

I will be happy if... i overcome evil with good

"Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth!" (Mt 5,6)



Objective

Learn to recognise and deal, in a peaceful way, with situations that can give rise to violent attitudes in us and in others.



How did it go?

A time of welcome, for dialogue and to share what each one has lived, the experiences made and the difficulties lived. We can recall the objectives we set ourselves during the last meeting: "How did we get on"?



Introductory Activity

ROLE PLAY

The participants divide into 3 groups and each group reflects on one of the following situations:

SITUATION 1: Max is one of my classmates and everyone makes fun of him because he is fat and unfriendly, and when he gets cross he often acts violently towards others. What can I do for him?

SITUATION 2: At home it is not easy for me to get on with my younger sister. She often comes and disturbs me while I am studying or am with my friends, she doesn't leave me alone to do my own thing and often she goes and tells our parents what I am doing. How can I handle my relationship with her?

SITUATION 3: I had a big fight with someone in my group of friends. I think he was wrong, but not everyone in the group thinks the same. Now there is a tension in the group and people are taking sides. What can I do to re-establish a good rapport in the group?

In each group, having listened to everyone, agree on a shared strategy to deal with the situation.

At the end, in a plenary, each group can 'act out' its situation and present how they have decided together to deal with it.



This is how we live

From a very early age, I began to play a game which is called "change the world with a smile".

I have been participating in the Mariapolis every year since I was born and I have learnt the importance of seeing Jesus in everyone. I realised that the easiest, and often the most effective way, to do this is simply with a smile. I remember one day I was cycling home from Mass when I met an old woman who was walking. She looked sad and tired but when I smiled and waved at her, her face changed and she too smiled at me. I saw her as if she was transformed, more beautiful and happy.

(T. K. New Zealand)



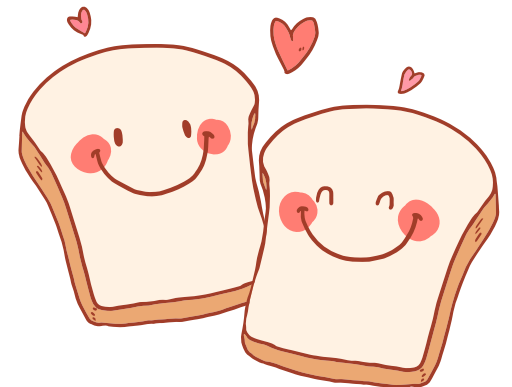
There was a girl in my class and I really didn't like her because she was always showing off. Then one day the teacher put her as my bench mate and I was not at all happy with this.

However, one day I realised that something was wrong. I was tempted to ignore her however I felt that Jesus within me was saying "Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth", so I went up to her and asked her what the problem was. I discovered she had not eaten breakfast because she had lost her meal ticket and she was very hungry.

I had already eaten my breakfast so I could not share it with her, however I immediately took my meal ticket for breakfast for the next day and I gave it to her even though I knew I would not have another one.

I was really happy that I had done this act of love for my class mate and from that moment on we became the best of friends.

(M.T. USA)



This happened
to me...



Going into depth

To win over with gentleness



*Chiara Lubich,
Rocca di Papa,
June 20, 1975,
Gen 3 Congress,
The Beatitudes*

With all the violence, kidnapping, and terrorist crimes committed even by young people, which we hear about each day on television, *we Gen feel it's necessary to take a decisive stand in the opposite direction: like the meek that Jesus speaks about.* These meek people, even when someone does them wrong, don't let themselves get carried away by anger, don't try at once to get revenge, but they overcome evil with good.

They know that any violence and oppression whatsoever go against God, and so they renounce them and prefer to put up with everything patiently and to let God fix things in the end.

