

**tam tam**  
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“You can’t explain Emmaus, you have to

# EMMAUS A MODEL FOR TOMORROW

tam-tam: the Emmaus news wall

“We often say that ‘you can’t explain Emmaus, you have to experience it’, which is true. But does that mean we should give up trying to find out what we are exactly?”

Abbé Pierre



## Emmaus on the move

The 2016 World Assembly offers the opportunity to rethink our actions and commitment to Emmaus International’s main missions. Three Emmaus activists share their vision with us.



**INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**  
Poppy John Xavier, Emmaus Kudumbam (India)

“The poor are not poor because they work less than others, but because society is unfair and deprives them of their most basic rights. At Emmaus, our policy of putting solidarity into practice by sharing resources enables us to repair this injustice. It enables us to provide people with drinking water, promote small-scale agriculture, to create jobs, reduce the dominance of lenders or to mitigate the consequences of dropping out of school and to restore migrants’ dignity... In a world increasingly dominated by capitalism and individualism, our alternative practices are based on recycling and community work, something which makes us true activists for change. We should continue to formulate alternative approaches based on our companions’ ideas, for they know about the causes of poverty, and we should promote these forms of solidarity with local, regional or international-level organisations, thus paving the way towards the implementation of sustainable policies.”



**CAMPAIGNING**  
Emmanuel Siambo, Emmaus Solidarité Ouaga (Burkina Faso)

“All the social issues we face in our Emmaus groups are first and foremost political issues. We won’t be able to combat misery, injustice or poverty without campaigning on the causes of these situations. Following in the footsteps of Abbé Pierre and his appeal of 1954, we must denounce every attack on our rights and work with the poorest of our world so that they can re-appropriate their rights. In our work as part of Emmaus, campaigning should remain at the heart of our daily action, alongside social work. I remember that during one visit to Burkina Faso, Abbé Pierre challenged the minister by asking her outright: ‘What are you going to do for the poorest people?’. I think that campaigning starts at the grassroots level: each Emmaus group should use every opportunity it can to lobby its local politicians. At the regional level, we could think about designating people to organise training sessions on and activities related to campaigning.”



**ABBE PIERRE AND THE MOVEMENT’S HERITAGE**  
Laurent Kaeuffer, Emmaus Touraine (France)

“Bringing to life the memory of Abbé Pierre is one of Emmaus International’s most significant missions. We have realised that our collective memory of Abbé Pierre and his image is at risk of fading... It’s more important than ever to preserve his memory and to continue to fighting for his causes – which remain relevant today. In a navel-gazing, selfish and individualistic society, Emmaus proves that it’s possible, fulfilling and beneficial to act and live together in solidarity. Giving, redistributing resources at the local level and sharing at the international level also enable us to curb the growth of inequality. The work in progress on the archives of Abbé Pierre and the movement is feeding our efforts to encourage others to join us and make our utopian ideas a reality. Each Emmaus group has a role to play in doing this. In 2017, the 10 year anniversary of Abbé Pierre’s death and the presidential elections in France offer the opportunity to place the memory of our founder at the heart of our work today - wherever Emmaus is active!”

**Editorial**  
“What about the others?” By Jean Rousseau, Chair of Emmaus International  
From the very beginning of his long life, Abbé Pierre never stopped questioning his ideas and pushing us to constantly reflect on our future, by which he meant the future of our movement. Several world assemblies have placed this reflection process at the heart of their discussions. Our primary challenge is thus to keep up this vigorous questioning in our everyday lives. Amongst the many questions we are faced with, two emerge as just as crucial as how we answer them tomorrow: **do we still serve those who suffer most, still listen to them and pay attention to their aspirations, even those which most disturb us?** And what about those famous “others”? Those who Abbé Pierre could never leave behind or forget, for otherwise we

would be betraying everything we believe in, leaving us to simply disappear. The second question is entirely summed up in our Manifesto and the words by which we can measure our ability to overcome our internal challenges: put our desire to help into action, create, organise, raise awareness, allow ourselves to be challenged... That says it all and such is our freedom.



All aboard

→ In order to prepare for the World Assembly and be able to fully participate in the discussions and decision-making, we invite you to read:  
- The 2012 – 2016 Activity Report and the Guidance Report, available on the intranet under “2016 World Assembly” then “Reports”  
- The documents on our values, also available on the intranet under “2016 World Assembly” then “Reflections on Emmaus values”

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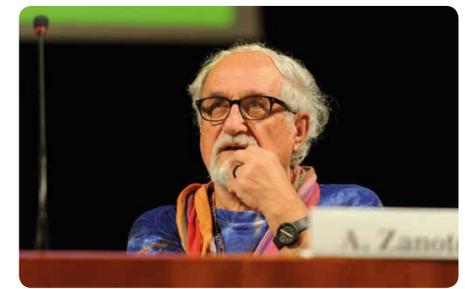
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Emmaus international

experience it”, which is true. But does that mean we should give up trying to find out what we are exactly?

## Next port of call... Jesolo (Italy)

Alex Zanotelli is an Italian priest and the founder of many peace and social justice movements. He has lived in South Sudan and Kenya. He will be at the World Assembly in Jesolo this April to share his experiences.



**How do you view Emmaus?** I’ve known Emmaus for a long time and the movement has had a significant impact on my life. I’ve been in frequent contact with the Italian communities and Graziano Zoni\*. I first encountered Emmaus at Villafraanca, where I was impressed by the movement’s work. I still had its model in mind when I left to work in the huge slum of Korogocho in Kenya.

**What’s so unique about this model?**  
Three aspects make it admirable:  
. It prioritises those left behind. It offers them a chance to give their lives meaning again.  
. It doesn’t offer charity, it restores dignity, making use of what society has rejected. For me, that’s what lies at the heart of Emmaus.  
. All of this takes place within a community, rather than individually. This collective element is key.

**What do you see for Emmaus in the future?** The system we live in leaves ever more people behind. There is so much suffering... Society urgently needs Emmaus communities. The movement is going to have a great deal more work to do in the future.

**What challenges will Emmaus have to face?** One of the biggest challenges faced by Emmaus will be the environmental crisis. The system produces so many things which are thrown away. And by making these things useful again, Emmaus gives people back the lives they have been denied. Emmaus should also continue to share its wonderful experience of community living. The system imprisons individuals, isolating them. Emmaus combats this trend by restoring the concept of living together. In the face of the challenges posed by religious extremism, Emmaus sets an example for the world: it accepts everyone, regardless of their religion and better still, enables everyone to live together whilst having different beliefs. This is because everyone is welcomed quite simply as a human being.

\* Emmaus International Board member from 2007 to 2012