

July 2025

But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.' (Lk 10:33)

Martine was on the metro in one of the main European cities; all the passengers were absorbed in their phones. She thought how the people may have been connected virtually but were really trapped in isolation and said to herself, 'Are we no longer able to look each other in the eye?'

This has become an everyday experience, especially in societies which are rich in material goods but increasingly poor in human relationships. However, the Gospel always offers its original, creative proposal, to 'make all things new'¹.

In the long dialogue with the lawyer who asked Jesus what to do to inherit eternal life², Jesus replied with the famous parable of the Good Samaritan: a priest and a Levite, respected figures in the society of the time, saw a man assaulted by robbers and lying on the roadside, but they passed him by.

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To the lawyer who was very familiar with the divine commandment to love one's neighbour³, Jesus gave the example of a foreigner who was considered to be a schismatic and an enemy. The man saw the wounded traveller, but he allowed himself to be moved by compassion, a feeling that comes from within, from deep in the human heart. So he interrupted his journey, approached the man and took care of him.

Jesus knows that every human being is wounded by sin and his very mission is: to heal hearts with God's mercy and gratuitous forgiveness, so that they too may be capable of closeness and sharing.

'...To learn to be merciful like the Father, perfect like him, we must look at Jesus, the full revelation of the Father's love... Love is the absolute value that gives meaning to everything else... and finds its highest expression in mercy. Mercy helps us to see the people we live with each day in a new light, in our family, at school, at work, without remembering their faults and mistakes. It helps us not to judge, but to forgive the wrongs we have suffered. Indeed, to forget them'⁴

1cf. Rev 21:5

2cf. Lk 10:25-37

3cf. Dt. 6:5; Lv. 19:18

4(C. Lubich, Word of Life, June 2002, in Words of Life, edited by Fabio Ciardi, Città Nuova, Rome, 2017, p. 659).

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The final and decisive response comes as a clear invitation: 'Go and do likewise'⁵. This is what Jesus repeats to anyone who welcomes his Word: to become a neighbour by taking the initiative to 'touch' the wounds of those encountered each day along the paths of life.

To live evangelical closeness, first of all we must ask Jesus to heal us of the blindness of prejudice and indifference, which prevent us from seeing beyond ourselves. Then, from the Samaritan, we can learn the ability for compassion which moved him to put his own life on the line. Let's imitate his readiness to take the first step toward others, his willingness to listen to them, to make their pain our own, free from judgment and from the anxiety of 'wasting time.'

This is what happened to a young woman from Korea: 'I tried to help a teenager who wasn't from my culture and whom I didn't know well. Even though I didn't know exactly what to do or how, I found the courage to try and to my surprise, by offering that help, I found that my own inner wounds had been healed.'

This Word offers us the golden key for living out a Christian humanism. It makes us aware of our common humanity, in which the image of God is reflected and it teaches us to courageously overcome the limits of physical and cultural 'closeness.' From this perspective, it becomes possible to expand the boundaries of 'us' to the horizon of 'everyone' and to rediscover the very foundations of social life.

Prepared by Letizia Magri and the Word of Life team