



L'Arche Sudbury

Community Mandate 2005-2009

Preamble

As we approach our 25th Anniversary, we are deeply grateful that God has called our community into being and continues to walk with us through new life as well as loss. We desire to continue reflecting on our stories, including our founding story, so that we can face new challenges rooted in a strong experience of our Identity and Mission. We must let go of some of the old ways of doing things, renew meaningful traditions, and create new ones in order to keep our community growing and alive.

The last Mandate was a period of significant loss: core members and assistants have aged, some became seriously ill or died; other long term members have moved away. These losses, and those among families and friends, have been painful and sometimes overwhelming, yet they also have been an opportunity for us to be present to each other in new ways and to be grateful for the unique gifts of each person's life. We desire to live loss with faithfulness and unity, open to new life for the community.

These personal losses, as well as increasing care needs of members and turnover of assistants in the homes, have led to the breakdown of the original model of how responsibility is carried in the community. We are in the time of **refounding** -new structures that call the gifts of a new generation of leaders are essential. We need to transmit the stories, values, and traditions that root the community in order to form these new leaders. Space must be created for community elders to be heard, for new leaders to be free to lead, and for the generations to build relationships of mutual trust and respect. The core members continue to call us and lead us towards unity, celebration and forgiveness.

We are deeply grateful for the support of our families, friends and benefactors and desire to strengthen our individual and communal circles of relationship. We desire to participate in the life of our city and know that we have an important contribution to make. We are grateful for our place in L'Arche in Ontario, Canada and the world. We know that we have much to learn about gratitude, simplicity and community from L'Arche Honduras, and desire to live in solidarity with all who build communities of welcome, compassion and celebration.

L'Arche Sudbury is coming of age. We have been abundantly blessed and go forward with all the challenges before us confident that we are not alone. We trust that we are being given the grace that we need to be a source of new life for our members, our friends, and all whose hearts we touch.

A. The Value of Core Members

1. **Strengthen the voice of the core members in their own lives:**
 - a. Implement ways to help core members communicate their abilities, needs, interests, & choices.
 - b. Form new assistants, relief and volunteers in the L'Arche model of "being with" while providing competent care.
2. **Build on the success of the vocational program:**
 - a. Develop a long-term strategy, including resources, to meet emerging needs for day activity.
 - b. Create a visiting pet program for those who would benefit.
 - c. Continue to engage the members of the vocational program in the values of L'Arche and invite them to become more involved with the community.
3. **Continue to develop housing/support options for aging, seriously ill core members** balancing their personal choices and needs with the community's capacity to respond well.
4. **Discern whether, when and how to welcome new core members** while participating in the Ministry's "Coming Home" initiative.

B. Life Sharing / Mutuality

1. **Make our homes "happy homes":**
 - a. Renew methods of listening, communication and decision making in the homes.
 - b. Develop intentional team building/conflict resolution.
 - c. Build times and traditions for celebrating the gifts of each member and life together.
2. **Tell and reflect on our personal/communal stories** in order to build mutual respect and understanding; claim our identity and mission; deepen individual commitment; live in gratitude.
3. **Support the long-term commitment of members:**
 - a. Implement the L'Arche Membership process.
 - b. Help long term assistants find their place –including input into community process, relationship building with the younger assistants, and mutual sharing/support as peers.
 - c. Explore housing options for members who seek a smaller setting.
4. **Complete a beautiful, multi-purpose community space in the lower level of Bethany.**

C. Faith Community

1. **Support the Spiritual Life Committee** to:
 - a. Develop simple tools to nurture traditions of prayer and celebration of daily life;
 - b. Foster a dialogue around the spiritual path of L'Arche that engages individuals from Christian and other faith traditions and those without a faith tradition;
 - c. Help members become more connected in their own churches/faith communities and to deepen in their personal spiritual journeys.
2. **Create a quiet place for prayer and reflection in the community.**
3. **Continue to reflect on the spiritual journey of loss and strengthen pastoral care** (including relationships with priests, ministers and counselors) for all struggling with loss and grief.

D. Leadership, Management, Structures and Human Resources

1. **Strengthen the house teams** (including relief and volunteers):
 - a. Identify, recruit and form the people we need (e.g. male, francophone, etc.).
 - b. Strengthen formation & evaluation while supporting healthy personal time.
 - c. Develop basic rules for appropriate, respectful communication.
2. **Continue to reflect on and develop leadership at all levels of the community:**
 - a. Strengthen the leadership team through individual and team development.
 - b. Develop new ways of community process and decision making that engage the members and Board and call forth their capacity to build the community.
 - c. Find new ways for Board Members to meet, celebrate and work with community members.
3. **Call the Stewardship Committee to lead a community reflection on values** of simplicity, gratitude, money and the heart; then create a long-term plan regarding the proper use and cultivation of resources (including fund-raising events that involve community members).

E. Communities Integrated in Society & Outreach

1. **Develop new opportunities for members to share their lives with others in Sudbury**, especially in places where L'Arche is not known:
 - a. Support individual members to belong to faith, social and service groups in the city.
 - b. Develop creative ways to share our life such as pictures, song, and mime.
 - c. Call people to consider supporting L'Arche Sudbury as an assistant, volunteer, benefactor.
 - d. Explore with Faith and Light the possibility of an Anglophone group in Sudbury.
2. **Deepen the relationship/celebration of Solidarity with Honduras** (and possibly Argentina).
3. **Integrate the directions of the Identity and Mission Statement of L'Arche International**

F. The 25th Anniversary in 2007

1. Create fun events to celebrate with each other and our friends and families.
2. Create inspirational events for members (e.g. a Community Weekend) that celebrate our Founding Story. Invite founding members, including those away, to share (and record) their stories.
3. Create a series of opportunities to share the story of L'Arche Sudbury with the wider community.

Approved by Board of Directors on April 28, 2005