

Holy Woman Companions: Harriet Tubman and Immaculee Ilibagiza

Voices that Challenge



Harriet Tubman (1822-1913)

Harriet Tubman was an American abolitionist and social activist. After escaping slavery, Tubman made some 13 missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved people, including her family and friends, using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known collectively as the Underground Railroad. Her final words were from John 14:3 in the Bible. "I go away to prepare a place for you, that where I am you also may be."

"I would fight for liberty so long as my strength lasted, and if the time came for me to go, the Lord would let them take me."

Reflection Questions: For what or for whom am I willing to sacrifice time, energy, and reputation? What would I imagine as my last words?

Immaculee Ilibagiza (1972-)



She is a Rwandan American author and motivational speaker. Her first book, *Left to Tell* is an autobiographical work detailing how she survived during the Rwandan genocide, hidden for 91 days with seven other women in a small bathroom. Most of her family was killed by Hutu soldiers. Her faith guided her through her ordeal and she came to a place of eventual forgiveness and compassion toward her family's killers. She now lives in the US and continues to write and speak about her experiences and her learnings.

"The love of a single heart can make a world of difference. I knew that my heart and mind would always be tempted to feel anger--to find blame and hate. But I resolved that when the negative feelings came upon me, I wouldn't wait for them to grow or fester."

Reflections Questions: What does it mean for me to be a voice for justice at this moment in history? What enables me to address injustices from a place of forgiveness rather than from anger and hatred?

Prayer: Loving God, you know my heart. Where there is anger and hatred, help me to allow it to be transformed into forgiveness and peace. Lead me to know what is mine to say and do for the sake of God's people, for the future of our planet, for all of God's creation. May it be so. AMEN!

