

THE COURAGE OF CHARITY

Who are the lay Friends of Jeanne Antide



Spiritual foundations and guidelines

«I called you friends»

Jn 15,15

From the Founding Text:

"We, friends of Jeanne Antide, together with the sisters of Charity, form one same spiritual family to live and share the charism of Jeanne Antide. Each one according to his/her vocation in the Church and in the society."

Who are the lay friends of Jeanne-Antide:

They are men and women of every age and culture, hailing from various Countries of the world who feel called by the charism of Jeanne-Antide.

"To love Christ Jesus,
to love and serve the poor who are His members,
to show them the love of the father;
this is the charism and mission which St. Vincent de Paul and St. Jeanne Antide
received from God"
From the Rule of the Sisters of Charity

They want to live it and deepen it in their daily life and in their Christian engagement.

Together, we want:

- To deepen the Christian life and that of the Friends of Jeanne-Antide
- To participate in the organised local meetings
- To engage ourselves in the voluntary work or in a service in collaboration with the Congregation, with ecclesial associations or any other kind of service that enhances solidarity and social inclusion.

The identity of the movement is Catholic. Men and women of good will can feel called to be part of it.

Some history

The Friends of Jeanne-Antide form part of the spiritual family of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Jeanne Antide Thouret, whose roots are embedded in the Vincentian spirituality.

- In the 80s some lay persons in the USA and in Lebanon ask to know the charism better. They commit themselves to deepen their faith and to live charity towards the poor.
- Between 1990 and 1995, in Italy, France, and Switzerland, some small groups want to participate in the mission of the congregation, because somehow they can reflect on it.
- In 2002, the sisters in charge of the movement "Journeying with the laity", meet in Rome. This journey challenges the sisters to open up to a new mentality, in faith and trust.
- In 2005 the General Chapter of the sisters asks "What kind of relationship do we want to establish between us and the laity in the future journey?"
- In 2007, in Rome, during the first International meeting of JA Friends, under the guidance of Mgr. Daloz, Archbishop of Besançon, a founding Text of JA Friends is prepared.
- Between 2007 and 2010 a competent International committee is appointed. In the meantime one seeks modalities to encourage more sharing among the groups: a journey of common spiritual deepening is suggested to encourage communion in diversity in the spirit of Jeanne Antide.
- In 2010, ten lay friends of JA hailing from various Countries across the globe, are invited to participate in the works of the General Chapter for some days. They presented to the assembly the syntheses of the preparatory work of all the groups of JA Friends in the world, in view of the General Chapter.
The same Chapter calls sisters and laity to be always close to the small, to the voiceless and to the socially excluded; it's therefore a call to renew our way of living the service (diaconia) and to render it a purely spiritual reality in history. In order to pursue the Global Objective of the General Chapter 2005, the General Chapter 2010 demands from everybody, sisters and laity: "We want to contribute together, sisters and laity, to sow seeds of a humanity which is simple, fraternal and in solidarity".
- In 2011 the Steering Group of JAF is formed and is engaged in elaborating a formation itinerary which is common to all the JAF throughout the world, in facilitating communication and information.
- In 2012, the "Friends of St. Martha", in view of the fusion of the Sisters of St. Martha with the Sisters of Charity, launch an itinerary to become acquainted with the charism and the groups of Friends of Jeanne-Antide. The fusion of the two Congregations is celebrated in Périgueux, on the 23rd April 2014.

- During the General Chapter 2015, the lay friends share some suggestions that emerged during their week's work in common:
 - to give life to a more structured organisation to the lay movement of JA Friends
 - to organise an international meeting for the lay Friends of JA
 - to pursue formation, especially for the representatives of the local groups
 - to intensify communion among the various groups
 - to keep alive the collaboration and communion between laity and sisters
 - to collaborate actively with the Thouret Foundation.

