

*Family
of the
Incarnation*



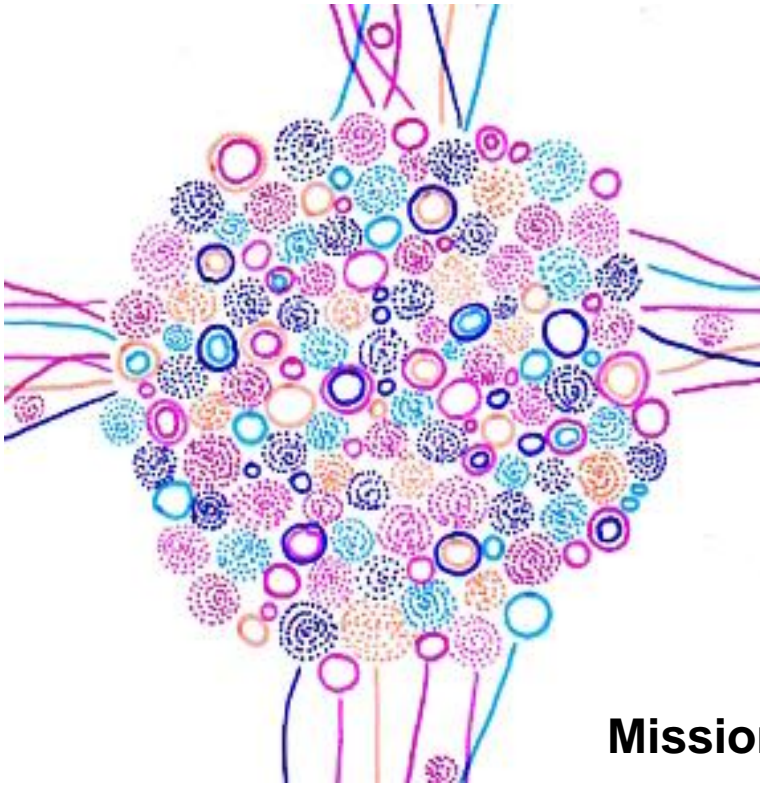
***COMMON
TREASURE***

"The Word was made flesh

and he Lived among us"

(John 1)

The Incarnation is a missionary adventure of a God who *“loved the world so much that he sent his only Son so that those who believe in Him may have life, life in abundance...”*



**Jesus,
Missionary of the Father,
through the strength of the Spirit.**

**It is Jesus the Word Incarnate
who calls, invites and sends us
to work in his
vineyard.**

(Steering Group Orientations 2013)



The groups of the Family of the Incarnation wanted to start working on the Orientations. We have read numerous testimonies of life in the Reviews: “In the Family” years, 2013 2014, 2015, 2016.

The Core Group recalls some of them. So the Common Treasure is enriched by the three pillars that we have discovered and underlined in the Steering Group.

Union with Jesus

*A gaze of love
on the world,*

Unity of missionaries.

Union with Jesus

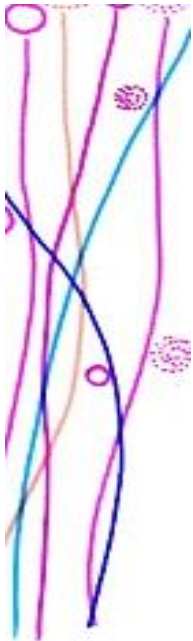
It is the Spirit of Jesus that little by little transforms our lives and in union with Jesus models us so that we may have “the same mind as Christ” (Orientations 2013)

Union with Jesus makes one naturally think of prayer, but this expression seems much greater than just prayer. For me, it consists of something real, tangible and perhaps more difficult to practise than prayer alone. It means to be in continual union with Jesus, heart and mind as in the Gospel, in everything we do and live. In his “Letters to priests” Father Baudouin helped me greatly to find this direction.

Concretely, to be united with Jesus is to live kindly with people, to be patient, respectful of people and their culture.

...**Union with Jesus**; is to live the poverty of Jesus. It is not a question of having or not having money. It is, first of all to live each day what life presents and to live it in truth.

...I discovered during this time and later on in different circumstances that the more we complain the less able we are to work joyfully in our mission, because there is always a ‘penny missing to make a pound’ When we act always in union of mind and heart with Jesus we are always joyful.



