

24 August

Bartholomew the Apostle

Almighty and everlasting God, who gave to your apostle Bartholomew, grace truly to believe and to preach your word: grant that your Church may love that word which he believed and may faithfully preach and receive the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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24 August

Bartholomew Apostle

It has long been assumed that Bartholomew is the same as Nathanael, though it is not a certainty. The gospels speak of Philip bringing Nathanael to Jesus, who calls him an Israelite worthy of the name. He is also present beside the Sea of Galilee at the resurrection. Although he seems initially a somewhat cynical man, he recognises Jesus for who he is and proclaims him as Son of God and King of Israel.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'

27 August

**Monica
Mother of Augustine of Hippo, 387**

Faithful God, who strengthened Monica, the mother of Augustine, with wisdom, and through her patient endurance encouraged him to seek after you: give us the will to persist in prayer that those who stray from you may be brought to faith in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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27 August

**Monica
Mother of Augustine of Hippo**

Monica was born in North Africa of Christian parents in 332 and she was married to a pagan named Patricius, whom she converted to Christianity. They had three children of whom the most famous was the eldest, the future Augustine. Indeed, Augustine ascribed his conversion to the example and devotion of his mother: ‘She never let me out of her prayers that you, O God, might say to the widow’s son “Young man, I say to you, rise!”’ – which is why the gospel of the widow of Nain is traditionally read today as her memorial. Monica’s husband died when she was forty. Her desire had been to be buried alongside him, but this was not to be. She died in Italy, at Ostia, in 387 on her way home to North Africa with her two sons.

Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’

28 August

**Augustine of Hippo,
Bishop, Teacher of the Faith.**

430

Merciful Lord, who turned Augustine from his sins to be a faithful Bishop and teacher: grant that we may follow him in penitence and discipline till our restless hearts find their rest in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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28 August

**Augustine, Bishop of Hippo,
Teacher of the Faith.**

Augustine was born in North Africa in 354. His career as an orator and rhetorician led him from Carthage to Rome, and from there to Milan where the Imperial court at that time resided. By temperament, he was passionate and sensual, and as a young man he rejected Christianity. Gradually, however, under the influence first of Monica, his mother, and then of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, Augustine began to look afresh at the Scriptures. He was baptised by Ambrose at the Easter Vigil in 387. Not long after returning to North Africa he was ordained priest, and then became Bishop of Hippo. It is difficult to overestimate the influence of Augustine on the subsequent development of European thought. A huge body of his sermons and writings has been preserved, through all of which runs the theme of the sovereignty of the grace of God. He died in the year 430.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'

29 August

The Beheading of John the Baptist

Almighty God, who called your servant John the Baptist to be the forerunner of your Son in birth and death: strengthen us by your grace that, as he suffered for the truth, so we may boldly resist corruption and vice and receive with him the unfading crown of glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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29 August

The Beheading of John the Baptist

The main celebration for John the Baptist is on 24 June, the date observing his birth, but John was also the forerunner of Christ in his death, which, as the gospels of Matthew and Mark relate it, followed his denunciation of immorality and his call to repentance. On hearing of John's arrest, Christ immediately took up John's call: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near; repent, and believe the good news.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'