

AS PART OF 'THE STORY CONTINUES...'

CONCRETE ACTIONS OF LOVE

1 John 3: 16-18

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words and talk but with actions and in truth."



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS CHRIST

We, the Dutch brothers, have become brother in this congregation to go in the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth, to follow him as

members of his Church in concrete service to the coming of God's Kingdom. Thus we pass on the good news of the Gospel.

We try to live and work in the spirit of our Founders Louis Rutten and Bernardus Hoecken, by:

- forming a fraternity in which we are indeed brothers of one another and of the people whom we meet;
- living in solidarity with the poor, the weak and the most deprived;
- being attentive to spiritual and religious needs;
- being attentive to a contemporary and culturally integrated transmission of faith;
- keeping the focus of our apostolate on education, formation and teaching;
- understanding the signs of the times and searching for appropriate answers;
- giving Mary an important place in our life.

ACROSS OUR BORDERS....TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

We, the Dutch brothers, have crossed the borders of our homeland – sharing in the mission of Christ's Church and inspired by our own charism as a congregation of brothers - so as to bring the good news of God's Love to the ends of the earth. We were able to do so through the spirit of sacrifice and the strength of being a community of brothers.

Since 1920 in Indonesia and since the fifties and sixties in Chile, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Spain, Zambia, Ghana and Pakistan, the Dutch brothers have committed themselves to make God's Kingdom visible by founding communities of brothers and by living and working with the people in the spirit of the Founders.

GROWTH OF INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD

We have trained indigenous brothers and have welcomed them

as our fellow brothers into our FIC brotherhood. They have lived and worked with us imbued with the same ideals. They in turn have taken upon themselves to continue the work of our Founders and also to be administratively responsible for their own region/province and to be a great asset to the general administration - all this for the well-being of the whole congregation. They too have crossed the borders of their homeland and sent out brothers to other regions and provinces.

In this way we have gradually become an international congregation, in which brothers - from different cultures and with different customs - live and work together, have all kinds of contact, meet one another and reflect together, across borders.

Thus we have to come to know one another better, do we feel welcome and at home with each other, and has the mutual relationship grown strong.

Thus in course of time an international brotherhood has been realized. We feel united with each other, we live and work imbued with the same ideals, we are nourished by the spirit of our Founders, we believe in the love of God, we experience Jesus as our brother, and are challenged to proclaim his good news of love to all people.

WHAT THE DUTCH BROTHERS RECOMMEND TO THOSE IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Just as a grateful mother at the end of her life urges her dear children to remain united in love and care for each other, we, the Dutch brothers, want to urge our fellow brothers in the other provinces:

- remain welcoming to the poor and the deprived in the spirit of our Founders;
- remain immersed in the social, cultural and spiritual develop-

ment of the country where you live and work

- remain, as FIC congregation, united with each other – as a unity in diversity;
- remain internationally oriented and focused on each other as an international brotherhood;
- remain steadfast in showing solidarity to each other, helping and supporting each other; in accepting responsibility for each other, for the congregation and the apostolate;
- remain close as fellow brothers in mutual respect, appreciation and love.

Thus you remain witnesses of your dedication to the coming of God's Kingdom and contribute to a world of love, justice and peace.

Our message to you that remains in force also for the future: live - also across borders - brotherly together in loving unity, serving people, anywhere in the world!

Maastricht, 15 August 2018

The brothers of the Religious House The Netherlands FIC