

A CALENDAR OF OTHER COMMEMORATIONS (with biographical notes)

INTRODUCTION

The Church celebrates the lives of particular people or particular events in Christian history. In some denominations, this list of commemorations is called a *Calendar of Saints' Days* or a *Sanctoral Cycle*. Sometimes there is a table of *Greater Holy Days* when the disciples of Jesus and other well-known people from the New Testament are commemorated. Next there is a table of *Lesser Festivals and Commemorations* when less significant names in the New Testament and famous people in the story of the Church through the centuries are recalled.

This *Calendar of Other Commemorations* is a single table; it calls to mind a representative group of people from the communion of saints, that great company whom no one can number, who have been the servants of Christ in their day and generation. It makes no attempt to be all-inclusive, and has limited resemblance to similar calendars prepared by other denominations. This calendar includes some saints' days which are of great antiquity and wide observance. But it also includes a representative list of the names of men and women across the centuries, from east and west. Some of the names give a particular emphasis to our Christian heritage in Australia and the Pacific. Synods and presbyteries, parishes and congregations are encouraged to add to this calendar the names of significant Christians and of important events.

This version of the Calendar offers biographical notes in relation to a number of those whose lives it celebrates. This addition of biographical notes is a work in progress. It is our intention to continue to seek further contributions and insert them into the calendar as they become available. A name in bold print indicates that a contribution for that person has already been promised. Anyone willing to assist by making a contribution is invited to contact the Convenor of the Assembly Working Group on Worship.

The calendar may provide helpful resources for worship services, for preaching, for congregations that hold services during the week, or in Bible study, fellowship, or house groups. It may stimulate ideas for Christian education programs, for the work of the Sunday school, or for an address to young people during the Service of the Lord's Day.

Further information in regard to the great majority of those whose names appear in the Calendar can be readily accessed via the worldwide web.

Each name listed in these commemorations is placed in one of nine groupings:

- Christian thinker
- Christian pioneer
- Renewer of society
- Reformer of the Church
- Martyr
- Apostle
- Faithful servant
- Person of prayer
- Witness to Jesus

Appropriate Bible readings and collects that can be used in conjunction with the Calendar are provided as an appendix.

THE CALENDAR

January

2	Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa & Gregory of Nazianzus	Christian thinkers
3	Gladys Aylward	Christian pioneer
13	George Fox	renewer of society
14	Monica Furlong	Christian thinker
17	Antony of Egypt	reformer of the Church
21	Agnes of Rome	martyr
24	Timothy & Titus	apostles
27	Lydia, Dorcas & Phoebe	faithful servants
27	John Chrysostom	faithful servant
28	Thomas Aquinas	Christian thinker
29	Alan Walker	faithful servant

Born in Sydney in 1911 the eldest of two boys, he was proud of the Walker heritage. John Joseph Walker was sent to Australia in the early 1800s as a convict, as was a young woman Ann Gill who became his partner. Their son John was an unruly young man but was converted through a Methodist preacher in 1838. He joined the local Methodists and began to preach. Alan's father was an evangelist and he responded to his father's appeal to people to give their lives to Christ at a service at the Boolaroo Methodist Church. He became the youngest student ever to be admitted to theological training in 1930. Due to the financial situation he had to pay his way, which he did through a profitable fruit and vegetable run.

He did well at theological college and asked to do university studies at Sydney University which he did while serving brief terms at Hornsby, Croydon and with the Young People's Department. Some key lay people at Croydon recognised his potential and offered to send him to England for a year to gain experience in ministry with leading ministers there. He was about to get married but they agreed he could take his new wife if he raised the cost of her fare. He was given a one-way fare and living expenses for three months. After that he was on his own financially. In 1938 he was enabled to spend time on the staff of each of the leading mission churches throughout the country. He was impacted especially by the 'big three' of English Methodism, namely Sangster, Soper and Weatherhead. During this time he went to Europe, witnessed a Hitler rally in Germany, and attended a Faith and Order congress in Switzerland where he met William Temple.

On returning to Australia he was appointed to Cessnock, a coal-mining town. He learned to understand the people and community he served, he made use of the mass media of radio and newspapers, as a pacifist he had to cope with controversy, and he developed links with the Trade Union movement. During this time he gained a master's degree in sociology published as *Coal Town: A Sociological Survey of Cessnock*. Next he was appointed to Waverley. There he continued to develop his media ministry, built a community centre with a range of programs and the congregation grew. He was chosen to represent the Methodist Church at the first assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948 and the Australian government at the United Nations in New York in 1949.

He was asked to head up the Methodist Church's "Mission to the Nation" which was launched in April 1953 in the Melbourne Town Hall. He travelled the nation speaking to huge crowds and attracting a great deal of media attention. A National Christian Youth Convention was held in January 1955 as part of the Mission to the Nation. He was then invited to the US to serve the Board of Evangelism of the Methodist Church for a year in 1956. This was followed by becoming visiting professor of evangelism at the Boston School of Theology for a semester and then returning to Australia by ship via Europe and the Suez Canal.

In 1958 he began as superintendent minister of the Central Methodist Mission in Sydney. He emphasised worship, social witness and evangelism as he sought to minister not just to the congregations but to the city. He instigated programs such as Teenage Cabaret, College for Christians, Singles Society and School for Seniors. The television program "I Challenge the Minister" gained high ratings. Vision Valley conference centre was established. The most notable development was Lifeline, the telephone counselling service that became a worldwide movement. In 1970 he became President of the NSW Methodist Conference, which included conducting "Newness NSW" missions and the Valley Festival. He was constantly in the media speaking on social issues, most notably opposing the war in Vietnam and Apartheid in South Africa. He had many overseas trips speaking to different groups: to the US in particular but also memorable ones to Southern Africa.

After 21 years at the Mission he became director of World Evangelism for the World Methodist Council from 1978 to 1987. He and his wife Win literally travelled the world proclaiming his holistic gospel that held together the personal and social dimensions of the gospel. This is best expressed in his most important book, *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World* (published by Abingdon in 1957). He wrote over 20 books and numerous articles especially the Easter and Christmas editorials for the Sydney Morning Herald. At an age when most people are retired he established the Pacific College (now Alan Walker College) of Evangelism at North Parramatta and served as principal until 1995 when he finally retired. He is remembered as a powerful speaker and leader who proclaimed Christ, spoke out on social issues, and established Lifeline. He was an evangelist, a prophetic voice and a person with a pastoral heart who became one of Australia's living treasures. His voice and life are heard today in the need to keep evangelism and social justice, personal and social holiness together, along with worship and pastoral care.

Contributed by Chris Walker

29 Andrei Rublev

person of prayer

Very little is known for certain about the life of Rublev. The date of his birth is probably between 1360 and 1370. It is recorded that he died 29/1/1430, though even that is questioned. He was a Russian Orthodox monk, and it was the custom for iconographers to sign their work only as "A Monk of the Eastern Church". Attention was to be focused on the subject of the icon, and not who painted (or wrote) it. Only a very few particularly talented and significant iconographers were remembered by name and their work identified. Rublev was certainly one of these.

He appears to have lived most of his life in the Trinity-St Sergius Monastery near Moscow. He may have come from a family of artisans, as the name Rublev comes from "Rubel" a particular tool in Russia. There is a legend that he was shy and calm by nature. The first reliable record is dated 1405, when he painted icons and frescoes in the Annunciation Cathedral, which still stands in the Kremlin in Moscow. Most of his work was destroyed. Although we know little about Rublev himself, we know a good deal about the turbulent times in which he lived. Warring princes destabilised the country, weakening it and making it vulnerable to invasion by Mongols and Tatars. Plague swept through Russia early in the fifteenth century, and it was a time of brutality and corruption.

Rublev rose above all this to paint works that are marked by simplicity and peace. His most famous icon is the Old Testament Trinity, which is also adjudged by many as the greatest icon ever painted. It was done about 1410, and has a story of its own. Icons were protected by a finishing treatment of olipha (basically linseed oil), which darkened over time, and which, together with soot from candles and general dust and dirt, meant that a century after they were painted they were obscured. Rublev's Trinity was over-painted several times in an attempt to preserve it, but eventually it was discarded.

In 1905 new techniques for cleaning old icons were developed, and some restorers happened upon this old board. A small test strip revealed exquisite work and it was sent to Moscow, where it lay until the revolution. In 1918 the first Minister for the Arts in the Communist government had it restored to its present condition and hung it in the Tretyakov Museum in Moscow, where it still resides, with several other undisputed works of the master. Apart from technique, the work of Rublev reveals deep insight into Orthodox theology and devotion. This is brought out in the film of his life made by Tarkovsky in 1966. The film was immediately suppressed by the Soviet Government, but was shown to great acclaim at the Cannes Festival of 1969. A censored version was then allowed into the Soviet Union, but it was cut even further for the American market in 1971. The version now available is disjointed, but shows Rublev as a man of prayer, deeply affected by the chaos of his time, and only rising to greatness after much suffering.

The Trinity icon depicts the Trinity as the three angels who appeared to Abraham at Mamre, and presents them as equal, bound together in a community of love. There is a space at the table so that person praying before this icon can be included in the life of heaven through the Eucharistic chalice that sits on the table. This divine energy cannot be shaken, no matter what disasters may occur on earth. Surrounding all is God's peace and light and life

30 Lesslie Newbigin

Christian thinker

February

2 Simeon & Anna

witnesses to Jesus

3 First Christian service in Australia

Christian pioneers

This was held in what is now Martin Place, Sydney, at 10am on 3 February, 1788. The Rev Richard Johnson led the service from under a large tree. Attendance was compulsory for the convicts. They were guarded by soldiers to ensure that they did not misbehave or try to slip away. For some, it may well have been the first service they had attended. Phillip was pleased with the tone of the service and the attention given to the sermon on Psalm 116:12. Johnson also performed the first baptism. The first service of Holy Communion was held on 17 February, 1788.

Unfortunately, the text of Johnson's sermon has not survived. It was reported that he proclaimed a Gospel which gave generous pardon to the guilty, cleansing to the polluted, healing to the sick, happiness to the miserable and life to the dying. There were common themes in Evangelical preaching. Though Phillip suspected Johnson of Methodist leanings, he respected the devoted pastoral care Johnson gave the troubled, sick and dying.

Johnson disliked being an open-air preacher, but had no choice for there was no church building provided for a decade, until he built one at his own expense in 1798. It was burnt down on 1 October, possibly by disgruntled convicts. In addition to his ministry in Sydney, Johnson regularly travelled by boat to Parramatta to take services there. His preaching was complemented by catechizing and the distribution of simple Christian literature.

"Southern Cross", February, 1971; "Sydney Morning Herald", 6 February, 1915; W.J.Gunther, The Church of England in Australia, 1888.

contributed by Rev Dr Ian Breward

5 Joseph Henry Davies & missionaries in
 Korea & Japan

Christian pioneers

12 Friedrich Schleiermacher

Christian thinker

Schleiermacher (1768-1834) was unquestionably the most influential Protestant theologian of the nineteenth century, so much so that he has been called 'the father of modern Protestant theology'. The word 'modern' here is a technical term. It does not mean the latest, but rather is a synonym for, in this case, a new theological system made necessary by the widespread collapse of classical theology initiated by the human centred strictures of the European Enlightenment, which had reduced religion to the knowledge of God in terms of arguments for his existence, or more exactly, to natural theology and to morality.

To this end, Schleiermacher began his apologetic ('apologetic' is a positive word meaning 'making a statement on behalf of') endeavour by publishing a book he called "On Religion, Speeches to its Cultured Despisers" (1799). Here, he attempted to win back the educated classes to a serious encounter with religion, which he defines as 'a sense and taste for the infinite', a foundation independent of all theological dogma. He contended that religion was based on intuition and 'feeling', by which he meant not subjective emotion but an experience of 'absolute dependence', the impact of the universe upon us in the depths of our being which transcends subject and object. In this respect, Schleiermacher wanted to affirm that although Christianity is the highest of the religions, it is not the only true one.

In 1809 he became Dean of the theological faculty in the newly founded University of Berlin. By this time he was recognised as a stirring and convincing preacher. From 1819 he was chiefly occupied with his most important work, "The Christian Faith". The title is significant; not "The Doctrine of God", since what is positively given in the world is the Christian *faith* as such. That is to say, for Schleiermacher you do not first have to decide about the truths or untruths of religion in general or Christianity in particular. Rather we find Christianity given as an empirical fact in history, and only then do we have to describe the meaning of its symbols.

When he explains why he thinks Christianity is the highest manifestation of the essence of religion, Schleiermacher says it is because Christianity has two defining characteristics. The first is what he calls ethical monotheism, namely a dependence on God as the giver of the law which reveals the goal towards which we have to strive. The second is that everything is related to salvation by Jesus of Nazareth. Since this One possesses *the* fully developed religious consciousness, he does not need salvation. So he qualifies supremely as being *the* Saviour.

The import of Schleiermacher's theology is that he subjects Christianity to a concept of religion which at least in intent is not derived from Christianity but from the whole panorama of world's religions. Two significant consequences follow from this foundation, both exemplifying what are essentially the presuppositions of Modernity. First, his method is always to move from the general to the particular, and second, he insisted that knowledge and action are *consequences* of religious experience; they are not the essence of religion. It is readily apparent how successful Schleiermacher has been since these principles continue to inform modern Protestant liberal Christianity, despite their being radically called into question by the prevailing theological concerns of most of the twentieth century.

Contributed by Bruce Barber

14	Cyril & Methodius	Christian pioneers
18	Martin Luther	reformer of the Church
19	James Robert Beattie (J.R.B.) Love	Christian pioneer
27	George Herbert	faithful servant

George Herbert (1593-1633) was an English priest and poet. He was born in Wales, a younger son of a wealthy and well-connected family. Although he excelled at Cambridge and won high preferment, he was disenchanted with his academic life, which did not suit his sickly constitution. He also longed to move in the more exalted circles of state, and served briefly as a Member of Parliament, where he attracted the attention of noble patrons and King James I. But these dreams came to nothing, and eventually he chose the path of ordination within the Church of England. When he was counselled that this profession was socially beneath him, he replied, "I will labour to make it honourable by consecrating all my learning, and all my poor abilities, to advance the glory of that God that gave them". Sadly he served only three years as a priest in a small rural parish before his death, aged forty.

Herbert is counted among the "metaphysical poets", and his work is concerned with religious devotion. It is characterized by a close intimacy with God, a deep humility and sense of indebtedness and joyful gratitude. There is also much introspective wrestling with his own sin and persistent rebellion against God, which perhaps reflects his long struggle before accepting his priestly vocation. Herbert was an accomplished musician, and that is reflected in his verse, in the intricate and varied metrical patterns and short lyrical forms suggesting song.

Some of Herbert's poems have been adopted as hymns; in *The Australian Hymn Book* and *Together in Song*, these include "Let all the world in every corner sing", "King of glory, King of peace", "Come, my way, my truth, my life", and "Teach me, my God and King".

The man who emerges from the poems is humble, witty and wise, deeply in love with God and well acquainted with himself; his verse overflows with the profound joy he has found in the love of Christ, abundantly but not cheaply.

The favourite poem *Love* is an apt illustration:

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,
 Guiltie of dust and sinne.
But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack
 From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
 If I lack'd any thing.
A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here:
 Love said, You shall be he.
I the unkinde, ungratefull? Ah my deare,
 I cannot look on thee.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
 Who made the eyes but I?
Truth Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame
 Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, sayes Love, who bore the blame?
 My deare, then I will serve.
You must sit down, sayes Love, and taste my meat:
 So I did sit and eat.

Contributed by Rev Martin Wright

28 Martin Bucer

reformer of the Church

Martin Bucer (1491-1551) is a sympathetic and somewhat neglected figure of the Reformation. Among the divisions that came so quickly to plague the Protestant movement, he was an advocate for reconciliation and dialogue. Born in Alsace, Bucer became a Dominican friar at an early age, but while studying in his twenties he was influenced by Erasmus and Martin Luther. He married a former nun and began preaching the new doctrines, was excommunicated, and was eventually received as a pastor in Strasbourg in 1524. He remained there for most of his life as a leader of the Reformed church. Changes in the political scene eventually forced him to flee to England, where he arrived in 1549. Before his death in 1551 he had come to have a significant influence on the English Reformation, including the second (1552) Prayer Book of Edward VI.

Bucer watched with dismay the dissipating factions of the early Reformation. Throughout his years in Strasbourg, he strove to foster dialogue between Lutheran and Swiss Protestants, and even with Anabaptists and Catholics, apparently believing in the possibility of a reunified church. In this sense, Bucer was a forerunner of the modern ecumenical movement. In the enduring conflict of interpretations over Christ's presence in the Eucharist, Bucer maintained the unusual opinion that Zwingli and Luther were simply at cross-purposes. In his own thought, he had reconciled their differences—agreeing with Zwingli that Christ remained in heaven, he nevertheless believed that the Eucharistic elements really participated in Christ's body and blood "after a heavenly manner". Through the sanctification of their senses by the Holy Spirit, Christians apprehend heavenly things on earth. Unfortunately, the rival theologians were not persuaded that their disagreements were so illusory. Perhaps Bucer anticipated not just the zeal and goodwill of modern ecumenism but also its failures, in underestimating the depth of the differences to be overcome, and relying too readily on formulae of accord.

Bucer also placed a high value on pastoral discipline and the formation of mutually supportive Christian communities. This emphasis underpins the continuing importance he attached to Confirmation. He regarded it as a "personal ratification of the baptismal covenant", a view which influenced many Protestant churches to retain a form of this rite. Ordination too, without being called a "sacrament" as such, retained a highly sacramental flavour in Bucer's thought, reflecting both the centrality of ecclesial office in his understanding of the church, and his faith in the real effectiveness of the Holy Spirit through human words and actions in the liturgy.

It is fitting that Bucer left us no church in his own name—his desire was for integration. But his influence was felt by those who more permanently shaped the young churches, especially Calvin, who had closely observed his work in Strasbourg, and Cranmer, a long-term correspondent and a friend in the last years of exile. Through such figures as these his legacy has been communicated to later Protestant generations.