The experience we have of God is found in the ordinary, based on the Word and not in another world. This experience cannot be disembodied from history. To discover that one is a mystic means; to be aware of the presence of God in history. God is there everyday. To be able to recognise what goes on unnoticed by the world, to listen with the heart, to open one's eyes to recognize God who reveals Himself in the here and now, in the suffering faces of men and women who, day after day are seeking for meaning in their lives.

We witness to the Gospel by our daily availability to others by listening, helping and comforting others where we can...



...We allow ourselves to be penetrated by the loving gaze of Jesus. We humbly ask him to renew us and to give us the strength to be able, in our turn, to fix our gaze, full of love on our brothers and sisters. This is not easy but we

persevere. We make an effort to come close and sow the good seed. It will be Jesus, the Word Incarnate, who will harvest the little we have humbly cultivated with Him.

Our daily prayer life, our regular gatherings as Associates to adore and thank God for His perfect gift, our sharing of our encounter with the face of Christ in those we meet is humbling. The gifts, graces and unconditional love of God sent to give us new life are not for coveting. We take the banquet out into the world and share it with all whom we meet. A smile, a moment with a stranger, people we know, listening to others; just being there, in the here and now, accepting and loving as God wills it.

I have accepted that "Lectio Divina, or again a "prayerful reading of the Bible" is an effective way of listening to Christ speaking to me each day is a "work of Incarnation" of the Word in me. It can change and create a new person in me, it makes me believe in myself- a new person...

This allows us to make a careful reading, a prayer and a contemplation of the Word of God. A second reading of the Word of God helps us to understand the text. The meditation of the Word read, invites us to energise our thinking, imagination, emotion and desire. We are able to deepen our faith, to arouse in ourselves a conversion of heart and strengthen the will to follow Christ. The contemplation which follows the



Word of God and the prayer on this Word and what inspires me during the meditation, stimulates me. The contemplation on the Word read, meditated on, prayed, transforms me.

The regular reading of our experience around the table **“helps us to discover the seeds of the Word in our daily lives where the mission sends us”**... The urgency and the pressing needs of the mission is what we are passionate about! **‘Go towards today, following Father Pecot**, with Jesus, adorers and missionary of the Father, we arise each morning on the roads of our brothers and sisters.

Solitude is also a way towards interior solitude. It allows me to open the ear of my heart and to grow in interior liberty. For me to live the Incarnation is to go where Providence sends me to announce God’s Love with confidence in who I am and as I am, living in his love. **Everything begins in Jesus Christ. Let us take the route that leads us to Him!**

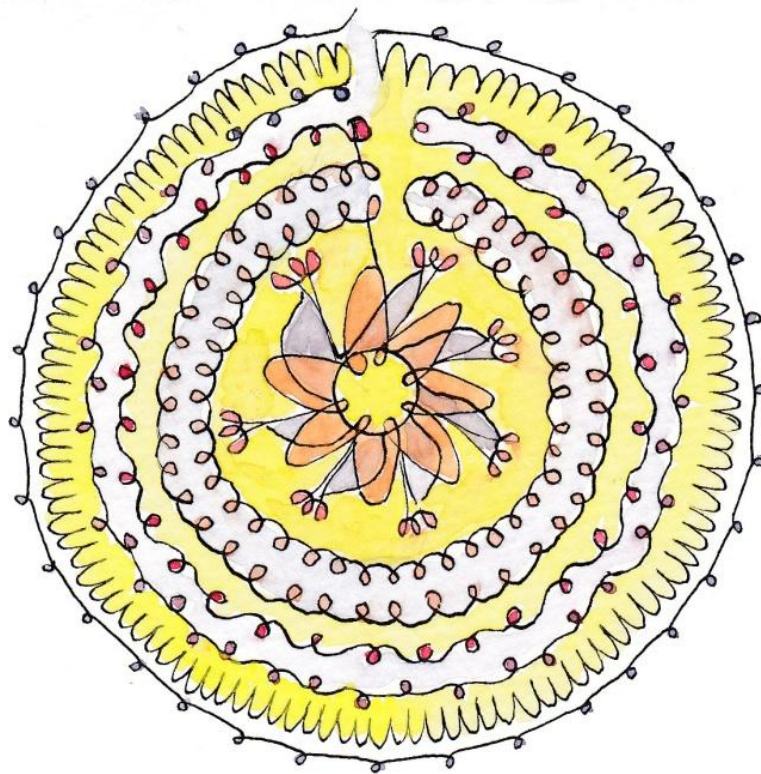
...The love of Christ helps me to change, to love and welcome my brothers better. It allows me to open the ear of my heart to understand them better and this makes me very happy. Christ is at work in us. He is with us. Let Him act. Have confidence in Him and take risks to take small steps at work in our daily lives.

