



5th Annual

Martin Luther King Jr.

RETREAT RETREAT

*An individual has not started living until he can rise above
the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns
of all humanity.*
- Martin Luther King Jr.



1968 / AP

This year's theme:

A Call to Conscience

January 19- 21, 2008

Ventura, California

Retreat Leader:

Fr. Vazken Movsesian



A Call to Conscience

In His Shoes Retreat

celebrating the life and teachings of
Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.
at the Marriott at Ventura Beach

- Saturday – 19 January 2008
 - 9AM – Registration/Fellowship/Orientation. Coffee/tea will be served
 - 10AM – First Session – Martin Luther King, a “Call to Conscience”
 - 12NOON – Lunch at the hotel
 - 1:30 PM – Second Session: A Different “Call”
 - 2:30 PM – Check-in to hotel
 - 3:00 PM – Third Session: Black/White; Armenian/American
 - 5:00 PM – Break for the evening
 - 6:00 PM – Dinner in Santa Barbara
 - 8:30PM – Vespers @ Hazarians
- Sunday – 20 January 2008
 - 6:30 AM – Early Bird Walk – Ventura Beach
 - 9:00 AM – Fourth Session – Dr. King the Preacher
 - 10:00 AM – Alternative Divine Liturgy with Sermon by Dr. King
 - 12NOON – Brunch Break – The Greek at the Harbor, Ventura
 - 2:00 PM – Around the town in Ventura
 - 6:00 PM – Dinner
 - 7:00 PM – Fifth Session – Wrap up – A Call for Our Lives/ In His Shoes
 - 9:00 PM - Vespers
- Monday – 21 January 2008
 - 9AM – Prayer and Dismissal

All sessions take place in the Puerto Escondido Room at the Marriott





In His Shoes is an organization which rallies support for those who suffer in the world. Our actions are based on Christ's principles of love and compassion as expressed in Armenian Orthodoxy.

In His Shoes was created in response to acts of Genocide perpetrated against the Armenian nation in 1915. Those who have suffered evil have a responsibility to take action against injustice to others. *In His Shoes* provides aid through rallies, information programs and fund raisers.

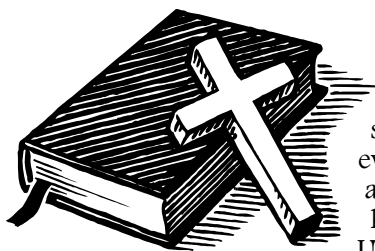
IN HIS SHOES is a non-profit faith based organization. It is established on the Christian principle of repaying evil with good. Membership and participation in the organization is open to members of all religious backgrounds and persuasions.

In His Shoes operates from the St. Peter Armenian Church & Youth Ministries' Center in Glendale, California and on the World Wide Web. All activities and events are funded by private donations.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Retreat is one of several on-going programs of the *In His Shoes* Mission. It is designed to inspire and motivate participants to take responsibility for their lives, community and world.

For more information, visit: [*InHisShoes.org*](http://InHisShoes.org)

Also, a member of the "My Church" virtual community: [*MyChurch.org*](http://MyChurch.org)



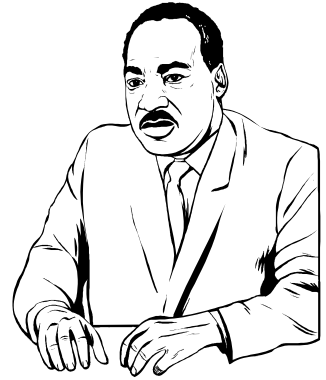
Luke Chapter 4: 14-21

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

*The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ON...



Human Fellowship

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

Freedom

Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.

Race

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

The Church and Society

Yes, I see the Church as the body of Christ. But, oh! How we have blemished and scarred that body through social neglect and through fear of being nonconformists.

Extremism

The question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be.

Acceptance

We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people.

Protest

One who breaks an unjust law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law.

Laws and the Law

Law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and . . . when they fail in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress.

Nonviolence

The Negro all over the South must come to the point that he can say to his white brother: "We will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. We will not hate you, but we will not obey your evil laws. We will soon wear you down by pure capacity to suffer."

Ignorance

Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.

Disappointment

There can be no deep disappointment where there is not deep love.

Martyrdom

If a man hasn't discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live.

Letter from Birmingham Jail

Author's Note: The response to a published statement by eight fellow clergymen from Alabama (Bishop C.C. J. Carpenter, Bishop Joseph A. Durick, Rabbi Hilton L. Grafman, Bishop Paul Hardin, Bishop Holan B. Harmon, the Reverend George M. Murray, the Reverend Edward V. Ramage and the Reverend Earl Stallings) was composed under somewhat constricting circumstances. Begun on the margins of the newspaper in which the statement appeared while I was in jail, the letter was continued on scraps of writing paper supplied by a friendly Negro trusty, and concluded on a pad my attorneys were eventually permitted to leave me. Although the text remains in substance unaltered, I have indulged in the author's prerogative of polishing it for publication. -MLK

April 16, 1963

MY DEAR FELLOW CLERGYMEN:

While confined here in the Birmingham city jail, I came across your recent statement calling my present activities "unwise and untimely." Seldom do I pause to answer criticism of my work and ideas. If I sought to answer all the criticisms that cross my desk, my secretaries would have little time for anything other than such correspondence in the course of the day, and I would have no time for constructive work. But since I feel that you are men of genuine good will and that your criticisms are sincerely set forth, I want to try to answer your statements in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.

I think I should indicate why I am here in Birmingham, since you have been influenced by the view which argues against "outsiders coming in." I have the honor of serving as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization operating in every southern state, with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. We have some eighty-five affiliated organizations across the South, and one of them is the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. Frequently we share staff, educational and financial resources with our affiliates. Several months ago the affiliate here in Birmingham asked us to be on call to engage in a nonviolent direct-action program if such were deemed necessary. We readily consented, and when the hour came we lived up to our promise. So I, along with several members of my staff, am here because I was invited here. I am here because I have organizational ties here.

But more basically, I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. Just as the prophets of the eighth

century B.C. left their villages and carried their "thus saith the Lord" far beyond the boundaries of their home towns, and just as the Apostle Paul left his village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to the far corners of the Greco-Roman world, so am I compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my own home town. Like Paul, I must constantly respond to the Macedonian call for aid.

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 anywhere within its bounds.

You deplore the demonstrations taking place in Birmingham. But your statement, I am sorry to say, fails to express a similar concern for the conditions that brought about the demonstrations. I am sure that none of you would want to rest content with the superficial kind of social analysis that deals merely with effects and does not grapple with underlying causes. It is unfortunate that demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham, but it is even more unfortunate that the city's white power structure left the Negro community with no alternative.

In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist; negotiation; self-purification; and direct action. We have gone through all these

steps in Birmingham. There can be no gainsaying the fact that racial injustice engulfs this community. Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States. Its ugly record of brutality is widely known. Negroes have experienced grossly unjust treatment in the courts. There have been more unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than in any other city in the nation. These are the hard, brutal facts of the case. On the basis of these conditions, Negro leaders sought to negotiate with the city fathers. But the latter consistently refused to engage in good-faith negotiation.

Then, last September, came the opportunity to talk with leaders of Birmingham's economic community. In the course of the negotiations, certain promises were made by the merchants --- for example, to remove the stores humiliating racial signs. On the basis of these promises, the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth and the leaders of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights agreed to a moratorium on all demonstrations. As the weeks and months went by, we realized that we were the victims of a broken promise. A few signs, briefly removed, returned; the others remained.

As in so many past experiences, our hopes had been blasted, and the shadow of deep disappointment settled upon us. We had no alternative except to prepare for direct action, whereby we would present our very bodies as a means of laying our case before the conscience of the local and the national community. Mindful of the difficulties involved, we decided to undertake a process of self-purification. We began a series of workshops on nonviolence, and we repeatedly asked ourselves: "Are you able to accept blows without retaliating?" "Are you able to endure the ordeal of jail?" We decided to schedule our direct-action program for the Easter season, realizing that except for Christmas, this is the main shopping period of the year. Knowing that a strong economic withdrawal program would be the by-product of direct action, we felt that this would be the best time to bring pressure to bear on the merchants for the needed change.

Then it occurred to us that Birmingham's mayoralty election was coming up in March, and we speedily decided to postpone action until after election day. When we discovered that the

Commissioner of Public Safety, Eugene "Bull" Connor, had piled up enough votes to be in the run-off we decided again to postpone action until the day after the run-off so that the demonstrations could not be used to cloud the issues. Like many others, we waited to see Mr. Connor defeated, and to this end we endured postponement after postponement. Having aided in this community need, we felt that our direct-action program could be delayed no longer.

You may well ask: "Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches and so forth? Isn't negotiation a better path?" You are quite right in calling for negotiation. Indeed, this is the very purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. My citing the creation of tension as part of the work of the nonviolent-resister may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word "tension." I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a type of constructive, nonviolent tension which 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 for nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood.

