CALLED BY OUR TRUE NAMES: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON PRISON MINISTRY

Address to “You Visited Me”: The Urgent Challenge of Prison Ministry October 29, 2010
Boston College School of Theology and Ministry and The Church in the 21st Century

I was asked by a friend recently to describe what my role was on today’s program and I found myself spontaneously saying, “Well.. I think of myself as something like the warm up band at rock concert, preparing the crowd for the featured West Coast band, “Sister Suzanne and the Bus Riders”!

On second and third reflection however I think that metaphor is actually misleading. It suggests that this conference is somehow about listening to performances. And that is not the case at all. A better musical metaphor might be the that we have all come together as persons who have been playing the instruments of the spirit if you will. Till now we’ve been doing that alone or in smaller groups and scattered communities. Today however we are gathered here to hear to what new sounds might be created when we finally listen to one another and play together. If it is performance, we are all of us in the act. So perhaps a more accurate image for my role is that magic moment we all know well who have heard the Boston’s Symphony. Every musicians is warming up individually and it is cacophonous. The suddenly the first violinist will play a single note to which all the players begin to tune their instruments. There arises a rich and complex sound from the full range of very different instruments. We don’t know what we will finally be created but in that moment we know we are hearing an orchestra of common purpose and not just a collection of individuals.

So my task this morning is to get us tuned up for what we shall all of us be doing all day, which all together I would call theological reflection. We are reflecting upon our various vocations of ministry to persons imprisoned in or released from America’s vast penal system or to imagine that more broadly, in the words of the mission statement of Jesuit Prison Ministries: The call of service to those imprisoned does not exclude anyone through this ministry: the prisoner, the persons victimized by crime, or the officers and staff of the prison system.
Spiritual director, Wilkie Au, wrote that a vocation is finding “a purpose for being in the world that is aligned with the purposes of God”. So we have to continuously ask what are the purposes of God at this point in history with respect to those persons within the American prison system? In the most general way the Abrahamic traditions are clear and together on that point: it is nothing less than the restoration of right relation between human persons and that Loving Creator that brought us into being. And the healing and restoration of right relations among persons living in community. What that actually should look like “on the ground” and in the particular, and how we might equip ourselves to collaborate with God in that purpose – well, that is what we have come to put our heads and hearts together to explore.

One thing that must leap out to us at the very beginning is that this purpose of God – the healing and restoration of right relationships among all persons effected by crime in violence and incarceration - is not the purpose of the American penal system at least as it has become politically and popularly understood over the last thirty years. During that time as you know the American prison population as increased six times over - giving this country the highest incarceration rate in the world. With 5% of the world’s population, the U.S. accounts for 25% of the world’s prisoners. If at one time in our history when the dominant religious influence on how prisons was the Religious Society of Friends, or the Quakers, prisons were conceived as places of spiritual and moral rehabilitation, that is no longer the case. Our colleague Fr. George Williams has written “As our reliance on mass incarceration increased, the ideology of corrections shifted from rehabilitation to retribution.” (Jesuit Prison Ministries Blog March 2008). This shift does not indict the many hundreds of dedicated and good hearted men and women working in treatment teams and in administrative positions within the prison systems who see it otherwise –and work heroically to uphold that ideal. But our prisons are public institutions and they reflect the political will and economic priorities of the majority culture that elects the officials who make laws and set the budgets. And that understanding of the purpose of prison was perhaps best illustrated to me by the reaction of my father nearly ten years ago when I first became involved as a volunteer at MCI Norfolk. After I described in a
phone call what I was doing his sole response was “don’t ever forget, son, these are BAD people or they wouldn’t be there in the first place”.

“Don’t forget, these are bad people”. This morning I most want to reflect theologically on the impact of that view on us, on prisoners themselves and on the communities to which they will return.

As I pick up that task I want to make one last contextual remark about what it means to theologize – and here I am going to perhaps sound a bit professorial .. but hey, that’s my day job.

