

## *The Idea of Dialogue, Trust and Reconciliation in the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth*

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to present the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth organized by the brothers of Taizé Community as an event building a relationship of dialogue, trust and reconciliation between nations and cultures. The article features an in-depth discussion of the elements of youth meetings and their impact on developing an attitude of dialogue and trust. We will briefly discuss the means used by the brothers to develop a dialogue between people, as well as the methods of spreading the idea of dialogue, trust and solidarity in interpersonal and international relations.

*KEYWORDS: dialogue, trust, reconciliation, the Taizé Community, the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth.*

THE IDEA OF DIALOGUE, TRUST AND RECONCILIATION  
IN THE PILGRIMAGE OF TRUST ON EARTH. A BRIEF HISTORY  
AND THE IDEA BEHIND THE PILGRIMAGE OF TRUST ON EARTH

Conceived by Brother Roger in 1978, the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth, besides the popular weekly meetings in the village of Taizé, also consisted of European Youth Meetings, which took place at

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the turn of the year, in the period between Christmas and New Year in one of the big cities of Europe. Currently the Pilgrimage has been extended to other continents; meetings are also held in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Pilgrimages of Trust on Earth can be said to have begun as early as in 1962. Accompanied by young people, brothers of the Community started discreetly visiting Eastern European countries in order to meet with those who could not leave their country because of the prevailing political system. The event which more directly shaped what is now called the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth was the idea of founding a Council of Young, which was announced by Brother Roger in 1970. The Pilgrimage known today is what that initiative eventually transformed into.

The first official European Youth Meeting was held in Paris at the turn of 1978 and 1979. The following ones took place in Barcelona, Rome, London, Rome, Paris, Cologne, Barcelona, London, Rome, Paris, in 1989 in Wrocław, then in Prague, Budapest, Vienna, Munich, Paris, in 1995 again in Wrocław, then in Stuttgart, Vienna, Milan, then 1999 in Warsaw, and then in Barcelona, Budapest, Paris, Hamburg, Lisbon, Milan, Zagreb, Geneva, Brussels, Poznań in 2009 and in Rotterdam, Berlin, Rome, Strasburg, Prague, and the last one at the turn of 2015 and 2016 in Valencia. The next meeting is going to be held in Riga.

European Meetings gather tens of thousands of people each time (Poles are usually the largest national group). The programme of the meetings is modelled after the typical daily routine in the village of Taizé and will be discussed in a separate part of this article. Smaller regional meetings are organized in addition to the European Youth Meetings. Usually they take place in fall or in spring for 2–3 days and are less extensive. The pilgrims are normally citizens of neighbouring countries. An example of such meetings may be the May summit meeting in Ljubljana in 2012; in October 2009 in Pécs, Hungary; in September 2010 in Sarajevo or the May meeting in Vilnius in 2009. Holding such a meeting

is very often the initiative of the same young people who wish to accept the pilgrims in their cities. Despite the smaller scale of such projects, they retain a form similar to the programme of European Youth Meetings. Additionally, when it is possible the brothers visit young people in different cities to support their exploration and promote the idea of dialogue among them in the course of a year.

Regardless of whether the meetings are European, regional, local or any other kind, the most important aspect is the very meeting – with Christ, but also with other people – which requires dialogue. On the one hand, it's through prayer that the participants get closer to God; on the other hand, it's through openness and hospitality that they overcome barriers and differences between people.

Thousands of young people come to Taizé almost every week. The brothers of the Community are opposed to creating any sort of movement or association among them, but they want them to introduce what they discovered during the retreat, at their place of residence, within their environment and their own personal style. It's not the intent of the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth to focus young people around the Community of Taizé, but to urge them to introduce peace and spread the idea of dialogue and trust where they live, e.g. by engaging in a broad range of activities in their parishes, villages and cities. Brother Roger always encouraged the youth to implement what they've learned during the meeting (be it a local one, a European one or a retreat) after returning home. They can do that via simple gestures of solidarity or by offering practical help to people in their environment.

Brother Alois, treating the organisation of international meetings as a kind of testament left to the Community by Brother Roger, said: '(...) we, brothers of the Community, would like to take on this challenge together with all those who try to bring peace throughout the entire world.' (taize.fr) The concept of peace itself is closely linked to this, as indicated by the very name of the Pilgrimage – it involves trust, which is impossible without

dialogue and mutual understanding. Without those, lasting peace cannot be reached – neither in political nor interpersonal relations.

