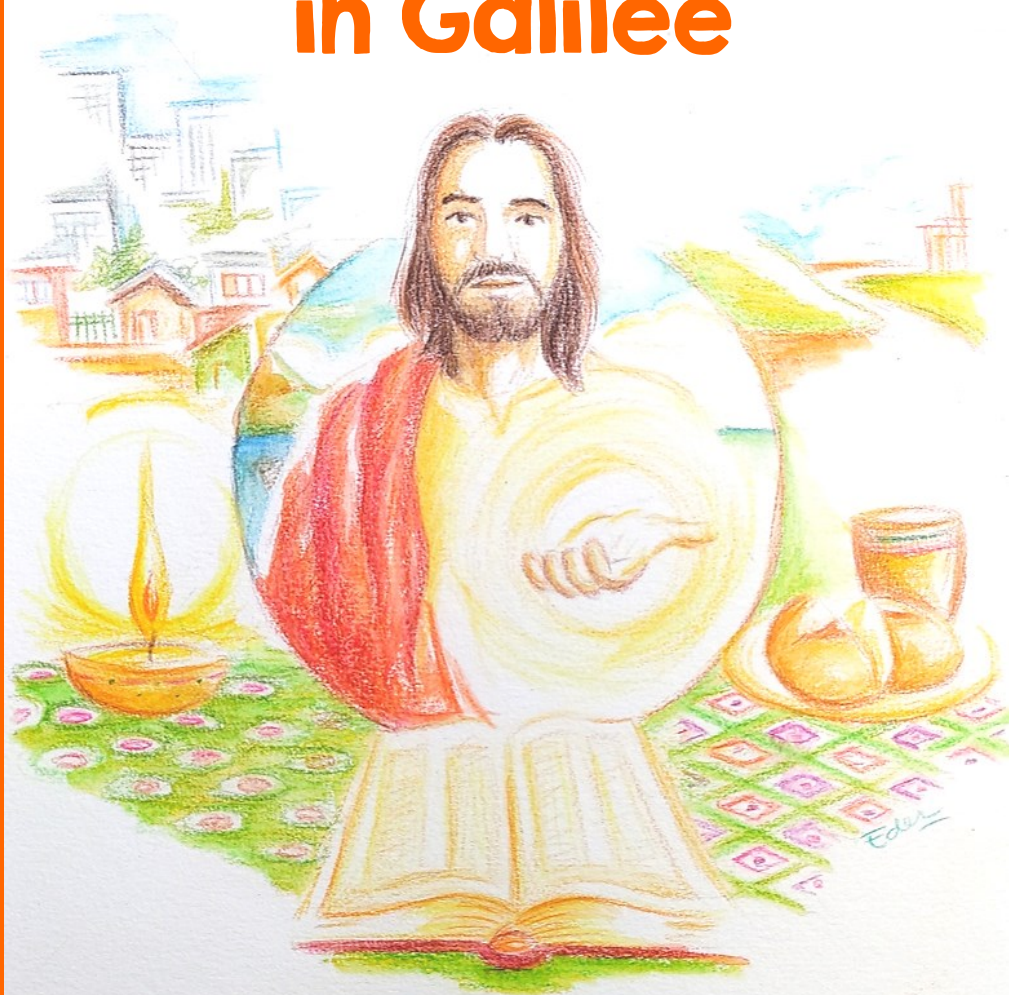


Meeting Jesus in Galilee



Guidelines 2023-2024
Faith and Light international

Content

• 2023/2024 Teams	3
• Introduction to the Brazil provinces	4
• Meeting Jesus in Galilee	6
• On the road together, prayer for meetings	8
1. Bethlehem , the search for littleness	9
2. Nazareth , the day's work, everyday life	13
3. Samaria , encountering mercy and love	17
4. Jericho , going to meet Jesus	21
5. Lake Tiberias , Faith and Light, do you love me?	25
6. The sea of Galilee , encounter, call, mission	29
7. Capharnaum , healing and freedom	33
8. Bethany , ties and the scent of friendship!	37
9. Cana in Galilee , a place of joy and togetherness	41
10. Mount Tabor , the experience of consolation	45
11. Jerusalem , our daily cross	49
12. Emmaus : the path, a place of encounters	53

Appendices

• Meditations by Don Marco Bove	
– Christmas	58
– Feast of Light	59
– Easter	60
– Pentecost	61
• The icon of Faith and Light, Father Joseph Larsen	62
• Artists' workshop	65
• O. L. of the Conception of Aparecida, patron saint of Brazil	74
• Faith and Light prayer (back cover)	

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

Teams 2023-2024

Reborn Province (Brazil North East)



Maria Cristina

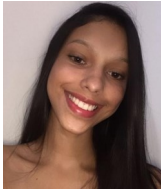


Auxiliadora

"Campo Belo" Province (Brazil Centre)



Anderson



Laura



Maria Eduarda



Sabrina



Frei Jairton

"Bridge of friendship" Province (Brazil South, Argentina, Paraguay)



Marcia Terezina



Jussara



Maria Helena
and her daughter Vanessa



Dora



Father Ederson



Illustrations: Eder d'Artagnan

Introduction

The international coordination of Faith and Light has asked the Brazilian provinces to draw up guidelines for the meetings of all the communities in our great family. What we offer Faith and Light is a small contribution compared to what we receive from it.

The guidelines reflect the country that produce them. The riches of our people and our environment have long been seen as the world's backyard. Our path to autonomy as a nation is still strewn with challenges. We are suffering the consequences of a global economy that emphasises the accumulation of wealth, to the detriment of the reality faced by our peoples. Pope Francis continually denounces this eco-nomic model, which devalues human beings.

As a Catholic Church, we are living through a time of synod as requested by Pope Francis. Walking together must be the hallmark of Faith and Light, as we seek out and listen to God's will for our time. Listening to God, listening to our brothers and sisters, listening to the signs of the times. We can make a great contribution to the Church.

We would like to emphasise the words that will recur in all the meetings: **Daily life - Time of faithfulness or the fourth time - Bringing meaning back to my life.**

Everyday life: Our everyday lives are very simple, sometimes filled with tasks, which may be big or small. The day-to-day reality of families and communities can seem monotonous, repetitive and routine. We need to re-discover the beauty and challenges of everyday life. Our people wisely say that yesterday's bread is hard and that the flour is still in the bag for tomorrow's bread. So, what we have left is the bread of today. Jesus already warned us: "Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Mt 6:34).

Jesus' life, during his thirty hidden years in Nazareth, was always simple and routine, but full of joy. The joy was in him, not in people

or things, time or tasks. We feel that this year we need to work more and better on the spirituality of everyday life. In doing this, our families and communities will be surprised by God's surprises. The Church and the world. We can call it a time of gratuitousness, with no agenda, no rush, no quest for results. Many of our brothers and sisters with disabilities live in solitude, with little interest shown in them. A visit, a walk, a snack, a lunch, a trip to the cinema, an amusement park or a pray-er can bring a feeling of belonging, of value and of integration. Many parents also need this fourth time to take a breather. When all is said and done, following Jesus means *dedicating your life to others* (Jn 15:13-15).

Giving new meaning to life is a concept that was much talked about during the COVID-19 pandemic. Every text of the Gospel leads us to give a new meaning to our lives, to seek to fit our existence to the life of Jesus. In other words, to give our lives the form of the life of Christ. We then experience a "transfiguration". The transfiguration was not an isolated moment in Jesus' life; it was constant, even when he was disfigured on the cross.

Faith and Light is a movement of transfiguration. You only have to listen to the personal stories and testimonies of parents and friends. We are an ecclesial and ecumenical movement for the transfiguration of human and Christian existence.

We'd like to suggest that everyone refer to the suggested biblical texts, studying them, looking at them in greater depth and praying over them. Reading them during the meeting is not enough.

We would like to draw your attention to the time of fidelity or fourth time, which is a way of lightening the daily routine of many families, helping them to give new meaning to the reality they are living.

We hope that these guidelines will help us to grow as a movement so that we can contribute to the building of the Kingdom of God.

With affection.

The provinces of Brazil

Meeting Jesus in Galilee

This year's theme is the places where we meet Jesus. Jesus lived in Palestine, a small strip of land measuring 20,000 km², 240 km long and no more than 90 km wide. Palestine is divided from top to bottom by a mountain range. At the time of Jesus, it was divided into two regions: Galilee and Samaria-Judea.

We have reproduced here a map of Palestine at the time of Jesus. Each month we'll stop off at one of these places and relive Jesus' encounters with the men, women, children, young people, adults and the elderly of his time.

We suggest that each community create an enlarged version of this card, because it will accompany us throughout the year. At each meeting, we'll stick drawings on it that relate to the theme of the month. We can then give one or more people the responsibility of drawing, painting or colouring the design.

As the coordinating team we suggest that after reading the Gospel of the month we answer the following question: How do I live my everyday life, the time of fidelity or the fourth time, and what new meaning does this give to my life?

Map of Palestine at the time of Jesus



On the road together

At each meeting, we will say this prayer in two choirs. We join hands and recite the refrain together:

**Take my hand, sister. Take my hand, my brother
because the road is hard, the path is long.**

If we walk it together, it will be easier.

If we stumble, we'll get up again.

You'll feel my hand supporting you and I'll feel yours, if I fall.

Chorus 1

We are not scattered grains,
we are ears of corn.
We are not mere grapes,
we are bunches;
God calls us to his vineyard
and invites us to live his life with
his tenderness.
Jesus, our friend, walks with us,
By sharing his bread
he gives us his wine.
Take my hand, sister...

Chorus 2

If we walk together and share the
pain, dreams and sorrows, hope
will grow
among the ears of corn because
with us
our friend Jesus walks.
He is the truth and the life the
light that enlightens,
the compass that guides us.
He is the Way.
Take my hand, sister...

Chorus 1

Lord, we are your people.
In your name we are
gathered together today
as brothers, on the path
our baptism opened.
One heart and one soul,
and in our midst
is our brother, Jesus Christ.
Take my hand, sister...

Choir 2

Our brother, Pope Francis
invites us
to make the journey together,
We'll stay together like a bunch,
because no one wants to lose
this path.
By sharing life, hope will be born
among the ears of corn.
Because with us comes Jesus,
our friend.
Take my hand, sister...

1

Bethlehem

The search for littleness



The word of the month

Poor little baby! When we come to Bethlehem to look at and contemplate the face of the child-God, we enter into the depths of the human heart, full of fragility, tenderness and goodness. In Bethlehem, we are calmed of our manias of grandeur and anxiety, of our eagerness to always do more and better, of our thirst for power and vanity. For before the fragility of the Infant Jesus, we are led to what we truly are. Leonardo Boff, a Brazilian theologian, says that *"every child wants to be a man, every man wants to be a king, every king wants to be God. Only God wanted to be a child!"*

Contemplation of the Child of Bethlehem urges us to cross over to the interior of the grotto: there, the great mystery of God's tenderness becomes visible and gently reveals the meaning of that mystery. There, we encounter the adventure of God which became the human adventure, from beginning to end. God became human fabric and clothed human beings in divine fabric, filling them with meaning and purpose. The God of Bethlehem entered human flesh and never left. For this reason, He can be sought in our interiority and in everything that is human.

A Faith and Light community is a new Bethlehem, a place of encounter, humanisation and divinisation. Here we are stripped of arrogance, superiority and a taste for wealth. Only those who feel themselves to be brothers or sisters, like Jesus, can make this journey as human as it is divine.

In Bethlehem, Jesus, Mary and Joseph remind us of the beauty of the simple things of everyday life, the Magi remind us of the meaning of gratuity (i.e., the time of fidelity or the fourth time), and the shepherds remind us of the joy of a new life in the encounter with the child-God.

So, *"Let us go to Bethlehem and see what has happened, what the Lord has made known to us"* (Lk 2: 15).

