

(See also 4/5 April)

- 1 Martin Luther King, the American Civil Rights leader, was born on this day in 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, in the southern United States.
- 2 In the United States in 1955, people were still kept apart because of the colour of their skin. Only whites could sit at the front of buses, for example, and if all the places for white people were occupied, it was the law that black people would have to stand and give up their seat for the whites. On 1st December 1955 a black lady, Mrs Rosa Parks, refused to give up her place, and she was arrested.
- 3 Martin Luther King was one of the Christian leaders who opposed the laws and the attitude of discrimination, and he would eventually pay for it with his life, even though he was fully committed himself to non-violence. He said: *“Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.”*

In 1963 in Birmingham, Alabama, people promised non-violence by signing a pledge which made 10 points:

- 4 *“I hereby pledge myself to the non-violent movement. Therefore I will keep the following ten commandments:*
 - 1 *MEDITATE* daily on the teachings and life of Jesus.
 - 2 *REMEMBER* always that the non-violent movement seeks justice and reconciliation - not victory.
 - 3 *WALK* and *TALK* in the manner of love, for God is love.
 - 4 *PRAY* daily to be used by God in order that all people might be free.
 - 5 *SACRIFICE* personal wishes in order that all people might be free.

- 6 *OBSERVE* with both friend and foe the ordinary rules of courtesy.
- 7 *SEEK* to perform regular service for others and for the world.
- 8 *REFRAIN* from the violence of fist, tongue or heart.
- 9 *STRIVE* to be in good spiritual and bodily health.
- 10 *FOLLOW* the directions of the movement and of the steward on a demonstration.

I sign this pledge, having seriously considered what I do, and with the determination and will to persevere.”

- 5 *Let us pray:*

**Father, may our human family
not become separated from you
by building barriers of race or colour,
of religion or class.**

**Inspire us to recognise
that we are all made
in your image and likeness,
so that we may grow in appreciation
of all people,
and encourage each other
to grow in pride in who we are
and who we are called to be.**

**May we recognise your Son in our midst,
and live truly as brothers and sisters.
Amen.**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year'
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:
www.prayingeachday.org