Contributed by the Rev Martin Wright

March

5 Dianne Buchanan Christian pioneer

7 Perpetua & Felicitas martyrs

Few women have shaped the Christian spiritual tradition like the young North African martyr and visionary, Vibia Perpetua. She has inspired people of different centuries, countries, and cultures. Her story, told in *The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas*, is a “dazzling text”, one of the most gripping accounts of martyrdom from the ancient church. Virtually from the moment of its writing in an early third-century Carthaginian prison, Perpetua’s story has played an important part in Christian spirituality. It is “timeless”, according to the medieval historian, Joyce Salisbury, meaning that it speaks to the human heart across the centuries, societies, and cultures.

An unknown figure first saw the potential of Perpetua’s story. He framed her story in such a way that succeeding generations of readers (or listeners) would treat it almost like Scripture. He saw in her visions a demonstration of the unceasing operation of the Holy Spirit and a witness for the glory of God and the good of the Church. The popularity of Perpetua and her companion Felicitas soon spread beyond the North African church. By the late fourth century their feast day was honoured in all the early calendars and martyrologies and their names were regularly remembered in Sunday worship.

By the early fifth century, Perpetua and Felicitas, were among the most venerated of African martyrs. Augustine loved these saints and drew inspiration from their life and witness. We know, for example, that Augustine preached at least three sermons in honour of Perpetua (after whom his sister was named). In Augustine’s first sermon he describes how upon hearing the story of the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas read in church, the congregation joined in a “celebration of universal devotion”. In his second sermon, Augustine elevates the merits of Perpetua and Felicitas above all other martyrs. And in the third sermon, he names Perpetua and Felicitas as a model for all those who suffer for the faith.

The overwhelming reason for the popularity of Perpetua in recent times is her importance for women’s religion. She gives an intimate view into the mind of a third-century woman, which, for centuries, has been a great source of inspiration for women struggling with questions of identity and meaning. Given the degree of silence that has surrounded women throughout history, Perpetua’s story is astonishingly rare and precious. She may well not be the first woman to have put her thoughts on paper; she is, however, one of the first of whom we have any real knowledge. In her writing we can hear a voice too little heard. It is an extraordinary voice. She has given the Church – especially women – a role model and a positive example of empowerment.

Contributed by William Emilsen

17 Patrick & Ninian Christian pioneers

18 Joseph of Arimathea witness to Jesus

19 Joseph of Nazareth witness to Jesus

20 Cuthbert, Aidan & Bede Christian pioneers

These three men of God exercised their ministries in the north-east of England, an area known today as Northumberland but their impact has moved far beyond that area.

ST AIDEN who died in 651AD was the first of the three. Coming originally from Ireland, he was a monk in the community of Iona in Scotland. Oswald, King of Northumbria had sent a request to Iona for someone to come and do missionary work in his Kingdom. When the first one sent failed because the people were so barbaric, Aidan was made a Bishop and sent to undertake the task.

Along with a group of a dozen Gaelic-speaking monks, Aidan installed himself on the windswept island of Lindisfarne, building a simple wooden church and outbuildings as a base for his mission in 635AD. *This island is just off the coast of Northumberland but can be reached by foot when the tide is out. It was reasonably close to Bamburgh where the King had his castle.*

Where another Bishop had sought to bully his targets back into church, Aidan became renowned for his tact and diplomacy, walking from one village to another to converse with villagers and slowly engage their interest in Christianity.

The feat was not achieved without difficulty. To assist his work Aidan insisted on learning the native tongue and set about recruiting a dozen Northumbrian youths to form the basis for new English Christian Church, and ensure tales of his holy acts lived on after him. As well as giving away the horse presented to him by King Oswald, his saintly deeds were said to include rendering a deer pursued by hunters invisible and putting out a fire through prayer. The Venerable Bede, the scholar and historian as well as another seventh-century Northumbrian monk, wrote of Aidan: "He neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately to the poor whatever was given him by kings or rich men. He traversed both town and country on foot, never on horseback, unless compelled by some urgent necessity.

"Wherever on his way he saw any, either rich or poor, he invited them, if pagans, to embrace the mystery of the faith; or if they were believers, he sought to strengthen them in their faith and stir them up by words and actions to alms and good works."

Aidan's missionary work was very effective. Many people turned from traditional religion to faith in Jesus Christ. Many missionaries came from Ireland to help in the work. Churches were built and Aidan travelled throughout his diocese usually on foot. He was known for his holy life, his passion to share the faith and his compassion for the poor.

While out visiting his diocese in August 651 he was taken ill and died. His body was taken back to Lindisfarne for burial. He had been the Bishop there for sixteen years.

ST CUTHBERT was born about 634AD somewhere near the River Tweed in the Border country between Scotland and England. As a child he loved games, was athletic and exuberant. As a man he loved hard physical work. One night in his teenage years he was out looking after a flock of sheep when he had a vision of Aidan of Lindisfarne, being transported to heaven. He found out later that on that night, Aidan had died. Cuthbert decided to become a monk and went to the monastery at Melrose, a sister monastery to Lindisfarne. Cuthbert was trained in the Christian disciplines of prayer, fasting and study of the Scriptures. He learnt how to read and write in both English and Latin for Latin was the language of the Church and the Bible. Cuthbert was not only diligent in spiritual disciplines and labouring tasks of the monastery, he also gave himself most wholeheartedly to evangelistic work and acts of compassion in the wider community. He would go to far away places in the mountains and live with the people there, teaching them about Jesus, urging them to come to faith and living the faith in their midst.

Cuthbert was one of the monks selected to move from Melrose to establish a new monastery at Ripon where he became Guestmaster. Because of his holiness and his concern for the people he returned to Melrose as Prior. This was a time of tension for the Church in England. Missionaries had come from Rome and begun work in Kent in the south of England. Their form of Christianity was Roman in origin. The north of England had been evangelised by Irish monks who lived out what is called Celtic Christianity. As the two groups spread throughout England tension became inevitable. The two groups had a different way of setting the date of Easter and disagreed about how much centralisation there should be in the Church and how much spontaneity. The wife of King Oswy of Northumbria came from Kent and so he was confronted by the two forms of Christianity in his own house. So he called a Synod at Whitby in 664 to decide whether Roman or Irish customs should be followed. The Roman forces prevailed and the Irish monks withdrew to Iona in Scotland.

To cope with the changes and the departure of the Irish monks Cuthbert was made Prior of Lindisfarne. He re-organised the monastery. He also became famous because of his gift of healing. Streams of people came to Lindisfarne to seek his help. Cuthbert also had a strong relationship with wild animals and birds. One time he rose in the middle of the night to pray. This he did by standing for hours in the sea. When he returned to the beach two otters came with him and played around him. After he blessed them they returned to the sea.

St Cuthbert now felt a further call from God to be a hermit. He made his home on one of the desolate Inner Farne Islands. A cell to live in and a place in which to worship were built. They were surrounded by high walls so Cuthbert could only see the sky. Occasionally the monks would come from Lindisfarne to visit him and still, though fewer, people came seeking counsel and healing.

In 684 he was elected Bishop of Lindisfarne a position which he did not want. The King and other Bishops prevailed upon him. After two years of faithful leadership he resigned his position and returned to his hermit cell on the Inner Farne. Cuthbert died a hermit on 20 March 687. His body was taken to Lindisfarne where he was buried on the right hand side of the altar.

After many raids by the Vikings the monks fled from Lindisfarne taking Cuthbert's body with them. After many years of wandering, the body of Cuthbert was brought to Durham in 995 and the monks began building that immense Cathedral. St Cuthbert's tomb is in Durham Cathedral behind the High Altar having been placed there in 1104.

The following prayer is used in the Cathedral each year on 20 March, St Cuthbert's Day:

Almighty God, who didst call thy servant Cuthbert from keeping sheep to follow thy Son and to be a shepherd of thy people, mercifully grant that we, following his example and caring for those who are lost, may bring them home to thy fold, through thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BEDE or THE VENERABLE BEDE

Bede was a child of only seven years when in 680 he was taken to the monastery at Monkwearmouth for education. He was dedicated to the service of God. Two years later, a monk named Ceofrith established an outreach monastery at Jarrow. It was called St Pauls. Both Monkwearmouth and Jarrow are in Northumberland in the north-east of England. Ceofrith took Bede with him and he lived there from when he was nine until his death in 735.

Bede has been called the Father of English History. He wrote at least forty works, his most famous being *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*. There is no doubt that Bede had a strong sense of the divine calling on his work. When he was still a child all the monks at Jarrow died of the plague except and Ceofrith and Bede. Because of his great knowledge of Latin and Greek and some Hebrew, he set about translating the Scriptures so they were more accessible to other monks and to the people. The Bede did not forsake his spiritual duties for his writing. He was always present at the worship the monks were required to attend. He was ordained a Deacon and at the age of thirty he was priested.

It is unknown how he became known as 'The Venerable Bede'. One story is that a disciple wrote in Latin, 'In this tomb are the bones of Bede'. When he woke in the morning the word 'venerable' had been added.

Bede died in 735. He was translating right up to the time of his death. He was buried at Jarrow but later his body was removed to Durham Cathedral. There he lies in the Galilee Chapel. Above his grave in Latin and in English is this prayer of The Bede:

*Christ is the Morning Star
Who when the night
of this world is past
brings to his saints
the promise of
the light of life
and opens everlasting day.*

Contributed by Rev John Mavor

20 Alan Mungulu

faithful witness

21 **Thomas Cranmer**

reformer of the Church

Thomas Cranmer

Martyred 21st March 1556

Thomas Cranmer is variously described in Anglican and Uniting Church calendars as "martyr" and "liturgist"; to many he is also known as "reformer". Behind those words is a figure of some complexity. In 2006, on the 450th anniversary of Cranmer's death, the Revd Ian Pearson kindly allowed me to mark the occasion with a Prayer Book Communion in Pitt Street Uniting Church, Sydney.

Henry Speagle gave the address which has just been published, “Thomas Cranmer and the Contest for Anglican Identity”. In it he spoke of Cranmer as one who found his identity only “after a tortuous and often tormented pilgrimage”.

From his birth and baptism in 1489, that pilgrimage included his studies at Jesus College, Cambridge, and ordination in 1523. Soon coming to the attention of Henry VIII and made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1533, Cranmer supported the King’s seeking of an annulment of Henry’s first marriage, the break with Rome, Henry’s claim to be “Supreme Head” of the Church of England, and the destruction of the monasteries—henceforth the foundation of stately homes and of riches for some, or else, in Shakespeare’s words, “bare ruin’d choirs”.

A convinced Protestant, seeking reformation, Cranmer welcomed the placing of an English Bible in churches in 1538 and in 1544 produced an English Litany for use in worship. However, it was only after the accession of Edward VI that he was able to replace the old Church of England Latin services with the 1549 Book of Common Prayer of which he was the chief author. Influenced by continental reformers, he soon replaced this by the more protestant Prayer Book of 1552. He was especially responsible also for “the stripping of the altars”—the abolition of many traditional ceremonies and the destruction of popular shrines.

In 1553, Mary Tudor became Queen, the links with Rome were restored, and the title of “Supreme Head” disappeared. (Elizabeth I was instead “Supreme Governor”). Cranmer, “this mild man of God” as John Knox called him, was arrested, tried for heresy and sentenced to death by burning. He signed several recantations but on the day of his death, the 21st March, 1556, he finally renounced them all, and affirmed the beliefs he had long come to hold, especially with regard to the Holy Communion. It was ironic that the erastian¹ who had seen the monarch as head of the Church was now one who came to repudiate what the *monarch* believed to be true of salvation and sacrament, and in the end returned to what he believed to be Scriptural and *truly* Catholic.

Some of the shrines and symbols and ceremonies Cranmer zealously abolished have long since been restored to his Church, but evangelical and liberal Christians would both still find wisdom in his understanding of the Eucharist and so many generally have benefited from an English Bible, a mainly married clergy, and from vernacular worship—in the 20th century restored even in Rome itself.

Cranmer’s greatest monument is the incomparable language of a Prayer Book, in its 1662 form still the official liturgy of the Church of England and of the Anglican Church of Australia. That *Book of Common Prayer* has been a major influence in many later liturgies, including Wesley’s Sunday Service, and some 20th century Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational and United forms of worship. John Wesley found in its liturgy “more of a solid, scriptural, rational piety” than in any other—although not perfect.

Through its services, many have come to faith, among them philosopher C.E.M. Joad and evangelist Bryan Green. And for some, like myself, who have known it from childhood, and for others as yet unfamiliar with it, it can still be, together with the Scriptures always underlying it, in George Herbert’s words, “a cupboard of food” and “cabinet of pleasure”.

We should remember the tragic aspects of the “Reformation”—mutual excommunications and persecution—but we can also thank God for blessings it has brought to the whole Church and pray in words largely those of Cranmer:

*O Almighty God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner-stone: grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple acceptable unto thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

Contributed by John Bunyan

24 Oscar Romero

martyr

When Oscar Romero became Archbishop of San Salvador in February 1977, the priests who were socially involved were unenthusiastic. Born in 1917 in Ciudad Barrios he had five brothers and two sisters. He was ordained in Rome in 1942 and began doctoral studies in ascetical theology but was called home from Fascist Italy. On route he made stops with another priest in Spain and Cuba. In Cuba they were placed in an internment camp for a time. He worked as a parish priest for 20 years in San Miguel. Romero rose gradually from parish priest, to secretary to a bishop, to auxiliary bishop, to finally an archbishop.

He was said to be a man of prayer but conventional in his outlook. His very installation was used by the authorities to step up their reign of terror in El Salvador. However, when a massacre took place, Romero indicated that he agreed with the sentiment of a message, which had been distributed among the crowd, which said: "The church is where it always should have been; with the people, surrounded by wolves."

The martyrdom of Rutilio Grande, a Jesuit priest who had been totally identified with the peasant poor of the countryside, along with two friends, moved Romero deeply when he went to the scene. He urged the government to investigate the deaths but they ignored his request. He began to come in conflict with the repressive government. He spoke out against poverty, social injustice, assassinations and torture. On a visit to Europe he met Pope John Paul II and expressed his concerns at what was happening in his country. He criticised the US government for giving military aid to the El Salvadoran government. He encouraged the development of new liturgies and more meaningful modes of worship. Ministering in a revolutionary situation, he was criticised for his innovations and his call for the church to become the voice of those who had no voice. His broadcast sermon on a Sunday began to attract a large audience. Romero became known as a champion of the poor. He knew he was courting death. He hoped that through his death he would contribute to the transformation of El Salvador. In a sermon the day before his death he called on Salvadoran soldiers as Christians to obey God's higher order and to stop carrying out the government's repression and violations of basic human rights.

On 24 March, 1980 this small gentle man was saying the Mass. As he reached the words of the consecration: "This is my body given for you....this is my blood shed for you" a shot rang out and the archbishop fell to the ground, killed instantly by a bullet through the heart. A friend of the people, one who desired peace and justice, he had become an enemy of those in power. Oscar Romero is remembered as a champion of the poor, a person who lived and died for Christ, a martyr for God and the people. His voice and witness is heard today especially in contexts of oppression. He is an inspiration to all who would follow Christ and accept the cost of discipleship.

Contributed by Chris Walker

24	Paul Couturier	reformer of the Church
26	Caroline Chisholm	renewer of society
31	Fred McKay	faithful servant
31	Maria Skobtsova	martyr

April

4	Martin Luther King Jnr	martyr
4	Leonard Kentish	martyr
9	Dietrich Bonhoeffer	Christian thinker

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was born in 1906 into a scholarly and academic family which, though not actively "church-going" was steeped in the humanitarian and liberal traditions that were prevalent in the Christian church within Germany in the later part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. Like all his siblings, he was intellectually astute, was a talented musician and well grounded in the art and literature of his time. At the same time, he rejoiced in the love of family and friends, and appreciated deeply the beauties of the natural world.

He seemed to be set for an academic career, and became lecturer in Systematic Theology at Berlin University. In the 1930s, however, Bonhoeffer became an opponent of Hitler's National Socialism in Germany. He quickly understood that the policies of this political movement focused on mere human endeavour and a complete denial of the presence and power of God. His opposition to the policies of Hitler led ultimately to his imprisonment and death.

Before that happened, however, Bonhoeffer became a leader in the *Bekennende Kirche* (the "Confessing Church" which was opposed to the pro-Nazi "German Evangelical Church"), and he participated in the preparation of the "Barmen Confession". This document rejected the doctrines of the "German Evangelical Church" – that the church was subordinate to the state, and the Word and the Spirit were subordinate to the church – and reasserted the Lordship of Christ over the Church, and the submission of the Church to the Holy Spirit and Holy Scripture.

Bonhoeffer's influence within the worldwide Church comes from his commitment to Christian discipleship as a fundamental component of Christian community. Even before his formal ministry began (in Barcelona in 1928) he had gathered a group of friends with whom he discussed issues of faith, including questions about the difference between religion founded on human experience and community based on living in the way of Christ. Following his martyrdom in 1945, friends in Germany, England and the United States took pains to ensure that his written works were made more widely available. Books like *The Cost of Discipleship* (a book of addresses on the Sermon on the Mount) and *Life Together* (a handbook of Christian community) provide insights into Bonhoeffer's understanding of the ways in which we are called to follow Christ.

Bonhoeffer's poems and prayers also provide the essence of his theology and faith. *Together in Song* provides a poem (song number 240: "All go to God when they are sorely placed") in which Bonhoeffer brings together an awareness of our need for God, of God's need for us, and of God's grace in denying no-one the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection. And a section of a prayer recorded in *Letters and Papers from Prison* gives insight into Bonhoeffer's confidence in and reliance on God's presence and love:

O God, ...
In me there is darkness,
But with you there is light.
I am lonely, but you leave me not.
I am feeble in heart, but you leave me not.
I am restless, but with you there is peace.
In me there is bitterness, but with you there is patience;
Your ways are beyond understanding, but
You know the way for me.
(language updated)

contributed by Graham Vawser

18 Kentigern

Christian pioneer

St. Kentigern was born about 518 in Culross, Fife, Scotland, to Thenaw, the daughter of a British prince, Lothus. Kentigern, (the name means "head chief") was popularly known as St. Mungo, meaning "dear one". He is believed to have been brought up by St. Servanus at a monastery in Fife. His father's name is unknown.

