

Bryan Stevenson
We need to talk about an injustice

Opening Prayer, *for the Oppressed, from the Book of Common Prayer, page 826*

Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon the people in this land who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. Strengthen those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all. And grant that every one of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of this land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Watch together Mr. Stevenson's TED Talk: "We need to talk about an injustice"
(run time under 24 min. To access: search for "Bryan Stevenson" at www.TED.com)

Read together 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Discussion Questions (*large group or table groups*)

1. When have you felt loved as Mr. Stevenson describes with Mama's hugs and her words that he was special and could do anything?
2. What from Mr. Stevenson's talk did you find most compelling? What from Mr. Stevenson's talk did you find hardest to listen to?
3. Mr. Stevenson says, "ultimately, we all have to believe things we haven't seen," and he calls this the heart-mind connection that helps bring change. What are some things you believe that you haven't seen?
4. Mr Stevenson says, "I've come to understand and to believe that each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done." How does that connect with the 2 Corinthians passage we read together? What other connections do you find between Mr. Stevenson's talk and the teachings of the Christian church?
5. What is something you can do to work toward justice this week? This month? This year?
6. How might God be calling your parish to work for justice?

Closing prayer, *prayer attributed to St. Francis, from the Book of Common Prayer, page 833, in unison*

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. *Amen.*