

# EMMAUS, A GLOBAL MOVEMENT WORKING TO TACKLE POVERTY AND EXCLUSION: “IT IS POSSIBLE TO ‘CHANGE THE WORLD’, SO LONG AS WE ALL WORK TOGETHER, EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY”.

Excerpt from the final declaration of the 1999 World Assembly (Orléans, France)



universal manifesto

Adopted at the 1969 World Assembly (Berne, Switzerland)

of the emmaus

movement

**O**ur name, “Emmaus”, comes from the name of a village in Palestine where despair was transformed into hope. For all, believers and non-believers alike, this name evokes our shared conviction that only love can unite us and allow us to move forward together. The Emmaus Movement was created in November 1949 when men who had become aware of their privileged situation and social responsibilities in the face of injustice and men who no longer had any reason to live crossed paths and decided to combine forces and take action together to help each other and come to the aid of those who were suffering, in the belief that it is by saving others that you yourself are saved. To this end, the Communities were set up, working to live and give. Groups of friends and volunteers were also set up to continue the struggle in the private and public arena. **1.OUR LAW** applies to all humankind and is that

on which depends any life worth living, true peace, and joy for the individual and society: “Serve those who are less fortunate before yourself”. “Serve first those who suffer most”. **2.OUR CONVICTION** is that respect for this law should guide any pursuit of justice and therefore peace among peoples. **3.OUR AIM** is to take action to ensure that every person, society and nation can live, have a place and be fulfilled through communication and sharing in equal dignity. **4.OUR METHOD** involves creating, supporting and coordinating a system in which everyone, by being free and respected, can meet their own needs and help each other. **5.OUR PRIMARY MEANS**, wherever possible, is the collection work that gives new value to any object and increases the potential to provide emergency relief to help those suffering most. **6.ANY OTHER MEANS** to raise awareness and meet this challenge should also be used to ensure that those suffering

most are served first, by sharing their troubles and struggles – whether public or private – until the cause of each ill is eliminated. **7.OUR FREEDOM** In the accomplishment of its task Emmaus is not subordinate to any other ideal than that expressed in this Manifesto, or to any other authority than that established internally according to its own rules. It acts in conformity with the Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations, and with the just laws of every society and nation, without political, racial, linguistic, spiritual or any other distinction. Nothing else is required of anyone wishing to participate in our action other than the acceptance of the content of this Manifesto. **8.OUR MEMBERS** This Manifesto constitutes the simple and clearly defined foundation of the Emmaus Movement. It should be adopted and applied by any group wishing to become an active member of the Movement.



## EMMAUS INTERNATIONAL

A WORLD BASED ON SOLIDARITY FORGED BY THE WORK OF THE POOR AND DESTITUTE

As Abbé Pierre's sole legatee, Emmaus International is a secular solidarity movement that has been targeting the causes of exclusion since 1971. What does it fight for? Allowing the most underprivileged to take back control of their own lives by helping others. From India to Poland, via Peru or Benin, the Emmaus Movement has more than 300 member organisations in 36 countries that develop economic activities and solidarity with the poorest in society. Their activities range from combating waste by collecting and recycling second-hand goods, producing handicrafts, and organic farming to helping street children, and providing microcredit. Present in the four corners of the world, these organisations work together to combine their efforts and establish ties of solidarity. Rejecting the idea of access to fundamental rights being a privilege, Emmaus International unites its members around practical, tangible achievements and political programmes. At the heart of this commitment is the Movement's collective work on five priority programmes: access to water, access to health, ethical finance, education and migrants' rights. Through their daily work dealing with the social reality, and through their collective commitments, the Emmaus groups set an example worldwide of the viability of a society and economic model founded on solidarity and ethical values.

### > TACKLING THE CAUSES OF POVERTY

As a Movement, Emmaus - as well as being “preliminary and complementary in any struggle for social justice” - is devoted to the interests of the weakest members of society; its mission consists not only in giving emergency aid, but in helping the people themselves to claim their just rights, that is: to make “their own voice heard”. This commitment implies that Emmaus will always be in conflict with those who, consciously or unconsciously, are the cause of these sufferings, especially national or international groups which exert an oppressive influence. Every member organisation of Emmaus International must determine, in the light of local conditions, whether it is opportune and how to make known the scope and limits of this Emmaus's commitment, and to shape its social policy accordingly. *Excerpts from the “Scope and Limits of Emmaus's Social Commitment”, adopted by the 1979 World Assembly (Århus, Denmark)*