For me to live the Charism of the Incarnation has been a real blessing. Since I have had the opportunity of knowing the teachings of Louie Marie Baudouin I have known the true face of Christ whom I meet and who lives in me each day. When I read and savour the Word in this way I keep the fire of love alive in my heart so that my attitudes and my work bear witness to the marvels done in each one of us by the Word Incarnate.

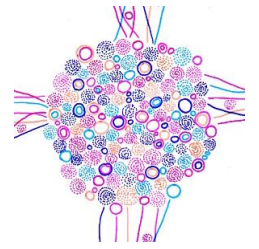
I try to show each person whom I meet on my way the goodness of this charism which opens a door for personal encounters with the living God.

From now on in the mission I carry the image of fatherly concern. Our vision of religious missionary priests leads us to affirm that the faith of our contemporaries is rather a faith that must be aroused, led in a fatherly way.

I think that in pastoral matters new life is given to the past with the requirement of loyalty to tradition and daring renewal. My approach comes from this dynamic. Hence my belief, my commitment to create a desire for personal experience with God. Raising the capacity for love and charity among our contemporaries today seems a more fruitful and beneficial apostolate. It is with this background of work today, in my opinion, that the missionary is called to tackle the belief that, *“the Christian God is the God of meetings”*, because, *“since He took flesh every human face becomes a meeting place”*.



Cast a glance of love on the world



To gaze with the eyes of God so as to discover with admiration, the seeds that the Word deposits in each person, each culture, which awakens missionary compassion and urgency to respond to needs.

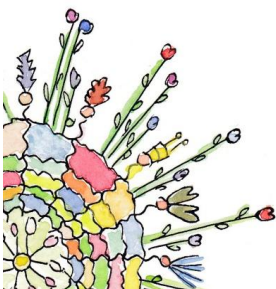
(Orientations 2013)

“Men may admire what they will but for us nothing is more admirable than the Incarnation and its divine consequences. We shall go to no other school, this one is sufficient...” Bearers of this treasure, it seems to us important to listen to those who live concretely an 'incarnation' a closeness to the wounded, badly treated etc.

...We have welcomed, listened, exchanged with the lay people involved with the service of humanity. We have listened to the women and men who have dared to respond to the challenges and the urgencies of today, who search there where they are, to live style of life according to the Gospel.

...Yes! The Word Incarnate who came to save mankind continues to manifest himself through these persons, gestures and presences to bring forth a more just and fraternal world that gives form to the kingdom of God.

Cast a gaze of love on the world: Everybody in Christ is already saved. This invites me to believe that in all human relations nothing is definitively closed or broken. When I contemplate Jesus, who 'looks' in the Gospel, it seems to me that he sees each man and woman with eyes of tenderness; this brings him close but not intrusive.



Christ invites me to really look at the other for who he is and not as whom I would wish him to be. We must be present to accompany, to allow the other to choose his own way....



To cast a look of Love on the world... means taking time to contemplate my life. This is very different from “flicking through” going quickly, passing from one thing to another. Passing from one child’s work to another quickly because the time-table is overloaded, going from one meeting to another... Contemplate, because Love offers itself and requires that I take the time.

To cast a look of love on the world... A precondition for living the mission of following Jesus is, to be in harmony more with the needs of our contemporaries, and more than a precondition; a daily attitude, a posture for each meeting, each event, and each prayer.

If mystery is the intimate relationship between God and man this *spirituality* cannot be only, “*Contemplation, celebration, a path of prayer*”, as it is often presented. It is also ‘*attention to human beings*’ and ‘*commitment to human realities*’. It is a way of prayer, certainly, but it must be also **institutionally**, a ‘*presence*’ to humanity.

