

A LOVE THAT... IS THE STARTING POINT.

T E E N S ' B O O K M A R K

I Care becomes a bookmark it will accompany you this month and help you live this Word of Life.

MARIA
from ITALY

Walid is new to my class, and we soon realized that he was a troublemaker. He kicked and punched everyone, and it wouldn't be rare to go home with a souvenir from him... a nice big black 'n blue mark!

Even with me, he often gets physical, and accuses me of things that I didn't do. Some of my classmates' parents saw no other solution than having him expelled, but to me that didn't seem right.

I think Walid would be a different person if he didn't have problems in his family, and if he would stop being beaten up at home.

I talked to my mom, who lives the Ideal of love with me, and during a class council she stood up for Walid. Instead of expelling him from school, she suggested that the other parents help him integrate into the class, perhaps by contacting his parents. After some discussion, her idea was approved.

I wanted to do something for Walid, too. So, with two other friends, we organized a surprise birthday party for him. I was in charge of buying all the supplies and the gift - a nice leather soccer ball. On the morning of his birthday, all the students were hiding behind our desks, waiting for him with a big «Happy Birthday» sign.

When Walid came in, we all jumped up from behind the desks - he was so surprised! And so happy, almost out of his mind! He loved the cake, not to mention the gift!! From that day on Walid became my best friend. He's much calmer now and even outside of school he greets everyone with a big smile.

What would you have done if this had happened to you?



A NEW FRIEND FOR EVERYONE

«WELCOME ONE ANOTHER, THEREFORE, JUST AS CHRIST WELCOMED YOU, FOR THE GLORY OF GOD»
(Rom 15:7)

From a commentary by Chiara Lubich - Adapted by the Gen 3 Center

These words remind us of one of the most touching aspects of Jesus' love. During his life on earth, **Jesus always welcomed everyone with great love**, especially those who were outcasts, who were most in need.

He offered his friendship to everyone, knocking down, one by one, the barriers of pride and selfishness that were part of the society where he lived.

LET'S GET RID OF
ALL PREJUDICE
AND QUICK
JUDGEMENTS

Jesus was the visible sign of the welcoming love that the heavenly Father has for each one of us, and of the kind of love we should have for one another.

This is the first will of God for us: **to welcome each other in the same way that Jesus welcomed us.**

TOGETHER
WE CAN OVERCOME
EVERY
DIFFICULTY

This Word of Life draws our attention to one of the aspects of human selfishness that is most common and most difficult to uproot, that is, **the tendency to isolate ourselves, to discriminate against others, and exclude those who are different, or who disturb our comfortable lifestyle.**

ONE STEP
AT A TIME
UNTIL WE REACH
EVERYONE

The act of welcoming others who are different from us is basic for Christian love.

In fact, **welcoming others is the starting point**, the first brick in building a civilization of love and in promoting a new culture based on sharing. That's what Jesus is calling us to do, especially now!

