



September / October 2018

Introduction



The descriptive sentence for our core value Stand on Humble Ground reads, “We earn trust and acceptance when we come as we are.”

In our world, it is a radical act to “come as we are”. To let go of the markers of status, and simply be ourselves with others. It is unconventional to be “happy to be me”, “serve others”, and live a “simple life”.

Of course, we have learned in L’Arche that it is when we “come as we are” that we earn trust and acceptance. In this issue of the Core Values Newsletter we invite you to reflect upon our core value, Stand on Humble Ground. When have

you been accepted and loved for being who you really are? When have you accepted others for being who they really are?

We wish to thank all of the contributors who have written articles, and shared stories and photos with us. A special thanks goes to the members of the Daybreak day program, for completing and photographing this month’s activities. We hope that you will be inspired to share these activities in your own teams, homes, and programs and invite you to send us photos when you do.

If you have any comments or would like to provide input or photos for future newsletters, please contact Elizabeth Nash at enash@larche.ca.

Our upcoming newsletters will be:

- November 2018- Live in Joy
- January 2019- Nurture Our Gifts and Growth
- March 2019- Celebrate the Value of Each Person
- May 2019- Journey Together with Respect

Preparing for the General Assembly 2018 in Halifax: A mission in service to others, by Josée Rochon



I have had the opportunity over the past year to work on preparing the General Assembly to be held in Halifax this September. This has involved collaborating with many different people to make the celebration a real success. I find it has been such a wonderful gift since teamwork requires a lot of humility but also authenticity. I had to confront and accept my imperfections and weaknesses...you need to be humble to work in a team and be successful! But the beauty of L’Arche is that I am lucky enough to have colleagues who complement me, have different gifts than I do, and whom I can count on to help compensate for my limitations. For me preparing the Assembly has been a great model of collaborative work where each person’s gifts are celebrated. Another wonderful gift of working on this project is that I am involved daily in service to L’Arche knowing that in September the delegates present at the Assembly as well as those in communities back home will benefit from all this work. I’ll have the opportunity to connect in person with the 160 delegates gathered to celebrate the end of a mandate and the beginning of a new one, but also to share all this with people at home through social media. I hope you will join us through our Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1828648127435296/>.

I am really looking forward to sharing with you either in person or virtually throughout the event.

Servant Leadership in Action!

Part of standing on humble ground, is to be generous with our time, talents, and treasures. Recently, we came across a wonderful example of this in L'Arche Sudbury. Maryjoy Tanedo, a longterm assistant with the SIL apartment, used her creativity to bring a group of people together to play Servant Leadership Snakes and Ladders. Two homes, Galilea and Bethany, helped Maryjoy to craft the game using small boxes for the dice and carpet sized paper for the map. The map had core values icons interspersed on it, along with places that the core members like to spend time, such as their homes, their church, and the local Tim Hortons! When everyone came together to play the game, there was plenty of fun and laughter (especially when the assistants cheated!)

Thank you to Servant Leaders like Maryjoy and everyone from Galilea and Bethany house who choose to nurture their relationships and share their time together.



Include Me! - Core Members as Partners

At L'Arche we aspire to listen to the voices and intentions of everyone in our community. We aspire to include everyone in making the decisions that affect them and to build on one another's ideas. How can the visual icons of the Servant Leadership Model support even more inclusion in your home, program and community? What are the mindsets and habits that you can improve to better engage and include core members?

INCLUDE ME !

- I Invite** - You remember to ask my opinion when there is a decision to be made.
- N Notice** - Your ears and eyes are always open so that you catch my verbal and non-verbal messages.
- C Collaboration** - You are willing to be flexible and build on my ideas.
- L Listening** - You create the time and space and are mindful of how you can best learn what it is I have to say.
- U Understanding** - You learn my language and help me learn yours so that we understand one another.
- D Day-to-Day** - Your efforts to include me are evident day-to-day and for decisions big and small.
- E Excitement** - You celebrate the difference my opinions make.
- M Meetings** - You arrange meetings and other processes so that they are inclusive.
- E Esteem** - You respect my years of living in community at L'Arche.

Reflection Questions

Happy to be Me

1. Share a story with each other about a time that you did something that made you feel proud of yourself. How does it feel to appreciate yourself?
2. What is something that you find funny? Share your favorite jokes or funny stories together.

Serve Others

1. Why is it sometimes difficult to be vulnerable to others? How can your vulnerability help to nourish others?
2. How do you know when you are leading from within the circle? Who helps you to understand and learn from your leadership mistakes?

Simple Life

1. Talk together about how you balance spending time together with getting everything done. Is the balance working for everyone in your home, program, or community? How does it feel when too much time is spent in either direction?
2. What does it mean to you to live simply? How do you make room for relationships in your life?

