

Jubilee interview with Philippe Seux

For the Jubilee, L'Arche Levain asked Philippe Seux to share some of his first memories at L'Arche.

“Philippe, tell us about how it was, at the beginning of L’Arche. You were with with Jean Vanier right at the start, weren’t you?”

Yes, and so what?

What happened on the first day?

Well, Jean Vanier came into the institution where I had been placed, in Trosly. He asked me if I wanted to follow him to a house, with some others. I said yes right away. I was 24 years old.

Did you know Jean Vanier before that?

No. But where I was, we weren’t allowed to go out. So I said yes right away so I could go out. Raphael Simi came with us. And then Dany, but Dany only stayed for two days.

How was the house (the first group home)?

Well, we had to light candles to see at night. We could cook. But sometimes someone brought us some soup. There were toilets in the outhouse but no bathroom. We would take showers at the Val [the Val Fleury, one of the other group homes]. We had a room upstairs, which three of us shared. Afterwards we found the electrical box and we had electricity.

What did you feel, after a few months at L’Arche?

I was like “phew”.

What is it like to live in Levain, in the city?

I live with Frank, for instance, we can’t talk much together, but we understand each other, we love together in the home. He is a good guy. Things have changed a lot since the first homes.... I have access to things like the movies, which are my passion. In the countryside there isn’t much. But here there are restaurants, exhibitions, I can go shopping to buy gifts for my friends. But everything is not always accessible. Like for instance the Mont St Michel, where I can’t go.

What else would you add?

I would like to say that we need to talk to school children and even adults about handicap, because they don’t know what it is, and often they are intimidated by me.

Thank you Philippe!"

Interview by Sophie Brandicourt



(Philippe Seux, L'Arche International)