The Emmaus movement is about people coming together and deciding to combine their efforts.

By Brigitte Mary, Emmaus International's first permanent staff member

The Emmaus movement is about people coming together and deciding to combine their efforts. That, I think, is what’s at the heart of the movement.”

Alida Pever

Editorial

The main reason for any world assembly is to choose a movement’s political direction, and this will definitely be the case in 2016. Indeed, while Abbé Pierre spoke of the critical moments, defined by the first world assembly in May 1969 in Berne, it was “the smallest common denominator” for a “good middle-class Swiss citizen” and a “Latin American middleclass citizen” at international level.

Today, our successive world assemblies have taken the concept further. As part of an ongoing process, our world assemblies have claimed the mandate by adopting three other “founding texts”: Scope and vision further (1996); Scope and values further (2003); and Scope and commitment further (2010). The 2003 world assembly endorsed these developments in the statutes and adopted our first work programme. The 2007 and 2012 world assemblies confirmed and expanded these priority areas so that they encompassed the entire movement.

Different visions and future actions are therefore the best option for each of us as partners towards progress and campaigning work. The world assembly may well produce a fifth founding text! Let’s move forward together.

Let’s move forward together

The 2016 world assembly will be a movement gathering. Following the founder’s cherished mission all the world’s groups in their own countries and territories, Emmaus International became Abbé Pierre’s sole legatee with the remit of publicising, protecting and bringing alive his memory. The founder’s death encouraged all the world’s groups to work together towards this objective. A movement, based on transparency, self-sufficiency and campaigning successes thanks to the experience of its pilot regions in Africa, has been enabled to develop and to multiply its global reach.

Emmaus on the move

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The Emmaus movement, with its 2000 groups and 50000 members in 110 countries, has become a truly international movement for solidarity, self-help and empowerment.

Speaking out and acting together

The Emmaus movement was founded in 1963 by a journalist and a middle-class Swiss citizen, who was also a Roman Catholic priest. The journalist remembers the priest died in the 18th kilometre of his 340-kilometre cycle ride from Paris to Lourdes, after his leg was amputated due to a near-fatal injury. The journalist remembers that the priest had the only person who knew of the plan. The journalist then decided on the spot to found the movement. The movement grew rapidly. In 1964, priests in 100 countries and continents and a middle-class citizen were founding Emmaus groups. The founding was not simple. The journalist and the middle-class citizen both had to work hard and to present the idea to people they did not work with and to explain it to them. The assembly also had to call to see whether there were other people who wanted to join. The assembly was followed by a meeting of all the Emmaus groups, which was officially the start of the organisation.

In solidarity for justice

We need to evince the idea of solidarity and what we can do to act in our changes. As one journalist, the leader of Emmaus Paris (France) and another of those who initiated the movement in the United States, Abbé Pierre said that our universal manifesto, adopted in 2014 will result in the adoption of a set of principles for each of us as partners towards progress and campaigning work. The world assembly may well produce a fifth founding text!

We held the world assembly in Africa for the very first time”, explains Véronique Ghanih, the leader of Emmaus Piura (Peru). “This was a really historic event. The assembly adopted three priority areas – access to water, ethical finance and migrants’ rights – with the hope that the discussion process would continue in the future assemblies to be held in Africa. The discussion process was described as an “international revolution”.

Emmaus on the move

With the 2016 world assembly just a few months away, we definitely be the case in 2016! Indeed, while Abbé Pierre said that our universal manifesto, adopted in 2014 will result in the adoption of a set of principles for each of us as partners towards progress and campaigning work. The world assembly may well produce a fifth founding text!

All aboard

The 2016 world assembly will be a movement gathering. Following the founder’s cherished mission all the world’s groups in their own countries and territories, Emmaus International became Abbé Pierre’s sole legatee with the remit of publicising, protecting and bringing alive his memory. The founder’s death encouraged all the world’s groups to work together towards this objective. A movement, based on transparency, self-sufficiency and campaigning successes thanks to the experience of its pilot regions in Africa, has been enabled to develop and to multiply its global reach.

Emmaus International cannot solely be a sum of groups, but instead should be the result of our collective solidarity initiatives, principles and values. We must also work together successfully with other movements and coalitions working towards the same global goals. The work on the values is an example of this. Emmaus International cannot solely be a sum of groups, but instead should be the result of our collective solidarity initiatives, principles and values. We must also work together successfully with other movements and coalitions working towards the same global goals. The work on the values is an example of this. Emmaus International cannot solely be a sum of groups, but instead should be the result of our collective solidarity initiatives, principles and values. We must also work together successfully with other movements and coalitions working towards the same global goals. The work on the values is an example of this. Emmaus International cannot solely be a sum of groups, but instead should be the result of our collective solidarity initiatives, principles and values. We must also work together successfully with other movements and coalitions working towards the same global goals. The work on the values is an example of this.