- **Evangelic reference:** Lk 2: 1-20

- **Welcome**

A member of the community greets the newcomer with a gesture of affection, handing him or her a star as a symbol of light and saying: "*(First name), your presence is fundamental to God*". We then sing a song of welcome.

Sharing

– Together

Reliving the Gospel of Saint Luke 2: 1-20.

- * How does the Gospel text help me discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

– In small groups

- * How should we live out our littleness on a daily basis, following the example of Jesus?
- * What attitudes do we as a Faith and Light community need to have in order to break out of our conformism and reach out to those who remain invisible in the Church and in society?
- * How does the littleness of Jesus' birth help us to bring new meaning to our lives as members of Faith and Light?

- **Artists' workshop**

Drawings: Where do we meet Jesus? (See page 65)

- **Celebration**

Game: The hot potato

Everyone sits in a circle and passes a "potato" (which can be any object) to their neighbour. The potato is passed around, singing "potato passing, potato passing, potato that has passed, who's going to stay with the potato, poor kid, he's burnt himself! When we get to "he's burnt", the person holding the object in their hands gets a challenge, for example, to sing a song, mime a job, imitate an animal, etc.

- **Prayer**

Jesus became man to include the poor in the heart of the Church and of humanity: the marginalised, the homeless, people suffering from addiction, refugees and all those who are still invisible in the world.

Jesus came so that we could all be part of the same body, with no exclusion.

Jesus, help us to have humble hearts that are in communion.

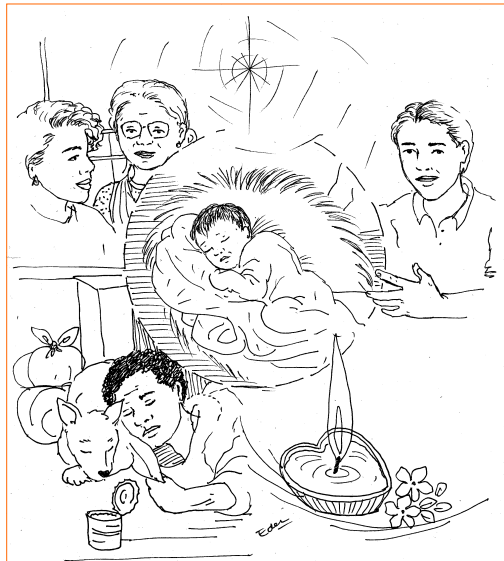
Prayer of a poor person

Thank you, Jesus, for being the Light that illuminates our path every day.

And until the next meeting

When we go home, let's try to adopt attitudes that help us to be simpler and more understanding towards others.

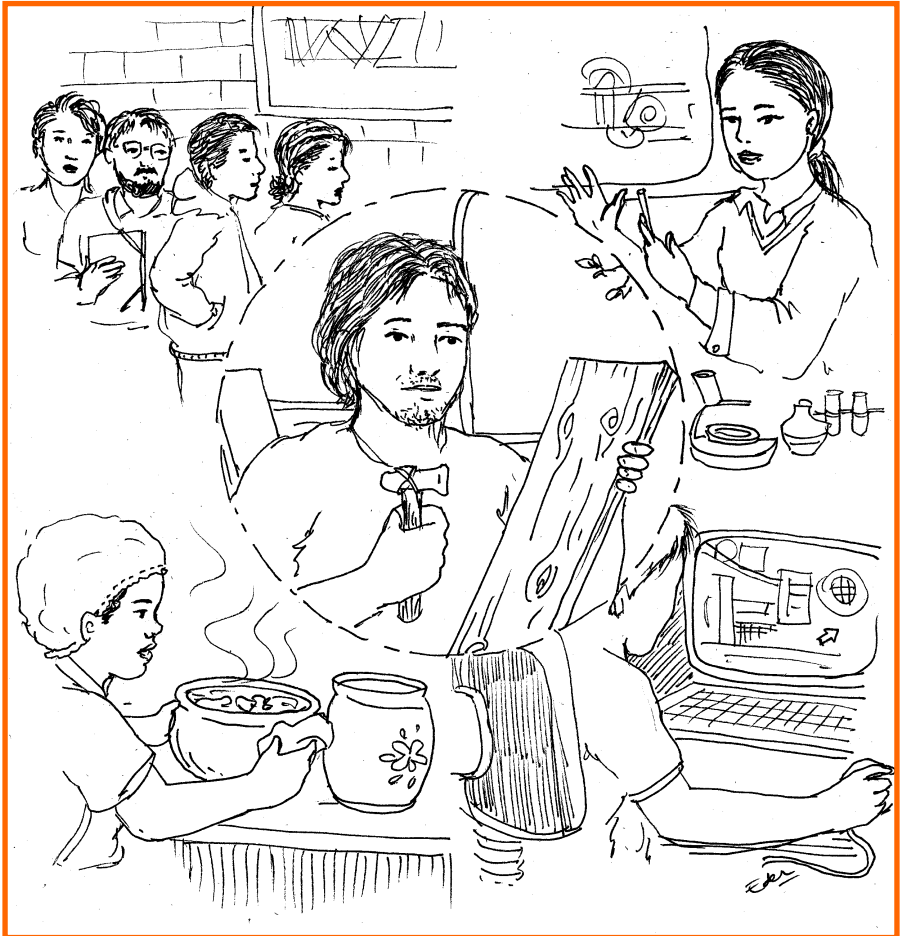
Invite one or two members of Faith and Light for a walk or a picnic (fidelity time or fourth time).



2

Nazareth

The day's work, everyday life



The word of the month

Nazareth at the time of Jesus had a population of around 400, a small, poor and little-known place. Jesus lived there for about thirty years and grew up with his people.

He learnt the faith of simple people, the upkeep of the home, manual labour and living together. Nazareth was his school.

Mary and Joseph were very important in the human formation of Jesus and, although we find nothing in the Gospels, we can base our reading on the public life of Jesus. In his three years of missionary life, he reveals the thirty years of simple, hidden life in Nazareth.

Our Faith and Light communities must translate the importance of living the spirit of Nazareth for humanity today. The spirit of Nazareth tells us to live with intensity this everyday life that is so simple that it seems repetitive. Through it we learn sobriety, care for everything and those around us, kindness (i.e., the time of fidelity or fourth time) that enables us to be in tune with others, to serve the poorest with generosity. Finally, Nazareth is a way of life, our spiritual home, a place so human that it becomes the manifestation of the divine, where everything can take on new meaning.

- **Evangelic reference: Lk 2:41-51**

- **Welcome**

On arrival, each member will receive a rose petal to complete the heart (see page 66) which will be placed in the centre of the room, next to the Bible and a lit candle.

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

Reliving the Gospel of Luke 2:41-51.

- * How does the Gospel text help me discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In small groups**

- * Mary and Joseph played a very important role in the education

- * Busy with our daily tasks, we forget to look at our brothers and sisters, we neglect personal relationships and family ties, preferring individualism, money and material goods. What must we do to rediscover this generous regard for our brothers and sisters?

- * How can we follow the example of the family of Nazareth with a simple daily life?

- **Artists' workshop**

Make a Brazilian Indian toy called a peteca (see page 66).

- **Celebration**

Game: Don't let the peteca fall

You need at least two players. The more players, the more fun the game will be. The space should be big enough to play without disturbing other people. The players stand in a circle, or opposite each other if there are only two. The player drawn throws the peteca in the air, hitting it like a volleyball serve. All the players must prevent it from falling to the ground by knocking it up again. Whoever catches it or lets it fall loses a point. The penultimate player to touch the peteca starts the next game.

Or

Mime

Each participant receives a piece of paper with an everyday action to imitate, and the others have to guess what it is.

• **Prayer**

Jesus, teach us to follow the path of the joy of living in friendship, respect and generosity with the most disadvantaged.

Jesus said: *"When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighboursBut when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind..."* (Luke 14: 12-13).

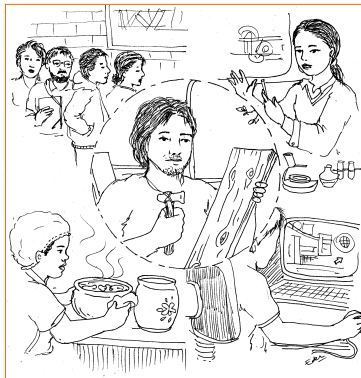
Lord, I thank you for showing us that we must put aside our pretentiousness and inner arrogance to be reborn in true communion with our brothers and sisters.

Prayer of a poor person

Thank you, Jesus, for being with us every day.

And until the next meeting

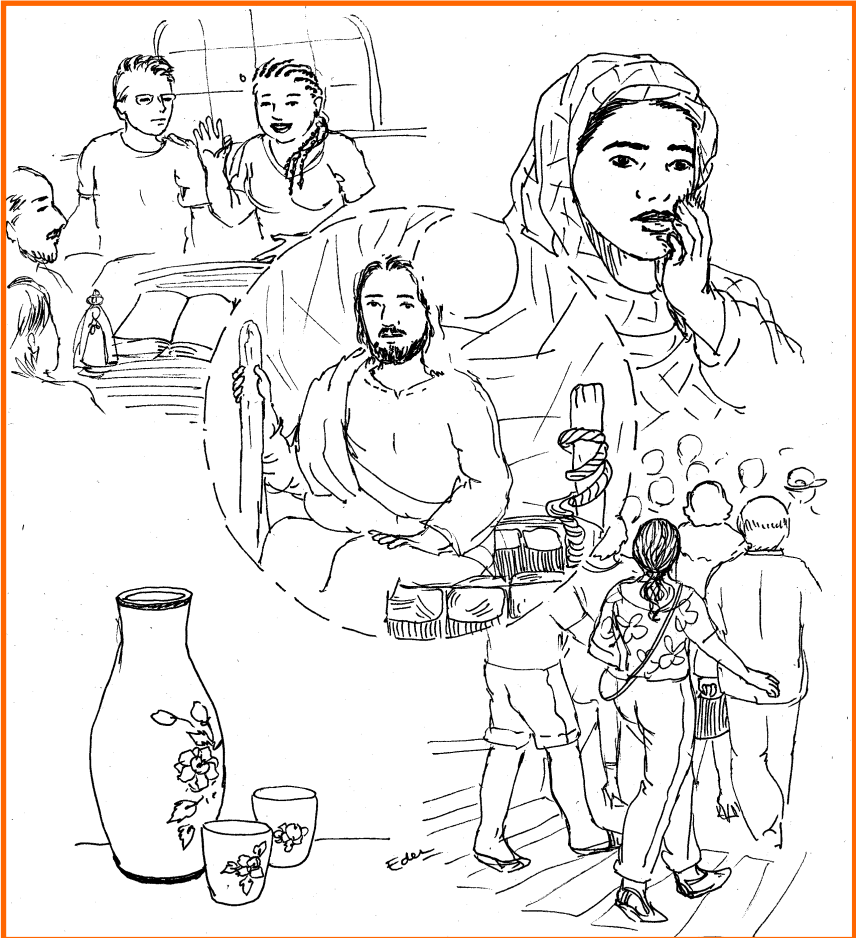
Let us try to pray to improve our human weaknesses by living more humbly in service. Following Mary's example, let's go in a small group to visit a friend of Faith and Light who is ill and/or far away.



3

Samaria

Encountering mercy and love



The word of the month

In the burning sun, dust and tiredness of midday, Jesus is sitting by a well waiting for someone to give him a drink. It's a scene we've seen many times before: tiredness, thirst, dust, exhaustion, waiting for someone... Into this scene comes a woman. She has come to fetch water at an inappropriate hour that becomes appropriate, the hour of encounter, the hour of grace. It is in our everyday lives that we encounter God's Christ.

