

**Proclamation 8215 of January 14, 2008****Religious Freedom Day, 2008**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

Thomas Jefferson counted the freedom of worship as one of America's greatest blessings. He said it was "a liberty deemed in other countries incompatible with good government, and yet proved by our experience to be its best support." On Religious Freedom Day, we celebrate the 1786 passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom.

The freedom to worship according to one's conscience is one of our Nation's most cherished values. It is the first protection offered in the Bill of Rights: that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." In America, people of different faiths can live together united in peace, tolerance, and humility. We are committed to the proposition that as equal citizens of the United States of America, all are free to worship as they choose.

In an era during which an unprecedented number of nations have embraced individual freedom, we have also witnessed the stubborn endurance of religious repression. Religious freedom belongs not to any one nation, but to the world, and my Administration continues to support freedom of worship at home and abroad. On Religious Freedom Day and throughout the year, we recognize the importance of religious freedom and the vital role it plays in spreading liberty and ensuring human dignity.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 16, 2008, as Religious Freedom Day. I call on all Americans to reflect on the great blessing of religious liberty, endeavor to preserve this freedom for future generations, and commemorate this day with appropriate events and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

GEORGE W. BUSH

**Proclamation 8216 of January 16, 2008****Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2008**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., changed our Nation forever through his leadership, service, and clarity of vision. On the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, we honor the lasting legacy of this great American, remember the ideals for which he fought, and recommit ourselves to

ensuring that our country's promise extends to all Americans across this great land.

In the brief time Dr. King walked upon this earth, he devoted his life to strengthening the content of the American character and called on our Nation to live up to its founding principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all its citizens. Dr. King's faith in the Almighty gave him the courage to confront discrimination and segregation, and he preached that all the powers of evil are ultimately no match for even one individual armed with eternal truths. Through his determination, spirit, and resolve, Dr. King helped lift souls and lead one of the greatest movements for equality and freedom in history.

Our Nation has made progress toward realizing Dr. King's dream, yet the work to achieve liberty and justice for all is never-ending. In July of 2006, I was honored to sign the "Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006," to renew the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and reaffirm our commitment to securing the voting rights of all Americans. My Administration will continue to protect the rights won through the sacrifice of Dr. King and other civil rights leaders, and our country will never rest until equality is real, opportunity is universal, and all citizens are empowered to realize their dreams.

As we observe Dr. King's birthday, I encourage all Americans to celebrate his memory by performing acts of kindness through service to others. Let us live out Dr. King's teachings as we continue to work for the day when the dignity and humanity of every person is respected.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 21, 2008, as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday. I encourage all Americans to observe this day with appropriate civic, community, and service programs and activities in honor of Dr. King's life and legacy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

GEORGE W. BUSH

**Proclamation 8217 of January 18, 2008**

**National Sanctity of Human Life Day, 2008**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

On National Sanctity of Human Life Day, we recognize that each life has inherent dignity and matchless value, and we reaffirm our steadfast determination to defend the weakest and most vulnerable members of our society.

America was founded on the belief that all men are created equal and have an inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and our country remains committed to upholding that founding prin-