- **Nel 2018**, the representatives, lay and sisters of 15 local groups hailing from the four continents, are summoned to Rome for an International Meeting bearing the title: "*Called to ... sent for ...*"

Today, the local groups are still active in Europe: France, Italy, Malta, England, Romania; in the Middle East : Egypt, Syria, Lebanon; in Asia: Pakistan, India, Indonesia; in Latin America: Paraguay and Argentine; in Africa: Central African Republic, Cameroon, Chad, South Sudan.

The ways of participating, deepening and living the charism vary according to the groups and the places: such as prayer groups or groups interested in deepening the life of Jeanne-Antide and the charism who accomplish deeds of solidarity either occasionally or in an organised or voluntary form.

This diversity has a deep desire and chooses to introduce into one's life the spirituality of Jeanne-Antide: not only in daily life but even in society and in our places of work, study and recreation. It's a matter of working within our world and society to serve and respect the poor today.

Integrating the groups of JAF in the local Churches is an enrichment to the Church's countenance according to God's will and even the Friends continue to receive new contributions from the communion of charisms.

Founding text

of the International Movement of St. Jeanne-Antide's Friends

"I want to make use of you to do great things"

(MSR. L.D - pag.539)

We, friends of Jeanne-Antide Antide form, with the sisters of Charity, the same **spiritual family**, to live and share Jeanne-Antide's charism, each one according to his/her own vocation in the Church, to serve society.

As baptized, to be faithful to the Gospel, we orientate our life toward **Christ** whom we want to serve **in the poor** , "**his suffering members** ".

- We commit ourselves **to live in a sober, fraternal manner, in solidarity.**
- We want to be attentive to the poor, **in the different cultural contexts** of the current society, acting according to our possibilities.
- We want that the **dignity** of all human beings is acknowledged, so that our world's development is not made to the detriment of the most undefended.
- From Jeanne Antide we learn to put our trust in **God Alone**, to find in Him the courage of love and witnessing. That is why in our life, we give an important place to prayer and to the deepening of the **Charism**.
- We choose the most suitable means **to form ourselves** in a human and spiritual way.
- We want to help one another to live this call, **at an international dimension**, respecting the freedom of every person.
- We want to involve **teenagers and young people** in our journey, while giving weight to their creativity.

We welcome Jeanne-Antide's message: she helps us to be faithful and open to the Holy Spirit.

Rome, 17th February 2008

SHARING IDEALS, SPIRIT, MISSION

"In their personal or professional commitment, there are Christians who, attracted by the founders' evangelical intuition, draw from this source, want to live their baptism and feel part of the Church through this light." (Mgr L. Daloz, International meeting, Rome, 2007)

Baptism comprises the secret and solid action of the entire theology, of the spirituality and of the Christian's mission. The evangelical intuition of the founders and foundresses offers in a unique manner, a way of expressing one's baptism fully, of living the relationship with God and with the brothers and sisters.

"A suitable house for the foundation's goal": since the first days of common life, Jeanne-Antide and her first companions share a spiritual ambiance, in the presence of – God Alone, Jesus Good Samaritan, the Holy Spirit, the Church, Mary, St. Vincent – who permit them to live an intensive life of faith, of service and of fraternity. Together, they are convinced to live evangelically "the better part": the service to the poor, the bond of communion and their daily life as an encounter with God and the neighbour.

Starting from these spiritual foundations – The house and the Better part – some concrete calls need to be highlighted.

"A SUITABLE HOUSE in view of the foundation"

(Jeanne-Antide to the Prefect Debry, 1808)

- God Alone
- Jesus Good Samaritan
- The Holy Spirit, source of God's charity
- The Church servant and poor
- Mary
- St. Vincent de Paul

"THE BETTER PART"

(Jeanne-Antide to Sister Martha, 1825)

- service in the spirit of the Gospel
- the poor, precious members of the suffering Christ
- daily life, an encounter with God and the neighbour
- communion, gift and commitment

“A SUITABLE HOUSE IN VIEW OF THE FOUNDATION

(Jeanne-Antide to the prefect Debry, 1808)

*“We went into the new rooms in the last days of October of the same year.
At the same time as I was training my Sisters for the active life,
I was training them also for the contemplative life,
to support and sanctify the active”*
(Jeanne-Antide, Manuscript of Pure Truths)

In Besançon, in 1799, the first house is a single room, assigned as school and Jeanne-Antide goes to a friend in the evening. Only in September 1800, she finally goes to live in 13, Martelots Street : four big rooms and a small kitchen. Then, the servants of the poor gradually begin to live in small apartments given to them by the municipalities, hospitals and parishes.

