



## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY NELSON MANDELA TURNING 103**

The Nelson Mandela Museum honours Nelson Mandela on what would be his 103 birthday. Born Rolihlahla Mandela on the 17 July 1918 in Mvezo to Gadla Henry Mphakanyiswa and Noqaphi Nosekeni. Rolihlahla grew up in Qunu where he was given the name “Nelson” on his first day at school. From Qunu Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela moved to Mqhekezweni following the death of his father where he continued to attend school. From Mqhekezweni, Nelson Mandela attended school in places like Qokolweni, Clarkeburry, and Healdtown high before enrolling at Fort Hare.

In the early 1940s, Nelson Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC) 1943 and immediately co-founded the Youth League (YL) in 1944. Presents to the formation of the ANCYL was Anton Lembede (president), Ashby Mda, Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu along with his wife, Albertina.

Nelson Mandela's struggle against apartheid caught the attention of the world when he delivered his "I am prepared to die" speech during the Rivonia Trial (1963-1964):

*"I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die"* said Nelson Mandela while facing racist South Africa's court system of the apartheid regime.

It is during this trial Nelson Mandela and seven other political leaders were convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. He served 27 years and 8 months in prison before being released on 11 February 1990. In 1993, Nelson Mandela was again in the leading front to calm down the nation following the assassination of Chris Hani, another well-known freedom fighter.

Against all odds, Nelson Mandela led South Africa from the brink of civil war and became the first democratically elected Black President of South Africa in 1994. Mandela led South Africa to a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic country from 1994 to 1999. He left behind the legacy of reconciliation, rule of law, peace, democracy and freedom. His life was celebrated as an icon worldwide and his efforts to bring about peace and development in South Africa won him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

Over the years Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela cemented his Iconic status as a state man, father of our nation and a champion of peace. In a world where we are faced with the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. Again, South Africa is honouring the life of Nelson Mandela under the difficult circumstances of economic property looting. It is in this regards that we draw inspiration from some of the most famous words Nelson Mandela once said:

### **Nelson Mandela on Racism**

"No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite".

## **Nelson Mandela on Leadership**

“A good leader can engage in a debate frankly and thoroughly, knowing that at the end he and the other side must be closer, and thus emerge stronger. You don't have that idea when you are arrogant, superficial”

## **Nelson Mandela on Poverty**

“overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life. While poverty persists, there is no true freedom”.

## **Nelson Mandela on Gender Equality**

“At the September (1995) Beijing Conference of the United Nations women of the world will gather to charter a path for humanity towards bringing an end to the evil that continues to plague even the most powerful of nations – and that is discrimination on the grounds of sex”.

**On Education Nelson Mandela said** “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can change the world”.

“I have realised that they could take everything from me except my mind and my heart. They could not take those things. Those things I still had control over. And I decided not to give them away”.

## **On Life**

“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead”.

## **On Children**

“There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children” and also said “Children are our greatest treasure. They are our future”.

Over the Years Nelson Mandela's birthdays were celebrated with well-wishers sending their gifts from all cross of life. Below is some of the most humbling message of well wishes Nelson Mandela received from the general public across the world:



