

## **Solidarity with the suspended staff of the Centre justice et foi!**

We were shocked to learn of the suspension of activities at the Centre justice et foi (CJF), including those of *Relations* magazine, and the cavalier layoff of its staff for an indefinite period resulting from a decision by its Board of Directors.

We who appreciate and/or collaborate with and participate in the CJF's activities in various capacities, coming from religious, academic, artistic, community, media, literary, union and other milieux, sign this statement in solidarity with the employees who were suspended indefinitely with only two days' notice and without valid justification.

This appalling layoff, even if it turns out to be temporary, stands in stark contrast to the principles of social justice and the spirit of concertation and solidarity that has guided the CJF until now. The confidence of many partners in the stability of the CJF and *Relations* built up over the decades has been shaken. Current and future funding, as well as the fundraising campaign that was underway when the suspension happened, are in jeopardy. Yet budgetary difficulties are cited as one of the factors justifying the suspension of activities. The expertise and organizational memory of the CJF risk being sacrificed, since those laid off who are unable to rely solely on unemployment insurance will have to find other "temporary" employment. That the official press release issued by the CJF and published on its website dare speak of a « smooth process » for employees is outrageous.

### **In solidarity with *Relations* magazine, we sign.**

We strongly denounce the abrupt interruption, even if temporary, of the production and marketing of *Relations* magazine! This puts it in serious danger in the short term. The recipient of numerous awards for excellence, *Relations* is an important intellectual focal point in the media and cultural landscape of Quebec, a crossroads for diverse and committed voices from here and elsewhere. It is one of a kind. We appreciate, among other things, the place it affords to artists. Its thematic dossiers are often at the cutting edge of issues such as degrowth, racism and technosciences, among others. *Relations* has had a history of uninterrupted publication for 83 years and 824 issues. The progressive Jesuits who founded it would undoubtedly see its suspension as a sacrilege, one committed in a totally improvised fashion, with no transparency and in total ignorance of the requirements of the magazine's production and marketing cycle - as its collaborators and partners can attest. We are dismayed by the board's decision

that has weakened *Relations* already; it should be reversed without delay. We dare not think that the magazine could have unknowingly published its last issue without saying goodbye to its readership and its many subscribers. This is totally unacceptable!

**In solidarity with the Vivre Ensemble (VE) sector of the CJF, we sign.**

Even a temporary interruption of the Centre's activities greatly harms this dynamic sector, one that has been valued for over 30 years by a great many citizens, allies and partners. VE provides essential reflections on crucial issues linked to immigration and the growing pluralism in Quebec. While Quebec is supposedly a democratic society, it is nevertheless one that denies rights and true citizen status to all to many racialized, minority and exploited people. The Vivre ensemble sector works with these people and carries their voices into different settings - academic, community, religious, etc. Like all the components of the CJF, VE explores the root causes of social realities, not just the symptoms. It seeks to understand and analyze issues in all their complexity while creating solidarities rather than stoking the polarizing debates that often arise. This is something that Quebec really needs.

**In solidarity with the sector of the CJF devoted to the future of social Christianity, we sign.**

The interruption of the CJF's activities, even if temporary, is putting the brakes on the momentum of the Social Christianity sector. Against the backdrop of the decline in the forces that shaped the social heritage of the Catholic Church in Quebec - a heritage that is often overlooked and to which Jesuits and the CJF have contributed -- those working in this sector have been patiently building bridges between different generations of socially committed Christians since 2018. They are highlighting and promoting this heritage, working to keep it alive and inspiring Christians who see faith as inseparable from social justice. The social Christianity sector of the CJF has succeeded in reaching out to people, especially young adults, who are affected by the dominant individualistic and consumerist culture and who have been isolated in their quest for spirituality and commitment.

**In solidarity with the Centre justice et foi as we have known it until now, we sign.**

Many other organizations face difficult and demanding challenges. Do these challenges really justify suspending operations and laying off staff in such an abrupt manner and with such far-reaching consequences - for the CJF, its

employees, and for many of us as well ? We seriously doubt it, especially given that the solutions proposed by the employees to the board were de facto rejected.

The Centre justice et foi and *Relations* deserve better than to be treated like a banal program that can be summarily interrupted and then taken up again after a "break". All the more given that the serious consequences of this "break" jeopardize the very possibility of the centre's activities and its magazine being resumed. **Solidarity with the laid-off staff of the Centre justice et foi!**

**I sign this declaration:**

Please sign online at :

<https://soutenonslesemployesducjf.org/declaration-appui-employes-du-cjf/>

All are invited to sign (readers and subscribers of *Relations*, readers of the VE webzine, citizens, professionals, directors of organizations, social actors from various milieux).

**What title do you prefer to sign with? Please be precise.**

**Examples :**

Jonathan Durand-Folco, **associate professor**, École d'innovation sociale  
Élisabeth-Bruyère, **Université Saint-Paul**

Your name, subscriber to *Relations* or to the VE webzine

Your name, **director of (name of organization)**

Your name, **reader**