



Many thanks to Rev. Dr. Alexia Salvatierra for her powerful presentation!

Rev. Dr. Salvatierra is the author with Dr. Peter Heltzel of *Faith-Rooted Organizing: Mobilizing the Church in Service to the World* (Intervarsity Press) and the founder of the Faith-Rooted Organizing UnNetwork. She is a Lutheran Pastor with over 40 years of experience in community ministry, including church-based service and community development programs, congregational and community organizing, and legislative advocacy. She has been a national leader in the areas of working poverty and immigration for over 20 years. Alexia received her doctoral degree in Intercultural Studies from Fuller Seminary and currently serves as Assistant Professor of Integral Mission and Global Transformation at Fuller.



Divine Purpose of Government

- ¹ Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.
- ² May he judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.
- ³ May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
- ⁴ May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.
- ¹² For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.
- ¹³ He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.
- ¹⁴ From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight. (Psalm 72)

Why faith and justice?



- Justice = just us – experience of unfair limitations (the stunted plant) and empathy with all those with this experience
- Hope that justice is possible – the empathy of the cross and the promise of the resurrection.
- Stewardship – using every tool we are given



Faith-Rooted Organizing

Organizing as if God is real

Going deep into the Well

Examining Assumptions

Mt. 10:18 – Wise as Serpents and Innocent as Doves

- Serpent Wisdom – Luke 18:1-8:
- And he told them a parable, to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. ² He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor regarded man; ³ and there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Vindicate me against my adversary.’ ⁴ For a while he refused; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor regard man, ⁵ yet because this widow bothers me, I will vindicate her, or she will wear me out by her continual coming.’” ⁶ And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. ⁷ And will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? ⁸ I tell you, he will vindicate them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

Strategies: Serpent Power

1. Force of law, Wealth, Influence, Numbers
2. Self-Interest and the Negotiation of Interests
3. Constituency, Connections and Case
4. Direct Communication
5. Indirect Communication
6. Escalation

Serpent Power Strategy

- Power Map – who makes the decisions? What influences them?
- Self-Interest –what do they have to gain or lose by doing what you want?
 1. Who is their constituency?
 2. What connections matter to them? Who influences them?
 3. What do they think will benefit their constituency? What is a case that would matter to them?
- What is your ask?
- How could you communicate with them? (directly and indirectly)
- How would you escalate over time?

Wise as Serpents: Innocent as Doves

- “The thirteenth rule: Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it and polarize it.” (Alinski)
- “Non-violent resistance is not for cowards. It is not a quiet, passive acceptance of evil. One is passive and non-violent physically, but very active spiritually, always seeking ways to persuade the opponent of advantages to the way of love, cooperation, and peace....The goal is not to defeat or humiliate the opponent but rather to win him or her over to understanding new ways to create cooperation and community.” (Gandhi)

Dove Power

- Understanding Spiritual Power: Bishop Tutu, King David and Steve Burd
 - Frederick Douglas – power never cedes power without a struggle vs. the struggle in the soul
 - Becoming an ally of the Holy Spirit
 - Human beings not targets
 - Poor are rooted in their spiritual power

- Prayer
- Pastoral Support – Chaplaincy on the field of the battle for justice – encouragement
- Prophetic Call:
 1. Re-member the Poor
 2. Dreams and Visions
 3. Exposing and Combatting Lies
 4. Reaching both sides of the Brain -- Symbols

Dove Power Strategy

- Who has spiritual power in this situation? Who has spiritual impact on the decision-makers?
- What will be the role of prayer?
- How will you en-courage them?
- How will you bring the poor into the room?
- How will you cast a vision and find the common sacred ground?
- How will you expose the lies?
- How will you utilize the symbols and texts of faith in the process?
- How might your ask or escalation change?

Micah 4:4

Everyone will sit
under their own
vine and under their
own fig tree, and no
one will make them
afraid, for
the LORD Almighty
has spoken.



Examples

- Living wage in San Diego
- Immigration: Ventura County Congressman, Central Washington Congressman, Orange County City Council
- Nursing Homes – Bonzai Trees
- Hotel Workers Healing Service, Bitter Herbs and Milk and Honey