“La Table du pain”: Feeding Students, Breaking Isolation

As the cost of living continues to rise, many students are struggling to make ends meet. La Table du pain (The Bread Table), administered and managed by the SSVP Marie Guyart Conference at Laval University, has been providing practical support for more than 24 years to those facing food insecurity. Every Wednesday, nearly 300 food baskets are distributed to students who need a little help getting through a difficult financial period.

But La Table du Pain’s mission goes far beyond distributing food. Its president, Giresse Mpey Ilimi, points out that the organization also aims to address another need that is often less visible: isolation. “The idea behind this is really to break down isolation. Our mission is to help students avoid living in solitude.” Recipients are invited to stop by to share a cup of coffee, chat with other students, and find a welcoming place.

The organization also works to preserve the dignity of the people it supports. “The idea behind our project is really to provide a safety net,” explains Mr. Ilimi, emphasizing that this assistance allows students to regain financial stability while continuing their studies.

Originally founded to distribute bread to students in need, La Table du Pain now offers complete food baskets containing fruits, vegetables, protein sources, and hygiene products. Thanks to the generosity of its partners and donors, the organization is able to meet ever-increasing demand without running out of resources. “There has never been a time when we ran out of food,” says its president.

This initiative reminds us of the importance of offering a spirit of fellowship to vulnerable people. Like the home visits made by members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, the assistance provided by La Table du Pain not only meets material needs but also addresses the fundamental need to be listened to, welcomed, and supported during difficult times.

See the report (French video): **La banque alimentaire de l'Université Laval veut se faire connaître, Radio-Canada**



Photo credit: Giresse Mpey Ilimi, President, Table du Pain