbly, become smaller, poorer. Thus, to wash one another's feet becomes for each of us a prayer.

This gesture also has a special meaning in relation to the unity of Christians. If we can't always eat together at the same Eucharistic table as our brothers and sisters of other denominations, we can still be deeply united together by living together the washing of the feet.

### **The procedure**

Before starting, several persons will have prepared the room. The chairs will be arranged in (a) circle(s) (one or several depending on the number of participants). At the center, there are placed, a Bible, a candle and a basin, a jug filled with water and a towel. Extra water will have been set aside to refill the jug if necessary.

The celebration begins. The candle is lighted. We sing some quiet songs and collect ourselves to find peace and interior silence. After the songs, the leader will explain the meaning of the evening ceremony. « *We are going to wash each other's feet as Jesus asked us to do* ». He then reads the passage from the Gospel of John (13, 1-17).

The leader in each group kneels before the person on his/her right and washes his/her two feet very slowly, with a great deal of love and respect. This is a sacred gesture. He/she wipes the feet. When finished, he/she remains kneeling before the person. This latter person puts his/her hands on the head of the other, and they both pray in silence. After a short prayer, the one who has had his/her feet washed, rises and kneels before



the person on his/her right and washes his/her feet ... and so on until each member of the community has had his/her feet washed.

During the time it takes to do the washing of the feet, we can play soft background music or sing softly (from Taizé, for example).

People that are somewhat incapacitated physically will need to be assisted in order to accomplish this ritual. It is important, however, that they experience this act of service. When the ritual of washing the feet appears to be difficult, at times even impossible to carry out, it belongs to each leader to assist with kindness in order that none of the participants feel guilty, or substitute the simple washing of hands.

### **In sharing groups**

After the celebration, we can remain in a circle and share our thoughts on different topics:

- Why does this gesture bring us together, unite us ?
- What are the actions, the words, the attitudes in my life that can build unity ?
- When I find myself with a person very different from myself, in whose presence I feel frozen or whom I find disagreeable, can I then imagine in my heart, that I am kneeling down to wash his/her feet and then, that he/she in turn is washing mine ?

At the end, we sing together « *Ubi Caritas* » and recite the « *Our Father* » while holding hands.



## 9. Pope John Paul II's Christmas message, 2004

### « Everywhere, we need peace ! »

Christ is born for us, come, let us worship !  
We come to you on this most holy day,  
Sweet Child of Bethlehem ;  
In being born, you hid your divinity  
in order to share our fragile human condition.  
Enlightened by faith, we acknowledge you  
As true God made flesh because of love for us.  
You are the only Redeemer of man !

Before the manger where you lie defenseless,  
May the numerous forms of violence that flood our world  
And that are the cause of indescribable suffering, cease.  
May the many seats of tension  
That threaten to turn into overt conflicts be extinguished.  
Would that the will to search for peaceful solutions  
Respectful of people's legitimate aspirations be strengthened !

Child of Bethlehem, Prophet of peace,  
Encourage the attempts at dialogue and reconciliation,  
Support the peace efforts that are yet timid, but nonetheless,  
Rich in hope that are presently being developed  
For a more peaceful present and future  
In favor of so many of our brothers and sisters in the world. ( ...)

Everywhere, we need peace !  
You who are the prince of true peace,  
Help us understand that the only path to follow in order to build it,  
Is to flee evil in horror  
And to pursue goodness, always and with courage.  
Men of good will, from all peoples of the earth,  
Come with confidence to the manger of the Savior !  
Run to meet Him  
Who comes to teach us  
The way of truth, peace and love.



## 10. Cardboard Eye glasses



We can glue two rectangular pieces of cardboard to fashion the temples. You can also make small holes on each side through which to pass a string or elastic band.

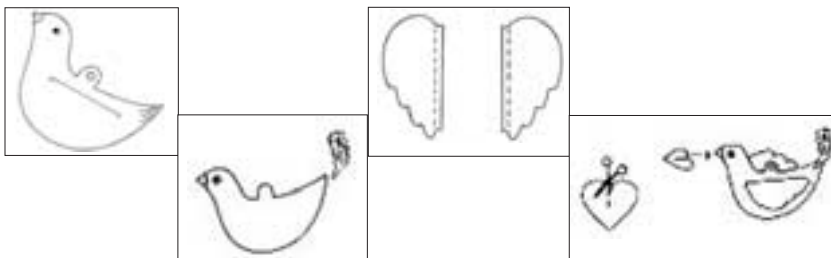
## 11. To make a dove

### Materials needed

White poster board, a small feather, glue, scissors, pencil and string.

