

19 July

**Gregory and Macrina Gregory,
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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**Gregory and Macrina Gregory,
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'

22 July

Mary Magdalene

Almighty God, whose Son restored Mary Magdalene to health of mind and body and called her to be a witness to his resurrection: forgive our sins and heal us by your grace, that we may serve you in the power of his risen life; 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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Mary Magdalene

All four gospels give Mary Magdalene a unique place among Jesus's followers. Probably from Magdala by the Sea of Galilee, she is described as having been healed by Jesus before accompanying him during his ministry. Along with other faithful women, she stayed beside the cross during the crucifixion and was the first disciple to discover the empty tomb on Easter morning. She was privileged with the first appearance of the risen Lord, who sent her to take the good news of the resurrection to the other disciples. This commission earned her the title, 'Apostle to the Apostles' in the early Church.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'