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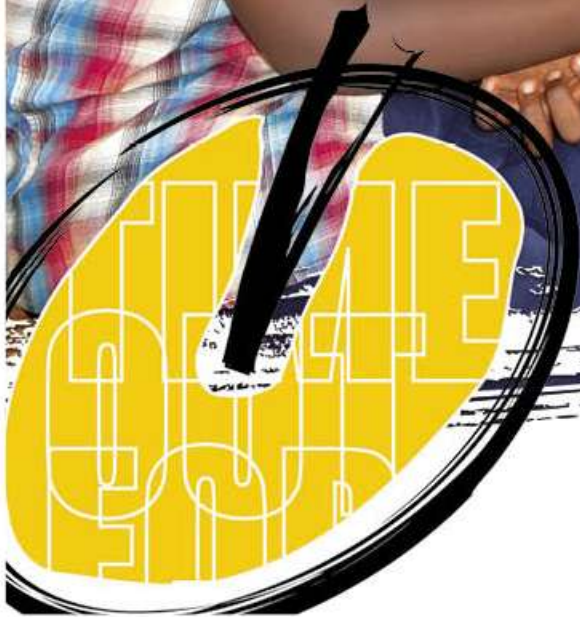
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2013

# PEACE



TIME  
OUT  
FOR  
PEACE



LETTER FROM

# Syria

One day, the rebels entered Aleppo, a neighborhood where many of us Gen 3 live. At that moment we were chatting on Facebook. Worry, anger ... each of us experienced different feelings. Overcome by fear, here are some of the lines that we wrote:

- xxx It seems that even God is against us.  
1 minute ago • Like • Share
- yyy No, He is crying with us.  
1 minute ago • Like • Share
- zzz But these guys have ruined our life.  
1 minute ago • Like • Share
- jjj Let's try to love them too.  
1 minute ago • Like • Share
- zzz But how?  
1 minute ago • Like • Share
- jjj Let's pray that they too will find Love.  
1 minute ago • Like • Share

By the end, we had all accepted the challenge to love even those who are hurting us.

**Mira, a Gen 3 from Aleppo writes:**

«Surely there is no need to say how the situation in Syria, especially in Aleppo, is difficult. We have gone

almost two weeks without electricity and water, and every day is becoming more difficult.

We have not been able to have a Gen 3 meeting for a long time, and this is very hard for us. I have not been able to stay in touch with the other Gen 3 either, because of damage to the telephone towers.

So, I'll try to share with you a little of what I have been living. To tell

you the truth, I'm not always able to live the Gen life as it should be lived; the hatred that is all around me has almost entered my own heart, but it will not defeat me. I got to the point of feeling pessimistic about life and I asked myself: how did Chiara manage to live during the time of war? But then I found my answer: if she could do it, perhaps I can manage too. This thought gave me a boost, and the desire to start over.

Sometimes I feel that we Gen are the hands of God here in Syria, so we are trying to help as much as we can. Our actions might make some change, no matter how small. I would ask each and every Gen to pray because, believe me, your prayers will give us great strength. I hope none of you will ever live moments such as these, or see what we are seeing here. I apologize for writing so little; I am trying to write quickly before the power is cut off. We ask the Lord to give us peace in our hearts.»



The idea of the Time Out prayer was born during the first Gen 3 Worldwide Supercongress. The name was suggested by a Gen 3 who played basketball.

Chiara really liked the idea, so much so that during the Gulf War she asked all the Gen 3 and everyone in the Movement to pray the Time Out. During the last Gen 2 Congress in Castelgandolfo, Emmaus relaunched it to everyone in the movement. She said: "only God can meet the longing for peace that is found in humankind. It would take a truly strong and powerful prayer, with a renewed faith that God can do it, and if we ask Him in unity, He will come to meet us in our need."

Our daily appointment time is at 12:00 noon. In unity we ask for the gift of peace. On Facebook, you can find the "Time Out for Peace" listed as an Event. Spread it among your friends!



