
On the importance of Faith and Light to the world:


“In their life there is so much spontaneity; we don’t know how to be like that. They sing. They laugh. We complicate life so much in this world. So I guess the most joyful time is when we are together, and everything happens in a very spontaneous way.”

Father Jim O’Donnell, Cleveland, Ohio

On the importance of Faith and Light to the disabled:


“The greatest suffering of the mentally handicapped is to feel different and useless. He needs friends who will help him and discover his own personality and his place in society, friends who will love him and respect him. But most of all he needs the love of God which he may discover through them. If, through faith and especially by experiencing the presence of Divine Love in himself he can discover how much Jesus really loves him, then I venture to say he is no longer handicapped.

Jean Vanier, Founder, Faith and Light, author of *Eruption to Hope*

Be part of our journey



Find a Community

Visit www.faithandlight.org and click on one of the orange arrows in the upper right corner of the website.

Start a Community

Can’t find a community near you?

Contact Brian Daw (bdaw314@gmail.com) or Father Jim O’Donnell at (216) 566-0531 to learn more.

We look forward to praying with you!

faithandlight.org

Faith and Light

45 years of creating friendships with persons with an intellectual disability



We must realize that not only the weak need the strong, but also the strong cannot exist without the weak. The elimination of the weak is the death of fellowship.
~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“The clouds opened up and your light, Lord, reached us.”



Faith and Light is an ecumenical association filled with communities made up of persons with an intellectual disability, their families and friends, particularly young friends, who meet together on a regular basis in a Christian spirit, to share friendship, pray together, fiesta and celebrate life.

The History

In 1968, persons with an intellectual disability were not considered as having a place among participants in pilgrimages. People thought that they were not capable of experiencing this kind of activity and that their presence would possibly disturb other pilgrims. In response to an appeal by the parents of Thaddée and Loïc, two children with an intellectual disability, Jean Vanier and Marie-Hélène Mathieu organized a pilgrimage to Lourdes with them. Three years of preparation ensued, which gave rise to strong reactions of both enthusiasm and reserve.

At Easter 1971, 12 000 pilgrims from 15 countries, 4,000 of whom were persons with an intellectual disability, assembled again. Carried away by the experience, they wanted to continue the adventure. Jean Vanier suggested : “Continue meeting together in small communities, **do whatever the Holy Spirit inspires you to do**”.

Faith and Light was born, Easter Monday 1971, in Lourdes.

Bearing Witness



“When we have a disability, we cannot always find friends by ourselves. Faith and Light creates a family close to God, with God’s friends. We do not feel our handicap. We are like everyone else because there is no difference.” **Peter, USA (member with disability)**

“I came to a Faith and Light meeting to please a teacher who invited me. The first time, I was a bit scared and also deeply moved. Like other friends from school, I think I was attracted to the way the person with a disability comes to you, smiles at you and welcomes you without trying to see if you are good or bad, rich or poor, disabled or not. I stayed because I was fascinated by the people and by God’s presence in them.” **Carlo, Italy (member and friend)**

The world needs you. The church needs you. Jesus needs you.