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On the Path of Reconciliation and Peace



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By Ms. Amélie Bonthoux

On **29 July 2017**, 27 walkers set off along the path that Peter-Julian Eymard took at the age of 9 towards Villard Saint Christophe in order to prepare for the sacrament of penance.

"May Our Lord keep you and guide you always in peace and devoted love for him." (CO 169)

"Oh! what a wonderful creation of the love of God, the Father reconciling the world constantly in Jesus Christ on the cross and on the altar!" (PG 148,5)

Our day of sharing and prayer began at the beginning of the Three Crosses at La Mure. Every year a walk is arranged by the Friends of Father Eymard. It allows parishioners and all who wish to experience a time of meditation and sharing. The first part of the journey took place in silence, while daylight remarkably dawned over the mountains and fields around us: this recalled the immensity and beauty of God's work. Our journey, which led us to Villard Saint Christophe, was punctuated by time to stop and pray. The



logistics team of four persons was waiting for us to cross the roads safely, to refuel us and offer us relief from our bags. The periods of prayer and songs on the theme of peace and reconciliation provided a guiding theme for this day.

A celebration in the church of Villard Saint Christophe brought our morning and our 11 kilometres journey to a close. The parishioners of the village were waiting for us and shared with us Mass and the meal. In his homily Father Manuel Barbiero reminded us that like Martha and her sister no one is better than the other. Each pilgrim is there with his/her differences. He recalled that “walking along the paths of reconciliation and peace” entails walking together: we, God and others. We then shared lunch, after which we set off again in the direction of La Mure by another route of 11 kilometres, which was always punctuated by our times of prayer.

The journey ended with prayer in the chapel of Father Eymard. Each one could complete the pilgrimage at their own pace, grateful for the group’s

good cohesion and able to express what they felt during the walk: “Very glad”, “fraternal spirit”, “a help to begin again”, “a resource and time of recharging”. This walk was a way of praying together and an instant of going beyond oneself.

A big ‘thank you’ for making the booklet, support of our prayers, for the valuable presence of the logistics team; finally great thanks to the organisers and those who accompanied us in this beautiful occasion of sharing.

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