Each of the stages of the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth consists of several elements that serve to establish relationships of dialogue, trust, solidarity and reconciliation between the participants of the meetings. It is not only about building some kind of ad hoc relationships between specific individuals, but also about developing an awareness of solidarity between people and teaching to build interpersonal relationships in a way that can bring peace in every country and society. These items will be discussed in detail below.

#### THE CHOICE OF THE MEETING PLACE

As already mentioned, thirty-six European Youth Meetings in 22 cities and in 14 countries have been held so far. In some cities meetings took place several times: in Paris (5 times), Rome (4 times), Barcelona (3 times), London (2 times), Wrocław (2 times), Vienna (2 times), Budapest (2 times), Milan (2 times).

Choosing a location for a European Youth Meeting is never arbitrary. The brothers plan the events in such a way that each year they can meet young people in a place where it is needed at the time. For example, two recent meetings in Brussels and Rotterdam were a response to the progressive secularisation of this region. Sometimes the choice of the city has a symbolic dimension as well. Examples include a meeting in Berlin (2011) and one in Strasbourg (2013). Berlin was divided by a concrete wall into West Berlin and East Berlin. The city was split from 13 August 1961 to 9 November 1989, and that wall is, to this day, one of the most famous symbols of the Cold War and divided Germany. It was in this city that the brothers organized a meeting aimed at spreading the idea of dialogue, reconciliation, peace, trust and solidarity. As you can read in the Letter from Taizé from 2012, 'Berlin is a city

characterized by great diversity, a city turned towards the future but also attempting to integrate the memory of a painful past, a city whose population has shown that it will not be discouraged by difficult situations. (...) Berlin is a symbol for all those who, throughout the world, try to leap over walls of separation in order to spread trust.' (Brother Alois, 2012) Looking at the ruins of the wall, which many of them couldn't have possibly had a recollection of, young people realised how much harm can be caused by divisions and barriers set up by people for people.

It is worth quoting a statement of a young Italian posted on the Community's website: 'A European Youth Meeting always proves an interesting experience, and this time it featured, in my case, a great reception in the family and new friends in Berlin. Although this was already my fourth pilgrimage of trust, what I experienced this time convinced me once again that in the Church there should be no divisions. Especially here, in Berlin, a city which constitutes a whole, but which was separated for over 20 years until the present times with an unnecessary wall, a desire for unity can be strongly felt. No more divisions, only unity among people! Thanks to trust and hope we can tear this wall down so that we can live together with all of our brethren. It is a difficult task, but with Christ it is possible to remove all the obstacles.' (taize.fr) Berlin was therefore a place conducive to the spreading of the truth about the need for reconciliation and disposal of various divisions. It can be therefore noted that the symbolism of the meeting place is very important not only for the organisers, but also for the pilgrims, and is interpreted as meant.

The symbolism of the meeting organised in Strasbourg last year was similarly clear. As is known, it is a city located within two countries – Germany and France. During the evening prayer of 28 December 2013, Brother Alois said that this region of Europe, as well as Strasbourg itself, had become a symbol of reconciliation and dialogue after the wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. 'The fact that all young foreigners who came to the meeting found hospital-

ity with families on both sides of the border is a sign of hope.' (Brother Alois, 2013). The young people were welcomed by families from both countries, so they were able to exchange different life experiences when talking to each other during the 'sharing time' in groups. It was, without a doubt, conducive to developing a dialogue and an attitude of openness and trust. Germany and France were engaged in territorial wars for years; some historical antagonisms between citizens of those countries still seem to be extant. But despite this, Germany and France managed to join their forces in the task of accepting the multitudes of pilgrims and were united in the organization of this meeting.

In the history of the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth it would also happen that families accepted young people of a country which was recently engaged in war with them. Nevertheless, 'hospitality experienced in great simplicity breaks down barriers and prejudices.' (taize.fr). Examples of such meetings included those in Sarajevo, Zagreb, Cochabamba and Nairobi.

As we can see, the choice of the European Youth Meeting's location in a given year is dependent on the current needs of the region or country, is often associated with very vivid symbolism, and above all is organized to help in a successful search for God and building proper relationships with people where this help is most needed. The brothers also choose places where antagonisms and mistrust are sometimes so strong and fresh, they seem insurmountable. Nevertheless, they take on the challenge of spreading the idea of dialogue and reconciliation there.

