

"Is it all mine?"

Bye, bye greed



### Aim

To learn how to recognize behavior that leads to keep only for oneself what one has, without considering the needs of others.

To give space to generosity in daily life.

## Preparing for the meeting

POINTS OF REFLECTION  
FOR THE ANIMATORS  
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psychologist

### Greed

The meaning of possessing and accumulating goods for oneself goes back to the meaning that material goods

have, influenced also by cultural factors. In some recent social contexts, people believe that having many material goods guarantees happiness and security. On the contrary, we must be aware that underlying this is a strong

commercial motivation far from guaranteeing happiness for each one!

A second reflection brings us to consider the basic importance of having goods for our daily life (food, clothes, games, books...) for the growth of each one. In the affective side, a child learns how to see him or herself as a person worth loving if s/he experiences the presence and the disposition of a loving, educative figure, who is physically present. In time, s/he will be able to detach him or herself from such affections when s/he has already interiorized that presence, and then will commit him or herself to explore the world outside. Similarly, the child learns and will experience being a person acting in the world if s/he can use objects that allow him or her to experience it; that is, to possess the objects, and thus to distinguish what is mine and what is yours. This builds a sense of independence from others, which is basic

for building personal identity. In life, certain objects acquire special important meaning because they reflect a period lived, a relationship built; hence, they are a bit of personal history. In pre-adolescence, one acquires the capacity to think no longer centered only on oneself but also on others, and from different points of view. Therefore, it is possible in an educational context to help distinguish between a sense of security and self-worth based exclusively on having material goods, and the sense of security based instead on qualities that are more abstract but more important and lasting.

I will be able to detach myself from something that I like very much (if I am an adolescent) or from a special type of sunglasses (if I am an adult) if I have the sense of my personal worth capable of giving up that object. Moreover, if I can have a better self-image experiencing the freedom that comes from giving or renouncing chosen independently.

DISCOVER THE BEAUTY within you

GROUP LEADER GUIDE



## The sack with a hole in it

**TYPE:** Problem solving

**AIM:** To find the solution of the game by putting generosity into action.

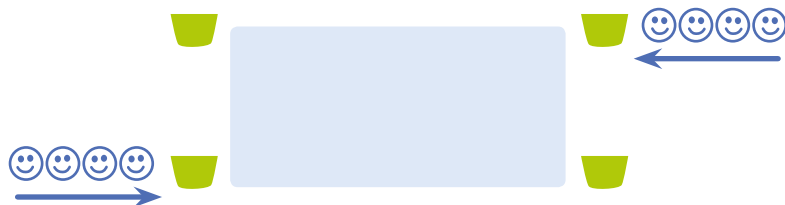
**PLACE:** outdoors or indoors, that is wide enough

**PLAYERS:** 8 or more divided into two teams

**MATERIALS:** 4 containers (baskets or buckets), items to fill up two of these (small balls, candies...) two small bags with a hole under, rectangular sports field

**TIME:** around 30 minutes

**PROCEDURE:** Each team, in file formation, stays behind one of the two lines in the field. On the line, in front of the first player, is a container with many objects inside (the same for the two teams; these can be small balls, candies, etc.) and a small bag with a hole in the bottom.



On the opposite line, there is an empty container for each team.

The winner is the one who can fill up first the empty container (do not specify that it is the container of the opposing team).

After the starting line, the player can only carry the bag with one hand. He or she is allowed to use both hands and to touch the objects only if, instead of moving forward, s/he goes towards the left wall (that is, towards the empty container of the opposing team). The objects that fall from the bag are picked up by the game organizer and cannot be used again.

The aim of the game (don't say it) is to realize that it is difficult, if not impossible, to fill up the container from the opposite side of the field; whereas, by moving sidewise, one can reach the empty container of the opposite team with the bag still full, by using both hands. To fill up reciprocally the container of the opposite team is the only way to win! **Hail to generosity!**

**NOTE FOR THE ANIMATOR:** if the teams do not progress in the game, take a time-out so you can ask the teams to think of a strategy to reach the goal of the game.



## Inside the image

We suggest the following activity to discover, together with the youth, the message of the allegorical design of GREED

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** a large copy of the allegorical design (attached is the PDF file for printing), a white card as large as the design to be cut into four parts, sheets of paper, pens.

**PROCEDURE:** Copy the design of the animal on a big poster and cover the design with a puzzle of four pieces. By uncovering one piece at a time, the youth should guess what animal it resembles, what it is doing, what are its thoughts and feelings, the reason for its behavior.

