

We Shall Overcome

by Genelda Woggon

One Sunday in the Level II Atrium, our discussion focused on the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. It opened the question of the many ways in which God speaks to us . . . guiding us, leading us, protecting us. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream to lead him both to and from Egypt. Does God speak to us today? How so? How is it that God sends a "messenger of light" to us? The children's responses flowed . . . "dreams" . . . "angels" . . . "the Bible" . . . "a small inner voice" . . . "our conscious" . . . "other people" and through "circumstances." (Wow! And I didn't prompt that one!) All good responses from 6-8 year-old children.

We had a nice art picture of the "Flight Into Egypt" with the angel guiding Joseph. As part of their work we had looked together at pictures of classical paintings of angels, as well as line drawn angels from stained glass windows. This was a work choice in which they were invited to add their own art interpretation.

Such delight came with this work that the next week it was immediately chosen by Anna Kate when she arrived early in the Atrium. At her school during the intervening week she had participated in the remembrance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. She had taken great interest in the stories her Second Grade teacher shared about the Civil Rights Movement. Anna Kate began very intentionally to water color the stained glass angel with dark brown face, dark brown hands that gently plucked the mandolin and dark brown feet that walked a certain path.

I had taken notice of her artwork but made no verbal comment. (I was interested in the color choices made by this blond fair skinned child.)

She looked up at me and said, "This is Martin Luther King Jr.'s angel that guided him to lead his people to freedom."

Maybe she was struck by the word's of this great orator, who, like Joseph, had also had a "dream." And I wanted to believe that in some far off distance she could hear the strings of the mandolin softly playing, "We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome someday . . ."

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