

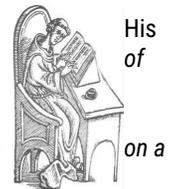
JANUARY

January 6 – Feast of the Epiphany

By the end of the second century, we know that January 6 had been chosen for Christians to celebrate the feast of Epiphany, primarily to commemorate the baptism of Jesus. The word “epiphany” also has the meaning of “manifestation,” so Epiphany emphasized those times in the life of Christ when his glory was **manifested** in some special way. Epiphany has been associated with three events in the life of Christ: the arrival of the wise men, the baptism of Jesus, and the first recorded miracle of our Lord at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. Because the primary emphasis of this date was upon the baptism of Jesus, January 6 became a day for converts to be baptized. There was a tradition of a 40 day period of preparation for baptism. In some traditions, this period began around November 11 so that the baptismal candidate would have an approximate 40 day preparation for baptism on January 6. This period of preparation was known as “St. Martin’s Lent,” since it began on St. Martin’s Day. Eventually, the joining of St. Martin’s Lent with the Epiphany season resulted in the period that we now know as Advent. This is why the season of Advent is celebrated with a mixture of joy and repentance. The days of Advent were originally used as a time of repentant preparation for baptism on January 6, Epiphany; **Scripture Readings:** for the Feast of the Epiphany: Monday, January 6; Morning–Ps. 46, 100; Isa. 60:1-9; 2 Cor. 4:1-6; Evening–Ps. 72, Isaiah 61, Rom. 15:8-21; **Collect:** *O God, who by the leading of a star didst manifest thy only begotten Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know thee now by faith, to thy presence, where we may behold thy glory face to face; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

January 12–Aelred, Bishop of Rievaulx, 1167

Aelred was an important figure in English church history. He became a Cistercian monk at the abbey of Rievaulx in 1133. His piety and insight even made an impression upon Bernard of Clairvaux. Two of Aelred’s most important writings were *Mirror of Charity*, and *Spiritual Friendship*. One of the reasons we remember Aelred on this day is to remember his teaching on friendship. He once wrote: *There are four qualities which characterize a friend; loyalty, right intention, discretion, and patience. Right intention seeks for nothing other than God and natural good. Discretion brings understanding of what is done on a friend’s behalf, and ability to know when to correct faults. Patience enables one to be justly rebuked, or to bear adversity on another’s behalf. Loyalty guards and protects friendship, in good or bitter times.* On this day, let us pray that God would help us know the meaning of true, Christian friendship; **Scripture Reading:** John 15:9-17; **Collect:** *Pour thou into our hearts, we beseech, O God, the Holy Spirit’s gift of love, that we, clasping each the other’s hand, may share the joy of friendship, human and divine, and with thy servant Aelred draw many into thy community of love; through Jesus Christ the Righteous, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*



January 13 – Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, 367

Hilary was born into a pagan family. He was converted to Christianity and baptized when he was about 30 years old. He was appointed bishop of Poitiers in 350. Hilary is remembered for defending the church against the Arian heresy. He was exiled for three years because of his stand against Arian bishops. While in exile he wrote one of his most important works, *On the Trinity*. Hilary was the model priest and bishop: prolific writer, great orator, and compassionate priest. Augustine said he was “the illustrious doctor of the churches.” Jerome called him “the trumpet of the Latins against the Arians.”; **Scripture Reading:** John 2:18-25; **Collect:** *O Lord our God, who didst raise up thy servant Hilary to be a champion of the catholic faith: Keep us steadfast in that true faith which we professed at our baptism, that we may rejoice in having thee for our Father, and may abide in thy Son, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit; thou who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.*

January 17–Antony, Abbot in Egypt, 356.

Antony was born to Christian parents. When his parents died, he inherited great wealth. After receiving his inheritance, he heard a sermon about the rich young ruler and gave away his wealth. Antony became an anchorite. An anchorite was a person who lived alone and spent his time developing the ascetic lifestyle, characterized mainly by prayer and fasting. He lived in a cave most of the time, but eventually left it and founded a monastery. The great Athanasius knew Antony and said that Antony spent his days in prayer, reading, and doing manual labor. The monks in Antony’s monastery lived in colonies of cells. Describing these cells, Athanasius said, “Their cells like tents were filled with singing, fasting, praying, and working that they might give alms, and having love and peace with one another.” Athanasius also described Antony in this manner: “He was like a physician given by God to Egypt. For who met him grieving and did not go away rejoicing? Who came full of anger and was not turned to kindness? What monk who had grown slack was not strengthened by coming to him? Who came troubled by doubts and failed to gain peace of mind?” Please pray that your Pastor would be such a man; **Scripture Reading:** Mark 10:17-21; **Collect:** *O God, who by the Holy Spirit didst enable thy servant Antony to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil: Give us grace, with pure hearts and minds, to follow thee, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.*

January 18–The Confession of Saint Peter the Apostle

Today we commemorate that wonderful event when Jesus asked his disciples, “Whom do ye say that I am?” The famous reply of the Apostle Peter was, “Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.” Of all the disciples, I suppose that Peter is the one in which we see ourselves. We see a man who spoke when he wasn’t supposed to speak, who doubted when he should have had faith, who said things he shouldn’t have said, who acted hypocritically on occasions, and who even denied his Lord. The Apostle Peter is a wonderful reminder to us all of how God can take weak and stumbling people, and turn them into rocks. When Peter confessed that Christ was the Son of the living God, Jesus said, “Blessed art thou, Simon bar-Jonas, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven.” If we have confessed that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God, it is because God revealed that great truth to us. Let us bless the name of God for having revealed to his glory in the face of Jesus Christ; **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 16:13-19; **Collect:** *Almighty Father, who didst inspire Simon Peter, first among the Apostles to confess Jesus as Messiah and Son of the living God: Keep thy Church steadfast upon the rock of this faith, that in unity and peace we may proclaim the one truth and follow the one Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever. Amen.*

January 21 – Agnes, Martyr at Rome, 304

During the persecution of Christians under the reign of Diocletian, Agnes was tortured for her faith when she was only 12 years old. Despite all of the torture, she would not worship the pagan gods. She was burned at the stake, or, according to another tradition, beheaded. We learn from Agnes that even children can stand for Christ; **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 18:1-6; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, chooses those whom the world deemeth powerless to put the powerful to shame: Grant us so to cherish the memory of thy youthful martyr Agnes, that we may share her pure and steadfast faith in thee; through Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. T*



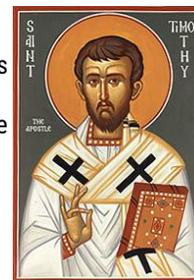
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January 25–The Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle

We all know the story about Saul of Tarsus. He was zealous for the faith of his fathers, and he believed that Christianity was a threat to that faith. So, he set out to destroy the Christian faith. But God had other plans for Saul. While on the way to Damascus to persecute Christians, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to Saul, called him to himself, and gave him the commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Thus, Saul, the persecutor of Christians, became Paul, the greatest of all missionaries. Today, we celebrate that conversion. For after his conversion, Paul spread the gospel to the West, and penned some of the most wonderful words of Holy Scripture; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 26:9-21; **Collect:** *O God, who, by the preaching of thine apostle, Paul, hast caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world: Grant, we beseech thee, that we, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show forth our thankfulness unto thee for the same by following the holy doctrine which he taught; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

January 26–Timothy and Titus

Timothy was the son of a Jewish woman and Greek father. In Acts 16:1-2 we read, “Then came and, behold, a certain disciple was there, name Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was but his father was a Greek: which was reported well of by the brethren that were at Lystra and sent to the Thessalonians to encourage them during persecution, and to Corinth to strengthen the Eusebius, Timothy was the first bishop of Ephesus. We owe so much of our knowledge about the Paul’s letters to Timothy. Titus was also a companion of the Apostle Paul. Paul calls Titus, “mine own son after the common faith” (Titus 1:4). We know that he accompanied St. Paul to the council in Jerusalem. St Paul writes, “Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.... And his inward affection is you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him” (II Cor. 7:13, 15). Titus also helped organize the church in Crete. We learn many things from the lives of Timothy and Titus. St. Paul mentions several times the youth of these two. They were young, but God uses young people to do important tasks; **Scripture Reading:** II Tim. 1:1-8; Titus 1:1-5; **Collect:** *Almighty God, who didst call Timothy and Titus to do the work of evangelists and teachers, and didst make them strong to endure hardship: Strengthen us to stand fast in adversity, and to live godly and righteous lives in this present time, that with sure confidence we may look for our blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*



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January 27–John Chrysostom, 407

John Chrysostom was the Patriarch of Constantinople. At first, he was determined to live his life in desert monasticism, but he had to leave the monastic life because of health problems. He was not well-liked in Constantinople, because, even though he was a bishop, he still lived an ascetic life. The Empress, Eudoxia, hated him because she believed that he had called her a Jezebel. He was exiled twice, and died during his second banishment. His remains were buried in Constantinople on January 27. Chrysostom was one of the greatest orators in the history of the church. Chrysostom means “golden-mouthed”. He believing that preaching was one of the most important duties of a priest. Chrysostom said that if a priest has no talent for preaching then his people “will fare no better than ships tossed in the storm.” He was also a great writer of liturgies. Chrysostom believed that during the liturgy we join with cherubim in singing sacred hymns. We still say one of his prayers during morning and evening prayer: *Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests; Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. Amen.* One of his most famous works, *Six Books on the Priesthood*, describes the priest as “dignified, but not haughty; awe-inspiring, but kind; affable in his authority; impartial, but courteous; humble, but not servile, strong but gentle.” Again, pray that your pastor would be such a priest; **Scripture Reading:** Jeremiah 1:4-10; **Collect:** *O God, who didst give to thy servant John Chrysostom grace eloquently to proclaim thy righteousness in the great congregation, and fearlessly to bear reproach for the honor of thy Name: Mercifully grant to all bishops and priests such excellency in preaching, and fidelity in ministering thy Word, that thy people may be partakers with them of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.*

January 28–Thomas Aquinas, Priest and Friar

Next to Augustine, Thomas Aquinas is considered possibly the greatest theologian in the history of Western Christianity. A member of the Dominican Order of Preachers, he was interested in the newly discovered works of Aristotle. Aquinas argued that Reason and Revelation are in harmony. His great theological works, such as the *Summa Theologica*, rely heavily on Aristotle’s philosophy; **Scripture Reading** - Matthew 13:47-52; **Collect:** *Almighty God, who has enriched thy Church with the singular learning and holiness of thy servant Thomas Aquinas: Enlighten us more and more, we pray thee, by the disciplined thinking and teaching of Christian scholars, and deepen our devotion by the example of saintly lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*



FEBRUARY

February 2–The Purification of the Blessed Virgin

This feast is sometimes called The Presentation of our Lord, or simply, Candlemas. It recalls the time when Mary and Joseph brought our Lord Jesus Christ to the temple: “And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A Pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons” (Luke 2:22-24). Jesus was presented in the temple as holy to the Lord. He was the lamb, without spot or blemish, that would take the place of all the other sacrifices when he died on the cross in our place. We should also remember that it was during this presentation at the temple, that Simeon took the Child Jesus in his arms and said what we often say or sing during Evening Prayer, the *Nunc dimittis*: Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel. How I wish we had our own building so we could have done the Candlemas procession. It is a celebration of light. All the people have lighted candles and process. Perhaps, at some point today, in your families, you could light a candle and say this prayer: God our Father, source of all light, today you revealed to the aged Simeon your light which enlightens the nations. Fill our hearts with the light of faith, that we who bear these candles may walk in the path of goodness, and come to the Light that shines for ever, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen; **Scripture Reading:** Psalm 84; Luke 2:22-40; **Collect:** *Almighty and everliving God, we humbly beseech thee that, as thy only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple, so we may be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts by the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

