

## **An apostolate to blind and visually impaired people**

Since 1974, the year of my novitiate, I have discovered this world that I did not know. Ever since that day, I have worked side by side with these people who give me more than I give them. It is their joy at being alive that has marked me and continues to do so every single day. They have helped me move forward in my Marist vocation.

I have been a member for several years of the “Grillons et Cigales” (“Crickets and Cicadas”) Association, founded in Lyons by a blind priest more than 80 years ago. This priest wanted to help his blind brothers and sisters to find their place in society and in the Church. He showed me the way to do this, and I try to be faithful very day to this mission. Every year I accompany a holiday stay for young people and adults. For me it is a joy to live and share with them on a daily basis. During the year, we organize several meetings in Lyons and Paris.

A few years ago I was asked to be the national chaplain of « Voir Ensemble », (“See Together”), a Catholic movement of the blind and visually impaired. This association has more than 3000 members in all the dioceses of France. We manage 36 institutions and services. I am a member of the board of directors, I bring the Christian voice of the blind. A pastoral council carries with me the concern for the Christian life of the movement. Last year we had “Fraternity” as our theme for reflection, and this year it is “Fraternity and Solidarity”. We have published a booklet to allow each group to reflect, pray and meditate. We also have an International Solidarity Group (ISC) that cares about our blind brothers and sisters in Africa. Every year we organize a national pilgrimage to Lourdes with 300-400 people. This coming year it will take place from April 27 to May 2. We also have in preparation a televised mass on A2 on Sunday, March 22 from the city of Limoges.

Our movement also organized 2 pilgrimages to Israel. This year we have a pilgrimage to Fatima from October 28 to November 2. I'll tell you about it in a future article. Our community of Sainte Foy près Lyon regularly welcomes blind people to the Sunday Mass but also to Christmas and other celebrations. This mission of our community corresponds well to the apostolate to the poorest.

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