#### PREPARING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PILGRIMAGE

Before participating in the Pilgrimage to the European Youth Meeting, or at any other stage of the Pilgrimage, young people must take the time to appropriately prepare. It would be wrong to think that taking part in any of the meetings is limited to the

arrival in the town or the village of Taizé and spending a few days there according to a specific programme. As already mentioned, participation in the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth does not end with the moment of leaving for home. That is when the true pilgrimage begins. The beginning of it is a similar case. So-called 'points of preparation' are formed in hundreds of parishes in every country before each winter; these are meant to introduce future pilgrims to what they are going to participate in. For example, there are about two hundred such points in Poland every year. There's such a high number of them due to Poles forming the largest national group participating in the meetings every year.

At preparation points young people themselves share their experiences with those who are just starting their adventure with the initiatives of the community of Taizé. The points are run by volunteers who declare their support as early as during the holidays. When possible, they are supported by chaplains and with their help ease their peers into the mood and the profound meaning of the impending departure. For this purpose they receive materials (such as posters and leaflets) from the community of brothers necessary for organisation, and necessary for proper formation, meaning topics to be discussed, questions to be considered, and tasks to be performed. The young meet at the points in order to talk about the indicated topics, express their opinions, to state what they expect from their participation in the Pilgrimage, and thus learn to engage in dialogue with other people. In addition, the participants themselves join in to help with organisational matters, which also aims to create mutual bonds of solidarity, friendship and trust, as well as teach fruitful cooperation and dialogue.

Citizens waiting to receive guests also prepare for the meetings. Families offering their homes to the pilgrims meet with the brothers and volunteers not only to learn the meeting's agenda and so to be able to aid their guests in participation, but also to learn tolerance, the customs of different countries, prepare snacks

and share responsibilities. Such preparations sometimes last up to several months and involve many difficulties and sacrifices, but they are necessary to make the dialogue undertaken during the meeting itself possible and effective.

#### RECEPTION AND ACCOMMODATION

In the village of Taizé itself the youth is received by the brothers in very simple conditions. Nevertheless, they share all they have with their guests, and open their doors and hearts before them. This involves great trust of the brothers, who believe in both accepting pilgrims and their sincere intentions. Brothers open their doors to all; they do not set restrictions, but – thanks to the help of the volunteers – they are committed to making sure the rules prevailing in the village are observed, even under threat of removal from Taizé.

During the international and regional meetings outside of Taizé, young people are either received by families in their homes, or sleep in parishes or collective rooms. Good treatment of the pilgrims by the residents of the city is very important in the context of the theme of trust and dialogue. Families open their homes for strangers, share everything they have, put their time and effort into this. They must also show trust that young people will not take advantage of them by robbing or abusing them. It is often the case that family members give the visitors keys, leave them alone at home or leave a separate part of the house under their disposal. This requires them to overcome anxiety and trust strangers. The factor of the locals receiving the young is also very important in building inter-cultural dialogue. That is because the pilgrims come from different parts of the world and, thanks to the openness of the hosts, can spend a few days with them and exchange experiences. It allows them to get to know the other person, understand their differences and build a relationship of dialogue.



The dialogue between the members of the household and the pilgrims may be based on the events of the past day – e.g. a story about the course of prayers, workshop topics and conclusions drawn from ‘sharing’ in groups – but very often it also involves getting to know each other. Young people ask a lot of questions pertaining to the fields of culture, politics, religion and social life in the country or city, and residents are interested in the culture of the guests’ country. It is also an opportunity to suggest a return visit, which will help to maintain and deepen established bonds. For this purpose the organisers of the meetings make sure that each parish acts as a host to participants from various European countries. This allows for extensive exchange of experiences and expansion of their horizons.

It is worth mentioning the testimony of a young Polish woman given at the meeting for Poles during the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth in Strasbourg. She told the story of how she found herself in the home of an African-American migrant who lived in extreme poverty, raising several children; her living conditions did not quite match the image Poles have of life in West Europe. At times she didn’t even have electricity or water. The woman was not a Christian, but one day, while waiting for a bus, she found a notice about the European Youth Meeting taking place in the city. She read it, and decided to help and accommodate one person under her roof. When the Polish girl crossed the threshold of her apartment, she hesitated, wanted to turn around, leave and ask for different accommodation. But she did not; instead, she talked to the woman and heard her story, learning how on the same day two other pilgrims had come to her place and promptly fled to ask for another host. It was then that the Polish girl realised how much harm she could cause by leaving that house. She accepted everything that woman had to offer her with gratitude, and so a very strong bond between them started. The Polish girl found that meeting to be the best of all the six she had attended. The

woman, on the other hand, thanked her for the testimony and the support she received every night (Statement, 2013).

