

# L'Arche

## Intro

L'Arche is an international private voluntary organization that works for the creation and growth of homes, programs, and support networks with people who have intellectual disabilities. Worldwide, L'Arche is organized into regional and national groupings of independent, locally operated agencies which it calls "communities." Today there are more than 154 communities and 19 projects in 38 countries around the world. While communities around the world share in the philosophy of L'Arche, each community celebrates and lives its own cultural and spiritual expression of community. In Paris, there are several communities of l'Arche, including one which include a member of St George's in its staff. The text below is extracted of an address given by the founder of l'Arche to all the bishops of the Anglican Communion gathered in Canterbury for the 1998 Lambeth Conference



## Text

I want to begin by saying just a little word about a little boy of eleven. This little boy made his first communion, and there was a beautiful liturgy. After the liturgy, there was a family celebration. And the uncle of the little boy said to the mother (and the little boy was nearby) "Wasn't it a beautiful liturgy? The only thing that's sad is that he understood nothing." The little boy looked at his mother, with tears in his eyes, and said "Don't worry mummy, Jesus loves me as I am."

"Jesus loves me as I am." Are we able to say that? Sometimes maybe we'll add, "Jesus loves me IF..." Can we believe that we - with our handicaps, with our brokenness - that Jesus loves us as we are? Some of you may think that these words "Jesus loves me as I am", may be a bit sentimental or emotional. But those of you who have lived or been with people who are crushed; those of you who know something about the wounds and hatred of humanity; you who know something about what oppression is; You know that somebody who begins to say "Jesus loves me as I am", is on the road of transformation.

Maybe that's what we are all called to discover. Maybe it is those words of Isaiah 43, where Isaiah says "Do not be afraid for I have redeemed you, I have liberated you. I have called you by your name, and you are mine. If you pass through the waters I will be with you. If you pass through the rivers you will not be overwhelmed. If you pass through the fires you will not be burned. If you pass through the flame you shall not be consumed, for I am the Lord God your Saviour. You are precious to my eyes, and I love you. Do not be afraid because I am with you."

[https://www.anglicannews.org/news/1998/08/address-of-jean-vanier-at-lambeth-vigil-\(first-service\)-30-july-1998.aspx](https://www.anglicannews.org/news/1998/08/address-of-jean-vanier-at-lambeth-vigil-(first-service)-30-july-1998.aspx)

## Questions and ideas for prayers

1. Can you identify your mental or spiritual brokenness's, frailties or vulnerabilities ? Can you link them the pain and wounds experienced by Jesus on the cross?
2. Can you openly affirm that God loves you as you are? How do you feel you could use the journey towards Easter and more widely this time of confinement to engage yourself on the road of transformation?
3. How do you feel that the death and resurrection of Jesus can help and support you in your redeeming work ?