February 3 - Anskar (865)

Anskar is an example of laboring on, even when there is no fruit to be seen. Born in France and educated in monastic life, Anskar felt the call to be a missionary. He established a school and mission in Denmark. He was quite unsuccessful in his attempts to convert and evangelize. Remember that at this time in Scandinavia, the Norse mythology of the Vikings was very powerful. Over a hundred years after Anskar's death, the seed that he planted came to fruition; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 1:1-9; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who didst send thy servant Anskar as an apostle to the people of Scandinavia, and didst enable him to lay a firm foundation for their conversion, though he did not see the results of his labors: Keep thy Church from discouragement in the day of small things, knowing that when thou hast begun a good work thou wilt bring it to a fruitful conclusion; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

February 4 – Cornelius the Centurion

The conversion of Cornelius and his household marked a turning point in the history of the Church. The Apostle Peter, and other Jewish Christians needed to be convinced that the Church was for Gentiles, as well as Jews. After being commanded in a vision to go preach to Cornelius and household, Peter obeyed. The Holy Spirit was poured out upon Cornelius and his household, and they were baptized. Peter used this experience to prove that the gospel was, indeed, for the Gentiles. According to tradition, Cornelius was the second Bishop of Caesarea; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 11:1-18; **Collect:** *O God, who by thy Spirit didst call Cornelius the Centurion to be the first Christian among the Gentiles: Grant to thy Church we beseech thee, such a ready will to go where thou dost send and to do what thou dost command, that under thy guidance it may welcome all who turn to thee in love and faith, and proclaim the Gospel to all nations; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

February 14–Cyril and Methodius (869, 885)

Cyril and Methodius were born in Thessalonika. Both became very learned men, especially in languages. In 862, the King of Moravia asked for missionaries to come to his area to teach his people. Cyril and Methodius were chosen. Cyril invented an alphabet which eventually came to be what we know now as "cyrillic." Many bishops did not want Cyril and Methodius to preach and write in Slavonic. Through many trials, Methodius finally was allowed to use Slavonic in the liturgy; **Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 3:1-7; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who by the power of the Holy Spirit didst move thy servant Cyril and his brother Methodius to bring the light of the Gospel to a hostile and divided people: Overcome, we pray thee, by the love of Christ, all bitterness and contention among us, and make us one united family under the banner of the Prince of Peace; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

February 15–Thomas Bray, Priest and Missionary, 1730

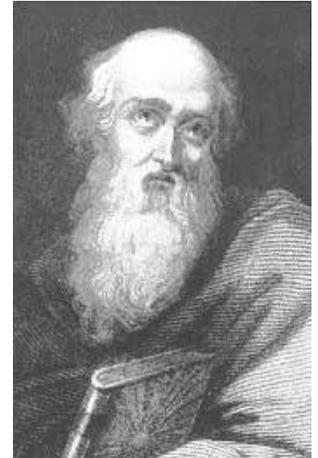
Thomas Bray was an English country parson who was sent to America to oversee the work of the church in Maryland. He didn't stay in America very long, but while in America, he felt strongly the need for an educated clergy and the instruction of children. He would not allow a minister to receive a charge unless it was known that he had a good report from the ship he came over in, "whether... he gave no matter of scandal, and whether he did constantly read prayers twice a day and catechize and preach on Sundays, which, notwithstanding the common excuses, I know can be done by a minister of any zeal for religion." He founded many schools and thirty-nine lending libraries in America. He founded the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, both very important organizations in Episcopalian history. He was also concerned for the treatment of prison inmates. He organized Sunday "Beef and Beer" dinners in prisons and worked for prison reform; **Scripture Reading:** Isaiah 52:7-10; **Collect:** *O God of compassion, who didst open the eyes of thy servant Thomas Bray to see the needs of the Church in the New World, and didst lead him to found societies to meet those needs: Make the Church in this land diligent at all times to propagate the Gospel among those who have not received it, and to promote the spread of Christian knowledge; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

February 18 - Martin Luther, Reformer, 1546.

I'm sure that I need not tell you much about Martin Luther, one of the great leaders of the Reformation. Martin Luther was born in 1483. His father wanted him to enter law, but he joined an Augustinian monastery. In 1512, he received a doctorate in theology and was made a professor of Biblical studies at the university of Wittenburg. When he began to question the sale of indulgences, he became bold enough to post his 95 Theses on the door of the castle church in Wittenburg, October 31, 1517. The pope wanted the Augustinians to discipline Luther, but he refused to recant. Luther was excommunicated on January 3, 1521. From 1522 until his death, Luther translated Scripture, composed liturgies, wrote hymns, and wrote numerous books on the Bible and theology, giving great inspiration and leadership to the Protestant Reformation. Perhaps today, on the anniversary of Luther's death, it would be a good idea to sing his great hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."; **Scripture Reading:** Isaiah 55:6-11; **Collect:** *O God, our refuge and strength: Thou didst raise up thy servant Martin Luther to reform and renew thy Church in the light of thy word. Defend and purify the Church in our own day and grant that, through faith, we may boldly proclaim the riches of thy grace which thou hast made known in Jesus Christ our Savior, who with thee and the Holy Spirit, liveth and reigneth, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

February 23–Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr of Smyrna, 156.

Irenaeus tells us that Polycarp was a pupil of the Apostle John. We know some of his teachings from a letter he wrote to the church at Philippi. Polycarp was martyred for his faith on February 23, 156. When he was asked to curse Christ in order to spare his own life, Polycarp's famous reply was: "Eighty-six years I have served him, and he never did me any wrong, How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" Polycarp was burned at the stake. Before meeting his death, he prayed, "Lord God Almighty, Father of your beloved and blessed child Jesus Christ, through whom we have received knowledge of you, God of angels and hosts and all creation, and of the whole race of the upright who live in your presence, I bless you that you have thought me worthy of this day and hour, to be numbered among the martyrs and share in the cup of Christ, for resurrection to eternal life, for soul and body in the incorruptibility of the Holy Spirit. Among them may I be accepted before you today, as a rich and acceptable sacrifice just as you, the faithful and true God, have prepared and foreshown and brought about. For this reason and for all things I praise you, I bless you, I glorify you, through the eternal heavenly high priest Jesus Christ, your beloved child, through whom be glory to you, with him and the Holy Spirit, now and for the ages to come. Amen."; **Scripture Reading:** Revelation 2:8-11; **Collect:** *O God, the maker of heaven and earth, who didst give to thy venerable servant, the holy and gentle Polycarp, boldness to confess Jesus Christ as King and Savior, and steadfastness to die for his faith: Give us grace, after his example, to share the cup of Christ and rise to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

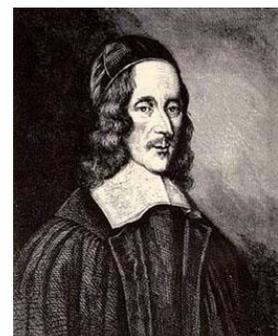


*February 24–Saint Matthias the Apostle

As the disciples were awaiting the gift of the Holy Spirit, they decided to choose another apostle who was witness of the resurrection to replace Judas Iscariot. After casting lots, Matthias was chosen. We know nothing about Matthias after his election. Perhaps he is an example of someone who is qualified to be a witness to Christ, but lives out of the spotlight, his story never being told this side of heaven; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 1:15-26; **Collect:** *O Almighty God, who into the place of Judas didst choose thy faithful servant Matthias to be of the number of the Twelve: Grant that thy Church, being delivered from false apostles, may always be ordered and guided by faithful and true pastors; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and ever. Amen.*

February 27 - George Herbert–Priest, 1633

George Herbert is one of my favorite poets. Most high school students will be called upon to read at one of his poems. Many do not realize that he was not only a poet, but also the rector of a small parish. One of his poems, "Let All the World in Every Corner Sing," became a well known hymn. His biographer, Izaak Walton, portrays him as a saintly parish priest. Walton writes that many of Herbert's parishioners "let their plow rest when Mr. Herbert's saints-bell rung to prayers, that they might also their devotion to God with him." May God give us many such saintly priests that people will delight to come to the house of God for Morning and Evening Prayer to offer up their prayers with their minister.



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MARCH

March 9— Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, 394

Gregory was born around 334. He was the younger brother of Basil the Great. After the deaths of Basil and his sister, Macrina, he devoted himself to more strenuous service and study. His most famous works include, *On the Making of Man*, *Life of Moses*, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, and his *Great Catechism*. In 381, at the Council of Constantinople, he was honored as “the pillar of the Church.” He fought valiantly for the Nicene faith. He, Basil the Great, and Gregory of Nazianzus are known as the Cappadocian Fathers; **Scripture Reading:** John 14:23-26; **Collect—***Almighty God, who hast revealed to thy Church thine eternal Being of glorious majesty and perfect love as one God in Trinity of Persons: Give us grace that, like thy bishop Gregory of Nyssa, we may continue steadfast in the confession of this faith, and constant in our worship of thee, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; who livest and reignest now and for ever. Amen.*

March 17—Patrick, Bishop and missionary of Ireland, 461.

Patrick was born in 390 on the northwest coast of Britain. His grandfather had been a priest and his father a deacon. When Patrick was 16, he was captured by slave-traders. He was carried to Ireland and forced to work as a shepherd. When he was 21, he escaped and returned to Britain. He returned to Ireland in 431. Patrick spent the rest of his life converting the people of Ireland from pagan religions such as Druidism. Men, get ready for our St. Patrick’s day celebration at our home where we will have some good Irish fellowship and a study of the life of Patrick; **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 28:16-20; **Collect—***Almighty God, who in thy providence didst choose thy servant Patrick to be the apostle of the Irish people, to bring those who were wandering in darkness and error to the true light and knowledge of thee: Grant us so to walk in that light that we may come at last to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*



March 18—Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, 386.

