Mrs. Rosa Parks: A Woman of “Integrity, Dignity, and Quiet Strength”

On December 1, 1955, Mrs. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat in the “neutral section” on the bus in Montgomery, Alabama. She had paid her fare at the front and then had to enter the bus from the rear. When the bus driver told her to get up to make space for a white person, Mrs. Parks refused. Some African Americans got off the bus because they were afraid that the whites would harm them. A policeman arrested Mrs. Parks.

Others heard about the arrest. Dr. Jo Ann Robinson and twenty-four women made posters to tell people to support Mrs. Parks by not riding buses. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led the boycott because he too believed that the practice of separate but equal on the buses should be changed. Mrs. Parks’s case went all the way to the Supreme Court. On November 13, 1956, the Court ruled that segregation on buses and in other public places was wrong. Rosa Parks, Dr. Robinson, Dr. King, and the African American community won the legal right to be treated equally. The nonviolent protest and Mrs. Parks’s “integrity, dignity, and quiet strength” made the case for fairness!

Resource: *Rosa*, by Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by Bryan Collier