

On holiday together



Faith and Light international

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Faith and Light international

3, rue du Laos 75015 Paris- France – T + (33) 1.53.69.44.30
international@foietlumiere.org - www.foietlumiere.org/en

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Introduction

For several years, a number of communities have organised holiday camps. It is a special time for relaxation in the countryside, but it is above all a time when we can get to know each other better, when we can pray together and when the ties of friendship can become closer. Each camp is an excellent means of formation.

In this booklet, several communities want to share their experience. We offer you, from different countries, testimonies as well as a reflection on what a camp is, its spirituality and the way it is organised. Of course, these are guidelines and the communities will be able to adapt to their possibilities and needs as well as to the specific living conditions of each country.

We hope that this booklet will help you, that it will prevent certain difficulties and above all that it will invite you to live together, in your community, this holiday season.

We remind you that it is imperative to read carefully the Code of Conduct of Faith and Light International and to return the signed declaration to the province coordinator before your camp (see page 28).

Do write to us. We need you, we need to have your ideas and your suggestions and to hear of your experience.

Good luck on your journey! May the light of the Holy Spirit guide you and shine on your path.

The holiday camp, a place to be reborn

In Italy, holiday camps are very important in the life of Faith and Light communities. Here, our friends share their experience and their discovery with us. Camp is really a place to be reborn.

What is the point of a Faith and Light camp? What is it aiming at?

That is the question we have to ask ourselves before we set off. We don't go to camp to render service. Nor do we go as tourists. Something much deeper than that makes us go off together. It isn't just an incident in the life of the community. It is an important stage in the path we are following in Faith and Light

The title: *A place to be reborn* may seem rather daring, but it is accurate. Camp is a time when the other person reveals himself/herself with his/her weakness and his/her thirst for love. It is a time when we discover ourselves and each other in Jesus.

What are we searching for?

Each of us wants and needs to find that camp is a place where we find God's place, as well as friendship and trust, where each one has his place, where there can be real celebration.

But, who will help us?

Who do we need?

We need Jesus who unites us with each other. Camp is a bit like a family where each person is unique and irreplaceable.

That is what it is for!

At camp, I got to know lots of new people, I made lots of new friends. That's what camp is for! You can find friends there, and I like meeting people and making friends. That's what I found when I went for walks, when we prepared the meals and when we prayed together.

Everyone is responsible for the life of the camp: this means that we must do what is asked and what we are trusted to do, with simplicity, willingness and joy. You can imagine what happens to life together if we are all being selfish!

Why with them ?

At the heart of a Faith and Light community we find the weakest person. He is always a *prophet*. He reveals God's plan to us. His look, his smile can transform my heart and make a new vision surge up from the depths of my heart.

If we stick with the attitude of *doing something* for a person in need instead of giving our heart, the barriers of superiority will remain. If we can accept the gift of the poor, take time to listen and to follow his rhythm, we will begin to be aware of the presence of God. He becomes our nourishment.

What is our aim ?

It isn't just a question in community of being in a warm, caring atmosphere. If we want to put down roots, we have to decide what we want to do, and how we want to be together.

The community is not a place where one cohabits : it is the place where each one tries to come out of the shadows of egoism in order to move towards the light of true Love.

There must be no competition among you, no conceit, but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of other people interests first but everybody thinks of other people's interest instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus (Phil 2: 3-5).

The snares

Two dangers for members of a community are to think of *friends* and *the others*. We like to be with people get on with us. We attract and *boost* each other.

This is friendship *for oneself* and not an encounter, an encouragement to grow and to serve our brothers and sisters.

Learn from them

Going off to the camp seemed very difficult for me to begin with. It seems that I was going to have to give a lot without getting anything in return. I was also uncomfortable with people with disabilities. You work always like Martha, full of good intentions and anxious that everything should be perfect. Then, suddenly, you find yourself like Mary, listening. It was the people with disabilities who were leading us, especially on a spiritual level. Their heart is so spontaneous, not lumbered with all the things that so often prevent us from finding the love of Jesus. I have discovered that people with disabilities can be an example in daily life, in spiritual life and, most of all, in their complete confidence in God.

There are always those who *I feel good with* and those with whom *I don't get on*. A community can only exist, if most of the members have decided to come out of the cocoon of friendship *for me*, and to hold out a hand to the other person, recognising the gift of the Holy Spirit which he has been given, and which must be given the opportunity to bear fruit. Not to be faithful to his gift which we have all been given, is to harm the whole community and each of its members. On the contrary, to make the gift grow is to build up the community.

