



A MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PRESIDENT

**Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.**

On June 19, 1865, Union Army General Gordon Granger proclaimed the abolition of slavery in the State of Texas. Over the years the celebration of Juneteenth – also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day – which began in Texas is now observed nation-wide. Though not yet a national holiday, Juneteenth is an official holiday in 47 states and the District of Columbia.

Juneteenth joyfully recognizes the remarkable resilience of Black America and its cultural, historical, and social contributions to the life of the country. It is also a potent reminder that, as Maya Angelou once wrote, “History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.” We must always denounce racism and oppression wherever they raise their ugly heads. We must work to make the dream of liberty and justice a reality not just for a few – but for all.

Such is the task of our nation. “Freedom,” by Black American poet Langston Hughes, captures the necessity for confronting that task:

Freedom will not come  
Today, this year  
or ever  
Through compromise and fear.

I have as much right  
As the other fellow has  
To stand  
On my two feet  
And own the land.

I tire so of hearing people say,  
*Let things take their course.*  
*Tomorrow is another day.*  
I do not need my freedom when I'm dead.  
I cannot live on tomorrow's bread.  
Freedom  
Is a strong seed  
Planted  
In a great need.  
I live here, too.  
I want my freedom  
Just as you.

I hope you will join me in celebrating this very special day.

*Mil gracias y bendiciones,*

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.  
Interim President

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