At the age of 25, Kentigern began his missionary labours at Cathures, on the Clyde, the site of modern Glasgow. He was welcomed there by Roderick Hael, the Christian King, and laboured in the district for some thirteen years. He lived an austere life in a small cell where the Clyde and Molendinar rivers met. By his teaching and example many people converted to the Christian faith. The large community that grew up around him became known as *clasgu*, meaning "dear family". The town and city ultimately grew to be known as modern Glasgow.

About 553 a strong anti-Christian movement in Strathclyde compelled Kentigern to leave the district. He retired to Wales, and stayed with St. David at Menevia, later founding a large monastery in Llanelwy and serving as its first abbot. In 573, accompanied by many of his Welsh disciples, he returned to Scotland at the request of the king, after a battle secured the Christian cause. For eight years he continued his evangelical outreach to the districts of Galloway and Cumberland.

Finally, in 581 Kentigern returned to Glasgow, where he remained until his death in 603, continuing his work amongst the people.

Several miracles were attributed to him including restoring life to a bird that had been inadvertently killed, the discovery inside a fish he caught of the missing ring of the Queen of Cadzow, and the rekindling of a fire that he had been tending, but which had gone out. These events are commemorated in the Coat of Arms of the City of Glasgow. The fourth symbol is a bell, believed to have been given to Kentigern by the Pope, Gregory I.

St. Kentigern is buried in Glasgow on the spot where a beautiful cathedral dedicated to his honour now stands. He is remembered on 13 January each year, the anniversary of his death. His humble life, lived in the service of God, affected the lives of many people, particularly in Wales, Galloway and Cumberland in Scotland, in parts of the northwest of England, and, of course, in Glasgow. St. Kentigern is still remembered as a model of how we can make a difference in the lives of others.

Contributed by Sandra Batey

21	Joo Ki Chul & Korean Martyrs	martyrs
22	Trevor Huddleston	renewer of society
22	Toyohiko Kagawa	renewer of society
26	Mark	witness to Jesus
28	Dorothy Soelle	Christian thinker
29	Catherine of Siena	faithful servant

Born Caterina Benincasa, Catherine of Siena (?1347-1380) is remembered for her peacemaking efforts, and for the hundreds of letters and prayers she left behind. She was born into a family of 25 children in Siena, Italy. It is reported that from an early age she began seeing visions, and devoted her time to conversation with God, leading the life of an ascetic. Her long hours of prayer and self-mortification brought her into conflict with her family, and at the age of 16 they permitted her to join the Dominican Order of Penance. She lived a further three years at home (the chronology of this is confused), and then later began to pursue work in the public domain, tending for the poor and the sick, and teaching. She travelled widely, defying suggestions that women should not do so, preaching and mediating disputes—including the conflict between Florence and the Holy See, for example. Her involvement in both spiritual and political events suggests she viewed the two as intimately connected, and equally a part of her service to God.

On her travels Catherine was often accompanied by an entourage of followers—clergy and lay people, men and women—who were attracted by her piety, spiritual wisdom, and engaging personality.

As her following and influence grew, so did Catherine's ability to help resolve conflicts, and she was instrumental in persuading Pope Gregory XI, with whom she corresponded extensively, to take the Papacy from Avignon in France back to Rome in 1377. (The previous seven popes had held the papal court at Avignon, but there was widespread concern that it should return to Italy.)

Catherine's writings reflect a boldness and directness that grew from her deep spirituality; qualities that made serious consideration of her counsel unavoidable. This is evident, for example, when she advised Gregory: "Even if you have not been very faithful in the past, begin now to follow Christ, whose vicar you are, in real earnest. And do not be afraid . . . Attend to things spiritual, appointing good shepherds and good rulers in the cities under your jurisdiction . . ." And then, expressing a sentiment that might be questioned today, "Above all, delay no longer in returning to Rome and proclaiming the Crusade".

And all of this in the 33 years of her short life. In 1461, Catherine of Siena was canonized, and in 1970 was made a Doctor of the Church.

Contributed by Bethany Butler

May

1	Philip & James	apostles
2	Athanasius	Christian thinker
3	Catherine Mowry LaCugna	Christian thinker
4	Monica, mother of Augustine of Hippo	faithful servant

Monica (c.331-87) was probably born in Tagaste, in the northern part of Africa that is now Algeria, administered from Carthage as part of the Roman Empire. Most of what we know about her comes from the spiritual autobiography of her eldest son, Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430). As Peter Brown comments, 'Few mothers can survive being presented to us exclusively in terms of what they have come to mean to their sons, much less to a son as complicated as Augustine'; but Monica emerges as resolute and absolutely steadfast in prayer. She was perceptive and not above some dignified sarcasm, but despised gossip. Augustine presents her as a peacemaker in the community, and a woman with deep inner resources.

Monica was brought up in a Christian household and through her life kept up devotional traditions of the African Church sometimes dismissed as primitive by more educated contemporaries, such as fasting in preparation for the Sabbath, graveside meals, and the confident interpretation of dreams. She was married to Patricius, a pagan, apparently hot-tempered and violent, who became a Christian catechumen about 369,

a few years before his death when Monica was 40. They had two other children, whose names we know, younger than Augustine: a second son, Navigius, and a daughter Perpetua.

Following contemporary practice, Monica enrolled the child Augustine as a catechumen without having him baptised. She was convinced that a good classical education would eventually bring Augustine to Christian faith, but was anxious enough about his lifestyle to follow him to Italy in 383, first to Rome and then the Milan. Like Augustine she was influenced by Ambrose, bishop of Milan, and Augustine presents her views in two dialogues written in 386 *De Ordine* and *De Beata Vita*. Garry Wills suggests that Augustine came to appreciate his mother later in life, realising not only her piety but now also her theological insight. Monica saw Augustine baptised in 387, and set out with him to return to Africa later that year. They had travelled as far as Ostia on the Italian mainland when she caught a fever and died.

Recording her final days in *Confessions* Augustine stressed Monica's faith and quiet contentment. He also recounted a conversation between them 'reclining by ourselves at a window which looked out on the inner garden of the house' that prompted a shared mystical experience of God as 'the ageless wisdom that outlasts all things else' (*Confessions* 9: 25). From conversation, 'recalling past events, musing about the truth which you [God] are, and wondering what the eternal life of the saints might be like' they were caught up so that their 'hearts were thirsting for the streams that flow from that fountain of life which is in you' (*Confessions* 9: 25). The remarkable experience was almost beyond words for Augustine, and of course not recorded at all by Monica, but it has become a touchstone for showing how community and companionship can lift individuals towards God.

Contributed by Katharine Massam

5 John Flynn

Christian pioneer

John Flynn (1880-1951) was a Presbyterian minister, missionary, and founder of the Australian Inland Mission. He was born in Moliagul in Victoria, Australia. In 1902, after four years with the Education Department of Victoria, Flynn joined the home mission staff of the Presbyterian Church, working amongst remote communities.

First, through his successful publication, *Bushman's Companion* (1910), and then through the Oodnadatta Nursing Hospital, Flynn began a long career of developing services and ministry to bush dwellers. He was ordained in 1911 when he was assigned for two years to what was known as the Smith of Dunesk Mission based at Beltana, South Australia. In 1912 he reported on the needs of remote Aboriginal and white communities in the Northern Territory, presenting a vision of the church's mission to the sparsely populated areas of inland Australia.

For the next 39 years, as superintendent of the Australian Inland Mission, Flynn was guided by the motto "For Christ and the Continent" and by putting need before creed. In 1928 he founded the mission's Aerial Medical Service at Cloncurry, Queensland, later known as the Royal Flying Doctor Service. This fulfilled his dream of a "mantle of safety" for outback Australians. From 1939 until 1942 Flynn was moderator general of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. His image is on the Australian \$20 note and there are many memorials to Flynn around Australia. At Moliagul there is a memorial with the inscription, "Across the lonely places of the land he planted kindness and gathered love." The John Flynn Memorial Church in Alice Springs is his official memorial.

William Emilsen

7 Charles Harris

faithful servant

Charles Enoch Edward Harris (1931–1993) was a cane cutter, railway worker, Assembly of God evangelist, Methodist and Uniting Church minister, and the Founding President of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress from 1985 to his retirement due to ill-health in 1989. Harris was born on 8 July 1931 into a Christian family in Ingham, north Queensland. His father was of Torres Strait Island and Spanish descent; his mother was of Aboriginal and Malay ancestry. The Harris family belonged to a Pentecostal Christian tradition. After a self-confessed 'wild' youth and various labouring jobs, Harris joined the Assemblies of God and became involved in youth work at Ayr. He later trained at the Commonwealth Bible College (Assemblies of God) from 1957 to 1959 and then took on several non-stipendiary pastorates with the Assemblies of God.

In 1966 Harris joined the Ingham Methodist Church and came under the influence of the Rev. Edward Smith, the Superintendent of the Ingham Circuit; a year later he was appointed a 'circuit assistant'. The following year Harris followed Smith to the Hermit Park Circuit in Townsville where he was appointed pastor to the newly established 'Mission to Aborigines and Islanders in North Queensland'. Under testing circumstances Harris persisted for five years in this 'evangelical and caring ministry', visiting prisons, conducting missions, and caring for Townsville's displaced and homeless 'bridge people'.

Persuaded by Pastor Don Brady, the 'boxing parson', Harris became a staff member of Central Methodist Mission in Brisbane in 1973 under the superintendency of the Rev. George Nash. Brady introduced Harris to the world of Aboriginal struggle for justice and demonstrated to him how the Gospel was addressed to every part of life. Harris assumed pastoral oversight of the predominantly Aboriginal and Islander congregation at the Paddington Methodist Church in Brisbane where he gave leadership to the Urban Aboriginal Mission in Brisbane and helped to establish a support network for Christian Aboriginal and Islander groups throughout the State. In this period the sharpest focus of his ministry was to alcoholics and troubled people who frequented Musgrave Park in Brisbane.

Harris' obvious gifts of evangelism and leadership singled him out for ordination and arrangements were made for him to study at Nungalinga College in Darwin. He was ordained on 27 November 1980 in Brisbane, the first Aboriginal and Islander Minister to be ordained by the Uniting Church in Queensland.

Of the many achievements in Harris' ministry two stand out above the rest. The first is the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress; it was his vision and energy that would eventually lead to the formation of Congress at Elcho Island in August 1983. The second is the March for Justice, Freedom and Hope. It was Harris who was the driving force behind the idea of the March held on the streets of Sydney on 26 January 1988, the largest gathering of Indigenous people ever in Australia and arguably the centrepiece of Aboriginal protest during the bicentennial year. In both the forming of Congress and the planning for the March, Harris was the instigator, visionary, primary advocate, spokesperson, trouble-shooter and figurehead. It was he who worked incessantly travelling around the country building bridges between Aboriginal groups, between them and the white community, and between church people and the non-church people.

The March propelled Charles Harris into the national and international spotlight and promoted the fledgling Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress as one of the leading Aboriginal and Islander organisations in the country. Throughout the planning of the March Harris grew as a national leader and a symbol of what Aboriginal and Islander people could do together in their common struggle. Sir Ronald Wilson remarked on the occasion of Harris's retirement: 'The emergence of the Congress as perhaps the leading Aboriginal organisation in the country, the growing maturity of its leadership, and its finest hour—the Bicentenary March for freedom, Justice and Hope will stand as lasting monuments to Charles' vision as president, his determination and keen sense of justice.'

Towards the end of Harris' life, he became progressively more radical, seizing every opportunity to speak out against injustice and the church's and governments' role in perpetuating injustice. His prayer in Hyde Park on the day of the March was typical of the gentle yet determined man who struggled to free his people:

God of the Dreamtime.

You who are with us during those 40,000 years or more, before 1788.

You were the one who gave us our law and our ceremonies.

You were the one who gave us our dreaming, our stories and our sacred sites.

The one who gave us this land.

You were with us then, you are with us now, you marched with us today. You will be with us during this week of activities here in Sydney.

You abhor the abomination which is taking place only 2 km from here.

You were with us during the past 200 years of the onslaught and sophisticated terrorism and apartheid and you have helped us to survive through it all.

God of the dreamtime avenge your people for their blood cries out to you from the very ground of the land which you gave us.

Avenge your people, show to the world the evil and the wickedness of this people who came, lied, cheated, raped, stole and murdered.

Expose them to the world.

Break down the mountains of injustice which surrounds us.

Smash down the walls which imprison us.

Lift us from the despair of hopelessness.

Bring us justice.
Bring us freedom.
Bring us hope.

Charles Harris died on 7 May 1993.

Contributed by William W. Emilsen

8 Julian of Norwich

person of prayer

(born 1342, died shortly after 1416).

If people knew how useful diseases are for the soul's discipline, wrote one medieval mystic, they would purchase them in the marketplace. That was certainly the view of the English mystic, theologian and author of the *Revelations of Divine Love*, St. Julian of Norwich.

While still a young lay woman, Julian asked God for three gifts: a profound experience of the passion of Christ, a physical illness, and the three 'wounds' of contrition, compassion, and earnest longing for God. She was granted them, but the first and the third came to her through physical illness. In her book, she records that when she was thirty, 'God sent me a physical illness in which I lay for three days and three nights. On the fourth night I took all the rites of holy church and did not think that I would live until morning.' Propped up in bed, losing both feeling and sight, Julian saw the crucifix set before her as surrounded by a 'universal light'; and in an access of compassion for the dying Jesus had a vision of the 'red blood trickling down from under the garland, just as I thought it would have done when the garland of thorns was thrust on His blessed head.' In turn, she understood that 'both God and man together suffered for me' and 'that it was he who showed it to me, without intermediary'. Simultaneously with this 'bodily sight' she experienced 'a spiritual vision of His matchless love', alone creating and sustaining the whole world.

Julian recovered from her apparently mortal illness, spending the rest of her life reflecting on these visions, which she gradually recognised as 'full of deep secrets' and 'inner significance'. For many years an anchoress (an enclosed hermit) at what is now St. Julian's church in Norwich, she wrote a short and a longer account of her visions and interpretations. Her theology centred around two principles: the all-embracing and all-powerful love of God, and the perfectly physical nature of the incarnate Christ. The first allows us to see that though sin and evil exist in the fallen world, they have no ultimate reality, having been destroyed by Christ's death and resurrection—'Ah wretched sin!...You are nothing. For I saw that God is everything; I did not see you'. The second enables the complete identification of humans, irrevocably identified in physical bodies, with Christ—'our saviour is our true Mother, in whom we are endlessly born and out of whom we shall never come.' Her evocation of God as the Mother who endlessly generates and re-creates us through Her/His own suffering, nourishes us spiritually, and disciplines us for our own training, remains her distinctive contribution to Christian spirituality.

We tend to think of diseases as always and only bad; to be cured if possible and resented if not. Julian and her contemporaries, often beset by illnesses they were powerless to cure, nevertheless succeeded in bringing good out of evil through their identification with both the suffering, and the salvation, of Christ.

Contributed by Phillippa Maddern

9 James Moulton

faithful servant

14 Matthias, Simon & Jude

apostle

23 Winifred Kiek

Christian pioneer

24 John & Charles Wesley

reformers of the Church

The Wesley brothers, John (1703–91) and Charles (1707–88), founders of Methodism, were the fifteenth and eighteenth children of Samuel Wesley and his wife Susannah (nee Annesley). Both their grandfathers were nonconformist ministers. Samuel was rector of Epworth parish in the fenlands of Lincolnshire.

Susannah, a highly intelligent and capable woman, was responsible for the early education of her children, and remained an influential confidante and advisor to both John and Charles. Both brothers were ordained Church of England ministers, and remained so until their death.

At Oxford University Charles founded and John became leader of a small group of scholars resolved to live ordered and committed Christian lives, in contrast to what they saw as the indolence and laxity of many of their colleagues. This group, variously called "The Holy Club", "Bible moths" and "Methodists" by their detractors, pledged to be regular in private devotions and in receiving Holy Communion, to be careful about their ethical conduct, to meet daily for prayer and Bible study, and to visit the prison once or twice a week.

Although the term "Methodist" Wesley was happy to retain, the dynamic of this Oxford Group was very different from the great Movement that later developed. Put bluntly, at this time its members were mainly concerned to achieve their own personal holiness, and thus to make themselves worthy before God, by acts of devotion, piety and charity. This too, it seems, was the main motivation that led John (who had become a Fellow of Lincoln College) and Charles away from Oxford to missionary work in the American colony of Georgia. This venture, however, proved a great disappointment to both. They returned to London in 1738, not only downcast at their failure in mission to others (they had hardly any contact with Indians they had hoped to convert; Charles was Chaplain to the Colony's Governor, John the minister to the expatriate British congregation in Savannah), but also in despair at how far they were themselves from achieving personal holiness. John summed up their despondency: "I know that every thought, every movement of my heart should bear God's image. But how far I am from God's glory. I feel that I am sold under sin."

It was Peter Boehler, a Moravian living in London, who guided both John and Charles through this crisis. He convinced them that it was precisely their sense of unworthiness that made them ready to receive the free forgiveness and saving grace of God. Good works and holiness would then be the result of, not the precondition for receiving the grace of God through the Holy Spirit. Giving intellectual assent to this doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, John was soon to be assured of its reality in his own experience. On May 24, 1738, at a religious society meeting (after attending Cathedral evensong and hearing Luther's preface to Paul's Letter to the Romans), John "felt his heart strangely warmed." He goes on to record "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." Charles had the same experience three days earlier, and wrote "I am now at peace with God" and in anticipation of his great contribution to come, "He has put a new song in my mouth."

The rest of their lives were spent in spreading this good news of God's free grace far and wide, to all who would listen. It was evident that this would involve preaching outside church buildings, in fields, halls and street corners, because most "common folk" were alienated from, or did not find a welcome in parish churches. Initially reluctant to follow former Oxford colleague George Whitefield in this irregular behaviour for Anglican clergy, he was persuaded by his mother that "this may well be the work of the Holy Spirit." So from 1739 until his death John rode an average of 8,000 miles a year on horseback, through the length and breadth of England, Scotland and Ireland, preaching the Gospel to all who would come and hear. And they did come in their hundreds and thousands, and turning to Christ, were gathered into local Societies and smaller class meetings for spiritual nurture. These Societies were grouped together into a Conference, with John as its overall Superintendent. It was his intention that they should remain within the Church of England, not become a separate denomination. However, John's ordaining preachers for the work in America, (when the Bishop of London, after the War of Independence, refused) made the break inevitable, as Charles foretold with great regret, but it did not occur in the lifetime of the Wesley brothers.