Cyril was born around 315 and became bishop of Jerusalem in 349. He is famous for his catechisms that he prepared for those who were awaiting baptism. His five *Mystagogical Catecheses on the Sacraments* were composed for the newly baptized. Cyril instituted the observance of Palm Sunday and Holy Week; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 24:44-48; **Collect—***Strengthen, O Lord, we beseech thee, the bishops of thy Church in the special calling to be teachers and ministers of the Sacraments, that they, like thy servant Cyril of Jerusalem, may effectively instruct thy people in Christian faith and practice; and that we, taught by them, may enter more fully into the celebration of the Paschal mystery; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

March 19 – Saint Joseph

It is often very easy for us to forget Joseph, but we see in the gospels what a loving husband he was to Mary, and no doubt, with what care he brought up Jesus in his household. God communicated with Joseph in dreams and visions to protect the infant Jesus. He was a descendant of David and worked diligently as a carpenter. Although we know very little of him, we see in him the kind of quiet devotion which glorifies God; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 2:41-52; **Collect—***O God, who from the family of thy servant David didst raise up Joseph to be the guardian of thy incarnate Son and the spouse of his virgin mother: Give us grace to imitate his uprightness of life and his obedience to thy commands; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*



March 25 - The Annunciation of Our Lord

This is the day we celebrate the coming of the archangel Gabriel to Mary, to announce that she would be the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ. So many paintings, songs, and poems have been devoted to the Annunciation. You will notice that March 25 is nine months from December 25. Today we marvel at Mary’s words, “Let it be to me according to thy word,” as she accepted both the shame and the blessedness that would come to her as a result of her obedience to God. We also marvel once again at the mystery of the Incarnation, as the blessed God becomes incarnate in the child whom Mary conceives in her womb; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 1:26-38; **Collect—***We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that we who have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ, announced by an angel to the Virgin Mary, may by his cross and passion be brought unto the glory of his resurrection; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

March 31 - John Donne, Priest, 1631

John Donne is remembered primarily as a poet, but we often forget that he was an Anglican priest. At some point in our education, we have probably read his poem, "Death, Be Not Proud," or "Meditation 17," with its immortal words, "Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls: It tolls for thee." John Donne was born a Roman Catholic and was educated at Oxford and Cambridge. King James I persuaded Donne to be ordained a priest in the Church of England. He became the most popular preacher in England. His sermons reveal that he was both a scholar and poet. He was Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London from 1622 until his death; **Scripture Reading:** Ps. 16:5-11; **Collect**—*Almighty God, the root and fountain of all being: Open our eyes to see, with thy servant John Donne, that whatsoever hath any being is a mirror in which we may behold thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

APRIL

Palm Sunday

On this Sunday we celebrate the triumphal entry of our Lord into Jerusalem when people strewed palm branches in his path, and exclaimed, "Blessed is that cometh in the name of the Lord." Palm Sunday is the beginning of Holy Week. While it is wonderful to remember how our Lord was greeted by the great throng, we must also remember how the crowds would soon turn against him and shout, "Crucify Him!" We want to be counted among the people who truly receive Jesus Christ as the King of kings and Lord of Lords. As Morgan Dix writes, "but as he came in sight of Jerusalem He wept over it; and when He arrived at the city, many were angry with those who sang His praises. Therefore think with thyself, if Jesus were to come, would He weep over thee, finding thee in hopeless sin? Wouldst thou be glad to receive Him? Art thou ready to receive Him? On this day He came as a man, but soon He will come in the clouds, with all His holy Angels, Judge of quick and dead; hast thou received Him now that thou canst meet Him then?"; **Scripture Reading:** Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 27; **Collect:** *ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility; Mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

April 4 – Ambrose (340-397)

Ambrose was the Bishop of Milan. Along with Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great, he is called one of the "four doctors of the Church." Born in Germany to a religious family, he was educated in Rome where he studied rhetoric, law, and literature. Until Augustine heard Ambrose preach, he had been unimpressed with Christian preaching, but Ambrose demonstrated to Augustine that Christians could have oratorical skills as well. Ambrose is remembered for his persuasive arguments against Arianism, a heresy that doubted the eternal existence of the Son of God; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 12:42-44; **Collect** – *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Ambrose, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Maundy Thursday

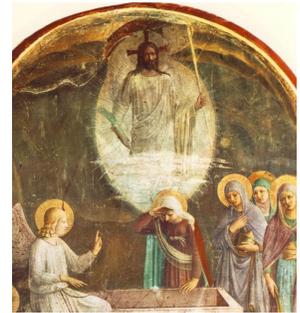
Maundy Thursday, called Holy Thursday in some Christian traditions, is the Thursday before Easter. On that Thursday, the Church remembers especially the events that occurred on that night before his death; Jesus washing the feet of the disciples; the institution of Holy Communion; Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane; and the betrayal by Judas Iscariot. The word "Maundy" comes from a Latin word "mandatum." In the Latin version of the Bible, when Jesus said, *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another* (John 13:34), the word for "commandment" is the word "mandatum."; **Scripture Reading:** John 13; I Cor. 11:23-26; **Collect:** *ALMIGHTY Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, did institute the Sacrament of his Body and Blood; Mercifully grant that we may thankfully receive the same in remembrance of him, who in these holy mysteries giveth us a pledge of life eternal; the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen.*

Good Friday¹

While Good Friday can be looked upon as one of the saddest days of the year as we remember the cruel atrocities perpetrated against the Son of God, Christians call it "good," because it was on that day that our Lord Jesus Christ paid the price for our eternal redemption. The day is observed by remembering the agonies of the cross through the reading of those passages in the gospels that describe the sufferings and death of our Lord. It is also a day of poignant self-examination as we remember our sins that made it necessary for him to go to the cross; **Scripture Reading:** Hebrews 10; John 19; **Collects for the Day** - ALMIGHTY God, we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. Amen. ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified; Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before thee for all estates of men in thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve thee; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen. MERCIFUL God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor desirest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all who know thee not as thou art revealed in the Gospel of thy Son. Take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy fold, that they may be made one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Easter Day

On this day we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. His body that was crucified, dead, and buried, rose again in newness of life. Every Sunday, the first day of the week, is a celebration of this glorious event, but especially do we commemorate this event on this holy day. Morgan Dix writes, "This is the day of days; this is the great Feast of the whole year. This is the Morning of Salvation, and the Queen of all times and seasons. On this day, shortly past midnight, Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, rose from the dead. He rose because it was not possible for Him to be held of Death. He rose, because God the Father had said that His Soul should not be left in the place of departed spirits, and that His Body should not see corruption. He rose to give life to the world, and to make it sure that they who believe in Him, and truly serve Him, shall at last rise from their graves, and like Him have the victory over Death and Hell.... Therefore rejoice on Easter-day more than at any other time of the year. Rejoice in pardon. Rejoice in being freed from the power of sin. Rejoice in the hope of your resurrection. Let no earthly care be on your brow this day. Let no angry, restless thought be in your mind. Go to the House of God, and lift up your heart. Above all, be sure to join with all your soul and with all your strength in the service of the Holy Sacrament by which the Lord makes us sharers in His Resurrection and gives immortality to our souls and bodies. For the Body and Blood of Christ, which we then eat and drink, are not those of one who is dead, but of Him who lives for evermore."; **Scripture Reading:** John 20:1-10; **Collect:** ALMIGHTY God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech thee that, as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. Amen.



April 14 - Justin Martyr (100-165)

Though born a pagan, Justin became one of the great apologists, or defenders, of the Christian faith. He was born in Palestine and became a student of philosophy. He searched for the truth among the various philosophies, especially those of the Stoics and the Pythagoreans. Finally, Justin was convinced that Christianity was the true philosophy. In his *First Apology*, addressed to Antonius Pius and Marcus Aurelius, he defends the Christian faith against false accusations and points to the superiority of Christian morality. He also points to the cruel injustices done to Christian during the times of persecution. In his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, he argues against the charge that Christianity had distorted the Old Testament Scriptures. Justin was martyred during the reign of Marcus Aurelius; **Scripture Reading:** I Peter 3:14-18, 22; John 12:44-50; **Collect:** O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Justin, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

April 21 - Anselm (1034-1109)

Anselm was born in northern Italy and was strongly influenced by his Christian mother. He entered a monastery and eventually became an abbot. Anselm was the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1093-1109. He is called, "the founder of scholasticism," a medieval method of education that tried to reconcile Christian theology with classical philosophy. Anselm is best known for his system of proving the existence of God by what is called "the ontological argument." The ontological argument seeks to prove God's existence on the basis of reason. For Anselm, denying the existence of God leads to a logical absurdity. Anselm's argument proceeds from the basic presupposition, "Now we believe that [the Lord] is something than which nothing greater can be imagined." From this basic assumption, Anselm believes the existence of God is a logical necessity. While Anselm did believe that the existence of God could be proved

¹ The date for this changes every year. See the Table for Finding Holidays on page 17.

rationality, he also recognized the necessity of faith. He said, "Nor do I seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe that I may understand. For this, too, I believe, that unless I first believe, I shall not understand." Thus, faith is necessary, but after a person has faith, it can be demonstrated rationally that God exists. Anselm is also known for his view of the atonement as satisfaction. In Anselm's system of theology, God is a just God who must punish sin. Therefore, man must be punished with eternal death for his sin. But God is also merciful, and out of his loving kindness, he sent his only Son to die for us on the cross, thus making satisfaction to the justice of God. Since Christ is God, his satisfaction was infinite, and therefore, a proper satisfaction for our sin which is also infinite in its heinousness and consequences; **Scripture Reading:** Romans 1:16-20; John 7:16-18; John 8:12;; **Collect:** *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Anselm, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

April 25 - St. Mark the Evangelist

Today we celebrate the life of the writer of the second synoptic gospel, the Gospel according to St. Mark. It is believed that St. Mark was a companion of St. Peter, who imparted to him many of the teachings and historical events in the life of Christ. In I Peter 5:13, the apostle refers to him as "my son, Mark." It is generally held that St. Mark is the John Mark that we find mentioned in the book of Acts. If so, Mark was the cousin of Barnabas who caused the separation between Paul and Barnabas. Later, the Apostle Paul seems to have forgiven Mark and looks forward to his companionship. Eastern Orthodoxy teaches that St. Mark was the first Patriarch of Alexandria, thus, the founder of African Christianity. According to tradition, he was martyred in Egypt in 67 A. D. for his opposition to idolatry; **Scripture Reading:** Eph. 4:7-16; John 15:1-11; **Collect** - *O ALMIGHTY God, who hast instructed thy holy Church with the heavenly doctrine of thy Evangelist Saint Mark; Give us grace that, being not like children carried away with every blast of vain doctrine, we may be established in the truth of thy holy Gospel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

MAY

May 1 - Saint Philip and Saint James, Apostles

St. James is sometimes referred to as "James the less." We know almost nothing about him except that he is always mentioned in the list of the twelve disciples. Many attempts have been made to identify this James with James, the brother of our Lord, and James, the son of Mary (Mark 15:40). All we can say for sure from Scripture is that he was one of the twelve. St. Philip is also one of the twelve. He was the friend of Nathanael whom he brought to meet Jesus (John 1:44). When some Greeks wanted to meet Jesus, they approached Him through Philip (John 12:20). Philip was also the disciple who, at the feeding of the 5,000, wondered how they were going to feed so many people. Philip is the disciple who asked Jesus to show them the Father. Jesus replied, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" (John 14:9). According to Church tradition, Philip was a missionary to Greece, Syrian, and Phrygia, and was crucified in the city of Hierapolis for his opposition to the worship of false gods; **Scripture Reading:** John 14:1-14; **Collect** - *O ALMIGHTY God, whom truly to know is everlasting life; Grant us perfectly to know thy Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life; that, following the steps of thy holy Apostles, Saint Philip and Saint James, we may stedfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

May 2–Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria (293-373)

Athanasius was one of the great theological champions of the Church in its battle against the heresy of Arianism, the idea that Christ did not always exist. He wrote, *“Against the Gentiles: On the Incarnation,”* a work that proved that Jesus Christ was both God and man. He also wrote, *“Three Discourses against the Arians,”* in which he established the doctrine of the eternal existence of Christ. Athanasius was also present at the council of Nicaea that produced the Nicene Creed, another statement against the heresy of Arianism. Athanasius was the first person to list a canon of the 27 books of the New Testament that we currently recognize as authoritative. Athanasius was exiled by Constantine I because of his strong stand against Arianism. He was later restored, but exiled again. Athanasius was exiled at least five times, which led to the popular saying, *“Athanasius against the world”* The Athanasian Creed, which is still recited in some church on Trinity Sunday, is also attributed to him, containing his detailed description of the Trinity; **Scripture Reading:** II Cor. 4: 5-14; Matthew 10:23-32; **Collect:** *O ALMIGHTY God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant Athanasius, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we with them attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

May 9 – Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389)

