

**20 August**

**Bernard**  
**Abbot of Clairvaux**  
**Teacher of the Faith, 1153**

Merciful redeemer, who by the life and preaching of your servant Bernard, rekindled the radiant light of your Church: grant us, in our generation, to be inflamed with the same spirit of discipline and love and ever to walk before you as children of light; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**20 August**

**Bernard**  
Abbot of Clairvaux,  
Teacher of the Faith.

Bernard was born at Fontaines near Dijon, in France in the year 1090. He entered the Benedictine abbey at Cîteaux in 1112, taking with him many of his young companions, some of whom were his own brothers. He was a leader of the reform within Benedictinism at this time and in 1115 was sent to establish a new monastery at a place he named Clairvaux, or 'valley of light'. Though times were hard, he built up the community with his remarkable qualities of leadership. Bernard preached widely and powerfully and proved himself a theologian of renown. Literally hundreds of houses were founded on the Cîteaux or Cistercian system and Bernard's influence on his own generation and beyond was immense. He died on this day in 1153.

*Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'*

**20 August**

**William and Catherine Booth**

Founders of the Salvation Army

William Booth was born in Nottingham in 1829, the same year as Catherine Mumford was born in Ashbourne, Derbyshire. They were married in 1855. A passionate preacher, William's style was criticised by his fellow Methodists and he left them in 1861, founding his own revivalist mission in Whitechapel four years later. The Christian Mission, as it was known, evolved into the Salvation Army by 1878. Both William and Catherine were famous for preaching and their movement developed into a worldwide denomination. It coupled moral fervour with a strong social commitment to the poor. Catherine died on 4 October 1890 and William on this day in 1912.

*Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'*

**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 the 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'*

**30 August**

**John Bunyan**

**Spiritual writer 1688**

God of peace, who called your servant John Bunyan to be valiant for truth: grant that as strangers and pilgrims we may at the last rejoice with all Christian people in your heavenly city; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**30 August**

**John Bunyan**

**Spiritual writer**

Born in Elstow in Bedfordshire in 1628 John Bunyan was largely self-educated and used the Bible as his grammar. He read very few other books, and they were all piously Protestant in nature, yet he produced *Pilgrim's progress*, probably the most original text of spiritual genius that century, telling the story of the man Christian on his journey through life to God. It was not written while he was a prisoner in Bedford goal, as often stated, but during a confinement some years later. History tells us little of the man but what is clear from his writings is that the salvation of the soul was what mattered most to him. He died this day in 1688.

*Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'*

**31 August**

**Aidan  
Bishop of Lindisfarne,  
Missionary, 651**

Everlasting God, you sent the gentle Bishop  
Aidan to proclaim the gospel in this land:  
grant us to live as he taught, in simplicity,  
humility and love for the poor; through Jesus  
Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**31 August**

**Aidan  
Bishop of Lindisfarne,  
Missionary**

One of Columba's monks from the monastery of Iona, Aidan was sent as a missionary to Northumbria at the request of King Oswald, who was later to become his friend and interpreter. Consecrated Bishop of Lindisfarne in 635, Aidan worked closely with Oswald and became involved with the training of priests. From the island of Lindisfarne he was able to combine a monastic lifestyle with missionary journeys to the mainland where, through his concern for the poor and enthusiasm for preaching, he won popular support. This enabled him to strengthen the Church beyond the boundaries of Northumbria. He died on this day in the year 651.

*Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'*