



### PREPARE FOR THE MEETING

#### Accepting others and understanding their culture in a global society

- **The social and political importance of immigration has grown steadily** over the past two decades, during which time we have seen a continuous increase in migratory flow around the world. At the same time we are seeing more and more incidents of discrimination, racism and rejection of those who are different, causing great tension within communities.
- There is a need **to raise awareness of the reasons why people choose, or are forced, to leave their country**. This can help promote respect for diversity and encourage social cohesion.
- In particular, we need **to raise awareness among young people, who are the decision-makers of the future**, because through the “culture of encounter” they are able to generate, even now, brotherhood among peoples, to accomplish the prayer of Jesus, “That all may be one” (Jn 17:21).
- If **the ideas, proposals and actions** are **shared with the community and with other associations**, we can have a greater impact on the environment and give teens the certainty that it is possible, even in emergency situations, to provide a concrete service of welcome.

#### What lines of action are suited to teens?

- In many countries, **schools have become places where many cultures intersect**, especially in big cities. This should be the first field of action for teens: they can promote a culture of welcoming foreign students, helping their friends to see that people who come from other cities or countries are a gift and an enrichment.
- Then we should encourage teens to **learn more about the situation of their foreign classmates**: Which students come from another country? Or from another city or part of the country? Help them to develop empathy towards others and feel the hardships and difficulties of integration are their own.
- Be promoters of even small projects in our cities. **We can act together with the local community**. Small projects carried out by adults, teenagers and children allow for greater continuity.

#### Some useful texts to explore the topic:

Pope Francis, The Angelus in St. Peter’s Square, September 6, 2015, **Appeal for the reception of refugees** ([pages 3 - 4](#))

- **Excerpts from “Handbook: some guidelines for action in favor of peace and for aid to refugees”** – organized by New Humanity and Youth for a United World ([pages 5 - 6](#))

### BEFORE THE MEETING

Who can we involve from our local community? How?

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## THE WORKS OF MERCY – Worksheet for Animators

**COME TO MY HOUSE! “I was a stranger and you welcomed me”**

### POSSIBLE POINTS TO REACH TOGETHER (SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES)

Develop sensitivity and empathy towards those who are foreigners in my country, in my school, etc.

Discover the values of cultures other than our own. Know that others can be welcomed as a gift that enriches and generates brotherhood among peoples.

Get concrete and sponsor projects to aid refugees in our own city

### MATERIAL SUITABLE FOR TEENS:

From **Hearts in Action Live** (pages 7-14) – teen experiences of "I was a stranger and you welcomed me"

Experience of Chiara Luce Badano on welcoming one who is a stranger and all alone (page 15)

Chiara Lubich: **A rainbow of peace in the world**, Roma, May 26, 2002, Supercongress of Teens for Unity, Excerpts from her talk at the Coliseum (page 16)

Experience of Maria Laura, **Open your hearts and your home** (page 17)

#### Proposals for activities to help develop the meeting:

- **An unexpected friend:** a Chilean UNICEF video. A child, Marciano, is a new student at school. The reaction of his classmates provides a fundamental lesson of life and acceptance. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSlrYDqFvfQ>
- **Count on Me!**: activities with various steps to develop sensitivity and empathy with those who are refugees in my country (pages 18-19)
- **Have you seen the new girl?:** Role play that helps to live the golden rule at school in an intercultural context (page 20)
- **Myriam of Qaraqoush:** interview of a child refugee in a refugee camp in Iraq. On Youtube with subtitles in English and Spanish. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZ-yT1w5Cto>

### EVALUATION

- Has this meeting strengthened team spirit and promoted sharing among all? Has there been a growth in confidence and mutual love? Did we experience the presence of Jesus among us?
- Does it seem that the problem of so many refugees has become our own? Are we aware that Jesus considers done to him any help we give to his brothers or sisters?
- Have we put these words into practice in daily life and possibly with a specific action?
- Have we involved the community?