But Jeanne-Antide soon perceives the need of a bigger lodging to welcome the novices and the sick sisters. She dreams of a sufficiently big *house that is suitable for her foundation goals*. And she repeatedly makes requests to the authorities. Yet, when she leaves for Naples she has no lodging, neither in France, nor in Switzerland, nor in Savoy.

But if they have no material building, the young women in formation are surely welcomed into a *rich and fertile “spiritual milieu”*, which mother Thouret and her first companions contribute to build day by day. A spiritual ground which *enables* the sisters to live *a life of strong faith, of service, of fraternity*; a spiritual space which enables the poor to feel welcomed, acknowledged in their dignity of sons and daughters of God and helped to shift from their material needs to deeper and real needs, to inner and spiritual needs.

The presences of this spiritual milieu who consent an intensive life of faith, service and fraternity are :

- God Alone
- Jesus Good Samaritan
- The Holy Spirit, source of God’s charity
- The Church servant and poor
- Mary
- St. Vincent de Paul

As Friend of Jeanne-Antide I commit myself to inhabit the “house”, while participating in the initiatives organised locally by the JAF.

God Alone!

*“The human being is incapable of giving life to himself,
he understands himself only by starting from God:
it is the relationship with him that gives our humanity consistence
and makes our life good and just.
Giving time and space to God,
so that he may be the vital centre of our existence”.*
(Benedict XVI, 11th September 2011)

For the first time in the Circular of 1809, Jeanne Antide introduces the *post-scriptum*: “From now on, our letters between me and the sisters, the motto will be “God Alone!”. During the various Seasons of her life, the motto undergoes various changes and forms: “God Alone and all Alone”, “Glad to belong to God Alone”, “God Alone is my everything!”, “To God Alone”.

This deep relationship with God, a boundless source of an utterly powerful vitality, unifies everything: intelligence, will, affectivity, action and personality. God Alone is Jeanne-Antide’s heart beat, the cause of her courage, the reason of her daring, the origin of her initiative, the support in moments of difficulties, the companion during her failures. “I am alone, helped by God Alone, my confidence solidly established on His omnipotence, making every effort, working day and night.” (1812).

She always receives from God new impulse and fervour. And she strongly desires that this profession of faith in God Alone resonates also in the heart of her daughters and in that of the poor: “The poor whom you serve will make the best of what you have indicated to them and will finally see that their only happiness and resort consist in their sincere conversion to God”. (Rule 1807)

FRIENDS OF JEANNE-ANTIDE

- ⇒ let’s draw the daring of love from daily prayer, from the Eucharist and from Reconciliation
- ⇒ let’s advance progressively in our intimacy with Christ, acknowledged in the Word, in the poor, in the daily events.
- ⇒ let’s seek to find time for Adoration, sharing and the re-reading of our experiences.

Jesus Good Samaritan

*“This parable is a splendid gift for us all, and also a task!
To each of us Jesus repeats what he said to the doctor of the Law:
“Go and do likewise” (v. 37).
Jesus bent down to us, he became our servant,
and thus he has saved us,
so that we too might love as he loved us,
in the same way.”
(Pope Francis, 27 April 2016)*

It is at the feet of Jesus Crucified that I draw all the strength that I need; I suffer for him and for my neighbour” (1823). This confession of faith is just one among many others which testifies the centrality of Christ’s Pascal mystery in Jeanne Antide’s life. In fact, in her epoch, dominated the typically spiritual reference to Christ, highlighting the Cross in a very particular way as mystery of universal redemption: “I united my deprivations and my sufferings with those that once the Lord has suffered for my love and for my eternal salvation” (1812).

