# PRAYER

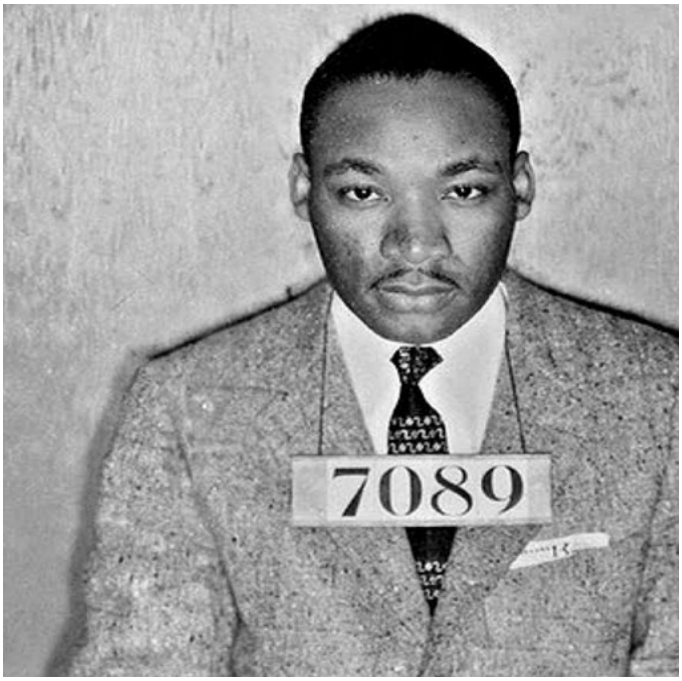
# Anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Letter from a Birmingham City Jail

## April 16, 1963

**CALL TO PRAYER**

***Place a candle and a photo of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on a small table.***

**Leader:** Good and Gracious God, we recognize the Gospel call of your faithful servant, Dr. King, to work for a world where all people are treated with dignity and justice. The injustices that Dr. King and those in the Civil Rights Movement faced continue to reveal themselves throughout our world. Both Your son Jesus and Dr. King knew of the risks of living the Gospels and speaking truth to power. From their witness, may we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.




**All:** Good and Gracious God, hear our prayer.

**Reader 1:** Birmingham, Alabama, in the early 1960s was described by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as "the most segregated city in America." In the spring of 1963, Dr. King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) joined with Birmingham's existing local movement, the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR), in what would become one of the most important and influential campaigns of the Civil Rights Movement. The Birmingham Campaign began on April 3, with a series of mass meetings, coordinated direct actions, lunch counter sit-ins, marches, and boycotts of downtown merchants to protest racism and racial segregation. On April 10, the city obtained a state circuit court injunction against the demonstrations, but the leaders of the campaign decided that they could not in good conscience follow the unjust court ruling. On Good Friday, April 12, Dr. King, SCLC activists Ralph Abernathy and Fred Shuttlesworth, and other marchers were arrested for their civil disobedience.

**Reader 2:** Eight white Alabama clergymen published a joint statement on April 12, "A Call for Unity," decrying King and the Civil Rights demonstrations. The letter criticized the direct action tactics of the Civil Rights Movement, arguing that they were inciting hatred and violence. Though they acknowledged the existence of racial problems in Alabama, the clergymen argued that racial segregation should be fought solely in the courts, and appealed to "law and order and common sense," despite the fact that many law enforcement officials were segregationists them- selves. While in jail, King penned his response on scraps of paper and newspaper margins. His "Letter from
a Birmingham Jail," a powerful defense of nonviolent resistance and direct action, became one of the most important texts to emerge from the Civil Rights Movement.

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

# PRAYER

**Reader 3:** More than 50 years later, King's words remain profoundly relevant as we confront the injustices of our times. King's letter challenges us to remember that "law and order" exist only insofar as they seek to establish and maintain justice. As tens of thousands marched in Birmingham, Selma, and Washington in the 1960s, so we are called to march and engage in nonviolent direct action today in response to unconscionable injustice — the Muslim ban, the ban on refugees, the construction of a border wall, police brutality and impunity, racialized mass incarceration, discrimination and violence against our LGBTQ brothers and sisters, and rampant destruction of Native lands, among many others. We have a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. Though this struggle is often difficult, it is necessary if we hope to create social change.

