

## THE EUCHARIST AND THE EYM

### *French EYM*

*"The EYM is a Church movement"*

"The EYM has a long history behind it which is rooted in the Jesuits and the pedagogy of their founder, Saint Ignatius Loyola. In his image, the EYM proposes that young people, as disciples of Christ, "seek and find God in all things". Linked to the French Episcopacy, in the heart of the Church of France and entirely trusted by it, the EYM wants to be a movement of both education and spirituality. It would like to train people able - today and above all tomorrow - to participate in the building of society. With this in view it proposes to help young people find a meaning for their daily life" (*Mgr Lagleize, bishop of Valence, accompanier of the EYM*).

"The word "Eucharist" comes from the Greek "eucharistein", which means: thanksgiving, saying thank you. Saying thank you for what we have received, learning to give... This is the sense of our undertaking. It is for this that the EYM wants to help young people to have lasting relationships, to blossom while maintaining a balance in the various domains of their lives, and to cultivate their festive spirit" (*Father Le Van, S.J. national chaplain of the EYM*).

*With the EYM, in the wake of Christ*

A young person lives in a world in which God became incarnate. With the EYM he seeks God's presence and the call to freedom in this world. And he tries to build himself in it and take on responsibilities. With the EYM the young person thus opens himself to God and the world, searching unceasingly. This is why the EYM addresses seekers of God. Christ is proposed to them as their friend, their model, their guide. It is he whom they seek to bear witness to. At the same time that it proposes spiritual life, the movement

develops education for listening, team life and responsibilities, all of which are essential for giving a sense to their lives.

*M. Décarité*, member of the national team: "In the EYM we propose that a young person create a link between his life, whatever it may be, and his faith, always in the making".

*To say "I'm a Christian isn't always easy*

"It's at the same time a statement I'd like to shout from the rooftops, because it's beautiful, it's strong, it's true. But my voice gets stifled in my throat: I'm afraid of other people's reactions. In the EYM I'm happy to affirm it. I'm supported by the other member's faith. My priority is personal prayer. I've discovered the richness of the relationship I can have with God. It's an inspiration to grow..." (*Tifaine*).

"I've taken part in the EYM activities for 8 years! The EYM has taught me to be a Christian at ease in my boots. In fact it's thanks to the movement that my faith has become a personal affair for me, in the sense of a personal relationship with God" (*Laurent*).

"The secret of the EYM is that it isn't just words... One discovers God through mountain hikes as well as through charitable actions... One learns to discover oneself" (*Isabelle*).

*Living the Eucharist today*

The vision of the EYM is based on the Eucharist - lived and celebrated. It is a matter of helping young people to welcome the best that is in them in order to live it better and offer it as a gift to those around them, thus entering into Jesus Christ's movement of offering. Jesus Christ is the Son of God who receives his whole life from his Father in order to give it back to him and offer it to his brothers. In this perspective the EYM proposes that young people

discover that their life - its joys as well as its difficulties - can be received as a gift of God. Thus the Eucharist can be lived in daily life.

#### *Prayer of the EYM*

"Teach us, Lord, to choose you every day, to repeat your "yes" in each of our acts. Grant us to follow you fearlessly and to love you more than anything else. Make us brothers, you who gathered us together. Make us bear witness in front of all people to what we have seen and heard, to what we believe and live, so that everybody may recognize in you, with us, the one and only Lord".

#### *Understanding the Scriptures*

In the EYM young people can learn to look at, listen to and enjoy a scene from the Gospel...

"As a team, read the text of the Beatitudes (Mt 5:1-12)

There are three parts in each Beatitude: the word "happy", the people who are said to be "happy", why they are or will be "happy": find these three parts.

Look for the Beatitudes which are in the present and those which are in the future.

To whom does Jesus promise happiness?

Colour in a more luminous way the attitude you would like to live...

As a team, invent new Beatitudes...".

### *Acting Church*

With the EYM the young person can discover the gestures of the Church, the symbols of the sacraments. As a team, through gatherings, he/she experiences an authentic Church community. He/she is invited to discover that he/she is a Child of God in the great family of the Church. He/she can discover the variety of the celebrations according to the liturgical period, the diversity of the assemblies. Thus, little by little, he/she is initiated into the aspect of community of the Church,...

