



PURPOSE

To help students understand that the human person grows in solidarity with others.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Participate in an act of solidarity.
2. Recognize ways to grow in solidarity.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- **Solidarity Tree** worksheet (see Materials)
- **Dignity Self-Portrait** worksheet (see Materials [L1])
- **Our Solidarity Puzzle** pieces (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

- **solidarity**: a close relationship among people
- **family**: the most basic unit of society and the place where people first grow
- **friendship**: a connection between two people who choose excellence together

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Write the three types of living beings on the board—plants, animals, humans—and ask the students to recall the powers for each of the living beings. Double-check understanding of the two unique human powers, to think and choose.

Step 2: Introduce solidarity.

Begin with a project. Have students either work on a miniature family tree—adding leaves to the **Solidarity Tree** worksheet by stamping a fingerprint in different colors of paint—or on a larger tree, on poster paper, using their handprints in different colors of paint. They can cut their portrait from the **Dignity Self-Portrait** worksheet and glue it on a tree branch. They should include the members of their family, the people with whom they live, etc.

Explain: In this project, we have to learn what it means to have solidarity: what it means for many people to come together and work toward the same purpose together.

Ask: What are some different ways or different places in which people come together? With prompting questions, list the three types of solidarity on the board:

- family
- friendship
- classmates & teachers

Explain: A human person cannot learn or grow without being in relationship with other people. In our families we can learn the basics of human existing and living. With our friends, we learn how to share and how to be kind, and it is through these relationships—and those we have with others—that we become truly excellent and happy.

Next, give each student an ***Our Solidarity Puzzle*** piece, and ask them to color in a self-portrait. Once kids are done, combine the puzzle pieces on the board—or in some other format, to retain for the rest of the class.

Explain: As human persons, we are members of a global family of humans—all human people make up one family! We start to learn about the relationships we are meant to have between each other through the relationships we have with our family members, our friends, and our teachers and classmates at school.

Step 3: Teach the importance of solidarity.

Tell students the story, ***“A Village on the Road,”*** Pedro Pablo Sacristan, to show the power of solidarity, and how to practice it in an excellent way.

In a land far away, once upon a time there was great poverty: only the rich could manage without great problems. Three of those rich men, and their servants, were traveling on the same road, in a convoy, when they came to a very poor village. Seeing this poverty provoked different reactions in all three rich men.

The first couldn't stand to see it, so he took all the gold and jewels from his wagons and shared them out among the villagers. He wished them all the best of luck, and he left.

The second rich man, seeing the desperate situation, stopped for a short time, and gave the villagers all his food and drink, since he could see that money would be of little use to them. He made sure that each villager received their fair share and would have enough food to last for some time. Then, he left.

The third rich man, on seeing such poverty, speeded up and traveled straight through the village without stopping. The two other rich men saw this from a distance, and commented with each other how the third rich man lacked decency and compassion. It was good that they had been there to help the poor villagers...

However, three days later, they met the third rich man who was traveling in the opposite direction. He was still traveling quickly, but his wagons, instead of the gold and valuables they had been carrying, were now full of farming implements, tools, and sacks of seeds and grain. He was heading to the poor village to help them out of poverty.

This happened a long, long time ago, but we can see the very same thing happening today too. There are some generous people who give only so that people can see how much they are giving. They don't want to know anything about the people they are giving to.

Other generous people really try to help others, but only so that they can feel better about themselves.

But there are other generous people: the best kind. To them, it doesn't matter what the other kinds of generous people think of them. Nor do they give in a showy way. Instead, they truly worry about how best to improve the lives of those they are helping. They give something much more valuable than money. They give their time, their vision and their lives.

We still have time to become like the third man.

Ask:

- Did the first two rich men show solidarity to the villagers? Why or why not?
- What was different in the actions of the third rich man?
- How can you show solidarity to someone you do not know?

Step 4: Summarize: This week, we looked at the way in which we, as individual people, live in relationship with others—ultimately, in solidarity with them. We demonstrate this solidarity with others in our family, among our friends, and among our classmates and teachers through generosity and kindness, two qualities we will look at later.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to show an act of kindness, in solidarity, to another student who is not their friend.

SUPPLEMENTS

None.



SOLIDARITY TREE