Activity 1: "I Can Be Humble" Board

Activities by Tanya Lee

Jean Vanier wrote in *Becoming Human*:

"The heart is never 'successful.' It does not want power, honours, privilege, or efficiency; it seeks a personal relationship with another, a communion of hearts, which is the to-and-fro of love. This opening of the heart implies vulnerability and the offering of our needs and weaknesses. The heart gives and receives but above all, it gives. The heart goes out to those who are humble and who cry out in their weakness and their need for understanding and love. It is the human heart and its need for communion that weakens the walls of ideology and prejudice. It leads us from closeness to openness, from illusion of superiority to vulnerability and humility. Because of this, instead of finding security in the group, we find it in our hearts, which have found a new inner strength, a real maturity."

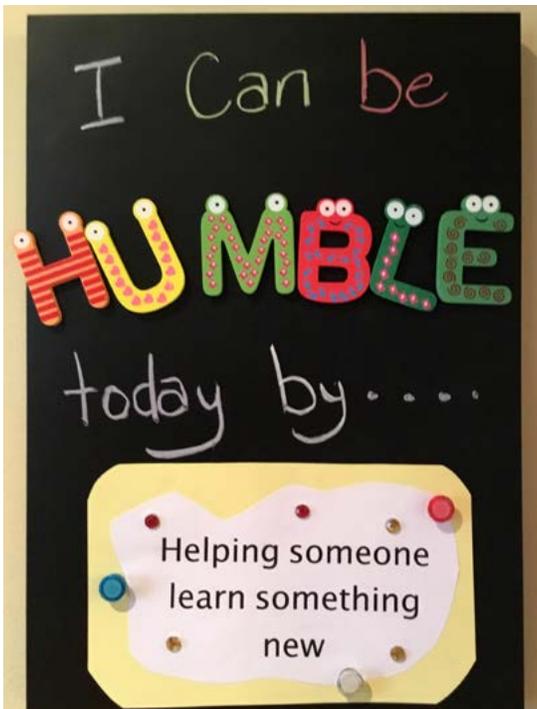
We must each strive, every day, every moment of our day to be humble – we all have a sense of pride to overcome. However, if we dedicate ourselves to becoming humbler, eventually, it will become a habit.

What you will need:

- A piece of bristol board, a magnetic board, or a white board
- Magnetic letters, cut-out letters, or a mini printed sign to read "I can be humble by:"
- Cardstock
- Markers
- Glue
- Stickers

Instructions:

1. Use the magnetic letters, cut-out letters, or mini printed sign to label the Bristol board, magnetic board, or white board "I can be humble today by:".
2. Discuss with the group and together write a list of ways each of us can be humble. Here are some examples:
 - Listening more than talking
 - Remembering I'm not perfect
 - Praying for humility
 - Learning from others
 - Complimenting others
 - Apologizing
 - Helping Others
 - Going last
 - Appreciating Others
 - Not Comparing Myself to Others
 - Helping someone learn something new
 - Holding Open a Door
 - Saying Thank You
 - Doing a random act of kindness
 - Accepting my limitations
 - Not Judging
 - Being grateful for what I have
 - Practicing Gentleness
 - Not taking all the credit
 - Admitting my mistakes
 - Not bragging
 - Being considerate in conversation
3. Cut out a bunch of cardstock and write the ways one can be humbler on the cardstock.
4. Decorate the cardstock with stickers, jewels, drawings, etc.
5. Create a few blank cardstock.
6. Place all the decorated cardstock in a basket or box.
7. Each day (or other designated time period), choose 1 way each of us can be humbler and display on the board.



The Gift of Silence, by Louisa Fiorino

Our talents are the gift that God gives to us...What we make of our talents is our gift back to God- Leo Buscaglia

When you visit Cana House you will often find Martha sitting on the couch, knees up, simply and quietly taking in the world around her.

She is a woman who has no words to express herself. Many people may view this as barrier to building genuine relationships. However, her silence is a unique gift that has drawn others into relationship with her. A big smile, eye contact, and holding hands are all ways that she creates communion with others. With these simple gestures she has been able to build mutual relationship, to bring joy, faith, forgiveness, and laughter to others' lives. This begins a process of transformation in those who dare to enter into silence with Martha.

Through her quiet nature she has been able to create deeply profound and spiritual moments. It is during these moments that Martha will grab my hand and call me to be still. Asking for my restless heart to enter into silence and prayer with her. The beautiful silence that ensues blocks out the world that continually calls me to be busy. Calling me into the present moment as if to say Be still and know that I am God. It is during these times I am more aware of the simple pleasures of life and the beauty of friendship. I often sit and ponder how mysterious and amazing it is that God chose to create Martha differently. That she has the talent to change the world one heart at a time.



