

Let's live like this!

A very simple gesture

Giovanni (Brazil)

In my school there are more than forty students in each class, so we don't always know everyone.

To start loving all my classmates, I decided to use a very simple gesture – just saying "good morning" to them! And I tried to do it not just to be polite, but to make them feel loved through this simple greeting.

It was fantastic! For a while, it didn't seem like anything had changed, but little by little, someone whom I didn't even know by name, told me, "John, you have no idea how good it makes me feel to hear your 'good morning!' You're the only person who is nice to me."

Another student said: "Sometimes the only reason I come to school in the morning is because I know you will say 'good morning' to me, and that's enough to make my day!"

Now I know much more about my classmates and this simple gesture has changed not only me, but the lives of the other people I live with at school.

I TAKE THE COMMITMENT

TO OVERCOME

EVERY KIND OF

BARRIER

WORD OF LIFE | 01

**"Jesus said to her,
'Give me a drink.'"**

(Jn 4:7)

Jesus had been travelling on foot and was tired. He sat down next to a well and asked a Samaritan woman for a drink. It was a request that went against the customs of the times. A man never spoke directly to a woman he didn't know. Moreover, Jews and Samaritans hated one another.

Jesus was free. He was not conditioned by customs and so he started a conversation with this woman. He wanted to enter into her heart, and he started by asking her: "Give me a drink."

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an international ecumenical initiative that is celebrated every year on January 18-25.

The barriers that often divide us can be social, political, or religious, or simply the result of certain cultural traditions that we don't know how to accept.

These things cause conflicts and wars between nations and ethnic groups, but also open hostility right in our own neighborhoods.

Which people or groups in our cities suffer the most because people are indifferent to them or insensitive to their needs?

And at school? Are there students from other countries, or who are in some way different from me? Is anyone rejected by others? Am I the one who feels different?

I stop for a moment and think about the barriers I am facing today.

Couldn't we accept others, just like Jesus did, and overcome all our differences and prejudices?

We can recognize Jesus in every person who is in need, like a classmate who's lonely, or an immigrant, or even in someone I don't like. In all of them Jesus is telling us, "I'm thirsty" and asks, "Give me a drink."

The Gospel tells us that offering a glass of water (which can also mean a smile, or just listening...) is the way to start a dialogue that will eventually make everyone feel like one family.

I share my successes and failures with my friends.