Charles, whose domestic life was much more congenial than John's, settled in Bristol to oversee the work in that area, centred as it was on the first purpose-built Methodist Chapel, the New Room, which is still in use, having escaped the incendiary bombing of World War II. His great contribution to Methodism, and to Christian life more generally, is his legacy of hymns, over 5,000 of them, enabling people to sing their faith in words that convey profound truth in poetic simplicity.

Contributed by Norman Young

27 John Calvin (1509-1564)

reformer of the Church

In May 2009, the 500th anniversary of the birth of the French Reformer Jean (John) Calvin will be acknowledged in Geneva and around the world. Calvin helped consolidate the Reformation movement. He was "second generation" to Martin Luther's initial protest against Catholic indulgences in 1517.

John Knox of Scotland (1514–1572) was another contemporary. Calvin was educated for the Catholic priesthood at the University of Paris and later in law at Orleans.

Calvin's influence as a Reformed theologian was significant in Europe during his years in Geneva. His theology particularly emphasized two central themes: salvation by grace alone, and the Kingdom of God. His *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, first written in Latin in 1536 following his break with Catholicism, are still regarded as a clear authority in some Protestant churches today. In his many confessional documents and other writings, Calvin tried to meld together gospel and practical Christian living.

For Calvin, the Bible was the focal point of church life. All members were to be lifelong students of the Scriptures, which "should be read with a view to finding Christ in them." He wanted to inject conviction and the presence of the Holy Spirit into liturgy and divine worship. Calvin believed that while the Lord's Supper should be central to each worship service, its mystery required protection from profaning sinners. This "godly discipline" led to a tightened access to Holy Communion within the Genevan church.

Calvin also attempted to transform the civil society of his time. He (and other Reformed leaders who lived in Geneva) cooperated with the town council to define the civil codes of the day. Some historians have pointed to this period between the mid-1550s and Calvin's death as one of moral austerity and political control.

Calvin remains controversial. For some, the principal concern is with the emphasis of Calvin's successors on an expanded doctrine of predestination, which led to a fear of hell. Other adherents have seen material prosperity as a sign of God's blessing and its recipients as predestined for salvation. Later, Max Weber named Calvin the "father" of capitalism.

To mark Calvin's anniversary this year, the General Secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Dr. Setri Nyomi, reminded WARC's member churches (Presbyterian, Congregational, Reformed, and Uniting/United), of their origins in the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation. Dr. Nyomi invites us to reflect on three themes from Calvin's life and ministry.

First, Calvin professed a strong call to compassion and social justice. This may have been engrained in him through his flight from persecution, or from his ministry with expelled French refugees in Geneva. He believed that "Where God is taken seriously, humanity is cared for as well."

Second, Calvin wrestled with "the question of whether, and how, the law of God revealed in the Bible . . . was to be obeyed in the political and social order." For him, reconciliation involved justice in society and "the rejection of war [between nations] as a means to serve the Gospel." Calvin believed that "we must live together in a family of brothers and sisters, which Christ has founded with his blood." To Calvin, this family included "barbarians and Moors"—an unpopular view in his day.

Third, despite the realities of the period of the Reformation, Calvin was committed to visible unity through the "one Lord of the one church". He was willing to mediate matters of division to minimize "scandalous" schisms. Historically, however, Reformed churches do not have a good record on visible unity, and commitment to ecumenism is often undermined by internal division. For Calvin, such circumstances were a poor witness to the gospel and inhibited the church's mission in the world as well as the lives of its members. Visible unity remains a challenge for churches to demonstrate the one body of Christ.

To read further, see the December 2007 issue of *Reformed World* with its record of an international consultation of 50 Calvin scholars on the theme of Calvin's legacy for today. The website www.warc.ch contains this issue as well as other material written for Reformation Sunday. The book *The Legacy of John Calvin: Some Actions for the Church in the 21st Century* (edited by Dr. Nyomi) was published by WARC and the John Knox International Reformed Centre in Geneva, and released in July 2008.

Contributed by Judi Fisher

June

3 Pope John XXIII

reformer of the Church

9 Columba of Iona

Christian pioneer

In 563 Columba arrived at the south end of the tiny Scottish Island of Iona along with a dozen Irish monks. He climbed a nearby hill and looked back toward Ireland, but was unable to see it, so he chose to stay on Iona and establish his monastery. Not being able to see his native land meant that he would not be tempted to return. There is a lot of debate about why Columba came to Iona but the most plausible is that he came both out of a sense of mission and of penitence. Columba was a member of the Ui Neil family – the high kings of Ireland - and was a likely candidate for the role of High King, yet he chose the church. He studied under Finnian at Molville and established his own monasteries in the north. It is claimed that Columba took and copied Finnian's Bible, which may have been the latest version by Jerome, or may have been a book of the Psalms. However there was a dispute over ownership of the copy made by Columba and the ruling was 'to every cow belongs its calf'- meaning that the copy belonged to Finnian. Columba refused to give it back. There are stories about how Columba was involved in a battle, either by his praying for the victory of his northern clan, or by physical participation. Whatever the truth of this Columba's decision to become a pilgrim and exile from his country and go to the land of the Picts, to evangelise that nation seems to be connected to this battle and the desire to do something that would redeem his actions.

Columba established a very significant mission on Iona, building close relationships with the King of Dalriada and beginning a systematic evangelical mission to the land of the Picts. It is reported by Adamnan – an Abbot of Columba's Iona monastery who wrote an account of his life – that Columba took his coracle and sailed up the great glen to meet King Brude of the Picts and to convert him to the Christian faith, which he did in fact achieve. Columba is shown to be a man of great courage and determination; a visionary with a passion for God and a mystic, who wrote wonderful poetry and hymns. Columba's missionary purpose was grounded in a deep life of prayer. In the Benedictine Abbey built much later on that site a window in the South wall of the sanctuary depicts in stone a monkey and a cat. The cat speaks of contemplation, the monastic life of the monks, and the monkey tells of the energy and liveliness of the Celtic mission, that reached out to embrace the whole of Scotland with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The wonderfully illustrated Book of Kells originated from Iona giving expression both to Columba's commitment to the Scriptures and to the importance he placed on Beauty as an expression of the Gospel. His life of prayer, his evangelical mission was also coupled with continued involvement in the political and ecclesiastical life of Ireland. He was a great statesman as well as a mystic who inspired in others an abiding faith in God.

O God, who gave to your servant Columba
the gifts of courage, faith and cheerfulness,
and sent people forth from Iona
to carry the word of your gospel to every creature:
grant, we pray, a like spirit to your church,
even at this present time.
Further in all things the purpose of our community,
that hidden things be revealed to us,
and new ways to touch the hearts of all.
May we preserve with each other
sincere charity and peace,
and, if it be your holy will,
grant that this place of your abiding be continued still
to be a sanctuary and a light,
through Jesus Christ.
Amen. (*Prayer by George MacLeod*)

Contributed by Peter Gador-Whyte

9	Ephrem the Syrian	person of prayer
10	Albrecht Ritschl & Adolf von Harnack	Christian thinkers
11	Barnabas	apostle

5 Willem Visser 't Hooft (1900-1985)

reformer of the Church

Visser 't Hooft — “Wim” to friends and colleagues—was the founding general secretary of the World Council of Churches. More than any other individual, he gave enduring shape to the modern ecumenical movement.

After studying theology, including a doctorate at Leiden, he became secretary for international youth work of the World YMCA (1924–32), then general secretary of the World Student Christian Federation. With the decision (1938) to form a world council of churches, the promising young Dutchman was seen as the obvious person to lead it. War intervened. He found himself at a lonely desk in Geneva, just a few kilometres from occupied France, responsible for an embryonic “WCC in process of formation” and struggling to maintain communications with church leaders divided and isolated by the conflict.

With the end of hostilities, Visser 't Hooft set about planning the WCC's inaugural assembly (Amsterdam, 1948). The years that followed involved more than finding staff and setting up an organization. He had to get to know a rapidly growing constituency, come to grips with the dilemmas of churches living under communism, find a path through Cold War tensions, address issues from the emerging so-called Third World and deal with the ecumenical impact of the Second Vatican Council. Above all he had to establish a style of work for the new World Council—an entity for which, as he said, there were no precedents.

After retiring in 1966 he was elected the WCC's honorary president, which meant continuing involvement in the Council's decision-making. With a permanent office in the Ecumenical Centre, he kept in contact with staff and visitors until shortly before his death, from emphysema, at the age of 85.

He was a brilliant man, a deft policy-maker and an effective communicator. A workaholic, he exuded energy. He had clear vision, a sharp mind, imagination, statesmanship, outstanding diplomatic skills and fluency in four languages. It is hard to imagine how the WCC without that rare combination of gifts would ever have seen daylight.

Wim was loved and admired. But he was not easy to work with. Some found him brusque and authoritarian — “more *general* than *secretary*”, went one comment. He did not suffer fools gladly, and into that category most of his colleagues found that, sooner or later, they fell. Mellowing in his later years, though, he always showed a special interest in younger staff—with a special tolerance for their gaffes!

Theologically, Visser 't Hooft owed much to his friend the Swiss theologian Karl Barth. Yet he was no doctrinaire Barthian. Reinhold Niebuhr's Christian realism informed his approach to social ethics and international affairs. He drew insights from a range of theologians, church leaders and, he always stressed, lay people too. For himself, Wim resisted the label *theologian*, preferring to describe his many writings and addresses as “interpretations across confessional and linguistic frontiers of thoughts which I have picked up from the theological pathfinders”.

He was a first-class example of that rare creature, a truly prophetic church policy-maker and administrator. Robert Bilheimer, a WCC associate general secretary for many years, identified what drove his old boss like some 20th century Amos to challenge the ecclesiastical status quo:

The prophetic quality lay in his capacity to discern and his fearlessness in laying out what he discerned . . . Even his insistence on tying the ecumenical movement to the churches, frequently questioned, was prophetic. He understood clearly that the churches were the carriers of the Body of Christ; and an ecumenical movement that was not tied to the churches had no relevance to anything. Given that, Visser 't Hooft could then turn the whole around, bringing “church” to bear on churches in withering analyses. Because he loved the church, he loved the churches.

And because he loved Christ, he loved the church. The gospel was the heart of it all, Christian unity mattered because reconciliation was a gospel imperative, Christ was summoning his scattered people to a renewed obedience, and the pressure of that common calling meant the churches just had to change.

Churchly change, however, comes slowly. In 1974, commenting on the impatience of many, young people especially, Visser 't Hooft wrote:

Those of us who have worked for a long time for the World Council are painfully aware of how frequently opportunities are missed because of visible or concealed brakes. We need the impatient people who call for boldness, imagination and forward-looking hope in action. But there is an impatience which gives up and an impatience which builds up.

Willem Visser 't Hooft had impatience aplenty. But his was the kind that produced a master builder for the ecumenical movement.

Contributed by David Gill

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|-----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 6 | Jan Hus & Peter Waldo | reformers of the Church |
| 8 | Priscilla & Aquila | faithful servants |
| 11 | Benedict of Nursia | person of prayer |

Benedict of Nursia was born around the year 480CE in Umbria, Italy. Four years before his birth the Roman Empire had fallen, and the world into which Benedict was born was one of violence, turmoil, uncertainty and insecurity. Around the age of 19-20 he travelled to Rome to study the liberal arts. However, he found life in the city dissolute and immoral, not to his liking at all. So around the year 500CE he abandoned his studies and went to live in an isolated place near Effide (modern Affile). After living here for about two years he sought deeper solitude. He took up residence in a cave at Subiaco. Romanus, a monk who lived nearby, encouraged him to live the hermit life, supplied him with a habit and on occasions brought him food. Over time he gradually became known for his piety.

When the abbot of a nearby monastery died the monks asked Benedict, even though he was only about 25 years old, to come and be their abbot. Knowing of their way of life, and being unimpressed by it, Benedict was reluctant to go. Eventually he went and unfortunately found his misgivings were confirmed. Their way of life was very different from Benedict's and they were in no mood to be reformed by him. After two attempts to poison him failed, Benedict returned to his solitude. But he was by now well known and people would come to him for spiritual guidance. It was at this point he began the monastic life that would later flourish. In the valley of Subiaco he established 12 small monasteries each with 12 monks and a superior. This success was not received well by the nearby priest who tried to undermine Benedict's efforts. Eventually this opposition got the better of him and he moved the monk's to the famous Monte Cassino, which became and has remained the central home of the Benedictine family. It was here he wrote his famous rule and it was where he died on March 21st 543. Benedict's feast day is July 11th.

Benedict is known mostly for the rule of monastic life that he wrote and which has been the most influential document on Western monasticism. It is very short, about 9000 words, but renowned for its moderation, balance and gentleness, containing as Benedict said, *'nothing harsh, nothing burdensome'*. His aim in writing the Rule was that it should be a guide to living the Gospels. Thus it is saturated with Biblical references and images. The best known parts of the Rule are Chapter 7 on humility and Chapter 53 on welcoming guests to the monastery as Christ.

In our world, which perhaps reflects something of Benedict's with the violence and uncertainty, the voice of this monk is speaking in a fresh way in our time. He calls us to a balance of prayer and work, of seeking to be aware of God's presence everywhere and seeing in all others the presence of Christ. In a world where we can feel life is out of balance, where our environment is in a perilous state and where human divisions abound, perhaps it's a good time to learn the wisdom of Benedict again.

Contributed by Gary Stuckey

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|-----------|---|-------------------------------|
| 12 | Desiderius Erasmus | reformer of the Church |
| 17 | Daniel Thambyrajah (D. T.) Niles | faithful servant |
| 18 | Macrina of Nyssa | person of prayer |
| 22 | Mary Magdalene | witness to Jesus |
| 25 | James the Great | apostle |
| 29 | Mary & Martha of Bethany | witnesses to Jesus |

30 William Wilberforce

renewer of society

Born on 24 August, 1759 in Hull, he was the son of a wealthy merchant, who died in 1768. Brought up by an aunt, he attended Hull Grammar and then St John's College Cambridge in 1776. In 1780, he became member for Kingston upon Hull. He was a close friend of William Pitt and an important independent, because of his eloquence and membership of networks. In 1784 he moved to the influential constituency of Yorkshire and travelled round Europe during 1784-85 in the company of Isaac Milner, who guided him into a deeper commitment to Christ and persuaded him to see a parliamentary career as a Christian vocation. He had two priorities - the suppression of the slave trade and the reformation of manners, setting up a society for that purpose in 1787.

He married Barbara Spooner in 1797. They had two daughters and four sons, brought up in Clapham, where he was part of an influential network of Christian activists. Concerned about the nominal commitment of many Christians, he wrote a best-selling book of 500 pages in 1797 to challenge their limitations. Entitled *A practical view of the prevailing religious system of professed Christians of the higher and middle classes of this country contrasted with real Christianity*, it went through many editions. Wilberforce wrote passionately about the need for recognition of humanity's sinful nature, the need for redemption and the importance of holiness, based on total commitment to the crucified and risen Lord. He thus outlined the main features of 19th century British Evangelicalism and its implications.

In addition, Wilberforce actively supported bodies such as the Church Missionary Society and the Bible Society, as well as assisting Hannah Moore's work. He worked with Thomas Clarkson to achieve the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807, after a wide-ranging combination of debate and publication. Initially supportive of Catholic Emancipation, he became more cautious on this after observing the results of the French Revolution. He helped to open India to Christian missions and was a strong ally of those working for comprehensive Sunday observance.

From 1823, he and his allies worked diligently for the abolition of slavery in the British Empire, a goal achieved just three days before his death, 29 July, 1833. Not always sensitive to social injustice in Britain and becoming more conservative in his later years, he nevertheless contributed to many changes which benefited the poor. His example continues to inspire Evangelicals worldwide to work for spiritual renewal and social justice.

J.Pollock, Wilberforce, 1977; J. Wolffe, The expansion of Evangelicalism, 2007

contributed by Rev Dr Ian Breward

31 Ignatius Loyola

person of prayer

Ignatius Loyola was born in 1491 in the Basque region of northern Spain. He lived in a time that was characterised by both the violent and bewildered imagery of the medieval age and the bright and enthusiastic expectations of the Renaissance. He grew up in a society that was structured around the principles of knightly chivalry, and served as a courtier to the Duke of Najera. In this service he was seriously wounded during the defense of Pamplona in 1521. Until his early years, he was a practicing Catholic though with little intensity in his spirituality. While he was convalescing, however, he yearned to read books of chivalric romance, but the only books available were a Life of Christ and a book of the Lives of the Saints. The more he read of these books, the more there developed in him a desire to reflect on that reading. This reflection led to him making a commitment to serve Christ as his only Captain.

For a time, Ignatius supposed that he would live out this service through pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where he could live in the footsteps of Christ and serve the poor. When this course was closed to him, and because of a sanction from the Inquisition, Ignatius became a student at a number of educational institutions, including the University of Paris. It was during this time that Ignatius began to formalise his own experiences into a program he called *The Spiritual Exercises*. At the same time, there gathered around Ignatius a group of people who recognised his spiritual leadership, and together they formed the Society of Jesus. The *Spiritual Exercises* continue to be a source of blessing for many people, being offered as a means by which the will of God may be discerned, and Christ's presence better experienced. Divided into 4 "weeks" of reflection, the *Exercises* provide opportunity for reflection on our relationship with God, on our experience of the presence and power of Jesus, with an invitation to use imagination to enter into the experiences of the Gospels, and on different ways of prayer through which we can wait more patiently, listen more effectively, and respond more fully to the Word God speaks to us.

Ignatius rightly holds a place in the Calendar of Commemorations as a person of prayer, both from the example of his own life and from the legacy by which he continues to provide guidance to people as we seek to discern the Spirit of Christ in our own living.

A prayer of Ignatius is given us in the “Treasury of Prayers” in *Uniting in Worship 2*:

Teach us, good Lord,
to serve you as you deserve:
to give, and not to count the cost;
to fight, and not to heed the wounds;
to toil, and not to seek for rest;
to labour, and not to ask for any reward,
except that of knowing that we do your holy will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Contributed by Graham Vawser

August

8 Mary MacKillop

Christian pioneer

HYMN – written by Ross Mackinnon, based on some of Mary MacKillop’s sayings
Suggested tune: MARYTON (TIS 601)

Remember, we’re but travellers here,
urged on by Christ to take our cross.
When this feels hard at times, take heart.
Our courage rises; Christ is near.

