

BASIC BELIEFS

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Each person carries within them an inalienable value which constitutes their human dignity. Regardless of his or her way of life or thinking, social group or economic means, racial or ethnic origin, each person retains intact this essential value, the basis of human equality. It gives to each one the same inalienable right to act freely for their own well-being and the well-being of others.

There exists in every society a population group, the Fourth World - persons, families, groups - whose extreme poverty and exclusion denies them the means to demonstrate to others this value which is the basis of all human rights.

The refusal of those concerned to accept their condition as irrevocable underlies the conviction that every person can contribute to the destruction of misery.

A society founded on this conviction and this analysis will always give priority in all things to the most disadvantaged minorities. Their interests will be served first in order to guarantee their chances of personal and family integrity, autonomy and participation in the life of the community. Their presence will provoke the transformation of all society; they will lead others to recognize that the progress of the most excluded amongst us is the measure of our own progress towards a truly fraternal and civilised society.

The ATD Fourth World Movement has opted for a transformation of civilisation (and therefore of society) that will totally reverse all our priorities, re-align all our commitments, resources and projects in the light of the Fourth World and especially of its most disadvantaged members.

Such a transformation depends on a voluntariat corps that links its destiny with that of the Fourth World. This voluntariat has the dual objective of enabling the persons and families of the Fourth World to develop the whole of their potential, to have a voice and access to education and culture in order to act as a witness and defend the most disadvantaged, in their turn, so fulfilling their rightful role as builders of society.