

Prayers by Martin Luther King, Jr., in his honor this weekend

Eternal God, out of whose absolute power and infinite intelligence the whole universe has come into being, we humbly confess that we have not lived as we should. We have all too often lived by our own selfish impulses rather than by the life of sacrificial love as revealed by Christ. We often give in order to receive. We love our friends and hate our enemies. We go the first mile but dare not travel the second. We forgive but dare not forget. And so as we look within ourselves, we are confronted with the appalling fact that the history of our lives is the history of an eternal revolt against you. But thou, O God, have mercy upon us. Forgive us for what we could have been but failed to be. Give us the intelligence to know your will. Give us the courage to do your will. Give us the devotion to love your will, in the name and spirit of Jesus we pray.

God grant that right here in America and all over this world, we will choose the higher way; a way in which humankind will live together as brothers and sisters. A way in which every man will respect the dignity and worth of all human personality. A way in which every nation will allow justice to run down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream. A way in which men will do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. A way in which men will be able to stand up, and in the midst of oppression, darkness and agony, they will be able to stand there and love their enemies, bless those that curse them, pray for those that spitefully use them. For this is the way that will free us and bring us once more into that society which we think of as the brotherhood of all men. This will be that day when white people, colored people, all people will join together and stretch out with their arms and be able to cry out: "Free at last! Free at last! Great God Almighty, we are free at last."

O Lord Jesus, you said that you are the truth and the truth will make us free. And so, may we, like MLK, Jr. live out your truths of love, compassion, mercy, understanding and justice for all people. And in that care and concern for all, we bring to you those who are in need of your presence, your touch, your healing, your comfort.

Silent Prayer

Lord's Prayer