RE-LAUNCHING THE "TIME OUT"

# OUR GREATEST TREASURE



« [...] **People in need, the poor, became the main object of our attention in this new life.**

How did we help them? We found this in the Gospel, too: "Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap (Lk 6:38)."

I remember during the war that in the corridor of my house there were sacks of flour and potatoes. There was wood, there was powdered milk and all kinds of things. They were constantly distributed and more would always come back. It was full, then, empty, full, then empty....

The first focolarine got ready, everyday, always, to go out to the poorest neighborhoods in the city with suitcases filled with all kinds of things.

**Very beautiful episodes come to mind showing how the Father always gave us exactly what we asked for Jesus in the poor: a pair of shoes size 12, a jacket....**

I remember the poor sitting around the table with us in the first focolare: a focolarina and a poor person, a focolarina and a poor person; and we always used the best tablecloth for them, the best silverware, and offered the best food!

Whenever we came across a poor person in the streets of our city we took down their addresses in a little notebook so that we could help them. Our greatest treasure was the poor. **It was Jesus: "You did it to me..."**

Thanks to this love for the poor, always enlightening, the Spirit made us understand the need to love not only them, but everyone else

too: **"Love your neighbor as yourself", whoever he or she may be.**

At this point we had a wonderful idea which led to the decision to transform our daily living, in contact with all kinds of people, into a wide spectrum of material and spiritual works of mercy because here again we could apply the words: "You did it to me".

In each brother or sister who passed by us, we saw Christ who was asking for help, for comfort, advice, correction, instruction, light, bread, shelter, clothes, prayers....

We lived in each present moment the work of mercy that God was asking of us. »

*Chiara*





## To Forgive

This year I made the resolution to concretely love each person who enters my classroom. I began by actually paying attention to the needs of everyone, studying well, and not being selective in the relationships with my classmates.

It was not always easy especially because my mother is the principal of the school.

When I got good grades people would spend all day commenting about it and insinuating that I didn't really deserve it. Once after a class project, one of my classmates posted some bad comments about me online. Many wondered what my response would be; perhaps they expected a big argument! But instead, my answer was, "I forgive you for what you have written and would like to build a good relationship with you. If I can help you with anything, let me know."

After my reply to the posting, everyone at school was curious to know how the story would end. For my part, from that day on, I tried to love even more. By the end of the school year two things happened: the students organized a surprise party for my birthday. I felt all their love in return, since even groups that had always been rivals came together for this party. The second thing was that, during a class project to elect a student who more than all the others brings good values into our class, all my classmates, voting by secret ballot, chose me.

**Natalia from Brazil**



## Giving Food

During a meeting we asked ourselves how we could help the poorest of the poor. An idea flashed in our minds and in our hearts when we realized that we know how to cook and bake cakes and that we willingly work together! We started a little business and we called it: "Season it with some love."

After we agreed on the menu, we launched our idea. We sent out an e-mail invitation to all of our communities across

Hungary to order our products. We received a total of 25 orders from families, volunteers and Focolare. We started working and the five hours we spent in the kitchen literally flew by!

What were our specialties?

75 Italian pizzas, 80 pieces of coconut treats, 78 poppy seed muffins, and 280 cookies (from a recipe of the mother of a Gen 3)! Each "product" was packed, decorated with a greeting card, and delivered to our customers. Subtracting the expenses from our grand total we had earned an amount equal to about 15% of an average monthly wage. We can only hope that this good start will give wings to our business! And while we are already planning the second round, we feel such joy because we have found a way to help those most in need.

**The gen 3 from Hungary**



Send your experiences to: [redazione.gen3@focolare.org](mailto:redazione.gen3@focolare.org)

# of GIVING



## The Gen3 from France write:

We would like to share with you a video on the "culture of giving," which is the fruit of our lives in recent months. It was made with the help of Mario Ponta, a producer from Paris.

