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For Martin Luther King, Jr.

by Art Laffin

NCR Today

Dear brother,
servant of justice,
you showed America how
to walk in the light,
to tell the truth,
to create the beloved community.

Like Gandhi,
you conspired
to nonviolently resist injustice--
to overcome evil with good!

Minister and Peacemaker
prisoner for Jesus,
you challenged America
to break its addiction to the triple evils:
racism,
materialism,
militarism.

You called us forth,
to follow the way of Jesus,
to renounce violence,
resist war,
to break down the walls of prejudice,

to embrace peace.

The powers that be
threatened by justice,
killed you--
but not your message.

You live, dear brother,
your life--a beacon of hope!
The beloved community
is still being forged.
Death will not have
the last word.

Love will overcome!

(Written in Rappanhannock Jail, Fredricksburg, VA, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, 1994).

On this national day of remembrance of Dr. King, let us heed his example and recommit ourselves to creating the beloved community. Inspired by King's passion for nonviolence, equality, peace and social justice, let us redouble our efforts to create a world free of violence, war, torture, killer drones, nuclear weapons and all weapons; where oppression, poverty, discrimination and indefinite detention and state-sanctioned killing is eradicated; where the rights of all people are upheld; and where every effort is made to stop global warming, preserve our climate and save our earth.

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