Poor misery of the world, rejected, dehumanized, unattractive, and such suffering! Every day new forms of suffering are discovered, every day we fight against despair, deadlocks and emotional void. Every day to the point that humanity on the margins became my ‘religion’ connecting me to the most and best of God himself...

Everyone at least has **the initiative of gesture**, gesture that speaks, gesture that gives meaning, gesture which beckons, gestures of homes, listening, attention, benevolence, service mutual assistance, affection, tenderness... but also many other behaviours that may seem mundane, ordinary, obvious and are no less an expression of great humanity in everyday relations.

To be a duty to inform, to explain, and to answer is a sign of respect and consideration for each other!

To thank, congratulate and encourage, is a sign of trust in someone!

Create the conviviality of the feast...openness, equality and sharing!



Apologize by accepting a mistake or wrong...

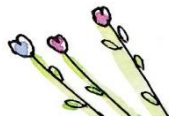
Recognition of equality, absence of malice, dialogue, and debate, exceed the disagreement and take responsibility for it! Signs of tolerance and openness.



Give your word and hold to it. Give the comforting gift of confidence.

Through our prayer we see the Holy Spirit at work in our lives in so many ways and in different situations through our involvement in the parishes. Through catechises, RCIA and bereavement support. We know how many exchanges, support, listening to the sick, considered as very high marks and are very important.

Living the Incarnation gives us a way of perceiving reality of looking at it. We have acquired a sensitivity for life, for humanity. In daily life we look for and discover in the face of each person the face of Jesus.



Mission is an uprooting, to let oneself be turned upside down by the welcome of another...

First of all it is an inner journey which causes a conversion within us...

We are called to live mission 'there, where we are sent.'

We have to open ourselves to the 'land' in which people are living.

Whatever the location, here or abroad it is the same missionary spirit that energises us. The religious is sent, he does not choose his mission himself.

We have received the spirit of evangelization at the school of Father Baudouin. This spirit is lived first in the family before being handed on.

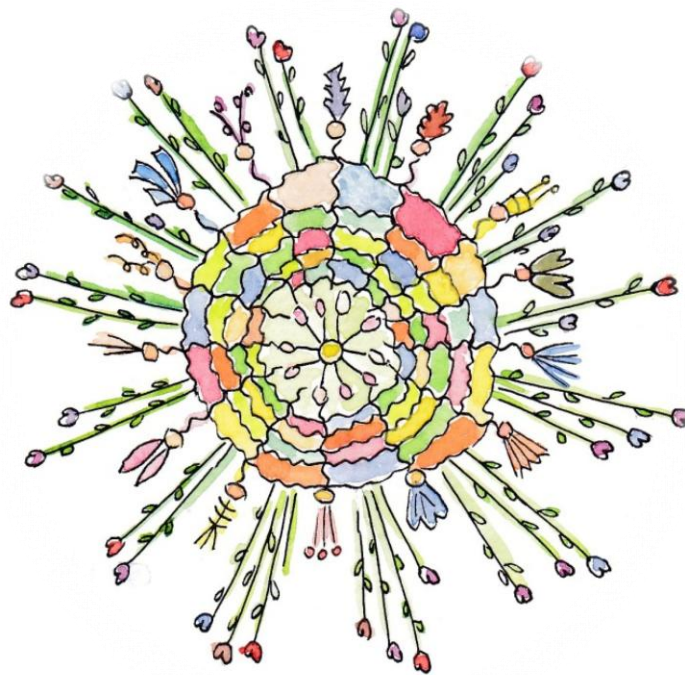
This spirit of the Incarnation lives also among people and with them, but this does not mean that all accept it.

Our spirituality invites us to come close to those who trust us. The ministry of closeness is like a common treasure of the congregation.

Our calling is perhaps to go out where the other may rediscover himself and become aware of his own resources.

A first evangelisation is necessary today for our mission,' human and divine' two slopes to climb, to walk with and to accompany people. As for ourselves, we live as, "adorers and missionaries of the Father"

We need to change the way we look at disability, to say that it is possible to arouse faith in the profoundly disabled person is not an intellectual task it is a work of mystery, this person can also be close to God.





***“Allow the Spirit
to awaken our missionary creativity
to go out to meet the other.
Go to the peripheries.
Accompany with a quality
of presence, of closeness.”***

(Orientations 2013)

Personally, I am a member of the **Prison chaplaincy Team**, along with a deacon. Every Saturday morning we meet some detainees at the Maison d'Arret de Foix. These places can contain a certain number of prisoners. We meet those who wish to share their faith, to live the Eucharist or simply to exchange.

