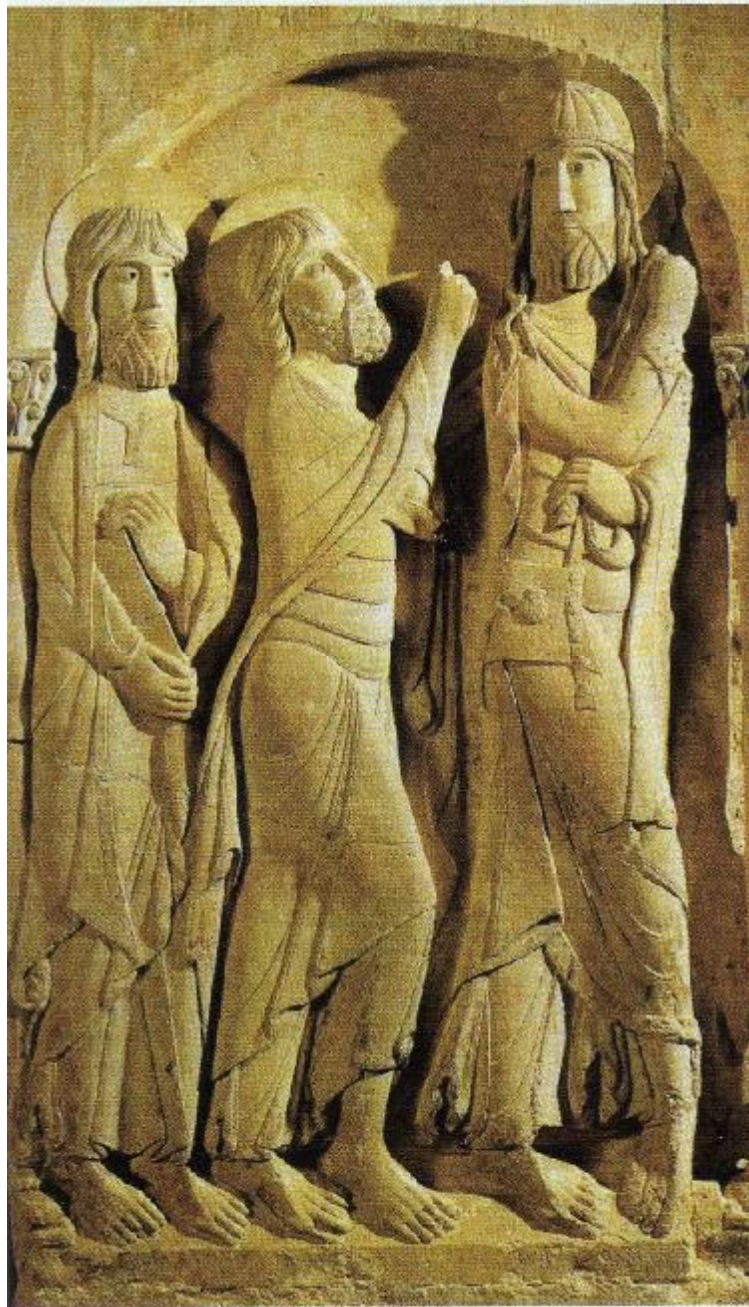


"Go, and do the Same Yourself"

(Luke 10 : 37)



International Leading Team (ERI)

Preparatory Study Topic for the
International Gathering in Brasilia

Very dear friends,

We present the study theme that the International Leading Team (ERI) has written in preparation for the XI International Gathering of Equipes Notre-Dame in Brasilia. As always on the occasion of the International Gatherings, the Movement invites all Team members to choose the same study theme in a spirit of unity and sharing, of fraternity, of pilgrimage towards the common objective which will unite us all together in Brasilia.

Before you start, we would like to give a few notes on the background to this study.

This theme of study has been prepared by all the members of the International Leading Team, so that it will really be the fruit of the internationality of the movement. If on the one hand this choice leads to a diversity of style and language in the different chapters, on the other hand it promotes the expression of several ways of thinking, writing, of living the faith, according to the different cultures.

However all the chapters follow the same format which, coming from a Gospel text, invites us to:-

- Listen and Reflect - Above all to listen attentively to the word of God, a listening which will allow a realisation of further reflection.
- See - not to stop at the limits of our own reality. Whether it be beautiful or not, good or bad, happy or sad, but rather to enlarge our own outlook and to put it within the reality of the word and of current history.
- Evaluate - it is not a question of expressing judgement from the height of a rostrum, but of observing in order to understand, learn and know. Then to take on a more active commitment in life and consider the interplay between our faith and our life.
- Act - our faith demands that we do not remain passive spectators of the reality that surrounds us. Our Movement is defined as "*a Movement of formation not of action but for active people*" and our God is a God who became man. What can we do to enliven our faith and other team members ?
- Share – in the sit-down and the Team meeting, the movement offers us an opportunity for serious and deep reflexion as a couple and as a team. At the end of each chapter we are invited to consider the questions posed, which can lead us on to a deeper sharing on the topics.

That is the route proposed in each chapter, allowing all those who tackle this study topic to approach it in the spirit of the Gathering and of living these times as a time of grace. First of all you will find the Gospel text which will be the theme of the next Gathering; a text which tells us the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 30-37).