Gregory of Nazianzus was one of the most important theologians of the Church. A great poet and orator, who studied in Nazianzus, Caesarea Cappadocia, Alexandria, and Athens, he defended orthodox Christianity in its struggles against Arianism and Apollonianism, a heresy that cast doubt on the full divinity and full humanity of Christ. Gregory contended that Christ was both fully human and fully divine, the view of Christ that was established by the second ecumenical council, the First Council of Constantinople, 381; **Scripture Reading:** John 8:25-32; **Collect:** *O ALMIGHTY God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant Gregory, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we with them attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Rogation Days

Rogation Days are the Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Ascension Thursday. In earlier times, people used these days as a period of fasting before the great celebration of Ascension Day. The word “rogation” comes from the Latin word “rogare,” meaning “to ask.” The Gospel reading for Rogation contains the verse, *“Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”* One of the customs that developed around Rogation days was for farmers to have their crops blessed by a priest. Also, in a custom known as *“beating the bounds,”* clergy and parishioners would march around the boundaries of the parish asking for God’s protection of the parish; **Scripture Reading:** John 16:23; **Collect -** *ALMIGHTY God, Lord of heaven and earth; We beseech thee to pour forth thy blessing upon this land, and to give us a fruitful season; that we, constantly receiving thy bounty, may evermore give thanks unto thee in thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Ascension Day

On this day we celebrate the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ to the right hand of the Father as described in Luke 24:50-51 and Acts 1:9-11. In Ephesians 4:8, St. Paul writes, *“When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”* Our Lord ascended to Heaven, dragging at his chariot wheels all our spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, and death, having triumphed over them. Then, from his position in heaven, he showered gifts upon the waiting Church, especially the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish our mission of world evangelization. Morgan Dix gives us good advice concerning how to celebrate this day: *“After spending forty days on the earth with His people, the Lord went up to Heaven, when He had come. He descended when He was God only. But when He went up again, He was Man also. In Him, this very nature of ours went up to Heaven, and is even now at God’s Right Hand. Heaven is opened to us: and now our risen and ascended Lord prays for us there, and, having all power in Heaven and earth, He gives us all things for the good of His Church. Lift up thy thoughts to Heaven on Holy Thursday, or Ascension Day, and if it be possible, lift them up in God’s House; and in that highest service in which it is said: Lift up your hearts. And we reply: We lift them up unto the Lord. Think not of earth, for Heaven is thine. Long for it, pant after it. There, is no more pain nor sorrow. There, is no more sin. There, thou shalt see the saints, and the Holy Angels, and thy Blessed Saviour, yea, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. What is all earth to this? Strive only after Heaven. Reach up to it. Ascend thither now in heart and mind, that hereafter thou mayest ascend in body and soul, and dwell therein forever”;* **Scripture Reading:** I Peter 4:7; John 15:26-16:4; **Collect:** *GRANT, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe thy only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.*

May 19 – Dunstan (909-988)

Dunstan was the Archbishop of Canterbury from 960-988. Before becoming the Archbishop, he had lived the life of a religious hermit at Glastonbury Abbey, where he copied manuscripts and worked as a silversmith. After having been exiled to France, he came back to England and instituted many reforms in monastic life. Many legends are connected with Dunstan, especially concerning his battles with the devil. One of the legends states that Dunstan put a horseshoe on the devil’s hoof. Dunstan agreed to take the shoe off only if the devil promised to never enter a home where there was a horseshoe. For this reason, horseshoes are considered to be lucky; **Scripture Reading:** John 17:18-23; **Collect:** *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Dunstan, may persevere in running*

the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May 20 – Alcuin, Deacon and Abbot of Tours (735-809)

(735-809). It is doubtful that Alcuin was ever ordained as a monk or priest, but he was a famous scholar, poet, theologian, and teacher from York, England, who used his vast learning in the service of the Church. Much of his life was spent in France, where he taught Charlemagne and his two sons, Pepin and Louis. In both England and France, Alcuin wanted to revive the tradition of learning, especially among the clergy, emphasizing the trivium and the quadrivium. Alcuin was also influential in the fight against the revival of the ancient heresy of Adoptionism which taught that Jesus was not divine at his birth, but became divine at some later point in his life, such as his baptism, at which point he became an “adopted” son of God, thus the name “adoptionism.” Writing to one of the famous adoptionists, Felix, Bishop of Urgell, he said, “As the Nestorian impiety divided Christ into two persons because of the two natures, so your unlearned temerity divided Him into two sons, one natural and one adoptive.”; **Scripture Reading:** John 1:1-14; **Collect:** O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Alcuin, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May 24 – Vincent of Lerins

Though many people may accept the Bible as the inspired, inerrant, and infallible word of God, we know that people differ in their interpretations of the Bible. How are we to know whose interpretation is correct? Vincent of Lerins offered a solution to this problem in his Commonitory (434 A. D.). In interpreting Scripture, we must accept that interpretation which “has been believed everywhere, always, and by all.” This maxim is often called “the Vincentian canon.” According to Vincent, the Church must use the principle of universality, antiquity, and consent. In other words, “Is this the interpretation that is most universally accepted by the Church.” “Do we find this interpretation held in the ancient Church?” “Have the great councils and the majority of the fathers and theologians of the church consented to this interpretation?” Vincent explains his position in Chapter 4 of the Commonitory: “Now in the Catholic Church itself we take the greatest care to hold that which has been believed everywhere, always and by all. That is truly and properly ‘Catholic,’ as is shown by the very force and meaning of the word, which comprehends everything almost universally. We shall hold to this rule if we follow universality [i.e. oecumenicity], antiquity, and consent. We shall follow universality if we acknowledge that one Faith to be true which the whole Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity if we in no wise depart from those interpretations which it is clear that our ancestors and fathers proclaimed; consent, if in antiquity itself we keep following the definitions and opinions of all, or certainly nearly all, bishops and doctors alike.” The Vincentian canon helps to preserve us from ancient heresies and novel teachings that often corrupt the teachings of the Church; **Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 4:1-6; **Collect:** O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Vincent, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May 26 – Augustine of Canterbury (?-604)

This Augustine, not to be confused with the famous theologian, St. Augustin of Hippo, was the first Archbishop of Canterbury, appointed by Pope Gregory the Great in 597. Augustine is famous for a mass conversion of people under the reign of King Ethelbert. According to the New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge: “Ethelbert permitted the missionaries to settle and preach in his town of Canterbury and before the end of the year he was converted and Augustine was consecrated bishop at Arles. At Christmas 10,000 of the king’s subjects were baptized. In 601 Mellitus (q.v.) and others brought the pope’s replies, with the pallium for Augustine and a present of sacred vessels, vestments, relics, books, and the like. Gregory directed the new archbishop to ordain as soon as possible twelve suffragan bishops and to send a bishop to York, who should also have twelve suffragans, – a plan which was not carried out, nor was the primatial see established at London as Gregory intended. More practicable were the pope’s mandates concerning heathen temples and usages; the former were to be consecrated to Christian service and the latter, so far as possible, to be transformed into dedication ceremonies or feasts of martyrs, since “he who would climb to a lofty height must go up by steps, not leaps” (letter of Gregory to Mellitus, in Bede, i, 30). Augustine reconsecrated and rebuilt an old church at Canterbury as his cathedral and founded a monastery in connection with it. He also restored a church and founded the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul outside the walls.” **Scripture Reading:** II Cor. 5:17-20; Matthew 13:31-33; **Collect:** O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Augustine, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Pentecost

On this day, we celebrate that wonderful moment in the life of the Church when the Holy Spirit was



poured out upon the waiting Church. The word Pentecost comes from a word meaning "fifty," thus Pentecost occurs 50 days after Easter. The Old Testament feast of Pentecost, or Shavuot, was a time of counting the days to the celebration of the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. On the day of Pentecost, a new era was ushered in as the Gospel began to be proclaimed to the world in the power of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is often called "Whitsunday," or "White Sunday." This day is associated with "white" because baptismal candidates, often baptized on the day of Pentecost wore white robes. Some have held that "whit" is not to be equated with "white" but with "wit," or "wisdom," which the Apostles received when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is a wonderful day that we should remember because of the all the blessings the Holy Spirit has bestowed upon his Church. Morgan Dix writes: "*The Lord had promised that after He was ascended into Heaven, He would send down the Comforter to dwell in His Church, so that it should not lose His Blessed Presence, but possess Him even more nearly and fully than when He was upon earth. For now He dwelleth unseen by us because within us; He is present in every Sacrament and means of grace, and in these He gives us by His Holy Spirit pardon of sin, and holiness, the seven-fold graces, the fruits of the Spirit. Yea, we are the temples of the Holy Ghost. We may we be full of fear, for he that defileth the temple of God, him shall God destroy. Well may we be full of joy also, and of hope, for we have Him in our hearts who will make us to triumph over every affliction and temptation if only we follow His gracious influence, Who will conform us to the image of the Son of God, and make us fit for His everlasting kingdom. One the eve of Whitsunday, that it to say, on the Saturday before, think over your many sins against the Holy Ghost; by what evil tempters you have grieved Him; by what thoughts, by what words, by what deeds; how holy you might have been and are not. Be sure, if you can, to communicate upon Whitsunday, that being joined to your Saviour by receiving His body and Blood, His Spirit may flow into you, and fill you with holy desires and resolutions, and grace to fulfill the same.*"; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 2:1-11; John 14:15-31; **Collect** - O GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

May 27 – Bede the Venerable – Priest and Monk of Jarrow (673-753)

Bede is recognized as one of the first great English scholars. He is referred to as "*the father of English history*," in recognition of his great work, "*The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*." This volume recounts the English people from the time of Caesar to his own day. Born in 673, he entered the monastery when he was only seven years old, ordained a deacon at 19, and a priest at 30. He was a man of broad learning, familiar with Ovid, Horace, Lucretius, and other classical writers. He wrote about music, time, and the Scriptures. He wrote, "*I spent all my life in this monastery, applying myself entirely to the study of Scripture.*"; **Scripture Reading:** Malachi 3:16-18; Matthew 13:47-52; **Collect:** O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Bede, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

JUNE

Trinity Sunday

On this day we celebrate the glorious truth of the Trinity: "*God in three persons, blessed Trinity*." Though there is a great deal of mystery surrounding the doctrine of the Trinity, the Church through the ages has taught us what we need to know concerning the persons and relationships within the Trinity. Article I of the Thirty-nine Articles summarizes our belief in this manner: "*There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.*" John Henry Hobart describes how the Scriptures affirm this doctrine: "*The Holy Scriptures, in speaking of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, distinguish them from one another, as we would in common speech distinguish three several persons. They are thus distinguished in the form of administering baptism, which is "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; also in the Apostolic benediction, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost"(II Cor. 13:14).... The names, attributes, and act of God are, in various places, attributed unto the Son, manifested in the flesh, as Jesus Christ the Saviour. St. John says, "the word was made flesh" (John 1:14): St. Paul, that "God was manifested in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16); that "Christ is overall, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9:5). Eternity is attributed to Jesus Christ the Son; "the Son hath life in himself. He is the same, and his years shall not fail" (John 5:26; Heb. 1:12). Perfection of knowledge is attributed to him; "as the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father" (John 10:15); as also the creation of all things; "all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). We are commanded to "honour the Son, as we honour the Father" (John 5:23). The glorified Saints sing Hallelujahs, as to God the Father, so also to "the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. 7:10) And Jesus himself is introduced, saying, "I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Rev. 22:13)... That the Holy Ghost is a divine person, is evident from many passages of Scripture. "Lying to the Holy Ghost" is called "lying unto God" (Acts 5:3-4). And because Christians are "the temples of the Holy Ghost," they are said too be "the temples of God" (I Cor. 3:16).... He is joined also with God the Father, "who will not give his glory to another," as an object of faith and worship, in baptism, and in the Apostolical benediction (Matthew 28:19-20; II Cor. 13:14)" **Scripture Reading:** Rev. 4; John 3:1-14; **Collect** - ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity; We beseech thee that thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.*