***Pause for a moment of silence.***

**Leader:** We come together as people of faith and we recognize that Dr. King's vision of a world where all people are treated with dignity and justice is still in the making. The injustices that he and those in the Civil Rights Movement faced live on. Let us listen to Dr. King as he responds to the eight Alabama clergymen who accused him and the civil rights demonstrators of inciting violence and hate. As we explore ways to stand in solidarity with those who are treated unjustly. We pray that Dr. King's words will inspire within each of us the courage to denounce sins of bigotry and ignorance and stand up to today's oppressors.




**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 1:** "…I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. Just as the eighth-century prophets left their little villages and carried their 'thus saith the Lord' far beyond the boundaries of their hometowns; and just as the Apostle Paul left his little village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to practically every hamlet and city of the Greco-Roman world, I too am compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my particular hometown. Moreover, I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial 'outside agitator' idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 1 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Who else has a message of the interconnectedness of today's world? Would Pope Francis agree with Dr. King? Why or why not?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

# PRAYER

**Reader 2:** "You deplore the demonstrations that are presently taking place in Birmingham. But I am sorry that your statement did not express a similar concern for the conditions that brought the demonstrations into being. I am sure that each of you would want to go beyond the superficial social analyst who looks merely at effects and does not grapple with underlying causes. In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices are alive, negotiation, self-purification, and direct action. We have gone through all of these steps in Birmingham. There can be no gainsaying of the fact that racial injustice engulfs this community. Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States. Its ugly record of police brutality is known in every section of this country. Its unjust treatment of Negroes in the courts is a notorious reality. There have been more unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than in any other city in this nation. These are the hard, brutal, and unbelievable facts. On the basis of them, Negro leaders sought to negotiate with the city fathers. But the political leaders consistently refused to engage in good-faith negotiation."

***After a moment of silence, reader 2 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- How are you engaged in self-purification?
- Consider some forms of violence that are generally never discussed by members of your faith community. Why is it important to give a name an unmentioned injustice, pain, or hurt that strips others of their dignity?
- How does racial injustice engulf your community or our world today and how are today's political leaders refusing to engage in good-faith negotiation?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 3:** "Then came the opportunity last September to talk with some of the leaders of the economic community. In these negotiating sessions certain promises were made by the merchants, such as the promise to remove the humiliating racial signs from the stores. As the weeks and months unfolded, we realized that we were the victims of a broken promise. The signs remained. As in so many experiences of the past, we were confronted with blasted hopes, and the dark shadow of a deep disappointment settled upon us. So we had no alternative except that of preparing for direct action, whereby we would present our very bodies as a means of laying our case before the conscience of the local and national community. We were not unmindful of the difficulties involved. So we decided to go through a process of self-purification. We started having workshops on nonviolence and repeatedly asked ourselves the questions, 'Are you able to accept blows without retaliating?' and 'are you able to endure the ordeals of jail?' We decided to set our direct-action program around the Easter season, realizing that, with exception of Christmas, this was the largest shopping period of the year."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 3 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Name three "blasted hopes" that exist today.
- Dr. King cites one example of nonviolent direct action as boycotting stores during a busy commerical season. What are other, similar strategies and protests you are aware of today?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

**Reader 4:** "You may well ask, 'Why direct action, why sit-ins, marches, and so forth? Isn't negotiation a better path?' You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has consistently refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. I just referred to the creation of tension as a part of the work of the nonviolent resister. This may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word 'tension.' I have earnestly worked and preached against violent tension, but there is a type of constructive nonviolent tension that is necessary for growth. Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, we must see the need of having nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men to rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood. So, the purpose of direct action is to create a situation so crisis-packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation. We therefore concur with you in your call for negotiation. Too long has our beloved Southland been bogged down in the tragic attempt to live in monologue rather than dialogue."



