

Scope and Limits of Emmaus's Social Commitment

The administrative Committee which met in October 6th and 7th, 1978, unanimously adopted the following text:

- I.1. Because the Emmaus groups fell morally obliged to show their solidarity with those levels or groups of society which are rightly considered to be down-and-outs, excluded or oppressed –in short, “the most suffering members of society”;
 2. Because, in concrete cases, the demands of the social groups for the satisfaction of their needs and aspirations in the fields of health, education, nutrition, dwellings, working conditions, and so on, are not treated by the powers that be –either public or private ones- with the promptness and sense of justice required by the seriousness and urgency of the requests;
 3. Because the aim that Emmaus has set itself –“to stir people’s conscience”- requires that on the one hand it should arouse the privileged classes to recognize where their duty lies, and on the other should open the eyes of the needy to the injustices inflicted on them, so that both can fulfil their responsibilities with ever-greater efficiency.
- II. After due deliberation, the Administrative Committee of Emmaus International judges the moment opportune to define its position as follows:
1. As a Movement, Emmaus –as well as being “ preliminary and complementary in any struggle for social justice”-is devoted to the interests of the weakest members of society; its mission consists not only in giving emergency aid, but in helping the people themselves to claim their just rights, that is: to make “their own voice heard”.
 2. This commitment implies that Emmaus will always be in conflict with those who, consciously or unconsciously, are the cause of these sufferings, especially national or international groups which exert an oppressive influence.
 3. Every member-association of Emmaus International must determine, in the light of local conditions, whether it is opportune and how to make known the scope and limits of this Emmaus’s commitment, and to shape its social policy accordingly.

4. In line with its Universal Manifesto, Emmaus must found, inspire, sustain and aid social or popular movements claiming people's injured rights. (see art.6 of the Manifesto).

The Administrative Committee of Emmaus International insists that any group which commits itself with a particular option (of course not in contradiction with the Universal Manifesto), will consider it has the duty to clearly specify in public that this is a special choice, peculiar to this group and not to the commitment of the Movement as a whole.