

***Pacem in Terris* and a Nonviolent Spirituality of White Resistance to Hyper-incarceration**

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In *Pacem in terris*, Blessed Pope John XXIII held that true peace must be rooted in a moral order “founded on truth, built according to justice, vivified, and integrated by charity, and put into practice in freedom.”¹ As part of this vision, he emphasized the value of full participation in public discourse, ordered to the common good through the exercise of rights and duties.

Following his lead, one might ask: Whose voices are heard in the political discourse of daily life? Whose interests are at stake, and are those persons afforded full exercise of their rights and duties in shaping the common good? These questions would serve well in guiding personal and communal discernment of current signs of the times in accord with John XXIII’s account of the moral order of truth, justice, charity, and freedom.

Among those excluded from full participation presently are those caught up in the prison system in the United States. Hyper-incarceration, the grossly disproportionate rate of imprisonment of people of color, particularly African American and Latino men, represents one of the most pressing threats to peace today, and yet it is also one of the most neglected. Alex Mikulich, Laurie Cassidy, and I recently published a book on this subject, and in this essay I will build on that work in conversation with *Pacem in terris* to explore what a spirituality of non-violence might contribute to consideration of hyper-incarceration as one of the most prominent structures of violence facing U.S. society today.²

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¹ Blessed Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in terris* (Encyclical Letter, 1963), in David O’Brien and Thomas Shannon, eds. *Catholic Social Thought. The Documentary Heritage* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992), paragraph 167. All references to Catholic social teaching texts will be by paragraph number.

² Alex Mikulich, Laurie Cassidy, and Margaret Pfeil, *The Scandal of White Complicity in U.S. Hyper-incarceration* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). This essay holds *Pacem in terris* in conversation with portions of chapters 5 and 6 of that volume.

Hyper-incarceration: A Structure of Violence

As Mikulich notes, “The United States incarcerates more people than does any country in the world, including China. Whereas Canada imprisons 116 people for every 100,000 adults and children and Russia 628 per 100,000, the United States incarcerates 750 people per 100,000. In 2007, nearly 2.3 million people were housed in US prisons and jails, and more than 7.3 million were in the criminal justice system. . . . Comprising only 6 percent of the global population, the United States holds 25 percent of all the world’s prisoners.”³ African Americans account for over forty percent of those incarcerated in the U.S. currently, while comprising twelve percent of the general population. “Over a lifetime,” Mikulich writes, “nearly one in three black men and well over half of black high school dropouts will spend some time in prison. These estimates suggest that young black men are more likely to go to prison than attend college, serve in the military, or, in the case of high school dropouts, be in the labor market. For the nation’s most marginalized groups, prison ‘has now become a normal and anticipated marker in the transition to adulthood.’”⁴

The task of making whiteness visible is an essential aspect of cultivating a spirituality of white resistance in the face of hyper-incarceration. Barbara Applebaum writes, “White complicity connects individuals to systems in which the privileges of some are relationally predicated upon the unjust exclusions of others. White people perform and sustain whiteness continuously, often without conscious intent, often by doing nothing out of the ordinary.”⁵ To make whiteness visible and to encourage white people to interrogate our own complicity in racial oppression, Applebaum suggests posing the question, “How might I be complicit in sustaining rather than challenging systemic oppression and white privilege?”⁶ Specifically, how might I be complicit in sustaining rather than challenging the system of hyper-incarceration in the United States? Answering these questions will unfold as a process and will require development of a deep contemplative awareness of the interrelated personal and social dimensions of the structural sin of white superiority

³ Mikulich et al., p. 34-35.

⁴ Mikulich et al., 36, citing Devah Pager, *Marked: Race, Crime, and Finding Work in an Era of Mass Incarceration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 3.

⁵ Barbara Applebaum, “White Complicity and Social Justice Education: Can One Be Culpable Without Being Liable?” *Educational Theory* 57:4 (2007), p. 453-467 at 456.

⁶ Barbara Applebaum, “Race Ignore-ance, Colortalk, and White Complicity: Race Is . . . Race Isn’t,” *Educational Theory* 56:3 (2006), p. 345-362 at 353.

and its particular institutional manifestations, including but not limited to the system of hyper-incarceration.

Pacem in terris offers a hopeful account of peace as right relationship. In the face of hyper-incarceration as a grave sign of the present time, as a systemic violation of justice corrosive to the deep peace of right relationship envisioned in *Pacem in terris*, what might a spirituality of nonviolent white resistance look like?

A Nonviolent Spirituality of White Resistance to Hyper-incarceration

Writing in 1743, a young Quaker named John Woolman recounted the experience of being asked by his employer to draft a bill of sale for another Quaker to take possession of a slave.

The thing was Sudden, and though the thoughts of writing an Instrument of Slavery for one of my fellow creatures felt uneasie, yet I remembered I was hired by the year; that it was my master who [directed] me to do it, and that it was an Elderly man, a member of our society, who bought her; so through weakness I gave way, and wrote it, but at the Executing it I was so Afflicted in my mind, that I said before my Master and the friend, that I believed Slavekeeping to be a practice inconsistent with the Christian Religion: this, in some degree, abated my uneasiness, yet as often as I reflected seriously upon it I thought I should have been clearer if I had desired to be Excused from it, as a thing against my conscience, for such it was.⁷

Faced with a similar situation sometime later, Woolman wrestled with the awkwardness of refusing to write the will of a slave owner, only to find tremendous spiritual consolation in his chosen path of integrity:

I spake to him in the fear of the Lord, and he made no reply to what I said, but went away: he himself had some concerns in the practice, and I thought he was displeased with me. In this case I had a fresh confirmation, that acting contrary to present outward interest, from a [motive of Divine love, and in] regard to Truth and Righteousness, and thereby incurring the resentments of people, opens the way to a treasure which is better than silver, and to a friendship Exceeding the friendship of men.⁸

⁷ John Woolman, *Journal 1743*, in *The Journal and Essays of John Woolman*, ed. Amelia Mott Gummere (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), p. 161. For a general account of John Woolman's anti-racism, see also Herbert Aptheker, *Anti-Racism in U.S. History. The First Two Hundred Years* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1993), p. 76-78.