Jesus immediately approaches her: *"Give me a drink!"* The dialogue seems tense, and the woman, hurt by the rejection, becomes defensive. *"What do you mean, you're talking to me?"* Jesus continued the dialogue with sensitivity and, at one point, took a radical initiative, saying to her: *"Call your husband"*. She replied, *"I don't have a husband"*. Jesus praised her for her honesty and told her it was true. He had already understood that this woman was honest in her search for love, despite her choice of path.

The woman, feeling welcomed in her faith, recognised him as a prophet, then Lord and Messiah. In the meantime, Jesus' disciples understand nothing, and are even angry when they see Jesus talking to the woman.

The Faith and Light community should be like a well, a place to find new meaning in life, where everyone can come and sit and express their thirst. Our brothers and sisters with disabilities also are thirsty for love and affection... Who is listening to them? The time of fidelity or the fourth time is a good time to listen. We are still like the disciples of Jesus, full of prejudice.

- **Evangelic reference:** John 14: 5-15

- **Welcome**

The coordinator or a member of the coordinating team gives a glass to the newcomers. While singing a song about living water, the coordinator serves water to everyone.

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

Reliving the Gospel of John (John 4: 5-15)

- * How does the Gospel text help me to discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life? * How can we turn our encounters into wells of living water?

- **In small groups**

- * How can we turn our encounters into wells of living water?
 - * On our journey through life, we are sometimes thirsty, not just for water, but also for peace, tenderness, love, forgiveness and, above all, friends. Who gave you something to drink on this journey?
 - * What attitudes must we adopt to live the time of fidelity or the fourth time with our neighbour?

- **Artist's workshop**

We make a small card with the Faith and Light logo to give to a friend with a disability, enclosing a chocolate or sweet treat (see page 67).

Celebration

Game: Simon says

One of the participants will be the game master (Simon). He must give orders. The others must obey him only if the sentence begins with "Simon says". Orders that do not begin with "Simon says" must not be carried out. For example: "Applause", nobody moves. "Simon says: stamp your feet", everyone must stamp their feet.

• **Prayer**

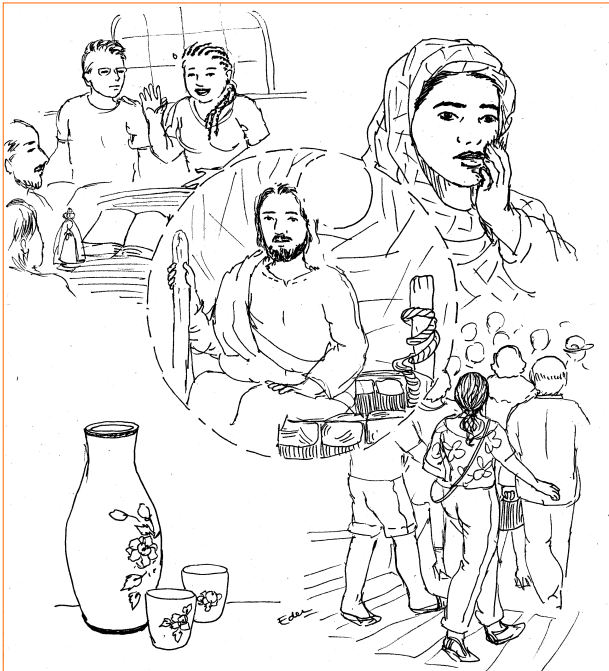
My God, in your words I find strength and hope.
Help us to live a new life, always forgiving and making our life a constant prayer.
Feed our thirst for forgiveness, humility, perseverance, joy and love.

Prayer of a poor person

Jesus, we thank you for your mercy.

And until the next meeting

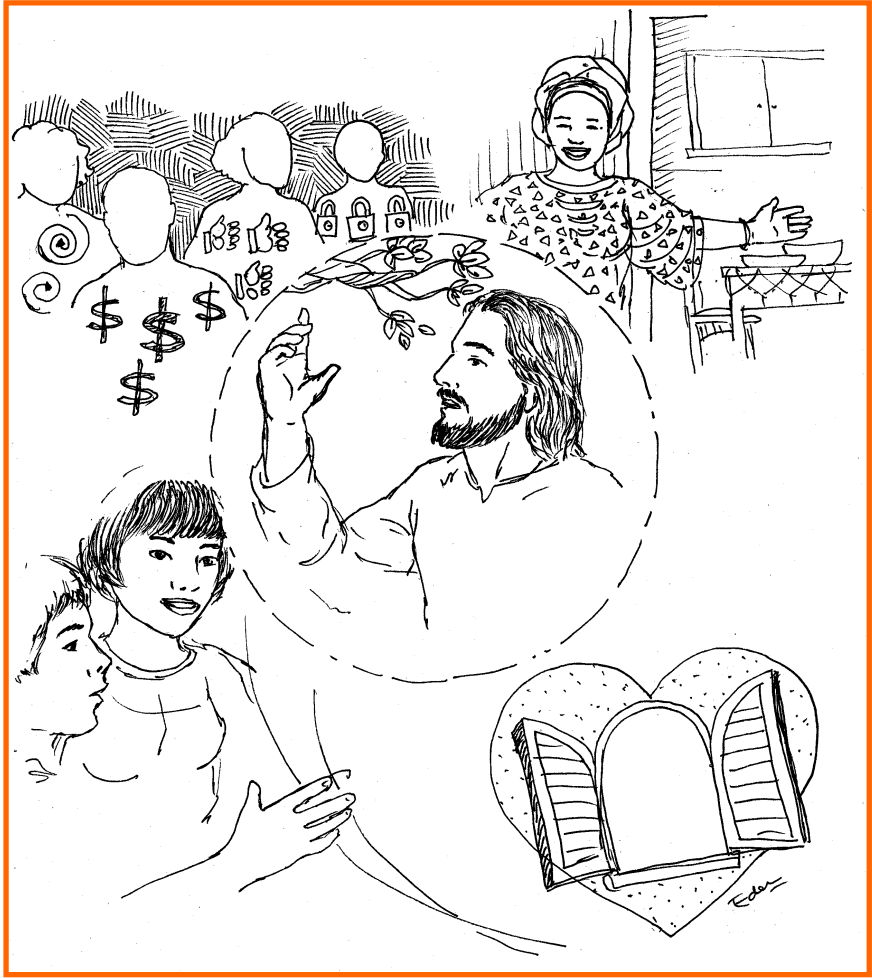
Let's visit a friend with a disability and enjoy a moment of prayer and encounter together. We offer them the card we made during the artists' workshop.



4

Jericho

Going to meet Jesus



The word of the month

When Zacchaeus, the tax collector, a man of dubious morality who prided himself on his dishonestly acquired wealth, heard that Jesus was passing through Jericho, he did not hesitate and ran like a child so he could climb a tree and see Jesus passing by. He was small, the story tells us, not only physically, but also and above all in terms of his morals. When Jesus passed by and saw this man bordering on the ridiculous, amongst the branches of a tree, he gave him a strong order followed by some good news: "*Zacchaeus, come down quickly: I must stay in your house today*", in other words, I am going to come into your everyday life. What Jesus said corresponds to what we at Faith and Light call the time of fidelity or the fourth time.

The story is superb because it tells us about a dynamic that we have to learn every day and that Faith and Light generously offers us: to see Jesus we must not go up, but rather come down. Coming down is a very difficult dynamic because inwardly we are driven to go up. That is why humanity is sick, disconnected from human, ecological, social and religious values. Jesus clearly tells us that in order to see him, we have to come down, and that it is only like this that he will dwell in our house, that is to say in our hearts, where we will hear from his lips: "*Today salvation has come for this house*". Thanks to this visitor, Zacchaeus found new meaning in his life.

The Faith and Light community teaches us a beautiful dynamic, which is both human and divine: to go up you have to come down. Remember, Jesus is the master of a life of descent, what Saint Paul calls "*kenosis*" (Phil 2: 5-11). There are no Faith and Light communities that are not genuine schools of *kenosis*...

- **Evangelic references:** Lk 19: 1-10 and Ph 2: 5-11.

- **Welcome**

Each participant will receive a drawing of a tree leaf from the coordinating team, on which they will write their first name. They will then stick it on the tree that has been drawn on a card (see page 68).

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

- Reliving the Gospel of Luke 19: 1-10.

- * How does the Gospel text help me discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In sharing groups**

- * What keeps me away from Jesus?

- * What can I do to come closer to him?

- * We are often selfish, accumulating "goods" while many of our brothers and sisters have little or nothing. How can we share our possessions (clothes, food, services, acquaintances, friendships) with the neediest?

- * What are we doing to open our inner house (heart) and welcome our friends with disabilities?

- * How can we move downwards to understand our brothers' suffering?

- **Artist's workshop**

Build a ladder with strips of paper (see page 68): on each step, write the things that lead us away from Jesus and our brothers and sisters. For example: pride, greed, dishonesty, distrust, anger, gossip... Or perhaps the opposite, the things that bring us closer to him: prayer, care, service, solidarity, love...

Then everyone can make a brief comment.

- **Celebration**

Game: Box of objects

This box can be made of cardboard. We place objects of various shapes, textures and sizes inside. For example: stones, small balls, plastic glass, dolls, flowers. Each person approaches the box and slides their hand inside. They grab an object without taking it out and try to guess what it is. Then they take it out of the box and describe the sensation they had while examining it (See page 69).

Or

Game: Birds in the nest

Each nest will be formed by two people facing each other, hand in hand. The number of nests will depend on the number of participants. Example: six people form three nests. The other participants are the birds that will fly to take shelter in the nests. A song is played or sung. When the music stops, we shout "birds to the nest". And with each turn, the nests will group together to form larger nests until they form a single nest where all the birds can nest together. No bird should remain outside the nest.

- **Prayer**

Lord, today we have been meditating in silence on the conversion of Zacchaeus, who gave up all actions that were prejudicial to his brothers and sisters, so that we might follow his example and convert our acts of indifference and human spitefulness into respect for everyone, especially our friends with disabilities.

Prayer of a poor person

Thank you, Jesus, for the certainty of being loved.

And until the next meeting

We're going to invite a friend from Faith and Light to spend some time with us and have lunch as a family.

5

Lake Tiberias

Faith and Light, do you love me?



The word of the month

Lake Tiberias or Lake Gennesaret was a familiar place for the fishermen who had become disciples. It was part of their everyday lives.

The Risen Jesus appeared to them in a place that was familiar to them and in the course of a daily action. This is how Jesus continues to appear to his disciples – there is nothing fantastic, extraordinary or grandiose about it. The reality of Faith and Light is like this, even if we would like things to be spectacular. By the beach, they are having a meal that is typical of the place: grilled fish and bread.

Jesus still had a mission: to heal Peter's heart. A wounded heart can become a sad heart. Jesus came to heal wounds, not to open them; He came to give new meaning to the wounds we carry. *"Peter, do you love me?"* The question repeated three times makes us think of Peter's three denials, in the cold, sad dawn, before the Sanhedrin. Jesus is not asking about the negative, but about love. Like Peter, we are all capable of doing evil, we all have our weaknesses. However, Jesus recognises that in every human being there is a capacity to love that far exceeds the capacity to do evil.

Faith and Light communities are made up of vulnerability, yet they bring a living source of love that makes them real and full of possibilities. This is precisely where Jesus asks us: *"Faith and Light, do you love me?"* If our answers are like Peter's, Jesus will also say to us, *"Take care of my people!"* The first question speaks of affective love, the second of effective love and the third of glorified love, that is, when we love affectively and effectively, the Father is glorified! Let's remember that the time of fidelity or fourth time is the time of affective love, of effective love and of glorified love par excellence.

- **Evangelic reference:** John 21: 1-19

- **Welcome**

A person dressed as Jesus greets all the members with the question "*(first name), do you love me?*"

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

- Reliving the Gospel of John (Jn 21: 1-19).

