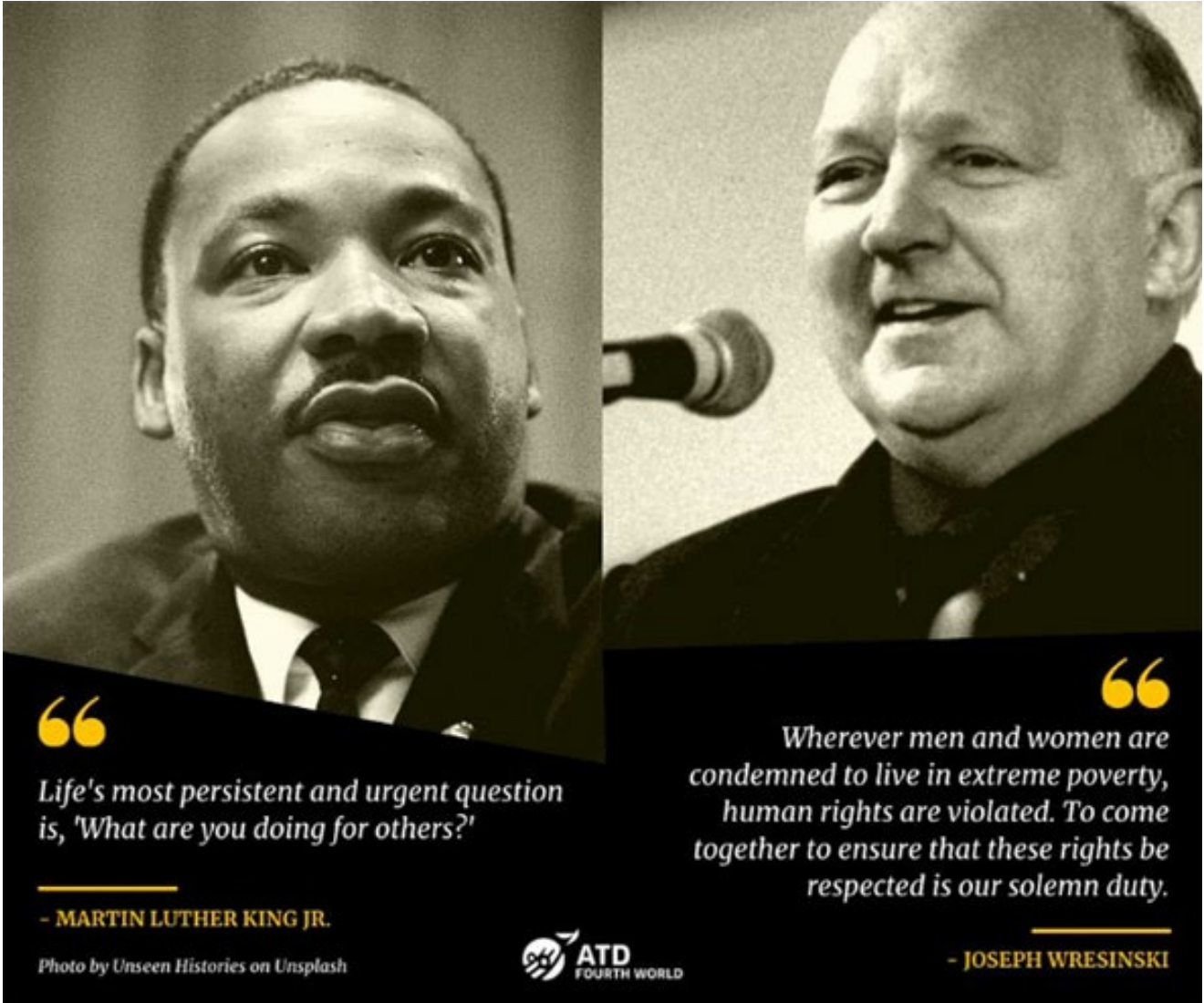


# “TO FREE THE OPPRESSED AND THE OPPRESSORS”

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Guillaume Charvon, National Director for ATD in the United States, wrote the piece below for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. On February 12, we also remember the birthday of ATD Fourth World founder [Joseph Wresinski](#). Both men devoted their lives to justice, taking great risks to achieve a radical vision. And both focussed on non-violence in an effort “to free the oppressed and the oppressors.”

## “What are you doing for others?”

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’” Martin

Luther King Jr.

As we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy this year with a renewed sense of urgency, this statement resonates with another man as humble and deeply encompassed by his mission to change the world, Joseph Wresinski, who said:

*"Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty, human rights are violated. To come together to ensure that these rights be respected is our solemn duty."*

King and Wresinski are both sons of the winter, when the days are the darkest. King was born on January 15, 1929 and Wresinski on February 12, 1917.

Both men were religious. They believed that humankind has a purpose, and that this purpose cannot be achieved without reaching unity. Indeed, they both trusted that the purpose of the human family is itself unity. And both offered to the world a vision that goes far beyond the people who share their faith, a vision that includes everyone.

- Both were also men of action, risk, and courage, who took the hardest road, the non-violent one. They knew that non-violence was the only way to achieve equality and peace.

By walking this road, they made the bold statement that **all acts of justice which do not aim to free the oppressed and the oppressors will not bring an end to inequality, racial discrimination, and poverty.**

As this year begins, it seems more relevant than ever to reaffirm our commitment to this legacy: one dignity, one destiny.

Guillaume Charvon, National Director of ATD Fourth World in the US and [ATD Volunteer Corps member](#).

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