

Word of life – March 2016		01
LESSON OUTLINE FOR THE GROUP LEADER		
“The kingdom of God has come to you” (Lk 11:20).		
OBJECTIVE:		
LEARNING FROM THE WORD OF GOD	GOING DEEPER	SUGGESTIONS FOR LIVING IT TOGETHER (chosen according to the Group)
<p>The Jews of his time had been waiting and waiting for the kingdom of God. Jesus started announcing it as he visited the villages and towns, "The kingdom of God is near" (see Lk 10:9). "The kingdom of God has come to you" (Lk 11:20). "The kingdom of God is in your midst!" (Lk 17:21). In the person of Jesus, God himself was among his people and took history in hand, moving it firmly and forcefully towards its fulfillment. The miracles Jesus performed testified to this.</p> <p>In the Gospel passage which contains the Word of Life for this month, he had just cured a deaf mute, freeing him from the devil who had held him prisoner. This is a sign that he came to conquer evil – all kinds of evil - and to establish forever the kingdom of God.</p>	<p>Read the passage of the Gospel below that includes this month's Word of Life: Luke, chapter 11, verses 14 to 20.</p> <p><i>Jesus was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the one who was mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed. But some of them said: "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." Others, to test him, kept demanding from him a sign from heaven. But he knew what they were thinking and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself becomes a desert, and house falls on house. If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? You say that I cast out demons by Beelzebub. Now if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your exorcists cast them out? Therefore, they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.</i></p>	
<p>This phrase, "the kingdom of God," in the language of the Jewish people meant God acting to help his people. He freed them from all forms of slavery and all evil, guiding them toward a life of justice and peace, flooding them with joy and blessings. Jesus revealed that God is a merciful "father," who is loving and compassionate and sensitive to the needs and sufferings of every one of his children.</p>	<p>Let's try to explain and describe the expression, "the kingdom of God." When is the kingdom of God among us? What does that mean?</p>	<p>Let's try to fulfill the conditions by which the kingdom of God is among us, living some of the aspects of the art of loving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - love everyone - be the first to love - love the other as you love yourself
<p>We too need to hear the message of Jesus: "The kingdom of God has come to you."</p> <p>As we look around we often have the impression that the world is dominated by evil, that people who are violent and corrupt always win out. Sometimes we feel at the mercy of hostile forces, threatened by powers that try to overwhelm us. We feel helpless when we consider all the wars and natural disasters, the massacres of innocent people</p>	<p>What are the things that harm us most? What are the situations that make us feel powerless?</p>	

<p>and the damage caused by climate change, the pain of the refugee crisis and also the financial crisis.</p> <p>This is when we have to remember what Jesus proclaimed. He invites us to believe that even now he is overcoming evil and is establishing a new world.</p>		
<p>During the month of March, exactly 25 years ago, Chiara spoke to thousands of young people, entrusting her dream to them, saying: "Make the world a better place, make it like one family. Make people feel like they belong to the same country, to one world, to a united world." Then, as now, those words seemed like a utopia. Yet, she invited them to live in mutual love, so that this dream would become a reality. She was certain that by doing so they would have in their midst "Jesus himself, Jesus who is all powerful. You can hope for everything from him!"</p> <p>Yes, Jesus IS the kingdom of God.</p> <p>So what is our task? To be sure that he is always among us. If he is, Chiara continued, "He will be the one working with you in your countries. He will come back into the world in a certain way wherever you are. You will make him present by your mutual love, by your unity. He will enlighten you about what you have to do. He will guide you, he will sustain you, he will be your strength, your ardor, your joy. Because of him the world around you will convert and begin to live in peace. Every division will be healed. (...) Love one another, therefore, and sow love in every corner of the earth, among individuals, groups and nations, using every possible method, so that there will be an invasion of love, as we often say. The civilization of love that everyone is waiting for will become more consistent, also because of your contribution. You are called to this. And you will see great things happen!"</p>	<p>Witnesses of Carl and Albert (attached article or Youtube videos https://youtu.be/Ft2i3-W-5vg)</p>	<p>Let's live mutual love, involving everyone in our local community and thinking up a project that would be a way to love concretely the people who live in our area or town or city.</p> <p>(For example, helping younger children with their homework, spending some time with an elderly person, telling our experiences to those who, like us, want to live the Word of Life, and so on).</p>
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