

Focolare Word of Life
March 2020

Find your creativity and generosity

“In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.” (Mt 7:12)

When making important decisions in life, how often do we look for a “compass” to ensure that we make the right choice? As Christians, how often do we ask ourselves what is the very essence of the Gospel message, the key to enter into the heart of God and live as his children here and now?

These words of Jesus, which provide a clear answer, are easy to understand and put into practice. They are taken from Matthew’s Gospel and are part of the great Sermon on the Mount, which records Jesus’ teachings on how to fully live the Christian life. His teaching is summarized in this concise statement.

Nowadays, people want meaningful but brief and effective messages: we could welcome this Word as a precious tweet to constantly keep in mind.

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To better understand what to do for others, Jesus invites us to put ourselves in their shoes; he did just this when, out of love for us, he took on our human nature.

If we ask ourselves what we expect from our parents, children, work colleagues, politicians and spiritual leaders, the list most probably includes welcoming, listening, including and supporting material needs. In addition, we would also like sincerity, forgiveness, encouragement, patience, advice, guidance and education.

For Jesus, it is the inner attitude that then becomes practical action and leads to the fulfilment of all of God’s law and all the richness of the spiritual life.

This sentence is the “Golden Rule,” a universal teaching contained in the different cultures, religions and traditions that humanity has developed over time. It is the basis of all authentically human values that lead to peaceful coexistence, with just and supportive personal and social relationships.

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This sentence encourages us to be creative and generous, to take the initiative for the benefit of everyone and build bridges even towards people we don't count among our friends. Jesus himself said and did just this. It asks us to avoid being closed in ourselves so that we can be credible witnesses of our faith.

Chiara Lubich encouraged us to do this when she wrote in a Gospel commentary in April 1978:

“Let's try. A day lived this way is worth a lifetime ... We will be filled with a joy we have never felt before ... God will be with us, because he is with those who love ...

“Sometimes we may slow down and feel discouraged and be tempted to stop ... But no! Take courage! God gives us the grace we need and so we can always start again.

“If we persevere, we will see the world around us slowly change. We will understand that the Gospel makes life fascinating. It brings a light into the world; it gives zest to our existence and contains the principle for solving all problems.

“And we will not feel at peace until we communicate our extraordinary experience to other people — to friends who can understand us, to relatives, to anyone with whom we feel compelled to share. Hope will be reborn.”

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Ramiro was one of the longest standing workers in his office team. He heard that new colleagues were arriving.

He asked himself, “If I were to enter this office for the first time, what would I like to see? What would make me feel at ease?” He began to move things around to create more space and involved other colleagues in finding more desks. They worked together to make new and welcoming workstations so that when the newcomers arrived, they found a positive atmosphere and a united working community.

Letizia Magri

Next month:

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe” (Jn 20:29).