Communion and celebration

Communion and celebration are the outcome of community life. Celebration represents symbolically the aim of the community. It brings hope to birth and gives a new strength. Celebration springs from the certainty that we are loved. It is a sign from heaven, a sign of the resurrection which helps us to carry our cross each day?

At the heart of the celebration is the smallest person. If he is excluded, there can be no celebration. We have to invent games and dances so that he can take part.

It's good to introduce him to new things: joyful songs and funny stories. Let's learn to laugh, to laugh freely because humour relaxes us and open us up to one another. We learn to

appreciate little gestures and happenings. We don't *make up* a celebration: it is our heart that celebrates.

A celebration can't be forced. It is the expression of a community that lives, creates, prays, rejoices and loves.

It is only if we build a real fellowship, a true sharing in Jesus (at any rate, doing our best with this) that the Eucharist together will make any sense: the sense of total communion with Christ in his joy. I believe that it is impossible to be brothers, sisters and friends if we rely on our own strength. During a summer camp, we can ask Jesus to help us.

Each morning, we offer him our day, meeting him in the Eucharist or the service with our friends, knowing that he told us: *Make your home in me, as I make mine in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, but must remain part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me* (Jn 15: 4-5).

Spiritual life during a holiday camp

Holiday time must be a time of rest for everyone, helping them to meet Jesus in their life and to enter into relationship with him. It is a time of grace, a grace with which we must cooperate so as not to waste it. For this to happen, a chaplain plays an important part. Here a Polish priest tells us of his experience: *As a priest, I consider my participation in a camp is very important element. Firstly, I can become a full-time*

Discovering the gifts of our children

Our annual camp gives us the chance to live fully the spirit of Faith and Light. To spend twenty four hours out of twenty four together is very enriching when the love of Jesus helps us to know each other and to accept each other. We discover the gift of our children with disabilities and we are as happy as they are to share this camp which is really their camp. They are surrounded by real affection and so live each day happy and fully alive, capable of forgetting themselves, thoughtful for others and recollected during the moments of prayer.

Amen!

The prayer each evening is carefully prepared and that's why it is always beautiful. On the third or fourth evening, I noticed that one of the children who couldn't speak, was making quite a noise. I said to myself that even if we couldn't understand what the child was saying, God certainly did. I didn't want to open my eyes to see who it was. The next day, I thought about it several times. That evening, the same unsolicited prayer was repeated. You could only understand the word "Amen" at the end of this prayer of praise. At that moment, my curiosity got the better of me and I opened my eyes. They filled with tears of emotion as I realised that what I had been remembering since the previous evening with so much admiration, was my own daughter!

member of the community, whereas during the year, I'm only a passing member who gives his services (celebrating mass, preaching during a retreat...). But at camp, all day long I am with people. It is a good opportunity to evangelise, to share the Word of Jesus by a phrase or gesture. I have realised that my presence is specially necessary for the people with disabilities and their parents who are deeply marked by suffering. They are often far from God and have the impression that they are rejected by the Church.

If we want to live this holiday-time deeply, the spiritual side of the programme must be prepared in advance. Prayer is a major element in the working out of this preparation. It is in an atmosphere of recollection that we come to understand what God wants to give us while at camp. The role of the chaplain is essential in this preparation, and his presence during the camp is very important.

The different camp activities have to be balanced – work, games, prayer, sharing. The theme of the camp will be carried through these activities, prayer and teaching.

Here is an example. One camp we took the theme: *Seek first the kingdom of God* (Lk 12:31). In our community, we want to discover how we could make God's kingdom come by using

the parables. On the first day, we took the parable of *the grain of mustard seed*. On the second day, we took *the treasure hidden in a field*. On the third day, we took *the prodigal son* which is all about a change of heart. These were the subjects for the homilies and for our prayer together. Then we mimed the parable to prepare us for the sacrament of reconciliation which we celebrated in the evening.

The central moment of each day is the Eucharist or the Service. It is celebrated with solemnity so that each one can participate in the liturgy. Little groups prepare the celebration which allows for a deepening of understanding of the readings.