***After a moment of silence, Reader 4 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Name a recent "constructive nonviolent tension" scenario. Did it lead to further negotiations? What did you learn from this action?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 5:** "My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure. History is the long and tragic story of the fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and voluntarily give up their unjust posture; but, as Reinhold Niebuhr has reminded us, groups are more immoral than individuals.

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have never yet engaged in a direct-action movement that was 'well timed' according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word 'wait.' It rings in the ear of every Negro with a piercing familiarity. This 'wait' has almost always meant 'never.' It has been a tranquilizing thalidomide, relieving the emotional stress for a moment, only to give birth to an ill-formed infant of frustration. We must come to see with the distinguished jurist of yesterday that 'justice too long delayed is justice denied.' We have waited for more than three hundred and forty years for our God-given and constitutional rights."

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

# PRAYER

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Cite a "wait" moment in today's world. Whose human rights have been put on hold? What can you do to change the community's attitude?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 6:** "I guess it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say 'wait.' But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick, brutalize, and even kill your black brothers and sisters with I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience."

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

# PRAYER

***After a moment of silence, Reader 6 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Who are the people who suffer from "nobodyness" in your community? How can you respond?
- Think of a time when your cup of endurance ran over. What did you learn from that experience?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 7:** "You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. One may well ask, 'How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?' The answer is found in the fact that there are two types of laws: there are just laws, and there are unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that 'An unjust law is no law at all.' Now, what is the difference between the two? How does one determine when a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law, or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas, an unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust.

All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority. To use the words of Martin Buber, the great Jewish philosopher, segregation substitutes an 'I – it' relationship for the 'I – thou' relationship and ends up relegating persons to the status of things. So segregation is not only politically, economically, and sociologically unsound, but it is morally wrong and sinful. Paul Tillich has said that sin is separation. Isn't segregation an existential expression of man's tragic separation, an expression of his awful estrangement, his terrible sinfulness? So I can urge men to obey the 1954 decision of the Supreme Court because it is morally right, and I can urge them to disobey segregation ordinances because they are morally wrong."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 7 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Can you think of unjust laws? Would you describe the current administration's ban on Muslims as a form of segregation? Why or why not?
- How can you advocate for inclusivity today?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 8:** "I was arrested Friday on a charge of parading without a permit. Now, there is nothing wrong with an ordinance which requires a permit for a parade, but when the ordinance is used to preserve segregation and to deny citizens the First Amendment privilege of peaceful assembly and peaceful protest, then it becomes unjust. Of course, there is nothing new about this kind of civil disobedience. It was seen sublimely in the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to obey the laws of Nebuchadnezzar because a higher moral law was involved. It was practiced superbly by the early Christians, who were willing to face hungry lions and the excruciating pain of chopping blocks before submitting to certain unjust laws of the Roman Empire. To a degree, academic freedom is a reality today because Socrates practiced civil disobedience.

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

# PRAYER

We can never forget that everything Hitler did in Germany was 'legal' and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was 'illegal.' It was 'illegal' to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler's Germany. But I am sure that if I had lived in Germany during that time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers even though it was illegal. If I lived in a Communist country today where certain principles dear to the Christian faith are suppressed, I believe I would openly advocate disobeying these anti-religious laws."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 8 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Are the current administration's policies on immigration, climate change, women's rights, and civil disobedience legal? Why or why not?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 1:** "In your statement you asserted that our actions, even though peaceful, must be condemned because they precipitate violence. But can this assertion be logically made? Isn't this like condemning the robbed man because his possession of money precipitated the evil act of robbery? Isn't this like condemning Socrates because his unswerving commitment to truth and his philosophical delvings precipitated the misguided popular mind to make him drink the hemlock? Isn't this like condemning Jesus because His unique God-consciousness and never-ceasing devotion to His will precipitated the evil act of crucifixion? We must come to see, as federal courts have consistently affirmed, that it is immoral to urge an individual to withdraw his efforts to gain his basic constitutional rights because the quest precipitates violence. Society must protect the robbed and punish the robber."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 1 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- How is today's society punishing the "robbed" and rewarding the "robber?"