Gifts Through Presence, by Brandon Lanteigne, Assistant, L'Arche Saint John

If I reflect on what I most value in my life, faith and relationships are at the centre. Without taking time to pray, without having genuine conversations with those who are close to me, there would be a huge void in my life. I am often surprised by the gift I receive by living in the moment and being truly present to those before me. I can recall an evening when I had decided to go to Mass despite an impending storm. I already had had a full day and was in the midst of completing a research paper but I took a half hour break to attend Mass and planned to immediately return home. Fortunately, the real task was to accept that not everything goes according to plan and that spontaneity is not necessarily a bad thing.

As Mass concluded, the storm had begun, we were quickly ushered out of the church. I had noticed a friend of mine at Mass but had no intention of having a conversation as I knew I wasn't afforded any additional "free time". She approached me right away to ask how I had been doing and we ended up talking outside in the middle of a blizzard for about 15 minutes. Ordinarily I would have been so frustrated with being so distracted knowing that I had another 7 or 8 pages

of writing to do but it was such an uplifting and encouraging conversation and I felt God's presence during these moments. It exemplified the importance of making room in our day for others and how we are, in turn, rewarded. She was there to give me some unexpected support and I hope that I have since paid it forward by being there for someone else.

This is of course easier said than done and we often find ourselves cluttering up our lives with so many things that finding additional time seems impossible. We hear others say "I wish there were more hours in a day" but I usually respond by saying that those extra hours would be filled with more tasks. Upon my first experience of L'Arche, I was totally blown away by how we choose to celebrate those small, seemingly insignificant happenings of life. The fact that together we prepare a meal, eat and share stories and laughter is something to value. By being intentional, we prioritize each other and find joy even in midst of life's simple moments. I earnestly try to extend this way of life beyond the walls of McKim House and I strive to share this idea of "living simply" with those who journey with me throughout my life.

Activity 2: St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta's Humility List

St. Mother Teresa has inspiring words on humility – “Humility is the mother of all virtues – purity, charity, and obedience. It is in being humble that our love becomes real, devoted, and ardent. If you are humble, nothing will touch you, neither praise nor disgrace, because you know what you are.

St. Mother Teresa was a Macedonian of Albanian descent who at the age of 12 felt strongly the call of God. She ultimately become the founder of the Missionaries of Charity. She was canonized in 2016 and is now known as St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta. She loved the poorest of the poor in India and around the world. She loved those who were the most vulnerable of all humanity; she opened hospices, orphanages, and leper houses all over the world. She cared about people and recognized their spiritual dignity.



Look together at the Mother Teresa Humility List
Are these examples of humility easy to follow?

What you will need:

- Computer with internet connectivity
- Bristol Board or poster board
- Markers

Instructions:

1. As a group, watch the following video: [Mother Teresa - Mini Biography](#)
2. Participants can print out and attach the Mother Teresa Humility List on the poster board together

Activity 3: Standing on Humble Ground Poster

Read together about the Core Value ‘[Stand on Humble Ground](#)’. How do we serve others? When are we generous? Are we aware of our actions and motivations?

What you will need:

- Bristol Board/Poster Board
- Paper
- Markers
- Glue
- Stickers

Instructions:

1. Create a poster with the title: “Stand on Humble Ground”.
2. Cut out a ‘[people chain](#)’ and decorate the people.
3. Paste the people cut-out on the poster board.
4. Around the board and the people cut-out, print and decorate the following quotes:
 - a. We are to touch people with great respect - Jean Vanier
 - b. If God lets you fall into some weakness, it is not to abandon you, but only to establish in you humility and make you more careful in the future ~ St. Padre Pio
 - c. He must become greater; I must become less. (John 3:30)
 - d. It is in being humble that our love becomes real, devoted, and ardent. - Mother Teresa
 - e. Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility. - St. Augustine.
 - f. Community is where humility and glory touch. - Henri Nouwen.



Have you visited the L’Arche Canada Training Website yet (www.larche.ca/training)? This website contains hundreds of modules related to our Core Values. Here are some modules related to the theme of “Stand on Humble Ground”. Use them on your own or with others to help fulfill your roles even better.

- [Personal Style and Preferences](#)
 - [Personal Style and Preferences Inventory Worksheet](#)
 - [Personal Style and Preferences Inventory Worksheet - Examples](#)
 - [Personal Leadership Style](#)
 - [Leading from Within the Circle](#)
 - [Personal Mission Profile - Guide & Example](#)
 - [Personal Mission Profile](#)
- Core Values Newsletters (Bubble of the Month):
- [November 2015](#)
 - [April 2017](#)
 - [February-March 2014](#)