



## President's Perspective

REV. VINCENT M. COOKE, S.J.

### W E M A R K B L A C K H I S T O R Y M O N T H

in February with a full schedule of events including our annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration. It is fitting that in this issue of *Canisius College Magazine* we highlight some unique work being done on the African American experience in the United States by one of our own professors, Dr. Bruce J. Dierenfield, of the Canisius College History Department (page 9) and recall some of the local struggles for civil rights in which Canisius alumnus and attorney, Dick Griffin '54, was involved (page 20).

Dierenfield and Griffin are but two examples of Canisius people who have made important contributions in the area of civil rights and race relations. There have been others such as Canisius students participating in the 1965 march on Selma, Alabama; faculty doing research on issues such as bank redlining and economic development in Buffalo's East Side; and students, faculty and staff working in volunteer activities in the heart of the African American community. It is part of our mission as a Jesuit university to instill in our students this commitment to service of all of God's people.

We realize, however, that as an institution located in the center of a city whose population is now more than one-third African American that there is much more to be done. As Canisius becomes a more important part of the central city in Buffalo with the development of its campus, we are being called upon to do more in our immediate neighborhood, more with area businesses, more with area churches and schools, and more with agencies and organizations meeting the needs of a diverse city population. As Dr. Dierenfield's program has shown, these can provide tremendous learning opportunities for our students.

Our annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration at the college allows us to reflect on the important message of Dr. King. It also provides us with an opportunity to commit ourselves, once again, to his vision of America and to all that we must do to realize that vision.

*Vincent M. Cooke, S.J.*

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### Student Spotlight "On Call"

As a team leader for the Red Cross Disaster Action Team, Daniel B. Moar '04 is responding to emergency situations throughout the city and recruiting an army of Canisius volunteers to do the same.

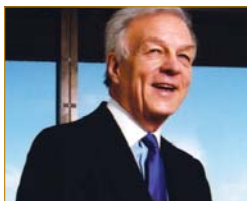
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### Cover Story The African American Experience

History professor Dr. Bruce Dierenfield teaches Canisius students about one of the most dramatic periods in our nation's annals: the civil rights struggle of African Americans, their fight to be freed from slavery and their eventual climb to a position of equality and power.

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Richard F. Griffin '54 recounts his efforts to bring about fairness and equality during an era of civil rights unrest.

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