## THE WORKS OF MERCY – Worksheet for Animators

**COME TO MY HOUSE! “I was a stranger and you welcomed me”**

POPE FRANCIS

### ***ANGELUS***

*Saint Peter's Square*

*Sunday, 6 September 2015*

*Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!*

The Gospel today (Mk 7:31-37) recounts Jesus' healing of a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment, an incredible event that shows how Jesus reestablishes the full communication of man with God and with other people. The miracle is set in the region of the Decapolis, that is, in a completely pagan territory; thus, this deaf man who is brought before Jesus becomes the symbol of an unbeliever who completes a journey to faith. In effect, his deafness expresses the inability to hear and to understand, not just the words of man, but also the Word of God. And St Paul reminds us that “faith comes from what is heard” (Rom 10:17).

(...)

But this Gospel speaks to us also about ourselves: Often we are drawn up and closed in on ourselves, and we create many inaccessible and inhospitable islands. Even the most basic human relationships can sometimes create realities incapable of reciprocal openness: the couple closed in, the family closed in, the group closed in, the parish closed in, the country closed in... And this is not from God! This is from us. This is our sin.

However, at the beginning of our Christian life, at baptism, it is precisely this gesture and word of Jesus that are present: “*Ephphatha!*” “Be opened!”. And behold the miracle has been worked. We are healed of the deafness of selfishness and the impediment of being closed in on ourselves, and of sin, and we have been inserted into the great family of the Church. We can hear God who speaks to us and communicates his Word to those who have never before heard it, or to the one who has forgotten it and buried it in the thorns of the anxieties and the traps of the world.

Let us ask the Virgin Mary, a woman of listening and of joyful testimony, that she sustain us in the commitment to profess our faith and to communicate the wonders of the Lord to those we find along our way.

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## THE WORKS OF MERCY – Worksheet for Animators

**COME TO MY HOUSE! “I was a stranger and you welcomed me”**

### **APPEAL**

Dear brothers and sisters,

God's mercy is seen through our works, as demonstrated to us by the life of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, whose anniversary of death we commemorated yesterday.

Faced with the tragedy of tens of thousands of refugees who flee death from war and hunger, and who have begun a journey moved by hope for survival, the Gospel calls us to be “neighbours” of the smallest and the abandoned, and to give them concrete hope. It's not enough to say, “Take heart. Be patient”.... Christian hope has a fighting spirit, with the tenacity of one who goes toward a sure goal.

Therefore, as the Jubilee of Mercy approaches, I make an appeal to parishes, religious communities, monasteries and shrines throughout Europe, that they express the Gospel in a concrete way and host a refugee family. A concrete gesture in preparation for the Holy Year of Mercy. May every parish, every religious community, every monastery, every shrine of Europe welcome one family, beginning with my Diocese of Rome.

I address my brother bishops of Europe, true pastors, that in their dioceses they endorse my appeal, remembering that Mercy is the second name of Love: “*What you have done for the least of my brothers, that you have done for me*” (cf. Mt 25:46).

In the coming days, the two parishes of the Vatican will also welcome two families of refugees.

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/angelus/2015/documents/papa-francesco\\_angelus\\_20150906.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/angelus/2015/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20150906.html)

*Translations in more languages on this website*



#### Excerpts from the Handbook "Unlocking Dialogue "

##### Some pointers for actions in favor of peace and providing aid to refugees

In September 2015, the secretariats of the New Humanity and Youth for a United World posted a handbook that has useful information about all the programs that the Focolare Movement sponsors for refugees and displaced persons in the local communities. Here below you will find just a portion of the information and an excerpt from their letter.

*"We would like to thank each of you for the news you sent us about the programs being carried out all over the world in response to the call of the Pope and of Emmaus to promote peace and provide aid to refugees. Once again, we see all the life there is in the local communities, and their enthusiasm to help with these situations, which are real emergencies.*

*We received experiences of the projects in Greece where they are welcoming Syrian families, in Macedonia, Austria and Hungary where they are helping refugees passing through their countries, in Serbia where they are working to provide necessities in the refugee camps and from the many projects all over Italy.*

*The important thing is to meet and share with our local community all the possible ideas, proposals, projects and requests. Then join with other associations in our region that are already operating to meet these needs. In this way, we can provide concrete service by welcoming people, getting to know them, supporting them with what they need, always respecting the local culture and following the laws of the region or country where we live.*

*We suggest that the best way to give concrete and useful responses to the great needs is to "network" with individuals, institutions and associations that are already working in the same area and on the same emergencies.*

*Therefore, we invite you to send us your experiences, ideas, suggestions, news and information, which will be of use to everyone.*