You can watch it in French (<https://vimeo.com/57916050>), with English subtitles (<https://vimeo.com/57916051>) or Italian (<https://vimeo.com/57916049>). The password is: 4teens.

It was a very enriching experience for us Gen 3 in France. We came from all over the country and were meeting together for the first time for our convention. It was great to share the efforts we make every day to put the art of loving into practice, always being ready to start over again.



With the making of this video, we grew in understanding better this aspect of our Gen life, the "Red." And in the video we tried to express what a great gift it is to give and receive love from our neighbors.



## Communion of GOODS

GEN3 |

FROM THE GEN3 FORMULA

“ God gave us the riches of this earth so that they might be put at the service of all. Like the plants that take from the earth only what they need to live, the Gen 3 want to keep for themselves only what is necessary. That is why the Gen 3 want to share all their material possessions, their spiritual gifts and their talents. They don't want anything to take the place of God in their hearts. ”

### COMMUNION OF SPIRITUAL GOODS

#### Sharing Experiences

“ It is very important to live the Word of Life, but this is not enough - we are also called to share our experiences. ”

### COMMUNION OF MATERIAL GOODS - THE BUNDLE -

#### A worldwide Communion of Goods

“ We are fascinated by the wonderful life of the first Christians in Jerusalem who were of one heart and one soul. And no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common and there was no needy person among them. ”

### THE GOSPEL PROMISES THE HUNDREDFOLD

“ Our giving opens the hands of God and he will fill us abundantly. The person who gives, and lives in love, will receive the hundredfold in this life. In this way we can meet the enormous needs of many. ”



# Culture of GIVING

## GEN3 | YOUNG FOR UNITY

### FROM THE GEN3 FORMULA

“ Together with the “Young for Unity,” the Gen 3 follow many different ways which they call “pathways” to reach this goal, and they promote various activities and initiatives both on a national and international level. ”

### RED PATH

#### We open pathways to a United World

“ We live and spread the culture of giving as the remedy for consumerism. Through the communion of goods we are able to build a network of love that unites young people from different countries of the world. We work to raise funds to help meet the needs of other youth. ”

### OUR GIVING PROJECTS

#### Solidarity Micro-projects

“ We support micro-projects of solidarity called **Giving Projects** by which we award scholarships to young people who, due to difficult economic and social situations, can't afford to go to school. ”

### GLOBAL EMERGENCY

#### A World Vision

“ Another thing that we do is to keep an eye out, every day, to learn about natural disasters, such as fires, earthquakes, floods or even wars that might occur in another part of the world. We use all the means available to us to raise funds to help the young people affected by such disasters. We believe that this contribution can help alleviate their tremendous sufferings. ”



GEN3 LIVE



**HI!** I'm Megan and I live in Naperville, Illinois, USA. I met the Gen 3 when I was nine and one of my friends invited me to a Gen meeting. Since then, **THE GEN 3 HAS MEANT A LOT TO ME** because I have amazing, loving friends; even when they get crazy!

I come to monthly meetings and most importantly, the Gen 3 conventions and festivals. How I get there is slightly different from my friends. Here's why . . . When I got invited to my first Gen Convention when I was nine, my mom told me about it. I got really excited, but then I found out the cost was \$75. My mom told me to think about it because it was a lot of money. During school, I got an idea. **IF I WANTED TO GO to this convention so badly, I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO PAY FOR THIS MYSELF.** I started earning money by doing chores. I would fold clothes, do the dishes, mop the floors, clean the bathrooms, and babysit my siblings. When I earned the \$75, **I WAS REALLY, REALLY HAPPY!** (For a nine-year-old, it was a very big accomplishment.)

That was four years ago, and I still earn money to go to the conventions. **IT'S WORTH EVERY PENNY!**

This year's convention was awesome. I made new friends and every year, it gets better and better!!