This serves as an example to show how to conduct a dialogue with another person – on the one hand by offering everything in one's possession, and on the other – through accepting the offered hospitality.

It is also worth mentioning the festive New Year dinner. It differs from the others in that it is not offered in the common halls, but by host families. The meal is an opportunity to talk, deepen bonds and learn about the peculiar cuisine of the region and the country in which the meeting takes place. New Year is usually the last day of the pilgrimage, which is why the dinner is followed by a farewell, sometimes very touching and difficult. The young people offer the residents small commemorative gifts related to their motherland and exchange addresses in order to be able to keep in touch with them. All these elements of the pilgrimage build and deepen relationships of dialogue, trust and solidarity.

#### THE COURSE OF A MEETING

The programmes of meetings are usually alike. Prayer is at the heart of them, gathering the participants three times a day, but in the context of dialogue and trust meetings in small groups are also very important; it's during those that numerous social, religious and cultural topics are discussed. The afternoon thematic workshops are no less important; there are usually a few dozens of those so that everyone can choose a subject that interests them.

The purpose of 'sharing' in small groups is not only a mutual understanding of people from different countries (as already mentioned, there are representatives of many nations in each parish), but also a mutual exchange of experiences. These meetings are led by the young people themselves; they are prepared for that on the preceding day. During such a meeting everyone reads

a text meant to spark discussion and containing questions they need to consider.

Listed below are a few sample questions to consider at a group meeting, provoking independent thought as well:

- What gives my life meaning and direction regardless of material prosperity? (LBM, 2013)
- What can we do to strengthen democracy in our own countries? (LBM, 2013)
- Who lives in seclusion in my neighbourhood or somewhere more distant that I can visit in order to make the situation less painful? (LBM, 2013)
- How can I express my respect for the followers of other religions to show that religion is a leaven of peace, not of violence? (LBM, 2013)
- Do I know of people or initiatives that work towards improving relationships between people? Can I help? (LBM, 2013)
- Christ has offered his friendship to all. What meaning can 'friendship shown to all' have in our lives? (LBM, 2013)
- Where can we witness generous love today: with whom, in what activities, in which communities? (LBM, 2013)
- What does 'the risk of trust' mean to me? Have I found myself in a situation where I had to take that risk yet? (LBM, 2013)

Group meetings are very important in the context of building trust and dialogue. People often follow stereotypes and rumours in their judgements, and as a result of their ignorance they may make wrong assessments. The brothers know that many antagonisms and misunderstandings can be ended or mitigated simply by understanding the other person and their uniqueness as well as learning about their views and customs. The brothers also consider it important for actions to extend beyond theoretical discussion, encompassing practical initiatives as well.

After 'sharing' is over, the youth go to the halls where they receive dinner and then consume it, sitting on the floor, tightly packed – next to one another. Both the time of distributing the

meal as well as of eating provide opportunities for mutual assistance and gestures of respect and kindness towards each other. Volunteers who distribute meals do it with a smile on their faces, wishing everyone *bon appétit* in their own language; those who wait in line use the time for collective singing or games, engaging others in those activities – regardless of whether they know them or the country they come from. The youth have many opportunities to offer kindness and solidarity when eating. As the hall becomes so packed that there is no more place to sit, those who have finished their meals offer their seats to others. No one considers borrowing or lending cutlery or handkerchiefs a problem, and people who leave to fetch tea often come back with cups for everyone around as well. The halls are filled with noise and rumpus as a result of the youth singing, praying and enjoying themselves in various ways and various languages, learning the customs of others and establishing close relationships.

After lunch collective prayer begins. Texts and prayers read during this time are also meant to help build a relationship of trust, solidarity and dialogue. Singing canons often grasps young people's attention, being not only a prayer, but also a very interesting experience. Listening to people of different nationalities singing a canon in unfamiliar languages makes one reflect on how to define 'unity in diversity'.

