

20 September

**John Coleridge Patteson
First Bishop of Melanesia and his
Companions, Martyrs 1871**

God of all tribes and peoples and tongues,
who called your servant, John Coleridge
Patteson to witness in life and death to the
gospel of Christ amongst the peoples of
Melanesia: grant us to hear your call to
service and to respond trustfully and joyfully
to Jesus Christ our redeemer, 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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Church of England

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**John Coleridge Patteson
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Companions, Martyrs 1871**

Born in London in 1827, John Coleridge Patteson was still a scholar at Eton when he came under the influence of George Augustus Selwyn. Patteson was ordained and, in 1855 at the age of twenty-eight, left Britain to begin his life's work among the Islanders of the South Pacific, becoming their first Bishop. His system of evangelisation was to train local people in the hope that some would be ordained and so to equip them to share the gospel in a way that was within their own culture. This bore fruit and Christianity spread rapidly. Also working in Melanesia were 'thief ships' or 'blackbirders', essentially European slave-traders, who carried off Islanders to work in British and other colonies. When Patteson landed alone on the island of Nukapu in the hope of showing that not all white men were deceivers, he was killed, probably in revenge for the capture of five young men by the blackbirders. His fellow-workers were also attacked in their boat, two of them later dying of tetanus. John Coleridge Patteson and his companions gave their lives for the gospel on this day in the year 1871.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'

21 September

**Matthew
Apostle and Evangelist**

O Almighty God, whose blessed Son called Matthew the tax collector to be an apostle and evangelist: give us grace to forsake the selfish pursuit of gain and the possessive love of riches that we may follow in the way of your Son Jesus Christ 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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Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist

Matthew appears in the list of the twelve apostles of Jesus and, according to the gospel written under his name, was a tax-collector. Mark and Luke called the tax-collector Levi, and it has been assumed that they are one and the same. This occupation was despised by his fellow Jews as a betrayal to the occupying Roman force but Christ showed that judging by outward appearance was not what he was about. He ate with Matthew and with his friends, scandalising those around him. Matthew followed at his call and this was enough for Jesus, for he had drawn someone back to God. He was forgiven, therefore he was acceptable, therefore he was received.

Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'