Welcome to the Sons of Saint Francis

To all the sons of Saint Francis who will come to Taizé from July 7 to 14, 2019, I would like to say from the bottom of my heart: welcome to our hill! May each of you feel at home here!

By taking the initiative for this week, our dear Minister General Michael has given us a great joy. This meeting will be, I hope, a step forward on the common road that we have been following together for many years.

In the history of our community, the reference to Saint Francis has always played an important role. Already when he wrote the Rule of Taizé in the early 1950s, Brother Roger was inspired by Franciscan texts. The place he gave to the spirit of the beatitudes, joy, simplicity and mercy, reveals a Franciscan accent.

We also come together on an even deeper level, of unfathomable depth. Your brother Thaddée enabled us to discover it in recent years, by opening an even more penetrating access to the personality of the Saint of Assisi, beyond the images that everyone knows.

Yes, many know St. Francis as the champion of poverty and simplicity, close to the poor and those excluded by society, the prophet of a poor church for the poor. Yes, Francis is the poet of the joy and praise of God, the admirer of nature, the friend of the wolf and the birds. Yes, he is the brother of all human beings, who did not hesitate to visit even the Sultan.

But there is in the center of his heart a wellspring that feeds all this, that we would like to scrutinize even more, and which also flowed in the soul of Brother Roger: Saint Francis is a contemplative, a mystic who lives in a personal relationship with the Trinitarian God and by his life he invites everyone to enter into the same relationship.

It is this, above all, that will unite us during the week that we will spend together.

We will discover and rediscover that this intimacy with God is not a complicated search; it is simple and accessible to all. In a simple prayer, we renew a relationship with the Creator, with Christ, with the Holy Spirit.

And even if our prayer remains poor, Christ welcomes us as we are, with what is good, but also with our inner contradictions, and even with our faults.

Simplicity of heart brings us into this mystery: our identity lies in a relationship with Christ. We receive the meaning of our life from Christ. It consists in being loved and in loving.

Let us rejoice that we shall soon be together! Praised be Christ for our fellowship!

Brother Alois, prior of Taizé