

## CALENDAR OF DEACON SAINTS

This calendar of more than 200 deacon saints is assembled from many sources, including Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox, and Lutheran calendars, and numerous other religious and secular sites. The Internet contains biographies, other information, and even entire books on Christian saints. The original listing was the work of Sister Teresa, CSA, formerly a deaconess (and later deacon) and now a priest of the Church of England. The present calendar is much expanded.

Until the publication in 2010 of *Holy Women, Holy Men* (a major revision of *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*), the practice in the Episcopal Church was to reserve each day for only one saint, unless two or more were naturally grouped. Partially continuing the earlier practice, the official calendar still places some saints on a date not traditionally associated with them. This practice affects several deacons. If a deacon traditionally has the same feast day as a bishop or a priest, the deacon's day gets moved to the next open day. Instead, I have placed most deacons on their actual (or suspected) date of death, when known, and sometimes, as is the custom, on the date of transfer or burial of their bodies or relics. For example, this calendar remembers Alcuin on May 19, Ephrem on June 9, Oakerhater on August 31, and Nicholas Ferrar on December 4, the dates they actually died. As a result of this system of actual or traditional dates, two or more deacons sometimes share a day.

Western and eastern churches remember some saints on different days. Where this occurs, I have indicated the alternative date.

My process of canonization is simple. I am a committee of one and make decisions rapidly. If you're a dead deacon, of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, you're eligible. To nominate a deacon or make a correction, contact me at [oplater@cox.net](mailto:oplater@cox.net). After my death, pray for my soul, and whoever takes over this task please consider me for the calendar.

Ormonde Plater  
2 November 2015

*January 3*

**Daniel of Padua**, deacon and martyr, killed in what is now northeastern Italy in 168.

Said to be of Jewish descent, Daniel aided Prosdocimus, the first bishop of Patavium (later Padua), in the evangelization of the area around the city. His body was discovered centuries later and solemnly enshrined 3 January 1064 in the church of Santa Sofia in Padua.

*January 4*

**Akhila** (Aquila), deacon and monk of Pechersk, in the Farther Caves at Kiev in the Ukraine, died in fourteenth century.

He lived for a long time as a hermit and became famous for fasting on a diet of a small amount of vegetables. (Akhila is also commemorated in Orthodox churches on August 28 and on the Second Sunday of Great Lent.)

*January 7*

**Clerus of Antioch**, deacon and martyr, killed at Antioch in Syria in 300.

For having professed faith in Christ, he was tortured seven times, kept in prison a long while, and finally beheaded.

*January 8*

**Theophilus**, deacon and martyr in Libya, with the layman Helladius, date of death unknown.

For preaching the gospel, they were tortured and thrown into a furnace.

**Dominika of Carthage**, deacon and abbess in Alexandria and Constantinople, died late fourth century.

She lived in the year 374, in the reign of Theodosius the Great.

**Harriet Mary Bedell**, deaconess and missionary among the Seminoles and Miccosukee in southern Florida, died on 8 January 1969.



*Harriet Bedell in her garden in Florida*

Born in 1875 in Buffalo, New York, Harriet Bedell became a teacher with many young Indian students. In the winter of 1905-06, she attended a meeting at her church to hear a missionary speak of the need for more workers in China to spread the word of the Lord. Determined to

become a missionary, she gave up her job to train as an Episcopal deaconess in New York City. At the end of her year of training, she elected to study nursing for a year in her home town of Buffalo. At the end of this schooling, in 1907, she was appointed an apprentice deaconess and sent to the Whirlwind Mission in Oklahoma to minister among the Cheyenne (assisting Oakerhater, see Aug. 31).

She threw herself into her work and gradually gained the love and trust of her people. She was adopted into the tribe and given the name of Vicsehia, which means Bird Woman, because she sang, hummed, and whistled constantly while she worked. Harriet devoted herself to the Cheyenne until she contracted tuberculosis and was sent to Colorado to recover. There she attended a healing service and became free of symptoms, which she called a miracle. Instead of returning to Oklahoma, in 1916 she was sent to Alaska, where she worked for many years among the native peoples. In 1922 she journeyed to Portland, Oregon, to be ordained a deaconess in the Episcopal Church, returning to her mission in Alaska.

In 1932 while she was enjoying her first sabbatical with her family in Buffalo, the bishop of New York asked her to visit the chain of missions in Florida to recruit church workers. On this trip she first encountered the Miccosukee tribe. She was appalled at the condition of the local Seminoles, who were wrestling alligators and making a display of themselves for the tourists. With the backing of Bishop Wing in Miami and the Collier Corporation in Everglades (now Everglades City), Bedell set up the Glade Cross Mission to minister to local people and native Americans. This feisty little woman ventured out into the Everglades swamp by canoe and on foot to visit remote villages, where she worked with the local medicine man to improve conditions and combat disease. She established the tradition of providing a Christmas celebration for the Indians with a feast of good food, small presents, and a brief religious service. Locally in Everglades City, and on nearby Marco Island, the deaconess held Sunday School classes, taught the girls to sew, and preached to the prisoners in the county jail. She attended social functions and became a fixture in the community.

The tribe adopted her and gave her the name Inkoshopie, woman who prays. Bedell borrowed on her salary and made an arrangement with the Collier Corporation to finance sales of Indian craft, including beadwork, clothing, pottery, carving, and leatherwork. With the proceeds, she repaid the loans and gave the Indians company script which they could spend at the store in Everglades. Bedell was tireless in persistent efforts for her people, traveling as far as Washington to prevent Japanese imitations of the craft work from entering the country, and to New York to sell Indian items to large department stores. She continued to do this work after her retirement, augmenting her meager income with loans from the Colliers, who eventually deeded over to her the small dwelling she occupied in Everglades. Every Christmas she arranged an enormous party with feasting and entertainment and gifts for all the Indians and children from Everglades.

In September 1960 Harriet was forced to evacuate her home when hurricane Donna struck. The storm leveled her property, destroying her typewriter, sewing machine, children's books, and gifts set aside for the upcoming holiday celebration. The bishop insisted that Harriet finally give up her active life at 85, and she moved to the Bishop Gray Inn in Davenport, Florida, a home for retired Episcopalians. Refusing to be idle, she planned and taught Sunday school, worked in the infirmary, and gave speeches to recruit mission workers. A huge birthday party was thrown for

her when she turned 90, and *Coronet* magazine featured an article about her. She died there on 8 January 1969, just short of her 94<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Her story has appeared in many newspapers and magazines, and three books have been written about her: William and Ellen Hartley, *A Woman Set Apart* (New York, 1953); Elizabeth Scott Ames, *Deaconess of the Everglades* (Cortland, NY, 1995); and Marya Repko, *Angel of the Swamp* (Everglades City, FL, 2009). General Convention in 2009 added her to the Episcopal calendar of saints.

*January 10*

**Nicanor**, deacon and martyr, one of the seven ordained by the apostles (Acts 6:5), according to tradition killed in Cyprus about 76 [also July 28].

**Theosebia**, deacon, wife or sister of Gregory of Nyssa, died about 387.



*Theosebia and Gregory of Nyssa*

Theosebia's life and identification are ambiguous; her dates of birth and death are uncertain (she died probably after 381). She is thought to have played an important role in the church in Nyssa, where she was called *diakonissa*. Gregory the Theologian (Nazianzuz) wrote a letter of condolence on her death to Gregory of Nyssa in which he mentioned "your sister Theosebia" and "true consort of a priest." There lies the ambiguity of her identification. Some historians suppose Theosebia was the wife of Gregory of Nyssa. Others suppose she was one of his sisters like Macrina the Younger; if so, then Theosebia was the sister of Basil the Great as well. Others imagined that she was the wife of Gregory Nazianzuz, although there is no evidence that he was ever married.

*January 12*

**Tatiana**, deacon and martyr, beheaded at Rome on 12 January about 225.



Tatiana came from an eminent Roman family and was educated in the Christian faith. When she reached adulthood, she became indifferent to riches and earthly blessings and came to love the spiritual way of life. She renounced wedded life and was made a deacon of the Roman Church. In this role she diligently tended the sick, visited jails, helped the needy, and constantly tried to please God with prayers and good deeds.

During the reign of Alexander Severus (222-235), under the Roman city mayor Ulypian, around the year 225, Tatiana became a martyr for professing her love of Jesus Christ. The emperor's mother Mammaea was a Christian, but the emperor was wavering and indecisive. He kept statues of Christ, Apollo, Abraham, and Orpheus in his palace, and his chief assistants persecuted Christians without his orders.

According to an ancient narrative, when they brought out Tatiana for torture, she prayed to God for her torturers. Their eyes were opened, and they saw four angels around the martyr. Seeing this, eight of them believed in Christ, for which they were tortured and slain. Tatiana was thrown into the arena at the Coliseum, to be torn apart by a lion for the amusement of the spectators. Instead she caressed the lion. The tormentors continued to torture Tatiana. They whipped her, cut off parts of her body, and scraped her with irons. Disfigured and bloody, Tatiana was thrown into the dungeon that evening so that the next day they could resume with different tortures.

In the night God sent angels to the dungeon to encourage Tatiana and heal her wounds so that each morning she appeared before the torturers completely healed. They cut off her hair, thinking that sorcery or magical power was concealed there. Finally, they beheaded both Tatiana and her father. According to the witness of Deacon Zocim in 1420, Tatiana's head was at Perivlepto in Constantinople.

*January 13*

**Hermylus**, deacon and martyr of Singidunum (present Belgrade, capital of Serbia), with his servant Stratonicus, killed in the Balkans in 315.

They were martyred by drowning in the Danube at Singidunum.

*January 14*

**Charles Lutwidge Dodgson** (pen name **Lewis Carroll**), deacon, author, mathematician, logician, and photographer, died on 14 January 1898.



Born 27 January 1832 into the large family of an Anglican priest, Charles Dodgson grew up in Cheshire and Yorkshire and was educated at Rugby and Christ Church, Oxford. As a requirement of his residency at Christ Church, he was ordained an Anglican deacon on 22 December 1861 but declined to become a priest.

After a new dean, Henry Liddell, arrived at Christ Church in 1856, Dodgson became close friends with Liddell's wife, Lorina, and their children, particularly the three sisters Lorina, Edith, and Alice Liddell. On a rowing expedition with the sisters, 4 July 1862, Dodgson invented the outline of the story that eventually became his first and largest commercial success. Having told the story and been begged by Alice Liddell to write it down, Dodgson eventually (after much delay) presented her with a handwritten, illustrated manuscript entitled *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* in November 1864. The work was finally published as *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in 1865 under the name Lewis Carroll. The overwhelming commercial success of the book changed Dodgson's life in many ways. The fame of his alter ego "Lewis Carroll" soon spread around the world. He was inundated with fan mail and with sometimes unwanted attention. When Lewis Carroll met Queen Victoria, who had loved his Alice books, she asked him to be sure to send her a copy of his next book. Her disappointment was apparently profound when it turned out to be a treatise on an obscure aspect of applied mathematics.

Over the remaining twenty years of his life, despite wealth and fame, his existence changed little. He continued to teach at Christ Church until 1881 and remained in residence there until his death. He died on 14 January 1898 at his sisters' home, "The Chestnuts" in Guildford, of pneumonia following influenza. He is buried in Guildford at the Mount Cemetery.

*January 17*

**Marianus**, deacon and martyr, with presbyter Diodorus and others, killed at Rome in 284.

In Rome under Numerian (emperor 282-284), a group of Christians including Diodorus and Marianus were found praying in the catacombs on the anniversary of an earlier martyrdom. The Roman authorities sealed them in the crypt alive. Diodorus and Marianus were canonized, and a church was later built above the sandpit. The two martyrs were particularly popular in fourth century Rome, and their names appear in the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* (Martyrology of Jerome).

**Charlotte Boyd**, deaconess at St. Bartholomew and Ascension in New York, died 17 January 1965.

Charlotte Boyd was born in 1872. She was set apart as deaconess on 6 May 1901. Her primary ministry was to the St. Bartholomew Girls' Club. She also was director of the summer home and farm St. Bartholomew's sponsored in Pawling, New York. During World War I, Deaconess Boyd oversaw the work of St. Bartholomew's Red Cross Chapter, dispensing 48,500 hand-wrapped surgical dressings and 1,659 hand-knitted garments to American troops in France and Belgium. When asked what part of her training was most influential in her life as a deaconess, Boyd replied: "To have known Dr. [William Reed] Huntington and to have felt his influence has been the greatest inspiration." Boyd left St. Bartholomew's in 1931 and, after a trip to England, took up her work at Ascension in Manhattan. She retired in 1957 after 56 years of active church work and died on 17 January 1965 in Quebec, Canada, where she lived with her sister. She was 92 at the time of her death. [research of Deacon Geri Swanson]

*January 18*

**Hugo Gorovoka**, deacon and native missionary at Miravovo, Guadalcanal, in the Solomon Islands, died in 1918.

*January 21*

**Augurius** and **Eulogius**, deacons and martyrs, with bishop Fructuosus of Tarraco (now Tarragona in northeastern Spain), martyred by burning on 21 January 259.

According to the *Acta*: The bishop and his two deacons were arrested on Sunday, 16 January, just as they were going to bed. The bishop asked for permission to put on his shoes, after which he cheerfully followed the arresting guards. In prison they spent their time in fervent prayer, full of joy at the prospect of the crown prepared for them. Fructuosus blessed those who visited him and on Monday baptized a catechumen named Rogatianus. On Wednesday they kept the usual fast of the stations until 3 p.m.

A few days later, on Friday, 21 January, the three were brought before the governor. Their examination was short and to the point: the prisoners affirmed their worship of one God and were sentenced to be burned to death. Officers were posted to prevent any demonstration because even the pagans loved Fructuosus for his virtues. The Christians accompanied them with sorrow tempered with joy. The faithful offered Fructuosus a cup of wine, which he refused because, since it was only 10 in the morning, it was too early to break the fast. Even with the guards at the gate of the amphitheater, some of the Christians were able to get close. The bishop's reader, Augustalis, with tears asked permission to remove his bishop's shoes. Felix, a Christian soldier, stepped in and asked the bishop for his prayers.



Fructuosus replied so that all could hear, “I am bound to bear in mind the whole universal church from East to West. Remain always in the bosom of the catholic church, and you will have a share in my prayers.” He added words of comfort to his flock. As the flames enveloped them and burned through their bonds, “they stretched forth their arms in token of the Lord’s victory, praying to him till they gave up their souls.”

An early legend adds that Babylas and Mygdone, two Christian servants of the governor, saw the heavens open and the saints carried up with crowns on their heads. By night the faithful came and each took some part of the martyrs’ bodies to their own home, but heaven admonished them and each returned the relics to a single grave. In art the three martyrs are portrayed as a bishop and two deacons singing on their funeral pyre. They are venerated at Tarragoña and in Africa.

*January 22*

**Vincent of Saragossa**, deacon and martyr, tortured to death at Valentia (now Valencia in Spain) on 22 January 304.



*A raven guards the body of Vincent*

Vincent was born at Osca and lived in Caesaraugusta (now Huesca and Zaragoza, Saragossa in English, both in the Aragon region of northern Spain). He served as the deacon and secretary of Valerius, bishop of Caesaraugusta. Because Valerius stuttered badly, Vincent often preached for him.

During a persecution they were arrested in Valentia by the prefect Dacian, threatened with torture and death, and pressured to renounce their faith. According to legend, Vincent said to his bishop, “Father, if you order me, I will speak.” Valerius replied, “Son, as I have committed you to dispense the word of God, so I now charge you to answer in vindication of the faith which we defend.” Like many martyrs in the early hagiographic literature, Vincent succeeded in converting his jailer. Though offered release if he would consign scripture to the fire, Vincent refused, was tortured on a gridiron (a detail perhaps adapted from the martyrdom of Laurence), and died. Valerius was exiled.



