

## MANDALA

MANDALA is Sanskrit and means a circle, without a beginning or an end, radiating from the centre, returning to the centre. A Mandala can convey much.

Here we see **Candles**.

The Candle itself, its Flame and its Light have great symbolism. In our Mandala the candles represent Countries.

The three in the middle represent those countries whose frontiers meet here: Germany, France and Luxembourg.

A further twenty-four candles are for the European Community. The candle's flame gives light and a little warmth. It also represents Remembrance, Mourning and Transience.

On this day we remember those who lost their life on the roads of Luxembourg, Europe and throughout the world. There were 43 road fatalities in Luxembourg in 2007.

Periods of adversity, grief, misery follow road crashes. Many people, young and old, of all races, nationalities, religions and from all walks of life suffer; their life has changed. They constantly think of those they have lost on the roads.

This reminds me of something Pope John XXIII said: "Our dead belong to those we cannot see, but not to those who are absent".

**Stones:** to be found all over the world, plain, beautiful, angular, round, large and small. Each has its weight.

The stones in our circle tell of the tragedy and grief felt by direct and indirect traffic victims. Tragedy overwhelms and lies like a stone on the heart.

**Leaves:** they are part of nature and change with the seasons. They lie in the circle to represent all the injured who after a road crash find themselves on a way forward full of sorrow, uncertainty, disappointment and anxiety, even depression. They have been deprived of the chance of a normal life. Life has irrevocably changed.

**Nuts:** the hard shell must be cracked to get to the soft kernel. After a tragedy, people withdraw into themselves. They have no pleasure in life and wonder how it will continue, as if they are covered by a hard shell. Feelings of happiness, love and freedom are locked in their heart. They need help, help from others. The nut lies in our circle for all the feelings that are locked in us and for all those who support us in this situation.

**Fir tree branches:** fir tree needles prick and its resin is sticky.

In our circle they represent a partner, parents, children, family, friends and acquaintances. All those associated with a traffic victim are also affected by what has happened. They mourn someone they have lost, someone they knew and loved. They commiserate with the person whose life will never be the same. They are anxious about the future; something of the tragedy has stuck to them.

**Flowers:** They stand for Life, Love and Consolation.

The flowers here tell us that there are, and have been, people who were injured in a road crash. They are still here, amongst us. They have lived through a tragedy and their life goes on. Little by little, time enables them to come to terms with their situation and little by little a love of life returns.

Our Mandala represents the many victims of road crashes, their families, their friends and acquaintances here in Luxembourg and throughout the world.

As a conclusion, a quotation from St Augustine:

“To rise again is our belief  
To meet again our hope  
To always remember our love”

Candle = European Community

Flame = the deceased

Stones = tragedy and grief

Leaves = the seriously injured

Nuts = feelings and those who help

Fir trees = all those associated with the victims

Flowers = all the injured

Romaine Hendel, 2008