

“Go Home to my Lord and Be Free” (African American Spiritual)

Dearly Beloveds:

I, and I expect you, have been thinking a lot about freedom since this month begins with a celebration of July 4, Independence Day. It is a day we mark with celebration and fireworks, causing us to remember what our forefathers and foremothers fought for. It is our responsibility to preserve it! It is also our responsibility as with so many other occasions to re-member it! Freedom is our legacy!

It is much like our responsibility as Christians to remember our liberation from the bonds of sin and to preserve the freedom, redemption and release which Christ came to model for us. The thing is, our freedom, our true freedom is a grace offered by God.

I spent a great deal of time in seminary studying liberation theology. I was honored to be among many professors who had been part of particular struggles to secure freedom. One of my mentors and greatest role models was Canon Ed Rodman. Ed has been quoted often and importantly by many who preach, especially about slavery and racial justice. I am humbled to call him friend. When I went to him at a chapel service to ask for a blessing his response was: Only if you bless me first sister! Tears rolled down my not yet ordained face when this man bowed his head and I gave thanks for his life and presence and witness. Freedom often comes from blessing.

I learned that I, a white privileged educated woman, was welcomed by the other in that mutuality of blessing, that mutuality of sharing God's love. I felt free and hope he did also. Freedom, I believe, is realized when bonds are broken, judgments suspended, and love is flowing unrestricted.

As Teresa of Avila says, “God does not give himself entirely to us, unless we give ourselves entirely to God.” Our task is to seek God in all things, in all people, including ourselves. When we find the Divine, we taste freedom like never before. We participate in the process of liberation which is ultimately the Kingdom come.

So I invite you to continue to celebrate freedom! Holy Freedom! “ O Freedom, O Freedom, O Freedom over me...Go home to my Lord and be free” (Spiritual)
Blessings to you in your celebrations,
Martha