Dacian tried to destroy Vincent's body by leaving it naked in a marsh. A raven guarded the body, driving away a bird of prey and a wolf. The prefect then threw the body into the sea. Although a heavy stone had been attached to it, the body did not sink but moved with the tide and came to rest on the beach. There it was buried until the Christians could build a tomb. Later, when the persecution was over, a church was built and the bones of Vincent were buried at the foot of the altar.

The earliest account of Vincent's martyrdom is in a *carmen* (lyric poem) written by Prudentius, (348-aft. 405), who wrote a series of such poems, *Peristephanon* (Crowns of Martyrdom), on Hispanic and Roman martyrs, including Laurence and Vincent. See "The Poems of Prudentius," trans. Sr. M. Clement Eagan, CCVI, in *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 43 (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1962). Vincent is also the patron saint of vintners, and his feast is celebrated in many winegrowing communities.

*January 23*

**Parmenas**, one of the seven ordained by the apostles (Acts 6:5), according to tradition martyred at Philippi in Macedonia, about 98 [also July 28].

**Yona Kanamuzeyi**, deacon and martyr, killed in Rwanda on 23 January 1964.

Yona Kanamuzeyi was a deacon in the town of Nyamata in Rwanda, south of the capital, Kigali. He had been asked to aid refugees fleeing ethnic violence. As a child of a Hutu-Tutsi marriage, his work of providing sanctuary earned him the label "Tutsi sympathizer." As Meg Guillebaud, a missionary, recounts: Five soldiers in a jeep came and took Yona away for questioning in the middle of the night on 23 January 1964. Two others were also in custody. Yona grabbed his diary and the keys to their church. The jeep stopped suddenly alongside a river. Yona scribbled in his diary: "We are going to heaven." Yona questioned his fellow prisoners about their own salvation. Then they all sang, "There is a happy land, far, far away." Soldiers took Yona into the bush, and gunfire was heard. The soldiers returned "amazed" that Yona sang as he walked along to his death. Minutes later, they released the other two prisoners. Years later, the dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London inscribed his name in the cathedral's book of modern martyrs.

The 1838 Scottish hymn "There Is a Happy Land," sung by Yona and his companions:

There is a happy land, far, far away,  
Where saints in glory stand, bright, bright as day.  
Oh, how they sweetly sing, worthy is our Savior King,  
Loud let His praises ring, praise, praise for aye.

Come to that happy land, come, come away;  
Why will ye doubting stand, why still delay?  
Oh, we shall happy be, when from sin and sorrow free,  
Lord, we shall live with Thee, blest, blest for aye.

Bright, in that happy land, beams every eye;  
Kept by a Father's hand, love cannot die.

Oh, then to glory run; be a crown and kingdom won;  
And, bright, above the sun, we reign for aye.

*January 24*

**Xenia** (originally **Eusebia**), deaconess and nun of Milassa in Asia Minor, died in 450.



Xenia, known in early life as Eusebia, was the only daughter of a Roman senator. From her youth she loved God, and she wished to avoid a marriage that had been arranged for her. She secretly left her parents' home with two servants and set sail on a ship. Near Milassa, a town of Caria (Asia Minor), she met the head of the monastery of the holy apostle Andrew. She asked him to take her and her companions to Milassa. She also changed her name, calling herself Xenia ("stranger" or "foreigner" in Greek).

Xenia drew many souls to Christ. At Milassa, she bought land, built a church dedicated to St. Stephen, and founded a women's monastery. Soon after this, bishop Paul of Milassa made Xenia a deaconess. She helped everyone—for the destitute, she was a benefactress; for the grief-stricken, a comforter; for sinners, a guide to repentance. She possessed a deep humility, accounting herself the worst and most sinful of all. She was guided in her ascetic deeds by the counsels of the Palestinian ascetic, Euthymius.

Xenia died in 450 while praying. During her funeral, a luminous wreath of stars surrounding a radiant cross appeared in the sky over the monastery. This sign accompanied the body of the saint when it was carried into the city and remained there until her burial. Many of the sick received healing after touching Xenia's relics.

*January 29*

**Caesarius of Angoulême**, deacon under Ausonius, the first bishop of Angoulême (originally Iculisma) in southwestern France, died of natural causes in first century.

*February 3*

**Celerinus of Carthage**, deacon and confessor, died of natural causes about 250.

Celerinus is revered for his sufferings while imprisoned in Rome by Decius (emperor 249-251). He was freed and returned to Carthage, where Cyprian ordained him a deacon.

*February 6*

**Luke**, deacon and martyr, with bishop Silvanus of Emesa in Phoenicia (now Homs in western Syria) and reader Mocius, martyred in 312. After torture, imprisonment, and exhaustion by hunger, they were thrown to wild beasts. They died praying, untouched by the animals. At night Christians took up their bodies and buried them.

*February 8*

**Stephen of Grandmont**, deacon, hermit, and founder of the (Benedictine) Order of Grandmont at Muret, near Toulouse in what is now southwestern France, died in 1124.

Stephen was born in 1046 in Thiers, in the Auvergne region of France. Despite historical inaccuracies in his medieval biography about his early life, his becoming a hermit is told in moving and convincing detail. Having built a small hermitage on the mountain of Muret, Stephen vowed to God: "I, Stephen, renounce the devil and all his pomps, and offer myself to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the one true God in three Persons." He prayed to the Blessed Virgin Mary, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, I commend my body, soul, and senses to your Son and to you." Stephen spent the next forty-eight years in the wilderness, devoting himself to prayer and penitential self-denial. When two papal legates visited him, they asked whether he was a monk, a hermit, or a canon. He replied, "I am a sinner." Other men came to join him, intending to imitate Stephen, so that the hermitage of Muret grew into a monastic community and a new religious congregation later known as the Order of Grandmont. He refused ordination as a priest to remain a deacon.

*February 9*

**Apollonia**, deacon and virgin, martyred by fire at Alexandria on 9 February 249.



*This 14<sup>th</sup> century wood carving depicts Apollonia with her insignia, a tooth held by a forceps.*

Apollonia, an old woman, was a leader among the Christians in Alexandria in Egypt. The account of her martyrdom comes from Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria (247-265), in a letter preserved by Eusebius. Under the persecution of Decius (emperor 249-251), during an anti-Christian uprising caused by a pagan prophecy, the mob seized Apollonia. They battered her jaw

until all her teeth were knocked out. Pushed to renounce her faith, Apollonia chose instead to die on a pyre. She is the patron saint of dentists and toothache victims.

**Primus and Donatus**, deacons and martyrs, put to death by Donatist heretics for resisting the takeover of a catholic church at Lavallum in northwest Africa in 362.

*February 12*

**Modestus**, deacon and martyr, a native of Sardinia, killed in 304.

Modestus was tortured on the rack and then burned alive by order of Diocletian (emperor 284-305). His relics were brought to Benevento in southern Italy around 785 and buried in a church named after him.

*February 14*

**Constantine** (later **Cyril**), deacon, scholar, philologist, linguist, and (with his brother Methodius) missionary to the southern Slavs, died 14 February 869.



Cyril and Methodius were born in Thessaloniki to a Greek *drungarios* (a military officer) named Leon and to Maria. Born in 827-828, Cyril was reputedly the youngest of seven brothers, according to the *Vita Cyrilli* (The Life of Cyril). He is said to have given himself to the pursuit of heavenly wisdom at the age of seven, but at fourteen was made an orphan by the death of his parents.

An influential official, possibly the eunuch Theoktistos (Θεόκτιστος), brought him to Constantinople where he studied theology and philosophy. Theoktistos was a *logothetes tou dromou*, a powerful Byzantine official, responsible for the postal services and the diplomatic relations of the empire. He was also responsible, along with the regent Bardas, for initiating a far-reaching educational program within the empire, which culminated in the establishment of the University of Magnaura, where Constantine/Cyril was to teach. Photius is said to have been

among his teachers; Anastasius Bibliothecarius mentions their later friendship, as well as a conflict between them on a point of doctrine. Cyril learned an eclectic variety of knowledge including astronomy, geometry, rhetoric, and music. It was in the field of linguistics, however, that Cyril particularly excelled. Besides his native old Macedonian (Slavonic), he was fluent in Latin, Arabic, Hebrew, and Greek; according to the *Vita*, the Byzantine Emperor Michael III claimed that “all Thessalonians speak perfect Slavonic” (ch. 86).

After the completion of his education Cyril was ordained deacon and became a monk. He seems to have held the important position of *chartophylax*, or secretary to the patriarch and keeper of the archives, with some judicial functions also. This influential position required that he be in holy orders. After six months' quiet retirement in a monastery he began to teach philosophy and theology. Cyril also took an active role in relations with the other great monotheistic religions, Islam and Judaism. He penned fiercely anti-Jewish polemics, perhaps connected with his mission to the Khazars, a tribe who lived near the Sea of Azov under a Jewish king who allowed Jews, Muslims, and Christians to live peaceably side by side. He also undertook a mission to the Arabs with whom, according to the *Vita*, he held discussions. He is said to have learned the Hebrew, Samaritan, and Arabic languages during this period. The account of his life presented in the Latin *Legenda* claims that he also learned the Khazar language while in Chersonesos, in Taurica (today Crimea). (It has been claimed that Methodius also accompanied him on the mission to the Khazars, but this is probably a later invention.)

In 862 Prince Rastislav of Great Moravia requested that the emperor Michael III and the patriarch Photius send missionaries to evangelize his Slavic subjects. His motives in doing so were probably more political than religious. Rastislav had become king with the support of the Frankish ruler Louis the German, but subsequently sought to assert his independence from the Franks. He is said to have expelled missionaries of the Roman Church and instead turned to Constantinople for ecclesiastical assistance and, presumably, a degree of political support. The request provided a convenient opportunity to expand Byzantine influence, and the task was entrusted to Cyril and Methodius. Their first work seems to have been the training of assistants.

In 863 they began the task of translating the Bible into the language now known as Old Church Slavonic and traveled to Great Moravia to promote it. They enjoyed considerable success in this endeavor. However, they came into conflict with German ecclesiastics who opposed their efforts to create a specifically Slavic liturgy. It is impossible to determine with certainty what portions of the Bible the brothers translated. The New Testament and the psalms seem to have been the first, followed by other lessons from the Old Testament. The *Translatio* speaks only of a version of the gospels by Cyril, and the *Vita Methodii* only of the *evangelium Slovenicum*, though other liturgical selections may also have been translated.

No one knows for sure which liturgy, that of Rome or that of Constantinople, they took as a source. They may well have used the Roman, as suggested by liturgical fragments which adhere closely to the Latin type. The Glagolitic alphabet, which was based on the Greek uncial writing of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, has been traditionally attributed to Cyril's work. That fact has been confirmed explicitly by the papal letter *Industriae tuae* (880) approving the use of Old Church Slavonic, which says that the alphabet was “invented by Constantine the Philosopher.” It is unclear, however, whether Cyril himself was the originator of the eponymous Cyrillic alphabet. More

probably, it was invented by later followers of Cyril and Methodius. In 867 Pope Nicholas I invited the brothers to Rome.

Their evangelizing mission in Moravia had by this time become the focus of a dispute with Theotmar, the archbishop of Salzburg and bishop of Passau, who claimed ecclesiastical control of the same territory and wished to see it use the Latin liturgy exclusively. Traveling with the relics of St. Clement and a retinue of disciples, they were warmly received in Rome on their arrival in 868. The brothers were praised for their learning and cultivated for their influence in Constantinople. Their project in Moravia found support from Pope Adrian II, who formally authorized the use of the new Slavic liturgy.

Cyril fell ill late in 868, retired to a monastery, and after fifty days of illness died on 14 February 869. The *Translatio* asserts that he was made a bishop before his death, but there is little credible evidence for this. Over time, Cyrillic eventually spread through much of the Slavic world to become the standard alphabet in the Orthodox Slavic countries. Their evangelizing efforts also paved the way for the spread of Christianity throughout eastern Europe.

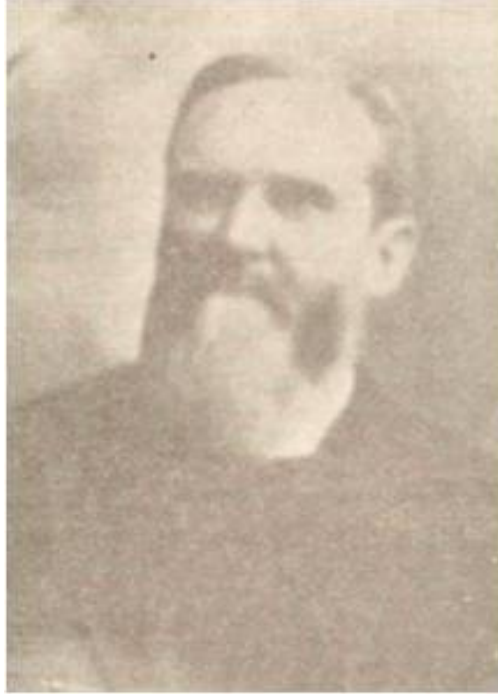
Cyril was canonized as a saint by the eastern church, and the Catholic Church canonized him in 1880 along with Methodius. The two brothers are known as the “Apostles of the Slavs” and are highly regarded by Catholic and Orthodox Christians. Cyril’s feast day is celebrated on 14 February (Catholic and Anglican) or 11 May (Orthodox). The two brothers were declared “Patrons of Europe” in 1980.

*February 15*

**Joseph of Antioch** (sometimes called **Josippus**), deacon and martyr, with seven companions, slain at Antioch in Syria, date unknown.

*February 21*

**Milnor Jones**, deacon and missionary in western North Carolina, died in Baltimore, Maryland, on 21 February 1916.



In 1895 Bishop Joseph Blount Cheshire of North Carolina decided to revive the Valle Crucis mission (see William West Skiles of 8 Dec.) around a fascinating character. Milnor Jones was born in 1848 of a prominent Maryland family, fought as a Confederate soldier, and then became a lawyer in Texas before suffering injury in a riding accident. Left with a limp, he devoted the rest of his life to God. After graduating from seminary at Sewanee and being ordained deacon in 1876, he decided to remain a deacon and, in the words of his bishop, to make himself “all things to the lowly whom he had chosen for his own.”

Most of his work was among the poor people of western North Carolina, in 1879-92 around Tryon and in 1894-96 at Valle Crucis. We know about Jones from his biographer, Bishop Cheshire. *Milnor Jones, Deacon and Missionary* (actually a long obituary, dated 1916) was published in the diocesan newspaper and later as a pamphlet (1920).

Jones was outspoken, crusty, and cantankerous, qualities that delighted the bishop. He was especially fond of denouncing the local Baptists and Methodists, and sometimes came close to inciting a riot. One mob of unruly men even threatened the bishop. Nevertheless, Bishop Cheshire took delight in a deacon “who did not scruple on occasion to tell his bishop that the sermon he [the bishop] had just preached, ‘did no more good than pouring water on a duck’s back.’”

An undisciplined oddball who cared nothing for settled work, and who preferred to minister in backwoods places, Jones traveled the mountain trails in the saddle, made friends of all he met, handed out prayer books, baptized everyone he could (often by immersion in a nearby creek), preached wild sermons from house to house, and only on rare occasion encountered his bishop, a priest, or any other member of the Episcopal establishment.



*February 23*

**Gorgonia**, deacon, sister of Gregory Nazianzus (the Theologian), died 23 February about 375.

Gorgonia was the daughter of Gregory the Elder and Nonna and the sister of Gregory Nazianzus (the Theologian) and Caesarius. Gorgonia married a man of some influence in Pisidia (in what is now southwestern Turkey), sometimes called Vitolian and other times Meletius. By at least one account, she is called the “pattern of a married saint.” She had several sons and three daughters, the most notable of whom was Alypania. Later in her life, she converted her husband and was baptized along with him and her sons and grandsons.

