



## Dorothy Clarke Wilson Peace Writing Prize

The Wilson Center - For Spiritual Exploration and Multifaith Dialogue

### About

The Peace Writing Prize Competition is sponsored by the Wilson Center and made possible by the generosity of talented author Dorothy Clarke Wilson. The Wilson Center believes in the difference that powerful writers can make in our world and seeks to encourage students to practice using their voice to promote peace and justice.

### Instructions

The quotation collaged below is drawn from Dr. King's celebrated *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*. Please respond to this quotation in an approximately 750 word written piece, addressing one or more of the following prompts. Any genre of writing is welcome, including but not limited to essays, poems, fiction, nonfiction, and editorials.

"We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have never yet engaged in a direct-action movement that was 'well timed' according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word 'wait'... We must come to see with the distinguished jurist of yesterday that 'justice too long delayed is justice denied.'" – *Letter from a Birmingham Jail, 1963*

- At what point does justice become "denied" – how does one tell the difference between appropriate patience and delaying justice too long? What roles do patience and urgency play in the creation of justice?
- How does this quote apply to another social justice issue about which you are passionate, such as prison reform, climate justice, or indigenous sovereignty?
- How are Dr. King's words relevant in your life today?

Completed works should be emailed in PDF document form, with a completed cover sheet (second page of this document) attached, to [john.leopold@maine.edu](mailto:john.leopold@maine.edu) by **November 23rd** at 11:59pm. The writer who is selected must be available to respond to email during winter break. The winner will receive a **\$500 prize**, and be invited to read their piece at the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Breakfast, provided the event is held this year. If the event is cancelled due to COVID, the winner may be invited to speak at an alternate event in lieu of this celebration,



**Dorothy Clarke Wilson Peace Writing Prize: Cover Sheet**  
**The Wilson Center - For Spiritual Exploration and Multifaith Dialogue**

**Personal Information**

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Full Name

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Date

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Major

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Year in School

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Address

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Phone Number

**Biography**

Please include a short (3-5 sentence) biography of yourself. If you are selected as the winner of this year's prize, your biography will be printed in the program for the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Breakfast and posted on the Wilson Center's website. You may write your biography on the lines below, or in a separate word document.

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