**29 July**

**Mary, Martha and Lazarus**

**Companions of Our Lord.**

God our Father, whose Son enjoyed the love

of his friends, Mary, Martha and Lazarus,

in learning, argument and hospitality: may we

so rejoice in your love that the world may come

to know the depths of your wisdom, the wonder

of your compassion, and your power to bring life

out of death; through the merits of Jesus Christ,

our friend and brother 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

**29 July**

**Mary, Martha and Lazarus,**

**Companions of Our Lord.**

The gospels describe how Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus gave Jesus hospitality in their home at Bethany outside Jerusalem. Jesus is said to have love all three. After Lazarus’s death, Jesus wept and was moved by the sisters’ grief: he brought Lazarus back from the dead that the glory of God might be shown. Martha recognised Jesus as the Messiah, while Mary anointed his feet, and on another occasion, was commended by Jesus for her attentiveness to his teaching while Martha served. From this, Mary is traditionally taken to be an example of the contemplative spiritual life and Martha an example of the active spiritual life.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**30 July**

 **William Wilberforce**

Social Reformer. 1833

 **Olaudah Equiano and**

**Thomas Clarkson**

Anti-Slavery Campaigners.

1797 and 1846

God our deliverer, who sent your

Son Jesus Christ to set your people

free from the slavery of sin: grant that,

as your servants William Wilberforce, Olaudah Equiano and Thomas Clarkson toiled against the sin of slavery, so we

may bring compassion to all and work for

the freedom of all the children of God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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**30 July**

**William Wilberforce**

William Wilberforce was born in 1759 in Hull. Converted to an Evangelical piety within the Church of England, Wilberforce decided to serve the faith in Parliament instead of being ordained, becoming a Member of Parliament at the age of 21. He was a supporter of missionary initiatives and helped found The Bible Society. Settling in Clapham in London, he became a leader of the reforming group of Evangelicals known as the ’Clapham Sect’. Of all the causes for which he fought, he is remembered best for his crusade against slavery. After years of effort, the trade in slaves was made illegal in the British Empire in 1807 and Wilberforce lived to see the complete abolition of slavery, just before his death on this day in 1833.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*