**HERE IS A SUGGESTION** to uncover the design in four steps and to allow the youth's reflection or expectation:

### 1. First to uncover the face with the magnet in the mouth

- Can you see to what animal it resembles?
- What is in its mouth? In your opinion, what will it be used for?
- What expression does it have? What emotion does it feel?

### 2. Uncover the left hand that holds something and one part of the bag

- What is it holding in its left hand?
- In your opinion, what is it dragging along behind?
- In your opinion, what are the advantages or disadvantages of dragging along such a huge thing?

### 3. Uncover the bag with the hole in the bottom

- What did it collect?
- Where will the objects go?
- In your opinion, what will be its reaction when it will realize what is happening?

### 4. Uncover the right hand trying to catch the money

- What is it thinking now that it sees the money?
- In your opinion, what will happen to the money?



- Distribute to the participants in groups some **empty cartoon clouds** and ask them to write one or more sentences that the monkey would say. Examples: "I want to have all" "it is mine" "my treasure" "more, more..." Paste these on the poster.

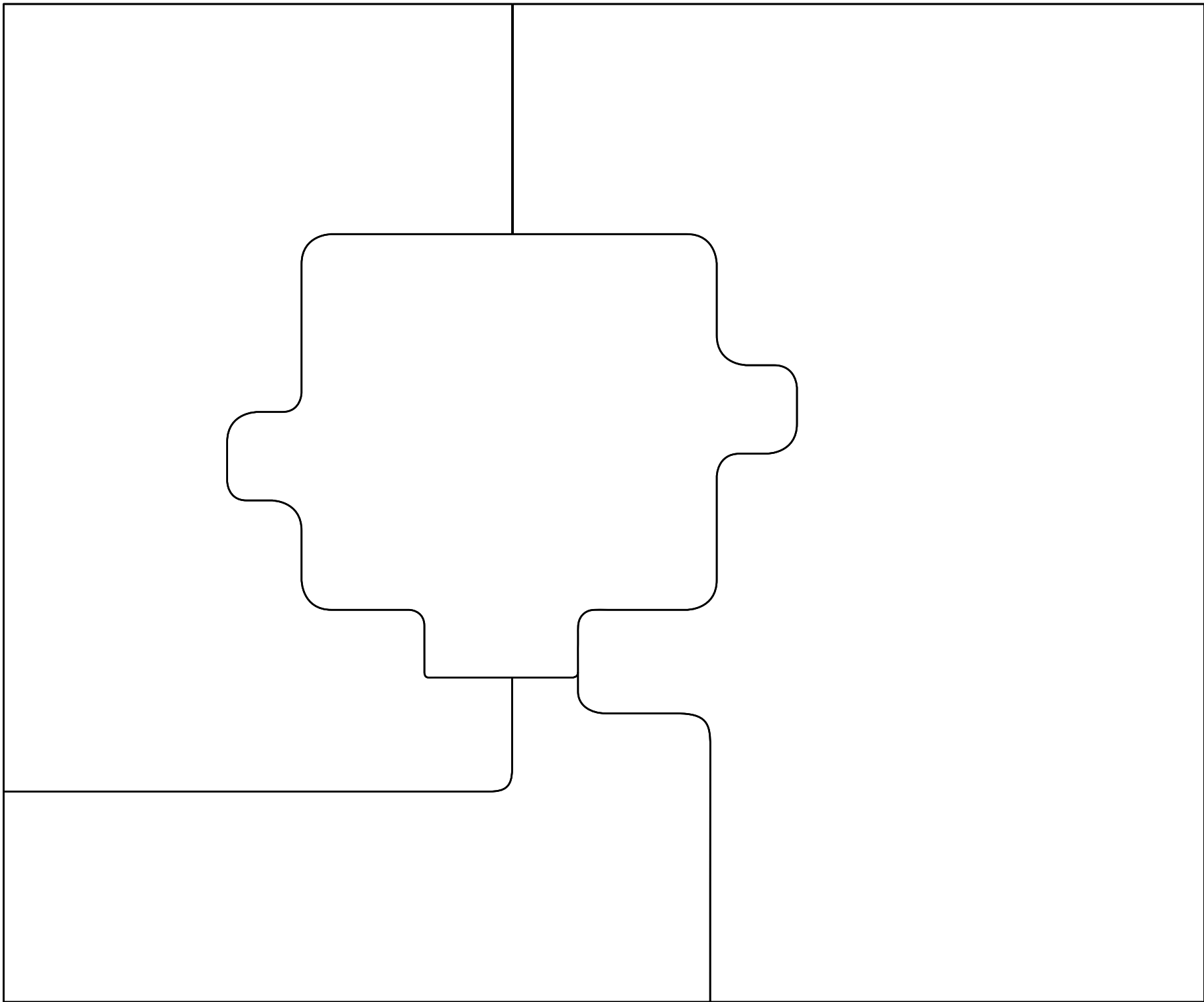
- Even if it takes everything for itself, what is it really lacking?