- * How does the Gospel text help me discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In small groups**

- * How can we show our love for Jesus and for Faith and Light?

- * If we affirm our love for Jesus and Faith and Light, can we truly care for his sheep? How can we do this?

- * How can we move beyond our own will and follow God's will?

- **Artist's workshop**

Make an origami heart (see page 69). Each person should write their first name on the heart.

- **Celebration**

Collect the hearts, mix them up and distribute them amongst the participants. Each person will read the name they have drawn without revealing who it is. They will say why they like this person and what characteristics and qualities they most admire in them. Start with: "I like this person because..." and at the end say the first name of the person they are referring to.

Game: I want to belong to the group

Experience the feeling of exclusion in the community and develop a sense of acceptance and belonging to the community.

All the participants form a tight circle in the centre of the room. One person tries their best to get in by whatever means they feel is most appropriate, either through force or through dialogue. Then

we ask ourselves the question: what do we feel when are excluded from the community? What leads the community to exclude someone? How can we avoid exclusion?

In our everyday lives, how do we welcome people who do not participate in our community?

• **Prayer**

Lord, we thank you for belonging to Faith and Light and we ask you for the strength and courage to share love wherever we go: in every family, in the church and in society for every brother or sister we meet.

Thanks to your love, we are communities of faith, where life is guided by the faithful following of your Son Jesus, in simplicity, joy, friendship and brotherhood. In the same way that your Son called the apostles, confirm in their intentions all those who have said "yes" to the mission of loving and following the path of goodness. Renew the enthusiasm of those who are not yet on this path. Through Christ Our Lord.

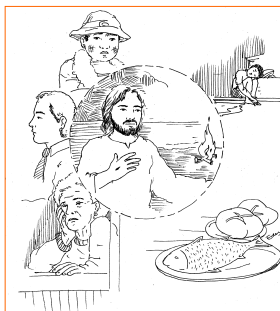
We pray Amen!

Prayer of a poor person

Jesus, keep us firm in our daily choice to love.

And until the next meeting

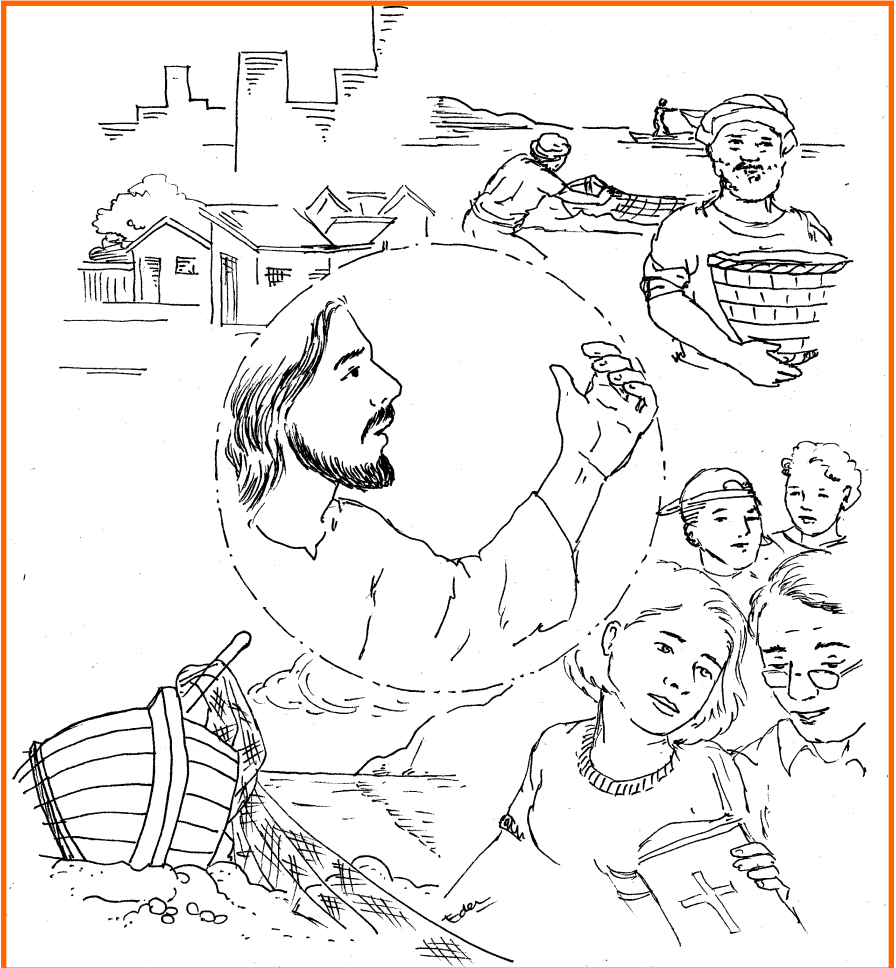
Let's think about the person whose name we have chosen and, over the course of the month, pray that he/she will persevere in their love for Jesus.



6

The Sea of Galilee

Encounter, call, mission!



The word of the month

The Gospel sets the tone with an extraordinary scene: Jesus, a layman, outside the religious space, surrounded by a crowd eager to hear the Word of God! It was from here that he saw men washing their fishing nets, tired and with heavy hearts, because they had nothing to bring home to the hungry mouths waiting for them at home. It's as if Jesus loved these fishermen at first sight. He saw that they were capable of risking their lives for their nearest and dearest, facing up to all the dangers of the high seas. Anyone who is not capable of risking his or her own life for others is not capable of risking his or her life for the Gospel.

The boat is part of the fisherman's everyday life. Jesus wanted to tell the crowd about Peter's life. He needed to go into deep waters, to get away from superficiality and to cast out the nets. In the same way, the Lord's invitation is continuing today for Faith and Light communities: to be deep in knowledge, relationships, faith and mission. Even though Peter knew the sea and had the experience of a good fisherman, he did not limit himself to his knowledge; he opened up completely: "*At your word I will cast out the nets*". What are the words that resonate within us? What new meaning do they give to our lives? The invitation is surprising: "*Cast out the nets!*" Simon, amazed, beckons to his companions in other boats. What signs do we give to those who are together in the same struggle to transform this world into the Kingdom of God, to draw closer to it?

In our communities, the time of fidelity or fourth time can be a sign of friendship, attention and compromise. Let's not forget that Faith and Light has a charism of healing, of absorbing differences by creating unity. The fishermen, at the end of the adventure in deep waters, are caught by Jesus: "*From now on I will make you fishers of men*".

- **Evangelic reference:** Luc 5: 1-11

- **Welcome**

Give each person a paper fish with a ring. They each write their name on it (see page 70).

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

- Relive the Gospel of Luke (Lk 5: 1-11).

- * How does the Gospel text help me to discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In small groups**

- * At what point in our mission have we been afraid?

- * On our journey, are we attentive to the call of Jesus and the Gospel?

- * In our everyday lives, how do we welcome people who are not part of our community?

- **Artist's workshop**

Decorate, colour and write your name on the fish given out at the start.

- **Celebration**

Game: Fishing for friendship

Decorated fish are placed in a bowl on sand. The community members take it in turns to catch a fish and make a gesture of affection towards the person to whom it belongs.

Or

Game: Crazy dance

One person stands in front of the rest of the group. Music of any style is played (samba, pop, rock, etc.) The person should do a crazy dance. The rest of the group then imitates him or her. There may be a change of guide so that other people can lead the choreography.

• Prayer

Lord, our refuge and our fortress, hear our prayers that the Faith and Light movement may persevere in faith, in spreading the Light that heals and generates unity.

May we always move towards deeper waters, flooding the world with love and light.

Grant us in abundance what we ask of you in faith. Through Christ Our Lord.

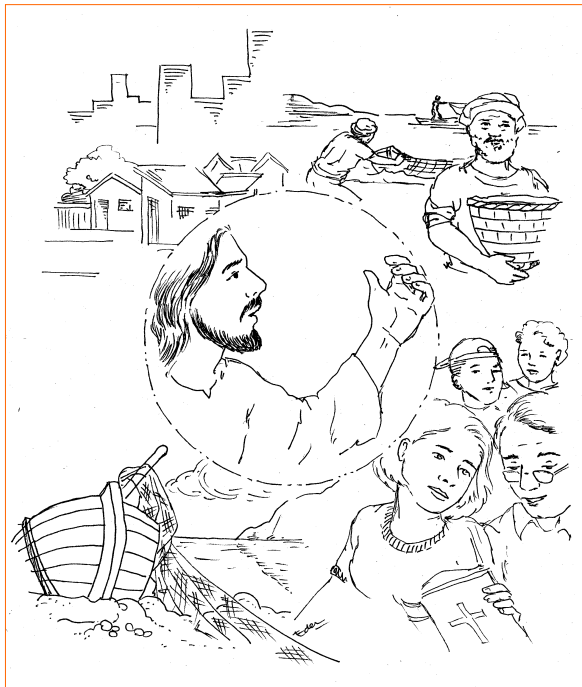
Amen!

Prayer of a poor person

Jesus, flood the world with love and light.

And until the next meeting

Let's pay a visit to the person whose name we have drawn.



7

Capharnaum

Healing and freedom



The word of the month

The scene of Jesus's encounter with the paralysed man is marvellous, but no less mocking. Four men, unable to approach Jesus, enter with the paralysed man through the roof. What courage these men and the paralysed man have! At certain times in our lives, we feel paralysed, and we are supported by people who, in our everyday lives, give us their faith.

In Faith and Light, brothers and sisters with disabilities are much more than these four men of the Gospel. Many relatives and friends transmit this faith to us and support many of us in times of paralysis. This is the purpose of the time of fidelity or fourth time. Jesus, seeing their faith, does not remain indifferent. Jesus is never indifferent towards the weak and the poor. Indifference is one of the evils of our time.

In two steps, Jesus restored total freedom to the paralysed man, forgiving him his sins and giving him back the freedom to move his body. To be in sin is to doubt God's goodness, and to be paralysed is to no longer walk on the paths of Love. The paralysed man received a stern command: "Get up, take your stretcher and walk". Which means, take hold of what is making you lie down and move forward on your path.

What is a stretcher? Anything that limits us, paralyses us, makes us uncomfortable. Take all of that, don't let yourself be dominated, be mature, be the author of your quest, walk, don't rid yourself of problems, solve them yourself, they're yours. Give new meaning to your limits.

In this sense, the Faith and Light community needs to move forward, not lament, but take the lead in resolving its own difficulties. When we do what Jesus tells us in the Gospel, we find inner and outer freedom, and nothing and no-one will paralyse us anymore.

- **Evangelic reference:** Mk 2: 1-12

- **Welcome**

Welcome members of the community with lively music familiar to the community.

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

- * How does the Gospel text help me discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In sharing groups**

- * What everyday events can discourage us in our mission of evangelisation?
 - * Who are the people who carry us on a “stretcher”?
 - * Faith in Jesus made the miracle possible in the paralysed man’s life. Is my faith enough to overcome my daily limitations?

- **Artist's workshop**

Each member draws the outline of their foot on a piece of card and cuts it out (see page 70).

Or

Write the names of simple objects on little pieces of paper, for example: house, balloon, chair, ice cream, watermelon, rainbow, etc. The papers are folded and placed in a basket to be drawn out.

- **Celebration**

- Walking in faith**

Using the cut-out feet, trace a path leading to the word "Faith". Members who wish to do so walk along this path and give testimony of a "miracle" that has occurred in their life.

Or

- Riddle**

The first participant should take out a paper with an object on it and then draw the object. The other members have to guess

which object he or she is drawing. The participant who guesses will be the next to draw.