# TEENS

www.teens4unity.net

## To Give ... as a way to happiness!

### Hello Everybody!

How is it going with our commitment to build a united world? In this issue we explore one of the building blocks of our project: the **"culture of giving."**

This is the opposite of the "the culture of having" where the goal is to have, to possess and to accumulate.

Instead, by trying to "give," we realize that there's a **change in our mentality**. A new lifestyle emerges around us where what's important is being **generous, giving freely of ourselves** and **being one with others**. Those who have already tried to live like this can assure us that giving brings happiness.

The law of "giving" encourages us to share with others what we have and who we are.

We can start in our own personal life, and then extend our sensitivity to include people who are in need all over the world. That's the invitation of our project Schoolmates ([www.school-mates.org](http://www.school-mates.org)). We want to create a network between schools and youth groups, and support the "giving projects" which sustain youth who would not be able to attend school without this aid.



## Best questions 4 Teens!

### What can I give?

We have inexhaustible treasures to share: our smile, our effort to understand and listen to others, our ideas, our availability to help, our material possessions, our time, our talents.

### To whom can I give?

Look around: there might be someone sick in the hospital, or someone who's alone, a friend whom you haven't seen for a while, a young person who is sad, a family in need.

### Where to start?

Let's look in our own bedrooms! We might find a lot of things we don't need any more. Let's invite our friends to do the same. Then we can find out what people around us might need, in our neighborhoods or at school. Let's give them what we collected. We could also organize garage sales, flea markets or raffles, and all the funds raised we can send to a charity project.



# Giving Projects



## "CAFÉ y LECHE"

- ◆ **Country:** Dominican Republic
- ◆ **Location:** "El Café," a poor neighborhood on the outskirts of Santo Domingo, which is the capital of the country..
- ◆ **The Project:** Schoolmates contributed to the construction of the school. It includes a sports field and cafeteria and 600 children are currently enrolled. The 19 scholarships provided by Schoolmates are used to cover food and educational materials.
- ◆ **Beginnings:** Several years ago, a student majoring in education started tutoring some children who couldn't afford to attend school. The group soon increased and the children and residents of that neighborhood started to save money to build a school. Little by little, thanks also to local and international aid, they had a real school. Even the President of the Dominican Republic wanted to give his own personal contribution and the Ministry of Education now gives regular grants.

«The culture of giving that we live in school,» says a student, «always gives us so much joy and I am so very grateful!».



## "PETITE FLAMME"

- ◆ **Country:** Congo
- ◆ **Location:** Kinshasa
- ◆ **The Project:** Thanks to scholarships we can support or complement the payment of school fees for 27 children so they can they finish their elementary or secondary education and be ready to take the state exams.
- ◆ **Beginnings:** In the Congo about half of the children and teens cannot go to school because they don't have the money to pay the school fees charged by even the public schools. The beneficiaries of our projects are students of the school "Petite Flamme" in Kinshasa whose parents cannot afford to send them to school.

«Thank you for helping me go to school! My father died and my mother doesn't have the money to send me to school. You have taken the responsibility to help me. I couldn't accept myself before - you have dried up my tears. now that I have a diploma, I've started smiling again!».





## “LA UNION” & “VISMIN”

- ◆ **Country:** Philippines.
- ◆ **Location:** Manila and Cebu.
- ◆ **The Project:** 25 students are receiving help in Manila, and 19 scholarships have been given to children in Cebu.
- ◆ **Beginnings:** In Manila the project was developed to support the children of families with very low income so that they could pay the school fees and purchase school supplies, food and clothing. In Cebu, the project provides scholarships to children who were forced to work because of the tragic economic situation in their country. It was impossible for them to go to school, and being on the streets meant the constant risk of getting caught up in illegal activities and crime. With the support of our project, some are able to work during the day and attend evening classes.



