

WHO ARE WE?

*The identity card of L'Arche in French speaking Belgium**

An organisation with people who have an intellectual disability:

We have four associations in Bruxelles and Wallonie*. Our mission is to accompany and support adults who have an intellectual disability to live with their limits, to discover and to develop their true value, dignity and potential, and their place in society.

Come and share these values and have a different experience:

- Society is only truly human when it is founded on the welcome and respect of every person, with their intellectual, social, cultural and spiritual differences.
- We all have our points of fragility; recognising this opens us up to our humanity. Our limits, our disabilities, or our failures, do not take away from our value and dignity as human beings.
- Thanks to the special gift of welcome that people with an intellectual disability have, their sense of wonder, spontaneity and truth, they have the ability to touch our hearts and call us to unity
- Living a mutual relationship is at the heart of L'Arche. Our lives are based on **'being with'** and **'doing with'**, which is a different attitude than **'doing for'**, and this helps each member of the community to grow and experience a personal transformation.

Building Community...

In order to live our mission fully and according to our values, we have developed a harmonious relationship between the professional and community dimensions:

- Our communities include people with an intellectual disability (who are the subject of their own lives), their families, professionals who are paid to work with us, volunteers, friends, members of the respective Associations and the Board of Directors.
- Each community has residential houses and day centres where we offer training, work and activities that promote well-being.
- Our aim on a day to day basis is to respond to the individual and collective needs of the people with an intellectual disability.
- Jean Vanier, the founder of L'Arche was inspired by his Christian Humanism to found the communities of L'Arche. However, L'Arche is enriched by the many philosophical and religious differences that are present in our communities. Out of respect for each one, all those who participate in our project are invited to share the meaning of what it is they discover at L'Arche.
- Celebrating life is very important for us and has a big place in our daily life together.

.....with Professionalism:

- Each member of the community has his/her specific place, with their role, skills and responsibilities.
- With respect for established procedures and competent systems, we prioritise a participative approach where questions are treated at the level closest to the people concerned
- So that we can respond best to the needs of the people with an intellectual disability and in order to enhance the quality of relationship with them, we prefer to keep our services and infrastructure small.
- As a recognised organisation that is partially financed by Public Funds we make every effort to use the resources, tools and technology available to us and to follow the procedures that contribute to the professionalism of our services. We are diligent with our finances and make every effort to seek new sources of funding.

We live in solidarity with the world:

Since its foundation by Jean Vanier in 1964, L'Arche is now spread over 40 countries on every continent, in the most diverse social, cultural and religious contexts. Today it is a Federation of 140 communities, which are open and socially committed**. United by shared values, they are a sign of hope and solidarity in a world that needs new models on how we can live together.

* For more information see: www.larche.be

** For more information see: www.larche.org