June 7 – Corpus Christi –

“Corpus Christi” is Latin for “body of Christ.” On this day we celebrate the giving of the Lord’s Supper to his church to be observed until he come comes again. It is observed on Thursday to correspond to Maundy Thursday, the night in which the Lord instituted the sacrament of Holy Communion; **Scripture Reading:** I Cor. 11:23-29; John 6:55-58; **Collect** – *ALMIGHTY Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, did institute the Sacrament of his Body and Blood; Mercifully grant that we may thankfully receive the same in remembrance of him, who in these holy mysteries giveth us a pledge of life eternal; the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen.*

June 9 – Columba (521-597)

Columba is one of the patron saints of Ireland, credited with introducing Christianity to Scotland. Born in Ireland, he became a monk and a priest. In 563, he left Ireland to become a missionary in Scotland. Through his leadership, monasticism became a powerful force in Ireland and Scotland. He ministered to the Picts and established churches in the Hebrides. He was given land in Iona where he eventually died. He established a school for missionaries to further the evangelization of the pagan tribes; **Scripture Reading:** I Cor. 3:11-23; Luke 10:17-20; **Collect** – *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Columba, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

June 10 – First Book of Common Prayer (1549)

The Book of Common Prayer is the primary liturgical book of the Anglican faith. During the time of the Reformation, efforts were being made to issue a liturgy in the language of the people, rather than Latin. Serious efforts toward this end were made during the reign of Henry VIII, but after Henry's death, Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, worked diligently to produce this first Book of Common Prayer. It was first used on Pentecost Sunday, June 9, 1549, during the reign of Edward VI. In the production of this liturgical work, Cranmer relied on earlier Latin, Greek, Gallican, and German liturgies. Though the Prayer Book has been revised since this initial issue in 1549, it provided the basis for the Book of Common Prayer as it is still used today. Anglicans still find within it the best method for the public worship of God and an invaluable aid in our private devotions; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 2:38-42; Matthew 6:5-15; **Collect** – *O GOD, who hast brought us near to an innumerable company of Angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect: Grant us during our pilgrimage to abide in their fellowship, and in our Country to become partakers of their joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

June 11 – St. Barnabas

Barnabas was the missionary companion of the Apostle Paul. In Acts 13 we read of the gathering of the church in Antioch, at which time, the Holy Ghost said, "*Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them*" (2). The name "Barnabas" means "son of encouragement", and he proved worthy of his name by introducing Saul to the church in Antioch at a time when Saul was still regarded with some suspicion by the early Christian communities. Barnabas was described as "a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" (Acts 11:24). Barnabas and Paul served together until they had a dispute concerning whether to take John Mark with them. John Mark had previously left them on one their journeys, and Paul felt that he was unreliable. According to Church tradition, Barnabas was stoned to death by the Jews at Salamis on the east coast of Cyprus; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 11:22-30; John 15:12-16; **Collect** – *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Barnabas, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

June 14 – Basil of Caesarea (330-391)

Basil, the older brother of Gregory of Nyssa, was another defender of the Church against the heresy of Arianism. He was educated in Constantinople and Athens. He decided to seek the counsel of some of the desert saints, being attracted by their rigorous asceticism. He became the head of a convent in Pontus, and eventually became the Bishop of Caesarea. Basil not only defended the Church against Arianism, but also against the Macedonian heresy, especially in his work, *De Spiritu Sancto*. The Macedonian heresy denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, a heresy that was condemned at the First Council of Constantinople (381); **Scripture Reading:** I Cor. 2:6-13; Luke 10:22-24; **Collect:** *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Basil, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

June 22 – Alban (?-304)

Alban is considered to be the first Christian martyr in Britain. He was born a pagan, but was converted by the life and witness of a very godly Christian priest. On one occasion, he was hiding a priest from Roman authorities. When the authorities arrived to search his home, he exchanged clothes with the priest and allowed himself to be arrested. When he was asked what he believed, he replied, “*I worship and adore the true and living God who created all things.*” He was beheaded as a sacrifice to the Roman gods. The Cathedral of St. Alban’s is located near the spot where Alban was martyred; **Scripture Reading:** I John 3:13-16; Matthew 10:34-42; **Collect:** *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Alban, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

June 24 – St. John the Baptist

John the Baptist was the cousin of our Lord Jesus, born to preach to the people and prepare them for the coming of the Messiah. He was born to Zacharias and Elizabeth, who was thought to be barren. After his birth, Zacharias prophesied of the future work of his son in the hymn that we now call the Benedictus (Luke 1:68:79). Though he felt unworthy, John baptized Jesus as our Lord began his public ministry. John was beheaded as a result of his opposition to the marriage of Herod Antipas to Herodias, the former wife of his brother, Herod Philip I. Jesus extolled the virtues of John the Baptist by saying “*Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist*” (Matt. 11:11); **Scripture Reading:** Isaiah 40:1-11; Luke 1:57-80. **Collect** – *ALMIGHTY God, by whose providence thy servant John Baptist was wonderfully born, and sent to prepare the way of thy Son our Saviour by preaching repentance; Make us so to follow his doctrine and holy life, that we may truly repent according to his preaching; and after his example constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth’s sake; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

June 28 – Irenaeus (130?-200)

Irenaeus was an early Christian apologist who defended the Church against the heresies of Gnosticism. He was a disciple of Polycarp, who had been a disciple of the Apostle John. He became a priest, and later the bishop of Lyon in Gaul. Irenaeus defended our current belief that only the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were authoritative. He rejected the many other gospel versions, especially those of the Gnostic variety such as the Gospel of Judas. One of the primary teachings of the Gnostics was that Jesus did not have a real body of flesh and blood, but only appeared to have one. His famous work, *Against Heresies*, was of the first great treatises against the heresy of Gnosticism; **Scripture Reading:** Malachi 2:5-7; Luke 11:33-36; **Collect** – *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Irenaeus, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

June 29 – St. Peter

The Apostle Peter is one of the key figures in the Gospels and the history of the early Church. He is always listed first in the lists of the apostles that we have in the Gospels. He is the one who made the great confession, “*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*” Though he denied Christ three times on the eve of the crucifixion, Peter repented and was given the commission of our Lord Jesus after his resurrection to “*feed my lambs.*” On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached a sermon that resulted in the conversion of 3,000. He was instrumental in breaking down the barriers that existed between Jew and Gentile when he preached in the home of Cornelius, the centurion. According to Church tradition, Peter was crucified, head downward, in 64 A. D. during the reign of Nero; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 12:1-11; Matthew 16:13-19; **Collect:** *O ALMIGHTY God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst give to thy Apostle Saint Peter many excellent gifts, and commandedst him earnestly to feed thy flock; Make, we beseech thee, all Bishops and Pastors diligently to preach thy holy Word, and the people obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

JULY



July 11—Benedict of Nursia (480-547)

Benedict was the founder of the Benedictine Order. During his life, he founded 12 monasteries, the most famous of which is the first monastery of Monte Cassino. His rules for living the monastic life are contained in a work which we now know as the Rule of St. Benedict. In 73 short chapters, this work describes how to run a monastery and how to be obedient and humble. Benedict was born into a noble family in Nursia. As he neared adulthood, he began a search to find the manner of life that he wanted to live. Under the instruction of a monk, Benedict lived in a cave for three years, receiving few visitors. His sanctity became well known, and soon he was encouraged by other monks to be their abbot. His first experience as abbot failed, but eventually, he was able to find men of like mind who would follow his rule. His Rule was used by most monastic orders throughout the Middle Ages; **Scripture Reading:** Proverbs 2:1-9; **Collect:** *Almighty and*

everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

July 22—St. Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene is described in the New Testament as a devoted follower of Jesus Christ. The word "Magdalene" refers to her native city, Magdala, which was located on the shore of the sea of Galilee. Though many legends have developed around the life of Mary Magdalene, we need not go beyond the Scriptures to know that Mary was one who loved our Lord Jesus Christ and sought to serve him. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalene. Afterwards, she was one of the women who helped to support financially the ministry of Jesus. She was present at the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus and arose early on that first Easter morning to go to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus with spices. She was one of the first eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ; **Scripture Reading:** John 20:11-18; **Collect:** *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Mary Magdalene, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



July 24 – Thomas a Kempis (1380-1471)

Thomas a Kempis was an Augustinian monk from Germany, best known for his work, *The Imitation of Christ*, which has been read by Christians of many generations for inspiration concerning how to live a humble life in obedience to Jesus Christ. John Wesley and John Newton found great encouragement in *The Imitation of Christ*. Though *The Imitation of Christ* was written primarily for monastics, Christians of all kinds have found help in the advice Thomas a Kempis gives concerning obedience, humility, resisting temptation, and forsaking the world. Thomas a Kempis spent his life in a quiet manner, primarily in devotional exercises and copying the Bible, making at least four handwritten copies of the Bible during his lifetime; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 6:17-23; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

July 25 - St. James*

Today we celebrate the feast of St. James, the brother of John. James is sometimes referred to as James the Greater, to distinguish him from the other disciple named James, referred to as James the Less. He is also not to be confused with "James the brother of the Lord." James, along with his brother John, was a fisherman with his father, Zebedee. Jesus called James and John to follow him and they left their nets and followed Jesus. James, along with John and Peter could be said to be part of the inner circle of disciples, being present with our Lord at certain events that no other disciples witnessed, such as the Transfiguration and Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. James was martyred for his faith at the hands of Herod (Acts 12:1-2); **Scripture Reading:** Acts 11:27-12:3; **Collect:** *GRANT, O merciful God, that, as thine holy Apostle Saint James, leaving his father and all that had, without delay was obedient unto the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him; so we, forsaking all worldly and carnal affections, may be evermore ready to follow thy holy commandments; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



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July 29 – Mary and Martha

Mary and Martha of Bethany were the sisters of Lazarus, the friend of Jesus whom our Lord raised from the dead. Mary and Martha both loved the Lord Jesus Christ and showed him great hospitality. John records for us how Mary anointed Jesus' feet with oil and wiped them with her hair. Martha demonstrated her faith in Jesus by professing that she knew that Jesus was the Son of God, and that God would do whatever Jesus asked of him. These two sisters are remembered as examples of love, faith, and devotion to Christ; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 10:38-42; **Collect:** *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servants, Mary and Martha, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

AUGUST

August 1 - Joseph of Arimathea

Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy man who was described as a secret disciple of Jesus (John 19:40). He have been a member of the Sanhedrin. Though Joseph was a secret disciple, he was brave enough, showing more courage than some of the other disciples, to ask for the body of Jesus after the crucifixion in order to the Lord a proper burial in one of his own tombs. He and Nicodemus prepared the body of Jesus for burial (John 19:38-9); **Scripture Reading:** Luke 23:50-56; **Collect:** *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Joseph of Arimathea, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



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August 6-Transfiguration of our Lord*

The Scripture tells us that Jesus took Peter, James, and John to high mountain, and he was transfigured before them. His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was as white as the light. Moses and Elijah came and stood beside him, signifying that Jesus was the fulfillment of both the law and the prophets. A cloud of glory overshadowed the Lord, and a voice was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The Apostle Peter recalled this event years later when he wrote his second epistle: "For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount" (II Peter 1:17-18). The Transfiguration strengthened our Lord in the light of his approaching death, and also

strengthened the faith of the disciples who saw in this event a foreshadowing of his resurrection and exaltation; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 9:28-36; **Collect:** *O GOD, who on the mount didst reveal to chosen witnesses thine only-begotten Son wonderfully transfigured, in raiment white and glistening; Mercifully grant that we, being delivered from the disquietude of this world, may be permitted to behold the King in his beauty, who with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. Amen.*

