



PREPARE FOR THE MEETING

Accepting others and understanding their culture in a global society

- **The social and political importance of immigration has grown steadily** over the past two decades, during which time we have seen a continuous increase in migratory flow around the world. At the same time we are seeing more and more incidents of discrimination, racism and rejection of those who are different, causing great tension within communities.
- There is a need **to raise awareness of the reasons why people choose, or are forced, to leave their country.** This can help promote respect for diversity and encourage social cohesion.
- In particular, we need **to raise awareness among young people, who are the decision-makers of the future,** because through the “culture of encounter” they are able to generate, even now, brotherhood among peoples, to accomplish the prayer of Jesus, “That all may be one” (Jn 17:21).
- If **the ideas, proposals and actions** are **shared with the community and with other associations,** we can have a greater impact on the environment and give teens the certainty that it is possible, even in emergency situations, to provide a concrete service of welcome.

What lines of action are suited to teens?

- In many countries, **schools have become places where many cultures intersect,** especially in big cities. This should be the first field of action for teens: they can promote a culture of welcoming foreign students, helping their friends to see that people who come from other cities or countries are a gift and an enrichment.
- Then we should encourage teens to **learn more about the situation of their foreign classmates:** Which students come from another country? Or from another city or part of the country? Help them to develop empathy towards others and feel the hardships and difficulties of integration are their own.
- Be promoters of even small projects in our cities. **We can act together with the local community.** Small projects carried out by adults, teenagers and children allow for greater continuity.

Some useful texts to explore the topic:

Pope Francis, The Angelus in St. Peter’s Square, September 6, 2015, **Appeal for the reception of refugees** ([attachment stranger A1](#), or [docx version](#))

- **Excerpts from “Handbook: some guidelines for action in favor of peace and for aid to refugees”** – organized by New Humanity and Youth for a United World ([attachment stranger A2](#), or [doc version](#))

BEFORE THE MEETING

Who can we involve from our local community? How?



WORKS OF MERCY – Guidelines for Group Leaders

COME TO MY HOUSE! “I was a stranger and you welcomed me”

POIBLE POINTS TO REACH TOGETHER (SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES)

Develop sensitivity and empathy towards those who are foreigners in my country, in my school, etc.

Discover the values of cultures other than our own. Know that others can be welcomed as a gift that enriches and generates brotherhood among peoples.

Get concrete and sponsor projects to aid refugees in our own city

MATERIAL SUITABLE FOR TEENS:

[From PPT Heart in Action, corporal works](#) – Slide 39 to 48 *"For all those who are looking for a home ..."*

From PPT [Heart in Action Live](#) – teen experiences of "I was a stranger and you welcomed me"

Experience of Chiara Luce Badano on welcoming one who is a stranger and all alone ([attachment stranger_R2](#) or [docx version](#))

Chiara Lubich: **A rainbow of peace in the world**, Roma, May 26, 2002, Supercongress of Teens for Unity, Excerpts from her talk at the Coliseum ([attachment stranger_R3](#), or [docx](#))

Experience of Maria Laura, **Open your hearts and your home**, ([attachment stranger_R4](#), or [docx](#))

Proposals for activities to help develop the meeting:

- **An unexpected friend:** a Chilean UNICEF video. A child, Marciano, is a new student at school. The reaction of his classmates provides a fundamental lesson of life and acceptance. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSlrYDqFvfQ>
- **Count on Me!**: activities with various steps to develop sensitivity and empathy with those who are refugees in my country ([attachment stranger_R5](#), or [zip archive](#))
- **Have you seen the new girl?:** Role play that helps to live the golden rule at school in an intercultural context ([attachment stranger_R6](#))
- **Myriam of Qaraqoush:** interview of a child refugee in a refugee camp in Iraq. On Youtube with subtitles in English and Spanish. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZ-yT1w5Cto>

EVALUATION

- Has this meeting strengthened team spirit and promoted sharing among all? Has there been a growth in confidence and mutual love? Did we experience the presence of Jesus among us?
- Does it seem that the problem of so many refugees has become our own? Are we aware that Jesus considers done to him any help we give to his brothers or sisters?
- Have we put these words into practice in daily life and possibly with a specific action?
- Have we involved the community?