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National Museum of African American History and Culture

Promotional and Souvenir Program autographed by Marian Anderson

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[[2 photo images of Miss Anderson followed with an article]

Photo 1: With her mother on the stoop of Mrs. Anderson's home.

Photo2: In Philadelphia's Union Baptist Church with Mrs. Blanche Burton, who accompanied Miss Anderson in Sunday School.

[[Article]]enough strength to stand alone. Then, one prays with a fervor one never had before. From my torment I prayed with the sure knowledge there was Someone to Whom I could pour out the greatest need of my heart and soul. It did not matter if He answered. It was enough to pray.

Slowly I came out of my despair. My mind began to clear. No one was to blame for my failure. Self-pity left me. In a burst of exuberance I told my mother:

"I want to study again. I want to be the best, and be loved by everyone, and be perfect in everything."

"That's a wonderful goal," she chided. "But our dear Lord walked this earth as the most perfect of all beings, yet not everybody loved Him."

Subdued, I decided to return to my music to seek humbleness before perfection.

One day I came home from my teacher unaware that I was humming. It was the first music I had uttered at home in a whole year. My mother heard it, and she rushed to meet me, and put her arms around me and kissed me. It was her way of saying:

"Your prayers have been answered, and mine have too."

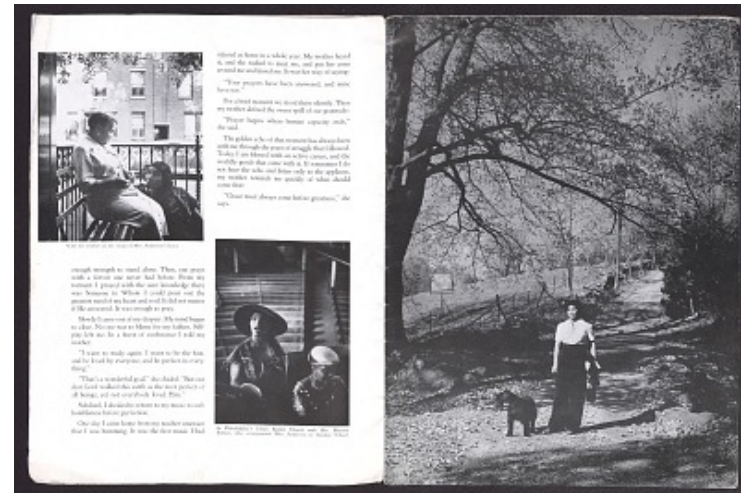
For a brief moment we stood there silently. Then my mother defined the sweet spell of our gratitude:

"Prayer begins where human capacity ends," she said.

The golden echo of that moment has always been with me through the years of struggle that followed. Today I am blessed with an active career, and the worldly goods that come with it. If sometimes I do not hear the echo and listen only to the applause, my mother reminds me quickly of what should come first:

"Grace must always come before greatness," she says.

[[image of Marian walking a tree lined path with a dog]]



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