

**24 May**

**John and Charles Wesley**

Evangelists, Hymn writers,  
1791 and 1788

God of mercy, who inspired John and Charles Wesley with zeal for your gospel: grant to all people boldness to proclaim your word and a heart ever to rejoice in singing your praises; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

© The Archbishops' Council of the  
Church of England

**24 May**

**John and Charles Wesley**  
**Evangelists, Hymn writers**

Born in Epworth rectory in Lincolnshire, John Wesley was the son of an Anglican clergyman and Puritan mother. He entered Holy Orders and, following a religious experience on this day in 1738, began an itinerant ministry which recognised no parish boundaries. This resulted, after his death, in the development of a worldwide Methodist Church. His spirituality involved an Arminian affirmation of grace, frequent communication and a disciplined corporate search for holiness. His open-air preaching, concern for education and for the poor, liturgical revision, organisation of local societies and training of preachers provided a firm basis for Christian growth and mission in England.

Charles shared with his brother John, the building-up of early Methodist societies, as they travelled the country. His special concern was that early Methodists should remain loyal to Anglicanism. He married and settled in Bristol, later in London, concentrating his work on the local Christian communities. His thousands of hymns established a resource of lyrical piety which has enabled generations of Christians to re-discover the refining power of God's love. They celebrate God's work of grace from birth to death, the great events of God's work of salvation and the rich themes of Eucharistic worship, anticipating the taking up of humanity into the divine life.

John Wesley died on 2 March 1791 and Charles on 29 March 1788  
*Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'*

**25 May**

**The Venerable Bede**

Monk at Jarrow,  
Scholar and Historian 735

God our maker, whose Son Jesus Christ gave to your servant Bede, grace to drink in with joy the word that leads us to know you and to love you: in your goodness grant that we also may come at length to you, the source of all wisdom, and stand before your face; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

© The Archbishops' Council of the  
Church of England

**25 May**

**The Venerable Bede**

Monk at Jarrow, Scholar, Historian

Bede was born in Northumbria around the year 670. When he was seven years old, his family gave him to the monastery of St Peter and St Paul at Wearmouth. He then moved to Jarrow, where he lived as a monk for the rest of his life. Although it seems he never travelled further than York, his monastery – first under Abbot Benedict Biscop and then Abbot Ceolfrith – was a centre of learning, and Bede studied extensively. He used all the resources available to write the most complete history of Christian England up to the year 729, as well as commentaries on books of the Bible. He was renowned for his monastic fidelity and his love of teaching, and was fondly remembered by his pupils, including his biographer. He died peacefully on the eve of Ascension Day in the year 735.

*Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'*

**26 May**

**Augustine of Canterbury**

First Archbishop of Canterbury, 605

Almighty God, whose servant Augustine was sent as the apostle of the English people: grant that as he laboured in the Spirit to preach Christ's gospel in this land, so all who hear the good news may strive to make your truth known in all the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

© The Archbishops' Council of the  
Church of England

**26 May**

**Augustine**

First Archbishop of Canterbury

Augustine was Prior of the Monastery of St Andrew in Rome. In 596, at the instigation of Pope Gregory the Great, he was dispatched as the leader of a group of forty monks to re-evangelise the English Church. Augustine appears not to have been a particularly confident person and, in Gaul, he wanted to turn back, but Pope Gregory's firm resolution held the group to their mission. The monks finally landed in Kent in the summer of 597 where they were well received by King Ethelbert whose wife, Bertha, was a Christian. Once established, Augustine returned temporarily to Gaul to receive Ordination as a Bishop. Pope Gregory would have preferred London to have become the Primatial See, but in the event Canterbury was chosen and thus Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury. He died in either 604 or 605.

*Sourced from 'Exciting Holiness'*