The purpose of our direct-action program is to create a situation so crisis-packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation. I therefore concur with you in your call for negotiation. Too long has our beloved Southland been bogged down in a tragic effort to live in monologue rather than dialogue.

One of the basic points in your statement is that the action that I and my associates have taken in Birmingham is untimely. Some have asked: "Why didn't you give the new city administration time to act?" The only answer that I can give to this query is that the new Birmingham administration must be prodded about as much as the outgoing one, before it will act. We are sadly mistaken if we feel

that the election of Albert Boutwell as mayor will bring the millennium to Birmingham. While Mr. Boutwell is a much more gentle person than Mr. Connor, they are both segregationists, dedicated to maintenance of the status quo. I have hope that Mr. Boutwell will be reasonable enough to see the futility of massive resistance to desegregation. But he will not see this without pressure from devotees of civil rights. My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain civil rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure. Lamentably, it is an historical 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 tend to be 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 yet to engage in a direct-action campaign that was "well timed" in the view 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 piercing familiarity. This "Wait" has almost always meant "Never." We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that "justice too long delayed is justice denied."

We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jet-like speed toward gaining political independence, but we still creep at horse-and-buggy pace toward gaining a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging dark 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 and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six-year-old daughter why she can't go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see

ominous clouds of inferiority beginning to form in her little mental sky, and see her beginning to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five-year-old son who is asking: "Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?"; when you take a cross-county drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading "white" and "colored"; when your first name becomes "nigger," your middle name becomes "boy" (however old you are) and your last name becomes "John," and your wife and mother are never given the respected title "Mrs."; when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never quite knowing what to expect next, and are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you no longer fighting a degenerating sense of "nobodiness" then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait. There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair. I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience.

You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. Since we so diligently urge people to obey the Supreme Court's decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in the public schools, at first glance it may seem rather paradoxical for us consciously to break laws. One may well ask: "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey 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 whether 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 law 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 distort the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority. Segregation, to use the terminology of the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, substitutes an "I-it" relationship for an "I-thou" relationship and ends up relegating persons to the status of things. Hence segregation is not only politically, economically and sociologically unsound, it is morally wrong and awful. Paul Tillich said that sin is separation. Is not segregation an existential expression of man's tragic separation, his awful estrangement, his terrible sinfulness? Thus it is that I can urge men to obey the 1954 decision of the Supreme Court, for it is morally right; and I can urge them to disobey segregation ordinances, for they are morally wrong.

Let us consider a more concrete example of just and unjust laws. An unjust law is a code that a numerical or power majority group compels a minority group to obey but does not make binding on itself. This is difference made legal. By the same token, a just law is a code that a majority compels a minority to follow and that it is willing to follow itself. This is sameness made legal. Let me give another explanation. A law is unjust if it is inflicted on a minority that, as a result of being denied the right to vote, had no part in enacting or devising the law. Who can say that the legislature of Alabama which set up that state's segregation laws was democratically elected? Throughout Alabama all sorts of devious methods are used to prevent Negroes from becoming registered voters, and there are some counties in which, even though Negroes constitute a majority of the population, not a single Negro is registered. Can any law enacted under such circumstances be considered democratically structured?

Sometimes a law is just on its face and unjust in its application. For instance, I have been arrested on a charge of parading without a permit. Now, there is nothing wrong in having an ordinance which requires a permit for a parade. But such an ordinance becomes unjust when it is used to maintain segregation and to deny citizens the First Amendment privilege of peaceful assembly and protest.

I hope you are able to see the distinction I am trying to point out. In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law, as would the rabid segregationist. That would lead to anarchy. One who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law.

Of course, there is nothing new about this kind of civil disobedience. It was evidenced sublimely in the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to obey the laws of Nebuchadnezzar, on the ground that a higher moral law was at stake. It was practiced superbly by the early Christians, who were willing to face hungry lions and the excruciating pain of chopping blocks rather than submit to certain unjust laws of the Roman Empire. To a degree, academic freedom is a reality today because Socrates practiced civil disobedience. In our own nation, the Boston Tea Party represented a massive act of civil disobedience.

We should never forget that everything Adolf 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. Even so, I am sure that, had I lived in Germany at the time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers. If today I lived in a Communist country where certain principles dear to the Christian faith are suppressed, I would openly advocate disobeying that country's antireligious laws.

I must make two honest confessions to you, my Christian and Jewish brothers. First, I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Counciler or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree

with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season." Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection.

I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and that when they fan in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress. I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that the present tension in the South is a necessary phase of the transition from an obnoxious negative peace, in which the Negro passively accepted his unjust plight, to a substantive and positive peace, in which all men will respect the dignity and worth of human personality. Actually, we who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it out in the open, where it can be seen and dealt with. Like a boil that can never be cured so long as it is covered up but must be opened with an its ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must be exposed, with all the tension its exposure creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured.

In your statement you assert that our actions, even though peaceful, must be condemned because they precipitate violence. But is this a logical assertion? Isn't this like condemning a 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 inquiries precipitated the act by the misguided populace in which they made him drink hemlock? Isn't this like condemning Jesus because his unique God-consciousness and never-ceasing devotion to God's will precipitated the evil act of crucifixion? We must come to see that, as the federal courts have consistently affirmed, it is wrong to urge an individual to cease his efforts to gain his basic constitutional rights because the quest may

precipitate violence. Society must protect the robbed and punish the robber.

I had also hoped that the white moderate would reject the myth concerning time in relation to the struggle for freedom. I have just received a letter from a white brother in Texas. He writes: "An Christians know that the colored people will receive equal rights eventually, but it is possible that you are in too great a religious hurry. It has taken Christianity almost two thousand years to accomplish what it has. The teachings of Christ take time to come to earth." Such an attitude stems from a tragic misconception of time, from the strangely rational notion that there is something in the very flow of time that will inevitably cure all ills. Actually, time itself is neutral; it can be used either destructively or constructively. More and more I feel that the people of ill will have used time much more effectively than have the people of good will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people. Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this 'hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy and transform our pending national elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood. Now is the time to lift our national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to 6e solid rock of human dignity.

You speak of our activity in Birmingham as extreme. At fist I was rather disappointed that fellow clergymen would see my nonviolent efforts as those of an extremist. I began thinking about the fact that stand in the middle of two opposing forces in the Negro community. One is a force of complacency, made up in part of Negroes who, as a result of long years of oppression, are so drained of self-respect and a sense of "somebodiness" that they have adjusted to segregation; and in part of a few middle class Negroes who, because of a degree of academic and economic security and because in some ways they profit by segregation, have become insensitive to the problems of the masses. The other force is one of bitterness and hatred, and it comes perilously close to advocating

violence. It is expressed in the various black nationalist groups that are springing up across the nation, the largest and best-known being Elijah Muhammad's Muslim movement. Nourished by the Negro's frustration over the continued existence of racial discrimination, this movement 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 incorrigible "devil."

I have tried to stand between these two forces, saying that we need emulate neither the "do-nothingism" of the complacent nor the hatred and despair of the black nationalist. For there is the more excellent way of love and nonviolent protest. I am grateful to God that, through the influence of the Negro church, the way of nonviolence became an integral part of our struggle.

If this philosophy had not emerged, by now many streets of the South would, I am convinced, be flowing with blood. And I am further convinced that if our white brothers dismiss as "rabble-rousers" and "outside agitators" those of us who employ nonviolent direct action, and if they refuse to support our nonviolent efforts, millions of Negroes will, out of frustration and despair, seek solace and security in black-nationalist ideologies a development that would inevitably lead to a frightening racial nightmare.

Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever. The yearning for freedom eventually manifests itself, and that is what has happened to the American Negro. Something within has reminded him of his birthright of freedom, and something without has reminded him that it can be gained. Consciously or unconsciously, he has been caught up by the Zeitgeist, and with his black brothers of Africa and his brown and yellow brothers of Asia, South America and the Caribbean, the United States Negro is moving with a sense of great urgency toward the promised land of racial justice. If one recognizes this vital urge that has engulfed the Negro community, one should readily understand why public demonstrations are taking place. The Negro has many pent-up resentments and latent frustrations, and he must release them. So let him march; let him make prayer pilgrimages to the city hall; let him go on freedom rides-and try to understand

why he must do so. If his repressed emotions are not released in nonviolent ways, they will seek expression through violence; this is not a threat but a fact of history. So I have not said to my people: "Get rid of your discontent." Rather, I have tried to say that this normal and healthy discontent can be channeled into the creative outlet of nonviolent direct action. And now this approach is being termed extremist.

