

## The Taizé Community and the Church Fathers — Based on *Soyons l'âme du monde*

### ABSTRACT

Spiritual identity of the Taizé Community in France, which attracts innumerable young people today, is greatly based on the historical heritage of the Church, especially on the Church Fathers. *Soyons l'âme du monde*, a selection from the Fathers' writings made by Taizé, indicates that the Fathers' thoughts confirm Taizé-spirituality in a historical and authentic way. It becomes clearer in examining texts in the framework of "Inner Life and Human Solidarity", which has been the theme of youth meetings in Taizé for many years. Silence and repetition of short essential words taken from the Bible are the heart of prayer both for Taizé and the Fathers. This kind of prayer nourishes one's inner attitudes, "trust, joy, simplicity, mercy, longing, freedom", as Brother Roger, the founder of Taizé, often expresses. The Fathers also frequently used these expressions as the keys to the kingdom of God. A person of prayer is at the same time a person attentive to unity of the human family, and to the suffering of others. The Fathers put great emphasis on "compassion" to the abandoned, which should be expressed in action. Today Taizé tries to represent such "compassion" by their own lives, e.g., by the works of Brothers in the poorest parts of the world. In the process of "Human Solidarity", reconciliation of the Church is urgently demanded. The Fathers realized the key to unity is nothing but "forgiveness". Along this line, Taizé, as an ecumenical community in its essence, concentrates on concretely living the urgency of reconciliation (Mt 5: 23-24) among different Christians, not on making arguments or documents.

**Key Words:** the Taizé Community, the Church Fathers, Spirituality