*We hope to send out soon a "handbook" with your contributions and also some practical notes that can be of common benefit.*

#### PRACTICAL DIRECTIVES

- Consult the government leaders in your region, the Catholic Charities or Caritas of your diocese, associations that are accredited and also the bishop of your city, and offer them whatever resources you have available or suggestions for local activities (like after-school programs, preparing meals, etc.) We highly discourage branching out on your own, even as a group. It is advisable to work together with authorized organizations.
- On the website of the New Humanity you will find some experiences and documents with important information about working with refugees ([www.umanitanuova.org](http://www.umanitanuova.org)).
- On the New Humanity page on Facebook and Twitter you will find updates on projects being sponsored to give aid to refugees (*New Humanity International Centre* - @UmanitaNuova).
- A number of initiatives for peace are published on the Facebook and Twitter pages of Youth for a United World (*Dialogue to unlock* - #DialogueToUnlock).



## FACTS ABOUT THE SITUATION:

- 60 million people are currently fleeing their homelands because of the dangers of war.
- More than one million refugees and migrants crossed the borders into the European Union during 2015, causing a crisis as countries struggle to cope with the influx. In fact it is the most serious refugee crisis since World War II.
- According to the European agency Frontex, the Greek islands are under more pressure than the other countries with about 500,000 people entering that country last year, which is double of the year before. Throughout Europe, a total of 1,294,000 refugees asking for asylum during 2015. See this interesting link for numbers and maps.
- 3,600 people drowned in the Mediterranean during 2014 and 3,700 during 2015.
- At present the most serious humanitarian crisis is in Syria where more than 11 million people have either left the country or are internally displaced (forced to leave their homes and move to another part of Syria). To make them visible the European Commission and Oxfam produced the documentary *District Zero*, <http://www.districtzero.org/>. One story concerns the refugees trapped in the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, the second largest in the world after that of Dadaab in Kenya.
- Since the outbreak of the war, many Syrians have chosen to take refuge in Latin America. Brazil, in particular, has taken in several thousand (2077 as of Sept 2015); Argentina, where there is a large Syrian community, has given shelter to several hundred people. Uruguay has done the same. In recent days, only Brazil and Venezuela have declared their willingness to accommodate new Syrian refugees. The United States granted asylum to 1869 Syrians during 2015 (the majority of whom were not currently refugees, but had applied at least two years previously), but a law passed in September 2015 is now limiting greatly the number of people from Syria who will be allowed to enter the USA. Canada has taken in 25,000 Syrians during 2015.

See these links for information on South and Central America:

<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e45be46.html>

Canada: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/mccallum-immigration-committee-tuesday-1.3455579>

Hearts

in

Action

live





# JORDAN

There was much disorder in the city, many streets were closed and there were demonstrations...



*I was a stranger...*



**It seemed impossible to  
organize the meeting so  
much awaited by a group  
of refugee children from  
nearby countries.**





**But we succeeded  
in involving many  
of our schoolmates.**





**An afternoon party with  
games, but not only that,**



**we shared  
our life of  
living the  
Gospel and  
telling what  
happened  
when we put  
it into  
practice.**





**Days later one companion brought us some gifts for those children. She bought them by giving up the money she had previously used only for herself.**

*...and you welcomed me*







## FROM THE LIFE OF CHIARA LUCE BADANO

Chiara Luce, a girl who died of bone cancer at the age of 18 and was beatified on September 25, 2010, made love of neighbor the center of her life. Even as a young child she was very attentive to others and tried to love them. One day her mother invited one of her classmates to dinner and asked her to bring her grandmother, too. This girl was very poor and her mother had died. Chiara Luce asked her mom to use their best and most beautiful tablecloth, "because," she said, "Jesus is coming to have for dinner with us today!" Her family often invited people over, and sometimes even had recent immigrants or homeless people as their guests.

One day Chiara Luce saw a homeless man looking for food in the garbage cans. She immediately thought of inviting him to her house for lunch. She ran home to ask her parents for permission and when they said yes, she ran back to look for him but she couldn't find him anywhere. Chiara was very sad about that, but there were other times when people she met on the street did come to their house for a warm welcome and a hot meal.