And as we go, we trust in God,
in God who helps us in all things.
God gives us strength for what we need,
and courage to stay on the road.

And on the way, how must we choose?
We must let God’s great Spirit guide;
do all we can with what we have
and calmly leave the rest to God.

And on the track, when needs are seen,
We must not leave ‘til they are met,
for we must teach, more by our deeds
than by our words, as Christ has shown.

10	Laurence	martyr
11	Christine Kilham	Christian pioneer
12	Ann Griffiths	person of prayer
13	Florence Nightingale & Edith Cavell	renewers of society
14	Maximilian Kolbe	martyr
15	Mary, mother of Jesus	witness to Jesus
18	Helena, mother of Constantine	faithful servant

20 Bernard of Clairvaux

person of prayer

Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) was a complex and many-sided character. He was a Cistercian abbot and monastic reformer, a spiritual writer of exceptional depth and beauty, an ecclesiastical statesman who advised kings, cardinals and popes, a preacher of crusades and a dogged opponent of heresy.

He was undoubtedly the most commanding Church leader in the first half of the twelfth century and one of the great spiritual masters of all times. He left his mark on schools of spirituality, monasticism, theology, worship, church music, church administration, art and architecture. Almost everything that he did had a tremendous effect in shaping the course of history.

Born to minor nobility at Fontaines-les-Dijon, Bernard entered the recently founded 'New Monastery' of Cîteaux in Burgundy, France, in 1112, bringing with him some thirty friends and relatives whom he had persuaded to join him. Three years later, Bernard, then only twenty-four or twenty-five, was sent to found a new monastery at Clairvaux ('Valley of Light') in Champagne, which became the most successful Cistercian house in Europe. From this time Bernard's fame spread and reluctantly he began to enter public affairs. Popes, bishops, abbesses (including Hildegard of Bingen), almost anyone in difficulty, sought his advice and support.

Bernard led a remarkable public life. He intervened (not always appropriately) in ecclesiastical elections to ensure the appointment of reform-minded candidates. He arbitrated disputes and resolved papal schism. He supported bright young men such as Peter Lombard, Robert Pullen (one of the early Masters at Oxford), and John of Salisbury (who became bishop of Chartres). Although a monk he spent more than a third of his time traversing Europe resolving disputes, upbraiding popes and emperor, dislodging archbishops, defending orthodoxy, pursuing heretics, writing prolifically, and leading the broadest reform movement in monastic history. Aware of the incongruity of his busy life, Bernard wrote that, 'I am like a little bird that has not yet grown feathers, nearly all the time outside its dear nest, at the mercy of wind and storm'. It would be easy to censure Bernard for being drawn so heavily into politics, especially when he preached a very different set of priorities, but his manner of living—struggling to be in the world but not of it—inspired and challenged other spiritual and political leaders of the time to be more devoted to Christ in their daily life.

Primarily, Bernard is remembered as a master of the spiritual life rather than as a statesman or ecclesiastical diplomat. And although his writings were mostly addressed to those living the monastic life, his prayerful, pastoral approach to theology was and still is attractive to many outside monastic cloisters. In Bernard's theology there is a comprehensive and cohesive 'theology of experience'. Experience is the distinguishing mark of his thought. His spirituality embraced notions of desire, delight, love, awe, wonder and anticipation. He treated religious experience as the gateway to God, beginning with introspection and self-knowledge and ending with the contemplation of and direct knowledge of God. Bernard effectively took Anselm's classic dictum, 'I believe so that I might understand', so characteristic of the scholastic approach to theology, and supplanted it with one of his own, 'I believe so that I might experience'.

Bernard speaks of the spiritual life as a kind of interior pilgrimage whereby one passes from lower to higher forms of love. This is clearly illustrated in his little classic *On the Love of God* where he traces the spiritual journey in terms of four degrees of love: human or carnal love, self-interested love of God; filial love of God; and a selfless love of God. For Bernard the body is important; the spiritual life begins with human nature and utilises human feelings such as desire, friendship, love, affection, and deep and unexplainable attachments to discover one's capacity and longing for God. Similarly, in Bernard's great masterpiece, *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, he discusses various themes on the love of God and the movement towards union with God.

Bernard was one of the few medieval theologians that the Protestant reformers spoke of with praise. Both Luther and Calvin valued him as an ally and quoted him extensively. Luther ranked Bernard alongside the Latin 'Fathers' of the Western Church: Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose and Gregory the Great. Luther appreciated Bernard's devotion to the humanity of Christ and regarded him as an outstanding preacher and witness to the gospel. In recent times Bernard has been described as a 'forerunner of the Reformation' and an 'evangelical Catholic'.

Bernard is a key literary source of hope and encouragement in the Christian life. His influence is still felt in the joyfulness of Francis of Assisi, the devotion in Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*, and in the oratorios of J. S. Bach. His theology has much that is worthy of the modern church's attention. It captures the best elements of both Catholicism and Protestantism. He emphasized teachings precious to Protestants such as confidence in God's grace, conversion and salvation through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ; he also honoured Catholic teachings on the sacraments, the saints and of the necessity of the Church.

Contributed by William Emilsen

20	William & Catherine Booth	reformers of the Church
24	Bartholomew	apostle
28	Augustine of Hippo	Christian thinker

31 John Bunyan **faithful servant**

John Bunyan is best remembered for his allegorical novel, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, but perhaps he should best be remembered as a fearless preacher.

Bunyan was born in November 1628 in Bedfordshire, England, at a time of religious unrest. Growing up, he had a reputation for enjoying life to the full, but he married a woman with a strong faith, and through her influence joined a local non-conformist church. The change from blasphemer to preacher intrigued the population of Bedford, and his preaching increased in popularity and power.

After the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, the meeting-houses of the non-conformists were closed by Act of Parliament, and preaching other than in authorized parish churches was forbidden. Bunyan, however, continued to preach throughout the countryside, and was arrested and gaoled for twelve years. It was while in prison that most of his books and articles were written.

Religious intolerance had meanwhile decreased, and after he was freed he became a pastor, again spending much time preaching throughout the countryside. His boldness led him to be imprisoned for six months in 1675, and it was during this time that he wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

The spirit of God was so strong in Bunyan that he could not stop sharing the gospel no matter what the consequences. His boldness and confidence in God in all situations is reflected in his hymn "Who would true valour see" (*TiS* 561; *AHB* 467). John Bunyan's life and works are remembered on 31st August.

Contributed by Ruth Slater

31	<u>Liyapidiny</u>	Christian pioneer
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September

1	George Brown & John Thomas	Christian pioneers
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4	Albert Schweitzer	Christian pioneer
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Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965), one of the best-known missionaries of the twentieth century, was born in Kayersberg, Alsace. He was extraordinarily gifted, intellectually brilliant and blessed with a robust constitution. His biographer, George Seaver, called him 'probably the most gifted genius of our age'. By the age of thirty he had achieved distinction in the two disparate fields of music and theology. He was an authority on the life and works of J.S. Bach, a renowned organist, expert on organ building and significant figure in the Organ Revival in the early twentieth century. In theology he is best remembered for *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1906), one of the most influential theological books of the twentieth century.

Thereafter, the apocalyptic element in the gospels—the sense of crisis, judgement, and the impending end of the world—had to be taken seriously. No longer could Christians be content with an image of Jesus as a civilized man of the nineteenth or twentieth century. And never again could preachers and scholars separate the teaching of Jesus from Jesus himself.

In 1906 Schweitzer began studying medicine and in 1913 he gave up his academic career as a theologian to devote himself to the care of the sick and to missionary activities at Lambaréné (French Equatorial Africa). For various reasons, he wanted to put the religion of love (the essential element in Christianity) into practice rather than talk about it. The prime reason for going to Africa, he explains in his reminiscences, *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest* (1922) was to do penance for the wrongs that Africans had suffered at the hands of Europeans—especially the introduction of disease and the slave trade. Schweitzer believed that Europeans (like the rich man, Dives, in the biblical parable), had sinned against the people of Africa (the poor man at their gate), in that they had accepted the advantages of medical science and technology without putting themselves in the poor man's place.

Schweitzer advocated an ethic based on 'reverence for life', including animal and plant life. For Schweitzer, it was good to maintain life and further life; it was bad to damage and destroy life. Only by means of reverence for life, in Schweitzer's view, can we establish a spiritual and humane relationship with all living creatures. A person is ethical when life is considered sacred and when that person devotes him or herself fully to those in need of help. Even as a child he was gripped by the sacredness of life. His night-time prayer was: 'O heavenly Father, protect and bless all things that have breath; guard them from all evil, and let them sleep in peace.'

Schweitzer received numerous awards including the Nobel Peace prize in 1953. In putting into practice 'reverence for life', he became a symbol throughout the world of human dignity, service, and an example of the power of compassion in a time of genocide and mass hatred.

Contributed by William W. Emilsen

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|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 5 | Robert Browne | reformer of the Church |
| 5 | Mother Teresa of Calcutta | faithful servant |

Born Agnes Bojaxhiu in 1910 of Albanian parents at Skopje, Yugoslavia, she was one of three children. She attended the government school but also had good priests who helped the boys and girls to follow their vocation according to the call of God. At twelve she first knew she had a vocation to the poor. While at school she became a member of the Sodality. At that time the Yugoslav Jesuits had accepted to work in the Calcutta Archdiocese. One of them sent enthusiastic letters about the mission field. These letters were read regularly to the Sodalists. Young Agnes was one who wanted to become a missionary and volunteered. Toward the end of 1928 she was sent to Loreto Abbey in Dublin, Ireland and from there to India to begin her noviciate.

For twenty years she taught geography at St Mary's High School in Calcutta. For a few years she was principal of the school. She was also in charge of the Daughters of St Anne, the Indian religious order attached to the Loreto Sisters. She loved teaching but then came a change of direction. In 1946 she was going to Darjeeling to make her retreat. In the train she heard the call to give up all and follow Christ into the slums to serve him among the poorest of the poor. First she had to get permission from the ecclesiastical authorities to live outside the cloister and work in the Calcutta slums. In 1948 Mother Teresa laid aside the Loreto habit and clothed herself in a white sari with blue border and cross on the shoulder. She went to Patna for three months to the American Medical Missionary Sisters for intensive nursing training. By Christmas she was back in Calcutta living with the Little Sisters of the Poor.

She began by going into homes to see the children and the sick. Then she started a little school. She also gave practical lessons on hygiene. Gradually the work grew and other women came to help and provide support. The first ten girls who came to help were all students Mother Teresa had taught. One by one they surrendered themselves to serve the poorest of the poor. In 1950 the new congregation of The Missionaries of Charity was instituted in Calcutta. Other helpers came. Doctors and nurses came on a voluntary basis to help. In 1952 the Home for the Dying was opened. This began when she literally picked up a dying woman from the street. The hospital only took her in because Mother Teresa refused to move until they accepted her. From there she went to the municipality and asked for a place to bring dying people. She was given the use of an empty Hindu temple. She wanted to make the destitute feel they are wanted and so are shown human and divine love. A Children's Home was established in 1955. Work among lepers began in 1957 when five lepers came because they had lost their jobs.

In 1963 the Archbishop of Calcutta blessed the beginnings of a new branch, The Missionary Brothers of Charity. In 1965 The Missionaries of Charity became a society of pontifical right, which showed the appreciation of the Pope for the work. The work spread to other parts of India, then to other poor areas in the cities of the world. They seek to express the love of God holding that Christ is found in the sacrament and in the slums; in the "little" people they seek to help. In later years she travelled, such as to assist and minister to the hungry in Ethiopia, the radiation victims at Chernobyl and earthquake victims in Armenia.

Mother Teresa is remembered as a person who served the poorest of the poor and inspired others to do so also. She saw the poor ones in the world's slums as like the suffering Christ. In them God's Son lives and dies and through them she saw God's face. For her prayer and service were bound together.

Her voice and example are heard today in her emphasis on the needs of the poorest of the poor, in seeing Christ in them, and in holding that prayer and compassionate action are both required.

Contributed by Chris Walker

17 Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)

person of prayer

Hildegard of Bingen, renowned for her spirituality in her day, was a German Benedictine abbess of the twelfth century. She was a poet, theologian, composer, artist, playwright, healer, visionary and advisor to eminent church authorities. Hildegard was the tenth child of a noble family who, at age eight, went to live with the reclusive Jutta von Spanheim, at the monastery of Saint Disibod in Disibodenberg. She took her vows at 15 and on Jutta's death in 1136 became leader of the convent.

Hildegard achieved fame when her remarkable work, *Scivias*, a record of her visions, was approved by Pope Eugenius who publicised it widely. Between 1147 and 1150, over the objections of the officials at Disibodenberg, Hildegard moved her community to Ruperstberg, near Bingen on the Rhine. In 1165, she founded a second convent at Eibingen.

Hildegard, despite frequent attacks of ill health, possessed extraordinary energy. During her long life she produced three books of visionary theology, several collections of writings on natural history and medicine, 77 songs and *Ordo Vitutum* the earliest surviving liturgical morality play. Hildegard is of contemporary interest with her appreciation of the feminine, her emphasis on the relationship between soul, mind and body. Her inspirational music has been widely recorded—especially by the group *Sequentia*.

Since the fifteenth century, when her name was incorporated into the Roman Martyrology, she has been remembered on 17 September.

Contributed by Carolyn Craig-Emilsen

18 Dag Hammarskjold

faithful servant

20 John Hunt & Pacific Martyrs

martyrs

21 Matthew

witness to Jesus

22 Lazarus Lamilami

faithful servant

By any measure Lazarus Lamilami Namadumbur (1906–77) was a remarkable man. He was handsome, intelligent and physically strong. His broad smile, quiet chuckle and warmth of presence instantly drew people to him. He was a sailor, carpenter, pastor, translator, and interpreter. He spoke five Aboriginal languages as well as English. He initiated the beginnings of an Aboriginal literary tradition. He was awarded an MBE (1968), elected to the council of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, a part-time lecturer at Nungalinga College in Darwin, and the first ordained Aboriginal Methodist Minister in Australia. Lamilami moved almost effortlessly between two cultures and was much respected by Indigenous and European alike.

Lamilami was born among the Maung people on the Northern Territory mainland directly opposite South Goulburn Island (Waruwi). At about the age of eight he attended the school on Goulburn Island established by James Watson, the first Methodist missionary to Arnhem Land, in 1916. Amy Corfield was the teacher in the school for its first three years and her unpublished diary in the Mitchell Library in Sydney gives a unique perspective of the carefree life of the pupils in the school. Schoolboys like the young Lazarus spent much of their time before or after lessons fishing, hunting, trepanging, singing, corroboreeing and even learning to play rugby. Though his schooling was restricted Lamilami took advantage of the opportunities he was given. He was taught elementary English, mathematics, scripture, animal husbandry and gardening. Later, as an adolescent he learnt carpentry at the Mission and worked in that trade during the war years and afterwards. The anthropologist Ronald Berndt says in the Foreword to Lamilami's autobiography, *Lamilami Speaks* (1975) that he was "fortunate in having Methodist teachers and guides who were not bigots and who, although they knew little of the traditional life going on around them, were not actively opposed to it."

As a young man Lamilami worked on the mission lugger and various boats in and out of Darwin. It was during this time (c.1946) that he was converted by the prayerful example of a wireless operator, named Bell, about whom we have no other details. A few years after Lamilami's conversion, George Calvert Barber, the President-General of the Methodist Church in Australasia, met up with Lamilami on a visit to North Australia. In Calvert Barber's report on the visit, he described Lamilami as a "sturdy figure with a radiant face and steadfast assurance [who] appealed for a deeper understanding among all the people of the world." Calvert Barber was particularly impressed by the reality of Jesus in Lamilami's life: "Jesus", Lamilami told Calvert Barber, "is my friend and I must keep on trying to do my best for Him. He does not fail me and he won't fail anyone who comes to Him. Colour does not matter to Jesus, and we must not let colour stop us from being friends in Him."

In the mid 1950s Lamilami was trained as a Local Preacher and then selected to deputation work in New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania. It was the heyday of the Federal Government's and the Methodist Church's policy of assimilation and there were huge expectations placed on Lamilami's shoulders. He was held up as an example of what the Methodist Mission could produce in Arnhem Land. He was variously named a "trail blazer", a "worthy ambassador", the face of assimilation, and the "first fruits" of what was generally considered slow and difficult work among the Aboriginal people in the North. Throughout the 1950s and '60s the Methodist *Missionary Magazine* published numerous photographs (including the accompanying charcoal sketch) of a smiling, smartly-dressed Lamilami meeting church dignitaries, opening new churches, preaching in the open air, and speaking to the General Conference of the Methodist Church. For Australian Methodism Lamilami represented a "new era" in mission and a new future for Aboriginal people. Now that the protection days were over, the "Christian conscience" believed that Australian Aboriginals would now be "educated for Australian citizenship, and . . . be integrated into the Australian community."

In 1966, at the age of 57, Lamilami was ordained in the small but picturesque church at Waruwi. His ordination was further evidence to the church of "spiritual advance"—an Aboriginal man had become a minister in a district where until then only Europeans, Fijians, Tongans and Rotumans had laboured. For the next ten years Lamilami faithfully ministered to an Aboriginal and European congregation at Croker Island (Minjilang). With great grace and dignity he straddled two cultures, becoming for many a "bridge of understanding". Although he did embrace some European ways and values, especially the importance of education for his people, he remained proud of his Aboriginal culture and never lost touch with his Maung "homeland. His dream, yet unfulfilled, was that one day there would be centre for Maung, Gunwinggu and Iwidja culture set up in West Arnhem Land, where the heritage of language, dance and song could be passed on.

Lamilami died on 21 September 1977 after a short illness. At his funeral in Darwin, Bernard Clarke, the Director of Mission and Service in the United Church in North Australia, identified Lazarus Lamilami's lasting legacy: "As he [Lamilami] sought understanding and reconciliation between cultures, so he sought to understand the Gospel as an Aboriginal man. . . . [H]e understood that the challenge of the Gospel was to follow in Christ's footsteps. He knew this was a narrow path, but he also knew that not all the signposts were in English. . . . As he found other signposts drawn from his heritage and culture he shared them and the way was clearer for us all."

