
Westminster Abbey

Learning



Modern Martyrs: Dr Martin Luther King Jr

Born: 15th January 1929

Died: 4th April 1968

Occupation: Priest

Biography

He was born in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. He was the son of an African-American Christian minister and became a priest in 1948.

He grew up in a racially segregated America, where white and black people were separated because of the colour of their skin, and he led peaceful protests against this oppression. He was an active campaigner in the Civil Rights Movement despite receiving death threats. He used Christian language of freedom and justice to communicate his message. In 1964, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Dr Martin Luther King Jr was shot dead at the age of 39. He is widely celebrated as one of the great, inspirational leaders of the 20th century.

Activities

“Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase.”

Discuss this quotation with a partner. What do you think Dr Martin Luther King Jr meant when he said these words? How does that make you feel?

“Jesus said to him. ‘Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.’”

(John 20:29)

Discuss this Bible passage with a partner. How is this passage similar to Dr Martin Luther King Jr’s quotation?

Write a paragraph about what people can learn from the behaviour and teachings of Dr Martin Luther King Jr.



For teachers:

We recommend you read our “[Introducing Modern Martyrs: primary teachers’ guide](#)” before using this activity sheet.

Thank you for downloading this resource. We hope that it will be a useful teaching tool in your classroom.

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