

Happy retirement, Corinne!

Each person's history is always associated to names, faces and surnames. This is what happened to Corinne Chatain with Faith and Light. Corinne has spent the past 23 years in that small office at 3 rue du Laos in Paris, dedicating her heart, soul and life. Because there are jobs that go beyond contracts and legalities when vocation and love are added to them. Corinne joined the international secretariat in 2000 and has been our General Secretary from 2002 until now, working among folders, emails, documents, dreams and hopes.



It is said that Corinne, French and Parisian, was born on the last day of 1953 and met Faith and Light at a birthday party. She had discovered the magazine "Ombres et Lumière" (Shadows and Light) during a retreat and had been very moved by the testimony of a mother about her autistic son Christophe. When she met Marie-Hélène, she asked her if she had any work for her in the magazine. She joined the OCH (Christian Centre at the service of persons with disabilities) in 1976 and stayed there for 7 years. She and her husband founded a community in Paris called "Notre Dame du Sourire" (Our Lady of the Smile), of which she was the coordinator. Then they had to leave Paris for the department of Ain (south-east of France). There they created another community, of which they were also the coordinators, "Notre Dame de Lumière" (Our Lady of Light), then they moved to Lyon and created a community for young children, "Enfants Lumière" (Children of Light), from which two other communities were born. She was also coordinator of the Loire Rhône Auvergne region and coordinator of the France Sud zone.

Married to Thierry, mother of Jean and Marie Pia, and grandmother of 3 grandsons and 3 granddaughters. Last 19th October, on a Parisian autumn evening, we officially said goodbye to Corinne from the International Secretariat and welcomed her retirement with a Eucharist and then a cocktail party with speeches, appetizers and wine along with some songs. Tears, hugs and much gratitude. Emotion and so many memories, accompanying her in an important moment for the history of our Faith and Light family and for her own.

Over the years, Corinne has been a living witness to the memory of a Christian movement that was born in the 1970s with the smell of the fresh bread of the Second Vatican Council. An international family that has grown and become more universal over the years. Corinne has experienced many moments in the first steps of Faith and Light, the birth of new communities and regions in so many countries all over the

world, the work of different international coordinators and chaplains, boards of directors and also the heartaches of events that nobody expects or wants, the death of so many brothers and sisters of Faith and Light, failure and helplessness. Honey and gall, joys and sorrows, achievements and failures in the luggage of her backpack loaded with the passing of time. And in the midst of it all, God who continues to push our boat with his Spirit, making the sun shine even on cloudy days.

It must seem like only yesterday to Corinne when she looks back and the memories fill her heart with longing and her eyes with tears. Everything lived, everything experienced, everything done. That's it. In her memory a balance of so many faces and events and in our hearts, at least in mine, a deep gratitude.

Yes, Corinne, that French woman who loved to spend her summers in Spain, with an almost Latin character and temper, hard-working and enjoying life, is reaching her retirement. It is an important moment in anyone's life, which we know has to come. She knew it too and had been looking forward to it for months. Now other people will follow and Faith and Light will continue the evolution of its history, but for the moment, it is time to thank Corinne for these years of work and service in Faith and Light.



She will now have more time for almost everything. She will continue in her community of Faith and Light L'Arche d'Alliance in Paris. And God will continue to take care of her, to accompany her on her journey, to breathe in her heart, to guide her steps. God does not move away. He remains there as a father and mother who never tires of being close.

Corinne's time for retirement has come, and she deserves it. And the rest of us, to continue rowing so that this boat of Faith and Light does not stop sailing, even in the midst of storms or surrounded by the most terrible pirates. Others have rowed before and others will row in the future. Thank you Corinne for rowing when it was your turn!

Goodbye, friend, sister, colleague.

Raúl Izquierdo García
International coordinator

Salamanca 20 October 2023