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GREEN



WorkIN progress



HAPPINESS DOESN'T COME FROM HAVING A LOT OF THINGS. HAPPINESS COMES FROM GIVING.

Try to give and you'll see how happy you will be. The Bible tells us that there is more happiness in giving than in receiving. (look up Acts 20:35)

So that's what we have to do! We have to love, because loving means giving. What should we give?

- GIVE A SMILE,**
- GIVE ADVICE,**
- GIVE A LISTENING EAR. GIVE SOME BREAD, GIVE SOME CLOTHES.**



The media continuously urges us to buy things and consume them, and all the ads we see and hear try to convince us that if we have a lot of these items and products we will be happy. **What can we do so that we don't fall into this trap?**

Love, always love, and you will start to give and your heart will be full of happiness. And when we teach others to love, their hearts will be full of happiness, too! This is really the right line to follow. Goodbye consumerism!

When we manage to put into practice our **CULTURE OF GIVING**, as we call it, you'll see how these false images disappear and the only thing that remains is what really makes us all happy.

Chiara



If God is with us, one city is not enough. Let's aim at **universal brotherhood**, at a united world. We need you, too - we need your colored pen stroke to reach the goal. Let's give as much as we can every day, so that we won't be sorry that we haven't loved enough.



Let's unite with others who have the same ideals as we do. Let's promise one another constant and mutual love. Then let's look around and take the measurements of our city. Let's choose the places where we can start coloring it with our love.



Let's share with others not only what we have, but also who we are. Each of us should cry with those who cry, and rejoice with those who are happy, without ever stopping.



People who are poor, lonely, rejected by others – what can we do for them? Let's run towards them every day! If someone is hungry, give them something to eat, or give them clothes if they don't have any, or be friends with them if they are alone. Let's go out to them, not only with material goods, but also to give them our time, a greeting, some attention, a moment to listen to them. Giving our smile is like a caress for them. **Let's not leave anyone alone.**

Let's multiply our love and widen our hearts to include everyone. Each person who passes by us, whether they are rich or poor, pretty or ugly, capable or not, of my religion or another, is a neighbor to be loved. Let's discover the treasure that each one has in their heart and let's dialogue with everyone, trying to find what unites us. Others will follow us!

It won't be simple because a commitment requires effort. If anyone makes fun of us, we will forgive them. Let's do our part and whatever we can't do, we will entrust it to God, without limiting our goals. **We will always receive a hundred times more.**

How can we work with young people of other religions so as to **bring peace and unity to the world?**,



ALL religions have the Golden Rule.

It's the same for everyone and says: **"Don't do to others what you would not want them to do to you"** (Lk 6:31) which means: love them. So we already have a way to work with them in doing something that we like a lot: loving! Let's try to live this rule and remind all the youth of other religions about it: **"DO YOU HAVE THE GOLDEN RULE, TOO? Do you try to love? We do, too! SO LET'S LOVE ONE ANOTHER WITH EVERYONE IN THE WORLD!"**

(...) I would emphasize these four points above all else. **LOVE EVERYONE WITHOUT EXCEPTION.**



And love your enemy, too, because in loving everyone, we have to **LOVE ALSO OUR ENEMY**. Then **BE THE FIRST TO LOVE**. That's logical because Jesus was the first to love us. He came on earth and saved us when we were still sinners – we certainly weren't the first to love him!

So be the first to love. And then try to **LOVE ONE ANOTHER**, because that's really our characteristic as Christians. And **BE CONCRETE IN LOVING**, do something for others. For example, if someone needs a suitcase, lend them yours; if someone needs a headphone, give them yours. Always love in concrete ways.

Have you understood that this is the way you can contribute to universal brotherhood, making everyone feel like brothers and sisters in one human family? It will be something marvelous!

Chiara

Focus on...

