

We will be happy if... we overcome evil with good

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



Objective

Be concerned and know the situations of violence which are in the world, be it at a global level (wars, terrorism) or at a local level (bullying, crime)
Study the valid alternative solutions to violence that the city, the state, the Focolare Movement or other Movements promote.



How did it go?

Time of welcome, allot space for dialogue and sharing of what each one has lived. Recall the objectives that we had proposed during the last meeting: "how did it go"?



Introductory Activity

VIDEOCLIP AND REFLECTION

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE IT

VIDEO: "it only takes one" (2'12)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hh1ReLlnBng>

MATERIALS: Computer /projector to watch the video, paper, pens for each group

FLOW: Before watching the video, the animator could divide the young people in small groups and in each group the participants should reflect for a short time (10 min) on the following question:

- Have you ever lived an experience of violence with your friends at school? What was your reaction in this situation?

After this first moment, we go on to watch the video "it only takes one" which talks about a girl who, after being subjected to violence, with the help of a group of friends was able to forgive and take the first step towards reconciliation.

At the end of the video, in each group, the young people could share their impressions or experiences. To conclude, each group could draw on a piece of paper a table with three columns and write:

- 1) in one column, situations (at a local or global level) in which there is violence
- 2) in the second column, what contributions to peace exist already
- 3) in the third column, what little step can we take to fight at least one form of violence.

If many in the whole world take a little step, we shall contribute to spreading a mentality of peace.

As an alternative, each group can try to make a proposal and then share it with everyone.



This is how we live

Some years ago, I lived through a difficult moment which affected my life and even my self-esteem. I have always been fat, and many children laughed at me and called me many bad names and some girls would disturb me especially during the lessons of physical education.

I lived very difficult moments: I spent many hours in front of a mirror and I did not accept myself. Then suddenly I realised that I was not the only one who suffered because of torments from others. I spoke to some of my friends and we decided to setup a project to help boys and girls who suffered because of bullying, to show them that they are not alone.

We spoke to our teacher of religious studies who liked the idea and she helped us to speak to the school coordinator. We explained to them the objective of our project: to be able to speak in the classes.

During the first year, our project was a success, we were able to touch the hearts of many people with our experiences. The second year, the teacher called us again to continue the project. Our group has grown in number and in the third year, we were able to present ourselves in all the classes in the school. Now instead of focusing on bullying, we concentrate on self-esteem.

With this project, I was able to perceive the different realities which are in my school, the different ways

of thinking, and also the sufferings that each one was going through. Many teens were moved listening to us. I knew some of them, others no, but we all had lived the same difficulties.

Many of them now look for us to tell us their story, to tell us that our words had changed their hearts and this makes me very happy.

Many boys and girls who were notorious for bullying and others who thought they had bad characters, embraced and thanked me.

The human person needs to be loved and we with our project, we try to bring love. We try to see that our agemates do not feel



alone and this is already much. Often, we don't know what is happening in the lives of those we have around us, we are immersed in our own world and our own problems and we end up leaving aside one of our friends or companions who is there, beside us and needs our help. A simple act of love like a "good morning", an embrace, or to ask "how are you?" can change the day for someone.

(A. Brazil)

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This is how we live

My father was preparing to travel to another country to visit his relatives and nobody from the family could accompany him. Since we don't have so many opportunities to be together I offered to go with him. The day before we left I had a great desire to go to Mass and there I felt very strongly inside of me a voice telling me: "Give yourself completely to me". And I thought: "My God I am already all yours! Already from the beginning of this journey I gave you my Yes, otherwise I would not be here!" But Jesus knew the reason for that invitation ...

On our return journey, we had a very serious accident, a head-on

collision. Generally, accidents of this nature are fatal. But, as if by a miracle, we had only some few scratches. The whole night we went from the hospital to the police headquarters but the most difficult part came later ... when we got home, there was no one there. My mother and brothers had gone to take care of my sick grandmother, my father from morning till night was looking after the car. I hid myself in the most remote room in the house and I did not want to eat, I did not want to do anything ... I wrote messages to some friends telling them that I would be happy if they would come to visit me because I was feeling lonely, but no one replied. Then all of a

sudden, a friend called me and said: "I am very proud of you because you were ready to give your life for your father".