...This mission is, for me a 'small missionary presence' which I live in the spirit of faith, of listening, trying to have the same gaze that Jesus would have here, without judgement, encouraging... to give them back their hope for the future. Personal and community prayer helps me to bring these persons who thirst for freedom.

Their door is always open. There is a bell but usually a gentle knock on the window is enough. There is always someone there with a word of comfort, material help, a moment of rest in the face of suffering, pain and problems, a listening ear and comfort.

One returns home feeling less alone and with renewed courage.

Faced with isolation, choose an encounter, meet somebody...

We, in a rural setting are always, ceaselessly invited to open our eyes, and our ears to be attentive to an isolated person. Out of necessity we stay awake to be available, listening.

...To create and recreate links in spite of isolation: weave social networks; a commitment to live day by day in this rural setting.

Give people the opportunity to be listened to.

This is not to say anything of the value of these actions in the eyes of God. Is it rather a manner of inventing ways of hope, of living a little in the manner of Jesus, of going to a meeting in the way of the Incarnation?



I work in a dispensary close to needy families who have malnourished children. The mothers learn to prepare and cook meals. We give human and spiritual formation to the mothers, play with the children. All this helps me to understand the love and preference of God for these little ones and for the poor. In the words of Pere Pecot, "Make a choice in favour of the weak and the little ones" remember that Jesus identified himself with them. This helps me to live the 'here and now'

It is here also that I live the mystery of the Incarnation; in contemplating Jesus through my relationships and the welcome of others.

"Jesus meek and humble of heart, make my heart like yours", a prayer I chose and say every day.



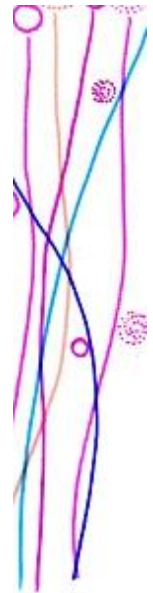
The "little breakfasts" to break the isolation and the solitude!

To break the isolation and solitude closed up behind the walls, the fears, and the unhappiness. Here is a challenge to take up today if we want our society, our areas and our lives to breathe better.

An encounter is certainly a way to invent and glance through, it is sometimes too simple, other times arduous, but what other way is there to weave links of a life together that is more human and more confident.

"Missionaries, who allow themselves to be led, "to the Sons of Providence" in an attitude of humility, welcome, respect and welcome for those to whom Jesus sends us, witness to the joy of the Gospel, simple sacraments of His presence of His closeness, His solidarity" (Orientations 2013)

An author added some words to a phrase of Pope Francis, “*Be pastors not only with the odour of lambs but also with their wounds.*” To use the words ‘odours and wounds’ to speak of persons and groups that we meet is to make them rejoin their carnal and material conditions. In that there is something to recall, it is a question, to what are we invited? **It is to bear witness to the mystery: The Word was made flesh and he lived among us.** (*Const. FMI no 1*) Jesus revealed himself firstly to the shepherds who must have smelled of sheep. In the workshop of Joseph there must have been the smell of wood. He called fishermen who must have smelled of fish. He allowed himself to be touched by a sinner who poured perfume over his feet. (*Luke 7, 38*)



“Odours as well as wounds” we will really be penetrated by the odour of lambs. Then we will be penetrated by the nails that this life throws at the sheep, all that wounds them, crushes them and makes them suffer, all that kills them. This presupposes physical proximity. “Put your finger... place your hand”. (*John 20, 27*)

Through this proximity we are invited to discern the perfumes of the Gospel in these human odours which can make us take to our heart and soul the promises of life, to help them stand up again in their crucifixions and their deaths.