CANADA

Twelve of us Gen 3 from **Toronto and Montreal** met for a weekend together – it was absolutely fantastic!! We felt the unity grow among us all, so that **WE FELT COMFORTABLE SHARING** our positive experiences of living the Word of Life, but also our difficult moments in trying to love, especially at school where it's a constant challenge! We also learned about the new theme for this year, "Love for Neighbor." Here are some of the things that came **FROM OUR SOULS AND THAT WE WANTED TO TELL JESUS.**

"Thank you for guiding me and for the hope you always give me even when it is so hard. Thank you for the Gen Movement!"

"Every time I meet with the Gen, I learn to love even more – to love the person next to me and to love God. Today I learned to love my neighbor!"

"Jesus, help me to always live the present moment in my life and to think of those around me... I love you and I thank you once again for everything - you changed my life!"

"Jesus, I ask your forgiveness for anything bad I did to you in my neighbor."

Jesus, I ask you to help my family, so that my parents can get a job and find what they need. I love you, Jesus!"

Dear Jesus, help me to accept every difficult situation and not run away from it. Help me to always do what is right. Thank you for all that you have given me. I love you!"



TEENS

www.teens4unity.net

OTHER PEOPLE? A TREASURE!

Hello everyone!

How are you doing in living the Golden Rule? We are asking that because this year we would like it to shine more brightly every day of our lives. How? **By seeing every person who passes by as a treasure**, right there beside us! Our schoolmates, next door neighbors, relatives – each one is really a treasure to be discovered! For us, Young for Unity, every person we approach is a brother or a sister. However different they may be from us - in fact, **precisely because they belong to that category of "others,"** they give us the opportunity to live the Golden Rule. And with them we can construct a little portion of the united world, because the united world excludes no one!

"Brothers and sisters" also includes all those people we see on TV in countries that have conflicts and wars, or suffer from natural disasters. The Golden Rule asks us: **Is there something we can do for them?** Surely love will give us many ideas and **will color our hearts and turn them...into gold!**



Best words 4 Teens!

Share: We become champions of unity by sharing joys and sorrows with every neighbor we meet during the day.

Current: If you go **with** the current you will drown in the sea of the world. If you struggle to go **upstream against** the current, you will reach the **source of all good** and find complete happiness.

Heart: Let's allow our heart to have **only one desire**, the desire to love.

Give: Give, if you want to be happy. What can I give today?

Goal: Love. Love always, love everyone. At the end of every day we should say: "I have always loved."



Microphone to...



Hello!

Do you know where the Peruvian Andes are? They are really high mountains! Last August we had another very beautiful experience **right there at 10,000 feet above sea level**, in the city of **Bolivar** – where we also had the Run4Unity the year before. The pastor there invited three of us boys and several adults from Lima to come and spend a week as religion teachers in his school! Our

text books? **We used our experiences and the life of the Young for Unity.**

Every day from 3 to 5 in the afternoon, more than 60 teens from the parish joined us in activities for the Young for Unity. But at 7:00 p.m., almost everyone was still there! They didn't want to go home - they were so happy! For the last two days, we proposed a camp and 150

PERU

young people came.

The program was centered on the Gospel, the art of loving, and the life of Chiara Luce.

Boys and girls came from many mountain communities, scattered over a vast area, travelling hours and hours by truck and even on foot!

You could see on their faces how very happy they were! And they really want to go ahead in living the Ideal. We were overjoyed, too, because we saw once again how we can give the Gospel to others.

The Young for Unity in Lima



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Microphone to...

Loppiano Lab - Journalists for a Day



LoppianoLab

Every year in Loppiano, the little city of the Focolare Movement in Italy, we hold the **LoppianoLab** which consists of four days of workshops and roundtable discussions on economics, politics, the media and getting to know other cultures.