Anglican theologian and evangelist John Wesley, the priest who rather accidently founded the Methodist movement, held that whenever we do theology we are involved in a conversation that has four interacting dimensions to it: scripture, tradition, reason and experience. Theologians have come to refer to this as the Wesleyan Quadrilateral and in many ways it remains a useful template for mapping how Roman Catholics, Episcopalians and other mainline Christians do theological reflection. I have drawn it here on this poster so that as our day rolls on we might notice how at any given point we move between these different elements. As I like to draw the Quadrilateral I put experience at the heart of the process. By experience I mean the prayerfully and thoughtfully appropriated experience of how life has most deeply impacted us, our stories of encounter, transformation, tragedy and grace. I am going to begin there this morning by talking about how I first stepped into this parallel universe
of the prison system and what I am learning. It is only the first of many experiences that we will be sharing in this room.

But my story illuminates and is informed by what my colleague Tom Groome has called The Story, the narrative of human engagement with the divine in history that is found in the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, and so I will have reference to two stories of Jesus a story about a man who went out on a limb, and a story about a man who was called out of a tomb – each of which have a lot to say about prison ministry both within but also outside the walls.

Tradition is the whole sum of the Christian movement’s historical expression of the life of faith. It is as Yale Church historian Jaroslav Pelikan memorable put it “the living witness of the dead” – which he contrasted with “traditionalism”, or “the dead witness of the living”. The quadrant of tradition includes doctrinal statements, the ecumenical councils for instance and for Roman Catholics magisterial teaching, but also devotional writing, autobiography, the lives of the saints living and dead, hymnology, liturgical texts, and for me this morning the visual representation of those two Jesus stories in two icons written by Orthodox iconographers. And finally there is reason – the quadrant in which we locate philosophy but also political science, sociology and for me in a very important way, social and developmental psychology. From experience that is the next place I want to visit on the quadrilateral because I believe that we can not do effective ministry without a critical understanding of the psychological impact of the social conditions - the racism, poverty or familial circumstances - that land persons in jail; and how incarceration itself is psychologically damaging.

So here we go. Ten years ago, 2000 a group then called Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation came into contact with members of the BC community, mostly staff and students and asked for help in staging their first national conference. MVFR – now renamed MVFHR – Murder Victims Families for Human Rights - was then and now a national net work of person who had lost family members to murder but who had decided that the execution of their son’s or father’s or mother’s murderer was not healing or helpful and who therefore
opposed the death penalty. They were in their own way part of that larger international philosophical and legal reform movement referred to as the Restorative Justice. A movement, to quote from one source “that moves from punishment to reconciliation, from vengeance against offenders to healing for victims, from alienation and harshness to community and wholeness, from negativity and destructiveness to healing, forgiveness and mercy.”

In many ways the three day conference that emerged from that very creative collaboration has a lot of similarities with what we are doing today. It was a bottom up rather than top down initiative. It did not begin with BC administrators and faculty, but like today’s work that was initiated by persons, like the students of the School of Theology and Ministry, who had an experience of encounter that had changed their view of life, and who wanted to do something about it.

The conference was called “Healing the Wounds of Murder” and I was privileged to work on the subcommittee that collaborated with MVFR members to put together the academic components that they felt would support and empower their membership. It was one of the most moving and powerful experiences of my thirty years at BC. It also made me vulnerable to saying yes when sometime after that I got a call from then Catholic chaplain at MCI Norfolk Sister Kathleen Deneven asking if I might consider coming out to Norfolk of an evening and giving a talk or leading a discussion for a group of Catholic prisoners who called themselves – the “Fully Alive” community – a reference to St. Irenaeus of Lyon’s famous line, “The glory of God is the human person fully alive”. It turns out that there was a steady stream of BC faculty and members of the Jesuit community who quietly had been involved with Catholic and other prisoners at Norfolk, at Framingham State, and at Suffolk House of Corrections for many years. Who knew? And many of them brought in by the irresistible persuasiveness of chaplains like Sister Kathleen. I will tell you right now that my experience resonates with that of a young French Dominican, Jean Joseph Lataste, O.P. who in September 1864 entered a women’s prison in Cadillac-sur-Garonne to preach a retreat but came away himself converted - spiritually “blown away” as it were by the depth of the piety and
commitment to the Gospel among those women, some of whom upon their release became the core of a new religious community he went on to found, The Dominican Sisters of Bethany.