During another camp, we tried to get to know the saints better, men and women who have carried out in their lives the commandment to love God and one's neighbour. Each day had his patron saint. One day it was Francis of Assisi. During a long walk, we tried to find "signs of St Francis", that's to say all the lovely things that would have made him happy. During the mass that evening, we thanked God for all the beautiful things that we had discovered and we tried to do everything really well so that we could be like St Francis in his generosity and humility.

One day, we were thinking about missions, we took St Theresa of Lisieux for our patron saint. Our contribution to the missionary work of the Church was the way we considered other people in everything we did that day.

There have been camps built round the story of the Little Prince, the prayer of l'Arche, the Magnificat... It would take

The presence of the one who draws us together

There is another experience which stays with us all through the camp: it is with certainty that all our efforts, all our plans and all our difficulties have a very deep meaning. There is the presence of the One who draws us together and guides us. To live in this presence and with this companion is perhaps the main source of strength which I feel comes to birth in me after having lived a holiday camp.

too long to describe in detail how these were worked out and, in any case, God always speaks in a new way, revealing his love to us all the time. The most important thing is to be open to the action of the Holy Spirit. He allows us to rediscover across the centuries, some of the best way of teaching even if they aren't new: the Eucharist, Reconciliation, the rosary spontaneous prayer, catechesis, teaching, work, play, daily life and the enthusiasm of celebration. We must always begin again.

Even if our efforts are clumsy, they are never without fruit because *God cooperates with all those who love him, with all those that he has called according in his purpose!* (Romans 8, 28).

Peace, joy and unity are the fruits of a well-run camp. Then the words of the psalm come to life: *How good, how delightful it is for all to live like brothers (...) where Yahweh confers his blessing, everlasting life.* (Psalm 133 (132) 1, 3)

The camp diary

In Belgium, holiday camps are very well organised. It has been found that to keep a diary can help and deepen one's life in camp. Here are some thoughts and details to explain it.

At the beginning of the camp, each person is given a diary which consists of:

- the theme of the camp,
- the outline of the programme,
- The timetable for each day, which can be in words or drawings,
- a page for each day (Monday, Tuesday.. Is better than 18th,19th...) with an indication of the day's main activities,
- illustrations, space for personal work or colouring,
- the names and addresses of the participants.

This diary is personal: everyone can put their name, collect photos, write down that happens each day, mention special things that happen...

This diary can be a way of thinking, of expression and of personal growth as well as a very useful way of helping the

person with disabilities and the person accompanying him to talk and discuss together. This discussion can be a jumping-off point for the fourth time in Faith and Light. We can see together the path we've travelled each day.

The diary includes questions for each day, such as:

- How have I met Jesus in my heart through meeting other people?
- What did I like doing the best?
- What can I thank Jesus for ?
- What can I try to do better tomorrow?

The diary helps the person with disabilities to be more conscious of how time is passing during the camp and the rhythm of each day. It can often help to prepare for the moment of going home which can be quite painful.

This diary contains landmarks in the spiritual journey of each one.

Practical advices

The notes which follow are the fruit of several Faith and Light holiday camp in Poland. We hope they will be of use to those who are planning a camp for the first time. And, who knows... Perhaps even for those who are not beginners!

Preparation

The first thing to do is to fix the date of the camp and to decide the approximate number of participants. Then, at least six weeks beforehand, book the house. A coordinating team should be specially chosen to be responsible for the arrangements. It is a good idea not to have people who already have responsibility in the community, but they should be kept in touch with arrangements by one member of the coordinating team.

The house

Since we are accommodating people with disabilities, the house must have certain facilities: a bathroom is essential, and

Preparing her pyjamas

It is with utter joy that Marie-Agnès leaves us to go to this camp, from which she returns radiant every time. She learns there, I think, this feeling for other people. Living in a group helps her to feel important. The example of the young helpers gives her all-round stimulation by their energy and their happiness. She feels appreciated and she finds her place in a group where she can make good friends. She is happy and realises in some way that this is a special time from the point of view of her spiritual life. For our part, we let Marie-Agnès leave us for a fortnight with complete confidence, knowing that she'll come back happy, radiating joy and increasingly mature. Marie-Agnès waits all year for the moment to go to her Faith and Light camp. Already, in January, she has packed her pyjamas for this year's camp, and on no account will she wear them still then !

a common room. The setting of the house and the environment is important too (for example, a safe enclosed garden...)

Before the camp, the coordinating team goes to look at the site. They check the equipment of the house, the shops, find about transport and make contact with the neighbours. They also find out if there is a local Faith and Light community so that they can spend a day or an evening together.

