

## Catholic Witness on World AIDS Day 2021

Gonzalo is a Chilean gay man, Catholic, Counselor and Member of [Padis+ Chile](#), who lives with HIV and shares with us his witness on World AIDS Day. Also, Gonzalo recently founded an ONG in Chile called "[Fundación Circulo de Apoyo Positivo.](#)"

*Hi! My name is Gonzalo Jiménez. I´m a Chilean gay man, Catholic, Counselor, Member of Padis+ Chile and I live with HIV.*

*When you test positive you think your world is over. Everything you know crumbles, disappears, because you feel that you become part of the dirty, the impure ones. More so when you are part of the LGBTIQ+ community and you live in the third world, a conservative country, or a region resistant to sex education. You live in loneliness, the anguish of abandonment and many times, the despair of not wanting to continue because you think your life is over and you are not worthy of it.*

*(PAUSE)*

*One day, waiting for the subway in the morning, my head got locked and the autopilot went on. I took a step forward when the train entered the platform, and a boy took my arm and asked me what I was going to do. When I reacted, he was gone... From that moment I knew that it was God taking care of me, asking me to take care of the gift He gave me. That´s how God touched my soul. God made me realize that He had never left me, and how he continued to work through his creation to take care of me and accompany me day and night.*

*(PAUSE)*

*I arrived to the "Sexual Diversity Pastoral Care Group" not long before all this happened, but my participation was almost nil until that moment. Since the subway incident, I felt called to collaborate, I felt called to help my sisters and brothers... to give my service.*

*Living with HIV can be harsh, cruel, and stigmatizing when you don't have a community or people to share with. On the other hand, when you are accompanied, you can be free to verbalize your feelings, your pain and when you receive that support you feel the real love of God.*

*You feel how your heart fills with strength, with hope for giving love and company to other people who are going through the same things that you are going through. When you manage to see the face of God in each of your siblings.*

*(PAUSE)*

*Since the start of the pandemic in the 1980s and currently because of the lack of health care, AIDS has claimed 47.8 million lives worldwide. I deeply believe that it is our duty as children of God to educate ourselves and work so that no one else dies from this anymore. Also understand and share that HIV diagnosis is not a death sentence insofar as early diagnosis and appropriate treatment can be accessed.*

*(PAUSE)*

*The LGBTIQ+ community ceased to be the sole focus of HIV a long time ago. It is our job to break the stigma, overcome prejudices and accompany our brothers and sisters who are diagnosed with the love of God. I am sure that Jesus would do it and I want to be His disciple and follow him.*

*Let's not let fear win us. Let's open our hearts and let the Spirit guide us, lead us to be more welcoming and inclusive. Currently the biggest disease is the lack of empathy and the lack of love.*

*Because everything is to love and serve, since loving makes us free and serving makes us humble.*

Gonzalo Jiménez – Santiago de Chile