

... It's about helping people to « Be born and Re-born. »...

Sent on Mission in an Ignatian Centre of Spirituality...

SR MARIE CHRISTINE (- LYON - FRANCE)



For the past four years, I have worked at an Ignatian Centre of Spirituality and I take part with others in facilitating retreats, sessions, and spiritual direction....It is a very varied mission. Among the recent retreats organised during the Summer are « **choice for life** » retreats.

Guiding a « **choice for life** » retreat, we begin by reading the reasons sent by those who apply : what they expect and their questions. Those whom I accompanied during the last month were between 25 and 38 years.

Who are these young people? Students or young professional people, often torn between their desire to follow Christ and the many openings in their environment. They are fragile, often easily influenced but also generous, carrying an ideal, wondering how to use their talents to create a better living together.

One of them wonders if the Lord is calling him to marriage or to consecrated life. He is lively, confident and honest. After some straying during adolescence he ended his law studies with success. To my question, « And why not a diocesan priest? » he becomes serious. His response is clear, « *I feel called to be a brother rather than a father. I believe also in the importance of community life and in its visibility for the world today.* » He often finds it difficult to relate to his companions who do not share his faith. « Am I normal wishing to give my life in this way? Because the Church is not a start-up, is it sister?

Another person, after eight years working in humanitarian areas, is searching to know if the Lord is calling her to apostolic religious life or to married life. The Word of God touches her. She lives in real proximity to the presence of Christ. She experiences Morning Prayer (Lauds in the Chapel) as a community experience which helps her orientate her day.

I cannot speak of everything that touches me but in these young people that I accompany it is their frankness, their strong desire for a life direction which makes sense. They have fears, of course and are able to name them but their confidence in God and in the person whom they receive to guide them is very strong.

For me, it's a question of listening to the way the Spirit is leading them and informing them of the struggles they must face to be disciples and servants. In other words, to help them to « **be born and re-born.** »