The cost

The cost of the camp should be estimated to include travel, board and lodging, insurance (very important), the buying of any necessary materials, leisure activities and excursions...

The list of participants

The number of participants should be limited to about thirty so that a real warm family atmosphere can be created¹.

In preparing the list of participants, be careful to get the right balance of persons with disabilities, parents and friends.

¹ In some countries, holiday groups over a certain number of people with disabilities and a certain number of days are subject to special requirements from the administration. Check with the relevant authorities.

We can't give exact figures but we can say that there must be as many able bodied people as persons with disabilities and for each person with a physical disability or epilepsy, there should be two able-bodied people.

It is important to decide in advance who will "accompany" each person with disabilities. Those who "accompany" will see that their partner is well integrated into camp life and that they can be helped if difficulties arise.

It is essential to have parents in camp. Their wide experience can help to solve many problems but you have to see that they get a real rest. Be sure to ask a priest or seminarian to come with you too.

The list of equipment

In preparing the list of equipment, it is useful to remember what is already in the house as noticed in the preliminary visit. Warm clothes are a must (in Europe) even if the weather is good, and two pairs of shoes are important to allow for a change. Don't forget small details: a forgotten tin-opener or replacement lightbulbs can cause great embarrassment!

The coordinating team and sharing responsibility

The camp is organised by the coordinator, the chaplain and five or six other people. The different jobs are shared out between them. Beside the coordinator, there are :

- the chaplain in charge of the spiritual side of the camp,

Black-outs

We had thought of everything... except that the electricity system would be catastrophic and that the fuses would blow continually! It was more and more maddening for us, the helpers. But most people took our irritation as a joke and at each black-out it was a race against time, a race through the whole house to see who could be the first to bring the candles, the matches or a torch! In the middle of all the clapping for the winner, certain voices could be heard: "Again, again!"

Three cheers for parents

We had two mothers and a grandmother at our camp. It was a great gift to have them with us. Our eyes were opened, through long discussions with them, to hitherto unknown situations. We were able to understand better the problems some families have. We were able to talk about important issues that we had never been able to touch on during our community meetings. For their part, the mothers found that they were able to draw on our energy, our strength for their daily life. At the beginning of the week, the two mothers and grandmother were a little strained in their new role, but by the end of the week they had completely changed. We were amazed at their initiative and creativity and we learnt a lot from them.

- someone in charge of the prayer with the chaplain,
- someone in charge of household jobs,
- someone responsible for the music (a song book is a help),
- the treasurer,
- the first aider,
- the cook,
- the person responsible for the maintenance of the house.

Before the holiday, it is good to have one or two meetings with these people.

The preparation of the programme

The success of the camp depends on the programme being well prepared beforehand. Decide why you are going to camp, then the theme and how the best to carry it out.

Obviously, the programme will depend on the needs of the participants with disabilities and their rhythm of life. For example, it won't be the same as a programme for young students. It has to go at a slower pace and calm and regular. If we try to impose our rhythm of life on person with disabilities (e.g. late night celebrations), we risk upsetting them, and there will be increased tension and fatigue. Each day should have its rhythm and harmony.

What hard work!

That day, we really believed we were going to have a fast! Jenni offered to make a ratatouille for us. At two o'clock she wanted to start cooking all by herself. With great care, she peeled one vegetable, got up, went to the sink and washed it, come back to sit down, cut it carefully into little pieces. Then she got up and put them into the saucepan. She sat down again and started on the second vegetable... After half an hour of this, we suggested that she might like to co-opt a little team to work with her. She was a bit cross at first but then she agreed, and amidst singing, and a lot of teasing and laughter, the ratatouille was finished, and it was delicious.

Camps is an ideal way of providing formation for the whole community. Each day is centred on part of the general theme that has been chosen. It can be linked to the liturgy of the Church or to a Bible story or to an aspect of spiritual life (see page 7).

Medical care

Each person with disabilities must have a medical certificate giving permission to attend camp, their medical card, written instructions for medicines and a sufficient supply of them to last the whole of the camp. An authorisation for surgery in case of emergency must also be signed by the parents (see page 31).

If there is no doctor or nurse in the group, one or two people should have taken first aid instruction so as to be able to cope with straightforward sickness or accident.

The camp medicine cupboard is stocked with the advice of a doctor. It is important to have the necessary medicines and to know how to use them. The whereabouts of the nearest hospital or health clinic in case of emergency.

