

15 July

**Swithun
Bishop of Winchester c.862**

Almighty God, by whose grace we celebrate again the feast of your servant Swithun: grant that, as he governed with gentleness the people committed to his care, so we, rejoicing in our Christian inheritance, may always seek to build up your Church in unity and love; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, 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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15 July

**Swithun,
Bishop of Winchester**

Swithun was Bishop of Winchester in the ninth century, though little is known of his life. He was Bishop for ten years and appears to have been the trusted adviser of Egbert, his King in Wessex. He had asked to be buried 'humbly' and not in a great shrine and, when he died on 2 July 862, his request was fulfilled. However, when a new cathedral was being built, Ethelwold, the new Bishop, decided to move Swithun's remains into a shrine in the cathedral, despite dire warnings that to move the bones would bring about terrible storms. He was duly translated on this day in the year 971 and, though many cures were claimed and other miracles observed, it apparently rained for forty days, as forecast. Thus the feast-day of Swithun became synonymous with long, summer storms, rather than as an occasion for celebrating Christian simplicity and holiness.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'

19 July

**Gregory and Macrina,
Bishop of Nyssa and his sister Macrina,
Deaconess. Teachers of the Faith.
c.394 and c.379**

Lord of eternity, creator of all things, in your Son Jesus Christ, you open for us the way to resurrection that we may enjoy your bountiful goodness: may we who celebrate your servants Gregory and Macrina, press onwards in faith to your boundless love and ever wonder at the miracle of your presence among us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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19 July

**Gregory and Macrina,
Bishop of Nyssa, and his sister
Macrina, Deaconess, Teachers of the
Faith.**

Gregory of Nyssa was born at Caesarea in what is now Turkey around the year 330, the child of an aristocratic Christian family. Unlike his elder brother Basil, he was academically undistinguished, but ultimately proved to be the most original of the group of the theologians known as the Cappadocian Fathers. He was introduced to the spiritual life by his elder sister Macrina who exercised a formative influence upon him, and with whom he maintained close bonds of friendship throughout his life. It was she who, after the death of their father, converted the household into a sort of monastery on one of the family estates. Gregory married a deeply spiritual woman, Theosebia, and at first refused ordination, choosing to pursue a secular career. He was ordained only later in life, and in 372 was chosen to be Bishop of Nyssa. In the year 379 both his brother Basil and his sister Macrina died, and this deeply affected him; but out of this darkness emerged a profound spirituality. For Gregory, God is met not as an object to be understood, but as a mystery to be loved. He died in the year 394.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'