One day, while stopped at a traffic light, her parents noticed a young man who looked like a foreigner and seemed a bit lost. They made gestures to him so that he would understand they were inviting him over for dinner. When Chiara Luce got home from school, they all sat down at the table. She was very happy about the unexpected guest and immediately began to chat with him. She found out that it was his birthday. She asked him if he wanted to take a shower and then improvised a little party in his honor. Can you imagine the joy and excitement of that young man!?!



## CHIARA LUBICH: A RAINBOW OF PEACE ON THE WORLD

*Rome, May 26, 2002, Teens for Unity Supercongress*

Excerpt of the talk at the Coliseum

Dearest boys and girls,

... from 92 nations of the world, representing many cultures and many faiths: Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Zoroastrians, traditional African religions and Christians of 14 Churches. You are here beside the Coliseum, where many Christians of the early centuries paid for their faith in Jesus with martyrdom. You are here to celebrate and to speak out in favor of a very great ideal: peace.

But is peace of such great interest today? Yes it is, of course, and perhaps more than ever before. And not only because of the dozens of wars that have broken out here and there on our planet, but also because today peace is threatened in a different, more insidious way. ... **Peace problem is alive especially during these days in which new similar threats of terrorism seem to loom on the horizon.** In view of this situation... we need to engage the forces of good with a capital G. And you all know what this Good is: it is God and all that is rooted in him: the world of the spirit, of great values, of authentic love, of prayer. ...

Peace is so precious that all of us, adults and young people, leaders and ordinary citizens, must be actively involved in safeguarding it. You boys and girls as well.

Naturally, in order to know how we should act, we need to be familiar with the deepest causes of this dramatic situation today. **You know as well as we do that justice does not prevail in the world, that there are rich countries and poor countries, whereas God's plan for humanity would be for everyone to be brothers and sisters,** in one big family with one Father. This imbalance is one of the factors, perhaps the most decisive, that generates resentment, revenge, terrorism. Well then, how can we create greater equality, **how can we bring about a kind of communion of goods?** It's obvious that we can't move goods unless we move hearts. Therefore, we need to spread love, that reciprocal love which generates brotherhood. We need to invade the world with love! And we need to begin with ourselves. Also with you, boys and girls.

But, someone here might ask me: "Is love, loving one another, compatible with the lifestyle that our cultures have handed down to us? Yes, it is: look in your sacred Books and you will find – in almost all of them – the so-called "Golden Rule". Christians know it in this form: **"Do to others as you would have them do to you"** (Lk 6:31). ... Islam: "None of you is a true believer if you do not desire for your brother what you desire for yourself" (Hadith 13, Al Bukhari). ... All these phrases mean: respect and love your neighbor.

And **if you, a Muslim boy or girl, love, and you, a Christian, love, and you, a Jew, love, and you, a Hindu, love, you will certainly reach the point of loving one another. And the same among all. This would already be a portion of universal brotherhood.**

Then we need to love other neighbors, and you, in particular, should love the boys and girls you meet in life: because if it is true that "birds of a feather flock together", boys and girls are more easily convinced and persuaded to embrace great ideals by other boys and girls.

**Loving then is one of the great secrets of this moment.** But it is a special kind of love. It is certainly not a love which is directed only towards our relatives and friends. Rather, this love is directed towards everyone, pleasant or unpleasant, rich or poor, children or adults, fellow countrymen or foreigners, friends or enemies... Towards everyone.

We should be the first to love, by taking the initiative, without waiting to be loved. We should love not only with words, but concretely, with facts; and we should love one another.

My dear boys and girls, if you do this, if we all do this, universal brotherhood will spread, solidarity will blossom, goods will be distributed more justly, and the rainbow of peace will shine over the world, the world which, in a few years, will be in your hands.

## Be their new family



"I ate too much chocolate. That's why I'm so dark!" This is how an African boy, who arrived in Italy to escape the war in his country, responded to my little cousin's astonishment at seeing him. Boats are landing day after day along the shores of Italy, crammed with women and children, teenagers and men, who face harrowing journeys to save their lives. With the hope of having a better future, they leave their country, their city, and even their parents and grandparents.