Two times in her life she was miraculously cured of serious maladies. In the first, she was trampled by a team of mules, causing broken bones and crushed internal organs. Yet Gorgonia would have no doctor, as she thought medical treatment indecent. According to legend, her modesty cured her. In the second, she cured herself of a desperate illness by anointing herself with “the sacred elements of the eucharist” mixed with her own tears, which she had shed with her head on the altar. As with the first malady, symptoms of headache, fever, paralysis, and sporadic coma disappeared through the strength of her prayer.

Gorgonia died of natural causes. Her father and mother were alive, though extremely old. At her funeral, her brother Gregory Nazianzus preached a eulogy which declared her a model Christian spouse and mother, “the paragon of women” and “the diamond of her sex.” Gorgonia is venerated as the patron saint of people afflicted by bodily ills or sickness.

The legacy of her charity has earned her the titles “Mother of Orphans,” “Eyes of the Blind,” and “Keeper of a Refuge of the Poor” in the Greek Orthodox Church. Her feast day on the calendar of saints is 9 December in the West and 23 February in the East, which is purported to be the date of her death.

*February 24*

**Flavian**, deacon and martyr, with Montanus, Julian, Lucius, presbyter Victorius, and five companions, tortured and beheaded at Carthage in 259.

They were disciples of Cyprian of Carthage, who had been martyred the previous year. According to the *Acta*, Flavian had received a reprieve at the people’s request. When the executioner was ready to give the stroke, Montanus prayed aloud to God that Flavian might follow them on the third day. To express his assurance that his prayer was heard, he ripped in half the handkerchief with which his eyes were to be covered, asked that one part of it to be reserved for Flavian, and desired that a place might be kept for him where he was to be buried, so that they might not be separated even in the grave. Flavian, seeing his crown of martyrdom delayed, made it the object of his ardent desires and prayers. He continued to insist that he was a deacon, and so he was beheaded three days later.

*February 25*

**Elizabeth Fedde**, pioneer Lutheran deaconess in America, died 25 February 1921.

Elizabeth Fedde was born on 25 December 1850 near Flekkefjord, Norway. She was trained as a

deaconess at the Lovisenberg Deaconess House under the supervision of Mother Katinka Guldberg, who had herself been trained at the Fliedner Motherhouse in Kaiserswerth, Germany. Elizabeth spent much of her early career in Troms, where she lived and worked under harsh and primitive conditions.

On her thirty-second birthday, Sister Elizabeth received a letter from her brother-in-law Gabriel Fedde challenging her to set up a ministry in New York City for Norwegian seamen there. She departed for the United States three months later and finally arrived on 9 April 1883. Sister Elizabeth firmly established her work beginning on 19 April the same year with the founding of the Norwegian Relief Society. The service establishing the society was led by Pastor Mortensen; Gabriel had served as his secretary.

In the beginning, the Relief Society was a boarding house with three small rooms rented for \$9 a month and located at 109 Williams Street, near the Seaman's Church. Sister Elizabeth also made significant efforts at visiting the sick and distressed, often writing in a journal about her experiences. In 1885 Fedde opened a deaconess house for the training of other women to help in her ministry. Originally, the house consisted of a nine-bed hospital that ultimately became Lutheran Medical Center in New York.

After remaining in New York for five years, she left at the request of Lutherans in Minnesota to come and minister to them. She arrived in Minneapolis in 1888 and established the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital of the Lutheran Free Church the next year and helped plan for a third hospital in Chicago. Eventually, the work in America proved to be exhausting, and Sister Elizabeth returned to Norway in November 1895, to Ola Sletteb, a suitor whom she had left to conduct her missionary work. The two were married shortly after her return.

*February 28*

**Deacons of Alexandria**, with presbyters and many others, died ministering to the sick during the plague, in 262.

*March 8*

**Pontius**, deacon and witness to the execution of Cyprian of Carthage, died in 260.

A deacon of the congregation at Carthage, Pontius followed Cyprian into the exile imposed upon him during the persecution of the church under Valerian (emperor 253-260). After attending Cyprian's trial and execution on 14 September 258, he wrote an account of the event. This appeared in his work, *Vita Cæcilii Cypriani* (Life of Cæcilius Cyprianus), which was not so much a biography of the bishop as a touching and vivid panegyric. Nevertheless, it is considered the earliest Christian biography.

**Apollonius**, deacon and martyr of Antinoe (also called Antinopolis) in Egypt, with the actor Philemon, cast into the sea at Alexandria about 305.

Apollonius was a deacon in Antinopolis Faiyoum, on the east bank of the Nile in central Egypt, and he converted Philemon, a musician and actor. Arrested in the persecutions of Diocletian (emperor 284-305), the two were taken to Alexandria, where they were drowned. Tradition states

that Philemon was hired to represent Apollonius at a pagan sacrifice demanded of citizens. Philemon announced he was a Christian. When no one listened to his claims, he persisted and was baptized miraculously. Apollonius declared the faith when arrested, and he and Philemon were sewn into sacks and thrown into the sea.

#### *March 12*

**Peter the Deacon**, disciple, secretary, and companion of Gregory the Great, died at Rome on 12 March 605.

A Benedictine monk and one of the seven deacons of Rome, Peter wrote the four books of the *Dialogues* as dictated by Gregory. He is responsible for the statement that the Holy Spirit sometimes hovered in the form of a dove over the great bishop's head. Peter died a year to the day after Gregory. He is revered as the patron saint of Salassola in the diocese of Biella, near Venice.

#### *March 14*

**Diaconus**, deacon of the church of the Marsi (an Italic tribe who lived in what is now Marsica in central Italy), martyred with two monks by the Lombards in the sixth century.

Gregory the Great recorded Diaconus' death in his *Dialogues*.

#### *March 16*

**Tatian**, deacon and martyr, with bishop Hilary (also called Dionysius) of Aquileia and others, killed by beheading in 284.

The others, all baptized Christians, were Denis, Felix, and Largus. Aquileia is at the head of the Adriatic in northeastern Italy.

#### *March 19*

**Amantius**, deacon and evangelist in Belgium and northeastern France, died about 668.

The bishop of Rome (Martin I, reigned 649-655) sent Landoald, a Roman priest, and Amantius his deacon to evangelize what is now the Maestricht region of Belgium and northeastern France. Landoald founded a church at Wintershoven.

#### *March 21*

**Sophia of Jerusalem**, deacon, died 21 March, probably in the fourth century.

The Greek inscription on her tombstone reads: "Here lies the servant and virgin of Christ, the deacon, the second Phoebe, who passed away in peace on the 21st day of March . . . May the Lord God . . ." In 1903 this inscription was found in five pieces below the tomb of the prophets on the Mount of Olives and is now in the museum of the White Fathers of St. Anne in Jerusalem. (*Revue biblique*, New 1 [1904], 260-262)

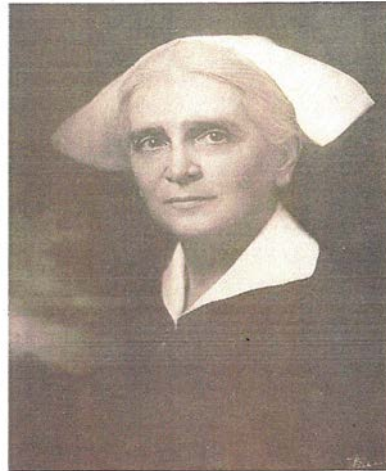
#### *March 22*

**Octavian**, archdeacon and martyr at Carthage, with several thousand of his flock, executed by

Arian Vandals at the command of King Huneric in 484.

*March 23*

**Bertha M. Garvin**, deaconess at Grace Church, New York City, died 23 March 1945.



BERTHA M. GARVIN

Originally from New Hampshire, Bertha Garvin served at Grace Church, Manhattan, where she was the rector's secretary and the vestry secretary for forty years. She first served under the Rev. William Huntington who had pioneered the deaconess cause at General Convention. During World War I, Garvin helped in organizing and serving Sunday dinners to sailors and soldiers who passed through the busy port of New York on their way to or from the European war. At the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Grace Parish, Garvin was honored at a luncheon at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. The guest speakers included Bishop William T. Manning of New York. More than 300 people attended this event. Garvin also served the greater community of deaconesses in New York City. She was president of the Alumnae Association of the New York Training School for Deaconesses in 1914, 1928, 1929, and 1930. She sat on the Executive Committee of the Association in 1923 and 1924. In 1940 Garvin retired to her home in Sanbornville, New Hampshire, where she died on 23 March 1945. [research of Deacon Geri Swanson]

*March 26*

**Irenaeus**, deacon and martyr, with bishop Theodore of Pentapolis (in what is now Libya) and others, had his tongue cut out but survived and died in peace in 310.

Theodore, Irenaeus, and readers Serapion and Ammonius suffered under Gallienus (emperor 260-268) by having their tongues cut out. Although all survived, they are venerated as martyrs.

*March 27*

**Pelagius**, deacon, venerated at Treviso (near Venice in northern Italy), date of death unknown.

*March 28*

**Cuthbert Symson**, deacon and Reformation martyr, deacon of an underground "Gospeller" congregation in London during the reign of Queen Mary, tortured and then burned at the stake 28 March 1558.

*March 29*

**Cyril**, deacon and martyr, killed at Heliopolis, and companions, who suffered under Julian the Apostate in 362.

Cyril was a prominent deacon in Heliopolis, a suburb of Athens in Greece. He opposed idol worship and destroyed many of the city's idols. Julian (emperor 360-363) sentenced him to torture and death. Tradition holds that God punished Cyril's torturers with blindness, boils, and terrible illness.

*March 31*

**Benjamin of Susa**, deacon and martyr, with bishop Audas, martyred by torture for refusing to cease preaching Christ, in 421.

Audas, bishop of the city of Susa (east of the Tigris River in Persia), was beheaded for Christ in the year 418 by Emperor Yezdegird. His deacon, Benjamin, was released by the tormentors with the understanding that he would never preach the gospel again. In the beginning Benjamin agreed, but he could not keep this promise and continued to spread the truth of Christ among the people. For this breach, three years after Audas, Benjamin was captured, tortured with thorns driven under his nails, and killed.

*April 2*

**Yazzie Mason**, first Navajo deacon, died 2 April 1997.

Yazzie Mason was born 18 July 1927 and ordained deacon 21 December 1977. He served at St. Michael's at Upper Fruitland, New Mexico, in the Navajo Nation. He was fluent in Navajo (both the Navajo people and their language are known as Diné) but limited in English. There was resistance to his ordination because he could neither read nor write. Every week his wife Alice read the gospel to him in Navajo, and on Sunday he recited it from memory to the congregation. His daughter Cornelia Eaton recalls: "My dad was a very sacred person, and he had such a profound passion for the gospel. Daily sunrise and sunset prayers and meditation were always spent in St. Michael's Chapel. I remember him today in that way."

*April 4*

**Agathopodes (Agathopus)**, deacon and martyr, with reader Theodulus, killed by drowning in Thessalonica for refusing to give up the sacred books, in 303.

Defying the co-emperor Maximian (reigned 286-305) and the governor Faustinus, they confessed the Christian faith. Stones were tied to their necks, and they were cast into the sea.

*April 6*

**Platonida (or Platonis)**, deacon, founder of a nunnery at Nisibis in Mesopotamia (now Nusaybin in southeastern Turkey), died in 308.



Platonida was at first a deaconess but then withdrew into the Nisibis wilderness, where she organized a women's monastery. The rule of her monastery was distinguished by its strictness. The sisters took food only once a day. Their free time from prayer they spent in monastic works and various obediences, usually involving manual labor. On Fridays, the day commemorating the sufferings of Christ on the cross, all work stopped, and the nuns from morning until evening were in church, where in the intervals between services they read from the scriptures and their interpretations. Platonida was for all the sisters a living example of strict monastic ascetic deed, meekness, and love for neighbor. Having reached extreme old age, Platonida died peacefully.

*April 7*

**Rufinus**, deacon and martyr, with Aquilina and 200 soldiers, beheaded at Sinope on the Black Sea (now Sinop in Turkey) during the reign of Maximian (305-311), about 310.

When Rufinus was put into prison for confessing Christ, Aquilina showed concern and also was placed under guard. In prison they converted 200 soldiers to Christ by their miracles, and all of them were beheaded by the sword.

*April 8*

**Elfgete**, deacon and martyr, with abbot Theodore of Croyland and 77 other monks, put to death by invading Danes at Croyland in England on 8 April 870.

On that day Danes attacked the famous Benedictine abbey at Croyland (now Crowland in Lincolnshire, East Anglia). They killed abbot Theodore and all the other monks who were there. We know the names of some of the monks: Askega (prior), Swethin (subprior), Elfgete (deacon), Sabinus (subdeacon), Grimkell, Agamund (centenarians), Herbert (chanter), Egred, Ulric (servers), and Egelred. By the evening of the next day only Egelred remained. He had been away and would have to wait until September to receive his crown of martyrdom. The morning had started as usual. The abbot was to preside at mass and was vested and at the altar when the Danes broke into the abbey. A few minutes later the killing was done, the looting commenced, and the Danes moved on. Behind them they left Theodore with a slash through the right side of his skull, the other monks also dead.

*April 10*

**Gajan**, deacon and martyr in Dacia (modern Romania), early fourth century.

Gajan died almost certainly during the persecution under Diocletian (emperor 284-305).

*April 13*

**Papylus**, deacon and martyr, with his sister Agathonice and bishop Carpus, killed at Pergamum in Asia Minor (now Bergama in western Turkey) in 170.

The account of their martyrdom at the hands of the proconsul Optimus, during a persecution by Marcus Aurelius (emperor 161-180), has survived. Carpus: "The gods are unfeeling; deprive them of your veneration and they will be defiled by dogs and crows. I have never before sacrificed to images which have no feeling or understanding." Papylus: "I have many children, in virtue of the faith of the Christians, spiritual children in every province and city. I feel no pain because I have someone to comfort me; one whom you do not see suffers within me."

Agathonice: "If I am worthy I desire to follow the footsteps of my teachers. My children have God, who watches over them." They were sentenced to be tortured with clawing instruments and then burned alive.

*April 16*

**Isabella Gilmore**, deaconess in the Church of England, died 16 April 1923.

Born in 1842, widowed and childless at age 40, Isabella Gilmore, the sister of William Morris, became a nurse at Guy's Hospital in London. In 1886 Bishop Anthony Thorold of Rochester asked her to begin deaconess work in his diocese. The bishop overcame her initial reluctance, and together they planned for an Order of Deaconesses along the same lines as the ordained ministry. She was admitted as a deaconess in 1887, and a training house developed on North Side, Clapham Common, later to be called Gilmore House in her memory. Isabella retired in 1906.

During her nineteen years of service, she trained head deaconesses for at least seven other dioceses. At her memorial service, Archbishop Randall Davidson predicted: "Someday, those who know best will be able to trace much of the origin and root of the revival of the Deaconess Order to the life, work, example, and words of Isabella Gilmore."

*April 17*

**Peter**, deacon and martyr, with his servant Hermogenes, killed probably at Antioch, date of death unknown.

*April 18*

**Elizabeth Ferard**, first deaconess in the Church of England, founder of the Community of St. Andrew, died 18 April 1883.





The Lutherans were the first denomination to revive the order of deaconesses. Pastor Theodor Fliedner founded a deaconess institution at Kaiserswerth in 1836. His idea was to train and send women, two to each parish—one to nurse and one to teach. But his two successive wives had different ideas and realized that such deaconesses needed a “home” for community structure. The Bishop of London, Archibald Campbell Tait, visited the Kaiserswerth community of deaconesses. In 1858 the recently revived Convocation of Canterbury discussed a revival of the order in England.