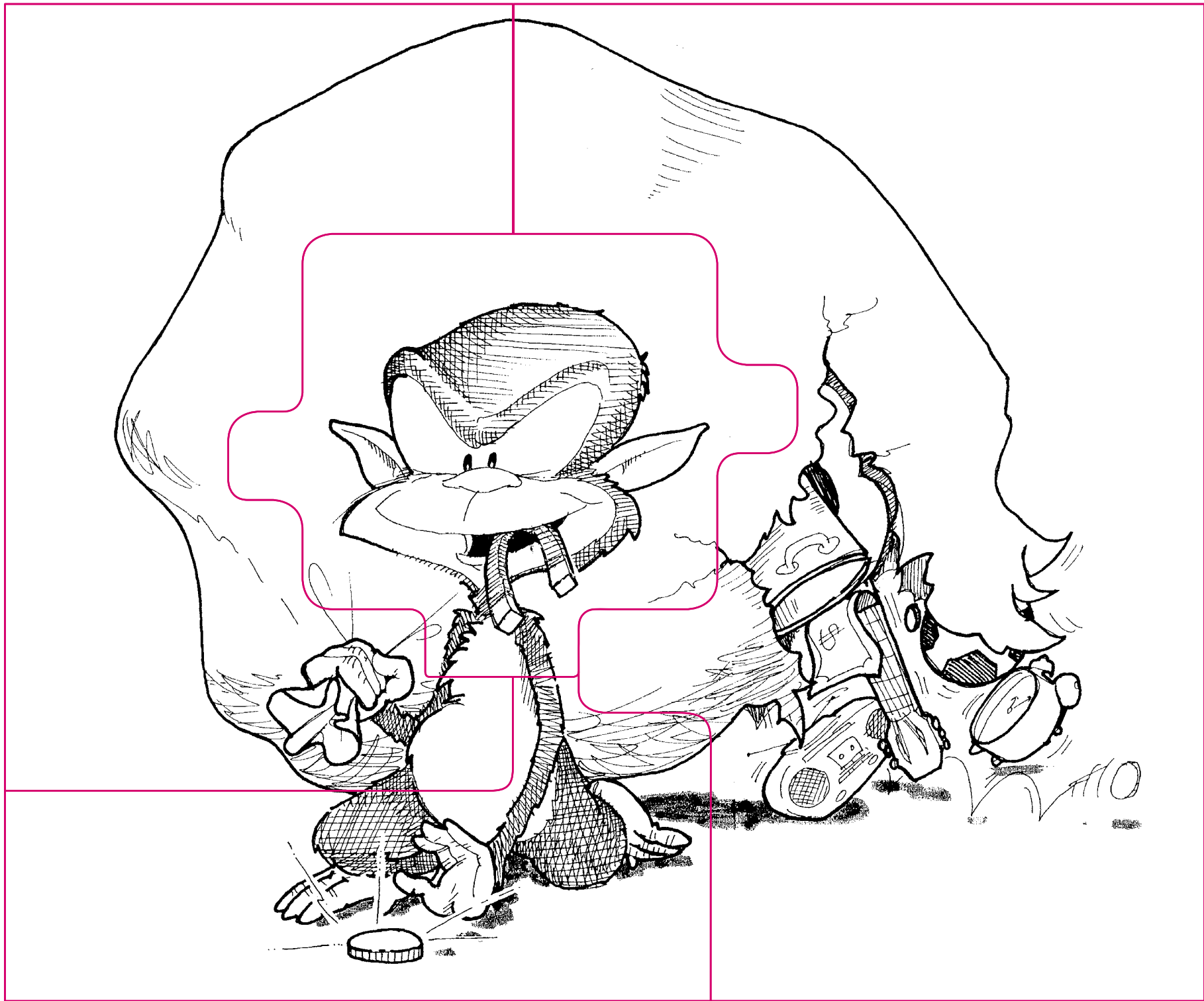
## GREED in movies

On the website <http://assistentigen3.focolare.org> you can download part of the movie "Ice Age - Funniest Scrat Moments" (mute). It can be useful to recognize, with irony, the extremely negative effects of wanting to have things at all costs.