⁸ *Journal 1754*, p. 175.

Woolman's experience lifts up a number of points to consider in relation to the spirituality of nonviolence. First, the practice of slavery in his time was so culturally and legally normative for white people that even self-professed members of one of the traditional Christian peace churches, the Quakers, could sell black human beings among themselves seemingly without difficulty, moral or otherwise. This practice represented an assumed part of white *habitus*. As the anti-racist scholar and activist Joseph Barndt notes, they inhabited the context of colonial America and were shaped by the two main ideological principles of colonization: white supremacy and the function of people of color in service of white people.⁹

Secondly, in light of this context, Woolman had to correlate his emerging dilemma of conscience with the reality at hand and make a case to his employer explaining his refusal to broker yet another sale of a black person. Only with considerable effort was he able to elicit from his fellow Christian pacifist some admission of "concerns in the practice" of slavery. Evidently, slavery did not qualify as a violent institution and therefore something Quakers at the time would reject as a violation of their faith commitment.

What constituted the moral ground of reality for these two Quakers? The broader social, cultural, economic, political, and legal context not only condoned but facilitated as normative the practice of slave-trading among white people. Having long before been conferred the status of normativity in the dominant white culture, its morality seemed beyond question. More than two centuries later, offering insight into the civil rights movement, Thomas Merton would notice the same cultural dynamic according white racism ethically normative status even when it so egregiously violated the moral norms of white Christians' faith commitments: "But we know from experience with other notorious historical forms of fanaticism, that societies which 'experience their reality' on this oniric and psychopathic level are precisely those whose members are most convinced of their own rightness, their own integrity, indeed their own complete infallibility. It is this experience of unreality as real, and as something to be defended against objective facts and rights as though against the devil himself, that produces the inferno of racism and race conflict."¹⁰

⁹ Joseph Barndt, *Understanding and Dismantling Racism. The Twenty-First Century Challenge to White America* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), p. 155.

¹⁰ Merton, "Letters to a White Liberal," in *Seeds of Destruction* (New York, Ferrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1964) p. 48-49.

As Alex Mikulich has noted, the culturally dominant norms of whiteness mean that objective facts of the present and past, such as the violent violation of Christian belief in creation of humans as *imago Dei* through the institutions of slavery and hyper-incarceration, go unacknowledged. This phenomenon represents what Gregory Baum has called false consciousness, involving the broad-based cultural assumption of objective, morally disordered patterns of behavior and institutionalized practices as normatively right. Baum identifies false consciousness as an important manifestation of systemic sin. Similarly, Blessed Pope John Paul II invoked the language of “structures of sin” to identify morally disordered economic and social systems that “often function almost automatically.”¹¹

Woolman’s narrative adumbrates a path of Christian nonviolence as a spiritual discipline of resistance to slavery in the U.S. of his time that may offer a promising means of resisting forms of slavery in our contemporary context as well. Following Loïc Wacquant and Michelle Alexander, I regard the current system of hyper-incarceration in the U.S. as a kind of neo-slavery.

The Beatitudes: A Framework for a Nonviolent Spirituality of White Resistance

As part of his commitment to nonviolence as a way of being in the world, Mahatma Gandhi cultivated the spiritual practice of reading the Sermon on the Mount every day. Along with Thomas Merton, he understood what many Christians have never grasped: The text of Mt. 5:1 – 7:28, and the beatitudes in particular, provides a spiritual wellspring for the ascetical practice of nonviolence as a way of life.¹² By correlating the beatitudes with elements of the experience of Woolman and other exemplary practitioners of active nonviolence, the shape of a spirituality of contemplative nonviolent resistance emerges, one hopefully supple enough to grapple with the complexities of white privilege and hyper-incarceration.

In focusing on the outlines of a nonviolent spirituality of white resistance, there is a risk of once again reinforcing white cultural dominance.

¹¹ Blessed John Paul II, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, (The Vatican, 1987), #16, accessed online at <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis_en.html>, accessed on July 9, 2012. Vatican documents are cited by paragraph number.

¹² See Merton, “Blessed Are the Meek,” in *Faith and Violence* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), p. 17.

Can a nonviolent spirituality of white resistance succeed in de-centering the white subject culturally and institutionally? Here, the beatitudes offer some hopeful (and even salvific) guidance. As Glen Stassen has argued, the beatitudes do not represent high ideals to be achieved through individual effort – one of the marks of dominant white culture. Rather, they point to “God’s gracious deliverance and our joyous participation. Here in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says we are blessed because God is not distant and absent; we experience God’s reign and presence in our midst and will experience it even more in the future. Therefore each beatitude begins and ends with the joy, the happiness, the blessedness of the good news of participation in God’s gracious deliverance.”¹³

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Woolman grew in his capacity to mediate God’s love transparently through a beatitudinal poverty that connoted both material detachment as well as an interior freedom marked by the humility of the meek. Jesus’ way involves pursuit of truth as part of liberation, and this process begins first of all with interior freedom, encompassing the depth and breadth of one’s whole manner of being in the world. Perceptively, Jim Douglass poses a question to himself and to all who take up the path of nonviolence: “How far would we like to go in?”¹⁴ For white people trying to face the truth of white complicity in the system of hyper-incarceration, with its reverberations in every aspect of U.S. society, this question serves as a portal to the spiritual discipline, or *askesis*, of a nonviolent spirituality of white resistance to hyper-incarceration.

For his part, John Woolman gradually developed a spiritual asceticism of nonviolence that sought to affirm the dignity of all human life by stripping away all enslaving attachments. He declined lodging and transportation provided at the cost of exploitation, shunned dyed clothing, sugar, and the use of silver vessels due to the oppressive labor conditions by which they were wrought, and refused to pay war taxes.¹⁵

¹³ Glen H. Stassen, *Living the Sermon on the Mount. A Practical Hope for Grace and Deliverance* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), p. 43.

¹⁴ Jim Douglass, *Resistance and Contemplation*, p. 46-47, in conversation with the cover of Bob Dylan’s album, *John Wesley Harding*.