Elizabeth Catherine Ferard, descended from an old Huguenot family, had been awaiting an opportunity to serve God in the Church of England. After the death of her mother in 1858 she went to Germany to stay for at least three months at Kaiserswerth (her journal of the visit has been published). Much of this trip she found frustrating, especially since she could not understand their dialect of German. She worked in the orphan house, observing and learning nursing skills, and commented, “I again heard of the continual spreading of the Deaconess work in every direction except in England, and more than ever wished we could have something of the kind in England, where the materials for it are so abundant, could we but found a Deaconess House on the right principles” which would “minister to the necessities of the Church.” She heard of the Ditchingham Sisters when she was at Kaiserswerth, and so she visited the Anglican Community of All Hallows in Suffolk.

Then, in 1861, Elizabeth offered to begin the deaconess training in England. She and two other women began the Community of St. Andrew at a house in Burton Crescent, just south of King’s Cross. The community observed a common rule and was dedicated to worship and to works of mercy. On St Andrew’s Day 1861 the institution officially began as the North London Deaconess House.

On 18 July 1862 Bishop Tait of London admitted Elizabeth as the first deaconess in the Church of England, receiving license No.1. The sisters worked in the local parish and the slum area of Somers Town (just west of King's Cross), were in charge of nursing at the Great Northern Hospital, and taught in the local Infants and Girls' schools. The new order began to flourish as more dioceses began to admit women to the order. St Andrew's began to train independent diocesan Deaconesses as well as ones for its own Community. Some women and dioceses disliked the concept of sisterhoods and preferred the parochial model pioneered by Isabella Gilmore (see 16 April) in Rochester diocese.

The Metropolitan Railway opened the station of Westbourne Park in 1866, which resulted in more people moving into this area. The clearance of Somers Town for St Pancras railway yards led to the move of the institution, by then called the London Diocesan Deaconess Institute, to the Westbourne Park area (one mile west of Paddington station) in 1873. Later that year Elizabeth's health failed and she resigned her leadership role. But she lived for a further ten years, dying on Easter Sunday 1883. In the Church of England her day is July 18, her ordination date, because her death date often occurs in Holy Week or Easter Week. [research by Sr. Teresa Joan White, CSA]

*April 19*

**Timon**, one of the seven ordained by the apostles (Acts 6:5), died first century [also July 28].

*April 20*

**Mary Drew**, deacon of the diocese of Olympia, died 20 April 2004.

Mary Stanley Drew was born 26 November 1912 in Dixfield, Maine. She and her family came west during World War I when her father was assigned to Camp Lewis. She graduated from the University of Washington, where she received bachelor's and master's degrees in social work. For 38 years Mary worked at United Way of King County. She retired at 65 in 1977 as the comptroller. Mary held a variety of lay leadership roles in the diocese of Olympia.

She started her second career when she was ordained a deacon on 28 October 1989 at age 77. She was the hospital chaplain for the diocese of Olympia, working in hospitals in the Seattle area. She also served as chaplain for the diocesan School of Theology. When she was 80, she served a term as chaplain for St. George's College in Jerusalem. Mary was a deacon mentor for many deacons in the diocese and was much beloved by each one of them. She was both a pioneer and a woman of fierce dignity. When she was the chaplain at St. George's College she was not allowed to function as a deacon. She held the office of deacon with dignity by being present for every liturgical service dressed in her clericals. She would not hide or go away but sat among the community as a faithful Christian. She functioned as a deacon until she retired in 2002 at age 90.

*April 21*

**Proculus, Sossius, and Faustus**, deacons and martyrs, with their bishop Januarius of Beneventum and others, beheaded at Puteolum (now Campegna in central Italy) about 305.

The group of Christians suffered martyrdom about the year 305 during the persecution ordered by Diocletian (emperor 284-305). The Roman authorities arrested bishop Januarius and led him

to trial before Menignus, governor of Campegna. Because of his firm confession of Christianity, they threw Januarius into a red-hot furnace, but he came out unharmed. Then at Menignus' command, they stretched him out on a bench and beat him with iron rods until his bones were exposed.

In the crowd were deacon Faustus and reader Desiderius, who wept at the sight of their bishop's suffering. The pagans suspected that they were Christians and threw them into prison with Januarius in the city of Puteolum. At this prison were two deacons jailed for confessing Christ, Sossius and Proculus, and two other Christians, Eutychius and Acution. On the following morning the captors led out all the imprisoned Christians into the circus to be torn to pieces by wild beasts, but the beasts would not touch them. Menignus claimed that all the miracles were caused by the sorcery of the Christians, and immediately he became blinded and cried out for help. Bishop Januarius prayed for healing, and Menignus recovered his sight. He accused the Christians of sorcery and ordered the martyrs beheaded before the walls of the city. Christians from surrounding cities took the bodies of the martyrs for burial. The body of Januarius was taken to Neapolis (Naples), and miracles were later connected with it.

*April 22*

**Luke** and **Mucius**, deacons and martyrs, with three presbyters, beheaded near Babylon in 250.

They were killed during the Roman invasion of Mesopotamia by Decius (emperor 249-251). The three presbyters were Parmenius, Chrysoteins, and Helimenas. The ruins of Babylon are 55 miles south of Baghdad in Iraq.

**Abdiesus** (or **Hebedjesus**) and **Azadanes** (or **Azadames**), deacons and martyrs, with seven companions, part of a vast multitude martyred in Persia in 342.

Abdiesus and Azadanes were deacons in the Christian community of Persia who were caught up in the persecutions conducted by Shapur II, king of the Persian Sassanid Empire from 309 to 379. They were accompanied in martyrdom by Abrosimus, Acepsimus, Azades, Bicor, Mareas, Milles, and a woman named Tarbula. Some were Persian courtiers, others presbyters and bishops. Tarbula was the sister of Simeon and suffered death by sawing.

*April 25*

**Philo** and **Agathopodes** (or **Agathopus**), deacons, who accompanied Ignatius of Antioch to his martyrdom in Rome, died in 150.

These two deacons assisted Ignatius of Antioch and, after his martyrdom in Rome, brought back to Antioch those relics they could recover from Roman authorities. They are believed to have written the *Acta* recounting the life and death of Ignatius.

*April 30*

**James**, deacon and martyr, with reader Marianus and others, beheaded at Lambesa, an ancient town in Numidia (now Algeria), in 259.

James was a deacon in the same church as Marianus, and he was imprisoned with him at Cirta

(modern Constantine in Algeria) in the persecutions of Valerian (emperor 253-260) He was tortured over several days to force him from his faith. During this torment he had a dream which showed him final triumph. He was martyred with Marianus, Agapius, Secindinus, and hundreds of others. His story was recorded by a fellow prisoner who was not martyred.

*May 1*

**Acius** (or **Ache**), deacon and martyr, with subdeacon Aceolus, martyred near Ambianum (modern Amiens in northern France) in 303.

They were taken prisoner during the persecution of Diocletian (emperor 284-305). Both are revered in Amiens, a city and commune in Picardy.

*May 2*

**Felix of Seville**, deacon and martyr, killed probably by Muslims at Seville, date unknown.

*May 3*

**Diodorus** and **Rhodopianus**, deacons and martyrs, killed at Aphrodisias, a small city near the southwest coast of Asia Minor, in the province of Caria (now an archeological site near the village of Geyre in Turkey), early fourth century.

As a provincial metropolis, Aphrodisias became the see city of the diocese of Caria, in the ecclesiastical arrangements institutionalized at the Council of Nicaea. The earliest attested bishop of Aphrodisias was Ammonius who attended Nicaea in 325. We know very little about Christianity at Aphrodisias before this date. A confused account of two martyrs at Aphrodisias is conserved in the *Martyrologium Syriacum*, the *Laterculi Hieronymiani*, and the *Synaxaria Constantinopolitana* (all in the *Acta Sanctorum*), and in a Latin passion narrative published by P. Peeters. Almost all the sources agree that the martyrdoms took place at Aphrodisias on April 30, under Decius, emperor 249-251 (*Passio*), or more likely Diocletian, emperor 284-305 (*Synax. Const.*). The names of the two martyrs vary but are most probably Diodoretus (or Diodorus) and Rhodopianus. The name Diodorus, but not Diodoretus, is attested in inscriptions on the site; Rhodopianus is not attested, but a Rhodopaeus appears in the sixth century. According to one source, Rhodopianus was a deacon (*Synax. Const.*). They were attacked by a crowd in the Agora and stoned to death there (*Synax. Const.*) or outside the city (*Passio*).

*May 4*

**Curcodomus of Auxerre**, a deacon of Rome, sent by the Pope to help Peregrinus, first bishop of Auxerre (originally Autissiodorum, in what is now the Burgundy region of central France), on a mission to Gaul, eighth century.

*May 5*

**Euthymius**, deacon and martyr at Alexandria, date unknown.

**Robert Pantutun**, deacon of Mota in the Banks Group in Vanuatu (formerly New Hebrides), Melanesia, died in 1910.

Robert Pantutun of Mota island was ordained deacon 17 Nov 1872 in "Pitcairn church" (All

Saints, Norfolk Island). According to Bishop H. H. Montgomery of Auckland, *The Light of Melanesia: A Record of Fifty Years' Mission Work in the South Seas* (New York: E. S. Gorham, 1904):

“In 1883 the Rev. E. Wogale died at Vipaka, on the island of Lo, where the first school had been opened. In the next year Robert Pantutun began work here. He is a Mota man, though his wife is a native of Lo. The bishop also took some boys with him, in 1880, to Norfolk Island. Two of these were brothers, and are now teachers, William Wulenew and Ernest Tughur. Robert Pantutun is a deacon. He was one of Bishop [John Coleridge] Patteson's earliest scholars, and has been a steady worker for years. His son John is in this year (1892) the organist of the chapel at Norfolk Island, and most striking it is to watch a Melanesian in that beautiful little church, a boy with frizzly head and bare feet, making full use of the pedals, and playing with taste and feeling the music of most of the great composers of sacred music. It can easily be realized what a deprivation it is to these native organists when they return to their homes as teachers, and are debarred from the use of musical instruments, for no harmonium has yet been invented which will stand the damp and the insect pests of these tropical islands. . . .

“One hot and brilliant morning I landed at Vava, and made the acquaintance of the Rev. Robert Pantutun. . . . The road up to the village was broad and open, according to the custom of the people, for the sake of their burial rites. The church in this village is beautifully built, and is perhaps better appointed than any in these parts. Mr. Robin was away, and therefore there were no confirmations, but upon our return Robert Pantutun hoped to present a class of adults for baptism.”

*May 16*

**Sixteen deacons** (nine men and seven women), with bishop Audas (or Abdas) of Cascar in eastern Persia, and seven presbyters, martyred at Leda in Persia in 420.

Audas was martyred on a Friday in May during the reign of Yazdegerd I (Sassanid king of Persia 399-421) with 28 members of his flock, including seven presbyters, nine men deacons, and seven virgins (i.e., women deacons). Their deaths marked the beginning of a long period of slaughter of Christians, in favor of Zoroastrians, throughout the Persian empire. Cascar is now Kashgar in western China near the border with Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

*May 19*

**Alcuin of York**, deacon and abbot of Tours, died 19 May 804. [Episcopal Church places him on May 20.]



Alcuinus or Ealhwine was a scholar, ecclesiastic, poet, and teacher from York in Northumbria. He liked to be called by the Latin nickname Albinus, and at the academy of Charlemagne's palace he took the surname Flaccus (after an ancient Roman family). He was born around 735 close to Eboracum (York), perhaps in the city itself. He was a noble, related to Willibrord, first bishop of Utrecht, whose father founded the monastery of St. Andrew, which Alcuin would later inherit. Alcuin of York had a long career as a teacher and scholar, first at the school at York now known as St. Peter's School (founded in 627) and later as Charlemagne's leading advisor on ecclesiastical and educational affairs. From 796 until his death he was abbot of the great Abbey of Saint-Martin at Tours.

Alcuin came to the cathedral school of York in the golden age of Egbert and Eadbert. Egbert had been a disciple of the Venerable Bede, who urged him to have York raised to an archbishopric. Eadbert was the king and brother to Egbert. These two men oversaw the reenergizing and reorganization of the English church with an emphasis on reforming the clergy and on the tradition of learning begun under Bede. Alcuin thrived under Egbert's tutelage. In York he formed his love of classical poetry, although he was sometimes troubled by the fact that it was written by non-Christians.

The York school was renowned as a center of learning not only in religious matters but also in literature and science, known as the *seven liberal arts*. It was from here that Alcuin drew inspiration for the school he would lead at the Frankish court. He revived the school with disciplines such as the *trivium* (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) and the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy). Two codices were written, by himself on the *trivium*, and by his student Hraban on the *quadrivium*. Alcuin graduated from student to teacher sometime in the 750s. His ascendancy to the headship of the York school began after Aelbert became archbishop of York in 767. Around the same time Alcuin became a deacon. He was never ordained priest, and there is no real evidence that he became an actual monk, but he lived his life like one.

In 781 King Elfwald sent Alcuin to Rome to petition the Pope for official confirmation of York's status as an archbishopric and to confirm the election of a new archbishop, Eanbald I. It was then, on his way home, that Alcuin met Charles, king of the Franks, later known as Charlemagne (Charles the Great). Alcuin was reluctantly persuaded to join Charles' court. His love of the church and his intellectual curiosity made the offer one he could not refuse. He was to join an already illustrious group of scholars that Charles had gathered around him like Peter of Pisa, Paulinus, Rado, and abbot Fulrad. He would later write that "the Lord was calling me to the

service of King Charles.”

Alcuin was welcomed at the Palace School of Charlemagne. The school had been founded under the king’s ancestors as a place for educating the royal children, mostly in manners and the ways of the court. Charles wanted more than this—he wanted to include the liberal arts and, most importantly, the study of the religion that he held sacred. From 782 to 790, Alcuin had as pupils Charlemagne himself, his sons Pepin and Louis, the young men sent for their education to the court, and the young clerics attached to the palace chapel. Bringing with him from York his assistants Pyttel, Sigewulf, and Joseph, Alcuin revolutionized the educational standards of the Palace School, introducing Charlemagne to the liberal arts and creating a personalized atmosphere of scholarship and learning to the extent that the institution came to be known as the “school of Master Albinus.”

Charlemagne was a master at gathering the best men of every nation in his court. He became far more than just the king at the center. He made many of these men his closest friends and counselors. They referred to him as “David,” a reference to the biblical King David. Alcuin soon found himself on intimate terms with the king and with the other men at court to whom he gave nicknames to be used for work and play. Alcuin himself was known as “Albinus” or “Flaccus.” Like many of his learned contemporaries, Alcuin was an astrologer. Alcuin’s friendships also extended to the ladies of the court, especially the queen mother and the daughters of the king. His relationships with these women, however, never reached the intense level of those with the men around him.

In 790 Alcuin went back to England, to which he had always been greatly attached. He dwelt there for some time, but Charlemagne then invited him back to help in the fight against the Adoptionist heresy which was making great progress in Toledo, Spain, the old capital town of the Visigoths and still a major city for the Christians under Islamic rule in Spain. He is believed to have had contacts with Beatus of Liébana, from the kingdom of Asturias, who fought against Adoptionism. At the Council of Frankfurt in 794, Alcuin upheld the orthodox doctrine and obtained the condemnation of the heresiarch Felix of Urgel.

Having failed during his stay in England to influence King Aethelraed of Northumbria in the conduct of his reign, Alcuin never returned to live in England. Alcuin was back at Charlemagne’s court by at least mid-792, writing a series of letters to Aethelraed, to Hygbald, bishop of Lindisfarne, and to Aethelheard, archbishop of Canterbury, in the succeeding months, which deal with the attack on Lindisfarne by Viking raiders in July 792. These letters and Alcuin’s poem *De clade Lindisfarnensis monasterii* provide the only significant contemporary account of these events.

