

# Speaker says best way to continue Rev. King's mission is to love

GARY, Ind. – If you ask the question “What’s love got to do with it?” from the Tina Turner song, Vincent Guider replies, “Everything.”

An educator and author from Chicago, Mr. Guider keynoted a tribute to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. at Holy Angels Cathedral in Gary Jan. 11. According to Guider, Rev. King’s message and mission were one of love, adding that the best way to continue the work of the slain civil rights leader is to love.

“Our love, or absence of love, defines who we are as a people,” Mr. Guider said. “Love is the absence of fear and fear is the absence of love. God sent Dr. King to us to remind us of God’s divine love for us.”

Recalling Rev. King’s acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway, in 1964, Mr. Guider said that “godly love was at the center of (Rev. King’s) ministry.”

This love, Mr. Guider said, is not the romanticized version of love, but rather the unconditional love that is absolutely necessary for the future of mankind and that is at the heart of all religions.

Quoting from the First Letter of John, Mr. Guider said, “Let us love one another, because love comes from God. ... Whoever does not love does not know God.”

Turning to Chapter 13 of St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, Mr. Guider said that without love even a talented person has nothing.

Guider continued, “The best way we can honor Dr. King in 2009 is to walk, talk, think and be love to one another this day and every day. Reflect on Dr. King and invest in his mission. Let us be about love.”

In his welcoming remarks, Father Jon Plavcan, rector of the cathedral, noted that Rev. King “inspired people throughout the world to strive for the ideals of equality and nonviolence to which he dedicated his life. He used words and peaceful methods

to solve problems, and through his peaceful methods of protest he managed to change laws that were unfair and unjust.”

Father Plavcan also cited Rev. King’s belief in service. “He believed each individual possessed the power to lift himself or herself up, no matter what his or her circumstances were in life,” the priest said. “He was a person about service in the world and helping others as well.”

The rector noted that Jan. 20, 1986, was the first official day of celebration of Dr. King’s life. Twenty-three years later, on Jan. 20, 2009, Father Plavcan said, “we will witness the dream expanding” with the inauguration of Barack Obama as the first African-American president of the United States.

Father Charles Mosley, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Hammond, recalled falling on his knees Nov. 4 after hearing the election results. An African-American, he recalled the stories of his grandmother working a second job so she could afford to pay an unfair poll tax to be able to vote.

Those election results, Father Mosley said, made him feel “one step closer to the promised land.”

While much work remains to be done with regard to civil rights, Father Mosley said, the best way to celebrate the King holiday is to “go forward and carry his message of love and unity and activism.”

Guider noted that the viewing of history is generational and that each generation must help the other understand the struggles Rev. King faced 40 years ago and the struggles minorities face today.

“Let us take our love to the streets, to school, to work. Let us take our love to the world,” Guider said. “Martin Luther King’s life was a message of love. Let us love as fully as we can. That way we honor Dr. King and we honor God.”