The welcome

The welcome must be carefully planned with two or three people arriving ahead of the main party. They take some of the

food and equipment, make sure the house is clean (including the windows). They organise the dining-room, the bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, washing-up place, the pantry, the dustbins. They have the first meal ready, decorate the house and prepare the prayer corner.

Camp life, a typical timetable

Naturally, this schedule is given as an indication only. It should be adapted to the country, the culture and the participants. If we have the grace of having a chaplain, the Eucharist could be celebrated before lunch, in the middle of the day, or in the evening, before dinner.

- 8.00 a.m. Rising prayer (allow enough time for help with washing and dressing, tidying up)
- 8.30 a.m. Breakfast
- 9.30 a.m. Sharing
- 10.30 a.m. Activities (games, singing, walks and camp jobs which are announced each day)
- 12.30 p.m. Dinner
- 1.30 p.m. Siesta
- 3.00 p.m. Activities (arts and craft)
- 6.30 p.m. Free time for prayer
- 7.00 p.m. Supper
- 8.00 p.m. Evening entertainment
- 9.30 p.m. Prayer
- 10.30 p.m. Meeting of coordinating team. Often it's better to have this meeting early in the morning before most campers get up, or else during the siesta to avoid going to bed too late. The more tired you get, the more you "drag your feet"

The small groups

It is useful to be divided into small groups for the holiday. Each group could choose a name which links with the theme

of the week. Small groups help people to get to know each other and they create a calm and peaceful atmosphere. During the morning, one group can go for a walk, another can do the household chores and another can prepare a mime for the evening entertainment.

Excursions and games

Excursions, walks and sport (football, rounders...) are an integral part of the week's programme and we try to include as many as possible because they are always enjoyed. You just have to remember that people with disabilities vary in their ability to move about. One solution is to group people according to their physical possibilities and to adapt the route for walks and the kind of games to suit each group. Remember to plan for indoor games on rainy days, simple but good fun for everybody.

Arts and crafts

Take suitable materials with you such as paper crayons, felt tips, paint and brushes, rags and modelling clay of some sort... Workshop can be organised for drawings and painting, decorating the house and prayer corner, making little gifts to take home to parents... Collect things on your walks that can be used, like pine cones, small pebbles, shells, leaves and flowers.

Mimes

Mimes are very important in the life of a community. They add to a celebration and help everyone to enter into the theme of the week, but only if they are really lived and not just acted to an audience. It is good to re-live the Gospel story that you have already heard, by miming it.

The fiesta

Fiestas must also be prepared and not just left to improvisation which leads to confusion. Songs and dances create an atmosphere of joy and they help people to interact with one an-

Free to be myself

For me, the holiday camp is a time when I discover how everyone is complementary. During our monthly meetings, we are a bit restricted when we seem to be too fixed in what we do, our own special job and our own role to play. But at camp, we are called to something different: the person with disabilities prepares the meal when it is his turn, parents become companions as they go off to the mountains and climb to the top, friends find themselves responsible for things they never imagined they could do, like doing the cooking or leading the prayer. At camp, we can free ourselves from a rather stereotyped way of behaving which we may impose on ourselves or on others.

other. Towards the middle of the camp, you could organise a fancy dress party, but be careful not to overdo this type of activity as some people with disabilities are easily disturbed by too much excitement.

The fiesta can also take on the character of a celebration, helping us to re-live certain events from the Gospel, such as the wedding of Cana or the return of the prodigal son...

Meal times

Meal times also have the Gospel dimension, feasting and relationship. They can be times of reconciliation. Let's make our meals really happy occasions!

Prayer

Each day begins and ends with prayer and it's good to sing before and after meals. Evening prayer has a special importance in the life of the camp. It gathers the day together and brings it gently to a close. Make sure that the prayer is well prepared and beautiful so that we can praise God and thank Him for all that's happened during the day. Take time to ask for His forgiveness and pardon. Make sure that the persons with severe disabilities have the chance to express themselves and see that they are not swamped but those who speak most easily.

Material jobs

If there are more than six people on holiday it helps with the smooth running of the camp if the jobs are shared out. People with disabilities can find this a way of expressing their independence and of showing initiative. Don't discourage them if they are slow and clumsy, because working like this can be an opportunity for growth and progress.