August 13 – Jeremy Taylor

Jeremy Taylor was an English bishop, theologian and devotional writer. Educated at Cambridge, he was made a royal chaplain by Archbishop Laud. During the Puritan revolution, he was ejected from his office. best remembered for his *Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* (1650), and *Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying* (1651). He was made bishop of Down and Connor, to which the diocese of Dromore was later added. A brilliant writer, one of his prayers for the sick is included in the Book of Common Prayer: *A Prayer which be said by the Minister in behalf of all present at the Visitation: O God, whose days are without end, and whose mercies cannot be numbered; Make us, we beseech thee, deeply sensible of the shortness and uncertainty of human life; and let thy Holy Spirit lead us in holiness and righteousness all our days: that, we shall have served thee in our generation, we may be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience; in the communion of the Catholic Church; in the confidence of a certain faith; in the comfort of a reasonable, religious, and holy hope; in favour with thee our God, and in perfect charity with the world. All which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*"; **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 24:42-47; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



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August 15 – St. Mary the Virgin

Though yielding to the will of God meant scandal, Mary, the mother of our Lord accepted her mission by saying, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." After giving birth to our Savior, Mary nurtured her son and accompanied him and ministered to his needs after he began his public ministry. She was with our Lord when he was crucified and with the disciples when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost. She remains an example of an obedient servant of God who humbly accepted the will of God for her life. **Scripture Reading:** Luke 1:46-55; **Collect:** *O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

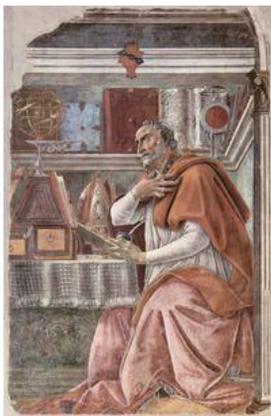


August 20 – Bernard of Clairvaux

In the New Schaff Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, M. Herold writes: St. Bernard of Clairvaux (*Bernardus Clarævallis*) is one of the most prominent personalities of the twelfth century, of the entire Middle Ages, and of church history in general. He gave a new impulse to monastic life, influenced ecclesiastical affairs outside of monasticism in the most effective manner, and contributed not a little toward awakening an inner piety in large circles. As he knew how to inspire the masses by his powerful preaching, so also he understood how to lead individual souls by his quiet conversation, to ease the mind, and to dominate the will. It was said in his time that the Church had had no preacher like him since Gregory the Great; and that this was no exaggeration is proved by Bernard's orations, which in copiousness of thought and beauty of exposition have few equals. Revered by his contemporaries as saint and prophet, his writings, which belong to the noblest productions of ecclesiastical literature, have secured him also a far-reaching influence upon posterity. Praised by Luther and Calvin, "Bernard's name has retained a good repute among Protestants, though he represented many things which the Reformation had to oppose." We still sing hymns that come from Bernard, such as "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded," and "Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee." **Scripture Reading:** John 15:7-11; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

August 24—St. Bartholomew the Apostle*

Bartholomew is mentioned in the list of apostles, but nothing certain is known about him other than that he was one of the twelve. Some think Bartholomew and Nathanael are the same person. According to Church tradition, Bartholomew made a missionary journey to India. He is credited with introducing the gospel to Armenia, and is said to have been martyred by being flayed alive and crucified head downward; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 22:24-30; **Collect:** *O ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who didst give to thine Apostle Bartholomew grace truly to believe and to preach thy Word; Grant, we beseech thee, unto thy Church, to love that Word which he believed, and both to preach and receive the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



August 28—St. Augustine of Hippo

Augustine is one of the greatest theologians of the Western Church. As a young man, he was attracted to Manichaeism and Neoplatonism, but due to the prayers and influence of his mother, Monicca, he became a Christian. He was baptized by Ambrose, the bishop of Milan in 387. His autobiography, called the *Confessions*, is one of the great spiritual classics of Christianity. Another of his great works is *The City of God*, written as the Roman Empire was beginning to crumble at the hands of the Visigoths. In *The City of God* he writes: "Two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by love of self, even to the contempt of God, the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The earthly city glories in itself, the heavenly city glories in the Lord. . . . In the one, the princes, and the nations it subdues, are ruled by the love of ruling; in the other, the princes and the subjects serve one another in love."; **Scripture Reading:** Hebrews 12:22-29; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

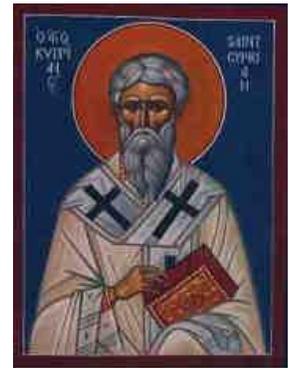
August 31—St. Aidan, Bishop of Lindisfarne, 651

According to the New Schaff Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, "When Oswald, king of Northumbria (634-642), wished to introduce Christianity into his dominions, he applied to Seghine, abbot of Iona, for missionaries, and a certain Cormac was sent, who soon returned, declaring it was impossible to Christianize so rude a people. Aidan, then a monk of Iona, suggested that Cormac had failed to adapt his teaching to their needs and had expected too much, forgetting the Apostle's injunction of "milk for babes." Whereupon Aidan was at once ordained and sent to Oswald in Cormac's place (635). He established himself on the island of Lindisfarne, near Bamborough, brought fellow workers from Ireland, and founded a school of twelve English boys to provide future priests. Consistently exemplifying in his daily life the doctrines he taught, he gained great influence with Oswald and, after his death, with Oswin, king of Deira, while the people were won by his mildness, humility, and benevolence. He could not preach in the Saxon language at first and Oswald acted as interpreter. His work in Northumbria was continued by Finan. All information about Aidan comes from Bede (*Hist. eccl.*, iii. 3, 5-17, 26), who praises him and tells marvelous stories about him."; **Scripture Reading:** I Corinthians 9:16-23; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

SEPTEMBER

September 13 – Cyprian - Bishop of Carthage, 258

Cyprian, gifted in rhetoric, was converted to Christianity in 246. In two years he was made the Bishop of Carthage. During Cyprian's lifetime, there was a controversy about what to do about those Christians who had denied the faith during times of persecution. While a group called the Novatians believed that such people could not be restored, Cyprian held that such people could be reconciled to the Church after an appropriate time of penance. Cyprian was beheaded in 258 during the reign of Emperor Valerian. Believing in the importance of the Church, Cyprian once said, "If you leave the Church of Christ you will not come to Christ's rewards, you will be an alien, an outcast, an enemy. You cannot have God for your Father unless you have the Church for your Mother."; **Scripture Reading:** John 10:11-16; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



September 19, 21, and 22—Ember Days

30—Ember Day—Ember Days occur four times in our Church calendar. The word "ember" comes from a word, meaning "circuit" or "revolution," and refers to the annual progression of the Church Year. These days are days of fasting, usually in connection with one of the great Christian festivals such as Advent, Easter, and Pentecost. These days have traditionally been set aside as appropriate days for the ordination of clergy, and the time for candidates to the ministry to make reports to their responsible parties such as bishops; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 13:44-49; Luke 4:16-21; **Collect:** *O ALMIGHTY God, who hast committed to the hands of men the ministry of reconciliation; We humbly beseech thee, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, to put it into the hearts of many to offer themselves for this ministry; that thereby mankind may be drawn to thy blessed kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



Sept 21 – Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist*

Before becoming a disciple of Jesus, Matthew was a tax **Collector**, but when Jesus called him, Matthew left everything to follow Christ. Later, Matthew gave a great feast for Christ and his disciples. He wrote the gospel which bears his name. According to some traditions, Matthew carried the gospel to Ethiopia and was martyred there; **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 9:9-13; **Collect:** *O ALMIGHTY God, who by thy blessed Son didst call Matthew from the receipt of custom to be an Apostle and Evangelist; Grant us grace to forsake all covetous desires, and inordinate love of riches, and to follow the same thy Son Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.*



Sept 26 – Lancelot Andrewes

Bishop of Winchester (1626), Lancelot Andrewes is recognized as one of the most eloquent preachers in the history of the Anglican Church. His sermons on the birth of Christ and the Resurrection are considered classics of Christian oratory, though his style is somewhat difficult for many modern readers. A great scholar, possessing immense knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, he was one of the translators of the King James Bible. Lancelot Andrewes is also famous for his "Private Devotions" which demonstrate that not only was he a scholar, but a devout man of prayer; **Scripture Reading:** I Timothy 2:1-7a; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Sept 29 – Saint Michael and All Angels*

Angels are messengers of God who do his bidding, ever waiting to do his will. The Scripture describes angels as ministering spirits who help the people of God and provide protection for us. Michael and Gabriel are the only two angels to whom the Scripture provides names. This feast, called Machaelmas in England is one of the most popular Christian festivals; **Scripture Reading:** Rev. 12:7-12; **Collect:** *O everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the ministries of angels and men in a wonderful order: Mercifully grant that, as thy holy angels always serve and worship thee in heaven, so by thy appointment they may help and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*



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Sept 30 – Jerome, Priest & Monk of Bethlehem, 420

Jerome was born around 347. After his conversion to Christianity, he felt called to the monastic life as a hermit. His experience as a hermit was an unhappy one and he turned to the study of Hebrew and Greek. In Damascus, he began to translate the Bible into Latin. This translation became known as the Vulgate, since it was in the "vulgar" or "common" tongue. He founded a monastery in Bethlehem and lived there until his death in 420; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 24:44-48; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

OCTOBER

October 4 – Francis of Assisi—1181-1226

Francis of Assisi was born to a wealthy family, but he spent most of his youth reading and pursuing worldly pleasures, though he soon became disillusioned with the pleasures of the flesh. Even when he was engaged in frivolous activities with friends, he could be moved to give all the money in his pockets to beggars. In 1201, while in the military, he was imprisoned for a year. When he returned to Assisi, he resumed his worldly pursuits, but an illness seemed to turn his mind to more serious matters. He began to minister to lepers, seek God in solitude, and ask God for guidance as to what he should do with his life. One day he had a vision of the crucified Christ saying to him, "Francis, Francis, go and repair My house which, as you can see, is falling into ruins." At first, he thought this vision was instructing him to repair an old church that had fallen into ruins. Later, he came to realize that the command had been to repair the Church as a whole. Eventually, Francis renounced his father and his riches and became a beggar, devoting himself to a life of poverty. Toward the end of his life, it was said that Francis received the stigmata, the actual wounds of Christ in his body. Two years later, he died, singing Psalm 141 as his death approached. Francis was known as a troubador for Lord. He loved to sing, and he loved nature. He is considered to be the patron saint of animals and birds. The Franciscans continued his ministry to the poor; **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 11:25-30; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



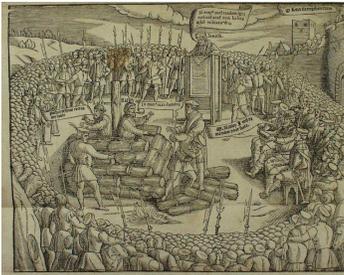
October 6 – William Tyndale (1484-1536)