But though I was initially disappointed at being categorized as an extremist, as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label. Was not Jesus an extremist for love: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Was not Amos an extremist for justice: "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." Was not Paul an extremist for the Christian gospel: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Was not Martin Luther an extremist: "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise, so help me God." And John Bunyan: "I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience." And Abraham Lincoln: "This nation cannot survive half slave and half free." And Thomas Jefferson: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..." So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice? In that dramatic scene on Calvary's hill three men were crucified. We must never forget that all three were crucified for the same crime---the crime of extremism. Two were extremists for immorality, and thus fell below their environment. The other, Jesus Christ, was an extremist for love, truth and goodness, and thereby rose above his environment. Perhaps the South, the nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists.

I had hoped that the white moderate would see this need. Perhaps I was too optimistic; perhaps I expected too much. I suppose I should have realized that few members of the oppressor race can understand the deep groans and passionate yearnings of the oppressed race, and still fewer have the vision to see that injustice must be rooted out by strong, persistent and determined

action. I am thankful, however, that some of our white brothers in the South have grasped the meaning of this social revolution and committed themselves to it. They are still too few in quantity, but they are big in quality. Some--such as Ralph McGill, Lillian Smith, Harry Golden, James McBride Dabbs, Ann Braden and Sarah Patton Boyle---have written about our struggle in eloquent and prophetic terms. Others have marched with us down nameless streets of the South. They have languished in filthy, roach-infested jails, suffering the abuse and brutality of policemen who view them as "dirty nigger lovers." Unlike so many of their moderate brothers and sisters, they have recognized the urgency of the moment and sensed the need for powerful "action" antidotes to combat the disease of segregation.

Let me take note of my other major disappointment. I have been so greatly disappointed with the white church and its leadership. Of course, there are some notable exceptions. I am not unmindful of the fact that each of you has taken some significant stands on this issue. I commend you, Reverend Stallings, for your Christian stand on this past Sunday, in welcoming Negroes to your worship service on a non segregated basis. I commend the Catholic leaders of this state for integrating Spring Hill College several years ago.

But despite these notable exceptions, I must honestly reiterate that I have been disappointed with the church. I do not say this as one of those negative critics who can always find something wrong with the church. I say this as a minister of the gospel, who loves the church; who was nurtured in its bosom; who has been sustained by its spiritual blessings and who will remain true to it as long as the cord of Rio shall lengthen.

When I was suddenly catapulted into the leadership of the bus protest in Montgomery, Alabama, a few years ago, I felt we would be supported by the white church felt that the white ministers, priests and rabbis of the South would be among our strongest allies. Instead, some have been outright opponents, refusing to understand the freedom movement and misrepresenting its leader era; and too many others have been more cautious than courageous and have remained

silent behind the anesthetizing security of stained-glass windows.

In spite of my shattered dreams, I came to Birmingham with the hope that the white religious leadership of this community would see the justice of our cause and, with deep moral concern, would serve as the channel through which our just grievances could reach the power structure. I had hoped that each of you would understand. But again I have been disappointed.

I have heard numerous southern religious leaders admonish their worshipers to comply with a desegregation decision because it is the law, but I have longed to hear white ministers declare: "Follow this decree because integration is morally right and because the Negro is your brother." In the midst of blatant injustices inflicted upon the Negro, I have watched white churchmen stand on the sideline and mouth pious irrelevancies and sanctimonious trivialities. In the midst of a mighty struggle to rid our nation of racial and economic injustice, I have heard many ministers say: "Those are social issues, with which the gospel has no real concern." And I have watched many churches commit themselves to a completely other worldly religion which makes a strange, on Biblical distinction between body and soul, between the sacred and the secular.

I have traveled the length and breadth of Alabama, Mississippi and all the other southern states. On sweltering summer days and crisp autumn mornings I have looked at the South's beautiful churches with their lofty spires pointing heavenward. I have beheld the impressive outlines of her massive religious-education buildings. Over and over I have found myself asking: "What kind of people worship here? Who is their God? Where were their voices when the lips of Governor Barnett dripped with words of interposition and nullification? Where were they when Governor Walleye gave a clarion call for defiance and hatred? Where were their voices of support when bruised and weary Negro men and women decided to rise from the dark dungeons of complacency to the bright hills of creative protest?"

Yes, these questions are still in my mind. In deep disappointment I have wept over the laxity of the church. But be assured that my tears have been tears of love. There can be no deep

disappointment where there is not deep love. Yes, I love the church. How could I do otherwise? I am in the rather unique position of being the son, the grandson and the great-grandson of preachers. Yes, I see the church as the body of Christ. But, oh! How we have blemished and scarred that body through social neglect and through fear of being nonconformists.

There was a time when the church was very powerful in the time when the early Christians rejoiced at being deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society. Whenever the early Christians entered a town, the people in power became disturbed and immediately sought to convict the Christians for being "disturbers of the peace" and "outside agitators!" But the Christians pressed on, in the conviction that they were "a colony of heaven," called to obey God rather than man. Small in number, they were big in commitment. They were too God intoxicated to be "astronomically intimidated." By their effort and example they brought an end to such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contests.

Things are different now. So often the contemporary church is a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. So often it is an archdefender 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 silent and often even vocal sanction of things as they are.

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

Perhaps I have once again been too optimistic. Is organized religion too inextricably bound to the status quo to save our nation and the world? Perhaps I must turn my faith to the inner spiritual church, the church within the church, as the true *ekklesia* and the hope of the world. But again I am thankful to God that some noble souls from the

ranks of organized religion have broken loose from the paralyzing chains of conformity and joined us as active partners in the struggle for freedom. They have left their secure congregations and walked the streets of Albany, Georgia, with us. They have gone down the highways of the South on tortuous rides for freedom. Yes, they have gone to jail with us. Some have been dismissed from their churches, have lost the support of their bishops and fellow ministers. But they have acted in the faith that right defeated is stronger than evil triumphant. Their witness has been the spiritual salt that has preserved the true meaning of the gospel in these troubled times. They have carved a tunnel of hope through the dark mountain of disappointment.

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. I have no fear about the outcome of our struggle in Birmingham, even if our motives are at present misunderstood. We will reach the goal of freedom in Birmingham, here 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 America's destiny. Before the pilgrims landed at Plymouth, we were here. Before the pen of Jefferson etched the majestic words of the Declaration of Independence across the pages of history, we were here. For more than two centuries our forebears labored in this country without wages; they made cotton king; they built the homes of their masters while suffering gross injustice and shameful humiliation—and yet out of a bottomless vitality they continued to thrive and develop. If the inexpressible cruelties of slavery could not stop us, the opposition we now face will surely fail. We will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands.

Before closing I feel impelled to mention one other point in your statement that has troubled me profoundly. You warmly commended the Birmingham police force for keeping "order" and "preventing violence." I doubt that you would have so warmly commended the police force if you had seen its dogs sinking their teeth into unarmed, nonviolent Negroes. I doubt that you would so quickly commend the policemen if you were to observe their ugly and inhumane

treatment of Negroes here in the city jail; if you were to watch them push and curse old Negro women and young Negro girls; if you were to see them slap and kick old Negro men and young boys; if you were to observe them, as they did on two occasions, refuse to give us food because we wanted to sing our grace together. I cannot join you in your praise of the Birmingham police department.

It is true that the police have exercised a degree of discipline in handing the demonstrators. In this sense they have conducted themselves rather "nonviolently" in public. But for what purpose? To preserve the evil system of segregation. Over the past few years I have consistently preached that nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek. I have tried to make 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 perhaps even more so, to use moral means to preserve immoral ends. Perhaps Mr. Connor and his policemen have been rather nonviolent in public, as was Chief Pritchett in Albany, Georgia but they have used the moral means of nonviolence to maintain the immoral end of racial injustice. As T. S. Eliot has said: "The last temptation is the greatest treason: To do the right deed for the wrong reason."

I wish you had commended the Negro sit-inners and demonstrators of Birmingham for their sublime courage, their willingness to suffer and their amazing discipline in the midst of great provocation. One day the South will recognize its real heroes. They will be the James Merediths, with the noble sense of purpose that enables them to face Jeering, and hostile mobs, and with 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 in Montgomery, Alabama, who rose up with a sense of dignity and with her people decided not to ride segregated buses, and who responded with ungrammatical profundity to one who inquired about her weariness: "My feet are tired, but my soul is at rest." They will be the young high school and college students, the 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' 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 what is best in the American dream and for the most sacred values in our Judaeo-Christian heritage, thereby bringing our nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug deep by the founding fathers in their formulation of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

Never before have I written so long a letter. I'm afraid 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 can one do when he is alone in a narrow jail cell, other than write long letters, think long thoughts and pray long prayers?

If I have said anything in this letter that overstates the truth and indicates an unreasonable impatience, I beg you to forgive me. If I have said anything that understates the truth and indicates my having a patience that allows me to settle for anything less than brotherhood, I beg God to forgive me.