In 796 Alcuin was in his sixties. He hoped to be free from court duties and was given the chance when abbot Itherius of Saint-Martin at Tours died. Charlemagne gave the abbey into Alcuin’s care with the understanding that he should be available if the king ever needed his counsel. He made the abbey school into a model of excellence, and students flocked to it; he had many manuscripts copied, the calligraphy of which is of outstanding beauty. He wrote many letters to his friends in England, to Arno, bishop of Salzburg, and above all to Charlemagne. These letters, of which 311 are extant, are filled mainly with pious meditations, but they further form a mine of



information as to the literary and social conditions of the time, and they are the most reliable authority for the history of humanism in the Carolingian age. He also trained the numerous monks of the abbey in piety, and it was in the midst of these pursuits that he died.

Alcuin is the most prominent figure of the Carolingian renaissance, in which three main periods have been distinguished: In the first of these, up to the arrival of Alcuin at the court, the Italians occupy the central place; in the second, Alcuin and the Anglo-Saxons are dominant; in the third, which begins in 804, the influence of Theodulf the Visigoth is preponderant. We owe to Alcuin, too, some manuals used in his educational work: a grammar and works on rhetoric and dialectics. They are written in the form of dialogues, and in the two last the interlocutors are Charlemagne and Alcuin. He also wrote several theological treatises, including *De fide Trinitatis* and commentaries on the Bible. Alcuin transmitted to the Franks the knowledge of Latin culture that had existed in England. We still have a number of his works. They include letters and poetry. Besides some graceful epistles in the style of Fortunatus, he wrote some long poems, and notably a history in verse of the church at York: *Versus de patribus, regibus et sanctis Eboracensis ecclesiae*.

Alcuin died on 19 May 804, some ten years before Charlemagne. He was buried at the abbey church of Saint-Martin under an epitaph he wrote in Latin, which partly reads in English:

*Dust, worms, and ashes now . . .  
Alcuin my name, wisdom I always loved,  
Pray, reader, for my soul.*

*May 21*

**Timothy, Polius, and Eutychius**, deacons and martyrs, of the African province of Mauretania Caesariensis (mainly in present Algeria), killed under Diocletian (emperor 284-305).

*May 25*

**Winebald** and **Worad**, deacons and martyrs, monks of the abbey of Saint-Bertin in the Pas-de-Calais region of France, with monks Gerbald and Reginhard, killed by the Danes in 862.

*May 31*

**Paschasius**, deacon of Rome, author of *De Spiritu Sancto*, several theological works on the Holy Spirit that have become lost, died about 512.

Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, IV, Chap. 40, “of the soul of Paschasius the Deacon” (1911 trans.):

“For when I was yet in my younger years, and lived a secular life, I heard from the mouth of mine elders, who knew it to be true: how that Paschasius, a Deacon of this Roman church (whose sound and eloquent books of the holy Ghost be extant amongst us), was a man of a wonderful holy life, a marvellous giver of alms, a lover of the poor, and one that contemned himself. This man, in that contention which, through the exceeding hot emulation of the clergy, fell out betwixt Symmachus and Lawrence, made choice of Lawrence to be Bishop of Rome: and though he was afterward by common consent overcome, yet did he continue in his former opinion till his dying

day: loving and preferring him, whom the Church, by the judgment of Bishops, refused for her governor. This Deacon ending his life in the time of Symmachus, Bishop of the Apostolic see: a man possessed with a devil came and touched his dalmatic, as it lay upon the bier, and was forthwith delivered from that vexation. Long time after, Germanus, Bishop of Capua (before mentioned), by the counsel of physicians, for the recovery of his health went to the baths: into which after he was entered, he found there standing in those hot waters the foresaid Paschasius, ready to do him service. At which sight being much afraid, he demanded what so worthy a man as he was did in that place: to whom Paschasius returned this answer: 'For no other cause,' quoth he, 'am I appointed to this place of punishment, but for that I took part with Lawrence against Symmachus: and therefore I beseech you to pray unto our Lord for me, and by this token shall you know that your prayers be heard, if, at your coming again, you find me not here.' Upon this, the holy man Germanus betook himself to his devotions, and after a few days he went again to the same baths, but found not Paschasius there: for seeing his fault proceeded not of malice, but of ignorance, he might after death be purged from that sin. And yet we must withal think that the plentiful alms which he bestowed in this life, obtained favour at God's hands, that he might then deserve pardon, when he could work nothing at all for himself."

### *June 1*

**Valens**, aged deacon and martyr of Jerusalem, with presbyter Pamphilus and Porphyrius and companions, killed at Caesarea in Palestine in 309.

Pamphilus, a native of Berytus (Beirut), received a high education and was the presbyter in Caesarea. During the persecution of Diocletian (emperor 284-305), Pamphilus suffered torture, together with Valens, the aged deacon of the Prophet Elijah Church, and Paul, a native of Jamnia. After torture all of them were imprisoned for two years and finally were dismembered by the sword together with five young Egyptians. Porphyrius, a servant of Pamphilus, asked permission to bury the bodies. When he confessed to being a Christian, he was burned. Seleucus, a warrior, was beheaded. Theodulus, the starer (elder), was crucified on a cross. One young Christian, Julian, approaching Caesarea, saw the mutilated bodies of the martyrs, went up to them, and kissed them. Soldiers who saw this informed the governor, and when the young man confessed Christ he was burned. [16 February among the Orthodox]

**Richard Henry Pemble**, archdeacon of the Episcopal diocese of Chicago, leader in the revival of the diaconate, died 1 June 2001.

Born in 1933, Dick Pemble was ordained a deacon in 1974 and served at St. Augustine Church in Wilmette, Illinois, for 19 years. In 1993 Bishop Frank Griswold appointed him archdeacon, a position previously held by priests. Archdeacon Pemble was deeply committed to ecumenism and was ecumenical officer of the North American Association for the Diaconate. He served on the board of the Fund for the Diaconate of the Episcopal Church and executive committee of the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers. He also was chairman of the Chicago Episcopal-Roman Catholic Deacons Dialog Group. He died after a long bout with lung cancer. (His wife, Pat, died 5 June 2014.)

### *June 2*

**Sanctus**, deacon and martyr, one of the Martyrs of Lyons in 177.

At Lyons (Lugdunum in Latin) and nearby Vienne, in Gaul, there were missionary centers which drew many Christians from Asia and Greece. Persecution began in 177. At first, Christians were excluded from the public baths and the market place and from all social and public life. They were subject to attack when they appeared in public, and many Christian homes were vandalized. The government became involved and began to take Christians into custody for questioning. Some slaves from Christian households were tortured to obtain confessions and were induced to say that Christians practiced cannibalism and incest. These charges were used to arouse the whole city against the Christians, especially Pothinus, the aged bishop of Lyons; Sanctus, a deacon from Vienne; Attalus; Maturus, a recent convert; and Blandina, a slave. Pothinus was beaten and then released, to die of his wounds a few days later. Sanctus the deacon resisted the interrogation. His torturers demanded his name, race, birthplace, and whether he was a slave or free, and to every question he replied: "I am a Christian." When they ran out of ideas, they pressed red-hot copper plates against sensitive parts of his body. After a few days they put him on the rack, hoping that this would break him, but he still resisted. Blandina, tortured all day long, would say nothing except, "I am a Christian, and nothing vile is done among us." Finally, the survivors were put to death in the public arena.

*June 3*

**Abraham Yac Deng**, deacon and martyr, shot to death by armed forces of the Islamic National Front in the village of Ayen in southern Sudan (now South Sudan) on 3 June 1998.

As reported by Christian Solidarity International-Suisse, between 1-10 June 1998 the armed forces of the Islamic National Front launched attacks on the majority Christian population of the district of Twic, north of Bahr el Ghazal, Sudan. During these attacks, on 3 June in the village of Ayen, the Islamic militia killed the deacon of the Episcopal church, Abraham Yac Deng, and took away as slaves Elizabeth Ading Deng and Abuk Goch, two members of the community. Two of the children of Abuk Goch were among the 25 members of the community who were abducted as slaves. The militia sacked the Episcopal church of Ayen, and the pastor and another deacon narrowly escaped death. Other attacks, with summary executions, destruction of churches, and the abduction of women and children as slaves took place in the villages of Turalei and Maper.

**Basman Yousef Daud, Wahid Hanna Isho, and Gassan Isam Bidawed**, deacons and martyrs, shot and killed with priest Ragheed Ganni after Sunday mass, as they left the (Chaldean Catholic) Church of the Holy Spirit in Mosul, northern Iraq, on 3 June 2007.

As they left the church, their car was stopped by a group of armed gunmen, who shot all four men and then rigged their car with explosives so that no one would dare remove their bodies. The car with the four murdered men remained in the street, bearing witness to the killings, for several hours until a police bomb-squad defused the devices. The parish where they served, the Church of the Holy Spirit, had been bombed and vandalized in the past, and Father Ganni had been threatened by Islamic militants. The three deacons had been accompanying the priest constantly, hoping to protect him.

*June 5*

**Rosemary Skinner Keller**, deacon of the United Methodist Church, feminist historian, and scholar, died 5 June 2008 of kidney cancer.

Dr. Keller was professor of church history and academic dean at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. She also taught at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois, where she served as the seminary's first woman dean and vice president of academic affairs. She was an ordained permanent deacon in the United Methodist Church. With feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether, Rosemary Skinner Keller was the editor of *In Our Own Voices: Four Centuries of American Women's Religious Writings* and the three-volume *Encyclopedia of Women and Religion in North America*.

*June 6*

**Ini Kopuria**, deacon, founder of the Melanesian Brotherhood on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, died on 6 June 1945.

According to Father Brian Macdonald-Milne, *Spearhead: The Story of the Melanesian Brotherhood* (Watford, England: The Melanesian Mission, about 1975), 7-9:

“On San Cristoval in the Solomons, a Brotherhood of Melanesian men attempted for a short time to work among the heathen of the mountainous bush areas. At that time, Dr. Charles Fox was working on the island and took a great interest in the experiment, as he and the Reverend John Mainwaring Steward were contemplating something similar for the island of Malaita, where the largest number of non-Christians was concentrated. One of the boys who had been sent to school at Pamua on San Cristoval at that time was Ini Kopuria. He was from Maravovo, the first Christian village on Guadalcanal, where Steward was based. It was through him, in cooperation with Steward and Fox, that the vision of a Melanesian Brotherhood would eventually come true. Ini Kopuria continued his education at Norfolk Island, then returned to the Solomons. His teachers wanted him to become a catechist to his own people, but because of his great love of adventure and travel, he refused. Instead, he joined the Solomon Islands Police Force, rising rapidly to the rank of Corporal. It was one of the few openings available to Solomon Islanders in the service of the colonial Government at that time. His work took him all over Guadalcanal, his home island, so he got to know the bush people as well as the people of the coastal areas, like himself.

“One day, while attempting to make an arrest, he had an accident and lay in hospital for a long time—the first period of prolonged inactivity in his life! This gave him time to think and to pray, and also to ask himself what was the meaning of the accident. During this time, he had a vision. He believed Jesus himself appeared to him and said, ‘Ini, you are not doing the work I want you to do.’ He did not go back to the Police. The question in Ini's mind when he eventually came out of hospital was ‘What does Jesus want me to do?’ He went to discuss this question with John Steward, who had by then become Bishop of Melanesia. He sent him to the Reverend Arthur Hopkins at the theological college. There he listened to Hopkins's lectures and heard for the first time about St. Francis and Brotherhoods and monasteries of Europe. This set him thinking. Soon he was clear in his own mind that God wanted him to be a Brother and that in this way he could go back to the bush people of Guadalcanal, not to arrest them but to share with them the Good News of peace and love through Jesus Christ. He hoped other young men would join him and

that the Brothers would be able to go even further than the limits of the Diocese of Melanesia (which still included the Territory of New Guinea)—perhaps even to Indonesia.

“Bishop Steward was overjoyed with Ini Kopuria’s suggestion and helped him to prepare simple rules for the Brotherhood, which they called the ‘Retatasiu’, the word for Brotherhood in the Mota language of the Banks Islands, which was then used as the common language of Anglicans in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. In 1925 Ini made his life vow standing on his own land at Tabalia, along the Guadalcanal coast from Maravovo. He had composed the vow himself, and as well as giving himself to the work for life, he also gave the use of his land to the Brothers, and promised not to marry, and to obey the orders of his superiors. This included being willing to go wherever the church wanted to send him. (His intention was sincere, but the coming of the Japanese invasion in 1942 led him to break his vow, join the American Labour Corps, and get married. At the end of his life, he deeply regretted what he had done, and in 1945 died of a broken heart, though full of trust in God.)

“Ini set out to find other young [men to] join him. He found them at Pawa School, the Senior School of the Diocese on Ugi Island in the Eastern Solomons where Solomon Islanders and Ni-Vanuatu (New Hebrideans) were trained. This school had replaced the one at Norfolk Island. The headmaster at that time was Charles Fox and he was very interested in his ideas and encouraged six of his schoolboys (some of whom were already grown men) to join him. Later he himself joined and was the only white man to become a Melanesian Brother, although others have worked with the Brotherhood at different times or been associated with it as Fathers or Chaplains or Companions. Charles Fox was a Brother for eleven years and was the only Brother who was a priest, although Ini Kopuria himself was later ordained deacon. Fox was also the only European working *under* a Melanesian at that time, as Ini was his superior, and he took orders from him. He established a proper training for the Novices and advised them also on their worship and spiritual life, but control was in the hands of the Melanesian leaders, under the general direction of the Bishop, with whom they had an annual meeting.

“Later, Ini became concerned that most of their support was coming from the Diocese, which derived its income largely from overseas. He therefore expressed his wish to Charles Fox that the Melanesian members of the Church should become the main supporters of the work, so that they could become involved with the work of the Brotherhood through prayer and giving, and also see it as their own agency of evangelisation, and not that of the ‘Mission.’ Together they worked out a scheme for Companions of the Brotherhood, men and women and young people, who would form groups in villages and schools, who would pray daily for the Brothers, who would receive and help the Brothers when they worked in or passed through their districts, and who would have annual collections in money or kind for the work of the Brothers and their own group of companions. They also hoped that by forming such groups in areas where the Brothers had worked, the Companions would continue to carry out some of the work the Brothers had started when the Brothers themselves were withdrawn or moved on to another place. The principle followed by the Brotherhood was that they were to be the spearhead of the evangelistic work of the church and not normally be used for ordinary pastoral work or teaching. They were to prepare the way for catechist-teachers and priests who would follow up the work. However, in many places there were not enough of these workers to follow up what the Brothers had done, and people who wanted to become Christians sometimes had to join other churches, especially in

Malaita.

“Through their work, as it spread out all over the Diocese, the Brothers challenged the established structures and forced a review of priorities, not so much through what they said but through what they did. Their sense of dedication and devotion and their simplicity of approach, living with the people and supporting themselves with the work of their own hands (or accepting whatever the people would give them), made their influence among village people very strong. Their reputation for courage in the face of opposition (whether of spiritual demonic forces or of physical threats of violence) and also for performing miracles, established them rapidly as the spearhead of the Church’s work in the bush villages. Their influence was greatly strengthened when the Companions were established and recruits began to flow in, so that at one time before the Second World War their numbers reached nearly 200.”

*June 7*

**Wallabonsus**, deacon and martyr of Córdoba in Spain, with companions, put to death in 851 for publicly rebuking Mohammed.

Five Spanish martyrs—Wallabonsus, Peter, Sabinian, Wistremundus, Habentius, and Jeremias—were killed in Córdoba at the order of Emir Abd al-Rahman II for preaching against Mohammed. Jeremias was scourged to death, and the others were beheaded.