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.




**Reader 2:** "You spoke of our activity in Birmingham as extreme. At first I was rather disappointed that fellow clergymen would see my nonviolent efforts as those of an extremist. I started thinking about the fact that I stand in the middle of two opposing forces in the Negro community. One is a force of complacency made up of Negroes who, as a result of long years of oppression, have been so completely drained of self-respect and a sense of 'somebodyness' that they have adjusted to segregation, and, on the other hand, of a few Negroes in the middle class who, because of a degree of academic and economic security and because at points they profit by segregation, have unconsciously become insensitive to the problems of the masses.

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

The other force is one of bitterness and hatred and comes perilously close to advocating violence…[and] is nourished by the contemporary frustration over the continued existence of racial discrimination. It is made up of people who have lost faith in America, who have absolutely repudiated Christianity, and who have concluded that the white man is an incurable devil. I have tried to stand between these two forces, saying that we need not follow the do-nothingism of the complacent or the hatred and despair of the black nationalist. There is a more excellent way, of love and nonviolent protest. I'm grateful to God that, through the Negro church, the dimension of nonviolence entered our struggle."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 2 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Who, in today's world, needs their sense of "somebodyness" restored?
- Who are the atypical nonviolent heroes in your life?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 3:** "Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever. The urge for freedom will eventually come. Recognizing this vital urge that has engulfed the Negro community, one should readily understand public demonstrations. The Negro has many pent-up resentments and latent frustrations. He has to get them out. So let him march sometime; let him have his prayer pilgrimages to the city hall; understand why he must have sit-ins and freedom rides. If his repressed emotions do not come out in these nonviolent ways, they will come out in ominous expressions of violence. This is not a threat; it is a fact of history. So I have not said to my people, 'Get rid of your discontent.' But I have tried to say that this normal and healthy discontent can be channeled through the creative outlet of nonviolent direct action. Now this approach is being dismissed as extremist. I must admit that I was initially disappointed in being so categorized."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 3 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Think of two ways that you can channel your discontent through the creative outlet of nonviolent direct action.

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 4**: "But as I continued to think about the matter, I gradually gained a bit of satisfaction from being considered an extremist. Was not Jesus an extremist in love? 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you.' Was not Amos an extremist for justice? 'Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.' Was not Paul an extremist for the gospel of Jesus Christ? 'I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.' Was not Martin Luther an extremist? 'Here I stand; I can do no other so help me God.' Was not John Bunyan an extremist? 'I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a mockery of my conscience.' Was not Abraham Lincoln an extremist? 'This nation cannot survive half slave and half free.' Was not Thomas Jefferson an extremist? 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.' So the question is not whether we will be extremist, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate, or will we be extremists for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice, or will we be extremists for the cause of justice?"

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

# PRAYER

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

# PRAYER

***After a moment of silence, Reader 4 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- How can you be an extremist for the cause of justice?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

***After a moment of silence, Reader 5 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Is your faith community standing on the sidelines or actively involved in today's social issues? Give two concrete examples. What can you personally do?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 6:** "Things are different now. The contemporary church is so often a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. It is so often the arch supporter of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church's often vocal sanction of things as they are.

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

But the judgment of God is upon the church as never before. If the church of today does not recapture the sacrificial spirit of the early church, it will lose its authentic ring, forfeit the loyalty of millions, and be dismissed as an irrelevant social club with no meaning for the twentieth century. I meet young people every day whose disappointment with the church has risen to outright disgust.