I hope this letter finds you strong in the faith. I also hope that circumstances will soon make it possible for me to meet each of you, not as an integrationist or a civil rights leader but as a fellow clergyman and a Christian brother. Let us all hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities, and in some not too distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all their scintillating beauty.

Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood,

Martin Luther King, Jr.

HOW MUCH LONGER CAN WE WAIT?

Martin Luther King, the Armenian Church and... Why We Can't Wait...

Excerpts from Sermon Delivered by Fr. Vazken Movsesian

18 January, 1998, St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church, Pasadena, CA

In the second chapter of the Gospel of John we read the story of Jesus' first miracle. It takes place in Cana, Galilee, where He changes water to wine. Today, let's shift our focus to the timing of the miracle.

Jesus sees that there is a need and takes care of it. There is a wedding party, they run out of wine, Jesus changes water to wine and the guests are satisfied. This is a simplistic approach to the story, but it's the timing and the need for the miracle that I wish to talk about today.

Tomorrow, in this country, we will be celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.'s holiday. As you know, he was a great Civil Rights leader and one of the champions for Black America and for many of us who grew up during the 60's. You may be familiar with his "I have a dream" speech, but he is remembered more for his actions than his dreams. A few days ago, I revisited one of his books, "Why We Can't Wait." It is a book which explains the need to rectify the discriminatory policies of the government and the need to end racism. Reading the book, it becomes obvious that We Can't Wait. There is no excuse for racism and an end must be found. How? By making the change ourselves – God above, and we on this Earth.

Martin Luther King was able to take the basic tenants of Christianity and apply them for the liberation of a people. His call was for a non-violent revolution, one, which began in Montgomery with the bus boycotts and continues, in many senses, today. King was not a pacifist. Sometimes, we categorize people who can motivate and effectuate change without bloodshed as pacifists. Look at the changes Jesus made to our lives, I'd hardly call him a pacifist. Jesus was among the first non-violent revolutionaries. He went against the system, without physical force, and was able demonstrate a greater power.

Martin Luther King called on us to look at our deepest moral, ethical and religious convictions, to make the necessary changes in our society. Service to humanity was the highest form of worship for King. He asked us to walk the walk of Christ. He was a minister of the Gospel. He saw that a liberation of a people depended on God above and we here on Earth. And I tell you that in any decision you need to make, always ask yourself, what would Christ do? How would Christ handle a particular situation? Would Christ discriminate against someone because of the color of their skin? Would Christ oppress a person and prevent them from maximizing their potential? In fact, just the opposite, we see today that Christ maximizes the potential of any situation. He changed the water to wine. There was need and He took care of it.

In the same way, Martin Luther King saw the need and he addressed it with the resources available to him. In the 30's and 40's, in the Fresno area, Armenians were also discriminated against. They couldn't get jobs and couldn't put food on their table. Some changed their names to hide their Armenian identity. But unlike the Armenians, for the Blacks, changing their name wouldn't help. They couldn't change the color of their skin. There was no reason to wait. The need existed. Martin Luther King addressed it.

Look at our world today. Can you imagine that we are already in 1998. Life goes by so quickly. Everything is so fast paced. We see changes in our lives and surroundings and this brings anxiety. We want answers for our deepest spiritual questions. This week the Pope will visit Castro's Cuba. Could we have thought that this would have happened? Could you have thought that the former Soviet Union would have fallen the way it did? What happened when it did? People started to look for their spirituality. Not that they weren't spiritual beings before independence, but the opportunity didn't exist for them to exercise their basic rights of expression. Much like these young boys who serve at the altar – it's not that they didn't want to serve in their Armenian Church before, it's just that the opportunity didn't exist. In Armenia, after independence, the search for spirituality came as a natural extension to the freedom they acquired. And what happened?

The Armenian Church was there when people started searching, but it was ill prepared to handle the volume and the manner of freedom. She wasn't ready for the tremendous work. Meanwhile, other groups and cults entered Armenia. Why? There was a need and they capitalized on the opportunity. Can you blame them?

We're talking about needs and timing. We're talking about there being a need and taking care of it. Changing water to wine – a need that was taken care of. The Civil Rights Movement – a need that demanded addressing. The Armenian Church is being



held captive today. It is a different form of slavery. It oppresses and prevents the church from maximizing its potential.

The Church is being held captive by the secular whims of some heirarchs, leaders and our people. Why are our people staying away from our churches? Why are they going elsewhere? How much longer are we going to wait? How many souls are going to be lost before we make some changes? Is this not the time to change the water to wine? Is this not the time to move ourselves to action? How much longer are we going to wait?

Look at the reality of the Armenian Church. Our lovely Catholicoi say that the church is one, but you and I know the reality. Right here in Pasadena, a few blocks down the street, another priest, ordained by the same rites, will celebrate the same liturgy, in the same language. Do you see one church here? How much longer are we going to put up with this non-sense? We could close our eyes and hope that it will go away, but it won't. We go to Diocesan conventions and see only a small minority under the age of 60. How much longer do we need to wait before we make a change? We see in our neighborhoods the kids being picked up by buses from other denominations and cults. How much longer will we wait?

In all things, and especially in the Armenian Church, we tend to blame others for our ills. As we see today, the only way that someone can hold you in the bonds of slavery is by your own approval. King taught us to stand up for our basic self worth. His words were given to us Armenians earlier by the likes of Khirimian Hayrig and Yeghishe Charentz, who emphasized the need for us to rely on our collective energy and strength. Who else can we blame but ourselves?

The name of our Church is the Church of the Armenian People. This church is yours. Its in our hands—yours and mine. We need to take control, because we can no longer wait. The Armenian Church is not run from Armenia or Beirut, it driven by the one who shed His blood for this Church and He said that the gates of Hell will not prevail against it. These are words that do not lie. Our faith is in God and Christ is the head of this Church. If we put God at the center of our church and our lives, there is no reason why the Church will not live. The reason there is a split in the Church is because there is no faith in God. If we believed in God, we'd be working together for the liberation of the soul rather than the acquiring of more property. If we believed in God, language would not be an issue. We wouldn't care if we spoke Armenian, English, Arabic or French in this church, because we'd be speaking the language of love, which is the only language God cares about.

The time for action is here. The time to change the water to wine is here. The revolution has already started. Today, in your presence you are seeing the beginnings of change. It is the reason why you have crowded into this church today. You know that Christ is here. It's the reason why the number of altar servers and Sunday School increases. You feel the workings of God all around you in this sanctuary. You're tasting the sweet wine.

Today, I'm asking you to rise—rise up from our collective slavery. We can no longer wait for catholicoi and bishops to make the changes that our Holy Church deserves. We can no longer relinquish our rights. Let's work hand and hand. I ask you first and foremost to pray. In your prayer life, keep the needs of this church at the forefront. Next, I ask you to support this ministry. If you believe in what we are doing, support it with your work, volunteering spirit and your money. Don't be a pacifist. It's going to happen because it's already happening. With God above, with the inspiration we receive from the Gospels and champions of justice such as Martin Luther King, the time is right for the water to change to wine.

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Catholicos Mgrudich Khrimian (Hayrig)

The Paper Ladle by “Khrimian Hayrig” (His Holiness Mgrdich Catholicos)

Affectionately called "Hayrig" by the Armenian people, Megerdich Khrimian was the Catholicos of the Armenian Church between 1892-1907. In 1878, at the request of Patriarch Nersess and the National Assembly, Khrimian represented the Armenians at Congress of Berlin. Upon his return to Constantinople he recited this message at the Cathedral. (Haig Ajemian, Hayotz Hayrig, page 511-3; excerpts translated: vm)

Blessed and beloved Armenians: Now, you have all perked up your ears, impatiently and anxiously waiting to hear what sort of news Khrimian Hayrig has brought us from the Berlin Congress, and what will he say about Article 61 which the powerful governments of the world have bestowed upon the Armenian provinces. Listen carefully to what I am about to say. Grasp the profound meaning of my words and then go and contemplate on my message.

As you know, upon the decision of Patriarch Nersess and the National Assembly, we went to Berlin to present the Armenian Case to the great powers of the Congress. We had great hopes that the Congress would bring peace to the world and liberation to the small and oppressed nations, among which we count ourselves.

The Congress convened, the statesmen of the great powers of the world gathered around diplomatic tables covered with green cloth. And we, the small and suppressed nations waited outside the Congress. In the middle of the Congress, upon a table covered with green cloth was placed a large bowl of *beriseh* (a thick and pasty porridge-like meal) from which large and small nations and governments would draw their portion.

Some of the participants pulled to the East, some pulled to the West, and after long debates, in order, one by one, they called the representatives of the small nations [into the meeting]. The Bulgarian entered first, then Serbian and the Gharadaghian. The rattling of the swords hanging from their sides attracted the attention of the assembly. After speaking for some while, these three, pulled out their swords, as if ladles made of iron, and dipped into the bowl, took their portion of *beriseh* and proudly and boldly departed. It was now the turn of the Armenian delegate. I drew near with the paper petition from the National Assembly, presented it and asked that they fill my plate too with *beriseh*. Then, the officials standing before the bowl asked me, "Where is your iron ladle? It is true that we are serving *beriseh* here, but he who does not have an iron ladle cannot draw from it. Listen up. In the future, if this *beriseh* is distributed, do not come without a ladle or you will return empty handed.