*June 9*

**Vincent of Agen**, deacon and martyr, tortured and beheaded at Agen in Gascony (southwestern France) for having disturbed a feast of the Gallic druids, in 292.

**Ephrem the Syrian** (or **Ephrem of Edessa**), deacon, theologian, and hymn writer, died of plague on 9 June 373 (celebrated June 10 in the Episcopal Church).



*Icon of Ephrem the Syrian from Meryem Ana Kilisesi in Turkey*

Ephrem is venerated as a saint by Christians throughout the world, and especially among Syriac Christians. He wrote a wide variety of hymns, poems, and homilies in verse, as well as prose biblical commentaries. These were works of practical theology for the edification of the church in troubled times. So popular were his works that, for centuries after his death, Christian authors

wrote hundreds of pseudepigraphous works in his name. Ephrem's works witness to an early, vibrant expression of Christian faith, little touched by the European modes of thought, and more engaged with eastern methods of discourse.

Ephrem was born around the year 306 in the city of Nisibis (now Nusaybin, in the extreme southeast of Turkey, on the border with Syria). Internal evidence from Ephrem's hymnody suggests that both his parents were part of the growing Christian community in the city, although later hagiographers wrote that his father was a pagan priest. Numerous languages were spoken in the Nisibis of Ephrem's day, mostly dialects of Aramaic. The Christian community used the Syriac dialect. Various pagan religions, Judaism, and early Christian sects vied with one another for the hearts and minds of the populace. It was a time of great religious and political tension. The Roman Emperor Diocletian (reigned 284-305) had signed a treaty with his Persian counterpart Nerses in 298 that transferred Nisibis into Roman hands. The savage persecution and martyrdom of Christians under Diocletian were an important part of Nisibene church heritage as Ephrem grew up.

Jacob, the first bishop of Nisibis, was appointed in 308, and Ephrem grew up under his leadership of the community. Jacob of Nisibis is recorded as a signatory at the Council of Nicaea in 325. Ephrem was baptized as a youth and almost certainly became a son of the covenant, an unusual form of Syrian proto-monasticism. Jacob appointed Ephrem as a teacher (Syriac *malpānā*, a title that still carries great respect for Syriac Christians). He was ordained as a deacon either at his baptism or later. In his poems Ephrem refers to himself as a "herdsman" ('*alana*), a member of the shepherd-bishop's pastoral staff. At the end of his *Hymns Against the Heresies* Ephrem wrote of himself, saying:

O Lord, may the works of your herdsman ('*alana*)  
not be negated.

I will not then have troubled your sheep,  
but as far as I was able,  
I will have kept the wolves away from them,  
and I will have built, as far as I was capable,  
enclosures of teaching-hymns (*madrāšē*)  
for the lambs of your flock.

I will have made a disciple  
of the simple and unlearned man,  
and I will have given him a strong hold  
on the herdsman's ('*alone*) staff,  
the healers' medicine,  
and the disputants' armor.

This is all that Ephrem tells us about his role in the church. It is probable that he was a deacon, but there is no early Syriac text that identifies him as such. The word '*alana*' translated as "herdsman" is difficult to define precisely. Most often it is interpreted in relation to the Greek tradition simply as meaning deacon. But the normal Syriac word for deacon is *mshamshono*. The term '*alana*' is often used to denote a disciple in relation to his master. In this instance the term

expresses Ephrem's relationship to God, which is the same relationship of Ephrem to his bishop. What inspired the Syriac writers to celebrate Ephrem as a teacher par excellence was the fame of his teaching and the holiness of his life. The same also led the hagiographers in the Greek-speaking world, and those under their influence, to fashion the image of Ephrem Byzantinus.

Constantine I (emperor 306-337), who had legalized and promoted the practice of Christianity in the Roman Empire, died in 337. Seizing on this opportunity, Shapur II of Persia began a series of attacks into Roman North Mesopotamia. Nisibis was besieged in 338, 346, and 350. During the first siege, Ephrem credits Bishop Jacob as defending the city with his prayers. Ephrem's beloved bishop died soon after the event, and Babu, who succeeded Jacob as bishop, led the church through the turbulent times of border skirmishes. In the third siege, of 350, Shapur rerouted the river Mygdonius to undermine the walls of Nisibis. The Nisibenes quickly repaired the walls while the Persian elephant cavalry became bogged down in the wet ground. Ephrem celebrated what he saw as the miraculous salvation of the city in a hymn which portrayed Nisibis as being like Noah's Ark, floating to safety on the flood.

One important physical link to Ephrem's lifetime is the baptistry of Nisibis. The inscription tells that it was constructed under Bishop Vologeses in 359. That was the year that Shapur began to harry the region once again. The cities around Nisibis were destroyed one by one, and their citizens killed or deported. The Roman Empire was preoccupied in the west, and Constantius II (emperor 337-361) and Julian the Apostate (emperor 360-363) struggled for overall control. Eventually, with Constantius dead, Julian began his march into Mesopotamia. He brought with him his increasingly stringent persecutions of Christians. Julian began a foolhardy march against the Persian capital, Ctesiphon, where, overstretched and outnumbered, he was forced into an immediate retreat back along the same road. Julian was killed defending his retreat, and the army elected Jovian as the new emperor (reigned 363-364).

Unlike his predecessor, Jovian was a Nicene Christian. He was forced by circumstances to ask for terms from Shapur and conceded Nisibis to Persia, with the provision that the city's Christian community would leave. Bishop Abraham, the successor to Vologeses, led his people into exile. Ephrem found himself among a large group of refugees that fled west, first to Amida (Diyarbakır), and eventually settling in Edessa (now Urfa in Turkey) in 363. Ephrem, in his late fifties, applied himself to ministry in his new church, and seems to have continued his work as a teacher, perhaps in the School of Edessa.

Edessa had always been at the heart of the Syriac-speaking world, and the city was full of rival philosophies and religions. Ephrem comments that orthodox Nicene Christians were simply called "Palutians" in Edessa, after a former bishop. Arians, Marcionites, Manichees, Bardaisanites, and various Gnostic sects proclaimed themselves as the true church. In this confusion, Ephrem wrote a great number of hymns defending Nicene orthodoxy. A later Syriac writer, Jacob of Serugh, wrote that Ephrem rehearsed all-women choirs to sing his hymns set to Syriac folk tunes in the forum of Edessa. After a ten-year residency in Edessa, in his sixties, Ephrem succumbed to the plague as he ministered to its victims. The most reliable date for his death is 9 June 373.

Ephrem began to compose hymns and write biblical commentaries as part of his educational



office. He is popularly credited as the founder of the School of Nisibis, which in later centuries was the center of learning of the church of the East. Over four hundred hymns composed by Ephrem still exist. Granted that some have been lost, Ephrem's productivity is not in doubt. The church historian Sozomen credits Ephrem with having written over three million lines. Ephrem combines in his writing a threefold heritage: he draws on the models and methods of early Rabbinic Judaism, he engages skillfully with Greek science and philosophy, and he delights in the Mesopotamian-Persian tradition of mystery symbolism.

The most important of his works are his lyric, teaching hymns (*madrāšê*). These hymns are full of rich, poetic imagery drawn from biblical sources, folk tradition, and other religions and philosophies. The *madrāšê* are written in stanzas of syllabic verse, and employ over fifty different metrical schemes. Each *madrāšâ* had its *qālâ*, a traditional tune identified by its opening line. All of these *qālê* are now lost. Bardaisan and Mani had composed *madrāšê*, and Ephrem felt that the medium was a suitable tool to use against their claims.

The *madrāšê* are gathered into various hymn cycles. Each group has a title—*Carmina Nisibena*, *On Faith*, *On Paradise*, *On Virginity*, *Against Heresies*—but some of these titles do not do justice to the entirety of the collection (for instance, only the first half of the *Carmina Nisibena* is about Nisibis). Each *madrāšâ* usually had a refrain (*‘ûnîṭâ*), which was repeated after each stanza. Later writers have suggested that the *madrāšê* were sung by all-women choirs with an accompanying lyre.

Particularly influential were his *Hymns Against Heresies*. Ephrem used these to warn his flock of the heresies which threatened to divide the early church. He lamented that the faithful were “tossed to and fro and carried around with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness and deceitful wiles.” He devised hymns laden with doctrinal details to inoculate right-thinking Christians against heresies such as docetism. The *Hymns Against Heresies* employ colorful metaphors to describe the incarnation of Christ as fully human and fully divine. Ephrem asserts that Christ's unity of humanity and divinity represents peace, perfection, and salvation; in contrast, docetism and other heresies sought to divide or reduce Christ's nature, and in doing so would rend and devalue Christ's followers with their false teachings.

Ephrem also wrote verse homilies (*mêmrê*). These sermons in poetry are far fewer in number than the *madrāšê*. The *mêmrê* are written in a heptosyllabic couplets (pairs of lines of seven syllables each).

The third category of Ephrem's writings is his prose work. He wrote biblical commentaries on the Diatessaron (the single gospel harmony of the early Syriac church), on Genesis and Exodus, and on the Acts of the Apostles and Pauline epistles. He also wrote refutations against Bardaisan, Mani, Marcion, and others. Ephrem wrote exclusively in the Syriac language, but translations of his writings exist in Armenian, Coptic, Georgian, Greek, and other languages. Some of his works are only extant in translation (particularly in Armenian).

Syriac churches still use many of Ephrem's hymns as part of the annual cycle of worship. Most of these liturgical hymns are edited and conflated versions of the originals. The most complete, critical text of authentic Ephrem was compiled between 1955 and 1979 by Dom Edmund Beck,

OSB, as part of the *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*. There are several collections in English, including translations by Sebastian Brock and Kathleen E. McVey.

*June 11*

**Katherine Gilmore**, deaconess in New York City and New England, died 11 June 1942.

Katherine Gilmore was educated at the Geneseo Seminary in Illinois and was set apart as a deaconess by Bishop David Greer of New York in 1905 at the Chapel of the Church Missionary House located at Fourth Avenue (Lexington Ave.) and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street in New York City, where she served for three years. She later served the congregation of St. John's in the Rosebank/Clifton section of Staten Island. In 1910 she was employed as the housemother and superintendent of "The Shelter for Respectable Girls" in New York City, a temporary home for young women looking for work in the city. In the twenties, Gilmore moved to Rhode Island, and by 1932 she was in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Like many deaconesses before and after her, Gilmore was reduced to genteel poverty in her old age. [research of Deacon Geri Swanson]

*June 13*

**Brooke Bushong**, deacon of the diocese of New York, died 13 June 2009.



Born in Maryland on 21 May 1941, Ann Brooke Bushong attended the University of Maryland before moving on to a multi-faceted career with the Church Army, Samaritan Village, Covenant House, and other non-profit groups, settling in the Brooklyn Heights area of New York City. Brooke was an accomplished liturgist and assisted Howard Galley with his work on rites and liturgy. Brooke was a founder of the AIDS Memorial at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and instituted a monthly eucharistic celebration that still continues. She was ordained deacon in the diocese of New York on 4 June 1994 and served the congregations of St. Ann's in Brooklyn Heights and, from 1996 until her death, St. Clement's in Hell's Kitchen, in whose columbarium her ashes rest. A bit of a curmudgeon, at St. Clement's she was known as the "Princess Deacon." She not only served at the altar but also held court at coffee hour and on the days when she served as receptionist, greeter, and screener for the rector.

*June 14*

**Anastasius**, deacon and martyr of Córdoba, Spain, beheaded in 853.

A deacon of the church of Saint Acisclus in Córdoba, Anastasius became a Benedictine monk at the double monastery of Tábanos nearby. He was beheaded by order of the caliph with the monk Felix and the nun Digna at Córdoba.

*June 16*

**Ferrutio**, deacon and martyr, with his brother the presbyter Ferreolus, natives of Asia Minor, killed at Vesontio in Gaul about 212.

The brothers were sent by Irenaeus of Lyons (who had ordained them) to evangelize the country around Vesontio (present-day Besançon in Franche-Comté), where they worked for thirty years. They were tortured and beheaded during the persecution of Severus. According to Gregory of Tours in the sixth century, their relics cured Gregory's brother-in-law of distemper. The relics are still treasured in the cathedral of Besançon.

**Colman McRoi**, deacon, disciple of Columba of Iona (Colum Cille), and founder and abbot of an abbey at Reachrain, now Lambay Island, Dublin, died sixth century.

*June 17*

**James Eugene Upton**, archdeacon of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, died of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma on 17 June 2007.

Born 9 June 1950 in Kansas City, Missouri, Jim Upton was a longtime educator and taught special needs students. He was ordained deacon on All Saints Day 1984, named archdeacon in April 1994 by Bishop William Smalley, and retained that post under Bishop Dean Wolfe. His extensive service to the diocese included five years as director of the Kansas School of Ministry. He was the deacon at St. Christopher's and St. Alban's in Wichita and St. Matthew's in Newton, Kansas.

*June 18*

**Sarah Shrewder Tracy**, former archdeacon of the Episcopal diocese of Northern Indiana and a leader in the revival of the diaconate, died of a stroke on 18 June 2009.



Born 4 January 1932 in Idaho, she was ordained deacon by the bishop of Idaho on 16 November 1984. Meanwhile, she and her husband Paul, a priest, had moved to Northern Indiana, where she served as deacon at St. James Cathedral in South Bend and other nearby churches. From 1989 to 1995 she served as archdeacon of the diocese, in charge of the deacons. She was the founder of St. Margaret's House for women and children. She was president of the North American Association for the Diaconate in 1993-1995. She and Paul were in New York City preparing for a cruise to Scandinavia when she suffered a stroke; they returned to South Bend by air ambulance, where she died a few days later.

In appearance, Sarah seemed the very model of everybody's grandmother, the embodiment of affection and sweet disposition. This picture was incomplete. She liked to confront bishops and make them squirm. At a national meeting of deacons in 1987, she told off the then-Presiding Bishop, Edmond Browning, who had made the mistake of bragging about transitional deacons. Sarah rose and countered: "The deacon, the honest-to-God deacon, is trained to be a deacon. The transitional deacon is trained to be a priest, and they are giving *diakonia* a bad name." Poor Ed Browning was not used to being contradicted. Sarah also gave sharp advice to her own bishops, on more than one occasion. In reality, Sarah was an honest-to-God deacon, gentle when gentleness was called for, earthy in language and blunt when she needed to get someone's attention.

*June 19*

**Culmatius**, deacon and martyr, with his bishop Gaudentius, layman Andreas and his wife and children, and 53 companions, killed for their catholic faith by the Arians in Arretium (now Arezzo in Tuscany), during the reign of Valentinian I (emperor 364-375), in 364.

*June 20*

**Demetrian**, deacon and martyr, with presbyter Aristocleus and reader Athanasius, beheaded at Salamis in Cyprus in 306.

Aristocleus, a native of the Cypriot city of Tamasa, served in the local church during the persecution under Maximian Galerius (emperor 305-311). He became terrified of the tortures, left the city, and hid in a mountain cave. Once during prayer a light shone on him, and he heard a command from the Lord to return to the island of Cyprus and suffer for Christ. Aristocleus obediently set out to return, and on the way he visited the church of the apostle Barnabas, where he met Demetrian and Athanasius. He told them of his vision, and Demetrian and Athanasius decided to endure martyrdom with him. Arriving in the city of Salamis, all three began to preach to the people about Jesus Christ and denounced idol worship. The pagans arrested them, and the governor, seeing that they were steadfast in their faith, gave orders to behead Aristocleus and to burn Demetrian and Athanasius. Because in the fire they remained unharmed, they were beheaded by sword.

*June 27*

**Arialdu**s, also called **Arialdo**, deacon and martyr, persecuted and killed by allies of the archbishop of Milan on 27 June 1066.

