Archbishop Lori's Remarks: Interfaith Prayer Service on the 50th Anniversary of the Assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Ecumenical and Interfaith Prayer Service
Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Cathedral of Mary Our Queen
April 12, 2018

Good evening and welcome to the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, most especially to those among us who are our sisters and brothers from other faith traditions.

It is my privilege to be joined by faith, civic and community leaders from throughout the Baltimore area, as we welcome members of the clergy, religious, and lay faithful of Baltimore.

On behalf of my brother bishops, Denis Madden, Adam Parker and Mark Brennan, we join our sisters and brothers from the interfaith and ecumenical community in warmly welcoming our Mayor, Catherine Pugh, along with representatives of the Baltimore City Council, and Baltimore Police Commissioner, Darryl DeSousa. Together with them, we offer a very warm welcome home to our guest preacher, Rev. Dr. Rafael Warnock, Senior Pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta.

Rev. Warnock is a successor to the man whose life, ministry and legacy we celebrate tonight, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Among those from the faith community joining me in hosting this special prayer service this evening are:

Michael Brady of the Maryland Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,

Imam Earl El-Amin of the Muslim Community Cultural Center,

Rabbi Steven Fink from Temple Oheb Shalom,

Bishop William Gohl of the Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church,

Rev. Alvin Hathaway of Union Baptist Church, and

Bishop Douglas Miles of Koinonia Baptist Church

We also welcome members of the combined gospel choir, who led us in song as we began tonight's service, and we are in for a very special treat as the students of the Cardinal Shehan Catholic School Choir will treat us to their now-famous rendition of Andra Day's "Rise Up."

We all know why we are here tonight: to remember that tragic day 50 years ago when we lost one of the great leaders our nation has ever produced: Dr. Martin Luther King. And though we come together on this anniversary of his death, it is his life and his legacy that we come together to recall and to reflect on and to embrace.

For 50 years after the death of his earthly body, his spirit and his words and his example continue to be present among us. And what a true tragedy it would be if we ever stop opening our hearts and our minds to the teachings he shared with us, not only in words but in actions.

We come together, too, on another anniversary—the death of Freddie Gray three years ago. His death led to unrest in our city and became a painful reminder to people throughout our nation that the peace and the unity and the justice that Dr. King struggled for and ultimately lost his life over, continue to elude our grasp.

How happy would Dr. King be to see all of us—led by his successor—coming together in prayer and in peace, as we pray in his name for strength, compassion, openness, and fraternal love to continue on the path he so brightly lit for us during

his all-to-short life.

But we do more than pray for our beloved city and for each other. As we saw three years ago in communities all over the city, people helped each other, neighbors of every race and creed helped their fellow neighbor. And that is the story of Baltimore that you won't see on the news. And it's a story that I and my colleagues here tonight are determined to tell, along with our Mayor and our city councilmen and women and our police commissioner…and we'll keep telling it until hope conquers fear and until people begin to think of Baltimore as a city of neighborhoods and not a city of violence.

May the solidarity we share through this common goal be a sign of healing for our wounded city and our fractured society. And may it bind us to each other always, as we work to make reality the dream Dr. King imparted to us and which so abundantly fills our hearts and our minds.