

# The Social Justice Tradition

*Notable Figures*

*Significant Movements*

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## **Jesus of Nazareth**

**(c. 4 B.C. - c. A.D. 29)**

Deacons (1st century to the present)

Order of Widows (1st-4th centuries)

Helena (c. 248-c. 327)

Paulinus (c. 353-431)

Sabas (c. 438-532)

Germanus (c. 496-576)

John the Almsgiver (?-c. 619)

Aidan of Lindisfarne (?-651)

Chad (?-672)

Adamnan (c. 625-704)

**1000**

Swithun (c. 802-862)

John Gualbert (?-1073)

Vladimir Monomakh (?-1125)

Catherine of Genoa (1447-1510)

Vincent de Paul (. 1581-c. 1660)

Roger Williams (1603-1683)

John Woolman (1720-1772)

Tikhon of Zadonsk (1727-1783)

Robert Raikes (1735-1811)

William Wilberforce (1759-1833)

Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845)

Jean-Baptiste Vianney (1786-1859)

Sojourner Truth (c. 1797-1883)

Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury (1801-1885)

David Livingstone (1813-1873)

Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906)

Florence Nightingale (1820-1910)

Harriet (Moses) Tubman (c. 1820-1913)

Catherine Mumfrod Booth (1829-1890)

William Booth (1829-1912)

Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965)

Toyohiko Kagawa (1888-1960)

Dorothy Day (1897-1980)

Mother Teresa (1910-1997)

Rosa Parks (1913-)

Paul Jewett (1919-1991)

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)

Desmond Tutu (1931-)

Jean Vanier (1928-)

Vincentians

(17th century to the present)

Sunday School Movement

(18th century to the present)

Abolition Movement

(18th century to the present)

Suffrage Movement

(19th century to the present)

Salvation Army

(19th century to the present)

American Civil Rights Movement

(20th century to the present)

## Practicing the Compassionate Life: The Social Justice Tradition

1. Write a supportive letter this week to someone you feel may be needing a word of encouragement.
2. If you live with others, help out around the house. Your willingness to do more than your share of work will be a real service to the others.
3. Spend an afternoon working at a local shelter or soup kitchen. Your help is sorely needed, even if you can only sweep floors.
4. Donate blood. We are giving the gift of life when we give blood.
5. Recycle your trash. Caring for the environment is an issue of social justice.
6. Help a friend in need. Volunteering to help is a simple way to care for your neighbor.
7. Write to your member of Congress - senator or representative - and share your views. Be sure that you have the facts straight and are expressing genuine Christian concern, not just prejudice.
8. Join a prison ministry. Contact a group and go with them to visit inmates, who often feel forgotten in their isolation. Jesus told us that when we visit inmates, we are visiting Him. (Mark 25:31-46)
9. Address an injustice with compassion. Is someone being treated unfairly? Do not be silent when your words could make a difference.
10. Practice the service of hiddenness. Do a kind deed without being asked or expecting recognition.
11. Serve others with your words. Kind words are great deeds.
12. Serve others by letting them have "space." We sometimes overwhelm people or consume their time or usurp their freedom with our expectations. Make concerted effort to give people space.
13. Serve others by letting others serve you. Are you guilty of not letting other people do things for you? Hold a door? Buy a cup of coffee? Make a photocopy? This is a sin. It is a gift to others to let them serve you; do not deny them this joy.
14. Read a book that discusses social justice issues. As an example, *The Politics of Jesus* by John Howard Yoder forces readers to ask hard questions. You may also want to read Donald Krabbill's book *The Upside-Down Kingdom*. Though you may not agree with everything these authors say, they should stimulate your thinking.
15. Write a one-page response this week to the following question: What is the most pressing social justice issue today, and what position should I, as a Christian, take? Share the paper with the other members of your Spiritual Formation Group.