Today, precisely, in spite of my age I feel this energy with my work with the laity. They are the protagonists of missionary action of the chapel confided to us. We, together with them, try to launch and transmit this spirit who inspires our life of prayer, our commitment, and our service. This “*RUAH*”, “*BREATH*”



in Hebrew, which is not seen but is transmitted silently and gives content, strength and depth to the action. From experience I can say that working with the laity has energised me, forced me and pushed me to identify myself more with their anxieties, necessities, sufferings and joy... It is this missionary ardour that led the sisters to form the Family of the Incarnation, how they are moved

by this “Mystery” These people have great devotion to Mary, they attach this mystery to her. They live a life of adoration, thanksgiving and service with Mary, at home, at work in the street, in solidarity... I sense this

“Missionary ardour” which promotes and heightens that of my community and my own; we feel committed to journey with them and to rediscover the transfigured face of Christ” Listen and share with those who sleep on the streets, pray and welcome the word of God with them

“Missionary ardour” remains as vibrant today as it did yesterday, with its own formulas, its own culture and its own experiences. It is the Spirit who gives inspiration. He is there from all eternity. We have to discover Him, welcome Him, give Him a place and have Him live together with others that God puts

in our path and with whom we wish to maintain the living flame that gives light and puts a little more clarity in the world, also tenderness and mercy. During this time we continue to sing, *“that the fire of our hearts not be quenched, let it persist in burning more and more”*.



My insertion into a new culture enriched me very much. I learned to be united with this simple population, to speak their language, to eat their food, and to participate in their feasts. Seeing how these people expressed their faith made me question myself little by little... I was able to recognise with certitude this presence of God in my life... He lives in me. He lives in you and in all His creatures. He is Love Incarnate placed in our hands with His “Seeds” in abundance, so that wherever we go, we will be ‘seeds of His Love’ and of His word.

“God is present in our ‘today’ and He is here in our lives”.



God is not far away. He is there, in Scripture I can read Him in myself, and he is always with me. I can also see Him every day, in the children and in the youth in my family and in all those around me, in the poor and the well-off, widows and orphans. I can contemplate him in nature, in plants and rocks. It is through all this that I can communicate with Him and serve Him.

To be a missionary is an experience that I want to share with my friends; an experience from a great school: The school of the Word Incarnate.

Firstly because I understand what it means to ‘allow myself to be led by Providence’ is to experience an uprooting and a rerouting. It is not easy, it is a work of confidence in He to whom I have said ‘yes’! We are faced with another way of living, of thinking, of reacting.

We are faced with new people that we have to get to know, to understand and the critics are never far away. In the pastoral plan the expressions of faith differ and there is always the major problem of languages. This gives the impression that we are in an unknown world. We are like a baby that has to learn everything..... It is not always simple to incarnate one self.

The Incarnation is a great school of adaptation, a meeting place for giving and receiving.

With the Vietnamese I learned that to serve is:

It is first of all to smile,

It is a way of life,

It is to be welcoming

It is to accompany,

It is to be spontaneous,

It is to have an acute perception of what the other is trying to live,

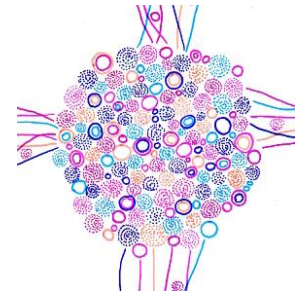
It is to offer friendship.

To serve is to see with the heart eyes of the heart,

It is to hold the heart in the palm of your hand.



Unity between missionaries



**Unity is the strength of missionaries.
“Without it, much fatigue and
little fruit” (orientations 2013)**

We rejoice in “making *this journey together*” which supports us in our commitments and in the different areas of our lives, family, social, professional and in our participation in the life of the Church.

We are aware of the reality of our environment. It is difficult to look away from the faces of today’s society where we live. The temptation to avoid conflicts and miseries continually urges us to take refuge in our little world, quiet and without serious problems, because the road is full of small challenges. This awareness Jesus lived and in it he became Incarnate to bring good news to the poor. It is in this reality that He makes us discover the seeds of this hope. Jesus takes the initiative and invites us to do the same. With Him we learn values such as courage freedom plurality and culture diversity, solidarity that drives women and men to join. We can go out into the street to shout if we do not agree with what is being done to defend the rights of others, to help families and individuals who are so desperately in need.

We can never solve all the problems, but walking with others, community, fraternity, in the Church, we bring our work to build the Kingdom.



Coming from ‘outside’ I discovered a human community, a community of women religious on the route of the Lord, where each one is welcomed with respect for difference.

What I noticed also was the attention each one had for the other the mutual support and constant concern to keep unity and to continue to build fraternity and to grow after a misunderstanding, pardon is given and received.