William Tyndale is one of the most famous translators of the Bible. During Tyndale's time, attempts to translate the Bible were met with firm opposition and persecution in England during the reign of Henry VIII. In order to have the freedom to translate the Bible, Tyndale went to Germany, but exactly where he produced his translation is unknown. Printing of his translation of the New Testament began at Cologne in 1526 and was completed at Worms. He also translated some portions of the Old Testament. His translations are echoed in many passages of the King James Bible. Tyndale also wrote *A Pathway into the Holy Scripture*, *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon* (1527); *The Obedience of a Christian Man* (1527-28). *Exposition of the First Epistle of St. John*, *An Exposition upon the V. VI. VII. Chapters of Matthew*; and *A Brief Declaration of the Sacraments*. Since translating the Bible was a considered criminal activity at the time, Tyndale was eventually arrested, tried, convicted, and strangled to death. His last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes."; **Scripture Reading:** John 12:44-50; **Collect**—Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



October 13 - Edward the Confessor (1004-1066)

Edward the Confessor was an Anglo-Saxon King of England from 1042-1066. Some traditions say that Edward was a holy man who had the gift of healing. He was canonized by the Roman Catholic church in the 12th century and is considered to be the patron saint of kings. He was the patron saint of England until he was replaced by St. George in 1548, but he remained the patron saint of the Royal family; **Scripture Reading:** Hebrews 12:1-2; **Collect**—Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



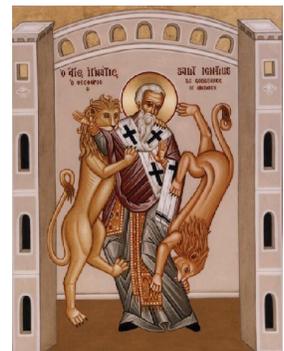
October 16 – Oxford Martyrs

Thomas Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley, and Hugh Latimer. After the death of Henry VIII, his son, Edward VI led the Church of England toward further reformation. After the death of Edward VI, Mary Tudor came to the throne and was determined to lead England back to the Roman Catholic Church. Leaders in the Church of England who refused to conform to her wishes were sometimes burned at the stake. More than 300 people were martyred during the reign of Mary, some of the most famous being a group known as the Oxford Martyrs. Three bishops, Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley, and Archbishop Thomas Cranmer were burned at the stake for their refusal to conform to Mary's beliefs and policies. Hugh Latimer's words to Nicholas Ridley as they were being led to the place of

execution were, 'Be of good cheer, Master Ridley, and play the man, for we shall this day light such a candle in England as I trust by God's grace shall never be put out.' Cranmer, at first submitted to Mary and the Pope, but in the end, he decided to stand against the Roman Catholic direction in which the Church was being led. As he died at the stake, he said, "I have sinned, in that I signed with my hand what I did not believe with my heart. When the flames are lit, this hand shall be the first to burn"; **Scripture Reading:** John 15:20-16:1; **Collect** – Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

October 17—Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch (35-107)

Ignatius, one of the Apostolic Fathers, was one of the early Christian theologians and martyrs. His writings, such as the letters to the Ephesians, the Trallians, the Romans, the Philadelphians, the Smyrnaeans, and to Polycarp are some of the earliest outside of the New Testament dealing with sacraments and bishops. Some traditions hold that Ignatius was the third bishop of Antioch, succeeding St. Peter and Evodius. He was the successor to Peter and Evodius at Antioch. It is also said that Ignatius was a disciple of the Apostle John. Ignatius was martyred for his faith in the Roman arena; **Scripture Reading:** John 12:23-26; **Collect** - Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



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October 18 - Luke, Evangelist



Luke is the author of both the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. Some of the accounts of the life of Jesus are found only in his gospel. He is mentioned in Philemon 24, Col. 4:14, and II Tim. 4:11. He was a physician and accompanied Paul on his missionary journeys. His writing indicates that Luke was well-educated. He wrote in the Greek language in order to make the Gospel known to the Gentile world. After the death of the Apostle Paul, nothing is known for certain of Luke's life. Some say that he was martyred, while some traditions claim that he died at the age of 84; **Scripture Reading:** II Tim. 4:5; Luke 10:1; **Collect:** ALMIGHTY God, who didst inspire thy servant Saint Luke the Physician, to set forth in the Gospel the love and healing power of thy Son; Manifest in thy Church the like power and love, to the healing of our bodies and our souls; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



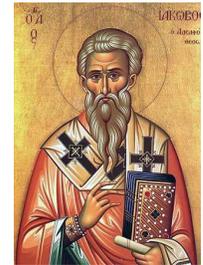
October 19 - Henry Martyn (1781-1812)

Henry Martyn was a missionary to the Muslims of India and Persia. Though preparing for a life in the law, after hearing the evangelical Anglican Charles Simeon and reading the life of David Brainerd, Martyn decided to become a missionary. He was ordained a deacon in 1803 and later became a priest. In 1805, he left for India and began his missionary work. A gifted linguist, he translated the New Testament into Hindustani, Urdu, and Persian. He also translated the Psalms into Persian and the Book of Common Prayer into Hindustani. During his missionary travels, he shared the Gospel with Jews, Muslims, and Sufis. Martin died of a fever at the early age of 31; **Scripture Reading:** Isa. 49:1-6; **Collect** - Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their

examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

October 23 - St. James of Jerusalem

This James is the brother of our Lord Jesus Christ, as distinguished from James the son of Zebedee and James the son of Alphaeus. During the ministry of Jesus, it appears that his brothers did not accept his claims to be the Messiah or the Son of God. But our Lord appeared to his brother after His resurrection. Afterwards, James became the head of the church at Jerusalem, and was present at the Council of Jerusalem when it was determined how to regard the Gentiles who were being converted to the Christian faith. Some Jewish Christians felt that the Gentiles should be compelled to observe the full Mosaic law. James was much more lenient as to which rules the Gentiles should be asked to keep. According to some traditions, James killed by being thrown from a tower by Pharisees around 66 A. D. Other traditions say that James was stoned to death by the Pharisees around 62 A. D.; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 15:12-22; Mark 3:31-35; **Collect:** O Almighty God, who hast called us to faith in thee, and hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses; Grant that we, encouraged by the good examples of thy Saints, and especially of thy servant, St. James of Jerusalem, may persevere in running the race that is set before us, until at length, through thy mercy, we, with them, attain to thine eternal joy; through him who is the author and finisher of our faith, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



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October 26 - Alfred the Great (849-899)

Alfred was king of Anglo-Saxon Wessex from 871-899. He defended his kingdom against the Vikings. Known for his love of learning from an early age, he promoted education and reformed the legal system in his kingdom. It is said that he based much of his legal reform on Mosaic law, a code of law that eventually led to Magna Charta of 1215. Trying to educate the clergy, Alfred translated many works into Old English such as Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, the *Dialogues of Gregory*, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Boethius' *The Consolation of Philosophy*. A prose version of the first 50 Psalms is also attributed to Alfred; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 6:43-49; **Collect** - Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



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October 28—St. Simon and St. Jude

St. Simon was one of the twelve apostles. He was called "Simon the Zealot." It is not known for certain where this title refers to his zeal for the Lord, or whether at one time he was part of a radical, Jewish, revolutionary force trying to overthrow Roman rule. He is also referred to as Simon the Canaanite. St. Simon's feast day is paired with that of St. Jude because according to some traditions, they were an evangelistic team who traveled to Armenia and Persia to spread the gospel. According to these traditions, both were martyred in Persia. St. Jude is also one of the twelve apostles, not to be confused with the writer of the Epistle of Jude. St. Jude was also known as Lebbaeus, who surname was Thaddaeus. He is also referred to as "Judas, (not Iscariot)." St. Jude is the one who asked Jesus at the Last Supper, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" (John 14:22). According to some traditions, Jude preached the gospel in Judea, Samaria, Idumaea, Syria, Mesopotamia and Libya, finally meeting his death as a martyr with Simon the Zealot in Persia;

Scripture Reading: Eph. 2:19-21; St. John 15:17; **Collect** - O ALMIGHTY God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner-stone; Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple acceptable unto thee; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



NOVEMBER

November 1 - All Saints Day

All Saints Day is sometimes called "All Hallows," "hallows" being an old word for "saints." Thus, October 31 was "All Hallows Eve" which came to be known as Halloween. This festival celebrates the lives of those Christians who have gone to be with the Lord. The festival probably originated from the practice of the early Church to commemorate the lives of the martyrs on the anniversaries of their deaths. After so many Christians had died during the various persecutions, it was decided that one day should be set apart to remember them Collectively. Though Luther and some of the other reformed churches abandoned the observation All Saints, the Church of England retained it. In the Anglican Churches, this festival is often celebrated with the wonderful hymn, "For All the Saints," especially with the tune by Ralph Vaughan William, *Sine Nomine*; **Scripture Reading:** I Thessalonians 4:13-18; **Collect**— O God, the Maker and Redeemer of all believers: Grant to the faithful departed the unsearchable benefits of the passion of thy Son; that on the day of his appearing they may be manifested as thy children; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.



November 3 - Richard Hooker (1554-1600)

Richard Hooker is one of the most important Anglican theologians. He was the rector of St. Mary's Drayton Beauchamp in Buckinghamshire, and later became the rector of London's Temple Church. Hooker's writings, such as *A Learned Discourse on Justification* (1585), became influential in the thought of the Church of England. Hooker ministered and wrote during a time when the Puritans were advocating changes in doctrine and worship that alarmed some Anglicans such as Hooker. His *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* answered many of the Puritan arguments, dealing with many theological issues, including guidelines for Biblical interpretation. Hooker argued that reason and tradition must be used in the interpretation of Holy Scripture. His works emphasized the things that united Christians, rather than divided them. *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* deals with salvation, sanctification, Church government, and Church/state relationships, as well. His impact on Anglicanism lingers to the present day; John 17:18-23; **Collect**—Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



November 11 - Martin of Tours—(316-397)

Martin of Tours, born in what is now part of Hungary, became a bishop of the Church and the patron saint of soldiers. He was the son of an officer in the Roman army. When Martin was 10 years old, he attended a Church, though his parents had forbidden him to do so. Though Christianity was the legal religion of the empire at this time, his parents still felt that Christianity was not a fit religion for people in their position. Nevertheless, Martin became a catechumen. At age 15, Martin became a member of a cavalry unit in the Roman army. While Martin was serving in the army, a beggar came to the city where Martin was stationed. Martin cut his own cloak in half and gave one half to the beggar. That night, Martin had dream in which Jesus, wearing the cloak Martin gave to the beggar, said, "Here is Martin, the Roman soldier who is not baptized; he has clad me." Martin was later baptized and continued to serve the army, but there came a point in which he felt, that as a Christian, he could no longer fight. Martin was put in jail because of his stand, but he was later released from prison and the army. Martin then went to the city of Tours and became a disciple of Hilary of Poitiers. For a while, he lived as a hermit. Later, he became very evangelistic and was known for his preaching. In 371 he was made the bishop of Tours. He opposed the pagan religions of his day, often destroying idols and pagan temples. Later, Martin organized a strict monastic community. Martin is also well known for his stand for the eternal deity of Christ against the Arian heresy; **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 25:35-40; **Collect**—*Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

November 16 - Margaret of Scotland (1045-1093)

Margaret, born in Hungary, became the wife of Malcolm III, King of Scots. Her uncle was Edward the Confessor. Margaret was a leader of Church reform during her time, encouraging the priests to be more serious and diligent in their duties. Devout herself, it is said that she arose each night at midnight for prayers. She looked after the poor, refusing to eat in the morning until the poor had been fed. She also helped to establish schools, orphanages, and hospitals. By all accounts, Margaret was a wife and queen, help Malcolm look after the kingdom, as well as being the mother of eight children; **Scripture Reading:** Proverbs 31:10-28; **Collect**—*Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



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November 17 - Hugh of Lincoln- (1135-1140)

Hugh entered the monastic life and was made a deacon at the age of 19. His strict adherence to the rules of monasticism singled him out as exceptionally devoted. He became the prior of the first English Carthusian monastery. With the help of Henry II, this monastery flourished and attracted many new members. Later, Hugh was made bishop of Lincoln in 1186. Hugh was noted for his educational efforts, as well as his protection of Jews from persecution. The Lincoln Cathedral had been damaged by an earthquake, Hugh rebuilt it in the Gothic style. Hugh of Lincoln is associated with a swan, because there is a story that a swan followed him about. He became known as the patron saint of sick children and swans; **Scripture Reading:** Titus 2:7-14; **Collect**—*Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

November 22 - Thanksgiving Day

When we think of Thanksgiving Day, our thoughts often turn to the Pilgrim Fathers celebrating the first thanksgiving with Indians in 1621. The Pilgrims were English Separatists, that is, they had separated themselves from the Church of England. But the 1621 celebration was not the first observance of Thanksgiving. Actually, harvest/Thanksgiving celebrations are found in the Bible. But the Pilgrim celebration of Thanksgiving was not the first official observance of Thanksgiving on the land that would eventually become the United States. The first Thanksgiving here was not celebrated by Separatists, but by Anglicans in 1619. Some two years before the Plymouth colony gave thanks for a harvest, Anglicans celebrated an official thanksgiving day at Jamestown near the Berkeley Plantation. A proclamation was issued that "the day of our ship's arrival ... shall be yearly and perpetually kept as a day of thanksgiving," Thus, Thanksgiving is really part of the Anglican tradition.



