

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Biography

Martin Luther King Jr. was born on Jan. 15, 1929, in Atlanta. He graduated from Morehouse College in 1948 and was ordained as a Baptist minister.

While studying theology at Crozer Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, King attended a lecture on Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent struggle for freedom for the people of India. Gandhi's teachings of civil disobedience, along with the teachings of Christianity and Henry Thoreau's social writings, had a profound effect on the young Baptist minister.

Upon graduation, King received a scholarship to pursue a doctoral degree at Boston University. There he met Coretta Scott, who was studying voice at the Boston Conservatory of Music. The two were married in 1953. They had four children.

King's involvement in nonviolent protest began in 1955 in Montgomery, Ala., where he led a successful boycott of the city's buses. Over the next 13 years, he promoted nonviolence as a means for African Americans to achieve their civil rights



King and his wife, Coretta, celebrate the news that he has received the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize. King was in a hospital in Atlanta recovering from illness brought on by his travel and work for the peace movement.

through boycotts, sit-ins, demonstrations and voter rights marches. He was jailed several times.

King also helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957.

On Aug. 28, 1963, King captured the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement with his "I Have a Dream" speech to 250,000 people assembled in Washington, D.C., at a rally for equality. This was the largest civil rights demonstration in history.

Internationally, he was viewed as an

eloquent and forceful proponent of non-violence. Among other prizes and awards given to him, King was honored with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his leadership in attempting to bring about social, political, and economic equality for blacks through nonviolent means. Four years later, at the age of 39, he was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn.

Today, King's birthday, Jan. 15 is celebrated on the third Monday in January as a national holiday.

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His Life and Times

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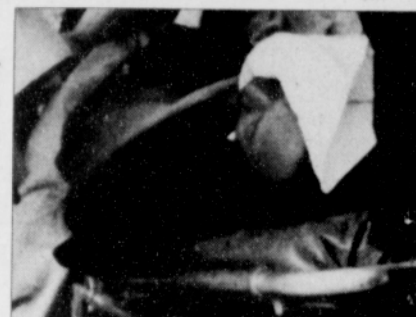
1966 July 10: King initiated a campaign to end discrimination in housing, employment and schools in Chicago.

1967: The Supreme Court ruled to uphold a conviction of MLK by a Birmingham court for demonstrating without a permit. King spent four days in Birmingham jail.

1967 Nov. 27: King announced the inception of the Poor People's Campaign focusing on jobs and freedom for the poor of all races.

1968: King announced that the Poor People's Campaign will culminate in a March on Washington demanding a \$12 billion Economic Bill of Rights guaranteeing employment to the able-bodied, incomes to those unable to work and an end to housing discrimination.

1968 March 28: King lead a march that turned violent. This was the first time one of his events had turned violent. He delivered 'I've Been to the Mountaintop' speech.



1968 April 4: Martin Luther King Jr. was fatally shot while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel at sunset in Memphis, Tenn.. There were riots and disturbances in 130 American cities and more than twenty thousand arrests.

1968 April 19: King's funeral was an international event. Within a week of the assassination, Congress passed the Open Housing Act.

1986 Nov. 2: A national holiday is proclaimed in King's honor.

Living the Dream



Students look up at their school's namesake, Martin Luther King Jr.

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special education. Her experience working with at-risk schools has prepared Craemer for King Elemen-

tary, where all students qualify for the free and reduced lunch program.

"With our demographics comes opportunity," Craemer said. "I was blown away by the support from the community for the students of King."

Several local businesses and non-profit organizations support King Elementary's fund-raisers, and often provide food, clothing and counseling for students and their families.

And while the state, district and community are taking care of King Elementary's basic needs, the staff works to carry on King's rich tradition of being a school comprised of minority students. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday is recognized with musical performances, speakers and traditional costumes. Cinco de Mayo is also a festive day at King Elementary.

"There's an awareness of culture at King, and the staff is very cognizant of representing all," Craemer said.

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