

PLEASE, HELP ME!

An adaptation of a Spanish audiovisual story: ““El Pez sin Samaritano”

Intent of the Story:

- ✓ *To exemplify the callous attitudes of our society towards those in need.*
- ✓ *To grow in pity for those in need and trouble.*

THE SMARTIANALES FISH (A Story)

Once upon a time, a fish was washed ashore by the stormy waves of the Sea. The poor creature, however much he struggled, could not return to the water

Desperately, he kept shouting: “Help! Help! Please! Please! Put me back into the sea” When **a passer-by** heard the pleas of the fish he said to the fish: “I wish I had some time to spare to help you. But alas! I am in a hurry. I am a business man; I’m on my way to the bank. I can’t delay. I’m so sorry! Excuse me!”

The fish kept pleading: ‘Please, please. Look here! I’m dying. Help! Help! Put me back into The sea.’ Then, **a tourist** happened to pass by. Pitifully he looked at the fish and said: Yes, I Wish I could help you! But I do not know how. Then, he took a snap of the dying fish and went off.

Then a **stylish lady** passed by. The fish screamed: “Madam, I am in pain. I’m dying! Help me! Hurry, put me back into the sea.” The lady inquired: “Tell me what exactly happened. I need to know your case to be able to help you. Tell me everything. Have you been at fault that you should find yourself in this terrible situation? You know, once you return into the sea, such things should not happen again.” By ten, the fish died!

Then an **old man** passed by, looked at the dead fish and without feeling remarked: “The Sea is really cruel! I wonder what could have been done for the fish. Such is life. It’s nobody’s fault.”

For a long time, the beach was deserted. Then the tide was up again and a friendly wave reclaimed the dead body of the fish into the sea.

At that moment, our **old tourist** passed by again, and seeing the fish back in the water remarked: “Of course, you see! I knew that when a person wants to help himself, everything is possible! Look! He is gone back into the sea!”

POINTS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. What titles would you give to the story and why? Which?
2. What attitudes are portrayed by the different characters of the story? Describe them.
 - The Business man.
 - The Tourist.
 - The Lady.
 - The Old Man.
3. Are these attitudes common today? What do those attitudes tell us of our world?
4. To which of those persons do you seem to be more like? What makes you say so?
5. Give instances of “lack of involvement” in others’ needs: in our homes, schools, colleges, parishes, places of work, neighborhoods, countries and the world at large?
6. What are the common “reasons” – rather “pretexts” and “false excuses” people give for not helping others and not getting involved in their problems?
7. What answers would you give to such excuses?
8. Can we say - like the old man of the story -when we see the sufferings of others: **“It’s nobody’s fault”**?
9. Is it our fault that there are so many people in need in our world, even close to our homes? Why?
10. How to make people aware of the injustices, oppression and exploitation taking place before their very noses?

11. When a Master of the Law to excuse himself for not helping others, asked Jesus “Who is my neighbor?” What did Jesus reply to him?
12. In the parable of the Good Samaritan who showed himself to be a good neighbor to the man in need?
13. What will be the consequences of showing ourselves “neighbors” to those in need?
14. Does the story remind you of incidents of lack of concern for others you have observed in the past? In your home, neighborhood, school, place of work, in public places?
15. When you see others in trouble and in need, what do you say to yourself?

THOUGHT PROVOKING SENTENCES

To be Reflected on, Commented on and practiced upon

In our world there is enough wealth for every body's' needs, but not enough for everybody's greed.

For many of us the population of the world is only one person

The size of your heart is measured by the number of people you keep therein

Enlarge your heart and your world will grow bigger.

Emotionally speaking, “enlarged hearts’ are the healthier hearts.

Don't count how much money you have but how many friends you helped

First give help, then advice

In moments of crises don't ask who is at fault, just help.

Love without involvement is empty talk

Anyone in serious need is your top priority.

‘Each one for himself and the rest to hell, its hell for all.

It's better to cry with others than to cry for others

To a hungry man, one loaf of bread is better than a hundred words

It's none of our business to ask God to help us if we do not help others

The measure you use while dealing with others, is the one God will use when dealing with you

Money lost to charity is gain, gain without charity is loss.