November 23 - Clement of Rome—(99)

Clement is often referred to as one of the Apostolic fathers. The Roman church teaches that he was the fourth pope, some say the second pope. He was the bishop of Rome from 88-99. According to some traditions, this is the Clement that is mentioned in Phil. 4:3, "And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowslabourers, whose names are in the book of life." In some traditions, it is recorded that he knew the apostle Peter. Two letters have been ascribed to Clement, but 2 Clement is not generally regarded at his work. Some sources say that Clement died a natural death, while others say that he was martyred by being tied to an anchor and cast into the sea, thus the symbol of an anchor is often associate with Clement. Sometimes the Mariner's Cross is referred to as St. Clement's cross. He is best known for a letter he wrote to the church as Corinth, often referred to as I Clement; **Scripture Reading:** II Tim. 2:1-7; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

November 30 - St. Andrew, the Apostle

Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter. Though we are more familiar with the Apostle Peter, it must be remembered that it was Andrew who brought Peter to Christ. Andrew and Peter were fisherman who left all to follow Christ. At first, Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist, but when John pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God, he became a follower of Christ. Andrew is mentioned in the book of Acts, but we know little of him after the Gospel accounts. It is said in some traditions that Andrew preached in Asia Minor and Eastern Europe. For this reason, he became known as the patron saint Romania and Russia. According to tradition, Andrew was martyred by being crucified on cross in the shape of an "X". Such a cross is now referred to as "St. Andrew's Cross.;" **Scripture Reading:** St. Matthew iv. 18-22; **Collect** - *ALMIGHTY God, who didst give such grace unto thy holy Apostle Saint Andrew, that he readily obeyed the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him without delay; Grant unto us all, that we, being called by thy holy Word, may forthwith give up ourselves obediently to fulfil thy holy commandments; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



DECEMBER

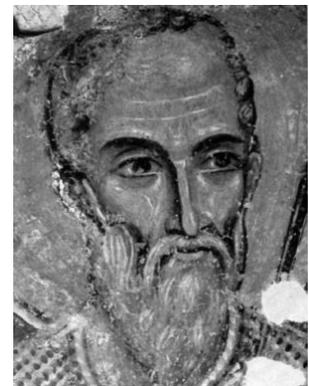


December 4 - Clement of Alexandria (150-216)

Clement of Alexandria was one of the early theologians of the Church who combined elements of Greek philosophy with Christian thought. Born in Athens, he appears to have been well-educated in Greek philosophy and poetry. For a time, Origen was one of Clement's students. Clement's most famous works include "Exhortation to the Greeks," "Instructor," and "Miscellanies." He also wrote "Who is the Rich Man Who Shall Be Saved," in which he argued that it was not riches, but their abuse that was condemned by Christ. He is best known for his ideas that Christians should not be afraid to use philosophical ideas in their understanding of the Gospel. Though he used some of the same terminology as the Gnostics, he did not believe that the knowledge of God was available only to a few. He believed that the Gospel could be known and understood by all; **Scripture Reading:** Col. 1:11-20; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

December 6—Nicholas of Myra (346)

Nicholas, bishop of Myra, because of his charity and love of children, later became associated with Santa Claus. In various traditions, he is known as the patron saint of children and sailors. Nicholas, son of devout Christian parents, became devoted to Christ at an early age. When his parents died, received a large inheritance, but he gave it away to the poor. Nicholas lived during a time of severe persecution of Christians during the reigns of Diocletian and Galerius. Nicholas survived these periods of persecution and died at an old age. He was well-known for his opposition to paganism the heresy of Arianism. He may have attended the First Council of Nicaea which condemned the teachings of Arianism. According to some traditions, Nicholas actually struck Arius at the Council of Nicaea. Because of the many stories concerning how Nicholas gave gifts to many people, usually anonymously, Nicholas is the prototype of the many legends concerning Santa Claus; **Scripture Reading:** I John 4:7-14; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



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7 – Ambrose (338-397)

Ambrose was bishop of Milan. Recognized as one of the four doctors of the Church, along with Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great, he is especially known for his contribution to the conversion of Augustine. Educated at Rome, he studied law, rhetoric, and literature. Famous for his stand against the heresy of Arianism, he was eventually made the bishop of Milan. He gave large sums of money to the poor and lived an ascetic lifestyle. A gifted orator, he made an impression on the young Augustine. Extremely interested in Church music, Ambrose is sometimes credited with writing the *Te Deum*; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 12:35-44; **Collect:** *Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

December 21 – St. Thomas the Apostle

Thomas, called Didymus, was of the twelve apostles. Thomas is best remembered for refusal to believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ unless he could put his finger in Christ's nail prints and thrust his hand into Christ's wounded side. After Christ appears Thomas, he makes the declaration, "My Lord, and My God." In some traditions, Thomas credited with carrying the Gospel to India where it is said that he was martyred; **Scripture Reading:** John 20:24-31; **Collect:** *ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who, for the greater confirmation of the faith, didst suffer thy holy Apostle Thomas to be doubtful in Son's resurrection; Grant us so perfectly, and without all doubt, to believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in thy sight may never be reprov'd. Hear us, O Lord, through the same Jesus Christ, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now for evermore. Amen.*



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December 25 – Christmas Day

On this day we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gospels of Matthew and Luke and Luke give us a great deal of information concerning the events surrounding his birth. Though we are not certain concerning the exact date of the birth of Jesus, December 25 was decided upon in Rome in 336. Christmas Day is celebrated as we remember the greatest gift that God to the world: His only Son. God became man so that he is called "Emmanuel," "God with us." As we share gifts with one another, let us remember the gift of Jesus who came to save his people from their sins; **Scripture Reading:** Luke 2:1-14; **Collect:** *ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin; Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen.*

December 26 – St. Stephen

Stephen was the first martyr of the Christian Church after the death of Christ. He is considered to one of the first deacons, being chosen to help the apostles serve those in need in order that the apostles might give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word. Put on trial before the Jews, his defense further enraged them. He was stoned, while a young man named Saul, (later the Apostle Paul) consented to the death of Stephen and held the cloaks of those who stoned him; **Scripture Reading:** Acts 7:55-60; **Collect:** *GRANT, O Lord, that, in all our sufferings here upon earth for the testimony of thy truth, we may stedfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold glory that shall be revealed; and, being filled with the Holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless our persecutors by the example of thy first Martyr Saint Stephen, who prayed for his murderers to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those who suffer for thee. our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.*



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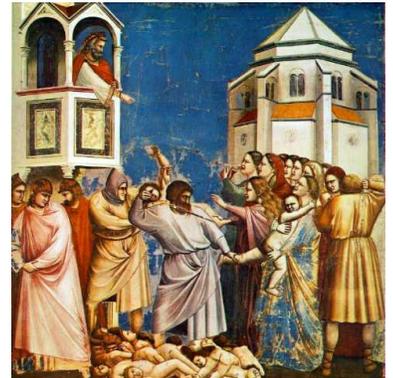
December 27 – St. John the Apostle



John, one of the twelve apostles, wrote the Gospel that bears his name, the epistles of I, II, and III John, as well as the book of Revelation. In the Gospel of John, he is referred to as the “disciple whom Jesus loved.” John and his brother James, fishermen, were sons of Zebedee. They were fishermen who left all to follow Jesus. He, Peter, and James were witnesses to some events that the other disciples were not. Of all the apostles, John alone was at the foot of the cross as Jesus died and was one of the first witnesses of the resurrection. He and Peter worked together in the early parts of the book of Acts to establish and confirm the early Christian movement. According to some traditions, John was the bishop of the church in Ephesus before being exiled to Patmos, where he wrote the book of Revelation. It is said that he taught Polycarp who later became the bishop of Smyrna; **Scripture Reading:** John 21:19-25; **Collect** - O MERCIFUL Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church, that it, being illumined by the doctrine of thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist Saint John, may so walk in the light of thy truth, that it may at length attain to life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

December 28 – Holy Innocents

In Matthew 2:16-18, we are told that Herod issued an order that all male babies two years old and under should be killed. When Herod heard from the wise men that the King of the Jews had been born, he was determined to kill the Christ child. Since he did not know the child’s true identity, he was trying to make sure that he killed the child by killing all the children who were born during the likely time period of the birth of Jesus. No one is sure how many infants were killed, estimates ranging from 6 to 64,000. Many Christians considered these infants to be the first martyrs, since they were killed because of the arrival of Christ into the world; **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 2:13-18; **Collect:** O ALMIGHTY God, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast ordained strength, and madest infants to glorify thee by their deaths; Mortify and kill all vices in us, and so strengthen us by thy grace, that by the innocency of our lives, and constancy of our faith even unto death, we may glorify thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



December 29 – Thomas Becket (1118-1170)

Thomas Becket was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1162 to 1170. Appointed by Henry II, Thomas was also assassinated in Canterbury Cathedral by the orders of Henry. Henry and Thomas had been in conflict over issues concerning the rights of the Church in relation to the State. Thomas was born to a wealthy family, received a splendid education, and became skilled in sporting activities. Noticing his obvious talents, Becket was made Lord Chancellor of England and supported Henry’s laws which often brought him into conflict with the Church. To gain further control of the church, Henry appointed Thomas to be Archbishop of Canterbury, thinking that he could control the Church through Thomas. After his appointment as archbishop, Thomas appears to have become a devout ascetic, engaging in works of charity and rigorous self-discipline. Henry and Thomas came into conflict over many issues. Henry wanted to be rid of Thomas and some

of his Henry’s friends decided to assassinate Thomas, which they did on December 29, 1170, in the cathedral as monks were chanting their hymns. It is still debated whether Henry actually wanted Becket to be killed. Becket is, nevertheless, considered to have been martyred for his stand for Christ and His Church; **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 10:16-22; **Collect** - Almighty and everlasting God, who dost enkindle the flame of thy love in the hearts of the Saints; Grant to us, thy humble servants, the same faith and power of love; that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may profit by their examples; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.