## “NUEVA VIDA” & “TACUAREMBÒ”

- ◆ **Country:** Uruguay
- ◆ **Location:** Montevideo and Tacuarembò
- ◆ **Beginnings:** "Nueva vida" developed in one of the poor neighborhoods of Montevideo. We started the "Centro Juvenil," (Center for Youth), which offers after-school programs, vocational training and a cafeteria where children and young people can eat for free. **Tacuarembò** is a town in the central part of the country where we were able to equip a library with textbooks and reference books. Besides our material donations, we also shared with the local students our lifestyle: the culture of giving. The students are very careful about how they treat each book since they know that other students will have to use the same books.
- ◆ **The Project:** In Montevideo scholarships are used to support the "Centro Juvenil" and to provide for the students' school supplies and clothing expenses. **Tacuarembò** funds are used to buy more books for the library and provide Internet connection. They were also used to build a playground and soccer field. The beneficiaries are 312 students.

«The fact that other young people and children have saved money and share it with us motivates us to study well. We really try to do our best!»

# Like the plants

## Strategies for overcoming consumerism

We must live and spread the **culture of giving**. The advice I give to you is this: at the beginning of the year, each one of you, should **make a small bundle of all the surplus things that you have**. You might have just a few, but you do have something: a book, a toy, a pencil, a backpack that you don't use anymore, clothes ... something, something that is extra, that is too much. Gather these things together and bring them to your centers, to the centers of

Then, my advice, since we must always begin ourselves to live what we teach others, I would advice you to repeat this operation at least two times during the year: put aside your surplus, bring what you have to your centers and then have some kind of activity so that you can give something to the poor.

**You should keep for yourselves only what you need, as the plants do. They absorb from the earth only the water, salts and other things that they need, and not more.** Likewise, each one of us must have what he or she needs. All the rest should be given away and put in common with the others.

Of course, you will experience that in giving, you will receive all kinds of things. Do you know why you will receive? Because the Gospel says: "Give - this is the culture of giving - and you will be given"; and it says: "... a full measure (as if we had an apron full of wheat) a full measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap..." (Lk 6:38). In other words, you will receive many things from here and there, from Mr. so and so, from that boy, from your teacher, from your mother - you will be given many things in return.

And naturally, here again, the more you receive, the more you must give.



**This is our line of action for overcoming consumerism, at least within ourselves.**

But then, something else you can do to overcome consumerism, as Gen 3, as the Young for Unity, is to **spread this culture of giving**. Then talk about it, as you have already done. Tell your experiences, for example, that you have given one thing and then received another.... Talk about them or write about them; make drawings or use videos, small videos, or television news programs which you already have for youngsters. In doing so, you will create this mentality in everyone, the mentality of the culture of giving."

Al gen 3 Chiara, 1981 - 1995 Rome 2006, pp. 66-68.



the Young for Unity. Then you who are very industrious and who have many initiatives, organize markets, raffles or other things, and try to accomplish something with all these bundles that arrive, to have a little bit of money that you can give to the boys and girls who are in need.



## NEWS

from around the world

### Hongkong

Throughout the year we reflected on the theme "Love in the social context." We understood that a society on its way to a United World

must be built upon love. We shouldn't put our own needs before the needs of others; rather we have to be aware of their needs and be ready to share what we have.

Hong Kong is a modern and affluent society, but the gap between rich and poor is very large. It is very hard for the poor to live a decent life. To better understand this un-

just social reality, we created the "Teens Kitchen," divided into three groups of about 7 teens each. We made a small budget, with the amount we had in order to buy supplies for a meal. After choosing a menu, we went to the market.