The 2012 session had something new for us: a laboratory for youth, entitled "Journalists for a Day." 50 youth participated. We were divided into groups, and each group had its editorial staffs that included the editor, journalists, photographers, and a graphic artist, and its own theme to develop. An adult who is a journalist and one who is a graphic artist explained to us some "trade secrets" and helped us get started. In addition to instructions on the art of communicating, **we all had the assignment to live for a day as journalists who practice the Golden Rule.** With this agenda, and armed with paper, pens, recorders and curiosity, we went out into the streets of Loppiano. We interviewed the citizens of the town and visitors, businessmen and journalists, university professors and students. We discovered that 850 people from 64 different countries live at Loppiano, but during the LoppianoLab there are more than 3000! We learned that Loppiano includes several art studios, two professional music groups, a

university, and an industrial park where business is done in a new way according to the principles of the **Economy of Communion.** Each editorial staff compiled the information they had gathered and prepared articles accompanied by photos. With the help of the graphic artist, we produced a magazine, which we entitled "NewsLab." We really liked the opportunity of being "journalists for a day!"





A Woman's True Beauty

Nowadays we don't even notice! We might be eating dinner in front of the TV, or walking down the street with our friends, or even at the supermarket with our parents and **we are bombarded with images** that portray the female body. I say "female body" and not "woman" because I want to make a point.

I wanted to check it out, so I went downtown in my city and started noticing the store fronts and magazine racks. There on display, in windows and magazine covers are **pictures of very beautiful women** – without a wrinkle in their faces, without a hair out of place, **almost without any human touch or personality**. They

all assume typical poses, they all almost look alike except for a different hair color. Then I noticed the pictures of men - a contented motorcyclist with a helmet in his hand, mud splashed on his clothes and hair messed up, and even a few wrinkles that betray his age. **So the man is allowed to show his "human" side, his unique character**, or at least one of his passions like a motorcycle. On the other hand women have to show their beauty and nothing about themselves as a person.

Then I turned on the TV, and I realized that the script is the same! Physical beauty, in perfection, **and a youthful appearance, as well as sex appeal, are required for a woman to get a**

position on TV and also to be accepted in society, with the consequence that her personal qualities are not valued.

For example, on a well-known health program on Italian TV, the anchor interviewed a young girl who had decided to undergo cosmetic surgery. What struck me was the fact that the reporter described as "totally inadequate" the part of her body that the girl wanted to change, and added, "And even so, she managed to get a boyfriend!" I could hardly believe it, but **the message is shattering:** you need a perfect body in order to have a relationship of love. But that's not all! With this comment, the anchor approved an unbalanced relationship between man and woman, where the girl must

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from the world

Trent (Italy)

In mid-October 450 teens and children from all over our region were due to meet for workshops, new programs and the awarding of prizes from "Over the Game." Every year it's very special...but we want to tell you about the suspense we experienced the week before! All of a sudden we were told we couldn't use the hall we had booked months before. We tried three different locations in three days, but then the



gym that we were finally allowed to use proved to be the best!! For three reasons: one, because some of us had worked there painting the dirty walls as part of a project, and so it wasn't just by chance that they let us come there. Two, we could share our projects with a lot of other

people due to this change, and three, it didn't rain – in fact, the sun came out which was amazing because just a few miles away it was raining heavily! So the fact

that we couldn't use the hall we thought was best for us gave us the chance to find a better one – a sign that Someone else was in charge and had our program in His heart... All we had to do was trust!



become something she is not - submitting to surgery, distorting her body - just to satisfy male desire.

Why is this image of the other, and especially that of the woman, reduced to this stereotype?

And **why is this way of viewing the female body dangerous?** Because what we see visually on TV or in print has enormous power! A well-known journalist said that television "steals, defaces and undermines our conscience; it takes away its roots and foundations. Its images enter our memory; its messages are what shape us."

This means that our minds, and consequently our behavior, are strongly conditioned by what we see.

The continuous sight of distorted images of man and woman, in fact, teaches us to behave in an improper way. If we always see the woman reduced to an object, and don't understand the implications of these images, then almost without wanting to, we start to consider the woman as an object, and consequently treat her just like the reporter on that health program did. That's why when we only talk about physical violence to women (which of course is horrible), **we are**

You can read more with the other Youth for Unity following this link: <http://www.ilcorpodelledonne.net>
Discuss it among yourselves and along with your leaders and send your opinions to redazione.teens@gmail.com

forgetting something more important and more deceptive and more hidden, yet equally dangerous.

