I consider Nelson Mandela to be one of the greatest leaders of the past 50 years. After serving 27 years in prison he renounced violence and instead upon his release worked with those who had oppressed him and the millions of blacks in So Africa to create a new society based on honesty and reconciliation. He did not want the children of his nation to have a future defined by hate. Mandela believed that any process of true healing required honesty about how his nation's past and the roles played by many contributed to their situation. The same is true with regards to the current situation in our nation. Violence is not the answer, if anything its counter productive because while having the national guard and military on our streets may restore stability it will further divide the nation and intended or not will increase further the number of innocent people hurt or killed. Rather than violence and looting what we require is prayer and reflection. Reflection on how our past has contributed to the present. Have we been or are we part of the problem? Are we open to being part of the solution? The violence against innocent people and property that we are witnessing is not reflective of the actions of great figures that have fought for civil rights in the past. Rosa Parks never punched anyone on that bus, the marchers in Selma did not cross that bridge to loot and MLK's dream was not of a society lashing out because of fear and frustration. Honesty is also important if not required for any reconciliation. Many of the same organizations that are expressing solidarity with BLM and those protesting have contributed to this situation. For example, Abercrombie and Fitch blacked out the Facebook profile like countless others today yet were they not sued in the past for discriminating again blacks in hiring. I heard Nancy Pelosi and Biden speak earlier today but they made no reference as to how their party 200 times filibustered anti-lynching laws the role of the KKK in their party, or how they pushed Jim Crow laws, They made no reference about the role their party played in opposing civil rights either. Earlier today a religious order issued a statement that I agreed with but I pointed out to them they failed to mention their own participation in slavery and their past discrimination. They thanked me and responded with such an acknowledgement. Georgetown University has also acknowledged that their early funding included profits from selling slaves. How many other organizations religious or secular have a past that needs to be acknowledged? We saw how the me too movement opened many eyes to much of the abuse of Hollywood and the media. I am sure that a little confession might be good for the soul and for contributing towards healing if the media including the liberal NY Times were a little honest of their past sins. This issue is much deeper than who is currently in the White House or of some white supremacists regardless if real or imagined.. Too many people including those whose profiles are black today or who are expressing support for those seeking change are blind to much of what is wrong today and how deep this sad legacy is. All too often we Americans fall back on symbolic gestures which might increase awareness but are low opportunity cost actions. Real change requires a commitment and seldom comes cheap. The struggle for civil rights, black, women, Hispanic, and gay have shown this. For example, in the State of NJ, the beaches belong to the towns, coastal towns that most minorities cannot even image living in so minorities are less likely to be able to legally utilize them These minorities therefore must use the state parks along the coast. Will the people of NJ have their state follow California in making the beaches the property of everyone in the state? In addition, how many teachers in rich school districts oppose charter schools. Yet these schools are intended the give inner city children an option other than an all too often underfunded and poor performing school. I doubt if many of them would choose to send their children to these same schools that they are compelling the poor to utilize. Is it any surprise that our prisons are full of people given the circumstances they were born into that results with them ending up in our justice system?. When school systems fail to educate or have lower expectations of their minority students then they are graduating another generation at a competitive disadvantage. The distance between Richmond and Lafayette CA is a lot greater than a BART ride its decades wide. As individuals and as a society we need to reflect on where we are and what kind of society we want for out children and grand children For me its not the society increasingly polarized and violent that I am witnessing July 18th will be the 102th anniversary of Nelson Mandala's birthday I hope that before that date we can have a little honesty and reflection.