Contributed by William Emilsen

23 Henri Nouwen (1932-1996)

faithful servant

Henri Nouwen was a well-known spiritualist and psychologist whose writings have been available to people in four continents. His teachings have helped seekers to develop authentic paths in providing space for others, for Christ to enter their lives and to make space for themselves.

During my studies at Yale Divinity School I was enrolled as a practical theology major, what we would recognize in Australia as Pastoral Theology. I took my first course taught by Henri in the Spring Semester of 1973. It was called "Ministry as Hospitality." In that course we students did theological and personal exploration of God's hospitality to us, how that spoke to our calling to ministry and how we, then, participated in the hospitality of Christ, which was about making space without conditions for others. We were also challenged about being open to the hospitality that we would receive in return. It was a way of recognizing that two people were both strangers in a hospitable space whereby we could offer and receive the gift of the other and no longer be "strangers".

The hardest part for those of us ministry students out to save the world (or at least those that would eventually be in our pastoral care) was that Henri offered a teaching that challenged our perceived responsibility to change other people.

Instead he wanted us to step back while still being present and to offer others a space in which they could make change. It also meant that we had to be open to being changed by our “guest”.

Henri was a practical teacher. He wanted his students to experience what he was teaching, which included completely new (unfamiliar) ways of being a guest in order to understand how to be a host. One of those experiences was to accompany Henri for a week, in the middle of winter, to Mount Savior, a Benedictine Monastery near Elmira in Western New York State, about 440 km northwest of New York City. Having a fixed idea of what a monastery would look and be like, the first shock was to find that Mount Savior was a fully operational farm with each monk contributing skills that ensured its viability. Interwoven with looking after livestock (and winter work like repairing furniture or re-binding books) was the observance of worship called “vigils”. For a daughter of New England Congregationalism it was a new experience to slide in knee-deep snow down the long hill from the women’s guesthouse for the first vigil of the day, which in February was an hour before dawn. The monks made themselves available for conversations as well as providing spaces of quiet where we could learn to be available for God. Henri was their guest as we were.

Back at Yale Divinity School we would reflect often on that experience and others in learning what it meant to be hospitable in ministry as well as how to do hospitality in ministry. Henri shared with us what it meant to be “useless” for Christ. That is, not becoming trapped by the idea that our ministry to others was valid only if it was “useful” by the standards of contemporary life. This was my first “ministry formation” class—although that language was not used at that time.

Henri was my teacher and later an important friend in the time that followed my years at Yale. His letters to Harry and me during the time of our first child’s illness and death offered love and support and let us know that he felt our pain. Even after he left Yale we would hear from him by letters or through a mutual friend, Virginia (“Enie”) van Dooran, of his continued search for the spaces that would answer his own call to be host and guest in the name of Christ.

It remains important for us to hear Henri’s wisdom, to learn to live in the hospitable space he creates for us in the name of Christ, and to make that space available to others.

Contributed by Meg Herbert

27 James Watson

Christian pioneer

October

4 Clare & Francis of Assisi

faithful servants

Francis of Assisi (c.1182-1226) and Clare of Assisi (c.1194-1253) are among the best-loved saints in the Christian tradition. Over the centuries they have captured the hearts and imaginations of men and women of all nationalities and creeds. People everywhere have been attracted to their manifest spirituality, their Christlike nature, and their genuine simplicity, devotion and compassion. Their lives are increasingly relevant to today’s world: in 1979 Pope John Paul II named Francis as ‘Patron Saint of Ecology’ and recent studies of Clare portray her not only as a fervent disciple of Francis but also as a new leader of women and ‘a light for our time’. Francis and Clare shared a similar vision—a love of the crucified Christ and a desire to lead a biblically-inspired, simple life modelled on the example of Christ in the Gospels. The chief characteristics of their spirituality may be treated under four headings: poverty, contemplation or prayer, mission and creation.

Francis and Clare embraced voluntary poverty because they wanted to imitate Jesus who had made himself poor for us (2 Cor. 8.9). Christ’s freely-chosen material poverty defined their whole manner of life. Francis’ understanding of poverty was shaped by Christ’s total obedience to the will of the Father. He saw in Jesus’ obedience a revelation of the humility of God. Clare, on the other hand, had a more ascetical understanding of poverty. She focussed her devotion on the ‘poor Christ’. For Clare, the spiritual life consisted of conforming oneself to the poor Christ by the observance of the most perfect poverty. Poverty was the door to contemplation. By living in poverty, Clare maintained, one might enter upon the ‘narrow’ way that leads to the kingdom of heaven. Following Christ’s example, both Clare and Francis vowed to use only that which was needed and to live without owning anything—no lands, no income, no saving up ‘for a rainy day’, no possessions beyond what was needed for daily life. Poverty was a source of their joy and freedom. It was a treasure to be sought, the ‘pearl of great price’.

Both Clare and Francis emphasized the close association between poverty and prayer (contemplation). For Clare, the 'poor Christ' was a mirror into which she gazes. She was awe-struck by the poverty of Him who was placed in the manger. She was overwhelmed by the mystery of God's love that led Christ to suffer on the Cross. Her prayer gives us insight into her life of contemplation: 'Gaze upon Him, consider (Him), contemplate Him.' Her way of being was to be a mirror to others living in the world. Clare was careful to point out that no other work was to supersede the spirit of prayer and devotion. For Francis, however, contemplation was focused on the Eucharist. Participation in the Eucharist was tantamount to the apostles' own experience of being with the earthly and incarnate Jesus. Thus, the mystery of the Eucharist enabled Francis to 'see' the poor and crucified Christ and to respond in a similar form of humility. The simple prayer that Francis taught his followers expresses his intense devotion to the Eucharist: 'We adore You, Lord Jesus Christ, in all your churches throughout the world, and we bless You, for through Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.'

Francis' idea of poverty was also linked to his understanding of mission. In poverty Francis found a freedom that fostered reconciliation. In the spirit of poverty he urged his followers to adopt a simple, non-polemical style of missionary presence, to renounce any desire to dominate, and to minister mostly among the poor. Francis was accustomed to saying, 'The poor are sacraments of Christ for in them we see the poor and humble Christ.' When a brother asked if it were proper to feed some robbers, he responded affirmatively, for in every person he saw a possible thief and in every thief a possible brother or sister.

Finally, Francis' concern for the environment was also shaped by his devotion to Christ. While the whole created order is a reminder of God's goodness and to be received as gift, there are certain things that are worthy of our special love and care because they symbolise aspects of the nature and activity of Christ. Thus, rocks reminded Francis of the rock that was Christ, lambs of the Lamb of God, trees of the Cross, and lights of the Light of the World. In Francis' magnificent hymn, the 'Canticle of Brother Sun', he expresses his vision of a reconciled world that reflects the poor and crucified Christ. This, it is commonly said, is the deepest meaning of the Francis' stigmata: his being becomes what he 'sees', he lives the life of Christ as literally as it is humanly possible.

Contributed by William Emilsen

4	Seluvaia Ma'u	martyr
6	William Tyndale (c.1494-1556)	reformer of the Church

Born to a yeoman family in Stinchcombe, Gloucestershire, where Lollard influences appear to have survived, he studied in Magdalen Hall, Oxford from 1510-15, gaining an MA and being ordained, possibly in 1514. He appears to have met Erasmus when he was teaching in Cambridge, gaining from him a passionate commitment to translation of the Bible⁴ into the vernacular. For some 18 months, he lived with Sir John and Lady Walsh in Little Sodbury, possibly as a tutor, and took a lively part in the theological discussion in their home. Suspected of unorthodoxy, he translated Erasmus' Enchiridion to underline his Christian commitment. He needed episcopal support to translate the New Testament, but Bishop Tunstall of London refused that in late 1523. Tyndale, however, had built up support among London merchants like Humphrey Monmouth, who later were to help to distribute his translations.

He went to Hamburg in early 1524 and later that year moved to Wittenberg. His New Testament translation was published in Cologne in 1525 and Worms in 1526 after narrowly escaping confiscation by the authorities. Some copies reached England in 1526. Many were burnt and Sir Thomas More, in his Dialogue concerning heresies published in 1529, attacked numerous alleged errors in translation, claiming that English was not a suitable language for conveying theological truth. Tyndale forcibly replied the following year in Answer to More, to which More replied in his Confutation. Tyndale was living clandestinely in Antwerp, supported by some English merchants there. In addition to continuing his translations, he wrote on aspects of Christian discipleship in Parable of the wicked Mammon and Obedience of a Christian man in 1528 and Practice of prelates in 1530. For a time he was assisted by George Joye, but their partnership broke up because of deep differences over translation.

Thomas Cromwell made several attempts to contact Tyndale through Stephen Vaughan, but his attempts to persuade Tyndale to return home failed, because he did not trust the goodwill of Henry VIII. Fluent in Hebrew and Greek, Tyndale also made discerning use of Luther in Prologue to Romans (1528) the Pentateuch (1530), Jonah (1531), Genesis 1534). He was constantly frustrated by printing mistakes, but was an outstanding translator, putting the Scriptures into vivid and readily understandable English which still resonates with readers.

A sharp critic of the papacy and medieval formularies, he was constantly at the risk of arrest. Finally betrayed by Henry Phillips, he was imprisoned at Vilvorde near Brussels in May, 1534 on the orders of Henry VIII. His trial for heresy was very comprehensive, but he continued to revise the New Testament and translate the Old Testament. He was strangled and burnt on 6 October, 1536.

Though sometimes abrasive personally, he could also be warm and generous in pastoral care. He demonstrated the positive features of Reformation discipleship. His translations were incorporated into officially approved English Bibles up to the Authorised Version, so that his influence continued until late in the 20th century.

D. Daniell, William Tyndale, 1994; A.M.O'Donnell, Independent Works of William Tyndale, 1998.

Contributed by Rev Dr Ian Breward

11 Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531)

reformer of the Church

His father was a respected farmer in Wildhaus, St. Gallen. Two brothers became priests and two sisters nuns. Little is known of his early years but he studied in Basel (1494), Bern (1496-98); Vienna (1498-1502). He gained his MA in 1506. Widely read in the Fathers and current humanism, he was deeply attracted by Erasmus and his scholarship. Ordained in 1506, he became parish priest in Glarus till 1516, taking time out in 1513 and 1515 to be a military chaplain. That experience left him strongly opposed to mercenary service. His next position was at the Benedictine Abbey at Einsiedeln, where he did further study of Greek, using Erasmus' New Testament and further consolidated his reputation as a fine preacher.

That led in 1518 to an invitation to be people's priest in the Old Minster in Zurich. Beginning on New Year's Day, 1519, he undertook to preach through biblical books, instead of confining himself to the readings of the lectionary. At this stage, he had no commitment to reform, but a near- death experience from plague in 1519 altered his priorities, both in his personal life and in his ministry. In 1522, he began to live with Anna Reinhart, a widow, while at the same time criticising abuses in the Zurich churches and community. His critique of fasting led to disregard of these rules. The Bishop of Constance was concerned at this breach. Disputations on the matter in January and November, 1523 aroused intense interest and led to the civic authorities removing the Minster from the bishop's jurisdiction and supporting some of Zwingli's suggestions for change.

Images, pictures and organs were removed, the Mass was simplified and Zwingli established a combined school and seminary. Religious houses were sold and the proceeds used to set up a welfare fund. A marriage tribunal took over the role of the bishop's court. Zwingli married his de facto wife in April, 1524. By 1525, sharp differences were emerging about reform. Some clergy believed that Zwingli was too cautious. They set up fellowships outside parish structures and began rebaptising adults who confessed their faith. Zwingli rejected their views on pure churches and underlined the partnership of Council and Church. Some dissenters were exiled. Others were drowned as a punishment. Such were beginnings of the radical reformation.

Zwingli believed that reforming centres should form political alliances. A conference was held in Marburg in 1529 to this end. Much agreement was achieved, but Luther and Zwingli disagreed about the real presence in the Mass. Zwingli sent a version of his beliefs to the meeting in Augsburg in 1530, hoping that a coalition could be created against the Habsburgs. That was not successful. It was not even possible to achieve a union of Swiss cantons. Attempts to preach reform in the Forest cantons led to civil war and Zwingli's death at the second Battle of Kappel in November, 1531. Catholicism was allowed back into Zurich.

Zwingli did not establish an international reform movement, but his teaching on God's sovereignty and covenant, the sacraments and church- state relations brought Word and Spirit together in a vital partnership, which was influential in parts of Germany and the British Isles.

G.W. Locher, Zwingli's thought, 1981; W.P. Stephens, Theology of Huldrych Zwingli, 1986

Contributed by Rev Dr Ian Breward

12 Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845)

renewer of society

The year was 1813. As Elizabeth entered the Women's Cell of the Newgate Prison in England she saw a child, dead. Beside him were two women stripping the corpse of the clothing. The clothes were then placed on another child, who might have been five years of age.

This experience prompted Elizabeth to speak to the prisoners from her own perspective of motherhood and in so doing gradually brought about radical prison reform. And radical reform was needed. In Newgate there were three hundred women prisoners with their children. The prison was indescribably filthy. Prisoners were unclassified and unemployed. Favours, and what money was available, brought ample quantities of liquor into the women's prison. In those days prisoners were treated as if they were less than human. Hundreds died of starvation, and of disease caused by foul air and cramped quarters. And once when a fire broke out in an Irish gaol, fifty-four prisoners were left to perish. Men and women, murderers, those suffering severe psychiatric disorders, debtors, pickpockets and children were thrown together in stinking underground cellars without light or bedding.

Elizabeth Fry grew up in a Quaker home which was not ready for her determination, commitment and passion for the wellbeing of the prisoners of Newgate. Her father actively tried to dissuade her. But aided by her husband Joseph she kept an open and frugal house from which she fulfilled her ministry. She arranged schools for the poor and the distribution of garments, medicine and food to the destitute. And all this in addition to the work of prison reform for which she is justly revered.

In 1817 Elizabeth founded the Association for the Improvement of Female Prisons. The beneficial work that the Association did soon became known right around the world. She travelled to many European countries in the cause of prison reform. And this reform included the prison ships that brought convicts to Australia. At her urging the colony of New South Wales had to organize appropriate housing and work for the new arrivals.

Her work did not stop with prison reform. In the notably severe winter of 1819/20 Elizabeth organized shelter and soup kitchens for the homeless in London and in Brighton. Aware that some occupations, like the Coastguard Service, could at times create idleness and boredom, she started a library service to relieve that problem.

Some of Elizabeth's convictions are worthy of note even now, especially now. She protested against solitary confinement and the darkness of prison cells. "Solitary confinement", she said, "was too cruel even for the greatest crimes, and sufficient to unhinge the mind."

Elizabeth Fry died on 12 October 1845. In the words of one biographer "Elizabeth lit, in the black hell of women's prisons in Europe, a spark that was to grow into the floodlight of reform."

Contributed by Grahame Ellis

15 Teresa of Avila & John of the Cross

people of prayer

HYMN – written by Ross Mackinnon, based on a prayer of Teresa of Avila
Suggested tune: NIAGARA (TiS 530)

Christ has no body now, but ours;
No hands, no feet on earth, but ours.
Ours are the eyes with which Christ looks
Compassion into all the world.

Ours are the feet with which Christ walks
to serve all those who are in need.
Ours are the hands which Christ can use
To love and touch and bless the world.

Ours are the hands, ours are the feet
Ours are the eyes, for Christ to use.
His body then, we take the road
To love and serve as he has done.

18 Luke

witness to Jesus

Luke ('the beloved physician')

(Greek: *Loukas* = luminous, white)

The name Luke occurs only three times in our New Testament (Philemon 24, '... Demas and Luke, my fellow workers'; Col 4:14, 'Luke the beloved physician'; and 2Tim 4:11, 'Only Luke is with me'), but authorship of the third gospel (and by association, *The Acts of the Apostles*) is also attributed to him from early times. Part of the evidence for this claim comes from the 'we' passages in Acts 16; 20-21 and 27 onwards, describing sea voyages with Paul, where it seems that the author himself suddenly joins the story in Troas. Luke remains with Paul until the end (Acts 28:16 and 2Tim 4:11), though he refrains from telling us the sad story of Paul's death.

Further evidence in support of these connections is given in the *Anti-Marcionite Prologue to the Gospel of Luke*, containing the following Greek section that may date as early as the second century:

Luke: a native of Antioch, by profession a physician. He had become a disciple of the apostle Paul and later followed Paul until his (Paul's) martyrdom. Having served the Lord continuously, unmarried and without children, filled with the Holy Spirit, he died at the age of 84 years in Boeotia (Greece).

It was Luke's genius that set the story of Jesus in the wider world of the Roman Empire (Lk 2:1; 3:1) and then continued it into the story of the earliest followers (Acts). He did this in sensitive continuity with the Jewish traditions, yet in a way that rehabilitated Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, as the great missionary who took the Gospel beyond the boundaries of Judea.

We owe to Luke's research and 2-volume narrative the conceptual and chronological framework for our understanding of the events following Jesus' death: from Passover to Pentecost, from First Fruits to the full harvest. We also are indebted to Luke's honesty for our awareness of the considerable tensions between the earliest communities of Jesus-followers (Acts 6; 15; and 21, for example), and for his vibrant portrayal of the movement of God's Spirit amongst diverse ethnic groups — a movement which the Apostles sometimes struggled to comprehend and affirm.

Traditionally, Luke has been the patron saint of artists, physicians, students, teachers and butchers (Feast Day, October 18). Given the particular emphases of the Lukan tradition, we might also suggest he should be seen today as patron saint of single people, the childless, researchers, historians, and of multi-ethnic communities.

Contributed by Keith Dyer

23 James, brother of Jesus

apostle

James ('the brother of Jesus', 'the Just', '*Adelphotheos*' — brother of God, first 'Bishop of Jerusalem')

(Greek: *Iakobos*, a variant of the Hebrew name *Ya'akov*, Jacob = supplanter, heel)

There are 42 mentions of the name James (*Iakobos*) in the New Testament — referring to as many as 7 different people — and a further 27 uses of Jacob (*Iakob*), referring to the Hebrew patriarch. It is sometimes difficult, therefore, to sort out which James is meant: one of the two disciples with that name; the 'brother of the Lord' and leader of the church in Jerusalem; or the author of the 'letter' of James — apart from other minor characters carrying the same name.