¹⁵ See *Journal 1763*, 246-248, *Journal, 1770*, 283, and *Journal, 1772*, 308-310, 312, 330; Dorothy Soelle, *The Silent Cry. Mysticism and Resistance*, 243-246; and *The Wisdom of John Woolman*, 6 ff.

Over time, he chose to limit his own income as a means of cultivating spiritual freedom by deepening his friendship with God. Over against a culture of voracious desire to possess not only goods but people as well, Woolman became convinced of the power of God's love to free humanity by stoking a desire to love what God loves. "There is a Love which stands in Nature; and a Parent beholding his Child in Misery, hath a Feeling of the Affliction, but in Divine Love, the Heart is enlarged towards Mankind universally, and prepar'd to sympathize with Strangers, though in the lowest Stations of Life."¹⁶

Speaking at the Riverside Church in New York City one year to the day before his assassination, with the carnage of Vietnam war rising to a bloody crescendo, Martin Luther King, Jr., drew the systemic connection among U.S. militarism, materialism, and racism, putting his finger on the cultural assumptions of whiteness that underpinned slavery, sped the drive toward the war in Vietnam, and still endure in the present U.S. context in the form of hyper-incarceration. Advocating a radical revolution of values in the U.S., King urged, "We must rapidly begin to shift from a 'thing-oriented' society to a 'person-oriented' society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered."¹⁷ Writing just a few years earlier, Thomas Merton also noticed that both the national defense system and systemic racism in the U.S. involve the sacrifice of the person and personal rights to systemic interests: "... It is not really the person and his rights who come first, but the system. Not flesh and blood, but an abstraction."¹⁸ Ultimately, all persons' interests are superseded in the dominant white U.S. culture by the interests of business, Merton rightly perceived: "It seems to me that we have little genuine interest in human liberty and in the human person. What we are interested in, on the contrary, is the unlimited freedom of the corporation. When we call ourselves the 'free world' we mean first of all the world in which *business* is free. And the freedom of the person comes only after that, because, in our eyes, the freedom of the person is dependent on money."¹⁹

¹⁶ *Last Essays*, "On the Slave Trade," in *The Journal and Essays of John Woolman*, ed. Amelia Mott Gummere (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), p. 499 and 500-501; cf. *Last Essays*, "On Loving Our Neighbours as Ourselves," p. 488-496.

¹⁷ King, "A Time to Break Silence," in *A Testament of Hope. The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.* ed. James M. Washington (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1986), p. 240.

¹⁸ Thomas Merton, "Letters to a White Liberal," in *Seeds of Destruction* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1964), p. 16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22-23.

In drawing these systemic connections and living out their implications, King and Merton had a kindred spirit in Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement. To those who objected to her pacifism during World War II, Dorothy pointed out the passivity of comfortable U.S. Americans in the face of the race and class wars ravaging their society while the world war raged, as if these manifestations of violence were not of a piece.²⁰ The Catholic Worker community's longtime retreat director, Fr. John Hugo, wondered at the hypocrisy of Americans in condemning Hitler's treatment of the Jews while upholding Jim Crow laws in their own country.²¹ In the face of these interrelated structures of hatred and fear, Dorothy exhorted the Catholic Worker houses of hospitality to wield the works of mercy as spiritual weapons on the frontlines of American inner cities, beginning right in their own neighborhoods with the people on their own streets. Like John Woolman two centuries earlier, she understood that structural transformation aligned with the revolution of values that King advocated must stand in dynamic interrelationship with personal conversion expressed in very concrete lifestyle practices.

Voluntary poverty was an essential component of her active nonviolence because with the mystics, she understood the spiritual interrelationship of possession, violence, and ego. As Dorothy Sölle noted in her work, *The Silent Cry*, a fortress of ego undergirds human attachment to material goods, facilitating use of violence in defense of possessions.²² In the white-knuckled grip of possessions, one comes finally to the point of being completely possessed by them, ultimately forfeiting one's very identity to them. Dante's moneylenders come to mind here, absorbed forever on the outer reaches of the seventh circle of hell by loveless fascination with the moneybags strung around their necks.²³ For them, consummate absorption in possessions meant the final consumption of their humanity. In the end, they found not egolessness but the

²⁰ Dorothy Day, *Selected Writings*. (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993), "Politics and Principles," p. 264.

²¹ John Hugo, "The Law of Love," *Catholic Worker* (June 1943), in *Weapons of the Spirit*, ed. David Scott and Mike Aquilina (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 1997), p. 163.

²² Dorothy Sölle, *The Silent Cry. Mysticism and Resistance*, translated by Barbara and Martin Rumscheidt (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001). I have developed this connection between Dorothy Day's commitment to voluntary poverty and to active nonviolence more fully in "Active Nonviolence in Times of War: The Witness of Dorothy Day," *Journal for Peace & Justice Studies* 13:1 (2003), p. 19-30.

²³ See Inferno, Canto XVII in "The Divine Comedy," *The Portable Dante*, ed. Mark Musa (New York: Penguin Books, 1995).

implosion of personal identity, rendering them incapable of loving self-gift in relationship to God and other human beings.

On the other hand, as Sölle notices, “[b]ecoming empty or ‘letting go’ of the ego, possession, and violence is the precondition of the creativity of transforming action.”²⁴ Thus, following John of the Cross’ insight that the fullness of love unfolds along the way of nothingness,²⁵ Dorothy Day turned to Thérèse of Lisieux as an exemplar who witnessed to the truth of stripping oneself of attachment to material things and to one’s very self.²⁶ Of Thérèse’s response to the trials and daily “pinpricks” of convent life, Day wrote, “She knew she had ‘to die in order to live’ and that every wound meant a killing of the ego.”²⁷ Thérèse herself described such detachment as true poverty of spirit.²⁸

The ascetic discipline of dying to self is at the heart of a nonviolent spirituality of resistance to racism. As Bryan Massingale put it, “Racial solidarity is a *paschal* experience, one that entails a dying of a false sense of self and a renunciation of racial privilege so as to rise to a new identity and a status that is God-given.”²⁹ In the Birmingham civil rights protest, Merton found a call to white people to embark upon personal conversion and structural transformation. That witness of nonviolent resistance, undertaken by children among others, called whites to recognize “that the cancer of injustice and hate which is eating white society and is only partly manifested in racial segregation with all its consequences, *is rooted in the heart of the white man himself*.”³⁰ If white people were truly to internalize this loving, courageous witness, Merton was convinced, “they would cease to be the people they were. They would have to ‘die’ to everything which was familiar and secure. They would have to die to their past, to their society with its prejudices and its inertia, die to its false beliefs. . .”³¹

Like Woolman, King, and Day, Merton readily grasped that this paschal journey would entail a total transformation of white *habitus*,

²⁴ Sölle, *The Silent Cry*, p. 253.