For Jeanne-Antide, the service represents the extension of Christ’s saving presence in the world: “Teaching the poor, the sick and the small ones to know, to love and to serve God, isn’t it partially what the Saviour of the world came to do on earth?” In all its forms, service is therefore a concrete and operative cooperation with Jesus’ saving love, taking care of the poor means “cooperating with our Divine Spouse’s work” (Rule, 1807). We discover that Christ is our Good Samaritan who stoops down on our weaknesses and heals our wounds. We recognize him in the poor and in the least of our brothers, in whom he identifies himself when we are “the Good Samaritan”.

FRIENDS OF JEANNE-ANTIDE

- ⇒ In the light of the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10,25-37), who guides our listening, our look, our attitudes and our actions, let’s seek to serve our brothers and sisters without discrimination of age, culture and religion as if we were serving Jesus himself.

- ⇒ Other biblical texts which characterise our spiritual family and continue to enlighten our belonging and our commitment, are the evangelical pages of Matthew 25, 31-46, “You did it to me”; John, 13,1-15, “...and he began to wash the feet of his disciples”; Luke, 10,38-41, “Martha, Martha...”; Luke 4,16-21: “The Lord sent me to bring the good news to the poor”.

The Holy Spirit source of God's charity

*«The Holy Spirit is the one who moves the Church;
He is the one who works in the Church, in our hearts;
He is the one who makes every Christian unique,
but united together as one family of God.
For all these reasons, the Holy Spirit is very important:
He is the protagonist of the living church”.*
(Pope Francis, homily 9th May, 2016)

During all her life, Jeanne Antide invokes him very intensively and frequently, she acknowledges him as a true and real dynamic force, especially for her awareness of being a woman and foundress, and even for the community entrusted to her by God: "I pray the Lord every day - wrote Jeanne-Antide to her vicar in Naples – to help you carry the heavy burden and that our sisters be animated by the Holy Spirit". The Holy Spirit is the divine energy who moulds and moves the lives in charity, rendering them generous and dynamic: "Like the apostles, even the Sisters of Charity have received God's spirit and can go all over the world" (1813).

Therefore, Jeanne-Antide the Holy Spirit is a creative and vital power, with whom we are constantly called to collaborate.

FRIENDS OF JEANNE-ANTIDE

- ⇒ Together, let's invoke the Holy Spirit to discern God's will for our journey as a Group, in creative fidelity to the charism.
- ⇒ Every year, we dedicate a significant time to live a spiritual retreat either personally or as a Group.

The Church servant and poor

"How I would like a church that is poor and for the poor".

(Pope Francis, 16 march 2013)

On her return from Germany, from the sanctuary of the Black Virgin of Einsiedeln, Jeanne Antide, waits trustfully for four days for an answer on behalf of the Church: «My daughter - she finally hears a monk telling her - this is God's will: He wants you in France. The children abandoned to religious ignorance are awaiting you: go, like a good daughter of St. Vincent de Paul, to evangelize the poor". Promptly and decidedly, Jeanne Antide answers the call of the Church. She opens a school and gathers around her young women who are apostolically motivated.

And when Pope Pius VII, returned after his two years' exile ordered by Napoleon, he dedicates himself with determination to the spiritual and pastoral interests of the Church, while trying to adapt the papacy to the post revolution modern world. In the new female congregations he precisely identifies the Church's possibility to face the changing social needs for instruction and assistance. Jeanne Antide and her companions are amongst the first to answer the call, putting the congregation at the disposition of the entire Church: "I am a daughter of the holy Church, and you also must be that with me !" (1820), daughter of the universal Church, open to give and to receive, open to the various and numerous human contexts.

