



OUR VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2016 WORLD ASSEMBLY, JESOLO, ITALY 18 – 23 APRIL 2016

'EMMAUS: COMMON VALUES, TOMORROW'S ACTIONS'



emmaus

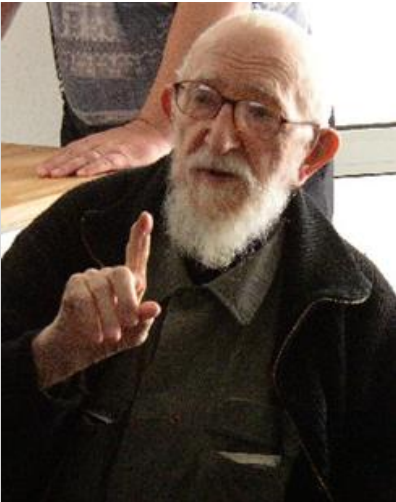
INTERNATIONAL

ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE



Summary of the two phases of work carried out by the groups of the four regions of Emmaus International from July 2014 to November 2015

Summary produced by the Values Committee of Emmaus International. This summary draws on the contributions from member groups that were compiled by the national and regional organisations.



*We often say that 'you can't explain Emmaus, you have to experience it', which is true.
But does that mean we should give up trying to find out what we are exactly?*

What's this all about?

> When we first began this process to prepare us all for the next world assembly, we said **our action needs to adapt to a world that's changing**. We also said we needed to take a step back and consider the values that drive us and set us apart.

> It's an opportunity for us all to think: what motivates me as an activist? **What do we need to pass on to members who've just joined or will soon join our movement? The idea is to identify what values are most important to us** – values that will help us meet tomorrow's challenges.



> Doing this will help us bring back the ethos of Abbé Pierre's first companions, tap into the energy and enthusiasm of those who first set up Emmaüs, think about **how we need to change our action** to go with the changes happening in our societies, and rediscover the value of sharing with the poor.

All of your cultures are wrong, cursed; they are wrong because the only values they teach you are human successes.

Abbé Pierre, *Fraternité*, 1999

A **value** helps us express an ideal to be attained – members of Emmaüs refer to it to guide our action. In this way, values enable us to prepare for the future. Common values are a source of cohesion which help us recognise each other and forge a shared identity. Common values also help others recognise us and help us convey our ideas beyond the movement.

A **guiding principle** clarifies how we understand and decide to apply our values. Guiding principles describe the common and unique methods we use to apply our values.

We must also discover, or rediscover, that money, social success and well-paid work are not the essential things in life – that other values exist, other ways of life and of using our time exist, other ways to be useful and to obtain social recognition. We must develop "humanising" activities that are non-lucrative and which would provide objectives, things to live for.

Fraternité, 1999

THE BASIS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF OUR SHARED VALUES TODAY

*The secret lies in restoring
people's dignity*

Pensées inédites, 2015

➔ **Respect for people and their dignity, and for their environment:** this core value enables personal and collective development, the acceptance of difference, as well as the expression of every individual's uniqueness and capacities. It's by respecting each individual that dignity is gained or regained. This value goes hand in hand with the fight against all human and material wastefulness.

Related value: **fairness**, which refers to the idea of rights for all.

➔ **Be tolerant and fight all forms of discrimination.**

➔ **Ensure dignity**, self-esteem, independence and recognition as well as restoring value to people and goods **through work** – a core guiding principle at Emmaus. ➔ **Strive to achieve respect for human rights and justice** – a guiding principle to ensure fairness and respect. "To relieve poverty and fight its causes" – the aim of both of these is social justice.

➔ **Promoting gender equality.**

➔ **Fighting environmental degradation.**

*Pity is not an objective.
The only goal that is worthy
of man is justice.*

Pensées inédites, 2015



Peru, 2015
Emmaus Cuna Nazareth



Bangladesh, 2014
Emmaus Thanapara Swallows

➔ **Sharing** in all of its dimensions – human, material, financial. This reminds us of the importance of giving, and that we can never own what we can “earn” together. It enables each of us to provide for our basic needs as well as to be autonomous and independent. Sharing is what solidarity is all about. It also contributes towards peace.



Related value: **equality**.

