

4 October

**Francis of Assisi
Friar, Deacon,
Founder of the Friars Minor 1226**

O God, you ever delight to reveal yourself to the childlike and lowly of heart: grant that, following the example of the blessed Francis, we may count the wisdom of this world as foolishness and know only Jesus Christ and him crucified, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

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4 October

Francis of Assisi

Francis was born in Assisi in central Italy either in 1181 or the following year. He was baptised Giovanni but given the name Francesco by his father, a cloth merchant who traded in France and had married a French wife. There was an expectation that he would eventually take over his father's business but Francis had a rebellious youth and a difficult relationship with his father. After suffering the ignominy of imprisonment following capture whilst at war with the local city of Perugia, he returned a changed man. He took to caring for disused churches and for the poor, particularly those suffering from leprosy. Whilst praying in the semi-derelict church of St Damian, he distinctly heard the words, 'Go and repair my church, which you see is falling down'. Others joined him and he prepared a simple gospel-based Rule for them all to live by. As the Order grew, it witnessed to Christ through preaching the gospel of repentance and emphasising the poverty of Christ as an example for his followers. Two years before his death, his life being so closely linked with that of his crucified Saviour, he received the Stigmata, the marks of the wounds of Christ, on his body. At his death, on the evening of 3 October 1226, his Order had spread throughout western Christendom.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'

6 October

William Tyndale

**Translator of the Scriptures,
Reformation Martyr 1536**

Lord, give to your people grace to hear and keep your word that, after the example of your servant, William Tyndale, we may not only profess your gospel but also be ready to suffer and die for it, to the honour of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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6 October

William Tyndale

Born in Gloucestershire in about the year 1494, William Tyndale studied first at Magdalen Hall (now Hertford College), Oxford, and then at Cambridge. He became determined to translate the scriptures from the Greek directly into contemporary English but was thwarted in this by the Bishop of London. So William settled in Hamburg in 1524 and never returned to England. When the first copies of his translation arrived in England in 1526, it was bitterly attacked as subversive by the ecclesiastical authorities. He spent much of the rest of his life making revisions to his work, but also writing theological works for those who, at the beginning of the following century, were to produce what became known as the Authorised Version of the Bible. He was eventually arrested in 1535 and imprisoned in Brussels on charges of heresy. He was strangled and then burnt at the stake on this day in 1536. His last words were, 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes.'

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'