These words shocked me and gave me the strength to embrace Jesus Forsaken. I pulled myself up again and I tried to be the first to love. My father had more bruises so I put some ointment on his leg, I helped him to remove the shards of glass that he had in his head and I tried to rejoice because we were alive. I offered my situation for my sick grandmother, for my mother and my brothers and for the family with whom we had the accident – they were still at the hospital. Now even the other family is fine.

Papa asked for forgiveness for the accident and they were reconciled

I believe that if God has permitted that I remain still on this earth, then surely, He has a splendid plan for me.

(T. Romania)



Going in depth

IN THE WORLD BUT NOT OF THE WORLD



"Dear Chiara, during the gen 3 congress in February, in your word of greetings, you spoke to us about sanctity: 'saints together, no one excluded'. Back in Rome, I found myself in a reality completely opposite to what I had lived during the congress. I realised at home, at school, with my friends, that everyone thought in a different manner. Now I know that I don't have to worry about what others think and go ahead. But you Chiara, what would you do in my place?"



This is what I would do. We must be convinced of what Jesus said, that is, we must be in the world – so in the midst of the world, in the family or at school – but not of the world. So, we must live in this world as foreigners. The others have their own language, they speak of purely human things, of television... and we have our language; we speak of the Ideal. They have their way of life and habits: they might hate one another, fight with one another; we have our way of life, we try to love one another and to keep Jesus in the midst.

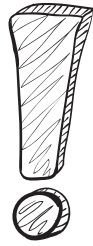
We're in the world as foreigners; we don't belong to this world. We have our own world: it's the Church, and more specifically for us, that portion of the Church which is the Work of Mary. We must stay there, even when we're outside, we must stay there spiritually, with our soul, and say: "The others reason in this way, of course, but I don't belong to that country, I'm like a foreigner. I have another

country; my country is the Church, the Work of Mary.

So, when doubts come because others look at things differently... go to the gen centre, go to the Work of Mary, go to the focolare, and it will help you to think according to your way of life. You are in the world but not of the world. You belong to another homeland, you're already in the waiting room, so to speak, of Paradise, because the Church is like the waiting room of paradise. Have you understood? Don't get lost, all right? Don't get lost, you must become a saint too, like all the others. 💡



Chiara Lubich
To the community
of the zone of Rome.
Marino 09.04.2000
Ai Gen 3, Chiara.
1996 -2002
pag. 74-75



We will try!

We can no longer remain silent in front of all the evil and injustice that is happening around us. Let us study what are the valid and alternative solutions to violence that the city, the state or other Movements already carry out and let us sustain them even if only with little acts.

Let's involve our friends, acquaintances and other people in our activities (for example Living Peace, Run4unity) which promote the common good and peace.



At what point are we?

To reach a goal, we need to train ourselves daily. Writing a diary could help us reflect on the difficulties we meet, and take note of the positive changes. It will help us in our commitment until the next meeting, when we shall have a moment to share our experiences.

We note also the steps to dialogue and the contribution which I am able to make daily to solve a situation of violence around me.

For the Group Leader



Evaluation after the meeting

- What was the atmosphere like? Did we feel joy in meeting together again, was there a generous reciprocal attention? Did we listen to one another with respect, and was there an openness in sharing? Could we say we experienced the presence of Jesus among us?
- Did the activities we proposed stir interest for these revolutionary words of Jesus? Were there difficulties? What is necessary to take into consideration to do better next time?
- Was there any particular area in which it was difficult to be meek? Do we think this topic could be considered concluded or is it necessary to deepen something again in the next meeting?
- Agree with the animators of Teens for Unity so that the spiritual formation follows (or precedes) activities of solidarity and concrete commitments, preferably carried out together with the community, Youth for a United World, or other groups and associations.