²⁵ “Pride,” in William D. Miller, *All Is Grace. The Spirituality of Dorothy Day*, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1987), p. 97.

²⁶ Cf. Dorothy Day, *Thérèse* (Springfield, Illinois: Templegate Publishers, 1960), 88.

²⁷ Day, *Thérèse*, p. 128.

²⁸ *Story of a Soul. The Autobiography of St. Thérèse of Lisieux*, trans. John Clarke, O.C.D. (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1976), p. 226.

²⁹ Bryan Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church* (Marynoll: Orbis Books, 2010), p. 121.

³⁰ Merton, “Letters to a White Liberal,” p. 45-46.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47-48.

manifested in both its interior and exterior dimensions: “If they are forced to listen to what the Negro is trying to say, the whites may have to admit that their prosperity is rooted to some extent in injustice and in sin. And, in consequence, this might lead to a complete re-examination of the political motives behind all our current policies, domestic and foreign, with the possible admission that we are wrong. Such an admission might, in fact, be so disastrous that its effects would dislocate our whole economy and ruin the country.”³² Considering the implications of the web of complicity represented by the “giant triplets” of racism, militarism, and materialism, true human freedom for each and every person in U.S. society will involve just this sort of personal and structural transformation. It is indeed the paschal mystery to which Jesus invites his followers.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

A disposition of mourning the almost total separation from God’s love entailed by systemic racism enables those complicit in white privilege to begin to notice the depth of loss at stake in hyper-incarceration. In his own day, contemplating the devastating reality of slavery and the morally corrupt sense of white superiority underlying it, John Woolman grieved this structural violence out of a profound sense of God’s mourning for God’s creation. Writing in his journal of slaves he encountered on a visit to Quakers in Virginia in 1757, he records:

These are a people by whose labour the other inhabitants are in a great measure supported, and many of them in the luxuries of life. These are a people who have made no agreement to serve us and who have not forfeited their liberty that we know of. These are souls for whom Christ died, and for our conduct toward them we must answer before that Almighty Being who is no respecter of persons.

They who know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, will therein perceive that the indignation of God is kindled against oppression and cruelty, and in beholding the great distress of so numerous a people will find cause for mourning.³³

Institutionalized desecration of God’s creation *imago Dei* elicits divine mourning; it is a systemic violation of God’s justice. As Woolman perceived, systematic dehumanization clearly involves what Amartya Sen has identified as capability deprivation: Stripped of the

³² Ibid., p. 48.

³³ John Woolman, “1757,” in *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman*, ed. Phillips P. Moulton (Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 1971), p. 65-66.

opportunity to develop one's gifts and talents fully, the oppressed person is deprived of full human flourishing.³⁴ The system of hyper-incarceration entails wholesale, intergenerational devastation visited particularly upon U.S. black males between the ages of 15 and 24 and their families in the form of intellects uneducated, marriages broken or foregone altogether, children unborn, children without fathers, jobs lost, health deteriorated, and lives shortened.³⁵

Can white people mourn this devastation as *our own* and accept our complicity in it? Can we understand the flourishing of each and every human being in society as intimately interconnected and bound up with our own integral well-being? In his 1987 encyclical, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, Blessed Pope John Paul II spoke of the virtue of solidarity as “not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a *firm and persevering determination* to commit oneself to the *common good*; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual because we are *all* really responsible *for all*.”³⁶

This thick account of the common good must ground the understanding of racial justice as part of a nonviolent spirituality of white resistance. John Woolman, over the course of his life, came to understand himself in deep and interdependent relationship with each person and every person. Out of profound grief, he appealed to his fellow Quakers for the abolition of slavery from the standpoint of the oppressed. As a practitioner of nonviolence, he was determined not to contribute to their further suffering and to dedicate his energies toward dismantling the structures of oppression. He might well have embraced as his own Joseph Barndt's insight about white cultural racism: “I am suggesting that our white racial identity is an imprisoned identity. . . . When we examine white cultural identity, we are asking how whiteness has been a source of injury and harm, not only for people of color, but also for ourselves as white people. The cultural curtain has harmed not only people of color by locking them out, but has also harmed us by locking us in.”³⁷

³⁴ Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books, 2000), p. 87-110.

³⁵ See Joe R. Feagin and Karyn D. McKinney, *The Many Costs of Racism* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2003) and Yanick St. Jean and Joe R. Feagin, “The Family Costs of White Racism: The Case of African American Families,” *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 29: 2 (Summer 1998), p. 297-312.

³⁶ John Paul II, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, #38, emphasis in the original.

³⁷ Barndt, *Understanding and Dismantling Racism*, p. 215.