Each day, we sort out the jobs for different people according to the rota we have made (cleaning the house, cooking, preparing vegetables...)

The meeting of the coordinating team

A daily reflection on camp activities is needed each day. The coordinating team must set aside a time for this daily meeting (in the morning if possible). The previous day is reviewed and adaptations made where necessary (was the programme too packed?...). One of the duties of this team is to be aware of the needs of each one (Why is this person not settling down? How can we help?...).

Safety

We have to be conscious all the time we are at camp of our responsibility for the persons with disabilities. We must

Growing in Faith

We try to prepare the times of prayer to fit in with the general theme of the camp. For example, the year of the pilgrimage to Lourdes, we built a little grotto. Each evening we thought about the different apparitions of Mary to Bernadette and we chose songs to Mary. The teaching was simple and clear and we all grew in faith. We saw the result of this prayer later when we celebrated Mass with the people of the village and again when we were staying with the parish priest. We were able to be a witness to those who generally only see us from the outside.

Bernard's inspiration!

The greatest fright of my life was when we lost Bernard on the motorway as we returned home from the camp. It was a Classic example of what can happen: two coaches, a short stop and, on starting again, each leader thought that Bernard must be on the other coach. Bernard, who can't speak, had the bright idea of unhooking one of the emergency telephones on the motorway. He grunted and groaned over the phone and the policeman, intrigued, came along to investigate... That's how we got Bernard back. We found him, jubilant in front of the TV in the police station... But what hours of anguish for us! We've learned our lesson, that everyone must return to the same coach after each stop and that we must take a roll call.

frequently check that everyone is there. Even though people with disabilities find their way about in familiar surroundings, they often lose their sense of direction in a strange place. Take every precaution to avoid accidents. The greatest danger occurs in swimming activities. Choose the place to swim very carefully and make sure that good swimmers are on the lookout all the time. Do this discretely and good temperedly. Leave people their freedom as that's the way they grow in confidence but, at the same time, make sure they are quite safe.

Contacting the neighbours

It's very nice to be on good terms with the neighbours. You can invite them to a meal or to a celebration. A Faith and Light camp can be a real witness to other people. Several times it has happened that the attitude of the inhabitants of a village to people with disabilities has been completely changed by a Faith and Light community spending their holiday amongst them.

Try to get in touch with the parish priest and invite him to come and celebrate the Eucharist in your house. Offer to take some special part in the parish mass.

Up and down

The team named to lay the table are all agreed in principle. But it is unusual if you don't find yourself running after half the team at the last moment! It's like places at the table: people change at each meal... and there's a bit of sulking and grumbling. It's sometimes funny in the bedrooms. For example, when Françoise was sharing with Isabelle. Françoise is so meticulous and Isabelle leaves everything lying about, as untidy and bohemian as you could imagine... To begin with they got on each other's nerves, but they finished up by showing great patience with each other and forgiveness when, inevitably, one of them explodes!

Whew, that's the end of our check list. We have learnt (often to our cost) that a pilot never sets out without one. It is absolutely necessary if the take-off, the flight and the landing are to go smoothly. And we'll be glad if by sharing with you our mistakes, the things we've forgotten and the things that went wrong, we shall have helped you to avoid these snags and pitfalls!

Alleluia!

Code of conduct

The Faith and Light International Association has set up a code of conduct relating to the wellbeing and protection of the most vulnerable people in its communities, in particular the children and the intellectually disabled, young and adult, who have joined the local communities for their usual meeting times and for more occasional activities such as weekends, holiday camps, pilgrimages...

This code of conduct does not replace any local legislation in force on these topics but it gives guidelines on the behaviour that members of the communities must observe within their community to respect the wellbeing of the most fragile members and protect them from any risk of abuse or maltreatment. Each person is responsible for knowing the legislation in force.

The communities may have many activities other than the regular meetings. They arise according to the needs and creativity of individuals and the inspiration from God. Among these initiatives are holiday camps, retreats and pilgrimages, etc. (Charter III, 2).

1) What is meant by maltreatment?

The World Health Organization defines maltreatment as all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the person's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. (WHO, Geneva, 29-31 March 1999).

2) What is this code of conduct?

In order to help people with intellectual disabilities to find peace of heart, hope and the desire to grow, it is certainly necessary to see them in the light of the Gospel, but also to

understand their human needs in their suffering, and to know how to respond. For this, we must gradually acquire human experience and the necessary knowledge. Those who are involved in Faith and Light must become competent in the way they accompany people who suffer or are in difficulties. (Charter II, 3).

