

July 2009

**HATE: DESTROYING THE WORLD ONE PERSON AT A TIME**

Fellow Pilgrims:

This month, hate took at least four lives in our country. A guard at the Holocaust Museum in Washington DC was killed, allegedly by James van Brunn. James van Brunn is a hater of long-standing as his personal web site amply shows. Scott Roeder allegedly killed Dr. George Tiller, an abortion provider, while Dr. Tiller was ushering at Reformation Lutheran Church at a Sunday service. Scott Roeder is another hater of long standing. According to people who knew the men and family members, they were consumed by hate. Hate consumed two men who in turn, killed two others. The score is hate 4 and love 0. How can we understand this? Erich Hoffmann, Aristotle, and Martin Luther King, Jr. provide us with insight.

Erich Hoffmann is a WWII Luftwaffe fighter ace with 352 confirmed kills. Here is a man who has experienced war close up along with all the horror of WWII. He says, "Never allow yourself to hate a people because of the actions of a few....Never hate, it only eats you alive. Keep an open mind and always look for the good in people. You might be surprised by what you find." The lesson is clear: never hate. Hate transforms us by hardening us in ways that would horrify us before hate, a sin, got us by the mind and heart. Our body, mind, soul, and spirit gets deadened, oblivious, and impervious to the good around us.

Martin Luther King, Jr., helped awaken the soul of our country to the evils of racism and was killed because of it. He said, "He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetuate it." I believe he is restating the comment by the British politician Burke who said that for evil to triumph, good men have to do nothing. Few of us will run across someone like James van Brunn or Scott Roeder, but we will run across snippets of evil in the form of racist jokes or stereotypes. It could be gossip that slanders another. Evil and hate can take many forms. We need to meet evil and hate with love and loving words. Be vocal and say you disagree and explain why. Listen in order to find out why they think the way they do. It is better to convert someone's ideas with love than slam them for their beliefs.

Is there ever a time for anger? Yes there is. Read John 2: 12-25. Jesus went out, made a whip, and the attacked the moneylenders and the animal sellers. Jesus said, "Get out of here. How dare you turn my Father's house into a market." (John 2: 16) He exhibits righteous anger, not hate. Aristotle said, "Anyone can become angry—that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way—this is not easy." Jesus was angry with the right people at the right time, to the right degree, and in the right way. This is how we show anger. We must not show hate or let it lodge in our hearts and minds.

Where do you see love in your life? Pray to become a lover, saving the world one person at a time by helping transform hate into love. The time to love is now and the need is great. Evil and suffering is not dead. Look at all the deaths due to genocide in Africa, suicide bombs killing many innocent lives throughout the world, and the hatred of others due to their color, religion, ethnicity, or nationality. The struggle in our lives and in the spiritual realm is not finished, even though Jesus has won for us, the ultimate

victory. Will you answer the call to love? After all, if not you, who? If not now, when? If not here, where? Remember this prayer of NYFD Chaplain Mychal F. Judge who died on 9/11: “Lord, take me where You want me to go; let me meet who You want me to meet; tell me what You want me to say; and keep me out of Your way. Amen” Will you say, “Here I am” when God calls? (I Samuel 3: 1-21 and Isaiah 6: 1-13) Without you and me, evil and hate can triumph.

In Christ’s love,  
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