For those of us complicit in white oppression of people of color, beatitudinal mourning must involve the sort of death to self witnessed by Woolman, Douglass, and Day. It is a death to the selfish love incarnated in white *habitus*. Massingale writes, “For the beneficiaries of white privilege, lament involves the difficult task of acknowledging their individual and communal complicity in the past and present racial injustices. It entails hard acknowledgement that one has benefited from another’s burden and that one’s social advantages have been purchased at a high cost to others.”³⁸

As part of the spiritual discipline of nonviolent white resistance, it will involve the dynamic unfolding of personal conversion *as part of* structural transformation. As James Perkinson notes,

Practically, for most white people today, however[,] antiracist conversion implies at least some measure of real material contraction expressed as a form of social expansion. It implies pursuing a more equal circulation of assets, opportunities, and power that will simultaneously be experienced as a form of real loss. Sharing control is also giving up control, at least in the moment of fear.³⁹

Glen Stassen prefers an adaptation of Clarence Jordan’s translation of this beatitude: “Joyful are those who are deeply saddened to the point of action, for they will be comforted.”⁴⁰ The Greek word, *penthountes*, often translated as “mourning,” means both deep sadness and also repentance, Jordan noticed. “Christians who pray for God’s reign to come are all the more aware that what is happening in themselves and their society is far from God’s reign. Their prayer life compares God’s compassion for all people with the suffering, violence, injustice, and lack of caring that hurt people; they are realists as to the causes of the wrong. They truly want to end their sinning and serve God.”⁴¹ A Scripture scholar with an agricultural background, Jordan founded an interracial cooperative pecan farm, *Koinonia*, in his native Georgia in 1942, in an effort to dismantle racist culture and practices through Gospel-inspired communal solidarity and participation.⁴²

³⁸ Massingale, *Racial Justice*, p. 111.

³⁹ James W. Perkinson, *White Theology. Outing Supremacy in Modernity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 234.

⁴⁰ Stassen, *Living the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 45, citing Clarence Jordan, *The Sermon on the Mount*, rev. ed. (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Judson, 1974), p. 22.

⁴¹ Stassen, *Living the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 47.

⁴² For more on the history of Koinonia Farms, please visit <http://www.koinoniapartners.org/>. See also Clarence Jordan, *Essential Writings*, selected with an introduction by Joyce Hollyday (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2003).

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Woolman's experience seems to confirm an insight of Thomas Merton, namely that integrity and humility amount to "practically the same thing."⁴³ Freed interiorly to be true to oneself before God, the humble person becomes radically free for relationship with the rest of God's creation. In the concrete practice of nonviolence, humility, rooted in radical trust in God's love, enables one to refuse any resort to "evil or suspect means," Merton insisted.⁴⁴

Conceiving of humility as steps of spiritual progress on the ladder of earthly life leading toward that "*perfect love of God which casts out fear* (1 Jn. 4:18)," Benedict of Nursia contrasted the ascent in humility with the downward journey of pride.⁴⁵ As part of temperance, Aquinas observed, humility serves to restrain the movement of passion evidenced "by preoccupation with earthly greatness."⁴⁶ Humility "mainly concerns a man's subjection to God, for whose sake he also submits himself to others."⁴⁷

Beatitudinal meekness, Merton noticed, frees one "to renounce the protection of violence and risk being humble, therefore *vulnerable*, not because he trusts in the supposed efficacy of a gentle and persuasive tactic that will disarm hatred and tame cruelty, but because he believes that the hidden power of the Gospel is demanding to be manifested in and through his own poor person. Hence in perfect obedience to the Gospel, he effaces himself and his own interests and even risks his life in order to testify not simply to 'the truth' in a sweeping, idealistic and purely platonic sense, but to the truth that is incarnate in a concrete human situation, involving living persons whose rights are denied or whose lives are threatened."⁴⁸

Proceeding from a humble place of being true to that of God in himself and others in the very concrete circumstances of his context of white cultural dominance, John Woolman was able to come to a fundamental insight of nonviolence as a path of spiritual resistance: Interior

⁴³ Thomas Merton, "Integrity," in *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: New Directions Books, 1972, first published 1961), p. 99.

⁴⁴ Merton, "Blessed Are the Meek," p. 23.

⁴⁵ *The Rule of St. Benedict in English*, ed. Timothy Fry (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1982), 7.67, emphasis in original.

⁴⁶ *ST II-II* 161.5 *ad* 4; cf. 161.4 *sed contra*.

⁴⁷ *ST II-II* 161.1 *ad* 5.

⁴⁸ Merton, "Blessed Are the Meek," p. 18-19.

liberation represents the work of God's love and the precondition for detachment from material goods and right relationship among humans.

I have felt an increasing Care to attend to that Holy Spirit which sets right bounds to our desires, and leads those who faithfully follow it to apply all the gifts of Divine Providence to the purposes for which they were intended. Did such who have the care of great Estates, attend with singleness of heart to this Heavenly Instructor, which so opens and enlarges the mind that Men love their neighbours as themselves, They would have wisdom given them to manage, without ever finding occasion to employ some people in the Luxuries of life, or to make it necessary for others to labour too hard. . .⁴⁹

Woolman was not indulging here in wistful parenthesis; he was exercising moral imagination to envision what might be possible if Christians actually enfolded the love of God and neighbor to which they were called and consecrated in their baptismal commitment to follow Jesus. Merton affirmed his approach as a central aspect of nonviolent resistance: "The mission of Christian humility in social life is not merely to edify, but to *keep minds open to many alternatives.*"⁵⁰

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Stassen raises the real concern that in U.S. culture, righteousness may easily be heard as self-righteousness, exactly the opposite of what is meant by this beatitude. He advocates the use of "restorative justice" instead of righteousness here to convey a twofold understanding of the sort of justice at stake: "... It means delivering justice (justice that rescues and releases the oppressed) and community-restorative justice (justice that restores the powerless and the outcasts to their rightful place in the covenant community)... This is ... why the hungry and the thirsty hunger and thirst for righteousness; they yearn bodily for the kind of justice that restores them to community where they can eat and drink."⁵¹

Woolman's witness also reveals the power of keen contemplative awareness capable of rigorous systemic analysis springing from his hunger and thirst for righteousness. In his refusal to draft the slaveholder's will, Woolman engaged in a careful discernment of the moral truth at stake. Like Gandhi's experiments with truth two centuries later, he used the ethical dissonance that emerged in this experience as fertile ground for

⁴⁹ *Journal 1756*, 184; cf. *Journal 1772*, 331.

⁵⁰ Merton, "Blessed Are the Meek," p. 24.

⁵¹ Stassen, *Living the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 52.

imagining and generating an alternative response when faced with a similar situation in the future. That method, in time, would unfold as a creative new way of life, one attuned to Woolman's increasingly refined conscience and rooted in his faith-based commitment to nonviolence.