FRIENDS of Jeanne-Antide

- ⇒ We are a living part of the universal Church and we receive the vocation and the mission of "Friends of Jeanne-Antide" in the world, through the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity.
- ⇒ We offer our concrete contribution to the local Church, as much as possible, as we seek to maintain a deep attention to the geographical and existential peripheries.
- ⇒ We seek to know and deepen the ecclesial Documents (Encyclicals, Exhortations...)
- ⇒ Let's love the Church, pray for her and for those in charge, without forgetting the persecuted Christians.

Mary

*“Mary, star of the new evangelization,
help us to bear radiant witness to communion,
service, ardent and generous faith,
justice and love of the poor,
that the joy of the Gospel
may reach to the ends of the earth,
illuminating even the fringes of our world.”.*
(*Evangelii Gaudium* 288)

For Jeanne-Antide, the heart’s main spiritual journey towards the Virgin is that of gratitude. Mother Thouret turns to Mary’s maternal intercession in particularly delicate moments for the future of the community: in front of the eventual fusion with the Daughters of St. Vincent and on the eve of the determining Paris Chapter of 1807, "Jeanne-Antide took the image of the Holy Virgin which she put at the feet of the Crucifix placed in her room; she lit some candles in front of Him and for an hour she prayed fervently Jesus Christ and his most Holy Mother. She repeated it every evening for several months" (Manuscript of Sr. Rosalie).

In her request to "cultivate throughout our life a tender but solid devotion to Mary", we acknowledge clearly that Jeanne-Antide was a woman of faith and prayer, who turns to Mary with daughterly simplicity and gratitude while she invokes her as "a special protector and mother" of those who live under the sign of service.

FRIENDS of Jeanne-Antide

- ⇒ Let’s learn from Mary to pronounce our “Here I am”, our “Fiat”, in our joys and trials.
- ⇒ With the Church, we invoke Mary and through her, we join the multitudes of poor people who turn to her and with her towards Jesus.
- ⇒ In communion with the Friends of all the world, let’s ask for Mary’s intercession by reciting one of the prayers so dear to Jeanne-Antide: Angelus, Rosary, Magnificat...

Saint Vincent de Paul

*«Great saint, be my Father: I want to be one of your daughters.
You are my first Superior and my model;
I want to imitate your virtues”.*
(Jeanne Antide in front of an image of St. Vincent de Paul)

God donated a new bud to the Vincentian trunk. This was nourished by the same lymph of the great saint of charity, whose charism gave life to new communities, lots of service and great passion for the poor; a charism that released female energies, stirred lay initiatives, gave a new dignity to priesthood and taught how to “love God but at the cost of the work of our arms and the sweat of our brows!”; it even put at the centre the service of the poor, “who are our lords and masters: they will be in Paradise to open us the door!”; it managed to hand over again the poor to the Church and the Church to the poor, in a total adherence to Christ: “It is necessary that Jesus Christ cooperates with us and we with Him; we must work in Him and He in us”.

The three virtues - humility, charity simplicity – suggested by Vincent concern us too, because like Jeanne-Antide, we are sons and “daughters of St. Vincent De Paul, because we honour him as our founder, father, model and special protector” (Jeanne-Antide, 1807).

FRIENDS of Jeanne-Antide

- ⇒ Let’s deepen the knowledge of the life and the work of St. Vincent de Paul, let’s make ours the three Vincentian virtues, while feeling part of a same spiritual family.
- ⇒ Let’s collaborate, as much as possible with the various branches of the Vincentian Family.

"THE BETTER PART"

*"It is in Him alone that I have placed all my confidence.
If Jesus deigns to be with me, I should fear nothing:
He is my perfect model;
I must follow Him in his sufferings and humiliations.
Not only I am thoroughly content,
I am full of joy that His divine mercy wants me in this precious position.
He has given me **the better part**, and it will not be taken from me".*
(Jeanne Antide , May 1825)

In May 1825, in the moment of her greatest tribulation, Jeanne Antide's statement represents the recapitulation of her entire life of faith, service and spiritual maternity. In that "precious situation" of sorrowful contradictions, apparently useless efforts, painful relationships and of an uncertain future, mother Thouret declares by which mysterious power she is animated: *the divine mercy*. And who is the central reference of her existence : *Jesus who has experienced the trial of sufferings and humiliations*. At this stage, Jeanne-Antide expresses one of the strongest paradoxes of Christian life : experiencing joy even in times of affliction.

