

GRIST

Diocese of New Ulm Social Concerns Office May, 2008

V. Choose Life

It is easy to fly into a passion – anybody can do that. But to be angry with the right person to the right extent and at the right time and with the right object and in the right way – that is not easy, and it is not everyone who can do it. *Aristotle*

We remember with shame that in the past we have exercised the high dominion of man with ruthless cruelty so that the voice of the earth, which should have gone up to Thee in song, has been a groan of travail. *St. Basil the Great*

I am opposed to all forms of therapeutic killing: war, assassination, lynching, abortion, capital punishment, genocide. *Wendell Berry*

The greatest prayer is patience. *Buddha*

From the earliest dawnings of policy to this day, the invention of man has been sharpening and improving the mystery of murder. *Edmund Burke*

We have no standard any more for anything, ever since human life is no longer the standard...Like many a prophet, his hatred of war made him wish for the defeat of his own side. The side he really belonged to was that of the victims...There is a wailing wall of humanity, and that is where I stand...The law of correspondence in psychological life: we cannot do anything to another person, no matter how secretly, without something corresponding happening to us. It may be possible that retribution is already contained in the form of our actions... How lamentable the man who is content with letting everything around him keep on in the same old way while nourishing himself from the murders that others commit for him. *Elias Canetti*

Held to be a crime when committed by individuals, homicide is called a virtue when committed by the state. *St. Cyprian*

I would really have gone to the cross for people if it were somehow necessary, and yet I am incapable of

living in the same room with anyone even for two days. In twenty-four hours I can begin to hate even the best people: one because he takes too long eating his dinner, another because he has a cold and keeps blowing his nose. *Fyodor Dostoyevsky*

We boil at different degrees. *Emerson*

Victory attained by violence is tantamount to a defeat, for it is momentary. *Gandhi*

Jesus, our advocate, has composed a prayer for our case. And our advocate is also our judge. He has inserted a condition in the prayer that reads: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Sometimes we say these words without carrying them out. Thus our words bind us more tightly. *St. Gregory the Great*

History says, *Don't hope on this side of the grave.* But then, once in a lifetime the longed-for tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme. So hope for a great sea-change on the far side of revenge. Believe that a further shore is reachable from here. *Seamus Heaney*

What is hateful to thyself do not do to another. This is the whole Law, the rest is commentary. *Hillel*

It is easier to love humanity than to love your neighbor. *Eric Hoffer*

Nobody ever forgets where he buried the hatchet. *Kin Hubbard*

Let us accustom ourselves henceforward to read on every creature these three words: "Receive, give, fear" – as if it should say, "Receive the blessing I offer you; give thanks to thy Creator for it; fear for the judgment which will be passed upon you according to the use you have made of me." *St. Ignatius of Loyola*

Prayer for our enemies is the highest summit of self-control. *St. John Chrysostom*

Violence deepens the brutality of the oppressor and increases the bitterness of the oppressed. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible. The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth. Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate. So it goes. Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Is it progress if a cannibal uses knife and fork?
Stanislaus Lec

Hatred is a salty jug offered to the thirsty.
Czeslaw Milosz

Who overcomes by force,
hath overcome but half his foe. *John Milton*

That which cannot be compassed by reason,
wisdom and discretion, can never be attained
by force. *Montaigne*

The only force I believe in is prayer.
Flannery O'Connor

Civilization is nothing else but the attempt
to reduce force to being the last resort.
Jose Ortega y Gasset

“Why do you kill me?” “What! Do you not live
on the other side of the water? If you lived on this
side, my friend, I should be an assassin, and it
would be unjust to slay you in this manner. But
since you live on the other side, I am a hero, and it
is just.” *Blaise Pascal*

Hate is always a clash between our spirit and
someone else's body. *Cesare Pavese*

No beast is more savage than man, when possessed
with power answerable to his rage. *Plutarch*

Like the greatest virtue and the worst dogs,
the fiercest hatred is silent. *Conrad Richter*

The history of the human race is written on a single
theme: How does love become stronger than death?

The composition is recomposed in each generation
by those whose love overcomes murdering or
dying. So history becomes a great song,
Augustine's *Carmen Humanum*. As often as the
lines rhyme, love has once again become stronger
than death. This rhyming, this connecting, is men's
function on earth. But that this is our function we
have only known since the birth of Christ.

Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy

Hesitation is the best cure for anger...Drunkenness
is simply voluntary insanity. *Seneca*

Revenge is barren: its delight is murder,
and its satiety, despair. *Friedrich Schiller*

Man is the only animal which causes pain to others
without any further purpose than just to cause
it...The chief source of the serious evils which
affect man is man himself: *homo homini lupus*.
Arthur Schopenhauer

To commit violent and unjust acts, it is not enough
for a government to have the will or even the
power; the habits, ideas, and passions of the time
must lend themselves to their committal.
Alexi de Tocqueville

Christ, in disarming Peter, unbelted every soldier.
Tertullian

Reconciliation is coming to an understanding our
hearts have been longing for. *Unknown*

Indulgence to oneself and severity toward others are
at bottom one and the same fault. *Valpereau*

It is forbidden to kill; therefore all murderers are
punished unless they kill in large numbers and to
the sound of trumpets. *Voltaire*

A hurtful act is the transference to others of the
degradation which we bear in ourselves...The same
suffering is much harder to bear for a high motive
than for a base one. The people who stood
motionless, from one to eight in the morning, for
the sake of having an egg, would have found it very
difficult to do in order to save a human life.
Simone Weil

Many promising reconciliations have broken down
because, while both parties came prepared to
forgive, neither party came prepared to be forgiven.
Charles Williams