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In this final document, the participants in the first Christian Forum of French-speaking Switzerland (Leysin, 10 to 13 October 2021) offer an echo of this rich encounter and want to convey to the Churches, communities and movements of French-speaking Switzerland some of their findings, in particular the experience of sharing our faith stories.

Coming from various confessions or Christian traditions of the different cantons of French-speaking Switzerland – catholics, orthodox, reformed, evangelicals, pentecostals, old catholics, anglicans, adventists, baptists, and members of communities and movements – *all together* (Acts 2:1) in the joy of the Holy Spirit at Leysin, we have listened to the Word of God, shared our journeys of faith and prayed together. We have also gathered at Aigle in a celebration together with members of the Churches of the region

The theme of this Forum was taken from the Gospel of John:

« You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you, so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you » (15:16).

This text has accompanied us during these days. Through these words, so elevated, full of life and powerful, Christ has called us. He always takes the first step, so that we respond to him in faith and turn ourselves to those around us.

Inspired by the recent gatherings of the Global Christian Forum and the Francophone Christian Forum (Bogota and Lyon 2018), we have experienced moments of mutual discovery with our cultures, our personal stories and our ways of living the faith.



We have climbed the mountain, not to settle our theological differences, but to know each other better and to be touched by the Holy Spirit. So many things seem to separate us: we often have images of the others which are not true. We forget our common roots and we forget that we share one and the same house: « *You are the people of God* » (1 Peter 2:5-10).

This Forum has reminded us that what unites us is much stronger than what separates us: Jesus Christ, true God and true human, sent by the Father and giver of the Holy Spirit to unite us in him.

In often surprising ways his grace visits our hearts so as to send us into this suffering world, particularly in this time of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Christ is the precious pearl. He teaches us to put God first, to love Him above everything else and to live out his new commandment of mutual love.

In small groups we have taken the time to listen to our faith stories. To dare to exchange as « I » creates a bond more than anything. What a joy to discover how Christ has chosen our brothers and sisters! To love him leads us to also love the fraternal communion.

Through our sharing, our hymns and our prayers, we have discovered that there are treasures in all the Churches. That diversity enriches us, and we give thanks for it. We cannot do without the other Churches. Let us recognize in them the lights that are missing in ours!

We have also lived these days with several members of communities, movements and institutions which in various ways are involved in witness and service. Visiting church-related activities in the region of Chablais and the Riviera vaudoise, we have rejoiced in their commitment to the life of the community, to prayer and to education. We have also been inspired by the fruitfulness of activities common to several Churches.

We have been encouraged by the support for our initiative from the leaders of our Churches who have opened their heart to us and stated their hope for the Church. We have prayed for the leaders of all the Churches that the peace of Christ may dwell in all.

What have we learned during these few days?

- In the sharing of our journeys of life and faith, we have expressed our sorrows. We are part of a wounded Body. The indifference of many and the uncovering of abuses of all kinds are causing a spiritual earthquake. An authentic spirituality gives meaning to pain by uniting our weaknesses to the vulnerability of Christ, who took them all upon himself. Without looking constantly at the cross by which he has reconciled us we cannot receive the gift of the living presence of the Risen One, and neither can we progress towards the unity that he will.
- We have rejoiced in the presence of several young people of our Churches. Their search of God inspires us. With them we want to help one another to be credible witnesses of the risen Christ.
- The sharing of our faith stories has renewed our relationships to one another. It is our wish that our families, communities and parishes may experience this fruitful exercise.



- We have enlarged our encounters between Churches. The Christian Forum seeks to build bridges between the two movements that have marked the twentieth century: the ecumenical movement and the evangelical-pentecostal movement. Let us always ask ourselves who is missing at the table of the Christian fraternity!
- We affirm the dignity of each human being created in the image of God. With various movements we want, in a relationship of friendship and accompaniment, meet Christ in the marginalized, the despairing young people, the migrants, the prostitutes and so many others in need and searching.
- We have reflected on our relation to creation, as a fruit of our calling. Concrete projects are being carried out by Christian associations which are eager to propose their services to the parishes.
- Today Christ wants us to be pilgrims with one another, because we have all become fragile. Let us not put off till tomorrow his call to live out together the mission that he has entrusted to us ... by reminding ourselves that it applies first of all to ourselves: we are the mission of Christ!

Hence we say to the Churches, communities and movements of French-speaking Switzerland:

- Share in confidence what Christ is for you!
- Seek to mutually discover one another in truth!
- Pray without ceasing and listen together to the Word of God!
- Dare to cross the boundaries that separate us to witness, in the communion of love, to Christ who frees us and wants that all attain to the knowledge of his truth!
- Seek new ways to join Christ who is waiting for us in every brother and sister, and in particular in those who are the most deprived!
- Proclaim with courage the hope released by the resurrection of Jesus to all those who despair of the meaning of life!
- Taking concrete steps will not resolve everything, but it will help us to change our hearts and the way we look at one another, to dispel some prejudices and to deal more serenely with our differences!

« *This is my command: love each other* » (John 15:17).

*Christian Forum of French-speaking Switzerland,
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Translated from French by Huibert van Beek