

WoL

WORD OF LIFE

MK 9:50

“Be at peace with one another.”

With all the conflicts going on in the world, with all the suffering due to wars, **Jesus’ invitation to live in peace gives us hope** because he promised he will always give us his peace – **and He IS peace!** We can live in peace every day in our families, at school and even with people who think differently from us.

WHERE THERE IS UNITY, THERE IS PEACE

To have real peace, we shouldn’t be afraid of talking opening to others, even if we disagree with them on certain things, because we want our unity to be deep and honest. However, we also have to be careful not to break a relationship with anyone, but value each person as they are, no matter how different they are from us.

Jesus in the midst is our peace.

How can we resolve conflicts? Chiara tells us: **“We have to form new relationships wherever we can.”** We can bring together individuals and whole nations, helping them **to listen to one another, help one another, love one another.** To do this, we have to set aside our own way of thinking and enter into the other person, even if we don’t always manage to understand them fully, just as they don’t always manage to understand us.

LIVE IN PEACE: A SERIOUS PLEDGE

Try to be always open to the other person, because what is important is the relationship, not who is right or wrong about a certain topic. The Gospel gives us a command, telling us, «Be at peace.» To do this requires that we take a serious, very demanding commitment. This is one of the most important ways that we can practice love and mercy towards all.

OUR EXPERIENCES**it's our Life****KIM (South Africa)****A STRATEGY FOR PEACE**

In my school, the students form groups according to their favorite activities and also according to social status. My group, of which I am considered the leader, was criticized by other groups who said we are snobby and think we are better than everyone else. We don't feel like that, but as the year progressed, the rivalry among the groups became very bad. The members of my group had different opinions about what to do. Some wanted to defend ourselves by confronting the others and telling them how we feel. Others wanted to return «fire with fire», even if it meant telling some lies about the others. I thought a lot about it and realized that the energy we would use to hurt the others would not have been good for anyone, neither ourselves nor them. **I decided to love Jesus in everyone, even though it was very hard to recognize him in each one.** To start to melt the ice, I brought to school some very good candy for one of the “rival” groups. Then I gave another group a device they needed for a project they were doing. Within my own group, I tried very hard not to say anything bad about anyone and to ignore all the gossip. I spoke politely with students from other groups and started conversations with everyone. In this way I was able to build a relationship with a lot of students of different groups, and when the time came to elect a student representative for our class, I got the highest number of votes. I was very happy about that because I feel that now I can love even more and bring more unity within the whole student body.

Have you ever had a similar experience?



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