Dear Armenian people. Could I have dipped my paper ladle in the *beriseh*? It would have become wet and stayed there. There, where guns talk and swords make noise, what significance do appeals and petitions have? And I saw next to the Gharadaghian, the Bulgarian and other delegates, several brave [men], blood dripping from the swords hanging at their sides. I then turned my head, as if I was looking for the brave men from Zeitoon, Sasoon, Shadakh and other mountainous areas. But where were they?

People of Armenia, tell me, where were those brave souls? Should not one or two of them have been next to me, so that showing their bloody swords to the members of Congress I could have exclaimed, "Look, HERE IS MY IRON LADLES! They are here, ready!" But alas, all I had was a paper petition, which got wet in the *beriseh* and we returned empty handed. Truly, had they compared me with the delegates of the Congress, I was taller, my facial features were more attractive. But to what avail? In my hand was placed a piece of paper and not a sword. For this reason we were deprived of the *beriseh*. People of Armenia, of course you understand well what the gun could have done and can do. And so, dear and blessed Armenians, when you return to the Fatherland, to your relatives and friends, take weapons, take weapons and again weapons. People, above all, place the hope of your liberation on yourself. Use your brain and your fist! Man must work for himself in order to be saved...

Hrant Dink's final article ≡::≡::≡::≡::≡::≡::≡::≡::≡::≡::≡::

The following are extracts from the final article by Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink, published in his newspaper Agos on 19 January, the day he was shot dead in Istanbul.

At first when an investigation was launched against me for insulting Turkishness I did not feel troubled. This was not the first time... I had complete trust in what I'd written and what my intentions had been.

Once the prosecutor had the chance to evaluate the text of my editorial as a whole, not that single sentence which made no sense by itself, he would understand that I had no intention of "insulting Turkishness" and this comedy would come to an end. I was sure of myself. But surprise! A lawsuit was filed...

In covering every hearing the newspapers, editorials and television programmes all referred to how I had said that "the blood of the Turk is poisonous".

Each time, they were adding to my fame as "the enemy of the Turk". In the corridors of the courthouse, the fascists physically attacked me with racist curses. They bombarded me with insults. Hundreds of threats hailed down for months by phone, email and post - increasing all the time. I persevered through all this with patience awaiting the decision that would acquit me. Then the truth would prevail and all those people would be ashamed of what they had done.

'False information' My only weapon was my sincerity. But when the decision came out my hopes were crushed. From then on, I was in the most distressed situation a person could possibly be in.

The memory of my computer is filled with angry, threatening lines sent by citizens

The judge had made a decision in the name of the "Turkish nation" and had it legally registered that I had "denigrated Turkishness." I could have coped with anything but this.

In my understanding, the denigration of a person on the basis of any difference - ethnic or religious - is racism, and there was no way this could ever be forgiven...

Those who tried to single me out and weaken me have succeeded. With the false information they oozed into society, they created a significant segment of the population who view Hrant Dink as someone who "insults Turkishness".

How real are these threats? To be honest, it is impossible for me to know for sure. What is truly threatening and unbearable for me is the psychological torture I place myself in. The question that really gets to me, is: 'What are these people thinking about me?'

Unfortunately I am now better-known than before and I feel people looking at me, thinking: 'Oh, look, isn't he that Armenian guy?' I am just like a pigeon, equally obsessed by what goes-on on my left and right, front and back. My head is just as mobile and fast.

Heaven and hell: What did Foreign Minister Gul say? Or Justice Minister Cicek? 'There is no need to exaggerate about Article 301 (on insulting Turkishness). Has anyone actually been put in prison?' As if going to prison was the only way to pay the price. This is the price. This is the price.

2007 will probably be an even harder year for me

Do you ministers know the price of making someone as scared as a pigeon? What my family and I have been through has not been easy. I have considered leaving this country at times... But leaving a 'boiling hell' to run to a 'heaven' is not for me. I wanted to turn this hell into heaven.

We stayed in Turkey because that was what we wanted - and out of respect for the thousands of people here who supported me in my fight for democracy... I am now applying to the European Court of Human Rights. I don't know how long the case will take, but what I do know is that I will continue living here in Turkey until the case is finalised. And if the court rules in my favour I will be very happy and will never have to leave my country.

2007 will probably be an even harder year for me. The court cases will continue, new ones will be initiated and God knows what kind of additional injustices I will have to face.

I may see myself as frightened as a pigeon, but I know that in this country people do not touch pigeons. Pigeons can live in cities, even in crowds. A little scared perhaps, but free.

**A Liturgy of the Armenian Church
For use at the In His Shoes/Martin Luther King Retreat**



SPECIAL REMEMBRANCE (REQUIEM) FOR REV. KING (20 YEARS) AND HRANT DINK (1ST YEAR) AND THE VENERABLE CATHOLICOS MGRDICH KHRIMIAN (100 YEARS)

BLESSED IS THE KINGDOM OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT,
now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Priest: For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Priest: Lord have mercy upon us. I confess before God and before the Holy Mother of God and before all the saints and before you, fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, all the sins that I have committed; for I have sinned in thought, word and deed and by all the sins that humans commit. I have sinned and I ask that you pray with me asking God to grant me forgiveness.

People: May God, the almighty have mercy upon you and grant you forgiveness of all your transgressions of the past and the present, and may He deliver you from those that are to come and confirm you in good works and give you rest in the life to come. Amen.

Priest: May God set you free and may He forgive all your sins; may He give you time to repent and to do good works; may He also direct your life in the time to come by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the mighty and the merciful. Let us give glory to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

People: Remember us in your prayers as you celebrate this Holy Sacrifice.

Priest: You shall be remembered before the Immortal Lamb of God, Christ.

Psalm 100

Deacon: Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

People: Worship the LORD with gladness; come into His presence with singing.

Deacon: Know that the LORD is God. It is He that made us, and we are His;

People: We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

Deacon: Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise.

People: Give thanks to Him, bless His name.

Deacon: For the LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations.

People: Glory to the Father, to the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Deacon: Now and always and to the end of the ages. Amen.

Priest: O Lord, Christ our God, we glorify Your Holy and wondrous dominion and we offer praise and glory to You with the Father and with the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the end of the ages. Amen.

Introit: A song of invitation, worship and praise

Then, a member of the congregation shall bring the wafer (bread) to the priest saying:

In peace let us pray to the Lord. Receive, save and have mercy.

Priest: Blessing and glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and to the end of the ages. Amen.

May we be reminded that our Lord Jesus Christ is seated on the throne not made with hands. He accepted the death of the cross for us. Bless, praise and exalt Him forever.

A member of the congregation shall bring the wine to the priest saying:

In peace let us pray to the Lord. Receive, save and have mercy.

Priest: Blessing and glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and to the end of the ages. Amen.

May we be reminded that our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is our Redeemer; through the fountain of His blood flowing from His side all creatures have been renewed and made immortal. Bless, praise and exalt Him forever.

O Lord our God, you sent our Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly bread, the food of the whole world, to be savior and redeemer and to bless and to sanctify us.

† Bless now, O Lord, this presentation. Receive this upon Your heavenly Altar.

Be mindful both of those who offer it and of those for whom it is offered and keep us without condemnation in the priestly ministry of Your divine mysteries.

† The Holy Spirit shall come upon You and the Power of the Most High shall overshadow You.

The priest raises the holy Gospel Book and says,

Priest: Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

People: Come, let us worship Christ. Save us, O Son of God who rose from the dead, to You we sing: Alleluia.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Holy God, You dwell among Your saints. You have brought all things out of nothing into being. You have created humans in Your image and likeness and adorned them with all the gifts of Your grace. You give wisdom and understanding to those who ask and You do not overlook the sinner but have established repentance as the way of salvation. You have enabled us, Your lowly and unworthy servants, to stand at this hour before the glory of Your holy altar and to offer to You due worship and praise.

People: For You are holy, our God, and to You we give glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Deacon: Let us sing,

All: *Soorp Asdvadz, soorp yev buxor, soorp
yev anmah, vor baryar ee merelotz,
voghormia mez. (3X)*

*Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and
Immortal, who was raised from the dead, have
mercy on us (3X).*

Deacon: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Priest: Blessed are You on the throne of glory of Your kingdom, seated upon the Cherubim, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Readings from the Church Leadership

People: Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Priest: Peace be with you.

People: And with your spirit.

Deacon: Let us be attentive.

Reading from the Holy Gospel

Sermon

All: Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Deacon: Now that we have been nourished through the Holy Scriptures, let us profess our faith in unison...

