

Our life at Anta Akhi

Serving a life of dignity for people with disability



Yvonne Chami - Founder

To live this Lent, to walk towards Easter and then the Pentecost, we are invited to follow the life's path of Jesus, Alive and Victorious, and taste the power of His love spirit, His kindness, His joy of being the Son of God, Son of Mary, His Mother, His joy of perceiving His father's project made for all mankind and humanity :

The man, every man is saved, if he agrees to be with Him, similar to Him, son of God, son of Mary, with the power of His spirit.

Shouldn't we agree to be sons of God like Him, to be saviors with him?

What is missing us to be the joy of the Father, while sharing the life of Jesus Alive and Victorious, and sharing His mission of Salvation for all man, for you my brother?

Inspired by the book of Charles Journet, "The 7 words of Christ on the cross", it is a great joy for me to share with you these 7 words that bring us into this great mystery: Jesus, Man and Son of God, has suffered like all other men, but He is also a risen, praised and glorified God.

"Father Forgive them". Let us meditate after His first word. Despite His pain on the cross, Jesus' concern was our salvation. Let us look and focus on the cross, let us get the power from Jesus and with Him let us pray: "Father, forgive me! Forgive my hatred and my selfishness. Father help me to forgive."

"Today with Me in paradise" The second word of Jesus on the cross. Once again He doesn't care about His pain. He is guiding us towards the same path, the path of purification and mercy so that we reach His Father's kingdom. Let's have a deep look through our heart and let Jesus touch it, wash it, purify it and flood it with His tenderness and love.

"Behold Your Mother". Thank you Jesus for letting Your mother becoming also ours. "Once again Lord Jesus, you forget Your pain only because You want to save us. Dear Mary, Mother of God, be there at the bottom of the cross, hold me under your wide coat, help me face my big challenges by looking at the challenges of Your Son. Help me so that I can hear His voice and also feel the tenderness of His Great Love ».

"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" "I thirst". Yes Jesus suffers; He suffers as all other men but differently. He knows well that God, the Father, will never abandon Him. He was physically thirsty but He was eager to save our souls! Every person lives moments of pain, of sadness, of abandonment, of disasters... « Jesus, don't let the moments of pain and suffer take us to rebellion or to despair on the contrary, let them lead us towards



confidence. Jesus, let our fears be merged with yours and our hunger be filled with Your love ».

"It is consummated" "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit". For the second time, Jesus calls His Father. « Father, with Jesus, I am also calling You. I am handing You my life with its pain, its joy, its failures and its success, its mistakes, but also its bursts and its hopes. Father, be the light of my life and be my shelter. I want to live with You the Resurrection. I want to live it and own it in order to make a difference in my life. I don't want to just believe in it but also to live it concretely in order to re-candle my life. Help me Jesus to overpass the limits declared by Your resurrection. Teach me how I should keep it safely in my heart, in my life and in the lives of the ones I love.

Roula Najm
President Director General

Easter Schedule

- Good Thursday:** Mass at Saint Maron-Jeita with the Big family of Sesobel at 10:00AM
Adoration Evening at the Home of Tenderness starting 8:30 PM.
- Good Friday:** Pray in front of The Cross at the Home of Tenderness from 10:00AM till 12:00PM
Procession and ceremony on Good Friday at Saint Elie Ballouneh Parish at 2:30PM.
- Saturday Easter:** Pâques Ambulant « Jésus vient chez nous » Home visit of the people with disabilities and their families starting 8:00AM.
Festive Dinner and Evening prayer starting 8:00PM followed by Mass at Home of Tenderness.
- Sunday Easter:** Day during which our house is open to welcome all our friends.
- Monday Easter:** Mass at 11:00AM at Lady of Lebanon- Harissa to congratulate Mary.

Our Home of Tenderness is always open and welcomes you to live together unforgettable moments! We are waiting for you.



The community Set el Beit, a ferment in the heart of Anta Akhi

Set el Beit, is Mary! She is the Mother of our Home! She is the caretaker of each of Her children. It is never enough for us to repeat: without Mary, we would have never been able to surpass all of our difficulties that we have faced during those 25 years at Anta Akhi. Yvonne is the one who has transmitted her great love for Mary, her unbreakable faith in Her intercession and who taught us to put our lives in Her hands.

It is from here that comes the birth of the “Set el Beit Community”, with its 30 members - adults with disabilities, team, friends and volunteers- who perform an annual consecration to Mary. This community is like the leaven in the dough, with the people who accept to live the values of Jesus, all together as brothers, under the eyes of Mary. Their mission is to be witnesses in the society that it is possible to live every day in joy despite all the challenges, in a fidelity to the founder’s breath.