In our communities, we should, as invited by our charter:

- Treat children and the most vulnerable people in our community with respect and dignity, taking into account their specific characters, their needs and their choices in accordance with local traditions and culture.
- Respect the rights of each person as a complete person, both in their body and soul.
- Create and develop a culture of frankness and transparency that allows each person to feel free to speak openly about their concerns, problems and personal situations and to be listened to seriously.
- Avoid any behaviour that may threaten the physical and psychological integrity of any person in the community.
- Inform the community coordinator and/or the vice provincial coordinator of any concern with regard to compliance with this code or any situation that contradicts this code.
- Make sure that it is the most appropriate people in the community who shower or take to the toilet vulnerable people who cannot do so alone

For each activity lasting more than 24 hours, each community coordinator will send a statement to the provincial or national association. That statement shall indicate that all the participants have been informed of this code of conduct. Each community coordinator must be informed by the provincial or national association of the means to implement when necessary, and specify the name of the reference person to contact in the association.

People with intellectual disability who are unable to read or write, or have limited capacity to do so, will have to be informed about the content of this code in a way appropriate to their level of communication and understanding.

In addition, when planning activities, community coordinators will have to foresee means of vigilance to implement, to ensure the well-being and the protection of the most fragile persons. Every evening, the people in charge of the supervision shall make a replay of the day's activities in relation with the protection of vulnerable persons.

Planning will take into account that legal prohibitions, whether factual or intentional, are punishable and liable to immediate prosecution, not all necessitating the same means of action or mapping. Amongst the legal prohibitions, it will be stipulated that it is absolutely forbidden under all circumstances to:

- hit or use any form of physical, verbal or psychological violence,
- have verbal or physical behaviours of a sexual nature or sexually abuse the person,
- humiliate the person or belittle them through words or acts,
- harass or intimidate directly or indirectly through social media.

We must be aware of the need to raise awareness amongst leaders and then all members of issues regarding abuse and maltreatment in general. On the other hand, when someone secretly receives a revelation, or finds out, he/she is upset and often disoriented, without knowing what to do. This increases the risk of either staying silent or of alerting everyone - and it is very important to maintain a high degree of discretion to protect the victim and to be able to listen to them in confidentiality. Therefore, there should be a team or at least one contact person with the provincial coordinating team. This person can first listen to the person who

has knowledge of the facts and give him/her guidance on the facts and information to detect.

3) Dealing with information about mistreatment or abuse, received from a community member

- a. It is necessary to have favourable preconceptions about the victim and not minimize the verbalisation of the event. It is very important to help him/her express himself/herself freely, making sure not to influence him/her, but trying to gather objective facts and write them down.
- b. The credibility needs to be assessed – based on objective facts noted– from the objective facts (observations or others). It is better to remove the alleged person from the activities so as not to compromise the statement.
- c. Create a written memo stating, in the most objective way possible (places, date and time), the facts and what was heard, and make it available to the authorities who may be required to carry out an investigation.
- d. If the facts are credible, the person who carried out the abuse must be immediately excluded from the movement and forbidden from taking part in any further meetings.
- e. If the abused person is a minor or vulnerable, those informed of this abuse must inform the police and relevant authority, as well as those responsible for the victim (parent, guardian) and the leaders of the provincial association.
- f. You can make a distinction in other situations where the facts are said to be “unclear” and where it is then necessary to carry out an investigation in accordance with the presumption of innocence but also with the desire not to risk any new abuse being committed.

4) Recommended practices for handling information from a community member, concerning mistreatment or abuse

- We must be aware that the person who receives the news in confidentiality will be upset and will need to be listened to in the strictest discretion by someone, with skills in the field, who can help him/her to listen to the victim and know how to proceed.
- This information should never be underestimated.
- It is therefore necessary to handle this initial information in the strictest confidence, and, in accordance with the presumption of innocence, request the strictest confidentiality from the person who raised this situation contravening the law and breaching this code of conduct. However, we must not contribute to the law of silence often present in such circumstances.
- Any notification made by a member of a community must immediately be sent to the provincial coordinator, who will be kept regularly updated with any development in this regard. The information will also be sent to the President of the Board of Directors of Faith and Light International as well as the General Secretary.
- If the fact is proven correct or confirmed, it is necessary to accompany the victim and allow him/her to verbalize his trauma with an official complaint. The victim should not bear the responsibility for the abuse, especially if it is perpetrated by a person of authority. The perpetrator of the abuse should no longer be in contact with the victim and possibly with the community members. Everyone must be treated differently. The community coordinator will ensure that appropriate support is provided to those involved, their accompaniers and their families; this support will be extended to other members of the community affected by this situation.

