

Sermon

1 Samuel 3:1-20

Psalm 139: 1-5, 12-17

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

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John 1:43-51

I was 13 years old, when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his historical, “I Had A Dream Speech,” at the great Civil Rights Rally in Washington D.C., in August of 1963. I was unable to go to Washington, so I was glued to the television, from start to finish. It was a proud moment for me to have been a part of that historical event, even though I was watching it from my television. What a thrill it was to see so many people, of all colors, and nationalities, standing together, arm in arm, and making a statement for justice, in a non-violent way.

I was 18 years old, when I heard the chilling news that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had been assassinated on April 4,1968. Again, I was glued to my television from start to finish. “What will become of us, now?” I thought to myself. We've come a long way, and I hoped and prayed that we would continue to move forward, and never forget that wonderful dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“to let freedom ring, and for all of God's children---black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants—will be able to join hands and to sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual----”Free at last, free at last; thank God Almighty, we are free at last.”

The slogan back then, in the '60's was, “Keep Hope Alive!”

On Tuesday, January 20, 2009, God willing, there will be another historical rally in Washington D.C., but this time it will not be a demonstration, but a celebration. A celebration and a witness to all of our many sisters and brothers who came together in 1963, and to those who lost their lives for the cause of justice.

Again, I will not be able to go to Washington D.C., but I will be glued to a television along with so many of our many sisters and brothers, of all colors and of all nationalities, on Tuesday morning and God willing, will witness the swearing in of the United States' 44th President, Mr. Barack Hussein Obama, the first African-American to ever hold such a prestigious position, in the history of the United States.

I can truly say that Hope is definitely alive and well for everyone!

One night in 1957, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was sitting alone in his kitchen, when he received a vicious telephone threat. Not knowing what else to do, he wept, and began to pray to God. While praying, he heard the Lord's voice, speaking to him, and

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commissioning him to, “stand up for righteousness, and to stand up for justice, and promised to never leave him alone.” This Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. often referred to, as his 'mountain top experience.'

As Baptized Christians, we are all called to strive for justice and peace, and to respect the dignity of every human being, and so I guess this is why Nathanael's question, that we heard in today's gospel, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” bothered me.

His question suggested, to me, that first, Nathanael was a very narrowed minded person, and second, that Nathanael looked upon the citizens of Nazareth as second or even third class people.

What a grave injustice, Nathanael just placed on all of those citizens that lived in Nazareth during that time span.

An injustice that has continued, not only from that time span, but continues in the world today. An injustice that has not only touched a person's birth place, but, also, a person's color of their skin, a person's sexual preference, and a person's religious beliefs. I can continue with my list, but this service is only for an hour.

“Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”
Philip has invited Nathanael to, “Come and see.”

Come and see that light that shines before you, that light that told Nathanael everything about himself, in their brief encounter. Come and see that light that has illuminated the hearts of so many. That light that promised Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and so many others that it will never leave them and will always be there with them, and for them.

Come and see that light that came into this world and gave it's life, out of love, for each of us, so that we may have eternal life. Come and see that light that allowed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to see a glimpse of the Promised Land, and to share that experience with us all.

Come and see that light that will intercede for us to God, and who lives deep inside our hearts.

Come and see that light, who gently took Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Ms. Janine Doughlin, and so many of our sisters and brothers by the hand and led them safely home.

Come and see that wonderful light, that has done and can do far more than any of us can ever imagine.

Come and see that light, that precious light, where there is no East or West, no North or

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South, just one great fellowship of love through out the whole world.

Yes, Tuesday, January 20th, 2009, will definitely become another historical day for the entire world to witness, and many will definitely share in that 'mountain top' experienced by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and all of our many sisters and brothers who came together in 1963, and to all those who lost their lives for the cause of justice.

I pray that we will never forget, Who it was, that quietly took each of us, by the hand and quietly, led us out of slavery, and quietly led us to the White House.

I pray that we will always remember that it was that Precious Light, that Good Light which came out of Nazareth.