



# Transforming Injustice



# Welcome

- Acknowledgement of Country
- Prayer
- Hygiene
- First Assignment
- Wifi: Guest of St Cuthbert's (no password required)
- My email: **rector@hillsanglicans.com**
- [www.hillsanglicans.com/transforminginjustice](http://www.hillsanglicans.com/transforminginjustice)

# First Assignment – Scriptural Reflection

Choose a portion of scripture relevant to the work of transforming injustice. How does this scripture inform the church's work of transforming injustice?

In your response, please include:

1. The context of your chosen scripture
2. At least one significant principle addressed by the scripture
3. An example of how this principle might be enacted by the church.

This is a short response assignment, with a word limit of 500 words.

# Summary

Discipleship

The Life of  
Nonviolence



Nonviolent  
Direct Action





# Forms of Violence

In table groups, list forms of violence of which you are aware under these headings:

1. Verbal
2. Systemic
3. Physical
4. Economic
5. Cultural/Religious Violence

# Babylonian Myth

In the beginning, according to the Babylonian myth, Apsu, the father god, and Tiamat, the mother god, give birth to the gods. But the frolicking of the younger gods makes so much noise that the elder gods resolve to kill them so they can sleep. The younger gods uncover the plot before the elder gods put it into action, and kill Apsu. His wife Tiamat, the Dragon of Chaos, pledges revenge. Terrified by Tiamat, the rebel gods turn for salvation to their youngest member, Marduk. He negotiates a steep price: if he succeeds, he must be given chief and undisputed power in the assembly of the gods. Having extorted this promise, he catches Tiamat in a net, drives an evil wind down her throat, shoots an arrow that bursts her distended belly and pierces her heart. He then splits her skull with a club and scatters her blood in out-of-the-way places. He stretches out her corpse full-length, and from it creates the cosmos.

*Wink, W. – The Myth of Redemptive Violence*





# The Myth of Redemptive Violence

The psychodynamics of the TV cartoon or comic book are marvelously simple: children identify with the good guy so that they can think of themselves as good. This enables them to project out onto the bad guy their own repressed anger, violence, rebelliousness, or lust, and then vicariously to enjoy their own evil by watching the bad guy initially prevail. This segment of the show – the “Tammuz” element, where the hero suffers – actually consumes all but the closing minutes, allowing ample time for indulging the violent side of the self. When the good guy finally wins, viewers are then able to reassert control over their own inner tendencies, repress them, and re-establish a sense of goodness without coming to any insight about their own inner evil. The villain’s punishment provides catharsis; one forswears the villain’s ways and heaps condemnation on him in a guilt-free orgy of aggression. Salvation is found through identification with the hero.

*-Wink, W. – The Myth of Redemptive Violence*

NEVER MEET YOUR HEROES

AMAZON ORIGINAL

# THE BOYS

7/26 | prime video





# Some Expressions of The Life of Nonviolence

- Nonviolent Communication
- Restorative Justice
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Pacifism
- Conscientisation
- Community Building and Dialogue
- Inclusion Practices
- Love of Enemies

# Houses of Hospitality

'It sometimes seemed that the more space we had, the more people came to us for help, so that our quarters were never quite adequate. But somehow we managed. Characters of every description and from every corner of life turned up – and we welcomed them all. They 'joined' the Catholic Worker in many ways. Some came with their suitcases, intending to stay with us a year, and, shocked by our poverty, lingered only for the night. Others came for a weekend and remained for years. Someone visiting us simply to challenge some 'point' made in an article in the paper would become a permanent member of our community.'

- *Day, D. Loaves and Fishes*

# The Life of Nonviolence is:

- the necessary precursor
- the constant companion, and
- the ultimate goal

of Nonviolent Direct Action



# Nonviolent Direct Action



# Inescapable Network of Mutuality

I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.

*- King, MLK (Jr). Letter from a Birmingham Jail*

# Tension

You may well ask, "Why direct action, why sit-ins, marches, and so forth? Isn't negotiation a better path?" You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has consistently refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. I just referred to the creation of tension as a part of the work of the nonviolent resister. This may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word "tension." I have earnestly worked and preached against violent tension, but there is a type of constructive nonviolent tension that is necessary for growth.

*- King, MLK (Jr). Letter from a Birmingham Jail*

# Freedom

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.

*- King, MLK (Jr). Letter from a Birmingham Jail*

# Just and Unjust Laws

One may well ask, "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer is found in the fact that there are two types of laws: there are just laws, and there are unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that "An unjust law is no law at all."

Now, what is the difference between the two? How does one determine when a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law, or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas, an unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust.

*- King, MLK (Jr). Letter from a Birmingham Jail*

# The Power of the Church

There was a time when the church was very powerful. It was during that period that the early Christians rejoiced when they were deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was the thermostat that transformed the mores of society. Wherever the early Christians entered a town the power structure got disturbed and immediately sought to convict them for being "disturbers of the peace" and "outside agitators." But they went on with the conviction that they were "a colony of heaven" and had to obey God rather than man [sic]. They were small in number but big in commitment. They were too God-intoxicated to be "astronomically intimidated." They brought an end to such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contest.

Things are different now. The contemporary church is so often a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. It is so often the arch supporter of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church's often vocal sanction of things as they are.

*- King, MLK (Jr). Letter from a Birmingham Jail*

# The Love Ethic

[https://soundcloud.com/il\\_wesleyan/dr-martin-luther-king-jr-at-illinois-wesleyan-university-1966#t=43:27](https://soundcloud.com/il_wesleyan/dr-martin-luther-king-jr-at-illinois-wesleyan-university-1966#t=43:27)

# Illinois Western University, 1966

...do to us what you will and we will still love you. We will match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. And do to us what you will, and we will still love you. We cannot in all good conscience obey your unjust laws because non-cooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good. And so throw us in jail, and as difficult as that is, we will still love you. Bomb our homes and threaten our children and as difficult as it is, we will still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities at the midnight hours and drag us out on some wayside road and beat us and leave us half-dead and we will still love you. But be assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. And one day we will win our freedom but we will not only win freedom for ourselves. We will so appeal to your heart and your conscience, that we will win you in the process. And our victory will be a double victory.

-Martin Luther King (Jr)

# True Nonviolence

The tactic of nonviolence is a tactic of love that seeks the salvation and redemption of the opponent, not his [sic] castigation, humiliation and defeat. A pretended nonviolence that seeks to defeat and humiliate the adversary by spiritual instead of physical attack is little more than a confession of weakness. True nonviolence is totally different from this, and much more difficult. It strives to operate without hatred, without hostility, and without resentment. It works without aggression, taking the side of the good that it is able to find already present in the adversary.

*- Merton, T. Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*



**The only thing that's been a worse flop than the organisation of nonviolence has been the organisation of violence.**

*-Joan Baez*



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