

1 Today is the Feast of the Holy Innocents - those babies murdered by King Herod. Doing that, he thought, would remove what he saw as a threat - the birth of Jesus, who was promised to be a new king in Israel. Amidst the evil that we witness in more recent times, we pray for all whose innocence and gentleness have been brutally stolen from them. We are going to listen to some words about how evil takes root.

2 In the 18th Century, the philosopher and politician, Edmund Burke, criticised the discrimination in Britain's governing of Ireland. His criticism cost him his seat as a member of Parliament. He said:

*"All that is needed for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing."*

3 Albert Einstein, the great scientist, had to flee Nazi Germany in 1933 because he was a Jew. He wrote:

*"The world is a dangerous place - not because of those who do evil, but because of those who watch and let it happen."*

4 Martin Luther King struggled to achieve civil rights for **all** people in the United States. He was assassinated in 1968. He had said:

*"The one who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as the one who helps to perpetuate it."*

5 Alexander Solzhenitsyn was imprisoned for criticising the Soviet Communist leader, Joseph Stalin, and was then exiled from his country in 1974. He said:

*"In order for people to do great evil, it is first necessary for them to think they are doing a great good."*

6 *Let us pray:*

**Father,**

**we remember before you those who have been abused in the womb, in childhood, and in later life.**

**We bring before you our brothers and sisters throughout the world who are victims of injustice, prejudice and persecution.**

**Lead us, Father,**

**and lead all people of good will to do whatever we can to help turn the hearts of those who think themselves better than others, and who perpetrate evil.**

**Deliver us, Lord,**

**from all that is evil. Amen.**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in  
*'Praying Each Day of the Year'*,  
a 3-volume book  
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine  
to research this topic further.

This material is part of  
the prayer and education website  
of the De La Salle Brothers  
in Great Britain:  
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