What she calls and acknowledges as "the better part," can be recapitulated around 4 pillars which constitute her life's foundation.

- service in the spirit of the Gospel
- the poor, precious members of the suffering Christ
- daily life, an encounter with God and with the neighbour
- communion, gift and commitment

As Friend of Jeanne-Antide, I draw from it inspiration for my life.

SERVICE in the spirit of the Gospel

"Faith and service cannot be separated; on the contrary, they are intimately linked, interwoven with each other. When faith is interwoven with service, the heart remains open and youthful, and it expands in the process of doing good."

(Pope Francis in Baku, 2016)

IN A WORLD characterised by a major sensibility concerning the human and fundamental issues, by a development of an active and responsible citizenship where individualism, nationalism, defensive attitudes and ambiguous forms of a return to the sacred and to spiritual research

IN A CHURCH who feels a strong call to conversion and to stoop down at the feet of the least in order to serve them with love and simplicity

IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHARISM of Mother Thouret

Soon after the French Revolution, on the 11th April 1799, Jeanne-Antide started with a girls' class and a soup-pot for the poor, hence rendering herself "at the service of ". For Jeanne-Antide and her companions, living the Gospel entails encountering faces and a concrete discernment of the physical, mental and spiritual needs of the other. It also entails deeds and words, prayer and consolation, ability to listen and to assume responsibilities.

Convinced that living the Gospel means encountering the Other and the others, in mutual giving and receiving,

The Friend is called to

⇒ "put on the apron again to serve" in the family, in the place of work, in his free time, in his relationships, in social life.

THE POOR

precious members of Christ, suffering

*“In the poor and the outcast we see Christ’s face;
by loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ.
Our efforts are also directed to ending violations of human dignity,
discrimination and abuse in the world,
for these are so often the cause of destitution.”*
(Pope Francis, Lent 2014)

IN A WORLD marked by the relativism of distances, by the utterly speedy transmission of information concerning the world’s events and the situations of poverty and marginalisation; by the ever growing awareness of the importance of respect of creation and of the environment and the life quality of humanity; in a world marked by both economic and financial interests which promote only the few, hence creating continuously new poverties together with an excessive exploitation of the natural consequences that bring forth ecological disasters and harmful effects on the populations, especially on the most deprived.

IN A CHURCH who "goes forth" towards the geographical and existential peripheries, who in spite of her wounds, turns towards choices of poverty and authenticity.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHARISM of mother Thouret

From Besançon, the Sisters of Charity reach Naples in November 1810 to “to direct and to assist the sick” in the hospital of the Incurables. Looking closely at the miserable “ground-floor houses” of the Neapolitan families, mother Thouret, with her sisters, aims to be at the service of the poor “*in the prisons, in the hospices of charity, in the homes and in the schools open for the instruction of poor*”. For Jeanne-Antide and for us, the poor are “the suffering members of the suffering Christ”.

Convinced that our personal lifestyle in the family and in places of work, our way of using money, free time and common goods contribute to the impoverishment or growth of the persons’ wellbeing, cause or eliminate situations of injustice, favour or prevent environment disasters

The Friend is called to

⇒ consider the poor as family members and friends and to serve them through an engagement of voluntary work in collaboration with the Sisters of Charity or with other ecclesial or social organizations.

DAILY LIFE

encounter with God and with the neighbour

*“We need to look at our cities with a contemplative gaze,
a gaze of faith which sees God dwelling in their homes,
in their streets and squares.*

This presence must not be contrived but found, uncovered.

God does not hide himself from those who seek him with a sincere heart”.

