



I'm fed up of those people who stick a photo of

# WE ARE ALL THE HEIRS OF ABBÉ PIERRE

tam-tam: the Emmaus news wall

"I'm fed up of those people who stick a photo of Abbé Pierre above their bed and when they wake in the morning they look at it and shed a tear, thinking that they've done something. Crying isn't taking action." Abbé Pierre



## Emmaus on the move

On all continents the heritage of Abbé Pierre is still present, living on through those people who met him and thanks to initiatives that aim at bringing this heritage to life today.



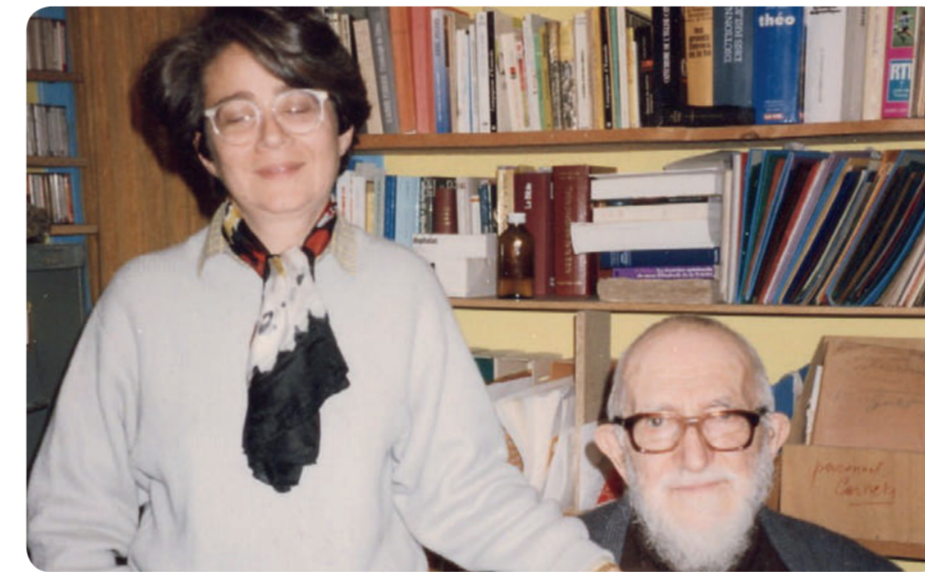
**AFRICA | Albert Tevoedjre (Benin)**  
A Political Career and a Career as an Activist in the Footsteps of Abbé Pierre

"I listened to the 1954 radio appeal live. I was struck by Abbé Pierre's bravery, commitment and political vision based on the idea of "serve first those who suffer most". I have tried to ensure these principles are embedded in my initiative to develop a minimum level of social services in Benin. I was also struck by his capacity to say "no", this helped us start the campaign for democratic renewal in our country. Abbé Pierre encouraged me to go into politics, he told me that I needed to be "where the decisions are made". I have always been a committed Christian activist convinced that development comes via solidarity and that peace can only be achieved if we have development. My ideas were strengthened, galvanised by meeting Abbé Pierre."



**THE AMERICAS | Emmaus Pereira (Columbia)**  
A Museum on the History of Emmaus and Abbé Pierre

Since 2012 Emmaus Pereira has been organising workshops on recycling and the environment for schoolchildren from poor areas. Gustavo Cano, the founder of the group, explains a little more: "given the interest in the story of our founder we understood that it was important to promote Abbé Pierre's life, work and philosophy. We decided to create a museum. He's an international figure who fought against the causes of poverty, exclusion and inequality so we're proud to be his heirs. We want the visitors to be aware that some people are worse off than they are and that solidarity is based on sharing and preserving our resources." The museum was opened on 5 August 2015 and has already had more than 620 visitors. The people of Pereira now know all about Abbé Pierre.



**ASIA | Claude Audi (Lebanon)**  
Committed to AEP for over 40 years

"I came across Emmaus in 1973 via Father Grégoire Haddad. He was a good friend of Abbé Pierre's and founded the 'Oasis of Hope' in Beirut. I was surprised to see such happiness in this community where people were re-integrated into the job market through work and that this was achieved using objects that people had thrown away! It was completely different to the other assistance policies in place at that time. Thus I gradually got involved in the international movement. I was already very committed when I met Abbé Pierre for the first time but meeting him did make me even more committed. He paid attention to everyone and always had a kind word to say, adapting to the person and their country of origin. Meeting Abbé Pierre and Father Grégoire was an enriching experience and their effect on me is proven by the fact that I'm still committed to the Movement 40 years down the line!