How can we make them feel our love? What's the best way? It's simple: try to be their new family! Together with my parents and my sister, I had the fantastic experience of welcoming Festus, a boy from Nigeria, into our home. His mother died when he was six, and when his father died, he should have become a *shaman*, which is the chief of his village. His uncle, however, wanted to have that position and that power and so he tried to kill Festus. To escape from his uncle and save his life he fled to the big city where he worked for a short time, until his uncle discovered where he was and he had to flee again. He arrived in Italy scared and suspicious of everyone. It had been very hard on him to be betrayed by the uncle who had raised him! A priest friend of ours, who helps young refugees on a daily basis, sensed the sadness and feeling of abandonment in Festus and thought he needed someone to welcome him and make him feel part of a family. He suggested it to my family and we all started a "contest" to see who would love him the most and let him feel the warmth of a family that he lost after his mother died. He responded immediately and opened his heart to us. He too became part of the contest to love one another, and this giving and receiving enriched all of us. Festus now has a new family, but we also have something priceless: the joy of adding a new member to our family!





## COUNT ON ME!!

### TYPE:

Group activities

### OBJECTIVES:

- To develop sensitivity and empathy towards those who are foreigners in our country, in order to "make ourselves one"
- Move beyond words to action, by promoting concrete projects.

### MATERIAL AND SPACE:

Poster board, post-it notes, pens, printed photo, cardboard eyeglasses.

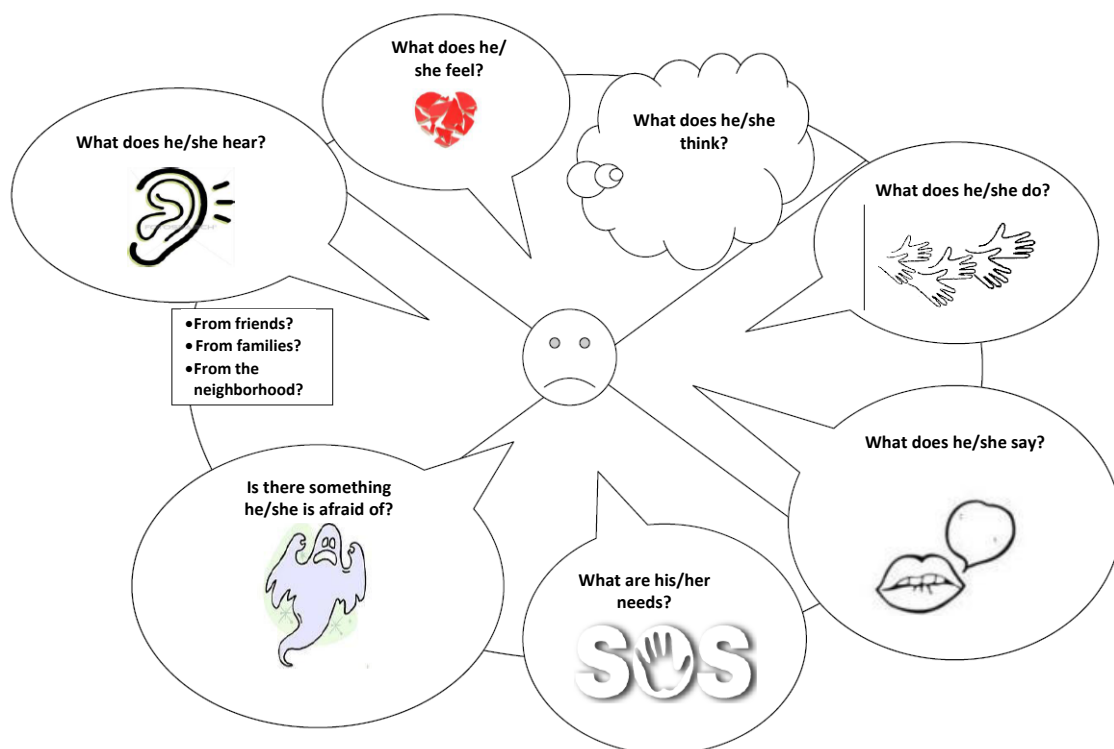
### DEVELOPMENT:

#### 1. First step: There you are!

*In this step we want to draw the "map of 'making ourselves one'"*

Place one of the attached photos of a refugee child in the center of a large poster

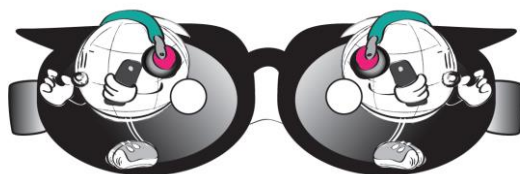
**Procedure:** Identify the person in the picture. Give the child a name (make one up), then cut out the figure and attach it in the center of the poster. In the group try to answer the questions (see drawing below), write the answers on post-it notes and stick them on the poster.



