

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'

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'