• Prayer

Lord, in a Christian spirit, we wish to share friendship, pray together and celebrate life. We want to radiate to the world the light and hope that come from the heart of Jesus.

We ask you to help us to always shine like the stars in the universe. Be our guide on our journey, that we may support one another in community, in brotherhood and in love.

Through Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Light of the Holy Spirit.
Amen!

Prayer of a poor person

Lord, may we be a support to one another on the journey of faith.

And until the next meeting

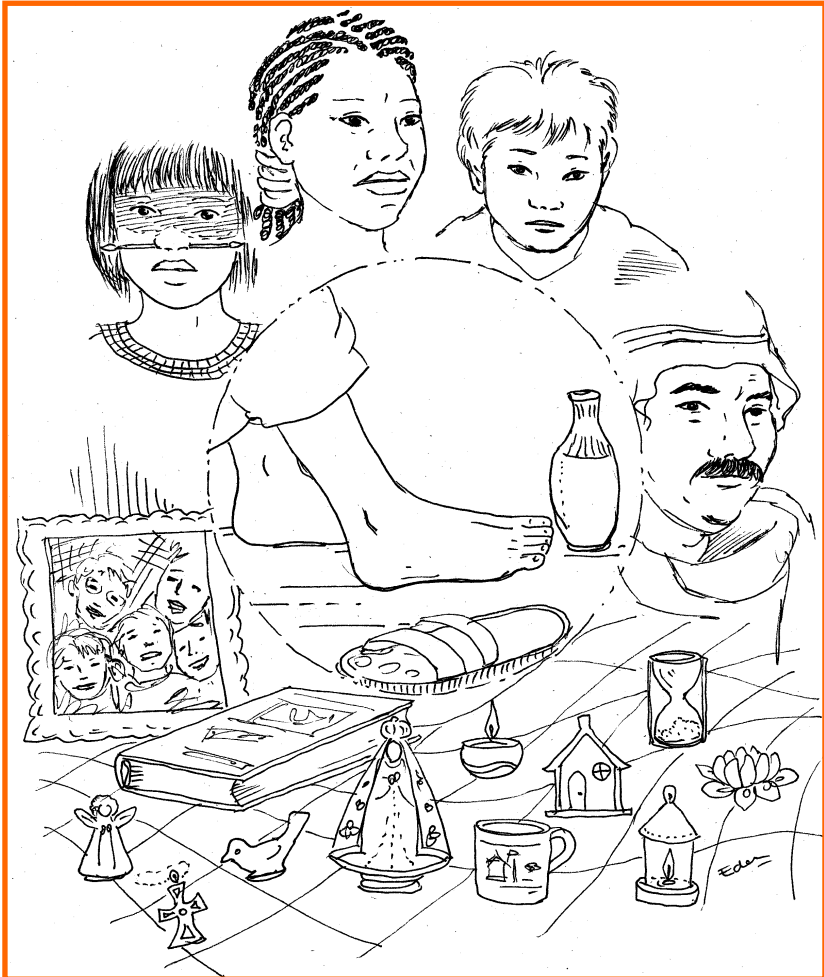
Ask all members to bring something of sentimental value (a photo, book, souvenir, etc.) to the next meeting.



8

Bethany

Ties and the scent of friendship!



The word of the month

Six days before Easter, in a tense climate of conflict, denunciation, Jesus leaves Jerusalem for Bethany, the home of his friends Martha, Mary and Lazarus, a house with the scent of the simple things of everyday life. No one, not even Jesus, can live under tension all the time. Jesus needed a break, affection, a welcome, because he was being judged.

In Faith and Light we call this pause the time of fidelity or fourth time. In Bethany, everything happens around a table. Jesus was offered dinner to regain his strength before the final destination, between the human plan and God's plan. In a gesture of greatness of heart, Mary opened a bottle of perfume, poured it over Jesus' feet and dried them with her hair. It was necessary to perfume the feet of the one who had travelled through these lands by perfuming the feet of his own people, poor, exploited, discredited. She herself felt renewed in her encounter with the Nazarene. Mary's gesture transcended Judas Iscariot's cowardice, to such an extent that not only Jesus' feet but the whole house exuded this fragrance.

St Paul, in his second letter to the Corinthians (2:14-16), says that we are the good odour of Christ. In other words, through us, Christ wants to show everywhere the fragrance of his love, compassion, mercy and forgiveness.

The Faith and Light community has a beautiful and delicate mission: to exhale the good fragrance of Christ. In a world of exclusion, to offer inclusion; in a world of abandonment, to offer welcome; in a selfish world, to offer solidarity; in a world of power, to offer service; in a world of wealth, to offer evangelical poverty. Wouldn't Bethany, the house of the poor, be another name for Faith and Light?

- **Evangelical reference:** Jn 12: 1-11 and 2 Cor 2:14-16

- **Welcome**

A member of the community brings a bottle of perfume and pours a few drops on each person's hands, saying the following phrase:
"(First name), you are the good perfume of Christ".

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

Reliving the Gospel of John (Jn 12: 1-11).

- * How does the Gospel text help me to discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In sharing groups**

- * Is our Faith and Light community a place of affection where we can put down our everyday problems?

- * In the image of Mary, who was generous in perfuming the feet of Jesus, what act of generosity do I practise?

- * In addition to community meetings, how do my home and family welcome members of Faith and Light?

- **Artist's workshop**

Assemble the House of Bethany and place it in the prayer corner (page 71).

- **Celebration**

Game: Fun dance

Each member is given a strip of crepe paper and string and ties it to their belt behind their back. Each participant must then remove their friends' strips without having their own removed. The last person to keep their strip of paper on their back gets a big round of applause!

• Prayer

Preparing the prayer: As requested at the last meeting, the members will bring objects with sentimental value. They will present them to the community and explain the meaning of the object, placing it close to the house of Bethany.

We conclude by reciting the prayer together:

Lord, we thank you for all the times Faith and Light has exhaled the beautiful fragrance of Christ in this world full of exclusion, abandonment and selfishness.

We thank you for all the times we have succeeded in revealing God's love, compassion, mercy and forgiveness in our community and for the world.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen!

Prayer of a poor person

Jesus, I want to exhale your good perfume.

And until the next meeting

Pray and put into practice the prayers of Saint Francis for a month.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

9

Cana in Galilee

A place of joy and togetherness



The word of the month

John's theological account of the wedding feast at Cana is rich in symbolism and theological and pastoral intensity. John's beautiful account shows us Jesus beginning his mission by going to a wedding feast. The symbolism is enchanting, because Jesus's mission, according to the evangelist, is to reveal the wedding, the marriage of God to his people. Jesus is the bridegroom, and the bride is the Church-People of God.

Mary was already in Cana when Jesus arrived with the disciples. The text suggests that she was standing next to the servants at the feast. Because she was there, she realised that there wasn't enough wine, and she had no doubts: I'm going to tell my son! After Jesus's strange answer, Mary went ahead, awakening in the servants of the feast the desire to do everything according to Jesus's command. Mary's approach was a complete success; the servants followed Jesus's order without a second thought.

We need to return to Cana so that our jars, our everyday lives, become jars of wine. In other words, an everyday life full of joy, celebration and love, thanks to the transforming presence of Jesus. John's goal can be found at the end of the text: *"What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him."* (Jn 2: 11). Jesus sends us many signs every day, but sometimes we are so distracted that we don't realise it. That's why our faith in him wanes.

Cana is the place of celebration, joy, conviviality, of the abundance of new meanings in life. A good framework for the Faith and Light communities. Experience of the time of fidelity or the fourth time can show us that a visit with love is like the transformation of water into wine.

- **Evangelic reference:** John 12: 1-11

- **Welcome**

Decorate the meeting place as if it were a wedding party. Two members of the community, if possible, a friend and a person with a disability, welcome the other members by offering them a small glass, which they should hold onto carefully.

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

- Reliving the Gospel of John 2, 1-11.

- In the prayer area, place a Bible on a table. A dark container (a bottle or jug, for example) is also placed on the table and a little powdered grape juice is poured into it. During the Gospel sharing, we fill the small glasses with drinking water and ask each person to pour the water from their glass into the container. When we have all poured in the water, we will have new wine (see page 71).

- * How does the Gospel text help me discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In sharing groups**

- * How do I perceive the transformations that Jesus makes in my everyday life?

- * Are there moments in my life when, like Mary, I ask Jesus for help and am sure that I will be heard?

- * Am I obedient to Mary's voice when she says to me: "Do whatever he tells you"?

- **Artist's workshop**

Distribute a sheet of paper to each member of the community. The leader asks everyone to draw or write down what we want Jesus to change in our lives. Then fold the paper into a cup to be used during the prayer (see page 71).

- **Celebration**

Game: Candy hunt

Hide sweets in the meeting room before the members arrive. At the time of the party, someone will announce that sweets are hidden and everyone has to look for them and put them in a basket or a box. When all the sweets have been found, they are shared between all the members of the community.

- **Prayer**

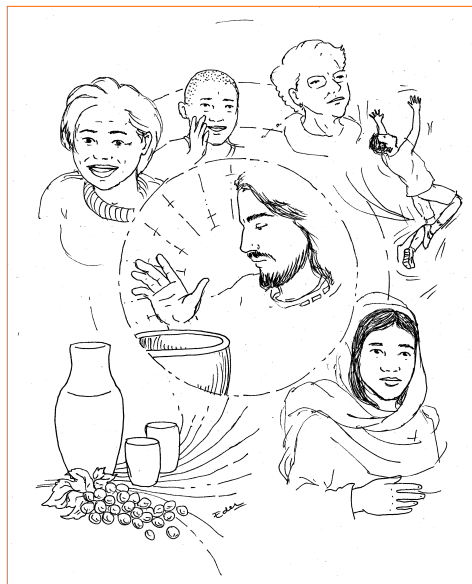
During the prayer, place the folded cup in the prayer corner. Recite the Faith and Light prayer (back cover).

Prayer of a poor person

Lord, may I always be ready to listen and do what you ask of me.

And until the next meeting

From this meeting onwards, may we all be attentive to the needs of our brothers and sisters, so they don't want for anything.



10

Mount Tabor

The experience of consolation



The word of the month

In the Bible, the mountain is the place where God is. Up there we can have a more open view of our own existence, in other words of our everyday lives. From there, we can see realities that we don't perceive down here in life, amid the noise and so many obligations and situations. In this sense, the mountain is not just a mountain; the mountain can be a pause for reflection. Entering a room to pray, a moment of Eucharistic adoration, a spiritual retreat, a confession, a spiritual direction in search of a new meaning to life.

As Jesus climbed the mountain, he was carrying with him his existence, his questions and his concerns... Only the Father can understand him, console him and confirm him. He doesn't go up on his own; he brings his small community of the great community of apostles with him. We are never alone, there is always someone walking the road with us, as the time of fidelity or the fourth time clearly shows.

Three signs reveal the glory of Jesus, and also that of all the baptised: the luminosity of the face, the dazzling clothes, the voice coming from the cloud. Even if there is a connection between the signs, I stress : "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him". In this voice lies the secret of a face and garments shining like the sun. The voice of the Father tells us that Jesus is the Beloved Son, and as we are sons of the Son (Rom 8:15-17), we are also loved by the Father. But it is a reality in the making insofar as we listen to it, but we are walking in this reality which is our identity, first and last.

The transfiguration of Jesus is the proclamation of our vocation for the present and the future. This is very important for Faith and Light communities: there is no disfigured reality that cannot be transfigured.

- **Evangelical reference:** Mk 9: 2-13

- **Welcome**

Prepare a poster with a drawing of Mount Tabor and Jesus and put it at the entrance to the room (see page 72).

When welcoming all those arriving, ask them to draw themselves next to Jesus.

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

- Reliving the Gospel (Mk 9: 2-8).