Below are the fundamentals of “Set el Beit Community” from few devotees’ point of view :

1. Purpose of the consecration to Mary

Marianne: I am engaged to Set el Beit because Jesus lives in my heart and because I want to live together with my brothers and sisters at Anta Akhi. I also want Mary to accompany me all my life. I am extremely happy at Anta Akhi. For me to be consecrated to Mary means: I love you Mary, I always pray for you so that You could stay inside my heart, don’t leave me alone. I want you, I need you, I love you so much Mary Set el Beit, Mother of this Home.

Elie K.: it is not obligatory to be engaged to Set el Beit but it is very important because it helps us to pray. I love being consecrated to Mary because She has elevated me and has taught me everything: how to pray, to have confidence, to believe that God is my Father.

Ghassan: Set El Beit, Mary, has educated Jesus and I became consecrated to Her so that She educates me in order to be loyal to Jesus and determined in my faith.

2. What does the engagement consist of?

Marianne: We pray, we celebrate the mass, we daily pray the rosary with meditation, we listen to the teaching.

Elie K: The Mass is very important; It gives us strength, joy and happiness.

Nicolas: I like to have a deeper understanding of the Bible and try to live accordingly.

3. Live the love and the forgiveness :

- Samo who is Set el Beit? She is the Mother of Jesus.
- Why did you join Set el Beit community? Because I want Jesus to be in my heart.
- Do you love Jesus that omuch? I love Him to heaven! I love Him, I love Carole,



Madonna, Pierre, Tony...

- Do you love Mary? Yes because She is in my heart. I always pray to her.
- Do you love everybody? Yes and I pray for all of them.
- And if someone hurts you? I apologize.
- No Samo, if someone hurts You? I tell him not to be afraid, I love him.
- And if you are not feeling well and in pain what do you do? I go and see a doctor.
- What do not revolt against God? No.
- *And Finally*: I love Mary, I love Jesus, I love Saint Charbel, I love everybody because Jesus loves us all.

4. Live today to the full, accept yourself and surpass the difficulties to reach Jesus :

Carole: I do an effort in order to be a reflection of Jesus Image. My heart is full of love but this love is not perfect. For that I pray for Mary to help me, guide me and fill the gaps in my life. I know I am not a Saint, I sin in my thoughts and in my words; I want to become a saint, but not in the eyes of the world but just between God and me, sometimes life is difficult and requires a great effort.

So I pray to the Holy Spirit to help me love as much as possible and overcome my weakness: “Help me, empower me because without you I don’t know how to love.” In conclusion, if we do the smallest simple things with love it will help us to become Saints. It is my experience and I am sharing it with confidence from all my heart.

5. Learn to Pray:

Joy: I was not used to pray. With Set el Beit Community, I learned how to pray, to stay in the serenity of silence and contemplate the life of Jesus.

Joanna: These gatherings gave me a push forward to follow Jesus’ path. It taught me how to enlarge my faith, how to build a good relationship with Jesus and how to communicate with my surrounding environment. I now have references in my life: they are Mary, and God’s words.

Michel *accompanist*: Not having enough time to dedicate it for prayers, it is an occasion that allows me to think deeply and pray

The news of our Home of Tenderness

Our Home is teeming with life during all the months of the year, especially this year since we're celebrating our 25th anniversary. So many are the friends that surround us and are committed to preserving the well-being of our young people with disabilities but mostly, they believe in our mission of living together, different and complementary, in peace and joy despite all the difficulties.

Through the love they hold in their hearts, they do not miss putting their talents in the service of our youth. How does this love manifest itself?

Thanks to the support of **Byblos Bank**, we were able to participate in the **Beirut Marathon** held on November 12th, 2017. Our youth, with the assistance of a great team, were able to cross 8 km, accompanied by music, songs and many photos!

We always have our **celebrations, traditions**, whether with the small family of Anta Akhi – day of the personnel, on January 5th, a day to thank Mary on March 25th – or with the parents, friends, godfathers, children – celebration of the mother's day on March 21st, mass for Saint Joseph's day on March 18th, mass of the newlyweds on February 11th and children's mass on February 4th. We can't miss the animation always present! **It would be interesting to tell you about the game of chairs, where the person who doesn't find a place to sit loses ...** This rule doesn't apply at all in Anta Akhi: here, the person who doesn't find a place to sit makes the whole team lose. Children are ingenious to find a place. They went all the way and won: 10 children sitting on a small chair, on each other ... What a beautiful lesson for us "adults": instead of promoting competitiveness and elimination, Mia, ani and guitarist, promoted mutual aid and complementarity ... The big one is eager to protect the little one ... and so they all won ...

It is an appointment renewed each month: **the sobhieh breakfast** of the parents' committee, managed as of the year 2017-2018 by the unit *Source des ressources* which innovates every time a theme, a decoration, a menu and an animation. To all the ladies of the sisterhood who support us, thank you!

