



# Inspired to Serve: Today's Faith Activists

*Mark H. Masse*

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"'Never underestimate the good you can do,' Rabbi Steve Foster tells his Denver congregation in Mark H. Massé's *Inspired to Serve*, and it is the book's message, as well." —Melissa Fay Greene, author of *Praying for Sheetrock*, *The Temple Bombing*, and *Last Man Out*

"Anyone who wants to know more about how diverse religious organizations perform civic good works should read this excellent account." —John J. DiIulio, Jr., University of Pennsylvania

"Powerful, real-life stories of people of faith serving and empowering the poor." —Ronald J. Sider, President, Evangelicals for Social Action

Curious about what had happened to the social activism of the 1960s, and in response to the recent interest in "faith-based initiatives," Mark H. Massé set out to identify people who had continued their social activism in the context of a religious commitment to work in aid of the poor and the disenfranchised. The profiled activists include clergy, lay workers, and others, representing a mix of faiths, social issues, and geographic regions. They include a Jesuit priest working in a poor neighborhood in Portland, a Muslim "messenger of good news" to an Islamic community in Texas, an Irish American nun working with migrants and others in central Florida, a black Episcopalian minister on Chicago's Southside, and a "Dharma activist" in California. What sets these and other activists apart is the depth and breadth of their service, vision, and sacrifice. Many risk their reputations and careers, their health, even their lives in pursuit of social change. Massé discovers that these individuals share an unbending belief in the power, potential, and rewards of service to others, as they try to balance their secular and spiritual lives in the face of challenging work.

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