

“LA RELEVE”: A SPRINGBOARD FOR THE YOUNG

1. Birth of the movement

The other day, I was talking about LA RELEVE (Relief) with one of my friends. Before I had the time to recount the experience which I have had among the young, he asked me: “LA RELEVE? What is that?” Because the movement is not very old (It has been in existence for only four years in the diocese of Quebec) I was not surprised by the question. However, I said to myself that perhaps the time has come to make this movement better known!

LA RELEVE is a Catholic movement, set up by the *cursillistas* (members of the CURSILLO movement, which is for adults) in the diocese of Saint-Jean d'Iberville during the years 1975-77.

La RELEVE endeavors to gather together young people of 15, 16, and 17 years of age who wish, together with youths of their age, to set out on the path to becoming at once human and Christian. These “adults of the future” are in charge of the movement and they are responsible for animating the activities. The adults who work along with them have as their mission helping them to get organized and to persevere in the activities which they undertake.

Some reflections on these youths

- * They adore the “La Relève” weekends.
- * Several of them are a bit timid during the first contacts with the community.
- * They recognize that they need the adults so that the group functions well.
- * They are lively enough, sometimes excited... this is not serious, merely a reflection of their age.
- * They lack toughness. Their thoughts are not yet entirely formed. They sometimes allow themselves to say almost anything arising from poorly-based opinions. They must learn to correct themselves because that is necessary, and

they must learn to accept certain “untruths” from time to time.

* They very much appreciate being able to share their faith. When there is a climate of respect and acceptance, they express their prayers easily enough.

* They are spontaneous and they make no bones about expressing their disagreement.

* They easily forget. They have to be constantly reminded!

* They always want someone to help them to persevere in carrying out their projects.

* They are not always very weak.

* They are never “in a hurry”. They often wait for the last minute.

* They like to be able to meet socially occasionally.

* They appreciate the values of respect, being heard, liberty of expression, fidelity, punctuality, and responsibility, even if they, like us, do not always practice it.

* Finally, the more the adult couple interest themselves in the community, the more the community is dynamic and the more the young people appreciate it.

(N.B. *They* does not *mean* the young people but *some* young people).

3. The weekly meetings

In order to share the movement, some young people, boys and girls often are invited by one of their companions, who are already members, to live the experience of a resource weekend. This experience is prepared and animated by a team of both youths and adults and is lived at the Youth Hostel of Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures. This house has been maintained as a center of pastoral animation for the past 16 years by the Brothers of the Christian Schools who generously collaborate in various ways in the activities of the movement.

So that this weekend experience will not be just a “flash in the pan”, the youths can continue on their way in an already existing group called the “community”. At present, there are six communities and a seventh will be established very soon. They are located in Beauport, Limoilou, l'Ancienne-Lorette, Saint-Romuald, Saint Jean Chrysostôme, Saint Anselme and soon at Sainte-Catherine-de Portneuf.

Each community meets every two weeks. The meeting is usually animated by two young peo-

ple who have previously submitted their project for the evening to the couple in charge and to the spiritual animator of their group. Of course, the meetings touch upon the concerns of the young. It is they themselves who choose the themes of the meetings. However, they are asked to reserve a moment to enter into a more spiritual part. Thus, these young people can progress in their faith life.

Two or three times a year, the young people from all the communities come together to live the time of renewal: it can be held on a weekend at the beginning of the year or as an evening in preparation for the Feast of Easter, for example.

Up until now more than 350 youths have live this experience on 14 weekends. There are about 160 active members in the movement.

There are 25 adults who generously devote themselves to helping these young people discover the presence of the Lord in this world. We sincerely believe that the LA RELEVE movement can be for the young a springboard which will allow them more basically to participate in the building up of the Kingdom.

In conclusion, allow me to thank all those men and women who have contributed to setting up and promoting this movement in our diocese. May the Lord fill them with His graces. Thanks also to all our readers for the support, of one kind or another, which you have given us.

Mr. Paul FOISY

Villa des Jeunes

4860 Saint Félix

Saint Augustin de Québec G3A 1X3