

The Origin of Taizé Worship

Taizé is a village in the Burgundy region of France. Roger Schütz, son of a Swiss Protestant minister, was only 25 years old when he came to Taizé from Switzerland in 1940. In the war-torn years that followed, he began sheltering Jewish refugees and praying in the village church. Others joined him and soon a small community of brothers was formed. Believing there would always be war in Europe until Christians stopped killing Christians, Roger and his followers committed themselves to a ministry of reconciliation, a challenging and difficult task in postwar France and Germany.

Slowly, one by one, brothers began making life-long commitments to communal life. Donning white robes, adopting a Benedictine style of daily life and receiving brothers from many countries, Taizé has become a monastic model of ecumenism. Over the years that followed, young people from all over Europe made their way to Taizé to open themselves to this communion which gives meaning to their lives. Today, from March to November, as many as six thousand young people a week come to Taizé for the weekly meetings with the brothers. Focusing on three periods of communal prayer each day, participants delve into the meaning of their own spiritual journey, explore their faith commitments and worship with people from all over the world.