It is an erroneous way of considering the person only as a "body" with no true identity, no unique personality with a unique mind, heart, talents, and so much else. Female qualities are thus banished from society and thus we no longer experience the richness contained in the gender differences between man and woman.

When girls and women try to compare themselves with famous models or successful women, they become overly anxious about how they are measuring up, they feel dissatisfied with themselves, and sometimes this leads to anorexia or depression or becoming dependent on drugs or other products. Therefore

PuntoLab is a civic laboratory of communication, which is regularly held at Rome and open to all. Over the course of several evenings participants will be offered some initial data through video, interviews and artistic moments for reflecting together on the messages that are transmitted on TV. It is presented by a group of people who work in this field and live for a united world.



Milan (Italy)

As we write we are completing preparations for the staging of our musical: "Rays of Light" on November 18. 100 youth tell the story of a special girl. You probably understand already: it's a musical to tell as many



people as possible about Chiara Lucre and her extraordinary life.

The experiences we had in these two years practicing for it? "...a great experience of unity which gave us the opportunity to love always, to go ahead together and to get to know the Young for Unity from this part of Italy."



"Preparing the musical wasn't easy because it's hard to get so many people to agree, but love helped us live this adventure and see it as a way of having a good time together!"



instead understands and loves every person, by looking at their inner beauty and accepting them as they are, whether they are pretty or less attractive, weak or strong, easy to like or not, man or woman...whether they are famous or not! This also helps us to highlight alternate models for people to imitate. In this way the media will present figures closer to reality, to our experiences of daily life, and will help us develop more honest relationships with everyone. We don't have to be adults to do this, but we do need to be mature. **And it's never too soon to try and change the world around us!**

it's vitally important to promote images of women that respect their human, cultural and professional dignity, and offer models that represent true feminine values.

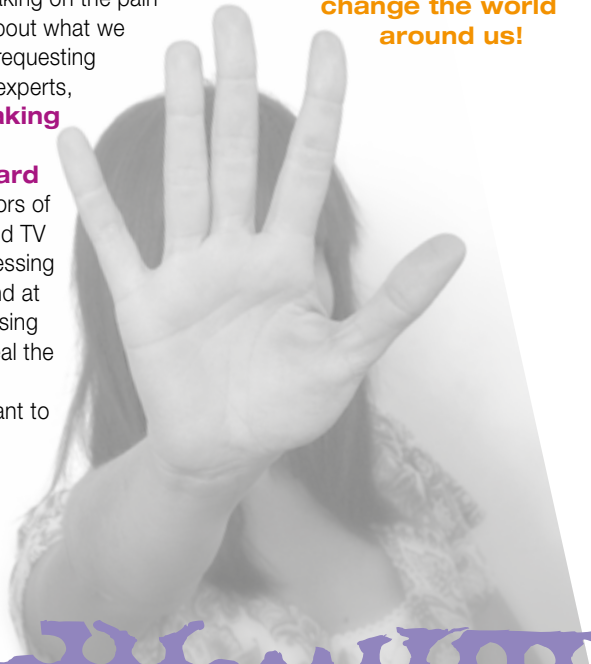
Turning off the TV doesn't help. Instead, we must learn **to watch it with a different eye, with greater awareness, together with others, taking on the pain of the damage being done to the dignity**

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of women, for which many men are in a certain



way responsible. Taking on the pain means talking about what we see, perhaps requesting advice from experts, but also **making our own voice heard** to the directors of magazines and TV channels, expressing our indignation, and at the same time proposing something new to heal the wounds. Above all, it's important to stimulate in us and around us a new lifestyle, **which excludes no one,** and



Point of view by Reka from Serbia

In regard of giving

We were preparing for the **Run4Unity** and our city was supposed to contribute a dance for the program. The steps had to be invented and naturally the rehearsals were very important as the date got closer.

One day, besides having to practice **I also had to prepare a presentation for an international exhibit of visual art.** It seemed impossible to do both things well and I was nervous about the fact that these two important appointments coincided.

