



## Brief chronology of Jean Vanier's life

- 1928** September 10th, birth of Jean Vanier in Geneva (Switzerland), the fourth of five children. His parents, Major General Georges Vanier (1881-1967) and Madame Pauline Archer Vanier (1898-1991) are both Canadians.
- 1942** Joined the British Royal Navy at Dartmouth Naval College in England, aged 13.
- 1949** Transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy, assigned to the aircraft carrier «Magnificent».
- 1950** Feels called to leave the Navy and joins a centre for lay people offering formation in spirituality and theology, run by Father Thomas Philippe, a Dominican who will become his spiritual father.
- 1962** Obtains his doctorate of philosophy «cum maxima laude» at the Institut Catholique, (Paris). His thesis was: «Happiness as principle and end of Aristotelian ethics».
- 1964** Teaches philosophy at St. Michael's College, a university in Toronto.
- 4/5 August 1964** At the suggestion of Father Thomas Philippe, he founded L'Arche in Trosly, France. He buys a small house where he welcomes Raphael Simi and Philippe Seux, two men with intellectual disabilities living in an institution; they come to live in his house with him. Today in 2019, L'Arche has 154 communities and 21 projects in 38 countries. 20 years after Father Thomas Philippe's death, L'Arche International learns and makes public, that during his years in Trosly, he had sexually abused a number of non-disabled adult women.
- 1968** Jean Vanier gives the first «Faith and Sharing» retreat at Marylake, King City, Ontario, which brings together lay people,(including some with disabilities), priests and religious. Since then, hundreds of «Faith and Sharing» retreats have been given in North America by different people.
- 1970s** Begins to make numerous trips around the world to give conferences, to animate retreats and to found and support communities of L'Arche and 'Faith and Light'. In his travels over the years, he had a particular concern for meetings with young people.
- 1971** Organizes and animates the first 'Faith and Light' pilgrimage in Lourdes for 12,000 people, including 4,000 with a disability. Every ten years since then, a major pilgrimage has been organized in Lourdes or Rome.
- 1971** With Marie-Hélène Mathieu, he founds 'Faith and Light', an organization that each month brings together people with disabilities, their families and friends. Today, in 2019, there are approximately 1,450 Faith and Light communities in 85 countries.

- : 1981** Steps down from daily responsibility for the first L'Arche community in Trosly, France, and lets others take over the running of the International Federation of L'Arche.
- : 1983** Delivers the keynote address to the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver.
- : 1987** At the invitation of Pope John Paul II, participates in the Synod on the Laity in Rome.
- : 1997** At the invitation of Jean Vanier and inspired by his example, Ruth Patterson and Anne Gibson found «Faith and Friendship» in Northern Ireland.
- : 1998** Jean Vanier addresses the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches in Geneva; at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, he addresses all the bishops of the Anglican Communion at the Lambeth Conference.
- : 2008** Participates in his last General Assembly of L'Arche International and cuts down on his travels.
- : 2015** Is awarded the Templeton Prize; Jean continues to share in the life of one of the homes of Trosly; he speaks at conferences and retreats.
- : 2016** Jean is promoted to the rank of Commander of the Legion d'honneur.
- : 2017** His final book is published: *A cry is heard*
- : 2018** His deteriorating state of health forces him reluctantly to cease speaking at conferences and retreats.