**THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**

**WEEK BEGINNING 15TH JANUARY 2018**

**WELLBEING TASK OF THE WEEK**: SMILE AT SOMEONE YOU DON’T REALLY KNOW AND ASK HOW THEY ARE TODAY.

**KEY WORDS FOR CONSIDERATION**: RACIAL EQUALITY, AFRICAN-AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, NON-VIOLENT PROTEST, VOCABULARY, THESAURUS.

**PRAYER TO BE REPEATED EACH DAY:** Lord, help us to follow the example of Martin Luther King and work towards racial equality for all. May we follow your own teachings of ‘treating others as we would wish to be treated.’ Amen.

[](https://i0.wp.com/nationaldaycalendar.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Martin-Luther-King-Jr.-Day-Third-Monday-in-January-e1448920500122.jpg)

Martin Luther Ring Jr. Day – Third Monday in January

1. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is on the third Monday in January.  Martin Luther King Jr.(January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was an American clergyman, activist and leader in the African-American Civil Rights Movement. He is best known for his role in the advancement of civil rights using nonviolent civil disobedience. King has become a national icon in the history of American progressivism. Hundreds of streets in the U.S. have been renamed in his honour.

A gifted and friendly student, King attended Morehouse College where he earned a BA in sociology. Combining a passion for racial equality with a rediscovered spirituality, King then attended Crozer Theological Seminary following in his father’s and grandfather’s footsteps earning a Bachelors of Divinity.

Shortly after he completed his Ph.D. in theology at Boston University in 1955 a 42-year-old Rosa Parks (See [Rosa Parks Day](http://nationaldaycalendar.com/rosa-parks-day-december-1/) which is observed December 1) refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama. The opportunity for the NAACP to bring their civil rights efforts to the forefront was before them, and King was chosen to lead the successful city-wide boycott of the Montgomery transit system.

Just over a year later, King along with over 60 other ministers and activists founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Together they coordinated non-violent protests and gave a voice to the young civil rights movement.

Through the next twelve years, King would be influential in organizing marches, sit-ins and political rallies for civil rights. During a 1963 March on Washington, D.C. for Jobs and Freedom, King spoke before more than 200,000 regarding the challenges African Americans face. His “I Have a Dream” speech has gone down in many history books as one of the greatest speeches ever given. Brutally honest, a call for action and a vision of hope, King’s speech resonated throughout the nation.

In early 1964, during a march outside Selma when 1,500 men and women were met by a wall of state troopers, King lead the marchers in prayer successfully avoiding any confrontation with authorities. On July 2, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. That same year, King became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for his unswerving work in the Civil Rights Movement.

Author, speaker, father, theologian, activist, King was assassinated by James Earl Ray on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennesee while giving a speech at a sanitation workers’ strike. President Johnson called for peace in the wave of riots and violence that followed, referring to King as the “apostle of nonviolence.”

What impact has Martin Luther King had on the world today? Do you believe that non-violent protest can achieve results?

1. NATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY

Each year, by Presidential Proclamation, January 16 is declared Religious Freedom Day in America.

The following is as stated by President Barack Obama in his Religious Freedom Day Presidential Proclamation:

**“I call on all Americans to commemorate this day with events and activities that teach us about this critical foundation of our Nation’s liberty, and show us how we can protect it for future generations here and around the world.”**

The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom was signed January 16, 1786, and is commemorated each year on National Religious Freedom Day. Thomas Jefferson’s landmark statute became the basis for Congressman Fisher Ames’ establishment clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Consitution.

**“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof…”**

The First Freedom Center in Richmond Virginia commemorates this day by holding an annual First Freedom Award banquet.

Do you believe that it is important to have religious freedom?

### **NATIONAL THESAURUS DAY**

National Thesaurus Day is observed annually on January 18 in honour of Peter Mark Roget, the author of Roget’s Thesaurus, who was born on this day in 1779.  In 1840, Roget retired from a successful career in medicine and spent the rest of his life working on “Roget’s Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases.” He published his first book of synonyms in 1852.

The thesaurus has been used for centuries by writers and poets to help make their writing come to life.

Whether you are looking for a new word or trying to complete a sentence, the thesaurus can be your best friend. Expanding your vocabulary improves both written and spoken communication skills, creative writing abilities and can be helpful in advancing your career.

How often do you use a thesaurus? How will it be able to improve your literacy skills?