But that is another story.. back to my own.

What I found in a crowded, poorly ventilated basement room that night was a group of men indeed more fully alive and present and engaged than just about any group I had ever encountered. What I brought with me was this icon and the story is meant to illuminate. By a providential coincidence it happens to be the story in the Gospel of Luke that tomorrow night or Sunday morning many of you will hear if you worship in a Roman Catholic or Episcopal or Presbyterian or any other community that uses the Revised Common Lectionary.


1 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” 6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

9 Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

What the men heard in this story and saw in this icon was something that they all could relate to quite directly. They saw it as a story of a transformative encounter, one that heals toxic shame –something about which they are only too tragically familiar.
There is a Zacchaeus – a man who is, shall we say, “vertically challenged”, and perhaps we might guess a man made to feel inadequate and inferior all of his life. A man in other words who lives with the undertow of toxic shame about something about which he has no control. But then he gets his chance to get even, to finally feel like he is a man of importance, or at least a man to be feared if he can’t be respected. He becomes one of the despised collaborators with the Roman occupiers authorized to collect the taxes the empire required of its subjects. Now the Romans had a policy that they would tell the tax collectors what they required them to send to the governor, but any thing over and above that amount the tax collector could keep as their commission. The kicker line is “and he was rich”. Zacchaeus has been soaking his fellow citizens of Jericho. And then one day the word gets out that this itinerant, wonder working rabbi from the Galilee is passing through town with his posse. and Zaccheus wants to see who he is and what he is about.

The story says that he can’t see over the crowd because of his height.
I once chose to lecture on this passage to an inter-faith gathering of clergy in Oklahoma City and discovered the morning of my talk that I had forgotten my bible back in Boston. Conveniently the Gideon Society had one in the nightstand of my Holiday Inn room, so I lifted it for the day. As it happens it was the original King James Version (this was after all Oklahoma) and the passage read *And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press*. I had never read this in the old King James version and almost cracked up reading it aloud as I imagined Jesus the celebrity rabbi surrounded by the first century equivalent of *paparazzi*. The men at Norfolk however had a more psychologically insightful imagining of what was going. They wondered if the towns folk of Jericho were really getting even by preventing Zaccheus from getting through.. Elbowing the little guy back they were getting even with a man who they despised.

and so he climbs up into a sycamore tree.

Then there is this encounter - Jesus looks up and spies Zaccheus and shouts at him to hurry down (the “urgent call of prison ministry”?!) because Jesus wants to eat at his home. “Eat at his home!” No wonder there is an angry buzz that begins to spread through the crowd. In Jesus time and throughout the traditional culture of the Middle East even down to today, who you choose to eat with is a matter of great moral, spiritual and social consequence. Eating together establishes bonds of affiliation and friendship and even an obligation of protection that is very serious business indeed. To eat with someone, especially someone whose behavior or social status renders them ritually and morally impure, is to break a major religious taboo. Please to note, and this is critical, Jesus desire to dine with Zaccheus is offered unconditionally. Jesus does not say, “IF you repent of how you have defrauded and exploited your fellow citizens THEN I will accept your hospitality and be your friend.” No, Jesus offer of this intimacy is made without any prior conditions.. We see here of course the pattern found throughout the gospel narratives. “He eats with prostitutes, tax collectors and sinners” (Mark 2:15-18) is one of the charges leveled against Jesus and his disciples by his contemporaries.
As the men at Norfolk prison contemplated the icon and ruminated on the narrative, they made a very penetrating observation. Zaccheus is depicted with a nimbus or halo proclaiming him “Saint Zaccheus”. Why? He has not come down from the tree, has not made the extravagant offer of repentance that would have compensated many times over those he has injufred. Why is he already “Saint Zaccheus”?  

This is how some of the men answered their own question. He is “Saint Zaccheus” perhaps because that is who Jesus sees. Jesus does not see the shamed and vengeful tax collector. He sees a man who has taken a risk, a man he goes out on a limb with some kind of hope.. perhaps barely conscious, that this healer from the Galilee might heal his own wounded soul. And out of that desire he makes himself vulnerable.