I hope the church as a whole will meet the challenge of this decisive hour. But even if the church does not come to the aid of justice, I have no despair about the future.… We will reach the goal of freedom in Birmingham and all over the nation, because the goal of America is freedom. Abused and scorned though we may be, our destiny is tied up with the destiny of America. We will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 6 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- How would Dr. King view the current status of participation of faith communities in public debate of social justice issues?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

**Reader 7:** "Over the last few years I have consistently preached that nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek. So I have tried to make it clear that it is wrong to use immoral means to attain moral ends. But now I must affirm that it is just as wrong, or even more, to use moral means to preserve immoral ends.

I wish you had commended the Negro demonstrators of Birmingham for their sublime courage, their willingness to suffer, and their amazing discipline in the midst of the most inhuman provocation. One day the South will recognize its real heroes. They will be the James Merediths, courageously and with a majestic sense of purpose facing jeering and hostile mobs and the agonizing loneliness that characterizes the life of the pioneer. They will be old, oppressed, battered Negro women, symbolized in a seventy-two-year-old woman of Montgomery, Alabama, who rose up with a sense of dignity and with her people decided not to ride the segregated buses, and responded to one who inquired about her tiredness with ungrammatical profundity, 'My feets is tired, but my soul is rested.' They will be young high school and college students, young ministers of the gospel and a host of their elders courageously and nonviolently sitting in at lunch counters and willingly going to jail for conscience's sake. One day the South will know that when these disinherited children of God sat down at lunch counters they were in reality standing up for the best in the American dream and the most sacred values in our Judeo-Christian heritage."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 7 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Can you name one of the heroes from the Civil Rights Movement in the South?
- How are youth of today "standing up for the best in the American dream" and what are some of the new methods and strategies used in by youth-led movements? What can social justice veterans learn from younger activists? What can lessons can more experienced activists impart to the younger generation?

**All:** God, Weaver of Humanity, show us how to robe ourselves with Dr. King's words. May we become women and men whose words and actions give rise to a world free of hatred and oppression.

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

# PRAYER

**Reader 8:** "Never before have I written a letter this long—or should I say a book? I'm afraid that it is much too long to take your precious time. I can assure you that it would have been much shorter if I had been writing from a comfortable desk, but what else is there to do when you are alone for days in the dull monotony of a narrow jail cell other than write long letters, think strange thoughts, and pray long prayers? … If I have said anything in this letter that is an understatement of the truth and is indicative of an unreasonable impatience, I beg you to forgive me. If I have said anything in this letter that is an overstatement of the truth and is indicative of my having a patience that makes me patient with anything less than brotherhood, I beg God to forgive me. Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood."

***After a moment of silence, Reader 8 invites participants to reflect privately or communally on one or more of the following questions:***

- Which part of Dr. King's quote was most meaningful to you?
- Imagine that you are a painter. Describe your painting of true "Peace and Brotherhood."
- What "unreasonable impatience" motivates you to act?
- After having heard these excerpts, how are Dr. King's words relevant in these times?

**Closing Prayer:** "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Us Around," by Dr. King

"Almighty God, Thou has called us to walk for freedom,
even as Thou did the Children of Israel.



We pray, dear God, as we go through a wilderness
of State Troopers that Thou will hold our hand.

We pray, dear God, as we must
go through the Valley of the Shadow of Death,
that Thou will go with us and strengthen us for the task.

Keep us strong. Keep us calm. Help us to love our enemy.
And above all, keep the fires of freedom burning in our hearts,
so that no matter what happens,
ain't gonna let nobody turn us around.

Because Thou, dear God, has sent us into this place.
Thou has sent us to fight, not just for ourselves,
but to fight for this nation so that democracy might exist here for the whole world.

Keep this vision in our hearts, and may we one day wake up
and find the state of Alabama, where all men might vote,
where all children might get a decent education,
where every man and woman might have a job according to his (or her) abilities,
and where every man and woman might live together as brothers,
and violence and bloodshed and hatred and prejudice shall be no more.
In Jesus' name, we pray." Amen.

(Source: http://bit.ly/2mZkYmx)

 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.

# PRAYER




 Copyright © 2017, Education for Justice, a project of Center of Concern.