



## Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland

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### **A Message from Bishop Deeley on Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

As Americans, we honor the birthday of the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., a man who led a fearless inventory of the American soul calling on us to confront racism and to discover how to move forward, respectful of the human and civil rights of all.

It is good to recall that Martin Luther King was first a minister. The message of the Gospel and its call to love permeated his preaching, his teaching, and his leadership in the civil rights movement. Reverend King challenged people to build what he called the "beloved community," a place of understanding that would "transform the deep gloom of the old age into the exuberant gladness of the new age. It is this love which will bring about miracles in the hearts of men." Our commemoration of his birthday sadly reminds us that this is not merely about remembering a struggle now relegated to the shelves of history books. We are, instead, prompted to realize that the struggle for racial harmony continues in our nation today.

Jesus has told us that we are to love one another as he has loved us. It is the way to peace and to reconciliation, and the path to harmony in our communities and our world. Let us honor Reverend King's memory by respecting the dignity of each human person, and by continually striving to show love for all people, born and unborn, black and white. By so doing, we will be active participants in building that "beloved community."