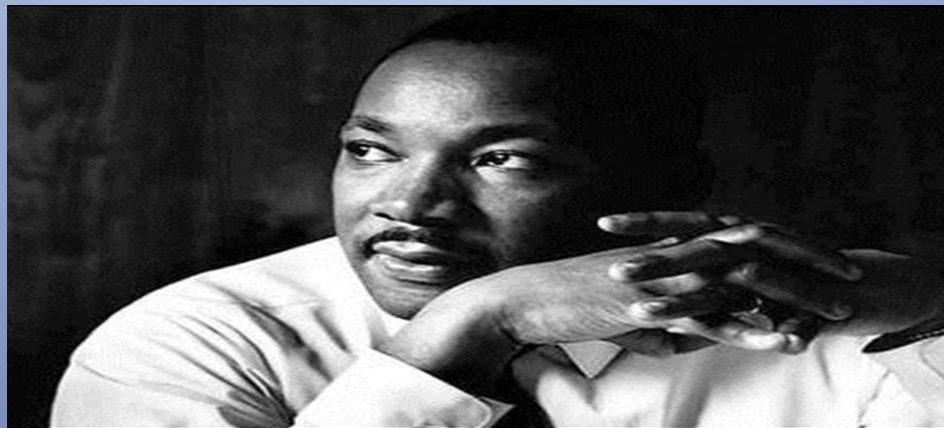


“Blessed are the Peacemakers”

Martin Luther King.



Martin Luther King

Martin Luther King was born on the 15th of January 1929 at his family home in Atlanta, Georgia. He had one brother, named Alfred, and a sister called Christine.



Family

Both Martin's father and grandfather were ministers.

His mother was a school teacher, which meant Martin was lucky enough to be taught at home, and he was at an advantage when he started school! He already mastered skills in reading and writing.

At school, he skipped some class grades because he was at a more advanced level than other pupils. He was an excellent student, and he enjoyed other activities such as reading, singing, cycling, football and baseball.



Racism.

Martin Luther King experienced racism early in life.

In 1935, when he was a mere six years old, he was told that he was not allowed to play with new friends he had met because they were white and he was black.

Seminary life.

Whilst at seminary, Martin Luther King became acquainted with Mohanda Gandhi's belief of non-violent social protest.

After visiting India in 1959 and meeting followers of Gandhi, he became convinced that non-violent protest was the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom.

When he graduated from Morehouse college in Atlanta, he became leader (Pastor) of a Baptist church in Montgomery, Alabama. Here, he led a Black bus boycott, leading to him being arrested, along with ninety others.

As the black bus boycott dragged on, King gained a national reputation as a leader in the fight against racism.

Dr King inspired a growing national civil rights movement. He wanted to ensure that all people were treated fairly. He wanted to see an end to segregation in every aspect of public life – stores, no separate bathrooms and drinking fountains and no job discrimination.

On the 28th of August, Dr. King led a march to Washington and gave a speech. It has since been called 'The Dream' speech. In the speech he spoke of his dream of equality and fair treatment for all American people

Blessed are the peacemakers

- Dr King was a religious man. His faith helped him to have hope.
- “With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1964 Martin Luther King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, which was a great honour.



Assassination.



Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee on 4th April 1968. He was shot by James Earl Ray whilst standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel. He was only 39 years old at the time.

Change the world.

- Martin Luther King wanted to stop oppression. The Black Community in America were oppressed.
 - There are references to oppression in the Bible:-
- And afterwards Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.’ ” Exodus 5 V 1
- Pharaoh, the king and ruler of Egypt, had to make a decision. Should he let the Israelites go? They were his slaves. He decided to keep them enslaved. Was he right to do this?
 - Decision makers struggle today when making decisions. They must consider what is right and wrong.
- Was Britain right to become involved in the war in Iraq? This is a question people are still asking today.
- Freedom, Martin Luther’s dream, was costly. He lost his life but the world gained a greater understanding of the need for justice, freedom and fairer world for all.

How can you change the world?

- Imagine you had the power to make a decision for the world.
- What would you do to change the world?
What is your dream?