



Press Release

JEAN VANIER, FOUNDER OF L'ARCHE, RECEIVES THE 2015 TEMPLETON PRIZE

London, U.K., May 18, 2015 – Jean Vanier has arrived in London, U.K. to receive this year's Templeton Prize for his work in founding and developing L'ARCHE, the groundbreaking international network of communities where people with and without intellectual disabilities live and work together as peers. The award, announced on March 11th, is valued at £1.1 million (about \$1.7 million USD), and is one of the world's largest annual awards given to an individual. It honors a living person who has made exceptional contributions to affirming life's spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery, or practical works. Former recipients include Mother Teresa, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the Dalai Lama, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Upon arriving in London, Vanier issued the following statement:

"I am grateful for the financial generosity of the Templeton Foundation, and for Sir John Templeton's insight that aligning finances with vision and values is a powerful way of transforming lives and creating a more human society.

100% of the Prize money will be used to benefit people with intellectual disabilities, who are among the most oppressed people on the planet. The Prize money will be gifted to L'Arche, Faith and Light, and through them to other organizations in financially poor countries who are working to lift up the lives and reveal the unique gifts of people with intellectual disabilities.

The largest amount will be used to fund new and innovative L'Arche projects in financially poor countries. I hope that the Templeton Prize will inspire others to join me in financially investing in the lives of people with an intellectual disability."

When he founded L'ARCHE in France in 1964, Vanier, now 86, discovered that those people whom society typically considers of least value, enable the strong to recognize and welcome their own vulnerability and to grow in their humanity. Five years later, the first Canadian community, L'ARCHE Daybreak, was founded in Richmond Hill, Ontario. In 1972, Vanier also co-founded Faith and Light, which is now a world-wide network supporting families with members who have an intellectual disability.

Worldwide, there are now 147 L'ARCHE communities in 35 countries on 5 continents. Twenty-nine communities are in Canada, spread from Comox Valley, BC, to Cape Breton, NS.

For more information, visit www.larche.ca/en/press/templeton.

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