The Creed of the Christian Church as developed in Nicea (325 A.D.)

- ◆ We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
- ◆ We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the God the Father, only-begotten, that is of the substance of the Father.

God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of selfsame nature of the Father, by whom all things came into being in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible. Who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate, was made man, was born perfectly of the holy Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit: By whom he took body, soul and mind and everything that is in man, truly and not in semblance. He suffered and was crucified and was buried and rose again on the third day and ascended into heaven with the same body and sat at the right hand of the Father. He is to come with the same body and with the glory of the Father to judge the living and the dead; of whose His kingdom there is no end.

- ◆ We believe also in the Holy Spirit, uncreated and the perfect; who spoke in the Law and in the Prophets and in the Gospels; who came down upon the Jordan, preached in the apostles and dwelt in the saints.
- ◆ We believe also in only one, universal, and apostolic holy Church; in one baptism with repentance for the remission and the forgiveness of sins; in the resurrection of the dead, in the everlasting judgment of souls and bodies, in the kingdom of heaven and in the life eternal.

Deacon: As for those who say there was a time when the Son or the Holy Spirit did not exist. Or that they were created or came into being out of nothing, such does the universal and apostolic holy Church renounce and anathematize.

Priest: As for us, we shall glorify him who was before the ages, worshipping the Holy Trinity and the one Godhead, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Petitions

Deacon: Let us ask that the Lord tend to our needs in His mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of God and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For peace of the whole world, for the stability of the holy churches of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: For all orthodox bishop and priests, for our Catholicos and Primate, for our priest and all those in God's service, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our country and the government of the United States of America, for the president, senators and representatives, and all those in public service. For the government of Armenia and Artzakh, for peace, tranquility and economic stability, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the inspiration given to us by great men and women in our lives, for our parents, our teachers, and the champion of civil rights and justice, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, hear our prayer.

Deacon: For the work of Hrant Dink, for his dedication and eventual martyrdom, and the need for us to continue the pursuit of justice, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, be mindful of all those who are persecuted for righteousness.

Deacon: For the guidance of the Venerable Patriarch Mgrdich Khirmian and his selfless dedication to the cause of justice and self-determination, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, be mindful of those who strive for justice.

Deacon: For those who offered their home, their services, support and love to make this Retreat a possibility, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our parish, the St. Peter Armenian Church Youth Ministries' Center, for the mission In His Shoes, for the priests, deacons, council members and all those who make a difference in the Holy Church, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For favorable weather, an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and temperate seasons. For travelers by land, sea, and air, for the sick, the suffering, the captives, and for their salvation. For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and distress, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Here special petitions for the recovery of the sick, or any special needs for individual parishioners are offered.

People: Hear us and have mercy.

Priest: Furthermore we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works in this holy church; for those who labor in its service, for the people here present, who await from You great and abundant mercy.

People: Hear us and have mercy.

Priest: We pray for the repose of the souls of the servants of God Martin, Hrant and Mgrdich of Blessed Memory, departed from this life, and that You will pardon their sins, both voluntary and involuntary, because who is it that lives and does not sin? Only You are sinless and Your Kingdom is the Kingdom of Eternity, now and always. Amen.

People: Remember them and have mercy.

All: *Der Voghormia, (4x)*

Lord have mercy, (4x)

*Amenasoorp yerortootiun, Door ashkharis
kbaghaghootiun*

All Holy Trinity, grant peace to the world

Heal the sick and open your kingdom to those at sleep

*Yev hivantatz, pujushgootiun. Nunchetzelotz,
arkayootiun*

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy,

Jesus the Savior have mercy on us

*Der Voghormia, Der Voghormia,
Hisos purgich, mez voghormia*

Priest: Lord, our God, whose power is beyond compare, and glory is beyond understanding; whose mercy is boundless, and love for us is beyond description; look upon us in Your compassion. Grant to us and to those who pray with us Your abundant mercy. For to You belong all glory, honor, and worship to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People:

Marmin Deroonagan yev aryoun purgchagan

The body of the Lord and blood of the savior

Gah arachi, yernayin zorootiunkn

are laid up for us. The heavenly hosts invisibly

Hanerevoyt yerken yev asen anbankist

sing and say with unceasing voice:

Parparov, soorp, soorp, soorp Der zorootiantz.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Hosts.

Priest: Having beheld the resurrection of Christ, let us worship the holy Lord Jesus, the only Sinless One. You are our God. We know no other than You, and we call upon Your name. Come, all faithful, let us venerate the holy resurrection of Christ. For behold, through the cross joy has come to all the world. Enduring the cross for us, He destroyed death by death. Through the mercies of Your only begotten Son with whom You are blessed, together with Your all holy, good, and life giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

People: And with your spirit.

Deacon: Let us profess our love for one another that in one mind and in one spirit we gather together today as a family of Christ's love.

The Kiss of Peace

Priest: Greet one another with a holy kiss: Christ is revealed among us!

People:

*Krisdos i mech mer haydnetzav
Vor enn asdvadz asd bazmetzav
Khaghaghootyan tziayn hunchetzav
Soorp voghechoyni braman duvav
Yegeghetzis mi antzun yeghev
Hampoyrs hot lurman duvav
Tushnamootiunun beratzav
Ser hunthanoor spretzav
Art bashdonyayk bartzyal ushtzayn
Dook zorhnootiun i mi peran
Miasnagan Asdvadzootyan
Voroom srovpekn en srapan*

Christ has been revealed among us;
He Who Is, God, is her seated.
The voice of peace has resounded;
Holy greeting is commanded.
This Church has now become one soul,
The kiss is given for a full bond.
The enmity has been removed;
And love is spread over us all.
Now, ministers, raise your voices,
And give blessings with one accord
To the God consubstantial,
While angels sing: "Holy, Holy, Holy..."

Deacon: Let us stand well. Let us stand in awe. Let us be attentive, that we may present the holy offering in peace.

People: Mercy and peace, a sacrifice of praise.

Priest: † The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you.

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us lift up our hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord.

People: It is proper and right.

Priest: We sing to You, bless You, praise You, thank You and worship You in all places of Your dominion; for You are God indescribable, beyond comprehension, invisible, beyond understanding, existing forever and always the same. You brought us into being out of nothing, and when we fell, You raised us up again. You did not cease doing everything until You led us to heaven and granted us Your kingdom to come. For all these things we thank You and Your only begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit; for all things that we know and do not know, for blessings seen and unseen that have been bestowed upon us. We also thank You for this liturgy which You are pleased to accept from our hands. We join the chorus of angels, singing the victory hymn, proclaiming, crying out, and saying:

People: Holy, holy, holy, Lord Sabbath, heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to God in the highest.

Priest: O Lord, You so loved Your world that You gave Your only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. He came and fulfilled the divine plan for us. On the night when He gave Himself up for the life of the world, He took bread in His holy, pure, and blameless hands, gave thanks, blessed, sanctified, broke and gave it to His holy disciples, saying:

Take, eat, **THIS IS MY BODY**, which is broken for you for the forgiveness of sins.

People: Amen.

Priest: Likewise, after supper, He took the cup, blessed it, drank, and gave it to His holy disciples saying:

Drink of it all of you; **THIS IS MY BLOOD** of the new Covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

People: Amen.

Priest: Remembering, therefore, this command of the Savior, and all that came to pass for our sake, the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension into heaven, the enthronement at the right hand of the Father, and the second, glorious coming. We offer to You these gifts from Your own gifts in all and for all.

People: We praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You, Lord our God.

Priest: Once again we offer to You this spiritual worship without the shedding of blood, and we ask, pray, and entreat You: send down Your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts here presented.

† And make this bread the precious Body of Your Christ.

Deacon (in a low voice): Amen.

Priest: † And that which is in this cup the precious Blood of Your Christ.

Deacon (in a low voice): Amen.

Priest: † Changing the bread and wine into the actual Body and Blood of Your Christ, by Your Holy Spirit.

Deacon (in a low voice): Amen. Amen. Amen.

Priest: So that the Holy Eucharist may be to us for vigilance of soul, forgiveness of sins, communion of Your Holy Spirit, fulfillment of the kingdom of heaven, make us worthy with confidence and without fear of condemnation, to dare call You, the heavenly God, Father, and to say:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Priest: For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

People: And with your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: The holy Gifts for the holy people of God.

People: One is Holy, one is Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen. Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Priest (*After the fraction of the sacred Bread*): The Lamb of God is broken and distributed; broken but not divided. He is forever eaten yet is never consumed, but He sanctifies those who partake of Him.

Then the priest places a portion of the sacred Bread in the Cup saying:

The fullness of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Communion Prayers are recited by those prepared to receive the holy Mysteries.

People: I believe and confess, Lord, that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. I also believe that this is truly Your pure Body and that this is truly Your precious Blood. Therefore, I pray to You, have mercy upon me, and forgive my transgressions, voluntary and involuntary, in word and deed, known and unknown. And make me worthy without condemnation to partake of Your pure Mysteries for the forgiveness of sins and for life eternal.