**DURATION:** 4'38"







## We live this way

In class, I do not always agree with all my classmates, but I try to start again. This is what happened once to me. During a break, a classmate whom I do not like much, started pulling my leg because my shoes, although nice, were bought at the supermarket that sells at a low price.

I did not tell her anything and within me, I told Jesus: «Forgive her, she does not know what she's doing». Immediately, I felt that instead of

having a grudge, peace returned in my heart.

Later, the same classmate asked me if I could lend her a new notebook. My first reaction was to say no: I might need it and anyway why should I be good to her?

However, immediately I remembered what Jesus said: «Give and it shall be given to you» and: «You did it to me». So I decided to lend it to her. The next day, she returned not only one but two, and with much gratitude.

J.- [Lithuania]



One day, at breakfast, the school cook placed one extra sandwich at table and there was a great temptation for all of us to eat it. I felt that I had to take the first step, so I told everyone: "Surely the cook made a mistake, so I will not take it because it can be for another meal. But you are free...do as the voice within you says".

To my great surprise, nobody took the sandwich, so I returned it to the cook. He was very surprised to see that we behaved in that unusual way. He thanked me and said that he was really touched and that it was meant for somebody else.

D. [Nairobi - Kenya]



## In touch with Chiara

### GREED

Do you see that kind of monkey, but it's not a monkey, with a magnet in his mouth and a sack on his shoulders, who keeps putting things in one side and losing them out the other? This is what happens to greed. He gathers more and more, and then comes bad luck, something happens or a fight in the family and he loses everything that he had put together.

Because the Gospel says: "Give, and you will receive!" that is, in order to receive, you must be generous. But greed doesn't give anything away, and so he loses everything

Chiara

Chiara Lubich,

Gen 3 Congress, 1973, Rocca di Papa, "NO TO VICIES, YES TO VIRTUES"

The video in Italian-English-Spanish and the international version of the powerpoint is available at the website <http://assistentigen3.focolare.org>



### Points for dialogue

- What goods – material or non-material (time, talents, etc.) – do you have that you consider “yours”?
- In your opinion, what is needed for a boy or girl of your age?
- Are there material or non-material goods that you make available or could make available to others?
- Chiara Lubich tells us that “whoever gives nothing will lose everything”. What do you think this means? Do you recall an experience of yours or someone else?

«Many people say that with lies, cheating, and corruption one can have much more, especially much money, more than through justice. Chiara, what do you advise us?»

I can really say that those who want money, who set out to have a lot of money, are not the most fortunate people. Just look, for example, at the rich man (cf. Lk 16: 19-31): he went to hell while Lazarus, who was poor, went to Paradise; therefore, he was the most fortunate. So the real good is not found in having much money or many possessions. **The true good is found in love and in justice**, in love and in justice. This is what we should do.

You might say: so we will stay poor forever? It is not true! The Gospel says: "Set your heart on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness – which means, try to love - and all these other things will be given you as well" (cf. Mt 6:33). It is providence that arrives. So we will have the hundred-fold in goods even in this world, also in goods; then eternal life too. **You will see that to follow Jesus is the real fortune under all aspects.**

Chiara

Chiara Lubich,

To the gen 3, 1996-2002. Città Nuova, Rome 2010, pp. 81-82

The video is available at the website <http://assistentigen3.focolare.org>



## We will try

In the next session, let us practice with the  
“SAVINGS BOX OF GIVING”

**MATERIALS:**  
boxes, small  
bags, pieces  
of card in  
various forms

**On each box,** make a hole big enough to put pieces of card through. For each one, prepare also a small bag to collect the pieces of card. Each one will bring home a box and a small bag.

**This is how it works:** each one commits himself/herself to write or draw on the pieces of card some objects or actions that he/she can give during the day (a pen, a smile, a snack, etc.).

**Each piece of card** will be put inside the box. The savings box will be filled up with each one's acts of generosity.

**At the next meeting,** each one will open the “savings box of giving” to share his/her experiences with the others.

