

Martin Luther King

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., (1929-1968) was the main leader of the American Civil Rights movement and one of the most famous speakers of all times. Leader of the black non-violent movement for equality, King followed the ideas of the Indian leader Mahatma Ghandi.



Dr King won the Nobel Prize in 1964

King believed in non-violent civil disobedience and sit-ins, boycotts, and peaceful protest marches were his methods of struggle.

After having attended segregated public schools in Georgia, Martin enrolled at Boston University where he always was one of the most brilliant students.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott

In December 1955, *Rosa Parks*, a black woman, refused to give her seat to a white person on a public bus in Montgomery, Alabama. She was arrested and King organized the famous *Montgomery Bus Boycott* against city buses. It lasted over a year, until the bus company finally capitulated.

During the following years also King was arrested many times, but he became more and more famous giving great strength to the movement for black integration. From 1957 to 1968, King travelled over six million miles and spoke over twenty-five hundred times, to speak against injustice and social discrimination.

In the summer of 1963 King led a huge peaceful march formed by multi-racial poor people to demand better jobs for the poor, to Washington DC, where he pronounced his famous speech "*I have a dream*" in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

The Nobel Prize

In 1964, King became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts against segregation and racial discrimination by means of civil disobedience and other non-violent means.

King was assassinated on April 4th, 1968, while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee.

In 1986 *Martin Luther King Day* (the 3rd Monday in January) was declared a national holiday in the United States.