Then the men’s attention was drawn to two little figures, children apparently, that the icon writer at the Orthodox Monastery of the Holy Transfiguration in Brookline where this was created added to the icon. They are “extra textual”, almost like a kind of visual midrash in the margins of the story. But here too these men in the prison at Norfolk discovered a level of significance many would have missed, myself included. Perhaps they wondered, these two figures are the visualization of what is going on inside Zaccheus as Jesus makes this extraordinary, precedent breaking offer. “They are like our inner children”, one inmate commented, “.. some parts of ourselves”. There is Zaccheus up the tree and the painted has him gesture towards himself almost as if he is saying, “What? ... you talking to me? You want to eat with ME?” That is the part of us that has identified with the judgments of the crowd and that is represented the little figure on the right, who clings to the robes of the sanctioning elders, even as he/she looks over the shoulder at the figure of Jesus – attracted by frightened by this radical transposition of values. Perhaps this is that part of us so attached in a perverse way to our shamed identity that it protests with Woody Allen, “Any club that would have me as a member I would not want to be a member of.” Jesus’ seeing Zaccheus not as the powerful sinner but as a Child of Abraham, is simply too good to be believed. Think here for a moment of the parallel process in the life of the man convicted of rape and murder whom Sister Helen Prejean writes of in her book, Dead Man Walking. Before he can come to any genuine
repentance and compunction for his actions, Sister Helen’s refusal to be thrown off by his protested racial superiority, his arrogance and his crudity eventually breaks down the wall by which he defended himself again the painful affect of his deep sense of shame—for his poverty, his fatherlessness, his illiteracy and failure, and the insecurity about his own masculinity that made it impossible for him to resist the judgment of the man who actually instigated the crime.

If we might shift for a moment to the “reason” pole of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, I would like to commend to you the significant work of James Gilligan, M.D. Dr. Gilligan for many years was the chief forensic psychiatrist for the Massachusetts Department of Corrections. In that capacity he interviewed many of the most violent offenders in the prison system. His analysis of what he learned over those many years is summarized in his book *Violence Reflection on a National Epidemic*. Gilligan limits his analysis here to male offenders who statistically still account for most of the violent crime in this country. He found that without exception the men that he interviewed had a history of physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse. They also were disproportionately children of poverty, stressed home environments especially with absent fathers or mothers who were unavailable for all kinds of reasons including their own incarceration, addiction or mental illness In his book he argues that the “pathogenic factor” in the epidemic of violence in this country is toxic shame a shame that has its roots in childhood experienced but can not be separated from the wounds of race, class, sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation, and the sexism and the sexism that makes emotional dependency a source of shame rather than a natural way in which human beings become fully human.

So if shame is the great wound to which the good news of the gospel must be addressed, what heals? The answer is to be found in the story we just reflected on. What heals is to be called by name, our true name and thus, invited to come down from the defensive isolation of our defensive identities and share real human contact.

I would like to return now to the experiential heart of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral and tell a story of what I think the Jesus-Zaccheus encounter looks like in contemporary experience.
For this I turn to Fr. Greg Boyle, S.J. former pastor of Dolores Mission and founder of Homeboy Industries. Dolores Mission is the poorest parish in the whole archdiocese of Los Angeles. It is also located in arguably the most violent neighborhoods of LA where latino young adults adults, like their African American and some of their Asian contemporaries across down find an embattled sense of fragile self esteem by membership in gangs and the drinking and drug use and endless cycles of gang-banging and vengeance that they perpetuate.

Fr. Greg writes about his ministry to and with his “homies” in his book Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion. Along with Gilligan’s book it is the other text that I think is a must read for all of us involved in this work.

Fr. Greg Boyle quotes biblical theologian Marcus Borg that the principle suffering of the poor is shame and disgrace. It is, again, toxic shame, a global sense of failure of the whole self. (Boyle. p. 52)

“Homies seem to live in the zip code of the eternally disappointing, and need a change of address. To this end one hopes (against all human inclination) to model not the “one false move” God, but the “no matter whatness of God. You seek to imitate the kind of God you believe in, where disappointment is, well Greek, to Him. You strive to live the black spiritual that says, ‘God looks beyond our fault and sees our need’.”