Our friends at the **Rotary Club– Sahel El Metn**, replied immediately to our call to ensure to Barbara a respiratory machine. Many thanks to Fady Abou Sleiman and all the club's friends who came to visit us on December 2017.

They returned to Anta Akhi, to participate in sowing the beauty generated by music. **Francois Lafaye, president of Promusicis Foundation** wanted to offer our youth with disabilities, two concerts by great award-winning concertists, the first one on January 24th, 2018 by Delphine Bardin – pianist, and the second one on March 20th, 2018 by Louis Rodde – violinist and Armen Ktechek – pianist. You should have seen the interaction of the youth and especially the joy of Georges who reacted so beautifully to music.

Jad Comair and Antoine Iskandar formed the first Lebanese team which participated in Rally Dakar on January 2018. We highly appreciate that they dedicated themselves to help us through a fundraising campaign, managed by Katia Yasmine, director of the company Traccs.

Katia' testimony at the end of the campaign: "The members of Anta Akhi's family were able to realize a great change in my life in small time. They introduced me to a course of faith, and a daily challenge to get attached to prayer and especially the community prayer, since I experience with them its efficiency and its great power to perform miracles.

They changed my perception of life; I love it more in its details, and I hate its superficial dimensions because I went deep and I appreciated the graces that God gives me for free. I was so used to these graces that I forgot to thank the Lord for them. But now I thank him for my health, my family, my work, my hands, my feet, all my members which I should put at service of my second family, Anta Akhi. I want to be the tong that makes their message reach everyone, the hand that facilitates their life, the foot always ready to help. Anta Akhi is not only an association, it is a school of faith, donation, charity, patience and hope for humanity, that breaks the difference and transforms the disability into joy."



Our visitors

“I learned to pray”, “I found Jesus”, “I wanted to help and I see that I was helped”, the joy of the youth is communicative” ... these are phrases often heard from Lebanese visitors as well as visitors from abroad. Their testimony and the change in their life, encourages others to experiment life in our Home of Tenderness which apparently “deserves well its name”.



Mgr Ivan Santus, Secretary of the Apostolic Nunciature in Lebanon, with 5 priests who came from Italy, spent the evening with us: the mass was followed by a meeting with the youth and a friendly dinner. During the meeting, one of the priests obviously touched declared that he learned from the testimony of the youth more than he did during years of conferences and seminars.

Father Philippe Parant, from the Diocese of Ars came for a period of 4 days to get to know Anta Akhi, and visit Joris Roland, a French seminarian who is spending one year with us.

After some months of internship/volunteering in Anta Akhi, **Xavier Maisonneuve, Jean-Baptiste Couvreur and Benedicte Lacoste** returned to France. We share with you an extract of Xavier’s testimony: “We do not choose our family. However, we can choose our friends, who form our new family. If I learned anything here, it would be humility. The youth, despite their health problems, always keep smiling. Then who am I to allow myself not to smile?” *Xavier.*



Mr. Michel Chatelier, a longtime friend, pays us regular visits, each time with a group of friends from Nantes, members of the French association **Partage**. They shared with us their impressions and we hereby quote an extract: “In Anta Akhi, what struck me is the testimony of the disabled residents, their path to find meaning to their lives, and to death. It is a group which takes into consideration the future, the meaning of life to be given to people with disabilities, when they get older or become more affected. To be surrounded by love and friendship is lived and invigorating.” *Genevieve Bichon*

They preceded us to the house of the Father

Guy Abou Zeid (28-09-1993 – 24-01-2018) and Georges Nadim (23-04-1984 – 26-02-2018) joined the kingdom of heaven.

Suffering from multiple disabilities, they were part of the group of youth accompanied at home.

It is a big consolation to know that Guy and Georges were so surrounded by their families. We pray that all persons suffering from disability can be surrounded with equal love, presence and self-giving.



“I live in the hope of uniting in this new world of light where they are, where the joy of life is guaranteed in plenitude, united to the Son of the Father, with Mary, in the Spirit of love and peace.” Yvonne

Call

Rita, as her older brother Fadi, suffers from a regressive disease, Marinesco Sjorgen, which resulted in the gradual loss of walking, hearing, and sight. If Fadi was able to recover his hearing, it was thanks to a surgical operation, Rita should also do it, in order to prevent any isolation and stay integrated in the group.

*The fees of her operation amount to 6,000 US dollars.
Thank you in advance for your generosity.*



How to help Anta Akhi:

1. Sponsor a share of the cost of the accompaniment of the life course of a young person with disability Starting from \$ 10 per month, \$ 120 per year. Bank Audi - Iban: LB07 0056 0001 6520 8465 0440 1605
2. Make a single donation possibly specifying the need that you want to support.

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