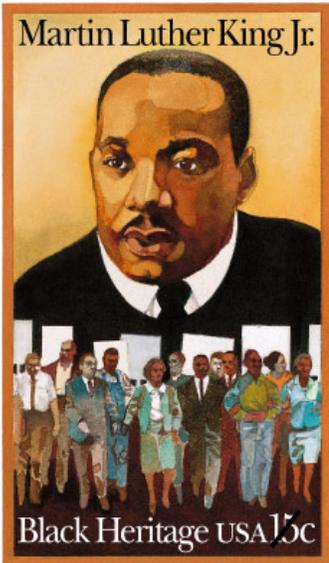


Martin Luther King, Jr.

Civil Rights Leader
Scott Catalog # 1771
Issued January 13, 1979 in Atlanta, Georgia



Michael Luther was born January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. At the age of six, Michael's father changed their names to Martin Luther King Sr. and Jr. Martin's father was the pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, which was founded by his maternal grandfather. Martin was ordained as a minister at the age of 18.

Martin entered Morehouse College at the age of 15 and graduated in 1947. He then attended Crozer Theological Seminary where he obtained a bachelor of divinity degree in 1951 and his PHD in Philosophy from Boston University in 1955.

Rosa Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955 for refusing to give up her seat on a bus, which led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott. King, at that time the pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, became actively involved in the fight against segregated bussing as the president of the Montgomery Improvement Association. The boycott against public transportation in Montgomery marked the beginning of the Civil Rights movement.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference was founded in 1957 to help coordinate Civil Rights activities throughout the south. Martin played a leading role in organizing this group in which Black churches and their ministers joined together to fight segregation.

In 1959 Martin Luther King joined his father in Atlanta to become a co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church.

Martin continued to be active in the Civil Rights movement and in 1963 helped organize The March on Washington where he delivered one of his most famous speeches, I Have a Dream. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 and in 1965 he helped organize and participated in the Voting Rights Marches from Selma to Montgomery. The first march ended in brutal beatings by the Selma police under Commissioner of Public Safety - Bull Conner. Two weeks later, a second march was successful in reaching Montgomery where King spoke to a crowd of more than 20,000 in front of the State Capitol.

Martin Luther King's home was bombed, his life was threatened, he was stoned, beaten, and arrested for his stand on Equal Rights. In spite of all that was done to him, he always stood for peaceful and passive resistance in the true spirit of Mohandas Gandhi.

On April 4, 1968 Martin Luther King was assassinated by James Earl Ray in Memphis Tennessee. The entire world mourned the passing of a great spiritual leader.

For further Information concerning Martin Luther King Jr., please visit the following Websites:

The King Center

Written Text of I Have a Dream Speech

Voice Recording of I have a Dream Speech

Sources:

Encyclopedia Britannica

Encyclopedia Africana