Here are a few selected prayers:

'Jesus Christ, you embrace every human being with your compassionate love. It's in your love that we seek to heal our wounds. Through the Gospel you tell each one of us: go to those who have been marginalized: to the poor, to the abandoned; within them you will find me – Christ.' (LBM, 2013)

'Jesus Christ, when we gather in your name, you're among us. You have suffered and risen from the dead. You give us peace; peace we cannot give ourselves. You forgive us and make us free. Free to love.' (LBM, 2013)

'God of all living beings, the Gospel makes us aware of people facing an uncertain future, violence, persecution or exile. You invite us to mitigate suffering in families.' (LBM, 2011)

'Holy Spirit, you are always with us and within us. You awaken our ability to marvel. We wish to accept everything you offer. Filled with your hope, we're capable of being close to those who suffer. Let your peace embrace all; let the flow of your kindness lead us.' (LBM, 2013)

'God of Love, sometimes we feel discouraged by violence and coldness. Nevertheless the Holy Spirit makes kindness of heart, forgiveness and peace flourish even in difficult situations. We wish therefore to listen to your voice when you speak to us humbly: "I need you, as you are, so that my love can spread throughout the world."' (LBM, 2013)

'God, we pray for those who strive to make the world hospitable to all those who are helping reduce social inequalities. Oh Lord, we beseech you.' (LBM, 2013)

The above-mentioned examples of prayers awaken a sense of God's presence, but at the same time they show how deep the concern of the community of Taizé is for the poorest, those struggling with a variety of life problems, those at a crossroads, and those who are lost and in need.

#### THEMATIC WORKSHOPS

During each of the European Youth Meetings, and also at regional meetings in Taizé as well as retreats, pilgrims can choose from many different thematic workshops that correspond to the diverse interests of young people and allow to thoroughly study chosen issues. Listed below are thirty-three topics of workshops held during the last meeting in Strasbourg:

1. Personal prayer in silence (a chance to talk or take part in the sacrament of reconciliation).

2. Can God be found in the art of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? Presentation of several works of art and a visit to the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Strasbourg.
3. What is the place of Christians in the business world? An exchange of ideas with managing directors and senior executives of various companies.
4. The crisis, unemployment, job insecurity... is there a need for a new economic model? Interview with an economist and a journalist.
5. 'Shape the World with word': reflection and exchange of ideas with Chief Rabbi René Gutman.
6. Justice and human rights as a challenge for Christians: personal reflection of Ann Power-Forde, a judge for the European Court of Human Rights.
7. New forms of poverty, new forms of solidarity: An interview with Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe and with Members of the European Parliament.
8. Alsace: born between cultures. A musical and poetical meeting.
9. To accompany, treat, heal? An exchange of ideas between students, healthcare professionals and hospital chaplains.
10. Ecumenical dialogue: to coexist peacefully or allow oneself to be transformed by the encounter? An exchange of ideas between young people and theologians of different religions.
11. 'Stop. Where are you running? Heaven is within you.' Texts and music. Listening to Meister Eckhart and Friends of God.
12. To change the social climate: what can young people do today to generate new jobs and promote social peace?
13. A walk through the streets of Strasbourg: discovering characteristic places in the city centre, each at their own pace...
14. Word in stone and glass: a guided tour of the cathedral.
15. Security, threat: what do we desire? Conversation between local councillors, the general of the army, and a high official responsible for matters of international security.

16. Proclaiming Christ: reflection on mission and attendance at a Christmas Fair.
17. Christmas music: pieces for four hands and four feet...
18. Overcoming being lost in life, addictions or prostitution: an encounter with street life.
19. 'Beauty will save the world': discovering icons and Orthodox chants.
20. Joint action in the face of urgent environmental needs: how can Christians participate in them?
21. Europe as a land of continuous migration: how to coexist in a more united way? A conversation between a sociologist and a theologian.
22. 'Never stand still'. The life and vision of Brother Roger, founder of Taizé. A meeting with a theologian and one of the brothers of the Community.
23. Do we need the Church? Biblical reflection on the communion in Christ.
24. Faith: the rejection of fatalism and openness to new possibilities.
25. Sacred art of the Middle Ages: guided tour of the Museum of L'Oeuvre Notre Dame.
26. Is it still possible to trust politics? A meeting with Roland Ries, mayor of Strasbourg, Edith Schreiner, mayor of Offenburg and young people involved in politics.
27. Christmas music: two young musicians play, comment and conduct chants.
28. New solidarity: a bridge between people, unity in diversity. An exchange of ideas with young people from four continents.
29. Stereotypes, prejudices, culture shock: can we deal with them? Testimonies and an exchange of ideas.
30. The search for our origins: the point of view of an astrophysicist.
31. 'God is light': a visit to the Grand Mosque of Strasbourg and discovering inter-religious dialogue.