I will not reveal Your mystery to Your adversaries nor will I give You a kiss as did Judas. But as the thief I confess to You: Lord, remember me in Your kingdom.

In Your love, Lord, cleanse my soul and save me. Amen

The priest proceeds to receive Holy Communion.

Priest: I approach Christ, our immortal King and God.

The precious and most holy Body and the precious and most holy Blood of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ is given to me Vazken the priest, for the forgiveness of my sins and eternal life.

This has touched my lips, taking away my transgressions and cleansing my sins.

Deacon: Approach with the fear of God, faith, and love.

As the congregations comes forward to receive the Holy Communion, the priest will say,

Receive the Body and Blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Priest: Save, O God, Your people and bless Your inheritance.

People: Amen. Let our mouths be filled with Your praise, You have made us worthy to partake of Your holy mysteries. Keep us in Your holiness, that all the day long we may meditate upon Your righteousness. Alleluia.

Priest: Christ our God, You are the fulfillment of the Law and the prophets. You have fulfilled all the dispensation of the Father. Fill our hearts with joy and gladness always.

Deacon: Let us be attentive. Having partaken of the divine, holy, pure, immortal, heavenly, life giving, and awesome Mysteries of Christ, let us commit ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

People: We commit ourselves to you, O Lord.

Priest: We thank You, loving Master, that on this day You have made us worthy once again of Your heavenly and immortal Mysteries. Direct our ways in the right path, establish us firmly in Your fear, guard our lives, and make our endeavors safe, through the prayers and supplications of the glorious Mother of God and ever virgin Mary and of the patron saint of our parish, St. Peter the Apostle and all Your saints. For You are our sanctification and to You we give glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Deacon: Let us listen attentively to the Words from the Holy Breath of God...

The final Gospel is read

Deacon: By the holy cross let us ask the Lord, that he may deliver us from sins and may save us by the grace of His mercy. Almighty Lord our God, save and have mercy.

Priest: Bless and protect your people under the shadow of Your holy and precious cross, in peace. Deliver them from enemies visible and invisible. Allow us to Glorify You always, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen

Orhnestzitz n̄Der hamenayn djam

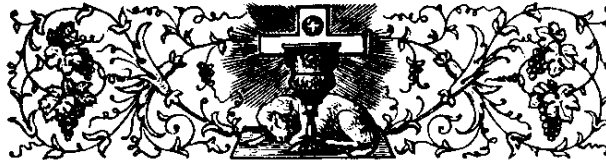
I will bless the Lord at all times;

Hamenayn djam, orbnootiun nora ee paran im

at all times His praise Shall be in my mouth.

Priest: Be blessed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Depart in peace and may the Lord Jesus be with you always.

People: Amen.



On the Road to Emmaus - Luke 24

¹³Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles¹⁴ from Jerusalem. ¹⁴They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶but they were kept from recognizing him.

¹⁷He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?"

¹⁹"What things?" he asked.

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. ²²In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

²⁵He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Did not the Christ²⁷ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

²⁸As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³²They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

³³They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." ³⁵Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Vesper Service of the Armenian Church



St. Peter Armenian Church & Youth Ministries' Center

Glendale, California

Written: September 5, 2007 · vkm

This evening's service is dedicated to Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910-97) on the 10th year of her passing.

- ❖ Priest: Blessed be our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❖ All: Amen.
- ❖ *Hayr Mer vor herginus es, Soorp yeghitzi anoon ko. Yegestzeh arkayootiun ko. Yeghitzi gamk ko vorbes herginus yev hergri. uZhatz mer hanabazort, dour mez aysor. Yev togh mez uzbardis mer vorbes yev mek toghoomk merotz bardabanatz. Yev mi danir uzmez ee portzoutiun. Ayl purgya ee chareh.*
- ❖ Priest: Zi ko eh arkayoutiun yev zoroutiun yev park havidyanus. Amen.

From Sirac chapter 2

- ❖ You who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy;
do not stray, or else you may fall.
- ❖ You who fear the Lord, trust in him,
and your reward will not be lost.
- ❖ You who fear the Lord, hope for good things,
for lasting joy and mercy.
- ❖ Consider the generations of old and see:
has anyone trusted in the Lord and been disappointed?
- ❖ Has anyone persevered in the fear of the
Lord and been forsaken?
- ❖ Has anyone called upon him and been neglected?
- ❖ For the Lord is compassionate and merciful;
he forgives sins and saves in time of distress.

Hymn – Holy God

Sourp Asdvadz, Sourp yev Huzor, Sourp yev Anmah, vor katchetzar vasun mer, voghormya mez.
(translation=Holy God, Holy and Mighty. Holy and Immortal, Who was Crucified for us, have mercy on us.)



First Reading from the writings of Mother Teresa:

"There is only one God and He is God to all; therefore it is important that everyone is seen as equal before God. I've always said we should help a Hindu become a better Hindu, a Muslim become a better Muslim, a Catholic become a better Catholic. We believe our work should be our example to people. We have among us 475 souls - 30 families are Catholics and the rest are all Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs—all different religions. But they all come to our prayers."

"There are so many religions and each one has its different ways of following God. I follow Christ:
Jesus is my God,
Jesus is my Spouse,
Jesus is my Life,
Jesus is my only Love,
Jesus is my All in All;
Jesus is my Everything."

Second Reading from the writings of Mother Teresa:

"Keep the joy of loving God in your heart and share this joy with all you meet especially your family. Be holy – let us pray."

"I once picked up a woman from a garbage dump and she was burning with fever; she was in her last days and her only lament was: 'My son did this to me.' I begged her: You must forgive your son. In a moment of madness, when he was not himself, he did a thing he regrets. Be a mother to him, forgive him. It took me a long time to make her say: 'I forgive my son.' Just before she died in my arms, she was able to say that with a real forgiveness. She was not concerned that she was dying. The breaking of the heart was that her son did not want her. This is something you and I can understand."

Third Reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew
Chapter 6:25-34

Petitions

- ❖ Response: Lord Have Mercy=*Der Voghormya*
- ❖ Again in peace let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For the stability of the whole world, for peace ever lasting, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For all orthodox bishops, priests and deacons, for our Catholicos Karekin and our Primate Hovnan, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For the sick and the suffering, for the poor and needy, for lonely and diseased, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For those who suffer in war and other human-made afflictions, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ That we may pass this evening in peace and in faith, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ That the angel of peace may guard our souls, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For the forgiveness and the remission of our transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ Have mercy upon us. O Lord our God, according to your great mercy, let us all say with one accord...

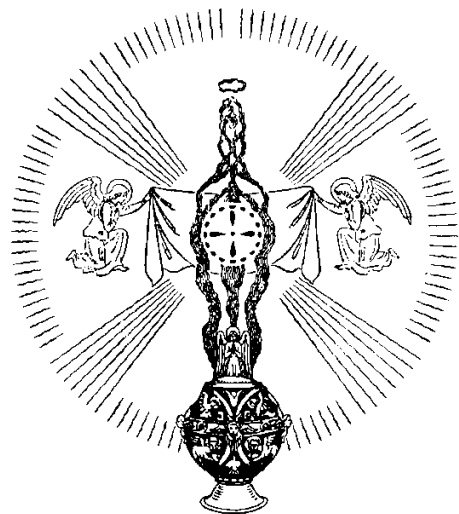
Prayer

Priest: Heavenly Father and Creator of souls and bodies, we thank you for the blessings of this day.

Above all the beauty you have placed in this world, we thank you especially for the mercy that you have shown to us by the grace and the loving kindness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We thank you Lord that you do not judge us by the standards of justice, but forgive us in your mercy. We are mindful and thankful for the example of human kindness that are all around us – from the love we experience at home, with family and friends, to the expressions of charity we witness at our church, and especially, we are mindful of the sacrifice and mercy to the poor and the suffering of the world, demonstrated by your servant Teresa of Calcutta, whom we remember with our prayers this evening. May her spirit and her dedication touch our souls and our lives. May we be touched by her kindness and dedication so that we seek that which is pleasing to You, as instruments of Your Will. In all things, we give glory, praise and honor to You, Father Almighty, along with your Son, Jesus Christ and the life-giving Holy Spirit, now and always, Amen.

Our Father which art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory. Amen.



Vesper Service
of the Armenian Church



St. Peter Armenian Church
& Youth Ministries' Center

Glendale, California

Written: October 17, 2007 - vkm

This evening is dedicated to the Quest for Righteousness – remembering the Armenian Genocide 1915 .