# How should we give?

## Freely, joyfully and without measure



We can say that there are two ways of approaching life: one way is to be very individualistic, meaning that we only worry about our own comfort or what interests us. This leads to a culture that we can call "the culture of having." The desire to have things dominates the lifestyle of many people, of many boys and girls. Their choices are directed by consumerism, which is the uncontrolled desire to possess things. What is the consequence of this kind of lifestyle? Even if they are not aware of it, they become aggressive and violent, ready to start a fight and create tension in society, because each one thinks only of themselves. Wars are started precisely because people are selfish and only think of their own needs. However, we can be promoters of a culture that is an alternative to the culture of having. It is the culture of the "new person," the new youth, who are no longer individualistic, but altruistic; no longer possessors, but givers. This is the **"culture of giving."** To be able to live this way, to make this our way of life, we have to ask ourselves: **"How should I give?"**

**"Giving" is not simply an action; it is an art. It has its own style so we have to learn its characteristics, because it is not enough just to give -- we need to give well.**



The **first** characteristic is to give freely, with no strings attached. **Giving is an act devoid of self-interest**, because if a person gives in order to receive, or out of vanity, or to be nice, or so that others see him giv-

ing, it is not authentic giving. **Another quality is joy** - we need to give with joy. In the Gospel, Jesus says, "There is more joy in giving than in receiving." Mother Theresa of Calcutta, who received the Nobel prize for peace, said, "The one who gives with joy, gives in a very good way. **The one who gives with joy gives more.** God loves those who give with joy. There is a profound joy in giving, because what we receive back is much more than what we give." So the fullness of joy is another quality of giving. Finally, a **third quality is giving abundantly, without measure, without calculating.**

We can ask ourselves another question: What should we give? Above all, we should give the most important thing, which is our spiritual goods. The first gift that we should give to others is the gift of ourselves, our

love and our friendship, and the gift of peace, welcoming others and listening to them.

If we live **the culture of giving**, it creates in us a new way of thinking and seeing things and, through our actions, it also enables us to overcome the culture of having. **It helps us fight the desire to possess and the thirst for power. Above all it enables us to build a society where the communion of goods and sharing among all is alive, leading to the unity of hearts. We can build a new world where young people as well as adults have a leading role, because they are builders, not just observers. We can say that with the culture of giving, a new world is possible.**



The strongest experience was precisely to make the best use of the 4 dollars we had to buy dinner for 7 of us! It made us realize immediately the desperate and painful

reality of those who live like this every day. In fact, you can't buy a lot of food with 4 dollars! We certainly felt closer to the poor! We questioned our lifestyle and it made us think about whether we are really sensitive to the needs of others. Sharing our experiences in

our groups, we discussed the situation of our city and tried to figure out how to help the poorest people and also how to achieve a more united society.

## "COLLEGIO S. MARIA" & CARAIBI

- ◆ **Country:** Mexico
- ◆ **Location:** Santa Maria Actipan and other locations along the Caribbean coast.
- ◆ **The Project:** To provide scholarships for 13 students from various towns and for 18 students from Santa Maria Actipan. With the help of many people, we were able to build a school in Santa Maria Actipan for 570 students. In 2002 the school received an award from the Mexican Department of Labor.
- ◆ **Beginnings:** The project was started to help the people of Santa Maria Actipan, a town of 10,000 inhabitants, with a very high rate of illiteracy. We also wanted to help some young people from other cities who were at a great disadvantage because of poverty. In those places the scholarships are used for food, hygiene products, clothing and school supplies.

*I understand now that being able to learn gives me dignity as a human being and gives dignity to my neighborhood. Only with commitment, desire and study, can we young people bring a new culture to our homes and our community.*



## "RAINBOW SCHOOL"

- ◆ **Country:** Uganda
- ◆ **Location:** Kampala
- ◆ **Beginnings:** I understand now that being able to learn gives me dignity as a human being and gives dignity to my neighborhood. Only with commitment, desire and study, can we young people bring a new culture to our homes and our community.
- ◆ **The project:** Today the school awards 15 scholarships to students who have finished elementary school but don't have the money to go to high school. Contributions are also used to cover their medical expenses. The school provides two meals a day for the students.



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