**EUROPE | Emmaus Europe**  
Training Session on the History and Values of the Movement

Over the last 3 years the 'Emmaus, Europe in all of its Facets' training session has been helping people to understand more about Emmaus' history and values. "The European groups are often quite isolated" explains Thierry Muniglia, one of the people leading the training sessions. "This training session helps create bonds realising that they have similar values and methods. It helps them see the meaning behind their initiatives. Leading the sessions has been a different way for me to get involved in the Movement, I'm not an expert on the history of Emmaus but I like explaining things and helping people get to know each other. What I like about Emmaus is welcoming and developing people through work. Leading these training sessions and in my role as a group leader I try to share Emmaus' values by living by them rather than by doing fancy speeches."

## Editorial

**Patrick Atohoun, Chair of Emmaus International**  
Abbé Pierre's struggles were international. Our founder believed that solidarity should include the poorest, most excluded people from all across our planet, and thus, logically, he made Emmaus International his sole legatee. Ten years on from Abbé Pierre's death we must continue to abide by Emmaus' values and the principles for action adopted at the

World Assembly in Jesolo; that is the true heritage of Abbé Pierre. His commitment and desire to help men and women get out of difficult situations was something that stood out and had an impact on people. This is why I got involved in helping children and young people in difficult situations. I also worked with political refugees from Togo and the inhabitants of Lake Nokoué once

I understood that their need to have access to water and sanitation was falling on deaf ears. We are all the heirs of Abbé Pierre. Each one of us has the responsibility of continuing his struggles and of working together to find global alternatives to exclusion, poverty and exploitation. We must do this to get men and women back on their feet.

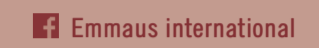


## All aboard

→ **Your Initiatives on Act Emmaus!**  
The Act Emmaus platform is now online. Let's show the diversity of initiatives following "in the footsteps of Abbé Pierre" that are led by the Emmaus groups across the globe. In order to do this, log on to the platform and tell us all about your initiative. The address is: [www.actemmaus.org/projects](http://www.actemmaus.org/projects)  
Contact person: [actemmaus@emmaus-international.org](mailto:actemmaus@emmaus-international.org)

→ **The Archives are Available to You**  
As Abbé Pierre's sole legatee, Emmaus International is responsible for archiving, conserving and promoting the archives of Abbé Pierre. But you can access this hoard of secret treasures too!  
If you would like to use photos please don't hesitate to ask.  
Contact person: [communication@emmaus-international.org](mailto:communication@emmaus-international.org)

An Emmaus International publication - 2017  
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Illustration by: Claire Robert ([www.claire-robert.org](http://www.claire-robert.org))  
Photo credits: Emmaus International, José Luis Iniesta  
Quotation: Statement made to journalists in 1970  
Printed on FSC certified paper by Loire Offset Titoulet  
[www.emmaus-international.org](http://www.emmaus-international.org)  
[www.actemmaus.org](http://www.actemmaus.org)



## Next port of call... Rambervilliers (France)

Frédérique Weixler, the founder of the Emmaus Friends Committee in Rambervilliers, has been committed to the Movement since 1984 and was initially drawn in by the message of our Universal Manifesto. Frédérique was the treasurer of Emmaus International in 2007, at the time of Abbé Pierre's death.



**Could you describe how you came across Emmaus?** Some friends and I founded the Emmaus Friends Committee in Rambervilliers in 1984; we were inspired by the Manifesto and had become aware of our "privileged situation and social responsibilities in the face of injustice". We did our collections in the evening after work and developed the group together - today we have employees being re-integrated into the job market and we cover the entire Vosges region. As time went on I got gradually more involved in the local, national and international bodies of Emmaus.

**Why did Abbé Pierre make Emmaus International his sole legatee?** The story of Abbé Pierre and the Emmaus Movement is an international one. From 1956 Abbé Pierre travelled around the world sharing his ideas and Emmaus groups were created along the way. In 1963 he almost died in a shipwreck in Latin America and he realised then that if he died the Movement he had built could disappear with him. He thus decided to bring the 70 Emmaus groups from 20 different countries together in Montreal in 1969 and that is when they adopted the Universal Manifesto. An International Secretariat was created in 1971 to provide

cohesion to the Movement and the statutes were adopted in order "to continue with the action started in 1949". In his will Abbé Pierre clearly named Emmaus International as his "sole legatee" and wrote to the President of France to give him the means necessary to fulfil his mission and responsibilities.

**What are the challenges for Emmaus today?** Being his sole legatee means that our mission includes both the spiritual and material memory of Abbé Pierre. We must continue working together to give meaning to the ideas of our founder. It's not about recounting the story of a saint but rather a powerful, fraternal wind of change inspired by Abbé Pierre.