As elderly religious in a public residence we also have the possibility of a community life and mission in the same environment which is a permanent and demanding conquest of listening, welcome, prayer, silence and brief sharings at different moments during the day: Gymnastics, games, music therapy, simple tasks... with little details; a kiss, a word, a smile, a caress, that at a glance projects relaxation and transmits peace and serenity.

Even if we live in a prosperous rich area we have many examples of poverty. Helping at the Food Bank is one way of reaching out to those in need.

The mood is sombre, there is little laughter. Most people are depressed because of their situation. However, all are treated with dignity, a kind word; a gesture is acknowledged with a thank you. It is easy to see the face of Jesus time after time as the team goes about its business. The companionship of our group is the joy that we all receive doing God's work each week.



During these times of sharing we strengthened our progress as an individual group and within the community as well as feeling part of the one body which makes the "*Mystery of the Incarnation*" present in all its richness of diversity. We reinforced connections in moments of thankfulness and our concern to find the resources to nourish the activities we wanted to contribute as representatives of the Family.

At our monthly meetings we said our prayers of Adoration to the Incarnate Word; we visited the sick and shared the little we had with the poor in our area; we also made a visit to the prison and marked happy and unhappy events together, even if we had not noticed them as they happened.

When I arrived at the mission I had everything to learn. My first steps had been accompanied by the experience of sharing with one another and also by their open spirit towards my ideas which were without a doubt newer, but not necessarily more valid. This spirit continued to accompany me manifesting itself in many ways. The spirit of solidarity called us to accept each other for who we are, we do not rise by lowering someone else!

In moments of tension in the group, in the community, we would organise an escape, a day at the beach, evening skewers, skewers have always followed me since the first year of my ministry. We eat, we talk, we sing, we open a bottle and the worries go away and fraternity is reborn. In effect, all this can be used to celebrate together and it is effective for keeping the union together and for repairing the loopholes. Not meeting just to repair the problems but

knowing how to rejoice together, making the effort to be at table with others and not always at the same place!

I therefore add my proverb to that of Père Baudouin: “**UNITY creates celebration, CELEBRATION creates union**”.

I think that everything that we lived in those six days has been marvellous, an experience, which together with the strength of the Lord, brought joy, unity and friendship among us all.



One of the members of the Family lives in a little village where bandits come regularly and they have to leave their house during the night and hide somewhere. As we cannot leave our houses to be with them where they are we have set up a prayer chain to support them.

Many other moments are experienced in order to maintain this “*unity among missionaries*”.

We visit other members of the Family to recognise in our union the joys, sorrows and bereavements, but sometimes just to visit for its own sake. We experience these visits as moments of prayer and sharing.

They are special times for us to learn the virtues which we have discovered through sharing and this unites us closer.

In my family and relationships the word which I share in the Fraternity helps me to be a gatherer, to pray, to give a bit of advice. I have learned to share the Gospel with others.

As Associates we pray together, read the Word of God and support each other when necessary. Our spiritual journey together with the thoughts and teachings of Louis Marie Baudouin continue to enhance our daily lives. We are united in our faith and inspired by the teachings of Louis Marie Baudouin and are able to take these riches to share among the people we encounter each day.



The mission of the sisters is, to reveal the tenderness, the watchfulness of the Father over these little ones, to awaken their intelligence through the school, catechesis and many other encounters in the areas where they live. Visiting the sick and accompanying the youth is also part of the mission. For several years now we have been linked to this mission. In the first instance helping them to build and open this nursery school and then by supporting them on a daily basis for a few months of the year, with equipment, school work and joyful participation in the daily life of the community. In Cameroun we love to say: **“We are together”** Yes, we are together united with the Sisters in the same mission, each responding to a ‘call’ Each day the different prayer times gather everyone to the source of that mission and helps to reinforce the unity at the heart of the community.