There are many suggestions about how the identities of the James's might overlap or be clarified, but the most commonly accepted position is that James the Just, 'the brother of the Lord' (Acts; Gal 1:19; 2:2,9), is the one who became the leader of the Jerusalem church and the most likely source of the Epistle of James. The other main James — the Apostle, brother of John and son of Zebedee — was the first and only member of the Twelve martyred in the New Testament record (Acts 12:1-2, around 44CE), but James the Just himself suffered the same fate later on in 62CE.

Indeed, the Jewish historian Josephus tells us more about the death of James the Just than he does about the death of Jesus, and attributes the dismissal of the High Priest Ananus the Younger to his blatant opportunism in having James clubbed and stoned while the Romans were absent (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 20, chapter 19).

We can see from the references in Acts (12:17; 15:13ff; 21:18) that in his own time, James had an authority and reputation in Jerusalem that exceeded that of Peter and Paul. James was the one who settled divisive issues in Jerusalem, and to whom Peter and Paul returned to maintain their good standing with the earliest Jesus-followers. The reputation of James (also known in the tradition as 'camel knees' due to the time he spent on his knees praying in the Temple) extends well beyond the Biblical canon. The Gospel of Thomas (logion 12) reads:

The disciples said to Jesus. "We know that you will depart from us. Who will be our leader?"
Jesus said to them, "Wherever you have come, you will go to James the Just, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being."

Again, this provides further evidence from outside the Bible of the considerable reputation of James of Jerusalem.

The 'Letter' of James itself shows signs of some very early material and may well be a re-working of the sermons of the first Bishop of Jerusalem. It is a treatise on putting into practice the teachings of Jesus — on God's bias to the poor, and on faith as action, not just belief ("Faith without works is dead!" James 2:26, a statement in some tension with Paul's writings).

Traditionally, James the Just has been the patron saint of the dying, of milliners, hatmakers, fullers and pharmacists. Given the distinctive emphases of the James traditions in Acts and the Epistle of James, we might suggest that he also be seen today as the patron saint of the poor, of community development (and 'practical Christianity'), of Jewish-Christian dialogue, of knee and hip replacements, and of any teachers who struggle with their sharp tongues (James 3:1–12)!

Contributed by Keith Dyer

31 Reformation Day

reformers of the Church

On Reformation, Saints, and Souls

At the end of the Christian year churches have four great celebrations, Reformation Day (31 October); All Saints' Day (1 November); All Souls' Day (2 November); and the Feast of Christ the King (the last Sunday before Advent).

Reformation Day is of course the day when Protestants especially remember the church-changing movements of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At the heart of these movements was an emphasis on justification by grace through faith, on the centrality of Christ, and on the need for a constant appeal to Holy Scripture.

By any measure, the leaders of the Reformation were grand figures. Luther, Calvin, Knox, Bucer, Browne and the Wesleys were men of immense intellect, love of the church, pastoral insight and capacity for work. It is right to remember them with thanks and appreciation.

All Saints' Day had its origin in the fact that the deaths of many martyrs and other faithful Christians were unrecorded. But various biblical texts remind us that we live within a communion of saints—the living and the dead; the known and remembered, and the unknown—and that it is right to remember that we, the living, share in the faith because it was handed down to us by these people. And so, in Syria and Rome in the sixth and seventh centuries, churches began celebrating with special prayers and services the faithfulness of those who had not been honoured on earth. As long ago as 835 these celebrations took place on 1 November. Take a trawl through your Bible, and see how many passages you can find that prompt us to remember the saints of old, the martyrs, "the cloud of witnesses" to our faith in Christ.

All Souls' Day (not often celebrated in Protestant Churches, though perhaps it should be) reminds us of another New Testament theme. The key here is in the writings of St. Paul: "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22). If you still have your Bible out, take a look through Romans and Galatians, to find evidence of the strength of this theme. The celebration of Christian saints is indeed a good thing! But because Paul's "all" means simply "all", this theme is even better! In his commentary on 2 November 2008, Russell Davies calls this day "The Festival of All Humanity", because it represents "the widest circle that God draws to ensure that nobody is outside divine love and care." Reformation Day and All Saints' are in their own ways celebrations of our own "family" of faith. All Souls' unites us with all people, because of its reminder that, as Russell noted, "nobody's salvation stands outside the circle of God's grace".

Contributed by Peter Butler

November

1	All Saints	faithful servants
4	Soren Kierkegaard	Christian thinker
16	Margaret of Scotland	faithful servant
17	Hilda of Whitby	faithful servant

Whitby Abbey, in England's North Yorkshire, is perched on top of a steep hill, exposed to the cold winds blowing in from the North Sea. Standing here amidst its ruins it is easy to appreciate the tenacity of those who lived out a call to the religious life on this site. In particular we are remembering Hilda of Whitby, who around 657 became the first Abbess of the Monastery. We remember Hilda (or "Hilde" as she was called in her day) for her strong faith and servant leadership.

Born in 614 into a Northumberland royal family, she decided to become a nun at about the age of 33. Under the leadership of St Aidan (another significant figure in Celtic Christianity) she established a number of monasteries before being invited to lead the newly-established one at Whitby in approximately 657. It was a double monastery (then called Streonashalh), housing religious communities for men and for women. Hilda created a community with fine educational and religious formation standards. She encouraged members of the community to develop their gifts and callings, and the monastery produced five bishops. When Caedmon, a humble worker in the monastery stable, was brought before her, after receiving a song in a vision, she designated him poet and songwriter. (Note: the Wikipedia reference to Caedmon has links to an audio recording of his most famous poem, spoken in old English.)

These were early years in the formation of Christian England, and Celtic culture and Roman influence sometimes led to disputes. Raised in Celtic Christianity, Hilda must have found it quite confronting when her monastery was chosen as the venue for the Synod of Whitby around 664. A variance in the observance of Easter had begun to emerge and the Synod of Whitby resolved to continue this in the Roman tradition, which Hilda took on board. As the reputation of Hilda and her monastery grew, bishops and kings sought her advice. She was clearly not only a wise and able leader of the daily life of her communities, but also a respected spiritual guide.

For the last seven years of her life Hilda suffered very poor health, but she remained in leadership and was not afraid to oppose church leaders when she was unhappy with decisions or directions being taken! Hilda died in 680. One of her nuns, Begu, had a vision before she died in which she saw the roof of the monastery opening and the soul of Hilda carried to heaven by angels. The monastery she founded was destroyed by Vikings in 867. In 1078 it was re-built as a Benedictine Monastery, and destroyed in 1540 in Henry V111's dissolution of the monasteries. It is these ruins that stand on the hilltop at Whitby today.

A beautiful series of contemporary Orthodox icons depicting scenes from Hilda's life can be found at http://www.wilfrid.com/saints/search_of_hilda06.htm

Contributed by Ann Siddall

19	Mechtild of Magdeburg	person of prayer
20	John Williams & Thomas Baker	Christian pioneers
22	Clive Staples (C.S.) Lewis	Christian thinker
24	John Knox (c. 1514-72)	reformer of the Church

Almost everyone has an opinion about John Knox. His character has been the subject of long and bitter controversy. To some he is the apostle of truth, the fearless warrior of God, a great hero of Scotland, and the founder of the Protestant Church; to others he is the architect of evil, a rabble-rouser, the father of intolerance and the destroyer of the old and beautiful. The poet Matthew Arnold quipped that there was more of Jesus in St Theresa's little finger than in John Knox's whole body.

Carlyle, the Scottish historian, rejected the conventional caricature of Knox as a gloomy, opinionated fanatic, describing him as a practical, patient and discerning man. Robert Louis Stevenson perhaps comes close to the truth: “He (Knox) had a grim reliance in himself, or rather, in his mission; if he were not sure he was a great man, he was at least sure that he was one set apart to do great things.”

While opinions about Knox’s character may differ widely, there is more general agreement as to his legacy. For good and for bad Knox set his stamp upon the Scottish Reformation. While it is no longer popular to speak of Knox as the “hero”, or the “maker of the Scottish Reformation”, his energy, courageous faith, and single-minded determination gave the reform movement a purpose and direction that marked it for all time.

Above all, Knox was a preacher: this was the source of his power and influence. He called himself God’s mouthpiece, a trumpeter for the Word of God. He believed himself to be “called of God to instruct the ignorant, comfort the sorrowful, confirm the weak, and rebuke the proud, by tongue and lively voice”. His preaching was often lively, volatile, and violent. His first sermon at St Andrews (1547) declared that the lives of the clergy (including the Pope) were evil and corrupt and that the Church of Rome was “the whore of Babylon”. At the Reformation Parliament in 1560, his powerful preaching on Haggai contributed to the Parliament’s action in abolishing papal jurisdiction and approving a confession of faith as the basis of belief in Scotland.

Knox was not a systematic theologian. His ideas, however, though not particularly original, have had a long-term influence upon Scottish thought. Apart from one theological work on predestination, almost all of his surviving works (six volumes) are polemical tracts written in response to specific circumstances. There are, however, three defining works of the Scottish Reformation in which Knox had a major hand—the *Scots Confession of Faith* (1560), *The First Book of Discipline* (1560), and the Anglo-Genevan *Book of Common Order* (1556–64), also known as “Knox’s Liturgy”. The *Confession* embodies the true spirit of the Scottish reformers. It is a typical Calvinistic document, and is simple, straightforward, frank, nationalistic, revolutionary in sentiment, and fiercely anti-Roman. The *Confession* sets forth three “notes” by which a true church could always be distinguished—the true preaching of the Word, the right administration of the Sacraments, and ecclesiastical discipline uprightly administered. Due to the *Confession* and Knox’s influence the Church of Scotland became Calvinist rather than Anglican, and after his death became Presbyterian rather than episcopal.

The *Book of Discipline* provided for the enforcement of moral discipline, the recognition of five classes of office bearers—superintendent, minister, elder, deacon, and reader—and for the organisation of the Church into courts known as Kirk Session, Synod, and General Assembly. (Presbyteries came later.) The *Book of Discipline* advocated universal compulsory education and relief for the poor—ideas well in advance of their time. Although the *Book of Discipline* was never authorised by Parliament, it nonetheless helped to mould the life of Scotland for centuries. It is commonly believed that the *Book of Discipline* helped produce a race of people who admired discipline and honest work, valued moral integrity, and prized education.

Knox was not always tactful and diplomatic. His conduct in politics was fumbling and uncompromising. In public and political life, he was his own worst enemy. His hatred of Catholicism, his dogmatism, his invective sprinkled with his favourite adjectives—“bloody”, “beastly”, “rotten”, and “stinking”—made him many enemies and alienated some of his friends. His tract, *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558), a violent diatribe against Mary Tudor, asserting that government by a woman is contrary to the law of nature and to divine ordinance, earned him the hostility of Protestant English Queen Elizabeth and persuaded many Scottish Protestants that Knox was a liability to the fledgling reform movement. Knox’s reasoning from nature and Scripture for the exclusion of women from power was not unusual for his time; what was extraordinary, however, was his call to the English to remove their Queen by whatever means necessary. The *First Blast* was, essentially, a call to revolution, a justification for armed resistance.

Of all Knox’s writings, the most brilliant is his *History of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland*. This began as a record of events of the Scottish Reformation of 1559–60, but during Mary Queen of Scots’ short reign, it evolved into a long sermon on Scotland’s covenanted status and the folly of breaching God’s law by tolerating a Catholic sovereign. A constant theme in the *History* is the absolute necessity of avoiding idolatry, which Knox identified specifically with the Mass. He believed Scotland (and England), like ancient Israel, were bound to promote and defend “true religion”.

Late in his life Knox wrote: “What I have been to my country, albeit this unthankful age will not know, yet the ages to come will be compelled to bear witness to the truth.” History seems to have vindicated Knox. The role he played in the upheaval of the sixteenth century is of prime importance to our understanding of the church and Christian theology today. Knox not only helped to establish the Church of Scotland; his teachings formed the basis of Presbyterian theology as it developed in Scotland and elsewhere.

Contributed by William Emilsen

30 Andrew

apostle

December

1	Charles de Foucauld	person of prayer
4	Nicholas Ferrar	person of prayer
6	Nicholas of Myra	faithful servant
8	Richard Baxter	faithful servant

9 Karl Barth

Christian thinker

Born on 10 May 1886 in Basel, Switzerland, Karl Barth grew up in the Swiss Reformed Church (in which his father was a pastor and a professor of New Testament). He was ordained in 1908 — but on entering the pulpit of his church in Safenwil, he was overwhelmed by a sense that his seminary training had failed to prepare him for what he realised was the most important work of a pastor – proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people in his community.

Responding to this failure of 19th century liberal theology, Barth plunged anew into the study of the Scriptures, producing in 1919 his commentary on *The Epistle to the Romans* (with a revised edition in 1922). In this study he identified that the divine revelation and salvation that come through Jesus Christ, Son of God, are entirely acts of God and that this dependence on God alone is the primary element of Christian faith. He developed this insight further in his most extensive work, *Church Dogmatics*. For Barth, Jesus Christ is the “fountain of light by which the other two [persons of the Trinity] are lit.” (Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*)

Barth was one of the Christian theologians who became deeply concerned about the policies promulgated in the rise of Nazism in Germany in the 1930s. He was a significant contributor to the wording of the Barmen Declaration, which opposed the development of a “German Christian” church. This Declaration asserts (among other things) that the church belongs solely to Christ, and neither the Scripture nor the church’s work may be controlled by any human organisation.

The Faith of the Church (one of the early documents of the Joint Commission on Church Union, before the *Basis of Union*) referred to the Barmen Declaration and contained a major quotation from Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*. Though the *Basis of Union* itself does not refer directly to Karl Barth, there is no doubt that his way of describing Christian discipleship undergirds the foundation of the Uniting Church’s life. It appears that Karl Barth always opened and closed his sermons with prayer. As this prayer shows, he was convinced that it was only by God’s generous gift that people are able to enter into the life of faith.

O Sovereign God,
grant that we may know you truly
and praise you fully
in the midst of your blessings to us,
that your word may be proclaimed aright
and heard aright
in this place and everywhere that your people call upon you.
May your light enlighten us,
your peace be upon us. Amen (Karl Barth, *Prayer*)

Contributed by Graham Vawser

10 Thomas Merton (1915-1968)

person of prayer

The life and writings of the Trappist monk Thomas Merton mark him as one of the great prophetic spiritual writers and teachers of the twentieth century. Merton integrated his life and writing by embracing wholeheartedly contradiction and paradox while expressing his passionate beliefs as a Christian through the voice of the mystic and poet. The greatness of Merton’s legacy lies largely in his capacity to record with searing transparency both his personal spiritual journey and his observations on the spiritual, political, economic, social and environmental issues of his day.

He was above all open to experience and not afraid of it: "Suspended entirely from God's mercy, I am content for anything to happen" (*Journal*, November 29, 1952).

Merton was born on 31 January 1915 in Prades, France. Perhaps, classically, his was an unhappy childhood. Merton's mother died when he was six. His father was an artist who, having moved around constantly, often leaving his son alone, died when Merton was fifteen. For several years Merton lived freely following his desires but also accompanied by personal angst and intense searching. In his mid-twenties, as a student at Columbia University, he experienced a religious conversion and joined the Catholic Church. In 1941 he entered the Trappist Monastery at Gethsemane in Kentucky and spent the rest of his life as a member of that community. His tragic and premature death from an accidental electrocution on 10 December 1968, while at an international conference of monks in Bangkok, was noted with a front-page obituary in *The New York Times*. He was 58 years old.

A man who loved silence yet felt compelled to write about silence. A man who craved solitude yet chose to disclose himself to the world and become fully engaged with it in order to discover more about God for himself and for others. A man who shunned public acclaim yet was read and admired by millions. What is the key to this great spiritual teacher? The key is in the remarkable gift of his writing and what it communicates to us. Writing was literally Merton's life. "To write is to think and to live—even to pray" (*Journal*, September, 1958).

Merton's first memoir, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, the story of his journey from self-absorbed youth to novice monk, became a best-seller and has remained in print since 1948. Merton's personal journals run to seven volumes. He writes in many different genres: devotional and philosophical meditations (e.g. *New Seeds of Contemplation* and *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*); social criticism and commentary (e.g. *The Seeds of Destruction*); explorations in Eastern spirituality (e.g. *Zen and The Birds of Appetite*); biblical studies (e.g. *Bread in the Wilderness*); and wrote several collections of poetry and essays.

Merton is always evocative and his insights illuminating on the nature of being human and on our ability to perceive God at work in our selves, each other and the world. And so he wrote:

I have the immense joy of being man, a member of a race in which God himself became incarnate. As if the sorrows and stupidities of the human condition could overwhelm me now that I realise what we all are. If only everybody could realise this! But it cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people they are all walking around shining like the sun.

Merton was profoundly interested in the East and especially in how the ways Eastern thought, particularly Buddhism, might illuminate aspects of the Western tradition:

If I can unite *in myself*, in my own spiritual life, the thought of the East and the West, of the Greek and Latin fathers, I will create in myself a reunion of the divided Church, and from that unity in myself can come the exterior and visible unity of the Church. For, if we want to bring together East and West, we cannot do it by imposing one upon the other. We must contain both in ourselves and transcend them both in Christ (28 April 1957).

Merton was a radical inclusivist and thoroughly post-modern. Yet ultimately, his is the voice of the mystic and poet: "By the reading of Scripture I am so renewed that all nature seems renewed round me and with me. The sky seems to be more pure, a cooler blue, the trees a deeper green, light is sharper on the outlines of the forests and the hills, and the whole world is charged with the glory of God and I feel fire and music in the earth under my feet." (8 August 1949)

(Quotations from Merton are from *The Intimate Merton, His Life from His Journals*. Edited by Patrick Hart and Jonathan Montaldo. Lion Publishing: Oxford, 1999.)

Contributed by Carolyn Craig-Emilsen

14 John Geddie & John Paton

Christian pioneers

John Geddie

John and Charlotte Geddie laid the foundations of Presbyterian mission work in the New Hebrides. From 1848 to 1872 they pioneered Christian missions on the small island of Aneityum where they set the patterns for evangelism, church planting and growth, education, and health. John was born in Banff, Scotland 9 April 1815. In 1816 the family moved to Pictou, Nova Scotia, Canada. The Presbyterian Church licensed him as a minister in May 1837 and ordained him in 1838.