We invite you to read it each time, at the beginning or at the end of the team meeting, to enter little by little into the spirit of the reflection which awaits us in Brasilia and which will ask us to reply with hope and courage to the exhortation: *Dare to Evangelise!*

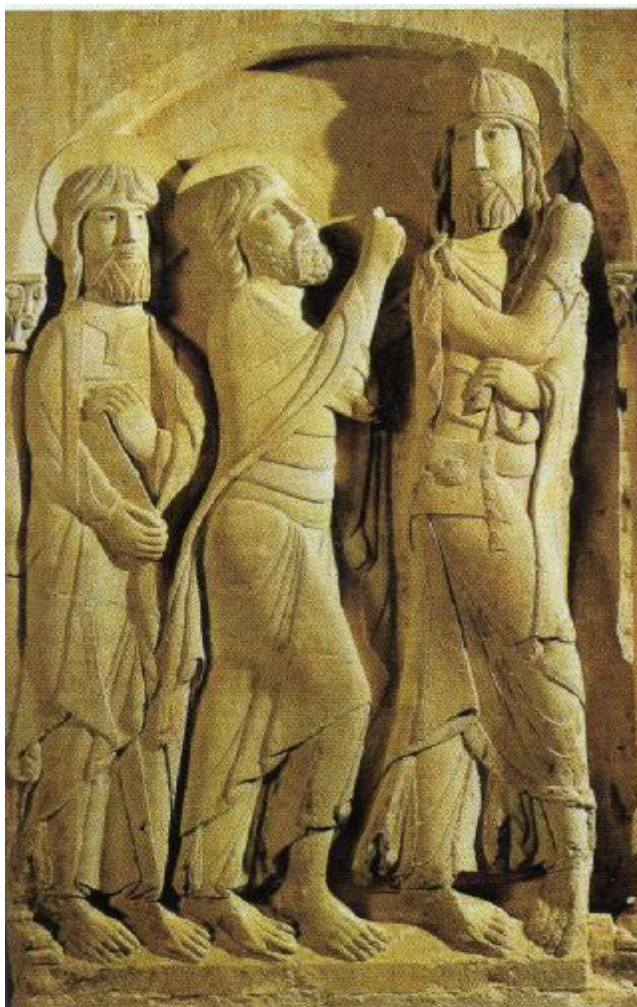
In this introduction, you will find a deeper explanation of the image that we have chosen as the cover of this study topic. The choice of this representation is not a simple response to an artistic or aesthetic criterion, but rather in a desire to give you an image which can remain in the intimacy of your heart, capable of reminding you that each day of our lives we have as a friend a God who goes before us and who walks with us on our journey.

The Lord blesses us on this way. May He be for all of us a guide and travelling companion.

Carlo and Maria-Carla Volpini, The International Leading Couple.

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10. 30-37)

In answer Jesus said, 'A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of bandits; they stripped him, beat him and then made off, leaving him half-dead. Now a priest happened to be travelling down the same road, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. In the same way a Levite who came to the place, saw him, and passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan traveller who came on him was moved with compassion when he saw him. He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He then lifted him onto his own mount and took him to an inn and looked after him. Next day, he took out two denarii and handed them to the innkeeper and said, "Look after him, and on my way back I will make good any extra expense you have." Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the bandits' hands?' He replied, 'The one who showed pity towards him.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do the same yourself.'



This bas relief at the end of the 11th century known as *Christ with the disciples at Emmaus* is in the Abbey of Santo Domingo de Silos in Spain. ¹

The Abbey of Santo Domingo de Silos is an ancient foundation, perhaps dating from 919 AD, which was restored by the Cluny Benedictines at the end of the eleventh century. Four large panels were sculptured in bas-relief on the four corner pillars of the lower Cloisters around 1100 AD: one of them represents *Christ with the disciples at Emmaus*.

¹ All the text relating to this bas-relief can be found in the artistic commentary of Father A. Scattolini in the Supplement No 9, May 2010 of the Journal *Evangelizzare*, published by Dehoniani of Bolgna.

The simplicity and austerity of the scene amazes anyone who directs their gaze towards the celebrated bas-relief. The verse in the Gospel telling of the two travellers on the Road to Emmaus *But they pressed him to stay with them saying, "It is nearly evening and the day is almost over."* (Luke 24: 29): is interpreted in a masterly way, and no decoration, no detail comes to disturb the unity of the scene. Today, as then, as always, we can repeat in all confidence, *"Stay with us, because evening approaches."*



The three people occupy all the space : the one in the centre raises his right hand to show that already the day is fading. In front of him Jesus turns his head backward when he seems to forge ahead. The third person has a book in his hand: an explicit reference to the Scriptures through which Jesus helps the disciples to re-read the significance of his passion. One must have fresh in one's mind the fact that the journey of the two disciples to Emmaus culminates in the Breaking of Bread ending with their return journey to the community and the announcement of the Resurrection: it is a matter then of a powerful theological synthesis contained in this bas-relief.



The detail of the feet leads us back to the first scene: whereas the first step of Christ makes its way towards us because we are among those whom He wishes to meet today. The feet of the two others are perfectly aligned, close to one another suggesting the walk that is necessary for us to embark upon in following the Lord. Jesus indeed is *the Way*. It is He who always goes before us on the routes of the world. The Risen Christ still walks today in the complex and often crooked pathways of our society and of our culture. There are also today on our journeys and in our workplaces, people who are looking for and who carry within themselves, desires and hesitations, sadness and hope.

We, as disciples, are called today to meet such expectations, continually putting ourselves behind the Master, the great Pilgrim who marks our footsteps and sends us out as travelling companions along known and familiar paths, but also on new and unexplored routes in our modern world.