However, Boyle says, “before this can take hold in gang members, they strut around in protective shells of posturing which stunts their real and complete selves.”

I read that and suddenly realized that a haunting and demoralizing sense of shame for somehow not measuring up pervades any social group that rank orders human beings by some extrinsic measure of value rather than our innate worth and dignity before God. And to that extent and for that reason, it is not just Los Angeles Homeboys that “strut around in protective shells of posturing”. Have you ever been to a national conference of academics ... in any discipline? A lot of protective shells of posturing, even if the regulation uniform is a herring
bone coat and tie or power suit and not low hanging cargo pants. It is not pretty.. a well placed critical response to a paper can wound too.. Trust me on that one.

Here is Greg Boyle describing an interaction with a young gang member in one of “rehabilitation” camps to which the courts will remand minors for offenses that fall short of felonies. I love it because here Greg so beautifully embodies the spirit and strategy of Jesus’ shout out to Zaccheus up in the sycamore tree. I will only translate the essential Spanish in this remarkable exchange.

Fr. Boyle writes:

*Often after Mass at the camps, kids will line up to talk one on one. The volunteers sometimes invite the minors to confession, but usually the kids just want to talk, be heard, get a blessing. At Camp Afflerbaugh, I’m seated on a bench outside in a baseball field and one by one, the homies come over to talk briefly. This day, there’s quite a line up. The next kid approaching, I can tell, is all swagger and pose. His walk is chignon in its highest gear. Is head bobs, side to side, to make sure all eyes are riveted. He sits down, we shake hands, but he seems unable to shake the scowl etched across his face.*

“What’s your name?” I ask him.

“SNIPER”, he sneers.

“Okay, look (I had been down this block before), I have a feeling you didn’t pop outta your mom and she took one look at your ass and said ‘Sniper’. So come on, dog, what’s your name?”

“Gonzales.” he relents a little.

Okay now, son. I know the staff here will call you by your last name. I’m not down with that. Tell me, mijo, what’s your mom call you?”

“Cabron”. (roughly translated, “bastard”)
There is not even the slightest flicker of innocence in his answer.

“Oye, no cabe duda.  But son, I’m looking for a birth certificate here.”

The kid softens. I can tell it’s happening. But there is embarrassment and a newfound vulnerability.

“Napoleon,” he manages to squeak out, pronouncing it in Spanish.

“Wow”, I say. “That’s a fine, noble, historic name. But I’m almost positive that when your jefita calls you, she doesn’t use the whole nine yardas. Come on mijito, do you have an apoda? What’s your mom call you?

Then I watch him go to some far, distant place – a location he has not visited in some time. His voice, body language, and whole being are taking on a new shape – right before my eyes.

“Sometimes,” – his voice so quiet I lean in – “Sometimes ... when my mom’s not mad at me ... she calls me .... Napito”.

I watch this kid move, transformed, from Sniper to Gonzalez, to Cabron, to Napoleon, to Napito. We all just want to be called by the name our mom uses when she is not pissed off at us.

“We all just want to be called by the name our mom uses when she is not pissed off at us”. To put this another way, we want to be called by the name that our Creator had for us from the foundation of the world- the name that marks our own lovableness, uniqueness and innate dignity and worth.

Before concluding I want briefly to turn our attention to one other story from Scripture and from the Orthodox tradition, one other iconographic depiction.. I do this to honor the other pole of prison ministry.. It is important to find ourselves in the neighborhood of Zaccheus – to see Jericho as MCI Concord, or Framingham, or Walpole or Norfolk. But it is also critical to look at how prisoners fare who have completed their sentences or been given parole. Here we
can perhaps look at another neighborhood – the little village outside Jerusalem called Bethany – where Jesus would regularly dine with his closest friends, Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus. Here I am going to count on your memory of this singular story that shows up only in the Gospel of John (John 11:1-44), even as the story of Zaccheus appears on in Luke. To my mind it is a parable about what is asked of us in ministry to the men and women who have been liberated from physical incarceration but are far from free and quite vulnerable to the being pulled back into the cycles of poverty, shame and hopelessness that helped bring them to prison in the first place.