A noble of the Alciati family, born in Cutiacum (now Cucciago, near Como in northern Italy), Arialdus studied at Laon and Paris before becoming a canon. He was leader of the *patari*, a popular reform movement, whose members assembled in the Pataria or ragmen's quarter of Milan (*pates* being a dialectal word for "rags"). He preached against the abuses of the clergy and was excommunicated by Archbishop Guido but reinstated by Pope Stephen IX. Arialdus procured the excommunication of Guido for simony and immorality, but Guido ignored the decree. Guido's allies tortured and killed Arialdus and threw his body into Lake Maggiore. The body was recovered ten months later, uncorrupt and sweet smelling, and carried to the cathedral in Milan, where it remained on public display before being buried in the cathedral. In 1067 Pope Alexander II declared Arialdus a martyr.

*July 3*

**Irenaeus**, deacon and martyr, with the Roman matron Mustiola, killed at Clusium (now Chiusi in Tuscany), during the reign of Aurelian (270-275), in 273.

Irenaeus was arrested for burying the martyred Felix of Sutri and was slain in the presence of Mustiola. She was beaten to death with a club after spurning the advances of a local magistrate.

**Jessie Carryl Smith**, deaconess at Holy Trinity Church in Paris, France, and later in Alaska, New York, and Philadelphia, died 3 July 1923.



*Jessie Carryl Smith (left) with an unidentified woman in the lodge at Holy Spirit Cathedral, Paris (Archives of the diocese of New York).*

Jessie Carryl Smith was an actress in New York. At the age of thirty, she entered the New York Training School for Deaconesses, graduating in 1902. She was set apart as a deaconess at Holy Trinity Church in Paris in 1906. While in Paris she ran a small hospital infirmary. During World War I Deaconess Smith served on the front lines in France at various field hospitals, including one that cared for wounded Senegalese soldiers serving with the Third Army of France. For her work on the front lines, she was awarded the Croix de Guerre with the Medaille de Reconnaissance by the government of France. In 1920 Smith traveled to Fort Yukon in Alaska to serve in the mission field, returning in 1921 to New York. She served the parish of St. Simeon in the Bronx and was also manager of the St. Paul's Chapel Lunch Club in lower Manhattan. In 1922 she took a position at St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral in Philadelphia where she taught a course in church history at a private girls' school. She died suddenly on 3 July 1923 at Kings Park, Long Island, New York.

From the Alumnae Bulletin of the New York School for Deaconesses 1919:

#### WORK OF THE GRADUATES AT HOME AND ABROAD

It is not often that an opportunity comes for service of such vivid worth and need as this in which Deaconess Jessie C. Smith has been engaged in France. The Alumnae may rejoice that she met it with such gallantry and that her efforts have won for her the proud distinction conferred with the decorations given her by the French Government.

She went to France early in 1917 as a member of Mrs. Daly's Equips and served continuously with Auto Cher No. 7, attached to the Third Army of France, at the front, this unit having always been assigned to the point nearest the line of battle. From July 1st, 1917, to February, 1918, they were at and near Ressons-sur-Matz, finally going into barracks (shacks) at Cuguy, where they wintered.

When that sector was taken over by the British, the unit (Auto Clier No. 7) were ordered "En repos" but Deaconess Smith asked to be assigned to duty at St. Raphael, where the Hospital Auxillaire No. 66 was short handed in the care of the Senegalese wounded who were segregated there.

When the terrible Prussian offensive began she was recalled on a twelve hour notice and rejoined the Auto Clier in the retreat of the armies during April and May. It was for her splendid work then and later at Compiègne, when the city was evacuated, that specific dates and deeds of great heroism and devotion were mentioned in the citations accompanying the Croix de Guerre with the Medaille de Reconnaissance accorded her by the French Government.

During the terrific struggle around Compiègne she was assigned to the deserted hospital at Royallieu where the hopelessly wounded had to be dropped in the retreat and there, again, her courage in remaining when the barracks on either side were destroyed, fire raging all around, and her own wards under continuous shell fire and nightly bombed and finally in effecting the evacuation of all the wounded was witnessed and cited by the commanding officers. Leaving Royallieu less than half an hour before the complete destruction of her own barracks, she reached Compiègne where the equipe had preceded her. From there they went to the big base hospital at Agincourt and upon finding it overflowing and no space for their wounded, camped out in the woods under tents, sleeping on the ground.

During the summer, epidemics of trench dysentery carried off a number of the unit, and Deaconess Smith, having had repeated attacks and in addition been severely poisoned by wasp bites, was finally ordered to Paris for a fortnight's "convalescent leave". She remained with Hospital No. 5 at Evreux until its closing in December, and was on duty at Camp Williams, near Dijon, since Christmas until, upon the request of Mr. Sedgwick, she was recently released.

[research of Deacon Geri Swanson]

*July 5*

**Athanasius**, deacon and martyr, killed at Jerusalem in 452.

Athanasius denounced Theodosius, a heretic who had usurped the see of Jerusalem, formerly held by bishop Juvenal. For this act of denunciation, Athanasius was arrested and beheaded.

*July 6*

**Isaurius**, deacon and martyr, with companions, beheaded at Apollonia in Macedonia in 283-284.

Isaurius and his companions Innocent, Felix, Hermias, Basil, and Peregrinus were Athenians, suffering for Christ in the Macedonian city of Apollonia under Numerian (emperor 283-284). Beheaded with them for believing in Christ were two city officials, Rufus and Ruphinus.

*July 12*

**Fortunato**, deacon and martyr, killed with his bishop Ermacora at Aquileia, near the northern Adriatic coast of Italy, in the first century.

According to legend, St. Mark converted and ordained Ermacora during a mission to northeastern Italy. The cathedral at Udine contains a painting of the two martyrs by Tiepolo (painted 1737).

*July 15*

**Catulinus** (also called **Cartholinus**), deacon and martyr, with companions Januarius, Florentius, Julia, and Justa, killed at Carthage in North Africa, under Diocletian (emperor 284-305) in 303.

Nothing is known of their martyrdom. Their bodies were buried in the basilica of bishop Faustus in Carthage. In praise of Catulinus, St. Augustine preached a panegyric to the faithful.

**Gundisalvus Hendriquez**, Portuguese deacon and martyr, Jesuit scholar, killed with companions in the Canary Islands on 15 July 1570.

Gundisalvus Hendriquez was a friend and companion of Ignatius de Azevedo (1528-1570), superior and leader of a band of forty Spanish and Portuguese Jesuit missionaries martyred by the Huguenot Jacques Sourie while en route to the West Indies. They were killed by drowning.

*July 19*

**Macrina the Younger** (also **Makrina**), deacon, older sister of Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, died in 379.



*Modern icon of Macrina*

Macrina the Younger was born to a holy family in Cappadocia in 340. Her grandmother, Macrina the Elder, for whom she was named, lived in the days of Diocletian (emperor 284-305), who made a determined effort to destroy the Christian faith. She and her husband fled into hiding and survived into the time of Constantine. One of their sons, Basil the Elder, and his wife Emmelia had nine children. Five are commemorated as saints: Macrina the Younger, Basil the Great, Peter of Sebaste, Gregory of Nyssa, and Theosebia the Deaconess (see 10 January).

Macrina was the oldest child. She was betrothed at the age of twelve, after the custom of the day, but when her fiancé died she decided to devote her life to prayer, contemplation, and works of charity. After the death of her father, she convinced her mother to sell the family estates, and they formed a community of women who shared her goals. This convent or monastery was the first group of Christians living under the rules of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Macrina often brought poor and hungry women home to be fed, clothed, nursed, or otherwise taken care of, and many eventually joined the community, as did many women of means.

After the death of their parents, Macrina was chiefly responsible for the upbringing of her younger brothers. When they were inclined to be conceited about their intellectual accomplishments, she deflated them with affectionate but pointed jibes. Her example encouraged some of them to pursue the monastic ideal and to found monastic communities for men. Although Basil the Great is remembered as the founder of eastern monasticism (all Orthodox monks follow a variation of Basil's monastic rule), the community of monks organized by Basil was preceded and inspired by the community of nuns organized by Macrina. Three of her brothers (Basil, Gregory, Peter) became bishops, and all of them were leading contenders for the faith of Nicaea against the Arians. She was buried in a grave shared with her parents, with a eulogy by her brother Gregory of Nyssa. In his *Life of Macrina*, Gregory records his last visit with her, her farewell speech, and her prayers and teachings about the resurrection.

**Arsenius the Great**, deacon of Rome and hermit in the desert of Egypt, died about 449.

Born about 360, Arsenius was the scion of a Roman senatorial family. He had an early career as tutor to the sons of Theodosius the Great (emperor 379-395). Bishop Damasus I is said to have ordained Arsenius to the diaconate and to have recommended the learned cleric to Theodosius. Arsenius later became a hermit at Sketis, in the desert near Alexandria in Egypt, and a disciple of



John the Dwarf. After barbarians began to raid the monasteries, Arsenius moved to Troë near Memphis, and he spent fifteen years wandering in the desert. Numbered among the desert fathers, Arsenius wrote a guide to monastic life and a commentary on the gospel according to Luke, which describes the contemplative life.

*July 20*

**Barhadbesciabas** (sometimes called **Barhadbesaba**), deacon and martyr of Arbela in Persia (now Arbil in Iraq), killed by beheading in 355.

He was caught up in the persecution conducted by Shapur II the Great (king of the Persian Sassanid empire 309-379) and was tortured by the governor of the Persian region of Adiabab (now Adaban in southwestern Iran). Aggai, an apostate Christian, was ordered to behead Barhadbesciabas. He used the ax with such clumsiness that he had to strike the martyr again to slay him.

**Paul of Saint Zoilus**, deacon and martyr of Córdoba in Spain and a member of the community of Saint Zoilus in that city, beheaded in 851.

Paul devoted much of his effort to bringing aid to Christians imprisoned by Muslim officials. Seized by members of the ruling Islamic government, he was beheaded.

*July 22*

**Theodora of Gaul**, deacon, died 22 July 539.

Her tomb in St. Trinitatis (Holy Trinity) at Ticini in Gaul (now southern Switzerland) carried this Latin inscription: “hic in pace requiescit b.m. Theodora diaconissa, quae uixit in saeculo annos pl. m. XLVIII. d[eposita] XI kal. Aug. V p.c. Paulini iun. u. c. ind. II” (Here rests in peace and blessed memory Theodora the deaconess, who lived in the world about 48 years. She was buried on 22 July 539.) (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berolini, 1863, V/2:6467)

*July 25*

**Olympias of Constantinople**, deacon, benefactor, cathedral staff member at Constantinople, and friend and disciple of the banished John Chrysostom, died on 25 July 410.



Born into a wealthy noble Constantinople family, about 361, Olympias was orphaned as a child and given over to the care of Theodosius I (emperor 379-395) by her uncle, the prefect Procopius. At about age twenty she married Nebridius, prefect of Constantinople, but he died soon after. She refused several offers of marriage, and Theodosius put her fortune in trust when she also refused his choice for a husband. When he restored her estate in 391, at age thirty,

Patriarch Nectarius ordained her deaconess, and with several other women she founded a community. She was so lavish in her almsgiving that her good friend John Chrysostom remonstrated with her, and when he became Patriarch of Constantinople in 398 he took her under his direction. She established a hospital and an orphanage and gave shelter to the expelled monks of Nitria.

When John Chrysostom was expelled from Constantinople in 404, Olympias became his firm supporter. She was fined by the prefect, Optatus, for refusing to accept the usurper Arsacius as Patriarch, and Arsacius' successor, Atticus, disbanded her community and ended her charitable works. She spent the last years of her life beset by illness and persecution but comforted by Chrysostom from his place of exile. She died in exile in Nicomedia on 25 July 410, less than a year after the death of Chrysostom. [Also observed 17 Dec.]

*July 27*

**George**, deacon and martyr, monk from Palestine, with four companions, killed at Córdoba in Spain about 852.

George and his companions were martyred under Emir Abd ar-Rahman II. Aurelius and Felix, with their wives, Natalia and Liliosa, were Spaniards whose family backgrounds, although religiously mixed, legally required them to profess Islam. Given four days to recant, they were condemned as apostates for revealing their previously secret Christian faith. Deacon George was a monk from Palestine who was arrested along with the two couples. Though offered a pardon as a foreigner, he chose to denounce Islam again and die with the others.

*July 28*

**Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas**, and **Nicolaus**, deacons, companions of Stephen and Philip, died first century (see Acts 6:5).

All except Nicolaus were Hellenistic Jews who became Christians. According to tradition, Prochorus (or Prochoros) accompanied St. John the Divine in exile on the island of Patmos. In icons Prochoros is portrayed as a scribe in a cave, taking dictation as John describes his vision of the Apocalypse (Revelation). Prochoros became bishop of Nicomedia and died in peace. Nicanor was stoned to death in Jerusalem. Timon became bishop of Bostra in Arabia and ended his life in martyrdom by fire at the hands of the pagans. Parmenas died in peace in Jerusalem. Nicolaus (or Nikolaos), a pagan from Antioch who became a Jew and then a Christian, was a deacon in Jerusalem.

**Irene Chrysovalantou**, deacon, abbess of a community of women at Constantinople, died in 921.



*Icon of cypress trees bending toward Irene (with apples and angels)*

Irene was born about 826 to the prominent Gouber family in Byzantium. The empress planned to marry her to Prince Michael III. According to legend, on the way to the wedding she delayed to listen to the wisdom of a hermit. When she arrived at Constantinople, the prince was already married to someone else. Irene gave her jewelry to the church, entered the monastery of Chrysovalantou, and immediately engaged in vigils and prayer. Soon she was ordained deaconess and became the new abbess.

Increasing her spiritual struggles, with great trust in God to guide the community properly, she developed the gifts of foresight and exorcism. She prayed throughout each night in the courtyard of the monastery, and her prayer caused her to levitate and the cypress trees to bend toward her. She was granted three apples from John the Theologian and visions of angels. Icons often portray her with bending trees, apples, and angels. She appeared in a vision to the emperor to release an unjustly convicted man. Her veneration and miracle-working continued down the centuries and include a miraculous weeping icon of St. Irene, written in 1921 by a monk at Mount Athos. It is now in the Orthodox monastery bearing her name at Astoria, Long Island.

#### *August 1*

**Felix** (Catalan **Feliu**, Spanish **Félix**), deacon and martyr, with bishop Cucuphas, killed at Girona in Spanish Catalonia in 304.

Felix was said to have been born at Scillium, near Carthage in Africa Proconsularis. He was martyred at Girona after traveling with Cucuphas from Carthage to Spain as a missionary.

#### *August 5*

**Nonna of Nazianzus**, deacon, evangelist, and educator within her family and the church, died in 374.

Nonna was born around 290 in Cappadocia (now a part of Turkey). Her prominent Christian parents raised her in the faith. She married and converted her husband, Gregory of Nazianzus the Elder, who had been a member of the Hypsistarii, a heretical sect. She was the mother of three saints, Gregory of Nazianzus, Caesarius, and Gorgonia. She outlived her husband and two of her children.

According to one story, in 351 she fell sick with a severe illness and appeared at the point of death. Gregory was on his way to pay a visit to a friend, but he hurried to his mother, who meanwhile had begun to recover, having a vision in which Gregory had given her cakes marked with the sign of the cross and blessed by him.

Gregory praised Nonna as the model of Christian motherhood, writing:

“My mother was a worthy companion for such a man [as my father], and her qualities were as great as his. She came from a pious family but was even more pious than they. Though in her body she was but a woman, in her spirit she was above all men. . . . Her mouth knew nothing but the truth, but in her modesty she was silent about those deeds which brought her glory. She was guided by the fear of God.”