- * How does the Gospel text help me discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In sharing groups**

- * To meet God, Jesus climbed the mountain with his disciples. How do I go about meeting him on a daily basis?

- * Can we see our Faith and Light community as a place of transformation? How do I experience this transformation from day to day?

- * What are the attitudes that prevent our transfiguration?

- **Artist's workshop**

On the hand that "supports" (see page 72), each person writes their first name and something that needs to be transformed in them (having more empathy, forgiving more, being humbler, etc.). Place the drawing on a table, with the face turned upside down in the prayer corner.

- **Celebration**

Game: We are not alone

Prepare blindfolds for all participants.

Some helpers are needed for this game: an activity leader and two people (a young person and a friend with a disability).

Hand out the blindfolds to the participants, ask them to blindfold themselves and remain seated, if possible barefoot. Once all the participants are blindfolded, those leading the game take one person, walk across the room and put him/her on another chair without saying anything. When everyone has changed places, the leader asks everyone to remain seated while waiting for someone to approach them. He chooses one person, touches their shoulder and says in their ear: *"You're not alone, you can always count on me"*. The facilitator then removes the blindfold and asks the person to do the same for their neighbour on the right. The dynamic comes to an end when everyone has removed their blindfolds, happy in the knowledge that *"they will never be alone"*.

• **Prayer**

Lord, may my first encounter with you when I wake up be through prayer. May I feel your presence at every moment, and may my last thought before going to sleep be to thank you for your presence by my side throughout the day.

At the end of the prayer, each member should go to the table and take a drawing, not his or her own, to take home with them with the mission of praying for the person whose name is on the drawing and for his or her need for transformation.

Prayer of a poor person

May I be a living presence in my journey with my brothers and sisters, may I practice the time of fidelity.

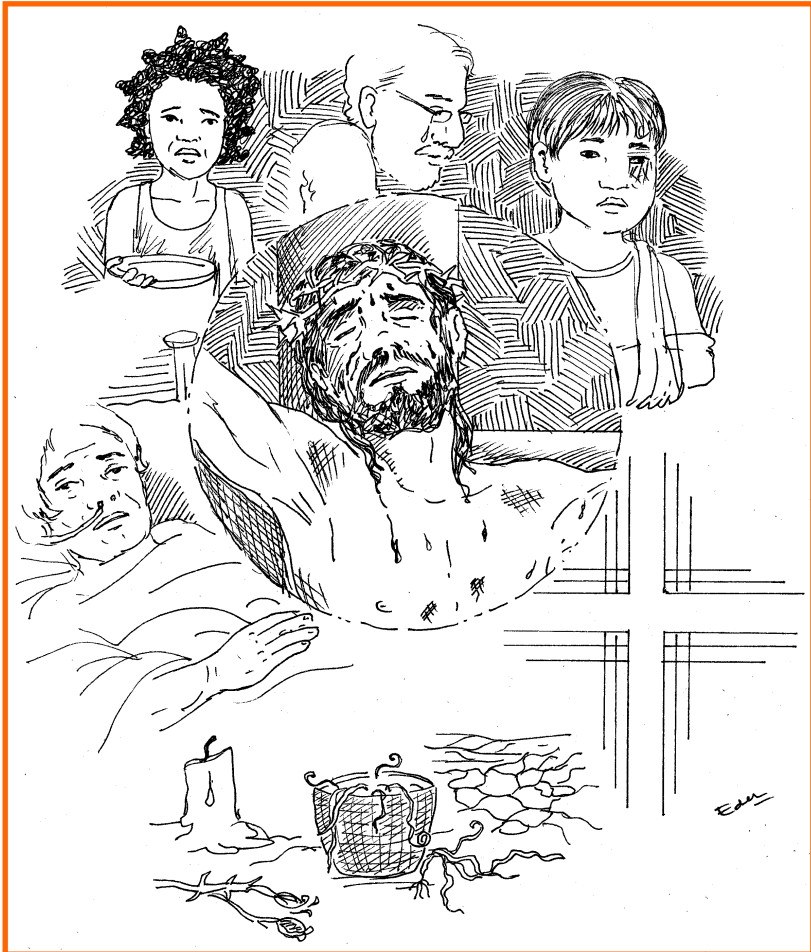
And until the next meeting

During this month, let's visit a family who feels alone and let them know that they have a friend they can count on in times of sorrow and joy.

11

Jerusalem

Our daily Cross



The word of the month

Jesus is walking towards Calvary, the cross on his shoulders, and nothing and no-one is stopping him. He is determined to see through to the end everything that he has preached, taught and offered. Everything that was awakened in the hearts of the simple and humble, whose eyes and ears were open, whose feet were free, whose consciences were enlightened, whose everyday lives were fulfilled. Everything was the Father's will, everything had been done with care, everything had been the revelation of a great love. For Jesus, the cross was the consequence of his life and his liberating practice.

To assume a life centred on the values of the Gospel (that is, the time of fidelity or fourth time) is to take up the cross as a consequence, it is like swimming against the current. In the text from John chosen for this reflection, we see what, in the Eucharistic liturgy, is called a "testament of tenderness" when Jesus, bereft of everything, entrusts his mother to John and John to Mary. The text says that John took her with him. John, at the foot of the cross, next to Mary, represents all humanity of all times and places. We need delicacy to welcome the gift of tenderness from Jesus, his mother into our company, into our home, into our movement! Having Mary as our companion is like having feminine tenderness within us, the gift of motherhood, of care, of firmness, because Mary is a gift that lives within us. She is a poor, prophetic, courageous woman who is revealed in the features of the faces of so many people in Faith and Light, in the perseverance and hope of so many mothers in our communities.

The cross is a defining reality of Faith and Light, where there are no words. What remains are the faces, the lives and the testimonies. The cross is not for its own sake. Its destiny, after the resurrection of Jesus, is a fulfilled life. For this reason, it is the way, it cannot be explained, it must be embraced, as Jesus did. The cross of Jesus gives new meaning to our crosses. Isn't that how we see Faith and Light?

- **Evangelical reference:** John 19: 25-27 and the icône of Faith and Light (see page 62).

- **Welcome**

Two members of the community wait for the guests and welcome them with a gesture of affection, saying: "*(First name), it's good that you're here*".

They may also sing a song of welcome.

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

Relive the Gospel of Tenderness (Jn 19: 25-27).

Jesus has his arms open on the cross, and at his feet are three women: Mary his mother, his mother's sister and Mary Magdalene.

Next to Mary is John.

Jesus looks at Mary, his mother, and says: "*Woman, here is your son*". Then Jesus looks at John and said, "*Here is your mother*".

John leaves with Mary and takes her to his home.

* How does the Gospel text help me discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In sharing groups**

* Can I manage to accept the crosses that emerge in my life by living the Gospel values day by day?

* To have mothers in our community is to hold up a mirror to Mary. How do the examples of these women inspire our journey inside and outside Faith and Light?

- **Artist's workshop**

Make crosses (see page 72). These crosses will be used during the prayer time.

- **Celebration**

Game: Musical chairs in reverse

In a circle, place fewer than half the chairs needed for the number

of participants. The aim is for everyone to find a way of sitting on fewer and fewer chairs. The music starts and everyone dances. When it stops, you have to find a way to sit down (the music doesn't start up again until everyone is seated). When 8 or even 10 people have to sit on one or two chairs, it's quite fun.

- **Prayer**

Lord, help me to go forward on my journey in the certainty that Mary is with me and that I am keeping my life centred on the values of the Gospel.

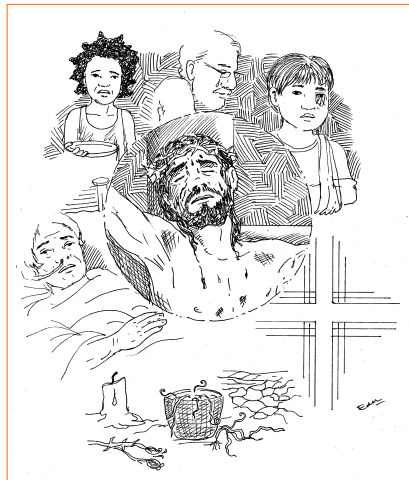
Prayer of a poor person

Lord, I thank you for giving me Mary as my mother.

And until the next meeting

During this month, let's reflect on Jesus's footsteps, let's give thanks for his sacrifice on the cross and put into practice the love that goes as far as giving of oneself.

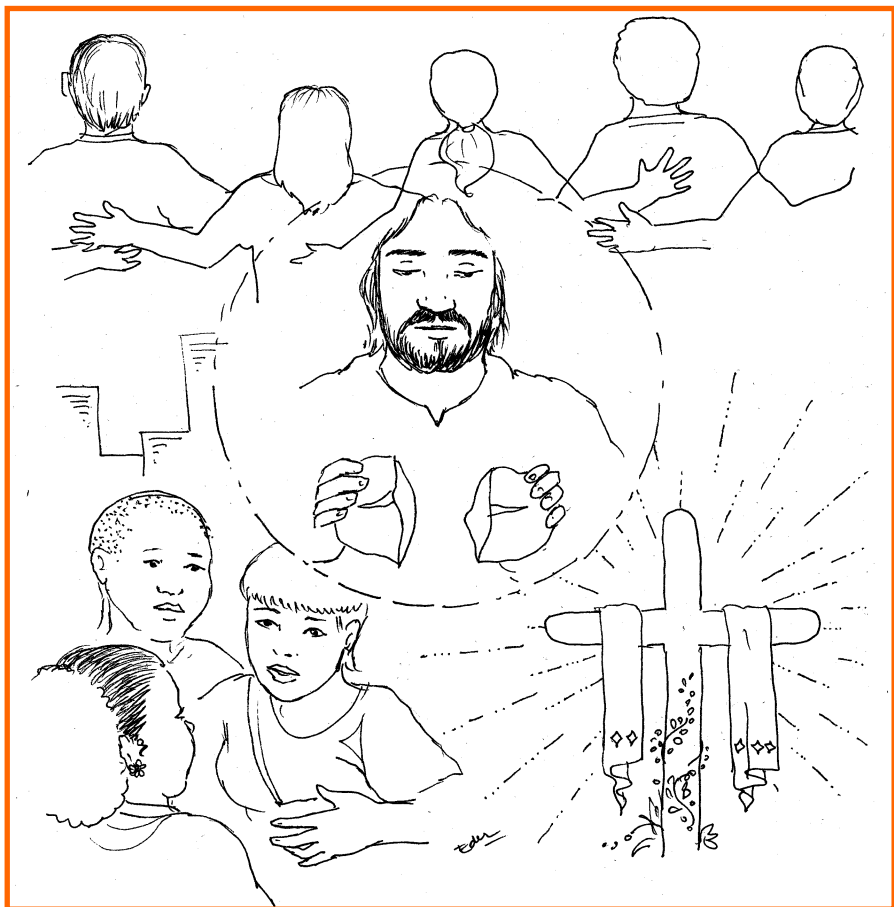
Why not organise a food or clothing collection among the members of our community, for example, and choose a family or institution to give it to?



12

Emmaus

The path: a place of encounters



The word of the month

Jesus joined the pilgrims on the desolate path they had set out on. He walked, listened, questioned, discussed and sat down at table. It's a journey that should be lived out in our communities, because very often our everyday lives are devoid of meaning and joy, as if life were a wasted experience. The strange walker, who seems to know nothing, will at the same time prove to be a great teacher and therapist. Letting them talk about their pain, their disappointed hopes and their lost lives is the way to re-establish unity and return to hope. No reprimands, no warnings about their reality.

Gently, he goes through the memories of the Word with them, until he reawakens the ardour in their hearts that had been disappointed. Jesus teaches us a way of living the time of fidelity or fourth time. He makes sure that he is invited to stay as night falls. At table, they share bread, a reminder of the Cenacle. There are three other verbs that are implicit in the experience of the Risen Lord: to draw near, to listen and to share. Jesus's approach revives the discouraged hearts of the walkers, and they return to the community in Jerusalem. The encounter with the Risen One gave new meaning to the lives of these disorientated disciples.