Nevertheless I went to the rehearsals for the Run4Unity, and even though I'm not one of the main dancers, I was determined to do my part. Every once in a while the work I had to do for my presentation came to my mind, but I decided to put God in the first place, along with what we were trying to build together. The leaps, the laughter and the unity gave me so much energy and made me feel so good that when I later took up my paper and paint brushes, I realized that I wouldn't

Making A Difference!

Adapted from an experience Natalia from Brazil

Once again we had a **fair at my school** with a variety of activities and contests. I chose to work on collecting food and other items for the people in need. We could choose which organization would benefit from our collection, so I chose one of the projects of the Focolare Movement. I was amazed because I was able to collect one ton of items!! I only had to give up a little of my free time to go door to door and ask people for donations – and this was the result!! Amazing! Then there was a contest called **“United by our differences.”** I didn’t really want to take part since I had already done a lot, but then I thought it could be a good opportunity to help build a more united world. Some of the groups chose cultural or racial differences but I thought of the difference that each person can make in the world. My other classmates didn’t particularly like the idea, but another Gen and I persevered with it

and tried to keep listening to them but also explaining what we meant. **We used the example of Chiara Luce** and what an impact she had on many youth all over the world. That’s when my friends started to get interested and started doing some research. The boy who had been most against the idea actually asked me to help him write his paper because he said, “I was thinking about how I live my life... I really have to improve. I want to do much more to contribute towards changing the world.”

I proposed that we include in our presentation an excerpt from Pope John Paul II where he explains the characteristics of being a saint. Do you know what happened in our class? I was bombarded by 1000’s of questions but we started a beautiful dialogue among us and in the end everyone agreed that we each need to



make a difference in the world!
When we finally gave our presentation, **we got a huge applause** from the audience and the jury gave us a great grade, and our teacher told us, “What a good job you did!” My classmates thanked me for showing them how to be “different” in a good way! Some also said that it showed them that holiness isn’t something impossible to reach, but **it’s for everyone!**

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run4unity



have had all this energy if I had skipped the rehearsal. **It took God, and the time I had spent with him in our midst, to enable me to concentrate and paint better.** Some months later the international scoring of the papers was announced: mine took first place! It was one more confirmation that **when we take the first step toward God, he gives us the hundredfold** - I guess he never wants to be in debt to us!

WorkINprogress

Do you know that an **international workshop** for the Young for Unity took place last July in Loppiano? On that occasion we started working on an idea that we had for some time: to make an **identikit** – a description of ...guess who? The Young for Unity! Yes, you got it right – about us! We divided into working groups and like a huge mirror we tried to reflect the characteristics of a boy or girl who lives for unity, with the qualities necessary to reach our objective: a united world. The result of all our work? A dozen pages of ideas, proposals and reflections. Here is a summary:

A young person who is part of the Young for Unity:

- lives the Golden rule and spreads it without being embarrassed or afraid;
- lives the culture of giving and sharing, is generous and welcoming;
- is joyful;
- loves always, is the first to love, loves without any self-interest;
- knows how to forgive, is sympathetic, friendly, reliable, fair and honest, authentic, just, responsible;
- is consistent, because there is no difference between what he says and believes in, and what he does;
- he never lets himself be discouraged and never gives in; if he makes a mistake he gets up and begins again;
- knows how to offer his own ideas while respecting those of others;

• treats everyone as a brother or sister; lives for others; defends those who are weak;

• brings unity where there is none;

• looks to the future in a positive way, is optimistic;

• supports "Project Schoolmates";

• participates actively in the life of the community in which he is living, for example, through "Let's Color our City with Love";

• might get involved in politics, maybe attending courses to learn more about it, to make his or her voice heard and give a contribution as an active citizen;

• is well acquainted with the "gray" neighborhoods where love is needed, and doesn't stop at his own city because his or her "neighborhood" is the world!

Do you agree? Is there anything you would like to add or delete? As the title says this is a **workINprogress!** So we are waiting for everyone's suggestions. Talk about it in your group and write down your ideas. Send them to: redazione.teens@gmail.com

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