5) Adaptation to local legislation

All provinces are requested to ensure that this code of conduct be adapted in a way that is consistent with the laws of each of the countries where Faith and Light is present.

The Board of Directors will be kept informed of the dissemination of these national codes of conduct as and when they are produced. A copy (in one of the three official languages of Faith and Light) will be sent to the International Secretariat.

**Document templates to be signed
by each community coordinator
for a Faith and Light event**

Statement to return to your provincial coordinator

STATEMENT

I, the undersigned:

Community coordinator:

Province:

Declare that I have read and understood the Code of Conduct of Faith and Light and pledge to respect it and abide by it as well as by the legislation of my country. Declare also that I have informed all the participants of the content of the Code. Declare being informed by the provincial/national Association of the means to implement if necessary.

Drawn up in:

On (date):

Signature:

Medical issues

Here are some medical questions to ask the parents or the centre if the person with a disability comes to the camp alone. This information will be added to the indispensable health booklet and will be kept with the utmost discretion.

- Do you receive free medical assistance? Name and address of the organisation.
- **Autonomy**
Does the person with disabilities need special assistance (getting up, washing, eating, toileting, etc.)
- **General condition**
Does she frequently have: diarrhoea, constipation, vomiting, acetone, hives, angina, nosebleeds, colds, allergies...
Has your daughter started to have her period?
Will she have her period during the camp?
- **Risk of discomfort**
Specify the nature and symptoms of any discomfort or seizures (epilepsy, cardiac, respiratory). Indicate the recommended medicines and contraindications (anaesthesia, certain medicines, etc.)?
- **Diet**
Does she need to be on a diet (normal, to be monitored)?
Are there any forbidden foods?
- **Incontinence**
Is the incontinence nocturnal, daytime, accidental, permanent, total?

- **Behaviour**

Is the person with disabilities easily worried, anxious, sleep-walking? Does the person have difficulties with group behaviour?

- **The baths**

Can she swim? Are cold baths allowed (sea, river, pool)?

A final note: the person with disabilities may have decayed teeth. It would be wise for them to consult a dentist before departure so that their stay is not spoiled by a toothache!

Certificate of the parents

I, the undersigned (name and surname)
Father, mother or guardian of

Authorise the person in charge of the stay to have any medical examinations carried out that may be necessary.

In case of emergency, I give full permission for surgery to be performed.

Done at On
Signature:

Parents or guardian to be notified if necessary during the stay

Name
Address
Town Tel
Tel office

Doctor to contact in case of emergency during the stay

Name (name and surname)
Address
Town Tel

Doctor's certificate

The doctor (name and surname):
Address

Certify that (name and surname of the person with disabilities) :

Do not have any contraindications for holiday stays and that the answers to the above questions seem to me to be correct.

Done at On
Signature:

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 in 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 ways of the Gospel.

Jesus come and live in us and in our communities
as you first lived 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.

Notes

Notes

Available documents

*at the international secretariat or on the intranet of the website:
www.foietlumiere.org/en*

Never again alone, the adventure of Faith and Light, Marie-Hélène Mathieu (www.amazon.com)

- Charter and Constitution
- Annual guidelines
- Leader's handbook
- Our first guidelines
- Identity and mission of Faith and Light

- General rules of financial management
- A few easy recipes to raise funds

- Day for a renewal in the community
- Spirituality of Faith and Light
- Letters to my brothers and sisters, Fr Joseph Larsen

- The Mysteries of Faith and Light, Ghislain du Chéné
- The Way of the Cross, Ghislain du Chéné
- How to prepare and live a retreat
- Retreats in Faith and Light
- Ecumenism in Faith and Light
- Fioretti, Fr Joseph Larsen
- Experiencing the essential of Faith and Light in the midst of a pandemic
- The way of the heart, chaplains bear witness
- Messages of the Churches to Faith and Light

- Leaflets
- Faith and Light posters

"Up Sails!", the Faith and Light international letter

**How good
how delightful it is
for all
to live like brothers**

Psalm 133