

## **MIRACLE Project Workshop Presentation of the DEFAP and the Mosaic Project**

In France, most of Protestant churches works together in French Protestant Federation. This group create a real network to be stronger and more efficient. In front of immigration too, this churches choose to work together.

When I talk about immigration, I don't mean person without paper, homeless and in great poverty. I speak about migrants who choose to come in France and who have the possibility, opportunity to lead a normal life there. For specific case of migrants who are illegal situation, without residence permit there is the Cimade. It works to help all those migrants who have nearly no rights on our territory.

But, first of all, I would like to present Défap's work in few words.

In France Défap works with 5 historical protestant churches to be their mission organisation trough the world. Since 1822 Défap is present in Africa, Oceania and more recently in South America. It has founded protestant churches in many countries. In fact, we specially work with Africa: Togo, Benin, Cameroun, and Madagascar. We also try to create a network in South America: especially in Nicaragua. Those churches, those communities have grown up, took their independence and become our today partners. But we don't want to stand in a one-way relation: from founder to the new churches. We need to break the old missionary model: it couldn't exist anymore. They have something to teach us too, and also in our own country in which some of their members have decided to live.

Défap has to work foreigner but in France too; of course with its churches members but also with its partners: those churches founded by migrants coming from countries we yet work with.

That's why we begin to create board dealing with group of churches coming from immigration. The coordinator was one of the Secretary of the Défap. The first purpose was to establish a kind of map of migrants' churches in France and get in touch with them. At the end of this work, it results that 4 cities were particularly concerned: Paris, Marseille, Strasbourg and Lyon.

Progressively this group grew up and needed a specific shift, with one person working full time on this project. It became Mosaic Project.

At first, few years ago, Défap has been appealed by several churches in different countries to get in touch with their members in France. Those churches do not already exist in France, but they exist as communities of people from the same native country. The communities are in a way a spontaneous generation. At first they are not real established church and not always have an official existence. Some of them are now big churches with hundreds of members but face difficulties to be recognized. Défap deals whit this recognition. At that moment, it has seemed that the project was beyond Défap action, it was a matter for French Protestant Federation. Indeed, FPF gathers most of protestant churches in France, its role is to get in touch with these new protestant churches and work with them.

And now, we are very lucky to have the Mosaic Project. Mosaic is a board of FPF and, almost, one person, Marianne, will work full time to meet all churches and make them live together.

I would like to explain why the project is called Mosaic. It's because we see all this churches as small parts of a great picture. Each has a particular form, a specific colour but it shines under the light when it's with other parts and not alone. If one misses, there is no more picture. The idea is to transform this group of churches in a scintillating team.

Since 4 years the coordinator of Mosaic has traversed France to meet reverends, boards and members of those churches.

For us it's very important that this project not only deals with reverends and managers but also with every member. The focus is on making a possible integration in society for every member through reception of his church. Feeling that her/his community becomes an official one can allow people to feel they can also have an official place in society.

But the Mosaïc Project does not want to stand in an only one way relation: from historical churches to churches from immigration. We think everyone has a richness to share. As I've just said, historical churches can help new churches to reach an official existence. But new churches can share way of living trust, perhaps that particular way of living trust missing to historical churches.

In fact, what does it mean? The role of Marianne should be to organize events between those different communities. We can imagine common days, celebrate shared worship, etc. But the concern is not about having a special event after which everybody returns at home and does not see each other anymore. We want to create a durable bond, make those churches becoming sister churches.

It seems that members of those churches migrants-led need to be members of two churches: one which brings together people from their former country and another one of the historical churches.

What they expect from those two churches is necessarily different: they go in their country churches to pray in their own language, it's a link through faith and native tongue. But then they go in the other church for celebration: wedding, baptism... They need both of them.