

## To build the Europe of Trust

### Taizé meeting

From Monday 29 December 2008 to Friday 2 January 2009

From the 29th December 2008 to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January 2009, more than 40,000 young people from different European countries met in Brussels in order to share in a peaceful and hopeful their experience of faith. This meeting, called a stage in the “*pilgrimage of trust on earth*” was animated by the Taizé community. Its aim was to help create more fraternal relationships, and to move beyond the mistaken views of others perpetuated by the lack of contact between peoples and by the wounds of history. The youths in this stage pilgrimage rekindle their intuition and their enthusiasm which marked perhaps for them the beginnings of the building of Europe, that is, to make reconciliation among peoples a reality by setting in common their resources and their specific gifts. This was a moment of prayer, of reflection and meeting among young people. Indeed, Thousands of families and religious communities open their doors to young people.



As matter of fact, our community in Leuven had welcomed 40 young people from Poland, Russia and England under the initiative of Father Willem. Some activities were organised in our community, namely, Morning Prayer, Evening prayer and the reflection on the gospel passages. Father Willem and I shared breakfast everyday with the group. On New Year day meals were offered to the group, at Saint Peter’s hospital of the University of Leuven. Prior to that, we had a vigil prayer in order to celebrate the feast of saint Sylvester. When it was New Year, in the midnight, all of us were very happy and we were singing and dancing together.

The meeting had in attendance not only Catholics but also some Protestants and members of Orthodox Churches in Belgium. Many topics were reflected upon. In our group we had reflected on many issues that we deal with nowadays, through the nineteen workshops that were proposed, participants were at liberty to choose their group of interest. The themes were explicitly linked to the search for God, namely, “What is the source from which we draw

life?” And “what could be the possible contribution of Christians in building an opening world to everyone”?



In our reflections, we had reflected on the fact that the Gospel encourages simplicity of life. It calls believers to bring their own desire under control in order to succeed in setting limits, not by constraint but by choice. Freely chosen simplicity enables those who are privileged to resist the race to acquire what is superfluous and contributes to the struggle against the poverty imposed on those who are deprived. Promoting steps toward forgiveness is another contribution of Christians. Such steps imply the refusal to pass on to the next generation rancor for this will mean still festering wounds not to forget a painful past. Christians were to heal past memories of rancor by forgiveness and interrupting the chain reaction that causes resentment to endure. Without forgiveness, there is no future for societies.



We had also reflected that everyone can take part in a civilisation marked not by mistrust but by trust. The reason why the Brussels meeting was both an invitation to participate in this task and an initiative to address this issue in making it our motto: “Let us go beyond the barriers in our societies”. The next meeting will take place in Poland in 2009.

Willy Mikobi, cj.