### Steps to follow

1. Draw the dove on the white poster board and cut it out.
2. Color in the dove's eyes and beak on both sides and glue the small feather as its tail.
3. Cut out the wings and fold them along the dotted line. Glue the wings to each side of the dove where indicated.
4. Cut out a small heart on colored paper and write a name on it.
5. Make a small slit in the heart and slip the heart over the dove's beak.
6. Make a small hole in the back of the dove in order to pass a string to hang it.





### **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 way 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.





### 13. The evaluation of the guidelines 2005-2006

To be sent to the International Secretariat before 15 April 2006

#### Name of my community :

First name and name of leader :

Address :

Country : Zone :

1. **Does the guidelines of 2005-2006 meet all your requirements?**
2. What do you appreciate **most** ?
3. What do you find **less good** ?
4. What are the **appendices** that you **use** ? (Indicate their number)  
What are the ones that you **don't use** ?
5. Has your community **formed small groups of friendship** ?  
How are they **constituted** ?  
**Who animate them** ?  
What are their main **activities** ?  
What are the **fruits** of the small groups of friendship ?
6. In what other ways do you live **the time of fidelity** ?
7. Could you describe a **typical meeting** of your community indicating freely what is good, less good, not good ?
8. What are your **suggestions** for improving the next «Guidelines» ?  
**If possible**, it could be of great help for improvement of next year's Guidelines that you tell us what you think about the suggestions given, give us fresh ideas, and inform us of your experiments starting from the present issues.
  - ◆ Welcome
  - ◆ The word
  - ◆ Sharing together
  - ◆ In sharing groups
  - ◆ Prayer
  - ◆ Prayer of a poor person
  - ◆ Fiesta
  - ◆ Small groups of friendship
  - ◆ Living Faith and Light in our daily life
  - ◆ As a coordinating team



## 14 List of internet websites

- Faith and Light International : [www.faithandlight.org](http://www.faithandlight.org)
- Taizé : [www.taize.fr](http://www.taize.fr) (« Prayers and Hymns », « Learning the Hymns »)
- Foi et Lumière Canada Est : <http://pages.infinit.net/canest/index.html> (« Outils pédagogiques », code d'accès : foi192 (French only))
- Orthodox Pages : [www.pagesorthodoxes.net/index.htm#index](http://www.pagesorthodoxes.net/index.htm#index)
- Catholic Church : [www.vatican.va/phome\\_fr.htm](http://www.vatican.va/phome_fr.htm)
- Search Engine : [www.google.com/](http://www.google.com/)
- Words and Expressions in multiple languages : [www.freelang.com/traduction/toutes/paix.html](http://www.freelang.com/traduction/toutes/paix.html)
- Songs of Jean-Claude Gianadda on peace (words, song parts, ...) : [www.gianaddajeanclaude.com](http://www.gianaddajeanclaude.com)

## 15. Available documents

### Building community

Charter and constitution	Free
Guidelines for the first year	3 €
Leader's pack handbook	3 €
Sharing our responsibility in Faith and Light	3 €
Annual guidelines	4,50 €

### Deepening our life together

Deepening our spirituality in Faith and Light	3 €
How to prepare and live a Faith and Light retreat (2004)	3 €
Ecumenism in Faith and Light	3 €
Fioretti	2,30 €
Formation weekends and sessions in Faith and Light	3 €
On holiday together	3 €
Let Faith and Light live, grow and shine forth (financial booklet 2005)	1,50 €
Day for a renewal in the community	free

### Getting to know us better

The history of Faith and Light on DVD, Marie-Hélène Mathieu	12,00 €
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### To deepen our peace meditation with Jean Vanier

Video : « Quest for peace » (English)	26 €
Book : « Search for peace »	10 €

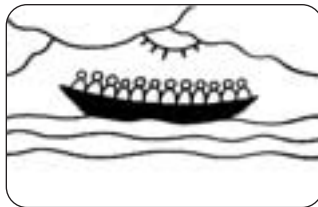
*These documents can be ordered from*

*La Ferme-Diffusion B.P. 19 - 60350 TROSLY-BREUIL*

*<http://www.lafermediffusion.com/>*

*In cover, olive branch, biblical symbol for peace.*

*Pictures p. 31 and 91 O. Peix - p. 58 Durand - p. 73, 81, 96 C. de Moffarts*



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[www.faithandlight.org](http://www.faithandlight.org)



*"Happy  
the peacemakers,  
they will be called  
Sons of God"*

*Matt. 5,9*