

Educational Unit 3 – The Myth of Saving Violence

For many years we have heard the same story:

«In a perfect paradise we enjoyed peace, but a tyrant arrived; he began to enslave us and make us suffer. We were powerless, who would save us? Finally, the superhero entered the scene; he had the physical force and could do for us the 'dirty work' we all wanted to do but could not do ourselves. He totally destroyed the evil one, so that peace was restored and our world was saved!».

This same song is repeated over and over again: in movies, comics, video games, television series; we find it even in history books, on monuments and in the names of streets. It is the belief that we survive because of the violence that is everywhere.

This belief is called the "myth of saving violence." It is a myth because it is not a reality. It starts with fictions that we have always believed:

1. There are only good people (us!) and bad people (the others) with nobody in the middle
2. We can change the situation only by the force of violence.
3. Violence will lead us to a genuine state of justice and peace.
4. The wicked are irredeemable.

These are myths that we have heard so many times that we believe them without realizing it. As a result, we make disastrous decisions: we justify revenge in response to the evil others have done to us, and we reject nonviolence as useless...

But nonviolence is an effective alternative that helps us get to the root of conflicts and transform them. The means nonviolence uses are based on another force; it believes that principles are more powerful than weapons. By using principles you can include the other in the solution, which is essential if we want the solution to be permanent. By using weapons, on the other hand, you force the other to submit to YOUR solution.

Observe, reflect, and recognize traces of the myth of saving violence in your day-to-day existence. If you want a different world, disarm this myth, and start the transformation.