



January 16, 2023

Dear Friends,

Today, The University of Scranton community joins in the national celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Although his life was tragically cut short by violence, he continues to inspire and challenge a country and world still in desperate need of his wisdom.

With war on the news each day in Ukraine and other troubled parts of the world, with the ongoing legacy and realities of racial injustice, and with daily division prominent in our own country, I was drawn to a message from Dr. King's 1963 collection of sermons, *Strength to Love*, a message that grows from his deep devotion to the Gospel:

“Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction. So when Jesus says “Love your enemies,” he is setting forth a profound and ultimately inescapable admonition. Have we not come to such an impasse in the modern world that we must love our enemies— or else? The chain reaction of evil—hate begetting hate, wars producing wars—must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation.”

These words remind us of the challenging journey ahead. Finding in his faith the strength to persevere in the face of hostility, Dr. King championed peace, justice and love. He encouraged us to combine “toughmindedness and tenderheartedness,” to remind ourselves that God has two outstretched arms: “one is strong enough to surround us with justice, and one is gentle enough to embrace us with grace.”

For our University community, we must continue to walk together in solidarity, working to overcome our own failings as we strive to build a welcoming and loving community for all. I am encouraged by the hard work we have accomplished thus far, guided by ambitious goals in the Strategic Plan, Mission Priority Examen and

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan. There is much for us yet to do to achieve the dreams and hopes that marked the life and teachings of Dr. King. I pray that we will continue to follow his example, finding the courage to lead the way in love.

Yours faithfully,

Joseph G. Marina, S.J.
President