Returning to the community is an imperative in these times of existential, social and ecclesial isolation. It is in the community that they will share the experience of the journey and the encounter with the Lord and set off on the road of life.

- **Evangelical reference:** Lk 24: 13-35

- **Welcome**

Prepare a basket containing bread.

When welcoming the community members, the leader breaks off a piece of bread and offers it to them, saying: "*(First name), welcome, stay with us*".

- **Sharing**

- **Together**

- Reliving the Gospel of Emmaus (Lk 24: 13-35).

- * How does the Gospel text help me discover the beauty of everyday life, of the fourth time, and lead me to find new meaning in my life?

- **In sharing groups**

- * How do I make my way in Faith and Light?

- * Do I practice listening and sharing with my brothers and sisters in the community?

- * Do we practice the time of fidelity or the fourth time in our community?

- **Artist's workshop**

Colour the drawings of the Emmaus Way (see page 73).

At the end of the meeting, members can exchange their drawings.

- **Celebration**

Game: Soulmates

Prepare two small bags and put the phrases from the table underneath them.

One bag receives the phrases in the blue column and the other those in the orange column. Divide the community into two groups with the same number of people and the same number of phrases. Once all the phrases have been distributed, one person with a phrase from the blue column reads his or her piece of paper. Example: "*I am a garden without flowers*". The members of

the other group have to find the phrase that completes their friend's sentence. Example: "I am the flower in your garden"! The search continues until everyone has found their pair.

When they meet, the two people can talk about their day-to-day joys and difficulties or try to find affinities between them, such as their tastes or physical characteristics.

1. I am a garden without flowers	1. I am the flower in your garden
2. I am a sky without stars	2. I am the star in your sky.
3. I am a spring without water	3. I am the water of your spring.
4. I am a flower without perfume	4. I am the fragrance of your flower.
5. I am a tree without fruit.	5. I am the fruit of your tree.
6. I am a sea without waves.	6. I am the wave of your sea.
7. I am a nest without a bird.	7. I am the bird in your nest.
8. I am a saucepan without a lid.	8. I am the lid on your saucepan.
9. I am a river without fish.	9. I am the fish in your river.
10. I am a fruit without a stone.	10. I am the stone of your fruit.
11. I am a party without music.	11. I am the music at your party.
12. I am a planet without life.	12. I am the life of your planet.
13. I am a theatre without an actor.	13. I am the actor in your theatre.
14. I am a book without a reader.	14. I am the reader of your book.
15. I am a heart without love.	15. I am the love of your heart.
16. I am a day without sunshine	16. I am the sunshine of your day.
17. I am a night without moon.	17. I am the moon of your night.
18. I am a being without radiance.	18. I am the radiance of your being.
19. I am a bird without wings.	19. I am the wings of your bird.
20. I am a rainbow without colour.	20. I am the colour of your rainbow.

• **Prayer**

Lord, grant me the grace to be a light wherever I am, so that I may be available and have the courage to speak of your love to the brothers and sisters who are discouraged on the roads I travel.

Prayer of a poor person

Lord, stay with us forever.

And until the next meeting

During this month, let's visit a family where there is a person with a disability who does not yet know Faith and Light or has moved away from the movement. The aim is to create and weave bonds of friendship and to listen to their sorrows and joys by sharing their experiences in a Faith and Light community. After the visit, send a monthly invitation for the next meeting to the families you have visited.



Appendices

Meditations Don Marco Bove, international chaplain

Christmas

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger (Luke 2:15-16).

The evangelist Luke tells us about the birth of Jesus, a birth announced to Mary and, after her, to the shepherds and then to all men. The angels indicate where this prodigious birth has taken place and where they can find the baby Jesus: in Bethlehem, a small village with a very significant name. In fact, Bethlehem means "house of bread" in the language of Jesus, perhaps because of the wheat and barley fields that were there in that region

Jesus said of himself: *"I am the bread that came down from heaven..."* He who is born among us is laid in a manger to be "eaten" by all those who hunger for love and seek God. For the hungry crowds, Jesus multiplies the loaves, giving them the food they need, because he also knows the needs of our bodies and our fragility. By praying the "Our Father", we ask to receive our daily bread to nourish our bodies and, at the same time, our hearts.

Let us ask Jesus, who was born among us, that our Faith and Light communities become, like Bethlehem, the "house of bread", a place where those who hunger for love and friendship can finally be satisfied.



Feast of Light

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."(Luke 2: 25-32)

In the Temple of Jerusalem, the old man Simeon meets Jesus with Mary and Joseph and recognises in him the salvation of his people, the light for all nations.

The Feast of Light for our Faith and Light communities is an important event. Jesus said of himself: I am the light of the world... And we know how much our world needs the light of Jesus to chase away the darkness of poverty, war and loneliness.

In Faith and Light, we too often say that it is better to light a lamp than to curse the darkness. Jesus is our light, and that day in the Temple in Jerusalem he was a revelation to Simeon. Meeting Jesus opens our eyes, gives our hearts new hope and illuminates our path with his presence.



Easter

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me" .(Mat 28: 8-10)

On Easter morning, the women go to the tomb but do not find the body of Jesus, and an angel tells them that the Lord has risen. As they went to join the disciples, Jesus came to meet them and invited them not to be afraid and to tell their brothers and sisters that they were returning to Galilee, where they could see him.

The tomb is no longer a place of death but of life, and the women are given the mission of announcing this news. In the same way, our Faith and Light communities are called to proclaim that Jesus is risen and that places of death can become places of life, communion and love.

But Jesus gives us an appointment: Galilee, which is the place in everyday life where the disciples' adventure with Jesus began. So it is in our everyday lives, in our everyday commitments and encounters, that we can recognise the presence of the Risen Lord and meet him: Jesus is always with us, and we can recognise him if we know how to look with the eyes of our heart, because in the most fragile and lonely people, there is the presence of Jesus.



Pentecost

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2: 1-4)

The apostles gathered in Jerusalem, but they were still confused and afraid. They had already met the risen Lord, but their hearts were not yet open to hope and trust.

And then, on the day of Pentecost, everyone was filled with the Holy Spirit, who gave them the light and strength they had lost after Jesus' passion and death. All this happens in Jerusalem, the Holy City, the centre of Israel's faith, which now becomes the heart of the Christian faith. The name of the city has different meanings, "vision of peace" or "city of peace". The gift of the Holy Spirit is precisely a gift of peace and joy that enables the apostles to speak every language and to proclaim the peace of Jesus.

Our Faith and Light communities also speak all the languages of the world, for they are born of the Holy Spirit and radiate throughout the world to proclaim Jesus' message of love and communion. Let us pray unceasingly to the Holy Spirit who, at Pentecost, renewed his gift to us and taught us to be, even today, welcoming communities, ready to listen and speak to everyone.



The icon of Faith and Light



“Being together” is central to our Faith and Light communities. It is touching to discover this very same “being together” in chapter 19 of John’s Gospel (verses 26-27), where we witness Jesus on the cross, with John and Mary at its foot. The text reads: ***When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son”. Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.”***

This is the hour of Jesus’s greatest suffering. His whole being is broken, destroyed. Perhaps what causes him greatest anguish is the fact that he can no longer move, can no longer do good. His hands, which have performed so many miracles, are nailed to the cross, really handicapped. He cannot even continue to use them to bless children as he used to.

There are real similarities between him and our friends with a disability. At the foot of the cross, those who passed by hurled in-

sults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!” (Mark 15: 29-30). As we gaze at the cross, do we not see in Jesus the person with a disability from our communities?

Jesus was not understood throughout his public life

Jesus was confronted by the apostles’ incomprehension: “Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear?” (Mark 8: 17-18). In fact, after the multiplication of the bread and the explanation Jesus offered, “many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him” (John 6: 66).

But that which the wise or the intelligent cannot understand is revealed to infants (Matthew 11: 25). It is perhaps our friends with an intellectual disability who are closest to Jesus, who have the least difficulty in understanding him.

Mary is the mother of a son who is rejected and misunderstood

Like for the parents of a child with a disability, it must have been hard for Mary to understand Jesus. She faced difficulties ever since Jesus was a young child. When Mary and Joseph find Jesus at the temple, they do not understand him when he explains why he is amongst doctors of the Law and what he is doing there with them: “But they did not understand what he said to them” (Luke 2: 50).

Simeon’s prophesy to Mary: “a sword will pierce your soul too” can also be applied to Faith and Light’s parents.

Mary “treasured all these things in her heart” (Luke 2: 51). Ultimately, she is there at the foot of the cross demonstrating her faith and absolute trust. Like many parents in our communities.....

John, the faithful friend of the son, and of his mother

John was one of the disciples who had not understood Jesus. He and his brother James had been reprimanded by Jesus when they had asked him to prepare a place for them at his right hand in the

kingdom of his Father. “You do not know what you are asking” (Mark 10: 38).

And yet Jesus has a special love for John. John was always one of the three disciples present at the most important moments in Jesus’s public life. It is also he who the fourth Gospel calls “the one whom Jesus loved” and who was reclining next to Jesus at the Last Supper table (John 13: 23).

The friend and Jesus’s mother are united at the foot of the cross. And on the Day of Pentecost, Mary will still be there amongst the disciples (Acts 1: 14).

Like Saint John, friends in Faith and Light have experienced difficult, dark times in their relationships with friends with an intellectual disability. But they have heard the same call for friendship and loyalty.

They have also been offered as friends to the parents of their friends, just as John was entrusted to Jesus’s mother.

The icon

Is it not the mystery of Jesus’s love, of Mary and John at the foot of the cross, that we are called upon to experience at the heart of Faith and Light communities? At the foot of the cross, in this hour of suffering, Jesus, Mary and John remained faithful. They could only “be there”, like us in Faith and Light.

These three people united in suffering are one in prayer – a wordless prayer – which is full of trust in God. These words are within us when we connect with them.

That is why you see a small lighted candle beneath the icon. This is the symbol of the Faith and Light communities who wish to take inspiration from the mystery Jesus, Mary and John experienced at the foot of the cross, for humanity as a whole.

At the top of the icon, you can observe this sun of hope overcoming the night of suffering. Faith and Light seeks to radiate this light and this Easter hope throughout the world, which are secretly awakening on the cross.

Father Joseph Larsen †
Former international chaplain

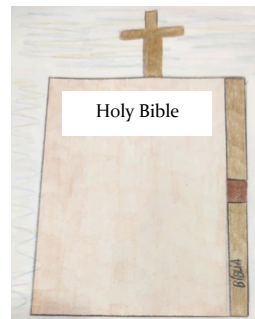
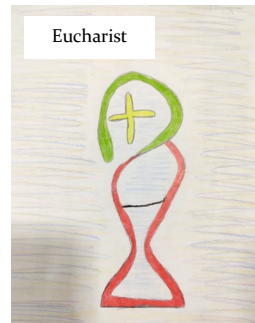
Artist's workshop

Images can be downloaded from: <https://www.foietlumiere.org/en>

Where do we meet Jesus?

Materials: sheets of paper, coloured pencils, glue, scissors, string, clothes pegs or stapler.

- Hand out one sheet of paper per person.
- Each person draws a place where they can meet Jesus.
- Use the string to create a sort of clothesline and hang the drawings on it using two clothes pegs per drawing (or staple them together).
- You could also stick the drawings on a board.
- The community can look at the drawings and discuss them.



A single heart

Materials: rose petals in fabric or crepe paper, a basket. Draw a large heart on a card in the prayer corner.

As each person arrives, take a rose petal from the basket and place it around the heart to form a heart of petals.