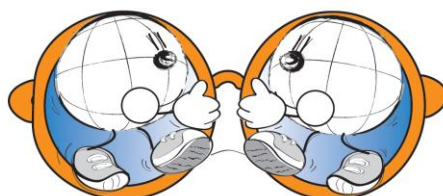
## 2. Second step: I look at you with my heart...

We have two pairs of glasses: the glasses of indifference and the glasses of "love everyone".

Each one takes a turn trying on the glasses of indifference (see attachment for how to make the glasses) and gives his or her reflections on the situation of the refugee child.



After the first round everyone puts on the glasses "of loving everyone" (see attachment for making the glasses).



### IMPORTANT: Do not anticipate what the second glasses are

In each round the question to ask is: What is your impression of this person when you look at him/her with these glasses?

Write the impressions in a list:

What you see with these glasses?	With glasses <b>of indifference</b> ?	With glasses of <b>"love everybody"</b> ?

### Question for reflection:

- *What did I discover when I used the "new glasses"?*

## 3. Third step: Count on Me!

*Proposals, change of attitudes, ideas, experiences...*

The group leader formulates these questions:

- *What can we do for these people to help them and make them happier?*
- *With whom in our city we can apply what we have learned in this game?*
- *Can we do something on our own or something together with others? For example, with classmates, friends, gen3, Teens for Unity or the local community?*

Each one draws on the poster the outline of his or her hand and notes internally with whom and how to put into practice what they learned in this game.



## HAVE YOU SEEN THE NEW GIRL YET?

**Edith recently moved to town from another country.** She is learning the language and making progress, but still doesn't know how to express herself correctly, so she is afraid to speak up in class. Some of the students don't want anything to do with her and tease her. Others started up a friendship with her and want to help her fit in. Today, during the break, the class and the math teacher gathered in the courtyard. Edith brought some food that is typical of her country and she wanted everyone to try it. A lot of the students didn't want to...

### Francis (\*)

*Personal qualities:*

- **Math teacher.**
- **During the break he likes to chat with the students**

*Possible decisions:*

- **Encourages Edith, highlight her abilities.**
- **Is fairly neutral about relating to Edith.**

### Diana (\*)

*Personal qualities:*

- **Dresses fashionably and judges people by appearances.**
- **Travels with her family on expensive vacations and has been to many countries**

*Possible decisions:*

- **During the break she hangs out with her friends and ignores everyone else.**
- **She is curious to know why some of her classmates welcome Edith.**

### Edith (\*)

*Personal qualities:*

- **A foreign student.**
- **She feels very lonely at school.**

*Possible decisions:*

- **Tries to make new friends at school.**
- **Is quite timid.**



Francesco\*



Diana\*



Edith\*



Filippo\*



Giulia



Tommaso



Alessio

### Philip (\*)

*Personal qualities:*

- **Tries to live the golden rule.**
- **Already has a friendly relationship with Edith**

*Possible decisions:*

- **He is interested in Edith and her culture.**
- **He looks for the opportunity to encourage other schoolmates to welcome Edith.**

### Julia

*Personal qualities:*

- **She is open and relates well with Edith.**
- **Traveling has enabled her to know and appreciate other cultures**

*Possible decisions:*

- **She is part of a group of volunteers**
- **She does not avoid confronting those who think differently from her**

### Thomas

*Personal qualities:*

- **His grandparents are from another country and have lived here for about 50 years.**
- **He is generous, and has good insights**

*Possible decisions:*

- **He wants to welcome Edith.**
- **He has never done anything to show Edith she is very welcome.**

### Alessio

*Personal qualities:*

- **His family is prejudiced against foreigners.**
- **He is not acquainted with other cultures.**

*Possible decisions:*

- **He is the type who does not change his mind easily.**
- **He is aware that prejudices are an obstacle.**

## HAVE YOU SEEN THE NEW GIRL YET?