### *Praying & celebrating*

The EYM aims at proposing a true initiation to interiority to young people.

Starting from Jesus' attitudes, the Gospel stories, the young person is invited to pray with everything he is: his body, his daily life, his relationships. In the course of meetings and liturgical gatherings he learns to pray as a team, in order to be able to pray alone. He cultivates a personal familiarity with prayer which leads him to Christ, whom he can thus address "in his heart".

*M. Davenel:* "Young people have a real capacity for living a time of prayer, a time of interiority, of relationship with God".

In the EYM a young person can discover his faith through yesterday and today's witnesses... Don Bosco, Sister Emmanuelle, the Abbé Pierre... Meeting witnesses helps to throw light on his faith.

*Father Sylvain Victoire, Jesuit:* "We want to help the young person build himself as a person "standing on his feet" in harmony with himself, with God and with others. At the heart of our

initiative: the Eucharist. Each young person is invited to welcome what is best in him in order to give it to others".

*Following Christ, a Christian is called on to receive and give his life freely in order to be entirely for and with others.*

*New Fire prayer:*

"Hello! An everyday word which I often say without thinking about it. And yet when it is said to me and I am really aware of it, it gives me pleasure...

In fact the person who is saying it is giving me his attention. Since God created me and loves me I too can say hello to him every morning, which means that once again I become aware of his presence at my side and am sure that he is going to live this new day with me".

*Learning to pray in a team:*

"Prepare for prayer. Be silent, close your eyes... to welcome Jesus.

Light a candle, the sign of Jesus' presence among us. Take the song "At the very heart of my life".

Each one choose and say a phrase of the song he wants to say to Jesus".

*Or else:*

To help you live the morning prayer, construct a large cube which can contain the treasures of your times of prayer inside and on its facets. Place it by your bed. Decorate one of the facets around the words: "Good morning Lord" according to your own taste.

*New Fire question:*

"How will we be after death?"

*Clément, 10 years old...:*

"When we're dead we won't exist any more as we do today. Thanks to Jesus, we know that we'll exist in another way, in an unknown world. Death is like a passage. When we were born, we made a first passage into this world which was new for us. Death, which sometimes frightens us, is like a new birth. But how will it be? It's a mystery. Only one thing is sure, when we're through living, God will welcome us, will help us throw light onto our life, what was good, what was bad, and he'll invite us all together to share his joy!

Have you been confronted with the death of someone close to you?

What is difficult to understand? What reassures you? And have you already spoken about it with your parents?"

*Young Witnesses prayer:*

"Bless you, God! When the weather is fine it does us good.

In front of a beautiful landscape, we're wholly taken up by it and forget our daily worries for a moment.

When the weather is fine, it speaks to us of God from whom all beauty comes. There are some psalms which look only at what is beautiful in the world. For an instant we leave everything that's not good behind us to thank the Lord for what we rejoice over. For God, blessing is doing good. For us, blessing is telling about the good done to us".

*End of Day prayer (Apostolic Teams):*

"Place ourselves in Lord's presence, ask him for the grace of recognizing in ourselves the traces of his passage during the day...

1. Recognizing in the work, relationships and events of my day what I have received from God: the moments when I have lived in peace, in joy, the moments of opening up to others. Recognizing God's kindness, the way he takes care of me. Thanking him for these gifts.

2. Carefully considering how I received these gifts from Lord, singling out the moments when I was "closed up", when I turned away from others, recognizing them and asking forgiveness.

3. On the strength of this alliance with God, entrusting tomorrow's day to him. Entrusting him with decisions which need to be taken, areas which need watching. Believing that, whatever happens, the Lord will be there, with me. Asking him to know how to welcome the unexpected".

*Chloé, 15 years old:*

"In secondary school I was the only one who said I believed in God. I was rather lost. An EYM team was formed in my parish: a friend suggested that I join her in it. And I quickly discovered that I could become a witness, in my school, with my friends. And the Lord did the rest!..."

*Thomas, 16 years old:*

"I heard about the EYM in my parish. When I went to the first meeting I was welcomed as if they had known me forever: smiles, cakes, exchanges... I loved it! They brought warmth to my heart. Now I know that I'm not alone in believing in God..."