- ❖ Priest: Blessed be our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❖ All: Amen.
- ❖ *Hayr Mer vor herginus es, Soorp yeghitzi anoon ko. Yegstzeh arkayootium ko. Yeghitzi gamk ko vorbes herginus yev hergri. uZhatz mer hanabazort, dour mez aysor. Yev togh mez uzbardis mer vorbes yev mek toghoomk merotz bardabanatz. Yev mi danir uzmez ee portzoutium. Ayl purgya ee chareh.*
- ❖ Priest: *Zi ko eh arkayoutium yev zoroutium yev park havidyanus. Amen.*

From Psalm 35

- ❖ Vindicate me, O LORD, my God, according to your righteousness, and do not let them rejoice over me.
- ❖ Do not let them say to themselves, "We have our heart's desire."
- ❖ Do not let them say, "We have swallowed you up." Let all those who rejoice at my calamity be put to shame and confusion; let those who exalt themselves against me be clothed with shame and dishonor.
- ❖ Let those who desire my vindication shout for joy and be glad, and say evermore, "Great is the LORD, who delights in the welfare of his servant."
- ❖ O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Hymn – Holy God

Sourp Asdvadz, Sourp yev Huzor, Sourp yev Anmah, vor katchetzar vasun mer, voghormya mez.

(translation=Holy God, Holy and Mighty. Holy and Immortal, Who was crucified for us, have mercy on us.)

*The First Reading is an excerpt from "Give Us the Ballot"
~ Address at the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom
by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
17 May 1957 · Washington, D.C.*

...Each of us must keep faith in the future. Let us not despair. Let us realize that as we struggle for justice and freedom, we have cosmic companionship. This is the long faith of the Hebraic-Christian tradition: that God is not some Aristotelian Unmoved Mover who merely contemplates upon himself. He is not merely a self-knowing God, but an other-loving God forever working through history for the establishment of His kingdom.

And those of us who call the name of Jesus Christ find something of an event in our Christian faith that tells us this. There is something in our faith that says to us, "Never despair; never give up; never feel that the cause of righteousness and justice is doomed." There is something in our Christian faith, at the center of it, which says to us that Good Friday may occupy the throne for a day, but ultimately it must give way to the triumphant beat of the drums of Easter. There is something in our faith that says evil may so shape events, that Caesar will occupy the palace and Christ the cross, but one day that same Christ will rise up and split history into a.d. and b.c., so that even the life of Caesar must be dated by his name.

There is something in this universe which justifies Carlyle in saying: "No lie can live forever." There is something in this universe which justifies William Cullen Bryant in saying: "Truth crushed to earth will rise again."

The Second Reading is from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ According to St. Matthew Chapter 5:3f

Petitions

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer and have mercy...*

- ❖ Again in peace let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For the stability of the whole world, for peace ever lasting, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For all orthodox bishops, priests and deacons, for our Catholicos Karekin and our Primate Hovnan, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For the sick and the suffering, for the poor and needy, for lonely and diseased, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For those who suffer in war and human-made afflictions, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For our troops and all troops who stand firm in the conviction to bring peace.
- ❖ For the cause of righteousness, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For the justice, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ For truth, let us ask for the Lord.
- ❖ For the remembrance of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 and that the perpetrators may be brought to justice, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ That our Holy Church, may regain her place as the sacred Body of Christ to champion the causes of righteousness, of justice and of truth, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ That, each of us may accept a calling as a part of that Sacred Holy Body, let us ask of the Lord.
- ❖ Have mercy upon us. O Lord our God, according to your great mercy, let us all say with one accord...

Prayer (Orthodox)

All:

Almighty God and Creator, you are the Father of all people on the earth.

Guide, I pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace.

Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war.

Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred.

Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war.

Lead us to find justice, peace and freedom.

Unite us in the making and creating of the tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression.

Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in Your image, to Your honor and praise. Amen.

Priest: Let us pray, the prayer which our Lord Jesus has taught us...

Our Father which art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory. Amen.



The Declaration of Independence



IN CONGRESS, JULY 4,
1776

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America

When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to

the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. --That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. --Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. ...

Preamble of the US Constitution

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Matthew 25

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

"Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'

"'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'

"But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

"Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'

"But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.'

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

The Parable of the Talents

"14"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

"The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

"Then the man who had received the one talent came.

"Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting

where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

"His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.'

"'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The Sheep and the Goats

"31"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

"They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

"He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

St. Peter Armenian Church
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InHisShoes.org

Time Line on the Life of Martin Luther King Jr.

- 1929- Martin Luther King Jr, was born to the parents of Reverend and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Sr. in Atlanta, Georgia
- 1948- Martin Luther King Jr. Graduates from Morehouse college, without ever graduating from high school
- 1953- King is married to Coretta Scott in Marion, Alabama.
- 1954- After choosing to become a minister the twentieth pastor of the Dexter Avenue Church, Montgomery.
- 1955- King receives his PHD from Boston University. Mrs. Rosa Parks is arrested for failing to give up a bus seat to a white man. African American's boycott the bus system in Montgomery, Alabama. King is unanimously elected president of an organization named the Montgomery Improvement Association. Bus service in the Black neighborhoods is suspended.
- 1956- A bomb is thrown onto the porch of the King home in Montgomery. King is indicted on charges under charges of helping hinder the operation of buses without legal cause. District court rules that bus segregation is unconstitutional. Montgomery buses return to the African American neighborhoods with unsegregated service.
- 1957- Another bomb is placed on the porch of the King's home but fails to explode. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference is founded King is elected its president. National guards are ordered by the vice president to escort 9 black students to a white high school. The Civil Rights Commission is created by the federal government.
- 1958- King's book *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* is published by Harper & Row. King is stabbed in the chest while doing a book signing in the heart of Harlem. The stabber, Mrs. Izola Curry, is supposedly mentally ill.
- 1959- King and family travel to India to study Gandhi's techniques of non-violence as guests of the Prime Minister.
- 1960- After the King family move to Atlanta Martin is made co-pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church. The first lunch-counter sit-in to desegregate eating facilities is held. King is acquitted of the tax evasion charge by an all white jury in Montgomery. King is arrested in Atlanta after conducting a sit-in on charges of violating trust passing laws. King is held on a 2,000 dollar bond which is immediately paid and he is released.
- 1961- A group called the freedom riders intent on desegregating the interstate bus system heads out from Washington D.C. on a bus. In Anniston, Alabama the bus is raided by a mob and the freedom riders are beaten viciously. In Albany, Georgia King conducts a demonstration to desegregate public facilities. He is arrested while doing this on charges of parading without a permit.
- 1962- King is convicted for leading the march in Albany. After leaving jail, King joins the Birmingham protests. In Albany again, King is arrested for obstructing the sidewalk and for disorderly conduct. The first African American attempt at attending the University of Mississippi is made and is a success thanks to the Supreme Court.

- 1963- During another demonstration King is arrested for a sit-in to protest segregation of eating facilities. While imprisoned King writes his letter from a Birmingham jail. use of police dogs and fire hoses upon marching protesters is ordered in Birmingham. The supreme court rules Birmingham's segregation laws are unconstitutional. King's book *Strength to Love* is published by Harper & Row. The march on Washington is the first large scale desegregation march is held. King delivers his I have a dream speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.
- 1964- King joins workers in demonstrations for the integration of public accommodations in St. Augustine, Florida. Because of this he is arrested and soon King's book *Why We Can't Wait* is published by Harper & Row. King attends the signing of the Public Accommodations Bill. Riots occur in Harlem and a black man is killed, more take place in New Jersey, Illinois and Pennsylvania. King receives the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway.
- 1965- President Johnson addresses the nation and Congress. He describes the voting rights bill he will submit to Congress in two days. Police on horseback beat demonstrators in Montgomery. Over 3,000 protest marchers leave Selma for a march to Montgomery. They are joined along the way by a total of 25,000 marchers. Upon reaching the Capitol they hear a speech by King. King visits Chicago and aids in the effort to improve the Chicago Projects. The 1965 Voting Rights Act is signed by President Johnson.
- 1966- King rents an apartment in the black ghetto of Chicago. King takes over a Chicago slum building and is sued by its owner. he Supreme Court rules any poll tax unconstitutional. King launches a drive to make Chicago an open city in regard to housing. King is stoned in Chicago as he leads a march through crowds of angry whites.
- 1967- King writes his final book *Where Do We Go from Here?* while visiting Jamaica. Alabama is ordered to desegregate all public schools by the federal government. Twenty-three people die, 725 are injured in riots in Newark, New Jersey. Dr. King announces the formation of a Poor People's Campaign, with the aim of representing the problems of poor blacks and whites.
- 1968- King leads a parade of 6,000 protesters in support of striking African American sanitation workers. King's last speech, entitled "I've Been to the Mountain Top," is delivered at the Memphis Masonic Temple. King is assassinated by a sniper at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. He dies moments later in St. Joseph's Hospital from a gunshot wound in the neck. James Earl Ray, the sniper, is later arrested, convicted, and sentenced to 99 years in prison.



*"Be still,
and know that
I am God."*

-Psalm 46:10

