

# A Feedback on the Governance Seminar of July 2024

On Saturday, 27 July, the Emmanuel Community concluded an international seminar bringing together all the Councils involved in its governance. The theme of the seminar, held at Notre Dame de l'Ouÿe, 60 km from Paris, was "Transforming Governance: Finding the Way ". It had four objectives:

- To review the various historical stages that led to current governance structures;
- To identify ways of better integrating the internationality of the charism of the Emmanuel Community;
- To initiate a reflection on greater subsidiarity in our community;
- To embark on a journey of transformation to better serve the mission within the Church.

This week began with a meeting of the International Council on Sunday, 21 and Monday, 22 July. The International Council validated the "Heart to Heart" initiative which is presented in the second document attached. This "Heart to Heart" process is proposed to all members of the community, in order to open up a path of missionary conversion and enter into the Jubilee of Hope in 2025 together. This process will unfold over the next three years.

After these first two days, the members of the Council were joined by the Council of the Clerical Association, the Council of the Fraternity of Jesus, the International Bureau and some invited brothers and sisters, including delegates from the clerical leaders of some zones and heads of major missions.

These were intense and fraternal days, sustained by prayer and marked by great freedom of speech. The highly participative method, led by consultants from Human Resources specialists, Ecclesia RH, involved numerous discussions in small groups and plenary sessions. Three external contributions from academics (Samuel Dolbeau, François Gallon and Peter Wirtz) nourished the discussions. Samuel Dolbeau's contribution was particularly noteworthy. He shared his views on a few points that seemed to stand out in the history of community governance, particularly in its early days.

The cases of abuse that have occurred in the long and recent history of our community also impacted the work of this week. All the participants in the seminar showed their determination to move forward in acknowledging our failings towards those who have been abused by members of the Emmanuel Community, in ways that will be clarified in the coming weeks. The ongoing review of the various situations should enable us to honestly acknowledge these failings and to reach out to each of the people concerned to ask for forgiveness and reparation.

At the end of the week, the College of Communion (the three Councils) approved the launch of four working groups and their coordinators:

- Working group on Internationality in the Community (led by Otto Neubauer and Xavier Bizard);
- Working group on the role of the Moderator (led by Alexis de Groote and Faustine Carron);
- Working group on the role and coordination of Councils (led by Marina Lattès and Jean-Régis Catta);

- Working group on the Youth service (led by Marie José Girard and Eric Jacquinet).

A progress report involving all seminar participants will be produced in January, with the aim of preparing decisions that could be taken next summer.