His discernment process also demonstrated a sharp contemplative sensibility to the intricate details of this particular incident. This enabled him to notice explicit, systemic connections between the institution of slavery and morally disordered cultural assumptions. One such assumption entailed the seemingly limitless bodily and spiritual degradation of black people in the service of total white dominance. Woolman repeatedly decried the culture of white greed and sloth undergirding the slave trade, naming the *systemic* moral degradation feeding the voracious cultural reproduction of white dominance. Like Dante's moneylenders, practitioners of slavery became captive themselves, losing touch with their own humanity as they grasped after possession of other human beings.⁵²

The neo-slavery of hyper-incarceration uses the prison as a powerful, race-based mechanism of cultural, social, political, legal, and economic exclusion. But, those benefiting from the system of hyper-incarceration through white privilege create for ourselves an interior form of bondage, constituted by the four walls of isolation, lies, amnesia, and addiction to white domination Joseph Barndt has outlined.⁵³ We white people, the slave masters, are ourselves enslaved and cut off from the liberating energy of God's love.

More than two centuries later in the heat of the civil rights movement, Merton argued "that American society *has to change* before the race problem can be solved" (34). He named clearly the need for white people to see the black struggle for civil rights "as a manifestation of a deep disorder that is eating away the inner substance of our society, *because it is in ourselves...*"⁵⁴

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

A test for the integrity of one's practice of nonviolence, Merton held, is: "Are we willing to *learn something from the adversary*? If a *new truth*

⁵² *The Journal of John Woolman, Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes (Part II)*, p. 380-381.

⁵³ See Barndt, *Understanding and Dismantling Racism*, p. 129-141.

⁵⁴ Merton, "Letters to a White Liberal," p. 38.

is made known to us by him or through him, will we admit it? Are we willing to admit that he is not totally inhumane, wrong, unreasonable, cruel? . . . If he sees that we are completely incapable of listening to him with an open mind, our non-violence will have nothing to say to him except that we distrust him and seek to outwit him.”⁵⁵ Through an open, dialogical, and non-defensive approach, the practitioner of non-violent white resistance participates in the power of God’s mercy to soften the hardened heart, beginning with one’s own.

Eileen O’Brien recounts the view of Vanessa, an anti-racist activist of color, regarding qualities in white activists that engender her trust and open up the possibility of authentic relationship: “I look for that self-analysis. . . . I look for a willingness to take whatever criticisms I may have without being defensive. Sort of accepting that and [being] willing to have the conversation that that might be true.”⁵⁶

As Barbara Applebaum argues, this sort of humble openness to self-interrogation is essential for white exploration of our complicity in racism. She recalls the narrative of one of her African-American students:

She said that it was difficult for the white students in class to imagine what it is like to wake up every morning and walk into a world where skin color alone might determine who one is perceived to be and how one is treated. She explained how she must be constantly vigilant to survive in such a world — one in which she never knows when she might be treated ‘as Black.’ Given this, isn’t it important for white people to develop a corresponding (although not comparable, since their survival does not depend on this vigilance) alertness because the effects of whiteness are so often indiscernible to us/them? If the web that the marginalized are enmeshed in is supported by whiteness, and if whiteness works best when it is invisible, white people need to develop attentiveness to those who experience marginalization and to attune themselves to how and when one might be complicit or wrongly deny complicity.⁵⁷

For white people, mercy involves compassionate alertness to the perspective and experience of the oppressed and suffering person, letting that reality transform and inform our understanding of what God’s merciful love requires. John Woolman came to grips with his own complicity and that of the Society of Friends in the institution of slavery and

⁵⁵ Merton, “Blessed Are the Meek,” p. 23.

⁵⁶ Eileen O’Brien, “The Political Is Personal: The Influence of White Supremacy on White Antiracists’ Personal Relationships,” in *White Out. The Continuing Significance of Racism*, ed. Ashley W. Doane and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 261.

⁵⁷ Barbara Applebaum, “Race Ignore-ance, Colortalk, and White Complicity: Race Is . . . Race Isn’t,” *Educational Theory* 56:3 (2006), p. 345-362 at 353-354.

systemic economic exploitation of laborers across the empire of his time first by allowing the experiences of particular oppressed people, black slaves and other exploited workers, to reshape his own way of life. Out of this changed pattern of behavior and social location, he engaged his fellow and sister Quakers in loving but challenging communal discernment of complicity.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Mahatma Gandhi's grandson, Arun, remembers vividly how he learned of the centrality of penance as part of the self-purification essential for one who practices nonviolence. As a teenager growing up in South Africa, he failed to fulfill a promise made to his father and then lied about it. That evening, when he went to pick his father up and drove him 18 miles back to their home, his father confronted him about the deception. "I am sorry you lied to me today. Obviously, I did not instill in you the confidence and courage to tell the truth without fear. I must do penance for my shortcoming, so I am going to walk home."⁵⁸ Arun trailed slowly after him in the car for five and a half hours along dark, dirt roads, absorbing the painful reality of his father undertaking an arduous penitential practice on his account.

Arun's father and grandfather both firmly held that the practitioner of *satyagraha*, or truth-force, ought not to seek to impose penance on others but rather to undergo it oneself. Through this practice, little by little, one comes face to face with all the manifold impulses toward the violence of dominative power within one's own heart and way of being. "To resist and encounter truly the powers," Jim Douglass affirms, "becomes a process of acknowledging that *I* am a major source of their power to kill others."⁵⁹

The white privilege that justifies and maintains the system of hyper-incarceration rests upon a radical distortion of the *imago Dei*, the human being's self-understanding as created in God's own likeness. That disfigurement begins first within the soul and psyche of the white person, and so the work of nonviolence in disarming white privilege must start there.

This process of self-purification serves to strip away the false self, freeing one to receive God's love ever more transparently and to

⁵⁸ Arun Gandhi, *Legacy of Love*, p. 103.