Peteca using recycled materials

Materials: Scissors, plastic bag, newspapers, advertising leaflets or sheets of scrap paper, string

- Crumple the sheets into a ball, slightly flattened vertically.
- Cut off the handles, the bottom and one side of the plastic bag.
- Unfold the bag completely and then fold in the middle.
- Place the paper ball in the centre of the cut bag.
- Shape the cut-out bag into a peteca.



- Tie with one of the bag's handles or with a cord. Reinforce by tying a second cord in the opposite direction.



Card for a friend

Materials: a white card in the shape of a vase or the Faith and Light logo, coloured pencils or pens.

- Cut out the card in the shape of a vase.
- Reproduce the logo and colour it in.



Tree to see Jesus

Materials: Cardboard, scissors and green paper.

- Draw a tree on the cardboard.
- Copy one tree leaf per person.



fr.freepik.com

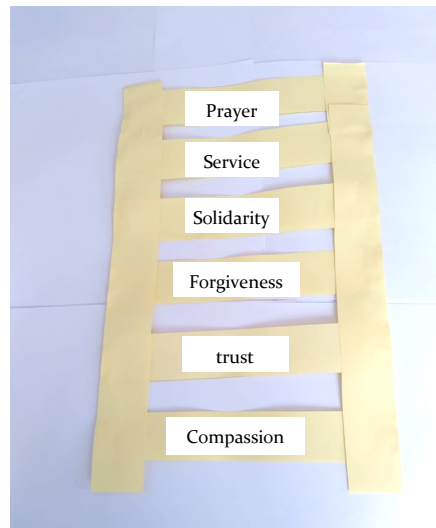
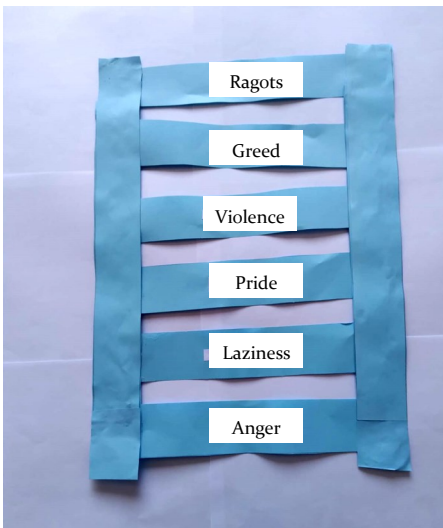
Scale of Values

Materials: strips of paper, scissors, labels.

Glue the strips of paper in the shape of a ladder.

Write on the labels what brings us closer to God and what distances us from him.

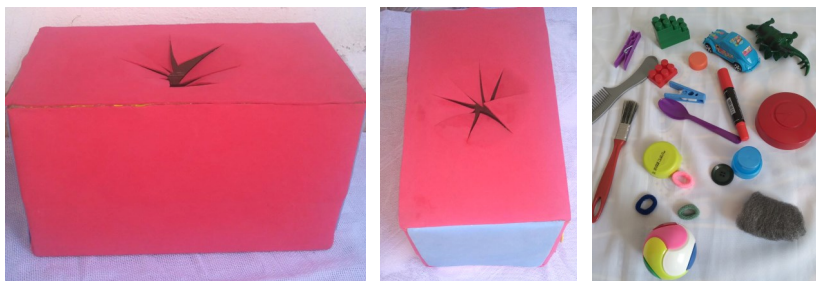
During the workshop, assemble the ladders, one that brings me closer to God and the other that takes me further away from him. You can replace the strips of paper with popsicle sticks.



Tactile box

Materials: cardboard box, sheet of EVA foam to cover the box (at least the top part), glue or adhesive tape, scissors, objects of various shapes and textures.

- Make a 15 cm diameter hole in the top of the cardboard box, an opening that will allow you to insert objects and your hand.
- Cover the box (at least the top part) with the EVA paper. Draw a circle the size of the top opening of the box and make radial cuts as shown in the photos.
- Put objects of different shapes, sizes and textures in the box. For example: stones, beads, balls, toys, flowers, photos, etc.

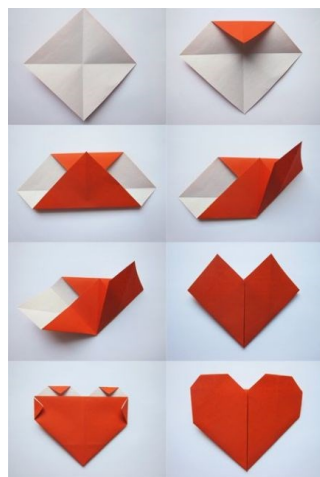


Origami heart

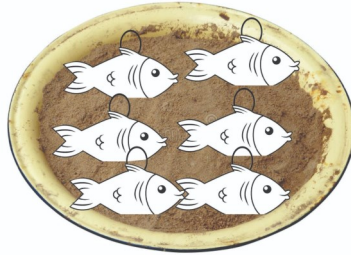
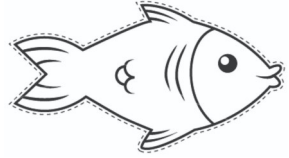
Materials: red paper cut into squares. Follow the instructions on the right or see the tutorial at <https://youtu.be/GoepoBMaiGA>

Fishing of friendship

Materials: white or coloured paper, pencil or pen, coloured pencil, glue or staples, bowl, sand and fishing rod.



- Draw fish, cut out and colour them in.
- Make a ring with a strip of paper or wire. Attach to the fish.
- Pour sand into a dish and place the fish in it.



Walking in faith

Materials: Paper the size of a foot, scissors

- Give each member a sheet of paper to draw the outline of a foot. One half of the community draws the right foot and the other half the left foot.
- Cut out the outlines.
- Write the word faith large so that everyone can see it.



Faith

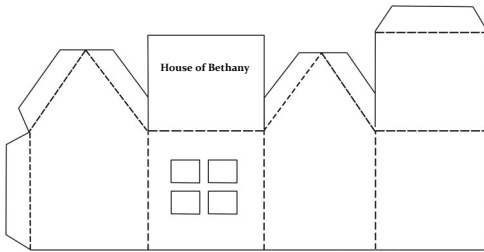


House of Bethany

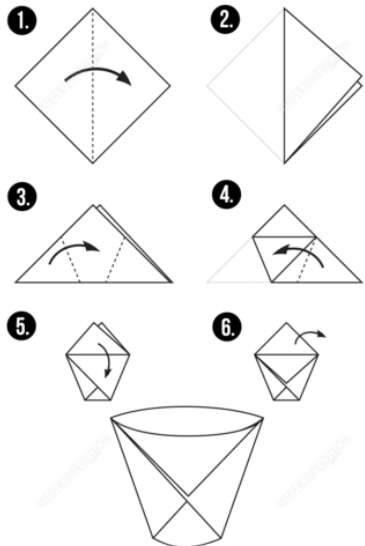
Materials: thin cardboard, label, cutter, glue.

- Print the template of the house on A3 paper.
- Cut out and hollow out the windows with a cutter and fold along the dotted lines.
- Glue the flaps on the inside.
- Write "House of Bethany".

Or make a poster with a drawing of a house.



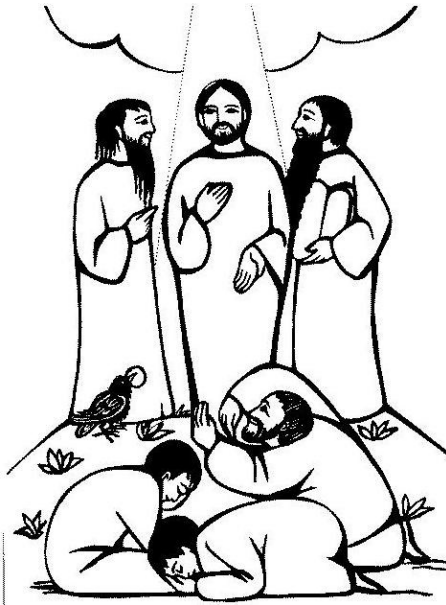
Decorating the prayer corner



Origami cup

Materials: Square paper
Follow the instructions on the diagram.

Mount Tabor



Supporting hand

Materials: Paper the width of an open hand, black or coloured pencil.

- Give each person a sheet of paper.
- Draw the outline of your open hand.



Cross

Materials: Popsicle sticks, string, paint.

- Use two Popsicle sticks to make a cross and tie it with the string.
- Decorate the cross.



Emmaus Road



Our Lady of the Conception of Aparecida, Patron Saint of Brazil

It would be a day like any other if it weren't for the result of fishing... Three poor fishermen go about their daily work on the River Paraíba. The fish they caught was synonymous with bread. They had to feed their families, who were waiting for them with their eyes fixed on the road leading to the river. As soon as the fishermen rounded the last bend in the road, the party started and the food arrived.

The river seemed to be carrying out its daily task, feeding so many hungry people, without asking for anything. That was its mission, full stop! The good fisherman knew how to thank God for the river, always generous with fish.

When the three fishing companions took the road to the river, the hungry children would not let them out of their sight in the hope that they would soon return with full sacks. While the children played in front of the hut doors, the mothers tidied the house, washed clothes and prepared the kitchen to cook the fish for the day's meal.

It was October 1717, a hot and rainy in Brazil, and these fishermen had an important mission: to catch and offer fresh fish for the banquet that would be given to a count passing through the village.

On their way down the river, the fishermen climbed into their small boat, which was as fragile as they were. After a few good strokes of the oars, they examined the waters and saw that they were in a good fishing spot. But first, they have to mop up their sweat, adjust their trousers to their waists, pick up their nets and cast them into the fresh waters of the river.

When they hauled in the nets, they were surprised to find not a fish, but a headless statuette of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. Respectfully, they put it in a safe place. They cast out the nets again and when they hauled them in, they discovered the head of the statuette. They were very surprised to catch the statu-

ette of the mother of Jesus. What thoughtfulness on the part of this river and the heavens... A black Virgin in the hands of three poor men.

Their joy was so great that they rushed home and gathered the children to pray together at the feet of Our Lady. They were so happy about Mary's visit that they forgot all about hunger and fish.

The statuette was kept in a small niche. Every Saturday, people would gather to pray the rosary and sing a litany. A liturgy very much in the style of simple, pious people.

God is truly amazing, this little statuette of the mother of Jesus was to become the greatest icon of the faith of the Brazilian people.

As her fame grew, a small oratory was built, then a chapel, then a church, then a sanctuary, then a Basilica.

Our Christian faith was born under the gaze of a woman, a mother. For this reason, we have many feminine expressions: care, delicacy, help, trust, strength, humility. We carry all this in our Brazilian Catholic identity.

An image of the Black Madonna! When they became aware of it, they immediately made a beautiful reading of it. We were at the height of the enslavement of black men and women from Africa. Many lost their lives on the slave ships, and those who escaped were sold as priceless labour, since the slave was the property of the white master. Slavery seemed normal and even after its abolition, we still encounter a lot of misogyny and racism. It may come as a surprise, but in Brazil there are still people in situations similar to slavery.

They were quick to understand the Virgin Mary's silent message: I suffer with my slave children. The message still goes on, even if many turn a deaf ear.

They were quick to understand the Virgin Mary's silent message: I suffer with my slave children. The message still goes on, even if many turn a deaf ear.

There have been moves to stifle this devotion to the black Virgin because Mary has always been venerated as a white woman of European origin with wheat-coloured hair. But no one can stifle what belongs to God.

Our Lady of the Conception of Aparecida, a small black statuette, welcomes thousands of pilgrims from all over the world, and even Popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis have made pilgrimages to her shrine.

Our Lady of the Conception was given the name Aparecida, because she appeared during that fishing trip.

Father Ederson Queiroz



Notes

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.