This was the characteristic of Jesus, who was meek and humble of heart,

and who put up with lies and offenses without rebelling out of love for us, and it was also the characteristic of many of the early Christians who brought faith in Christ to the very people who persecuted them, conquering them through their gentleness. *"I'm not afraid of you, but rather, I love you,"* they sometimes said to their executioners. 💡



Reacting with meekness and humility

«Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit
the earth»

These are strong words in a world that from the beginning has been a place of conflict, disputes and enmity on all sides, where we constantly pigeonhole others on the basis of their ideas, their customs and even their way of speaking or dressing. Ultimately, it is the reign of pride and vanity, where each person thinks he or she has the right to dominate others. Nonetheless, impossible as it may seem, Jesus proposes a different way of doing things: the way of meekness. This is what we see him doing with his disciples. It is what we contemplate on his entrance to Jerusalem: «Behold, your king is coming to you,



*Apostolic Exhortation
Gaudete et Exsultate
Pope Francis
paragraphs 71 to 74*

humble, and mounted on a donkey» (Mt 21:5; Zech 9:9).

Christ says: «Learn from me; for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls» (Mt 11:29). If we are constantly upset and impatient with others, we will end up drained and weary. But if we regard the faults and limitations of others with tenderness and meekness, without an air of superiority, we can actually help them and stop wasting our energy

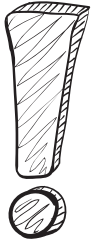
on useless complaining. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux tells us that «perfect charity consists in putting up with others' mistakes, and not being scandalized by their faults».

Paul speaks of meekness as one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal 5:23). He suggests that, if a wrongful action of one of our brothers or sisters troubles us, we should try to correct them, but «with a spirit of meekness» (Gal 6:1), since: «you too could be tempted» (ibid.). Even when we defend our faith and convictions, we are to do so “with meekness” (cf. 1 Pet 3:16). Our enemies too are to be treated “with meekness” (2 Tim 2:25). In the Church we have often erred by not embracing this demand of God’s word.

Meekness is yet another expression of the interior poverty of those who put

their trust in God alone. Indeed, in the Bible the same word – anawim – usually refers both to the poor and to the meek. Someone might object: “If I am that meek, they will think that I am an idiot, a fool or a weakling”. At times they may, but so be it. It is always better to be meek, for then our deepest desires will be fulfilled. The meek “shall inherit the earth”, for they will see God’s promises accomplished in their lives. In every situation, the meek put their hope in the Lord, and those who hope in him shall possess the land.. and enjoy the fullness of peace (cf Ps 37,9:11). For his part, the Lord trusts in them: «This is the one to whom I will look, to the humble and contrite in spirit, who trembles at my word» (Is 66:2).

Reacting with meekness and humility: this is holiness. 💡



I will try!

Jesus said 'Learn from me who is meek and humble of heart'. Chiara gave us Jesus as our role model, as the One we have to follow and to imitate. So, this month, trying to live like Jesus I will try to:

1. Avoid acting or reacting impulsively, instead before every action I will ask myself 'what would Jesus do in my place'?
2. Patiently resist the urge to respond to hatred with hatred. Instead I will try to respond to the evil I receive with positive actions.
3. Each day let's exchange messages which encourage us to live like this and share experiences of how things are going.



Where are we at?

To reach a goal we have to train day after day. Keeping a diary can help us to reflect about the difficulties we have encountered and to keep a note of positive changes. It will help us to keep our commitment until the next meeting, when there will be time to share our experiences.

LET US MAKE A NOTE: in what situations did I manage to answer bad with good?

Did I manage not to get angry immediately, but rather to remain calm in situations which normally would make me nervous?

For the Group Leader



Evaluation after the meeting

- What was the atmosphere like? Were we happy to meet each other again, did we really listen to one another? Did everyone listen respectfully and did everyone share fully? Can we say we experienced the presence of Jesus among us?
- Did the suggested activities encourage an interest in these revolutionary words of Jesus? Were there any difficulties? What might be suggested so as to improve the presentation the next time?
- Did any particular area emerge in which it is very difficult to be meek? Do we think we have exhausted the topic or do we want to deepen something at the next meeting?