**17 October**

**Ignatius**

**Bishop, Martyr c 107**

Feed us, O Lord, with the living bread and

make us drink deep of the cup of salvation that, following the teaching of your Bishop Ignatius

and rejoicing in the faith with which he embraced

a martyr’s death, we may be nourished for that

eternal life for which he longed; though Jesus

Christ our Lord.

Amen.

© The Archbishops’ Council of the

 Church of England

**17 October**

**Ignatius,**

**Bishop of Antioch, Martyr**

Ignatius was born probably in Syria in about the year AD35 and was either the second or third Bishop of Antioch, the third largest city in the Roman Empire. Nothing is known of his life except his final journey under armed escort to Rome, where he was martyred around the year 107. In the course of this journey, he met Polycarp in Smyrna and wrote a number of letters to various Christian congregations which are among the greatest treasures of the primitive Church. In the face of persecution he appealed to his fellow Christians to maintain unity with their Bishop at all costs. His letters reveal his passionate commitment to Christ, and how he longed ‘to imitate the passion of my God’.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**18 October**

**Luke the Evangelist**

Your word is a lantern to my feet and a

light upon my path.

We bring you the good news that what God

has promised to the fathers he has fulfilled to

us their children by raising Jesus.

The one who saw what Jesus did has borne witness

that you also may believe.

Almighty God, you called Luke the physician,

whose praise is in the gospel, to be an evangelist and physician of the soul: by the grace of the Spirit and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel, give your Church the same love and power to heal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

© The Archbishops’ Council of the

 Church of England

**18 October**

**Luke, Evangelist**

Luke was a dear friend of the apostle, Paul and is mentioned three times in the New Testament Letters.

Paul describes him as ‘the beloved physician’ and in the second Letter to Timothy, he is referred to as Paul’s only companion in prison. He is believed to be the author of two books of the New Testament, firstly the gospel which stands in his name and also the Acts of the Apostles. Luke’s narrative of the life of Christ has a pictorial quality and shows the sequential pattern from the nativity through to the death and resurrection. The distinctive theology found in Paul’s writings is virtually unknown in those of Luke but, as a Gentile, Luke makes clear that the good news of salvation is for all, regardless of gender, social position or nationality.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**19 October**

**Henry Martyn**

**Translator of the Scriptures**

**Missionary in India and Persia 1812**

Almighty God, who by your Holy Spirit gave Henry Martyn a longing to tell the good news of Christ and skill to translate the Scriptures: by the same Spirit

give us grace to offer you our gifts, wherever you may lead, at whatever cost; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

© The Archbishops’ Council of the

 Church of England

**19 October**

**Henry Martyn**

**Translator of the Scriptures, Missionary in India and Persia**

Born in Truro in 1781, Henry Martyn went up to Cambridge at the age of sixteen. He became an avowed evangelical and his friendship with Charles Simeon led to his interest in missionary work. In 1805, he left for Calcutta as a chaplain to the East India Company. The expectation was that he would minister to the British expatriate community, not to the indigenous peoples; in fact, there was a constant fear of insurrection and even the recitation of the Magnificat at Evensong was forbidden, lest ‘putting down the mighty from their seat’ should incite the natives. Henry set about learning the local languages and then supervised the translation of the New Testament first into Hindustani and then into Persian and Arabic, as well as preaching and teaching in mission schools. He went to Persia to continue the work but, suffering from tuberculosis, he died in Armenia on this day in 1812.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**BIBLE SUNDAY**

We thank you, Lord, for the collected works of your word. Grant us patience to read, time to digest and wisdom to understand.

Amen.

**26 October**

**Alfred the Great**

**King of the West Saxons,**

**Scholar 899**

God, our maker and redeemer, we pray you

of your great mercy and by the power of your

holy cross to guide us by your will and to shield

us from our foes: that, after the example of you

servant Alfred, we may inwardly love you above

all things, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

© The Archbishops’ Council of the

 Church of England

**26 October**

**Alfred the Great**

**King of the West Saxons, Scholar**

Born in the year 849, Alfred was the King of the West Saxons who effectively brought to an end the constant threat of Danish domination in the British Isles. He came to the throne at the age of twenty-two, and after establishing peace set about bringing stability to both Church and State. He gave half of his income to founding religious houses which themselves acted as Christian centres for education, care of the sick and poor and respite for travellers. He was a daily attender at Mass and himself translated many works into the vernacular. He evolved a legal code based on common sense and Christian mercy. His whole life was marked by the compassion of Christ. He died on this day in the year 899.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*

**28 October**

**Simon and Jude**

**Apostles**

When all is made new, and the Christ is on

his throne of glory, you will sit on the twelve

thrones to judge the tribes of Israel.

You did not choose me but I chose you and

I appointed you to go out and bear fruit, fruit

that shall last.

Almighty God, who built your Church upon

the foundations of the apostles and prophets,

with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone:

so join us together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made a holy temple acceptable to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

© The Archbishops’ Council of the

 Church of England

**28 October**

**Simon and Jude, Apostles**

Simon and Jude were named among the twelve apostles in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. Simon is called, ‘the Zealot’, probably because he belonged to a nationalist resistance movement opposing the Roman occupation forces. There is no indication in the gospels whether Simon moved from the Zealot party to be a follower of Christ, or on the other hand, if he became a supporter of that group after the resurrection, seeing it as a response to God’s call to proclaim the Kingdom.

Luke describes Jude as the son of James, while the Letter of Jude has him as a brother of James, neither of which negates the other. It seems he is the same person as Thaddæus, which may have been a last name. Owing to the similarity of his name to that of Judas Iscariot, Jude was rarely invoked in prayer and it is likely that because of this, interceding through him was seen as a final resort when all else failed. He became known, therefore, as the Patron Saint of Lost Causes.

The two apostles are joined together on 28 October because a church which had recently acquired their relics was dedicated to their memory in Rome on this day in the seventh century.

*Sourced from ‘Exciting Holiness’*