

## A Prayer in Honor of Martin Luther King Day

By Lilly Kaufman

Dr. King would have faced hard facts today.  
He would know the number of children  
going hungry in America this very minute.  
He would know the number of our war dead,  
and those wounded in new ways.  
He would know the astounding costs  
of financial corruption.  
He would have seen beyond the numbers,  
to the faces of our people,  
and he would still have faith in them,  
and in what is right.

He would be preaching now  
a determined, measured, poetic, prophetic outrage.  
He would be teaching by example  
our civic duty of compassion,  
and decrying the grave civic danger of cynicism.

He would challenge the strange new ideas  
that money equals speech  
and corporations are people  
in a democracy.

When he gave his life for peoples' rights  
of speech, and assembly, and the vote,  
it was for people  
who had no money to pay for speech.  
They knew speech as an unalienable right,  
and their wealth of spirit sufficed.

Dr. King had faith in a few great things:  
one was our essential American dream.  
Not a middle-class American dream,  
or an upper-class, a working-poor,  
or an impoverished-class American dream.  
But the defining American dream  
which lifts up those bowed down.  
The abiding American dream  
of liberty and justice for all.

Dr. King asked of God in 1964:  
... grant that we will always reach out  
for that which is high,  
realizing that we are made for the stars,  
created for the everlasting,  
born for eternity.

May we learn again to reach out for that which is high. Amen.