⁵⁹ James Douglass, *Resistance and Contemplation*, p. 188.

cooperate with its dynamic, inexorable movement to restore the brokenness caused by sin. Accepting violence within myself becomes part of my “yes” to go deeper in my commitment to the path of Jesus’ love in disarming social systems of domination. Without rootedness in God’s love for God’s own creation, a gratuitous and infinitely forgiving love, Douglass predicts that the nonviolent resister’s path will end either in self-hatred or self-righteousness. But, “Self-emptying love for others – *all* the others... – is the radically liberating reality capable of supporting resistance beyond an adolescent awareness of self... Love liberates me from evil’s source of division in my self and makes me whole in a greater Reality.”⁶⁰

For Christians, Jesus reveals the path of self-emptying love for those desiring to become pure of heart. Along the way, Dorothy Day discovered,

The love of God and man becomes the love of equals, as the love of the bride and the bridegroom is the love of equals . . . [T]he relationship we hope to attain to is that of the love of the Canticle of Canticles. If we cannot deny the *self* in us, kill the self-love, as He has commanded, and put on the Christ life, then God will do it for us. We must become like Him. Love must go through these purgations.⁶¹

This process of purification as part of a spirituality of nonviolent resistance to racism takes very concrete, incarnate form. White people have much to learn from the witness of Dr. King and the other nonviolent activists who took to the streets in Birmingham in 1963. Before taking direct action, their preparations involved self-purification, King recalled: “We started having workshops on nonviolence and repeatedly asked ourselves the questions, ‘Are you able to accept blows without retaliating? Are you able to endure the ordeals of jail?’”⁶² As a spiritual discipline, beatitudinal purity of heart holds the potential to turn the system of hyper-incarceration on its head. Are white people willing to suffer physical imprisonment ourselves as a consequence of meeting systemic violence and racial hatred with love? Spiritually, this may be a necessary implication of interior liberation from the prison of white racism.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

The blessing of peacemakers envisions restoration of the humanity of all involved in a situation of systemic dehumanization. For U.S.

⁶⁰ *Resistance and Contemplation*, p. 189.

⁶¹ Dorothy Day, *On Pilgrimage*, “November,” p. 235.

⁶² Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham City Jail,” in *A Testament of Hope*, 291.

white people, hyper-incarceration mirrors the evil within us. Active nonviolence invites us to hold that growing awareness of our own sinful complicity in structures of white privilege together with a related question: “How can I find God in my enemy?”⁶³ That question takes us, if we are honest, deep within ourselves.

A spiritual *askesis* of nonviolent white resistance creates space for the practitioner to face the darkness within one’s own heart. Over time it becomes more and more possible to place my trust not in my own capacity to disarm the violence within and without, but rather in the infinite power of the Spirit of God’s love at work in the world, continually healing and reconciling creation. This contemplative spiritual practice is essential for coming to a free, loving white racial identity. Rooted in the *askesis* of Gospel nonviolent love, U.S. white people can strive in solidarity with other human beings in the beloved community and find our lives in God by losing them.

Only then can we take the next step on the spiritual path of nonviolence, as Jesus, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Dorothy Day practiced it – to seek the opponent’s good by freeing that person from oppressive actions.⁶⁴ As a U.S. white person, the first oppressor to be freed is myself, and it is God who, by grace, liberates each person through love. Spiritually, how do I surrender to God’s vast, unrelenting gift of merciful love? By grace, ultimately; but, through the spiritual *askesis* on nonviolent resistance, I can learn to wait and listen for God’s movement in a spirit of open surrender.

Nonviolent contemplation in action opens ground for the interior liberation required. Constance FitzGerald describes John of the Cross’ approach in *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (1.4.8):

[Divine Sophia] challenges those who are unfree, consumed by the possessive desire for what can never completely satisfy. She calls them ‘little ones’ because they become as small as that which they crave, while the lasting affection and reassurance they unconsciously search for in their choices are present and available in Sophia. Therefore, Sophia says, “desire me”: “O people, I cry to you, my voice is directed to all that live. Be attentive, little ones, to cunning and sagacity; and you ignorant, be careful. . . . The fruit you will find in me is better than gold and precious stones . . . [Prv. 8:4-6; 18-21].”⁶⁵

⁶³ Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence*, p. 64.

⁶⁴ Cf. Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence*, p. 64, who cites Bondurant, 50.

⁶⁵ Constance FitzGerald, “Transformation in Wisdom: The Subversive Character and Educative Power of Sophia in Contemplation,” in *Carmel and Contemplation. Transforming Human Consciousness*, ed. Kevin Culligan and Regis Jordan (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 2000), p. 289.

This dynamic freeing is the fruit of God's love. Knowing oneself to be loved and forgiven by God, the practitioner of nonviolence loves the oppressor into freedom, beginning with oneself. Having practiced this way of life assiduously for quite some time, Woolman found that he was able to extend compassionate love to other white people enslaved by possessive desire. His journals contain several accounts of the disarming effect of his loving interactions with slave owners.

[A] neighbor received a bad bruise in his body, and sent for me to bleed him, which being done he desired me to write his will. I took notes and amongst other things he told me to which of his children he gave his young Negro woman. I considered the pain and distress he was in, and knew not how it would end, so I wrote his Will save only that part concerning his Slave, and, carrying it to his bed-side read it to him, and then told him in a friendly way, that I could not write any Instruments by which my fellow creatures were made slaves without bringing trouble on my own mind. I let him know that I charged nothing for what I had done, and desired to be Excused from doing the other part in the way he propos'd. Then we had a serious conference on the Subject, and at length he agreeing to set her free I finished his will.⁶⁶

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

and

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Contemplating the meaning of nonviolent resistance, Merton understood the larger horizon at stake in these last two beatitudes: Against the background of the reign of God, one can better discern the demands of the truth of Jesus' love in very concrete, everyday circumstances. "Non-violence," he wrote, "is perhaps the most exacting of all forms of struggle, not only because it demands first of all that one be ready to suffer evil and even face the threat of death without violent retaliation, but because it excludes mere transient self-interest, even political, from its considerations. In a very real sense, he who practices non-violent resistance must commit himself not to the defense of his own interests or even those of a particular group: he must commit himself to the defense of objective truth and right and above all of *man*."⁶⁷

⁶⁶ *Journal 1756*, 180-181.