(Evangelii Gaudium 71)

IN A WORLD marked by the possibility of access to gigantic quantities of every type of information, by new cultures which continue to produce unprecedented orientations of life and by extraordinary success in the health domain, education, communication and wellbeing;

in a world where one can encounter realities that are capable to trigger processes of dehumanisation and situations of protests claiming for freedom, participation, justice, dignity...

IN A CHURCH called to live fully whatever is human and to enter in the heart of the challenges to stir up witnessing

IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHARISM of mother Thouret

“God is everywhere, our neighbour is everywhere. That’s enough for us!” An inseparable bond between love of God and love of neighbour: this is the way of staying within Jeanne Antide’s world, who acknowledges in every social, cultural, geographical, ethnic reality God’s presence and the fraternal bond with men and women. In the concrete choices of Jeanne-Antide one can acknowledge the desire to increase his faith - “God Alone”, adoration of the Cross, praying together – and to contribute in the building of God’s Kingdom. In our daily life – like Jeanne Antide - we need to “to take counsel from God, from the circumstances and from time ” (to Mgr Lecoz, 1812).

While entrusting himself/herself to the light of the Holy Spirit and to the power of love

The Friend is called to

- ⇒ reserve regularly some time for prayer and meditation on the Word of God to live his daily life as an appointment with God, with himself, with the others and with the contemporary world:
- ⇒ deepen the Scripture, in the light of the Spirit, and to “read the newspaper” to discern the signs of the times and to discover God’s action and calls in his life and in that of his brothers.
- ⇒ to form a free conscience, evaluating critically the sources of information while taking the opportunity of formation and deepening to become evangelically oriented in society.
- ⇒ to deepen his personal spiritual life through the reading of his experiences, the spiritual accompaniment...

COMMUNION

gift and commitment

“Today, when the networks and means of human communication have made unprecedented advances, we sense the challenge of finding and sharing a “mystique” of living together, of mingling and encounter, of embracing supporting one another, of stepping into this flood tide which, while chaotic, can become a genuine experience of fraternity, a caravan of solidarity, a sacred pilgrimage.”

(Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium 87)

IN A WORLD marked by a desire to cooperation and peace, by the necessity of interreligious dialogue and the welcoming of the diversities, by a thirst of participation to build together the political, social and cultural progress; where forms of violence and abuse of power, phenomena of exclusion and marginalisation, difficulties to accept the diversity, still abide ...

IN A CHURCH who seeks to promote communion within its walls and is in dialogue with the entire humanity, fosters the culture of mutual respect, of world peace, of living together in the understanding of the great divine grace that renders brothers all human beings (cf. Declaration on Human Fraternity, Abu Dhabi, 4 February 2019); in a Church who strives to be more attentive to the problems of life, of the family and of sexuality.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHARISM of mother Thouret

For Jeanne-Antide and her first companions, who have opened communities beyond the territories of the Franche Comté region and later outside France, it is possible not to withdraw in front of difficulties and failures in order to weave communion and build fraternity. Just before leaving to Naples, Jeanne-Antide prayed: *“It’s a question of a foreign country, of a foreign language, of foreign customs, of foreign daughters to welcome and form... O Holy Spirit, come down on us as you came down on your apostles”*. Animated by this conviction, Jeanne-Antide goes to encounter the unknown and the foreigner with trust and hope, while being aware that there are difficulties to overcome.

THE FRIEND of Jeanne-Antide,

Welcoming the appeal to become a relational person who favours dialogue, harmony, and reconciliation in the spirit of the Gospel.

The Friend is called

- ⇒ to be at the service of weaving and rebuilding broken relationships in the family, in the neighbourhood, on places of work, in the parish environment, in the society...
- ⇒ to seek ways and means to be a bridge between the various ecclesial and social realities
- ⇒ to participate and seek to promote occasions of encounter, of sharing, of fraternity and openness towards the new religious, intergenerational, cultural, ethnic realities...

To you ...

To you who believe in friendship

To you who treasure the future of creation

To you who believe in a more supportive and fraternal world

To you who are ready to help in front of needs

To you who try to turn your glance Upwards

The international movement of the Friends of Jeanne Antide