32. To the roots of the Gospel: from Togo to Mississippi via Alsace.
33. Inter-cultural dialogue and its religious dimension: two workshops offered by the Youth Sector of the Council of Europe (LBM, 2013).

The above workshop topics prove the workshops are organized in a way that helps to reach young people in various ways. They touch upon issues related to culture, social life, science, religion, ecumenism, ecology and history. Despite having such a broad range of themes, all of the workshops serve to deepen knowledge, encourage to reflect and raise awareness about a number of matters which often impact the perception of other human beings. They teach how to help people in need; they suggest what kinds of initiatives could be launched after returning to one's country and how to engage in doing good and spreading trust. Without a doubt, they promote the concept of dialogue through the very need for discussion of selected issues with representatives of different nationalities and cultures.

Commenting on one of the thematic meetings, David from France writes: 'The visit to the European Parliament allowed us to exchange ideas with the deputies, and also helped us better understand the way it operates. That meeting allowed us to inspect problems, values and Europe's nagging questions from the inside. We, the youth, ask ourselves a lot of questions about our European identity, our future in the European Union and the changes that are coming. The people we met encouraged us to go further, to make our voice heard, and to constantly fight for a more democratic world. Ukraine was often shown as an example. The world is in crisis, and it can get out of it more involved in co-responsibility and sharing of goods. One of the deputies said, 'I belong to the past already, you – to the future; do better than us.'" (taize.fr)

During the workshops young people talk about ways of transforming existing social relations, to reduce the world's inequality and injustice, of overcoming feelings of helplessness and futility,



and of introducing the culture of dialogue, trust and solidarity to the modern world.

#### FESTIVAL OF NATIONS

During the European Youth Meeting on New Year's Eve, the Feast of Nations invariably begins at 11pm. The participants of the pilgrimage take part in prayer for world peace in their host parishes. This is a special service whose course is similar to other prayers of Taizé. The intentions and the content of the readings indicate the exceptional nature of prayer focused on the desire for peace that would embrace the whole world. It is worth noting that 1 January is celebrated as the International Day of Peace, and the pope sends a message of peace to the world on that day. This shows that the community of Taizé joins all Christians in prayer. The pilgrims often light candles, and come out with them outside the church at midnight in order to give testimony of their faith and display their willingness to bring love and peace to the whole world. A joint international party begins after the service. The various national groups of a given host parish prepare presentations about their countries and traditions for this evening. They can thus share their regions' distinctive dances, songs and games while encouraging others to take part in them. The course of the evening is dependent on the creativity of the organisers as much as on the involvement of young people themselves. This kind of shared fun allows one to discover how necessary diversity is and how satisfying it can be to share joy with others. It also helps to break down existing stereotypes and learn about the culture of other nations. It is often a night of farewells as well, so it involves a lot of emotions and gratitude.

## LETTERS AND PUBLISHING

Every year Brother Roger wrote the Letter from Taizé for the pilgrims and anyone interested. The letter was translated into dozens of languages so that they could be understood by anyone who wished to respond to Christ's call and sought their own way. The Brothers would write similar letters after returning from different stages of the 'Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth' held outside Europe. Examples include the Letter from China, Letter from Kenya or Letter from Congo. The content was related to the situation prevailing in that region of the world. Those letters are considered by all the young people coming to the village of Taizé in a given year. This allows them to spread awareness about the situation of communities that are often very distant; the brothers want also them to be involved in the dialogue and peace they wish to teach young people.

There is a huge number of books, articles and letters that stand as a testament to how strong the desire of the brothers to spread the idea of dialogue, trust and solidarity is. It also shows how big the need for preaching is among the young, who are often lost and desire help and support.

END

In conclusion, it should be emphasised that the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth, beyond the obvious religious and spiritual dimensions, has a social dimension as well. We've discussed the most important elements of the pilgrimage which have an influence on the relations of trust and dialogue between people. It should also be noted that the mere presence of young people in a given city – its squares, parks and public transport – can be an opportunity to witness openness, sincerity, simplicity and willingness to help another human being. Taking part in dialogue enables

young people to overcome stereotypes and old antagonisms still in place today, while lasting friendships have an influence on the formation of a genuine and visible community of nations based on mutual solidarity, cooperation, trust and dialogue. Another fruit of the international meetings are new-found energy and creativity that allow for the continuation of the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth in all European countries. An expression of this are charitable, pastoral and social activities undertaken by young people in their schools, towns and parishes.

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