**24 August**

**Bartholomew the Apostle**

Almighty and everlasting God, who

gave to your apostle Bartholomew,

grace truly to believe and to preach

your word: grant that your Church

may love that word which he believed

and may faithfully preach and receive

the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**24 August**

**Bartholomew the Apostle**

It has long been assumed that Bartholomew

is the same as Nathanael, though it is not a

certainty. The gospels speak of Philip bringing Nathanael to Jesus, who calls him an Israelite worthy of the name. He is also present beside

the Sea of Galilee at the resurrection.

Although he seems initially a somewhat cynical man, he recognises Jesus for who he is and proclaims him as Son of God and King of Israel.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**27 August**

**Monica**

**Mother of Augustine of Hippo, 387**

Faithful God, who strengthened Monica,

the mother of Augustine, with wisdom, and through her patient endurance encouraged

him to seek after you: give us the will to

persist in prayer that those who stray from you may be brought to faith in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**27 August**

**Monica**

**Mother of Augustine of Hippo**

Monica was born in North Africa of Christian parents in 332 and she was married to a pagan named Patricius, whom she converted to Christianity. They had three children of whom the most famous was the eldest, the future Augustine. Indeed, Augustine ascribed his conversion to the example and devotion of his mother: ‘She never let me out of her prayers that you, O God, might say to the widow’s son “Young man, I say to you, rise!”’ – which is why the gospel of the widow of Nain is traditionally read today as her memorial. Monica’s husband died when she was forty. Her desire had been to be buried alongside him, but this was not to be. She died in Italy, at Ostia, in 387 on her way home to North Africa with her two sons.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**h**

**29 August**

**The Beheading of John the Baptist**

Almighty God, who called your servant

John the Baptist to be the forerunner of y

our Son in birth and death: strengthen us

by your grace that, as he suffered for the

truth, so we may boldly resist corruption

and vice and receive with him the unfading

crown of glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**29 August**

**The Beheading of John the Baptist**

The main celebration for John the Baptist is on 24 June, the date observing his birth, but John was also the forerunner of Christ in his death, which, as the gospels of Matthew and Mark relate it, followed his denunciation of immorality and his call to repentance. On hearing of John’s arrest, Christ immediately took up John’s call: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near; repent, and believe the good news.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**h**

**30 August**

**John Bunyan**

**Spiritual writer 1688**

God of peace, who called your servant

John Bunyan to be valiant for truth:

grant that as strangers and pilgrims we

may at the last rejoice with all Christian

people in your heavenly city; through Jesus

Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**30 August**

**John Bunyan**

**Spiritual writer**

Born in Elstow in Bedfordshire in 1628 John Bunyan was largely self-educated and used the Bible as his grammar. He read very few other books, and they were all piously Protestant in nature, yet he produced *Pilgrim’s progress,* probably the most original text of spiritual genius that century, telling the story of the man Christian on his journey through life to God. It was not written while was a prisoner in Bedford goal, as often stated, but during a confinement some years later. History tells us little of the man but what is clear from his writings is that the salvation of the soul was what mattered most to him. He died this day in 1688.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**31 August**

**Aidan**

**Bishop of Lindisfarne,**

**Missionary, 651**

Everlasting God, you sent the gentle

Bishop Aidan to proclaim the gospel

in this land: grant us to live as he taught,

in simplicity, humility and love for the poor; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**31 August**

**Aidan**

**Bishop of Lindisfarne,**

**Missionary**

One of Columba’s monks from the monastery of Iona, Aidan was sent as a missionary to Northumbria at the request of King Oswald, who was later to become his friend and interpreter. Consecrated Bishop of Lindisfarne in 635, Aidan worked closely with Oswald and became involved with the training of priests. From the island of Lindisfarne he was able to combine a monastic lifestyle with missionary journeys to the mainland where, through his concern for the poor and enthusiasm for preaching, he won popular support. This enabled him to strengthen the Church beyond the boundaries of Northumbria. He died on this day in the year 651.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**3 September**

**Gregory the Great**

**Bishop of Rome,**

**Teacher of the Faith, 604**

Merciful Father, who chose your Bishop

Gregory to be a servant of the servants of

God: grant that, like him, we may ever long

to serve you by proclaiming your gospel to

the nations, and may ever rejoice to sing your

praises; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**3 September**

**Gregory the Great,**

**Bishop of Rome, Teacher of the Faith.**

Gregory was born in 540 the son of a Roman Senator. As a young man he pursued a governmental career, and in 573 was made Prefect of the city of Rome. Following the death of his father, he resigned his office, sold his inheritance, and became a monk. In 579 he was sent by the Pope to Constantinople to be his representative to the patriarch. He returned to Rome in 586, and was himself elected Pope in 590. At a time of political turmoil, Gregory proved an astute administrator and diplomat, securing peace with the Lombards. He initiated the mission to England, sending forty monks from his own monastery to re-found the English Church. His writings were pastorally orientated. His spirituality was animated by a dynamic of love and desire for God. Indeed, he is sometimes called the ‘Doctor of desire’. For Gregory, desire was a metaphor for the journey into God. As Pope, he styled himself ‘Servant of the servants of God’ – a title which typified both his personality and ministry. He died in 604.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*