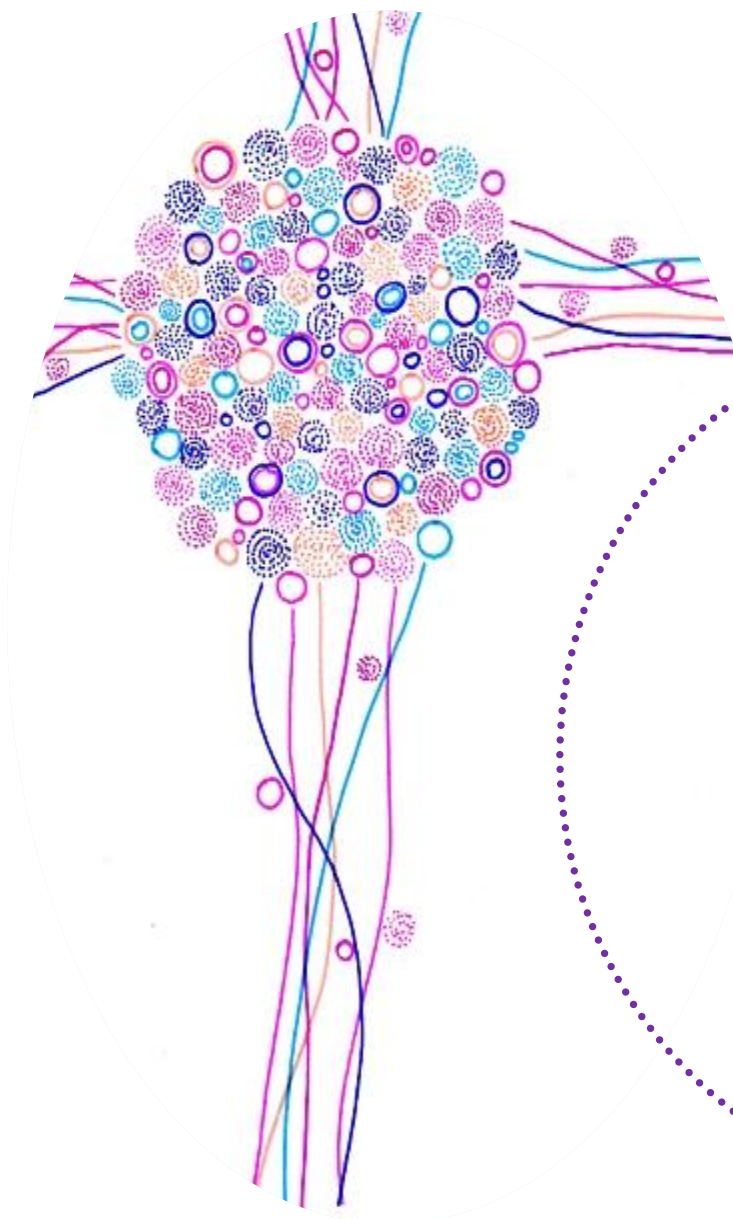
The chatting and the meals, the moments of joy and relaxation, the community sharing, the communal life serves to reinforce those links which may become visible signs for everyone who lives with that community.

We root ourselves in our history and announce the joy of the Gospel.

This meeting urged me, as did the founders, to live and to testify to missionary strength with joy, patience and gentleness. Not to fear the faithful, humble, transparent, **“Oui”** of Mary. Not to be afraid to be a leader of the faith, to point to God who shows me the way through my life experiences. This meeting made me enter into the Spirit of the Word Incarnate, gazing with the eyes of Jesus....**simply to contemplate and to listen with love.**

Our realities are not much different from those lived by our Founders: wars, persecutions, poverty, hunger power struggles, death and egoism. I must be strong, courageous, tenacious and steeped in faith to live these changes now. I must be led by the breath of the Spirit where that He may act in me and allow me to water the seeds where He wants them to fall, to take root, to be fortified by the Word of God, by prayer, by witness and so make them burst with life.

I sense that life in the Sacre - Coeur is receiving, is thanksgiving and offering, is permanent adoration....is "the spirit of Nazarenes" expressed by devotion, mission to the end of life, by illness or age, each sister is always available to be of service, to visit the other sisters or residents who are not able to leave their rooms...it is truly an authentic witness of what our missionary life should be, not only outside but above all, inside the house.



What is really
big and important,
is the love
we put into
everything we do or live,
no matter how small it is.
It is this that gives life
to the Project of God
in the world:
to love Him above all,
and to love our brothers
and sisters as ourselves.
THANKS TO EVERYONE!

2019 Edition

The drawings were made by H el ene Masson, who was inspired reading this Common Treasure.