



**ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
OFFICE FOR COMMUNICATIONS**

222 North Seventeenth Street • Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-1299
Telephone (215) 587-3747 • commof@archphila.org • www.archphila.org

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Contact: Kenneth A. Gavin
Chief Communications Officer
215-587-3747 (*office*)

**STATEMENT OF ARCHBISHOP NELSON J. PÉREZ
ON THE OBSERVANCE OF
REVEREND DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY 2022**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

On Monday, we will commemorate the extraordinary life of Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr., a man of uncommon and extraordinary courage. He embraced a vocation of service to others with a tireless zeal for justice and equality, while drawing strength and inspiration from his Christian faith.

Today, let us give thanks for the gift of his life and strive to imitate his example. While great strides have been made in the decades since his assassination, much work remains to be done. Sadly, the evil of racism still infects the hearts of many. We share a common obligation to uphold Doctor King's legacy by driving it out by peaceful means.

Doctor King once said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."

One year ago on Doctor King's national holiday, I established a Commission on Racial Healing. Much good has come from the work of this group this past year. However, so much remains to be done to heal the sin of racism, eradicate the scourge of gun violence and promote the dignity of all.

By remembering his life, we are provided with an opportunity to recommit ourselves to the Gospel message he preached; that the sin of racism can be defeated by active love and the light of faith.

May the love that God planted in our hearts at the moment of conception, help us overcome the darkness of sin, and may Doctor King's dream inspire us to champion for the dignity of all of God's people.

May God bless you abundantly.

*Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, D.D.
Archbishop of Philadelphia*