He married Charlotte Leonora McDonald in September 1839. During his seven years of ministry on Prince Edward Island, Geddie promoted overseas missions and pressed the Church Assembly to establish an overseas missions committee. The Church chose the New Hebrides as its mission field, and in 1846 it appointed John Geddie as its first missionary.

After six months orientation in Samoa, the Geddies arrived at Anelgauhat, Aneityum on 29 July 1848 aboard the LMS mission ship *John Williams*. They joined several Samoan and Raratongan teachers who had worked there since 1841. They befriended the local people and learnt the language. The women warmly received Charlotte and her growing number of children. Two of their eight children later married New Hebrides missionaries. Women encouraged their men to attend worship, and to participate in literacy, numeracy, Bible, health, hygiene, agriculture and other courses. Gradually attendance at worship increased. Village schools were established and staffed by Polynesian and Aneityumese teachers. Geddie and colleague John Inglis established a teacher-catechist training institution. The teachers taught literacy and numeracy and conducted daily village prayer, worship and Bible study. Charlotte used her medical knowledge to help the sick. She and John visited the schools and prepared readers and other literature printed on their Mission Press. John encouraged the processing of copra and arrowroot to enable the local Church to become self-supporting. He worked with local Christians to translate the New Testament into Aneityumese. After John's departure in 1872, Inglis completed the translation of the Old Testament.

For over two decades, Geddie had helped new missionaries from the Pacific Islands, Scotland, Nova Scotia and Victoria to settle in the islands and to develop their own mission programmes. After twenty-four years, on 4 June 1872, Geddie and his missionary colleagues met on Aneityum to constitute the New Hebrides Presbyterian Mission Synod. The next day Geddie suffered a stroke. He returned to Geelong where he died on 14 December 1872 aged 57. He was buried in the Eastern Cemetery. Charlotte established mission support groups in churches in Geelong and Melbourne, and later was a foundation member of the Victorian Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union. She died in Malvern, Victoria, on New Year's Day 1916, aged 94.

During Geddie's pioneering ministry, many communities accepted the Christian faith. Solid foundations were laid for locally led Church planting and growth, support, and leadership. John Geddie's epitaph on the pulpit at Aneityum stated, "*When he landed in 1848 there were no Christians here and when he left in 1872 there were no heathens*".

John Paton

John Gibson Paton was a passionate evangelist, Presbyterian Church leader and advocate for justice. A compelling speaker, he raised the profile of mission work in Australasia and the British Isles. Born on 24 May 1824 in Dumfriesshire, Scotland, he worked at various trades before studying theology at the Free Church Normal Seminary. For ten years he was an evangelist in the Glasgow City Mission. In spare time he studied at the University of Glasgow, the Andersonian (Medical) College and the Reformed Presbyterian Divinity Hall. He was licensed to preach on 1 December 1857 and on 23 March 1858 ordained as a minister and missionary to the southern New Hebrides.

His stay at Port Resolution on Tanna from November 1858 was brief and tragic. In March 1859 his wife Mary Ann (Robson), their infant son and a missionary colleague died of malaria and he was very ill. Tannese opposition to Christianity increased when a measles epidemic caused the deaths of a third of the population and three devastating hurricanes left many starving. In 1861 intertribal fighting broke out and the sickly Paton and colleague Matheson hastily withdrew to Aneityum.

These sad and painful experiences had positive results. An excellent propagandist and story-teller, Paton toured the Australian colonial Churches with graphic descriptions of his experiences in mission work. Over the next forty years he raised thousands of pounds and obtained the permanent support of Sabbath schools and congregations for the mission and its ship *Dayspring*. When he went to Scotland in 1864 to recruit more missionaries, he was inducted as moderator of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland. There he married Margaret Whitecross. In 1865 he stirred up missionary enthusiasm in the newly united Presbyterian Church of Victoria and was appointed as its first missionary to the very small island of Aniwa. Between 1865 and 1872 Aniwa became almost entirely Christian. Margaret's illness caused their withdrawal in 1872 but John continued regular visits for another thirty years and in 1899 presented them with the complete New Testament in Aniwan.

Paton rapidly became an international figure. From 1881 as Presbyterian Mission Agent, and as Moderator of the Victorian Church in 1886, he continued mission promotion and toured extensively in the Colonies and Britain. He was a political activist, making vigorous representations to Colonial premiers, British Prime

Ministers and American Presidents. He opposed the “Melanesian slave trade”, and its recruiting irregularities; He opposed the expansion of French colonial interests and begged Britain to annex the New Hebrides, the Solomons and New Guinea and to ban arms and liquor for “the native races”. In 1891 Edinburgh University conferred on him an honorary Doctor of Divinity.

In 1891 the interdenominational 'John G. Paton Fund' was founded in Britain to support some New Hebrides missionaries including John's son Frank H L Paton at Lenakel. John's wife Margaret Whitecross Paton was also involved mission support and the PWMU. She died in May 1905. John died in Melbourne on 28 January 1907. Both rest in Boroondara cemetery after lifetimes of dedicated service.

Contributed by Malcolm Campbell

26	Stephen	martyr
27	John	witness to Jesus
28	The Innocents	martyrs
31	Josephine Butler	renewer of society

READINGS AND COLLECTS FOR OTHER COMMEMORATIONS

APOSTLES

Isaiah 62:1-7	I will not keep silent	Psalm 48
Joshua 1:1-9	The Lord your God is with you	Psalm 44:1-8
Isaiah 49:1-6	The Lord called me from the womb	Psalm 139
Ezekiel 3:16-21	You are a sentinel for Israel	Psalm 18:19-27
Isaiah 49:7-13	The Holy One of Israel has chosen you	Psalm 122
Isaiah 6:1-8	Here am I, send me	Psalm 46
Acts 1:1-8	You will be my witnesses	
Romans 10:11-17	Faith comes from what is heard	
1 Corinthians 12:14-28	God has appointed apostles in the Church	
Philippians 1:1-11	I thank God for you	
1 Thessalonians 2:2b-8	We have courage to declare the gospel	
1 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18	Be a good servant of Christ Jesus	
Luke 24:44-53	You are witnesses of these things	
Mark 3:13-19	The call of the disciples	
Luke 5:1-11	You will be fishers of people	
John 17:11, 17-23	Father, protect them in your name	
Luke 10:1-20	The mission of the seventy	
Mark 8:27-38	Those who lose their life will save it	

The following readings may be used as alternatives to the above:

John 1:35-42	Andrew	Acts 11:19-26	Barnabas
John 1:45-51	Bartholomew	Acts 11:27 to 12:3	James the Great
John 14:6-14	Philip	Acts 21:15-25	James, brother of Jesus
John 20:24-29	Thomas	2 Corinthians 7:5-7, 13-16	Titus
John 21:15-19	Peter	Galatians 2:1-10	Paul
Acts 1:15-26	Matthias	2 Timothy 1:1-8	Timothy

Almighty God,
you have built your Church
on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.
Grant us so to embrace and hold fast the faith
which has been handed on through the ages,
that we too may grow into a holy temple in the Lord;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Holy and mighty God,
we thank you for the glorious company of the apostles
as we remember today your servant N.
Grant that your Church,
inspired by the teaching and example of all the apostles,
and made one by the Holy Spirit,
may always stand firm upon the one foundation,
Jesus Christ our Lord;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

CHRISTIAN PIONEERS

Isaiah 62:1-7	The nations shall see your vindication	Psalm 67
Isaiah 49:1-12	These shall come from far away	Psalm 111
Isaiah 52:7-10	How beautiful upon the mountains	Psalm 119:105-112
1 John 4:1-6	Test the spirits	
Galatians 1:11-24	The gospel I proclaimed is from Christ	
1 John 1:1 to 2:2	God is light	
Matthew 28:16-20	Make disciples of all nations	
Mark 12:41-44	She contributed out of her poverty	
John 1:35-51	The call of the disciples	

Everlasting God,
whose servant N carried the good news of your Son
to a distant place on earth:
grant that we who commemorate his/her service
may know the hope of the gospel in our hearts
and manifest its light in all our ways;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

God of grace and might,
we praise you for your servant N,
to whom you gave gifts to make the good news known.
Raise up, we pray, in every country
heralds and evangelists of your kingdom,
so that the world may know the unsearchable riches
of our Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A local pioneer/founder

Jeremiah 31:10-14	Hear the word of the Lord	Psalm 84
Ezekiel 34:11-16 I will seek out my sheep	Psalm 23	
Exodus 3:1-15 The call of Moses	Psalm 113	
Revelation 22:1-2, 14-21	For the healing of the nations	
Ephesians 4:1-13	Lead a life worthy of your calling	
Romans 12:1-21 Present your bodies as a living sacrifice		
Matthew 9:35 to 10:4	The Lord of the harvest	
Luke 10:38-42 Mary and Martha		
Luke 21:10-19 By your endurance you shall gain life		

God of grace,
we thank you for the life and witness of N
through whom you began the work of the gospel
in this congregation and community.
Raise up, we pray, in every generation
heralds and teachers of your truth,
that all may hear the good news of salvation
which is freely offered through Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, through the ages of ages. **Amen.**

Ever living God,
you are constantly raising up in your Church
faithful leaders of your people.
Today we recall the work and witness of your servant N
in this congregation.
May his/her example be a source of joy to our spirit
and an inspiration to our faith.
Encouraged by the example of all your faithful people
who have gone before us,
may we continue to grow into the full stature
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

CHRISTIAN THINKERS

Proverbs 3:11-20	Happy are those who find wisdom	Psalm 119:97-104
Jeremiah 1:4-9	I have put my words in your mouth	Psalm 96
Ezekiel 3:16-21	You are a sentinel for Israel	Psalm 19:1-10
1 Corinthians 1:1-9	Enriched in Christ in speech and knowledge	
1 Corinthians 2:1-13	I know nothing except Christ crucified	
Hebrews 12:22-29	You have come to the heavenly Jerusalem	
Matthew 11:25-30	I thank you for revealing these things to infants	
John 14:1-7	I am the way, and the truth, and the life	
Luke 9:57-62	Readiness for the kingdom of God	

Almighty God,
who through the teaching of your servant N
enlightened and enabled all your Church
to understand the truth of Jesus Christ:
raise up among us teachers of your word,
that, set free by truth from unbelief,
we may come to know our great salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

O God of truth,
your Holy Spirit gives to one the word of wisdom,
to another the word of knowledge,
and to another the word of faith.
We praise you for the gifts of grace
imparted to your servant N;
and we pray that by his/her teaching
your Church may be led to a fuller knowledge
of the truth we have seen in your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FAITHFUL SERVANTS

Daniel 7:9-17	The saints shall receive the kingdom	Psalm 149
Exodus 3:1-6, 9-12	I AM has sent me to you	Psalm 27
1 Kings 19:16, 19-21	Elisha shall be appointed prophet	Psalm 38
1 Samuel 3:1-10	Speak, for your servant is listening	Psalm 43
Isaiah 58:6-11	The Lord shall hear your cry	Psalm 1
Micah 6:6-8	What the Lord requires	Psalm 9:1-10
1 John 3:1-3	See what love the Father has	
Colossians 1:9-14	Lead a life worthy of God	
Ephesians 1:11-23	You are sealed by the Spirit	
1 Corinthians 1:26-31	The message of the cross	
Acts 9:36-42	Tabitha saw Peter and sat up	
Hebrews 12:18-24	You have come to the heavenly Jerusalem	
Matthew 5:1-12	Blessed are the poor in spirit	
John 11:32-44	Mary knelt at Jesus' feet	
John 15:1-8	I am the true vine	
Mark 10:17-27	For God all things are possible	
Matthew 10:16-33	Sheep in the midst of wolves	
Matthew 5:13-16	You are the salt of the earth	

The following may be used as an alternative first reading on 1 November and during the Easter season:

Revelation 7:9-17	A great multitude stood before the throne	Psalm 34:1-10
Revelation 21:1-6a	I am the beginning and the end	Psalm 24:1-6

Almighty God,
who gave to your servant N boldness
to confess the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ
before the rulers of this world:
grant us, who remember him/her with thanksgiving,
to be faithful to you in our witness day by day,
and at last to receive with him/her the crown of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Faithful God,
whose will it is to be glorified in your saints,
and who raised up your servant N
to be a light in the world:
shine, we pray, in our hearts,
that we also in our generation may remain faithful to you,
and proclaim your praise with our lips and in our lives;
for you have called us out of darkness

into your marvellous light through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

MARTYRS

Jeremiah 20:7-10	God's word has become a reproach	Psalm 18:1-6, 16-19
Jeremiah 15:15-20	Lord, remember me and visit me	Psalm 124
Jeremiah 31:15-20	Rachel weeping for her children	Psalm 31:1-8
Revelation 7:13-17	They have washed their robes	
1 Peter 4:12-19	Do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal	
2 Corinthians 4:7-15	We have this treasure in clay jars	
Luke 12:2-12	Do not fear those who kill the body	
Mark 8:34-38	Those who lose their life will save it	
John 15:18-21	They will persecute you	

The following readings may be used as alternatives to the above:

Matthew 2:13-18	The Innocents
Mark 6:17-29	John the Baptist
Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-60	Stephen

Almighty God,
who gave your servant N courage to confess Jesus Christ
and to die for this faith:
may we always be ready
to give a reason for the hope that is in us,
and to suffer gladly for his sake;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Gracious Lord,
in every age you have sent men and women
who have given their lives for the message of your love.
Inspire us with the memory of those martyrs for the gospel,
like your servant N,
whose faithfulness led them in the way of the cross,
and give us courage to bear true witness with our lives
to your Son's victory over sin and death;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEOPLE OF PRAYER

Isaiah 61:10 to 62:5	I will greatly rejoice in the Lord	Psalm 80:1-7
1 Kings 19:9-12	A sound of sheer silence	Psalm 131
Isaiah 66:10-14	Your heart shall rejoice	Psalm 16:1-8
2 Corinthians 6:1-10	Now is the day of salvation	
Romans 8:22-27	The Spirit helps us in our weakness	
Hebrews 4:1-16; 7:23-28	We have a great high priest	
Mark 1:32-39	Jesus went out to a deserted place and prayed	
Matthew 6:25-33	Strive first for the kingdom of God	
Luke 11:1-10	Lord, teach us to pray	

Almighty God,
you have brought forth in your Church
the love and devotion of many people.
We give thanks for your servant N
whom we commemorate today.
Inspire us by his/her example,
and keep us faithful in prayer,
that we in our generation may rejoice with him/her
in the vision of your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Holy God,
by whose grace N, kindled with the fire of your love,
became a burning and shining light in the Church:
in flame us with the same spirit of discipline and devotion,
that we may know our union with you through prayer,
and always walk as children of the light;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit
in glory for ever. **Amen.**

REFORMERS OF THE CHURCH

Exodus 33:12-17	My presence will go with you	Psalm 46
Isaiah 51:1-11	Listen to me, my people	Psalm 115
Amos 4:4-13	Yet you did not return to me	Psalm 130

1 Peter 2:1-10	Come to Christ, the living stone
Romans 3:21-26	The righteousness of God has been disclosed
Romans 5:1-11	We are justified by grace through faith

Matthew 23:1-8, 11-12	All who humble themselves will be exalted
John 8:31-38	The truth will make you free
John 2:13-22	The cleansing of the temple

Almighty God,
you raised up your servant N
to proclaim anew the gift of salvation
and the life of holiness.
Pour out the Holy Spirit in our day,
and revive your work among us;
that, inspired by the one true faith,
and upheld by grace in word and sacrament,
we and all your people may be made one
in the unity of your Church on earth,
even as in heaven we are made one in you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Renewing God,
we praise you for the men and women you have sent
to recall the Church to its mission
and to reform its life, such as your servant N.
Raise up in our own day
teachers and prophets inspired by the Holy Spirit,
whose voice will give strength to your Church
and proclaim the reality of your kingdom;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

RENEWERS OF SOCIETY

Isaiah 5:11-24	Woe to those who call evil good	Psalm 22:22-31
Zechariah 8:3-12, 16-17	These are the good things that you shall do	Psalm 72:1-4, 12-14
Amos 5:10-15	Seek good and not evil	Psalm 146

Romans 12:9-21	Let love be genuine
Acts 3:1-10	I give you what I have
James 2:1-5	Show no partiality
Matthew 25:31-46	The judgment of the nations
Mark 12:13-17	Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's
Luke 6:27-36	Love your enemies

Loving God,
your Son came among us to serve and not to be served,
and to give his life for the world.
Lead us by his love to serve all those
to whom the world offers no comfort and little help.
Through us give hope to the hopeless,
love to the unloved,
peace to the troubled,
and rest to the weary;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Holy and righteous God,
you created us in your image.
Grant us grace to contend fearlessly against evil
and to make no peace with oppression.
Help us, like your servant N, to use our freedom
to bring justice among people and nations,
to the glory of your name;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

WITNESSES TO JESUS

Malachi 3:1-4
Malachi 4:1-6
Isaiah 40:1-11

I send my messenger before me
The day of the Lord is coming
Comfort, O comfort my people

Psalm 139:1-3, 13-17
Psalm 141
Psalm 85:7-13

Acts 13:22-26
Acts 19:1-9
Revelation 7:13-17

The message of salvation
Baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus
The Lamb will be their shepherd

Luke 1:57-66, 80
Luke 3:7-19
Matthew 6:19-21, 24-29

Elizabeth gave birth to a son
He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit
Do not be anxious about your life

The following readings may be used as alternatives to the above:

Matthew 2:13-23
Luke 1:46-55
Luke 2:22-38
Luke 10:38-42

Joseph of Nazareth
Mary, mother of Jesus
Simeon and Anna
Mary and Martha

John 1:19-28
John 19:38-42
John 20:1-2, 11-18
John 20:30-31

John the Baptist
Joseph of Arimathea
Mary Magdalene
Matthew, Mark,
Luke and John

Faithful God,
you gave to your servant N
grace and strength to bear witness to the truth.
Grant that we, mindful of his/her victory of faith,
may glorify in life and death the name of Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Lord God,
you have surrounded us with a great cloud of witnesses.
Grant that we, encouraged by the example of your servant N,
and looking to Jesus,
the author and finisher of our faith,
may persevere in the course that is set before us.
May we be living signs of the gospel,
and at last, with all your saints,
share in your eternal joy;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**