⁶⁷ Thomas Merton, "Blessed Are the Meek," in *Faith and Violence. Christian Teaching and Christian Practice* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), p. 14, emphasis in the original.

Naming and dismantling structures of racism emerges clearly as a claim of truth and right upon all Christians in U.S. society, especially upon white Christians as beneficiaries of systemic racism. A spirituality of nonviolent white resistance to hyper-incarceration will involve total and trusting surrender to God's love, and this will include acceptance of persecution in the spirit of solidarity with all human beings who suffer, particularly the most vulnerable and oppressed.

Remembering the children involved in the civil rights protest in Birmingham, Merton finds in their witness the way of Jesus' love that all Christians must follow, including the awesome act of loving one's oppressor into freedom:

They were also, in their simplicity, bearing heroic Christian witness to the truth, for they were exposing their bodies to death in order to show God and man that they believed in the just rights of their people, knew that those rights had been unjustly, shamefully and systematically violated, and realized that the violation called for expiation and redemptive protest, because it was an offense against God and His truth. . . These Negroes are not simply judging the white man and rejecting him. On the contrary, they are seeking by Christian love and sacrifice to redeem him, to enlighten him, so as not only to save his soul from perdition, but also to awaken his mind and his conscience, and stir him to initiate the reform and renewal which may still be capable of saving our society. But this renewal must be the work of both the White and the Negro together.⁶⁸

Rooted in profound respect for the dignity of each and every person, nonviolent resistance appeals to the human freedom of the would-be adversary: "Instead of forcing a decision upon him from the outside," Merton wrote, "it invites him to arrive freely at a decision of his own, in dialogue and cooperation, in the presence of that truth which Christian non-violence brings into full view by its sacrificial witness. The key to non-violence is the willingness of the non-violent resister to suffer a certain amount of accidental evil in order to bring about a change of mind in the oppressor and awaken him to personal openness and to dialogue." Echoing King's Riverside Church address, Merton noted that the person-oriented approach of nonviolence focuses not on control but rather on appealing to human dignity by awakening one's free response to love.⁶⁹

Writing from the Birmingham City Jail, King chose to respond to a letter from white (and outwardly free) Alabama clergy objecting to his practices of nonviolent resistance. In a tone of gentle but direct and

⁶⁸ Merton, "Letters to a White Liberal," p. 44-45.

⁶⁹ Merton, "Blessed Are the Meek," p. 27-28.

challenging love, King noted, “You deplore the demonstrations that are presently taking place in Birmingham. But I am sorry that your statement did not express a similar concern for the conditions that brought the demonstrations into being.”⁷⁰ Though incarcerated bodily, King appealed from a place of deep spiritual freedom, rooted in God’s love, to his white fellow clergy, recognizing their spiritual, mental, and emotional bondage. As a counterexample to complacent, white Christian ecclesial practice that so readily reinforced institutionalized racism, King called their attention to the nonviolent witness of the early Christians. In whatever town they entered, “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.”⁷¹ The persecution they suffered came as they responded to God’s invitation to love God’s creation as God loves it.

Contemplating the witness of the King and the Birmingham protestors can be an ascetical spiritual practice of nonviolent resistance in the face of hyper-incarceration. Viewed against the horizon of God’s reign, what collective action of resistance do the current signs of the times demand of anti-racist white people? Massingale turns to the work of Joe Feagin to name the sort of “transformative love” that becomes manifest “when whites intentionally place themselves, ‘if only partially, into the racist world of the oppressed and thereby not only receive racist hostility from whites but also personally feel some of the pain that comes from being enmeshed in the racist conditions central to the lives of the oppressed others.’”⁷² Glen Stassen recalls that the *Koinonia* community in Georgia has endured racist drive-by shootings (with a visiting Dorothy Day among their targets), business boycotts, and expulsion from the local Southern Baptist worship community. But, it went on to incubate Habitat for Humanity and continues to thrive in the present day.⁷³ As the name *Koinonia* suggests, this anti-racist and multi-racial community of nonviolent resistance set its sights on the larger horizon of the transformative love of God’s reign, enabling them to persevere in right relationship, attempting to love their oppressors into openness to God’s liberating love.

⁷⁰ King, “Letter from Birmingham City Jail,” p. 290.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 300.

⁷² Massingale, *Racial Justice*, p. 118, quoting Joe R. Feagin, *Racist America: Roots, Current Realities, and Future Reparations*. (New York: Routledge, 2000), 254-55, with modification of verbs for plural forms.

⁷³ For more information on Habitat for Humanity, see <<http://www.habitat.org>>.

Conclusion

John Woolman, Martin Luther King, Jr., Clarence Jordan, Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, the young Birmingham marchers, Gandhi and his grandson – all these have given witness to a nonviolent spirituality of resistance that emerges clearly in the beatitudes. Rather than a strategy or technique, it represents a way of being in the world that in itself constitutes an act of resistance to all that would subvert the order of truth, justice, charity, and freedom that John XXIII envisioned as the foundation of peace.

Over against the institutions and culture of white *habitus*, the beatitudes lead toward a radically anti-racist praxis: Poverty of spirit; mourning and lament; humility; a longing for restorative justice that leads to committed, collective action; compassionate mercy; single-heartedness; peacemaking; and submission to the inevitable persecution that such praxis will elicit.

At several points, *Pacem in terris* addressed “the law of fear” or the grip of fear.⁷⁴ The antidote, John XXIII perceived, is trust and love rooted in faith: Between human beings and among peoples “it is not fear which should reign but love, a love which tends to express itself in a collaboration that is loyal, manifold in form and productive of many benefits.”⁷⁵ In the face of the structured violence of hyper-incarceration, the power of beatitudinal love to disarm fear constitutes the heart of a nonviolent spirituality of white resistance.

⁷⁴ See, for example, *Pacem in terris*, nos. 113 and 128 regarding the arms race.

⁷⁵ *PT*, no. 129. See also paragraph 113.