- ➔ **Raise awareness**, for political and social commitment, to ensure solidarity and sharing as well as to **join forces to campaign**.
- ➔ **To share work, goods, meeting places, problems, knowledge, skills, responsibilities.**
- ➔ **Encouraging people to donate, being generous.**
- ➔ **Aim to get people actively involved.**

Help create a different way of organising our world, based on sharing, not competition!

Hélder Câmara and Abbé Pierre's appeal, 18 August 1996, Recife in *Pensées Inédites*, 2015

The desperate man became a saviour. Emmaus was born.

Fraternité, 1999

➔ **Openness**, which opens up to reciprocity; it makes it possible to understand the questions that are raised, people and their points of view.

What is possible right now, however, is that each and every one of us put our gifts, our talents, our skills at the service of all, in a spirit of fraternity. Thus nature's inequalities would become sufferable as they are made right by honesty and virtue.

Fraternité, 1999

Related values: **honesty** and **transparency, accountability.**

- **Promoting education and culture**, living together and raising awareness.
- **Training, providing information, raising awareness.**
- **Celebrating diversity, not judging and accepting others.**
- **Putting democracy into practice.**



→ **Solidarity**, shown in the community and the desire to live together, gives strength to combat loneliness and to resolve conflict. It should take on an international dimension and reach above and beyond the Movement.

The world will most likely go through serious crises which will force the most developed nations, which are also often the least densely populated, to make a choice – either they will become inward-looking, by preserving the order and their own interests, instead (...) or they will look beyond their borders, to solidarity.

Fraternité, 1999

Related value: **fraternity** which is expressed in Emmaus groups, following the words of Abbé Pierre – “serve first those who suffer most”.

- **Redistributing wealth and reducing inequalities.**
- **Embracing solidarity as a political commitment.**
- **Promoting responsibility, ensuring sustainability and being coherent**
- **Resolving conflicts.**

Globalisation is leading us, I'd even say forcing us to try, at long last, to build a world of fraternity.

Fraternité, 1999



→ **Welcoming**, in the sense of “to be welcoming”, which is a state of mind; it’s also a practice at Emmaus that’s mainly understood in the sense of the expression: to offer an “unconditional welcome”.

The fundamental definition of Emmaus is welcoming others, living together: freed by the bread we earned at work: work that we want to be more than just our simple need, to have the right and to be capable of being activists at the heart of society, a voice for those who have none.

A gathering of companions, 1984

→ **Guaranteeing a warm welcome and highlighting our ‘community’ practices (of work, solidarity, at times of life)**, they are the Emmaus Movement's key practices. Other related guiding principles are participative democracy and having trust in others. Living together is related to sharing a future and to individual responsibility.

→ **Listen to and support people**, these are principles that characterise “welcoming” in all its dimensions at Emmaus.

→ **To respond to people's needs and wishes**, particularly those of migrants, women and families.

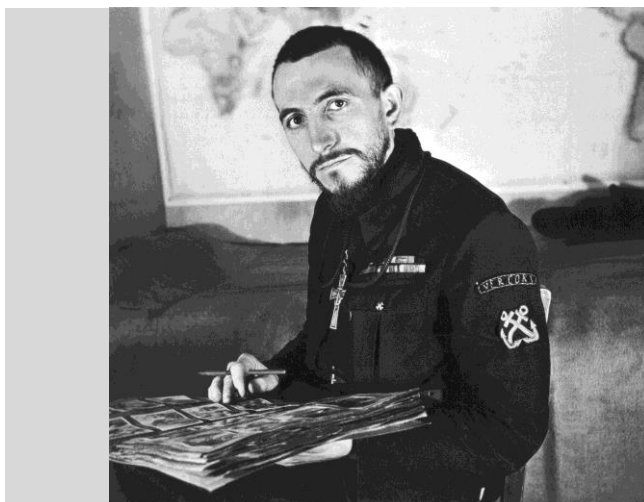
A family can only survive if its adult, strong and resilient members adapt their way of life to accommodate the babies, the ill and the old. The same goes for society as a whole.

The programme 'Le téléphone sonne' (the phone is ringing), French radio station 'France Inter', 1994

Ultimately, amongst all the key values which the Movement has reviewed today, two overarching guiding principles characterise our action:

→ **Acting first and foremost for the most vulnerable.**

→ **Accepting and respecting differences.**



Honour lies in strength serving weakness

Letter refusing the Legion of Honour, 1992