You know the story, Jesus gets word that his friend Lazarus is sick but by the time he arrives at Bethany his friend has already died and been several days in the tomb. Mary’s sobbing protest, “if you had only been here my brother would not have died” occasions the shortest line in the whole New Testament, “Jesus wept”. So strongly that the crowds of mourners comment to one another, “See how he loved him.” The icon here takes us to the moment after Jesus has prayed and summoned his friend from the Tomb.

Jesus paroles Lazarus from his sentence to MCI Death but then tells the people of Bethany that their obligation to their neighbor has just begun, “unbind him and let him go free” is Jesus’ command to them ... and to us. The bite and burden of that mandate, and society’s resistance to it, is vividly illustrated in the figure in the very center of the icon who is conspicuously covering his nose with the sleeve of his robe. Earlier you may recall Martha, Lazarus own sister, protests the moving of the stone, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” The original King James version puts it more bluntly, “Lord, he stinketh”. I thought of Martha recently when one of our brothers who has been imprisoned for several decades received parole and was deeply hurt when he found that his own sister who while he was in prison was encouraging, now was reluctant to have anything to do with supporting him, suggesting that perhaps he would be better off staying in prison. As so many persons at this conference know only too well, the general societal attitude towards persons who are released from prison too often is that they are contaminated, they stink, and the barriers to their employment, housing and social affiliation are raised to keep them away. It is
our task as prison ministers to find ourselves in solidarity with these sisters and brothers, and to
do the hard work with them of removing the many bands of prejudice and fear, poor education,limited opportunities, and internalized shame that have bound them and held them back.

Jesus command remains, “unbind them and let them go free”.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these opening reflections. I look forward to our conversation through all territories of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, but most especially how today we shall our own stories of being up a tree or of being called out of our respective tombs and liberated by the loving care of our communities.

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ON LINE RESOURCES:

Jesuit Prison Ministries  http://jpminc.org  See especially the archive of blogs. For example “Archive for March 2008” for “Some Reflections on Our Vision of Prison Ministry” and “A Philosophical Critique of Prison Segregation Units” by George Williams .S.J.

BOOKS


Fr. Greg Boyle has been the pastor of Dolores Mission Church, the poorest parish in his hometown of Los Angeles and the founder in 1992 of Homeboy Industries  http://www.homeboy-industries.org/  whose mission statement is “Jobs not Jails: Homeboy Industries assists at-risk and formerly gang-involved youth to become positive and contributing members of society through job placement, training and education”.


Based on the extensive experience in developing an emotional literacy program for inmates of Boston based clinical social worker Robin Casarjian. See  www.lionheart.org  for information on this emotional literacy educational project now found in prisons across the U.S. Also comes with a work book and tapes.

James Gilligan, M.D. directed the Center for the Study of Violence at Harvard Medical School, was former medical director of the Bridgewater State Hospital for the Criminally Insane and director of mental health for the prison system of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. One of the most important books analyzing the roots of violence in pathological shame reactions among men related to the injuries of class, culture, gender and race and sexual orientation.


Jens Soering, ([www.jenssoering.com](http://www.jenssoering.com)) - A Catholic convert who has been in prison since 20 and has served 24 year on two life sentences for a double murder, currently at Buckingham Correctional Center, Virginia.


*The Church of the Second Chance: A Faith Based Approach to Prison Reform.* (Lantern, 2008).


A self described “asthmatic Jewish kid” and out of work recent Harvard grad, Avi Steinberg takes a job as the prison librarian at the Suffolk County House of Corrections in South Bay, and describes life “inside” as he experiences as the man the inmates call “bookie”.


By distinguished Mennonite theologian and social activist, Howard Zehr, it is a practical, compact and thoughtful introduction to “restorative justice”, a shift in paradigm thinking about the nature of crime and the criminal justice system that aims at healing the wounds of crime comprehensively.

See [www.restorativejustice.org](http://www.restorativejustice.org) for more resources, contacts and readings.