*August 6*

**Januarius, Vincentius, Magnus, Stephanus, Felicissimus, and Agapitus**, deacons and martyrs, with their bishop Sixtus II (from Xystus in Greek), seized and beheaded at Rome during the persecution of Valerian (emperor 253-260), on 6 August 258.

Shortly before the election of Sixtus (on 31 August 257), Valerian issued his first edict of persecution, which made it binding on all Christians to participate in the Roman cult of pagan gods and forbade them to assemble in cemeteries, threatening with exile or death those who disobeyed the order. For almost a year Sixtus managed to perform his duties as bishop without being molested. In the first days of August 258, Valerian ordered all bishops, presbyters, and deacons put to death.

On 6 August bishop Sixtus gathered his people in one of the lesser-known cemeteries, of Prætextatus, on the left side of the Appian Way, nearly opposite the cemetery of St. Callistus. While seated on his chair addressing them, he was suddenly seized by a band of soldiers. He was brought before a tribunal to receive his sentence and then led back to the cemetery for execution by beheading. Four deacons, Januarius, Vincentius, Magnus, and Stephanus, were apprehended with Sixtus and beheaded with him at the same cemetery. Three other deacons were seized. Felicissimus and Agapitus suffered martyrdom on the same day. Laurentius was martyred four days later [10 August].

*August 8*

**Cyriacus**, deacon and martyr, with companions, beheaded at Rome in 303.

Born of a noble family, Cyriacus became a Christian and gave his wealth to the poor. He was ordained a deacon at Rome by bishop Marcellinus. Diocletian (emperor 284-305) was assisted by Maximian (co-emperor 286-305), his favorite. Maximian decided to build a palace for the emperor, with magnificent baths, and to make the Christians work at the construction. Among the enforced workers were old men and presbyters. The labor was hard and the food scanty. A Roman nobleman desired to relieve the sufferings of these laborers and sent four Christians with alms, Cyriacus, Sisinius, Largus, and Smaragdus. They pursued their charities at the risk of their lives, and they worked alongside those who were growing weak.

When Maximian heard of it, he ordered the beheading of Sisinius and an old man he had helped. Cyriacus was well known to Diocletian, who was fond of him. Diocletian's daughter became possessed by a demon, and she announced that only Cyriacus could deliver her. Diocletian sent for him, and he cured her. She became a Christian like her mother, Serena. A short time later the daughter of the king of Persia also became possessed, and cried out that she too could be delivered only by Cyriacus, who was in Rome. A message was sent to Diocletian, who asked his wife to persuade the deacon to go to Persia. He went with his two remaining Christian companions, and again he cast out the demon, thus bringing about the conversion of the king, his family, and four hundred persons, whom he baptized.

The three confessors returned to Rome, having refused all compensation for their services, since they had received the gifts of God freely and wished to share them freely. Maximian, hearing of their return in 303, had them seized, imprisoned, tortured, and finally beheaded with twenty other Christians. Their bodies were buried near the place of their execution on the Salarian Way. Later, on 8 August, they were removed to a farm of the devout Lady Lucina on the Ostian Road. An abbey in France, at Altorf in Alsace, possesses relics of Cyriacus and bears his name. There is more on Cyriacus at <http://www.cyriac-fhp.com/csx.htm>.

**Lydia Elliott Hopkins**, deacon, champion of the underdog, and longtime organizer who plunged into community work after Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans, died on 8 August 2012.



Born in Chicago on 30 Jan. 1949, she lived in New Orleans off and on since 1972. Eventually she became active at St. George's Church. Throughout her life, according to one of her daughters, Jessica White-Sustaita, "she needed to be serving. She started getting more and more active in the church and realized that the community-organizing spirit was still in her. She wanted to be on the ground, as deacons are, feeding people and ministering to them." She was ordained with a class of eight deacons on 23 Oct. 2005, soon after Katrina hit the city. A skilled cook and baker (who often showed up at people's doors with a fresh loaf of bread or jar of jam), she baked the bread for her class's ordination mass. (A loaf she had made was also used at her

funeral.) In a community severely wounded by catastrophe, she was active in relief efforts. Soon after her ordination she helped create and lead the “Dragon’s Café” program at St. George’s to provide meals to migrants, indigents, and displaced persons. For several years she was diocesan coordinator for fundraising for Episcopal Relief and Development. In 2008 she was assigned to All Souls, a new congregation in the Lower Ninth Ward, an area especially hard hit. At All Souls she organized and ran food and housing programs and taught classes in creative writing and Bible studies.

On 25 Oct. 1997 she married Patrick Rogan, a widower with four children. She had two daughters by a previous marriage, and together they had many grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. She was with them all, vacationing in the Florida Panhandle, when she had a heart attack and died at age 63.

*August 10*

**Laurence of Rome** (Latin **Laurentius**, “laurelled”), bishop’s deacon and martyr at Rome, supposedly roasted on a gridiron but probably beheaded, on 10 August 258.



*Modern icon of Laurence*

Laurence or Lawrence (about 225-258) was one of the seven deacons of ancient Rome who were martyred under the persecution of Valerian (emperor 253-260) in 258. The Acts of Laurence were lost by the time of Augustine, one of whose sermons on St. Laurence (*Sermo 302, de Sancto Laurent.*) admits that his narration came from tradition instead of the Acts as was his custom. Such early legends made Laurence a native of Huesca (Roman *Osc*a) in Hispania Tarraconensis who had received religious instruction from the bishop’s deacon Sixtus in Rome. (The term *diaconus episcopi* or “bishop’s deacon” was the early form of what gradually came to be called, after 370, *archidiaconus* or “archdeacon.”) After Sixtus was elected bishop on 31 August 257, he ordained Laurence a deacon and placed him in charge of the administration of church goods and care for the poor. For this duty, he is regarded as one of the first archivists and

treasurers of the church and is the patron of librarians.

In the persecutions under Valerian, numerous presbyters and bishops were put to death, while Christians belonging to the nobility or the senate were deprived of their goods and exiled. Sixtus II was one of the first victims, beheaded on 6 August 258. According to a legend cited by Ambrose of Milan, Laurence met Sixtus on his way to execution, and said: "Father, where are you going without your son? Holy priest, where are you hurrying without your deacon? You have never offered sacrifice without an attendant. Are you displeased with me, my father? Have you found me unworthy? Prove, then, whether you have chosen a fitting servant. To him to whom you have trusted the distribution of the Savior's blood, to him whom you have granted fellowship in the partaking of the Sacraments, why do you refuse this person a part in your death?" [Laurence may have said simply: "Father, don't leave me! We shared the blood of Christ. Let's share each other's blood."] Sixtus answered: "I am not leaving you or forsaking you. Greater struggles yet await you. We old men have to undergo an easier fight; a more glorious triumph over the Tyrant awaits you, young man. Don't cry; after three days you will follow me." Modern scholars tend to read this moving encounter as a literary invention. Augustine connects Laurence with the cup of the mass: "For in that church, you see, as you have regularly been told, he performed the office of deacon; it was there that he administered the sacred cup of Christ's blood."

After the death of Sixtus, the prefect of Rome demanded that Laurence turn over the riches of the church. Ambrose is the earliest source for the tale that Laurence asked for three days to gather together the wealth. Laurence worked swiftly to distribute as much church property to the poor as possible, to prevent its being seized by the prefect.

[According to legend, among the treasures entrusted to Laurence for safe-keeping was the cup from which Jesus and the apostles drank at the Last Supper. Laurence was able to spirit this away to Huesca in Spain, to his parents, with a letter and a supposed inventory. He entrusted the cup to a friend he knew would travel back to Spain, his home country. While the cup's exact journey through the centuries is disputed, eventually his family sent it to a monastery. Historical records indicate that this cup has been venerated and preserved by a number of monks and monasteries through the centuries. Today the cup is in a special chapel in the cathedral of Valencia, in the region of Laurence's birth and early life.]

On the third day, at the head of a small delegation, he presented himself to the prefect. When ordered to give up the treasures of the church, he presented the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the suffering, and said that these were the true treasures of the church. One account records him declaring to the prefect, "The church is truly rich, far richer than your emperor." This act of defiance led to his martyrdom. It is said that Laurence was burned on a gridiron or "grilled" to death. According to legend, at the point of death he exclaimed, "I am done on this side! Turn me over and eat." (More likely, he was beheaded like his bishop and fellow deacons.)

By tradition, Laurence was sentenced at San Lorenzo in Miranda, martyred at San Lorenzo in Panisperna, and buried in the Via Tiburtina in the Catacomb of Cyriaca by Hippolytus and Justinus, a presbyter. Constantine I is said to have built a small oratory in honor of the martyr, which was a station on the itineraries of the graves of the Roman martyrs by the seventh century.



Damasus I (bishop of Rome 366-384) rebuilt or repaired the church now known as San Lorenzo fuori le Mura, while the minor basilica of San Lorenzo in Panisperna was built over the place of his martyrdom. The gridiron of the martyrdom was placed by Paschal II (pope 1099-1118) in the church of San Lorenzo in Lucina. One of the early sources for the martyrdom of Saint Laurence was the description by Aurelius Prudentius Clemens in his *Peristephanon*, Hymn II.

In icons Laurence is vested as an Orthodox deacon, sometimes shown with a gridiron, sometimes holding a church building in his left hand and a censer in his right. In western art he is usually depicted wearing a dalmatic and holding a gridiron.

*August 11*

**Euplus**, bishop's deacon of Catania in Sicily and martyr, racked and killed for having a copy of the gospels, during the persecution of Diocletian (emperor 284-305), beheaded in 304.



*Icon of Euplus*

Always carrying the gospels with him, Euplus preached constantly to the pagans about Christ. Once, while he read and explained the gospel to the gathered crowd, the authorities arrested him and took him to the governor of Catania, Calvisianus. Euplus confessed himself a Christian and denounced the impiety of idol-worship. For this, the authorities sentenced him to torture. They threw the injured deacon into prison, where he remained in prayer for seven days. The Lord made a spring of water flow into the prison to quench his thirst.

Brought to trial a second time, strengthened, and rejoicing, he again confessed his faith in Christ and denounced the torturer for spilling the blood of innocent Christians. The judge commanded that his ears be torn off, and that he be beheaded. When they led Euplus to execution, they hung the gospels around his neck. Having asked time for prayer, Euplus began to read and explain the gospel to the people, and many of the pagans believed in Christ. The soldiers beheaded him with a sword. His relics are in the village of Vico della Batonia, near Naples.

**Theodor**, deacon and martyr, monk of the Monastery of the Caves near Kiev in the Ukraine, killed with monk Basil in 1088.

Theodor distributed his riches to the poor and settled into the Varangian Cave, adjoining the Caves of St. Theodosius. He lived in the monastery many years in strict temperance. When the devil aroused sorrow in him for giving away his possessions, Basil comforted him: "I implore you, brother Theodor, do not forget the reward. If you want to have possessions, take everything that is mine." Theodor repented and dearly loved Basil, with whom he lived in the cell.



Once Basil was on an errand outside the monastery for three months. The devil, having assumed his form, appeared to Theodor and indicated that there was a treasure hidden somewhere in the cave by robbers. The monk still wanted to leave the monastery to buy possessions to live in the world. When Basil returned, the demonic illusion disappeared. In order not to be distracted by idle thoughts, Theodor set up a millstone, and by night he ground grain. Thus, by long and zealous ascetic action he freed himself from greed.

A report reached Prince Mstislav Svyatopolkovich that Theodor had found much treasure in the cave. He summoned the monk and commanded him to show him the spot where the valuables were hidden. Theodor told the prince that indeed he had once seen gold and precious vessels in the cave, but fearing temptation, he and Basil had buried the treasure, and God took from him the memory of where it was hidden. Not believing Theodor, the prince gave orders to torture him to death. The guards beat Theodor so much that his hair-shirt was wet with blood, and then they suspended him head-downwards, lighting a fire beneath him. In a drunken condition the prince commanded them to torture Basil also, and then to kill him with an arrow. Dying, Basil threw the arrow at the feet of Prince Mstislav and predicted that he himself would soon be mortally wounded by it.

The prophecy was fulfilled on 15 July 1099 during an internecine war with David Igorevich. On the wall of the Vladimir fortress, Prince Mstislav was suddenly struck in the chest by an arrow through an opening in the timbers, and on the following night he died. Recognizing his own arrow, the prince said: "I die because of the monastic martyrs Basil and Theodor."

*August 13*

**Radegund of Poitiers**, deacon, queen, minister to the sick and poor, founder of Holy Cross abbey at Poitiers, died on 13 August 587.



*Radegund, with bishop Euphronius and Venantius Fortunatus, receiving the cross and a gospel book (Abbaye de Saint-Antoine in Isère, France)*

Radegund (also spelled Radegunde, Radegunda, and Radegundis, and in modern French Radegonde) was born in Thuringia (an area of Germany between the Rhine and the Elbe) about 520. Her father was Berthar, one of three kings of Thuringia.

As a child she was surrounded by brutality and turbulence. When she was still small, her uncle, Hermanfrid, killed Berthar in battle over control of Thuringia. She then lived in the household of Hermanfrid. When Clothaire (also spelled Clothar, Clotaire, or Lothar), king of the Franks, conquered Thuringia in 531 (and killed most members of the royal house), he, then in his 40s, took the child Radegund and her only surviving brother as his share of the booty. Radegund was to be raised as his future wife (one of four), legitimizing his claim to Thuringia.

Radegund was reluctant to marry Clothaire, partly because of his brutal and dissolute character, but also because she didn't care for marriage. She eventually consented to the wedding (about 540), but continued to lead an austere and devout existence, apparently without intimacy, goading Clothaire to fury. She bore him no children.

Her chaplain and first biographer, Venantius Fortunatus, reports: "Because of this [her austerity], people said that the king had yoked himself to a nun rather than a queen. Her goodness provoked him to harsh irritation, but she either soothed him to the best of her ability or bore her husband's brawling modestly." She used the revenues of the lands she was granted at her wedding to found hospices and do other charitable work on behalf of the poor. One such hospice, dedicated to Saint Radegund, still exists at Athies in Pas-de-Calais.

After Radegund had lived for ten years at Clothaire's court, Clothaire murdered her brother since, as the last surviving male member of the Thuringian royal family, he was a threat to Clothaire's rule over Thuringia. When she learned of her brother's murder, Radegund fled from Clothaire's court (about 550) and took sanctuary in the church at Noyon, where she persuaded Medard, bishop of Noyon, to overcome his initial reluctance and ordain her a deacon. She then managed to escape from her husband's territory, fleeing first to her estate at Saix and then to Poitiers. Clothaire made several attempts to reclaim his wife, but she now had the power of the church behind her. In 560, fearing another attempt to recapture her, she sent a letter to Germanus, bishop of Paris, asking him to exert his influence with her husband. Eventually Clothaire capitulated, sending Germanus to Poitiers to ask the queen's pardon, which she readily granted. Clothaire died in 561, releasing Radegund from any further claims.

During these years of exile Radegund founded the Convent of Our Lady of Poitiers, at the city walls (about 552). This convent was completed by 560, with the help of Clothaire and the revenues of the lands granted to her at her wedding. When she had established the new convent, Radegund sent a letter of foundation to the bishops of the Poitiers area.

In this document, which was later transcribed by Gregory of Tours in his *History of the Franks*, Radegund laid down the organization of the convent. It was to abide by the Rule of Caesaria of Arles; Agnes (a close friend of Radegund since her childhood at Athies) was to be the mother superior; and it had been founded with the complete approval of the prelates in the area of Poitiers, as well as of the heirs of Clothaire. The most notable aspect of the Caesarian Rule was

its rigid requirement that, once cloistered, a nun was never, under any circumstances, to leave the convent. It further required that the cloistered sisters be able to read and write, and that they devote several hours of the day to reading the scriptures and copying manuscripts, as well as to such traditionally female tasks as weaving and needlework. The community of nuns numbered about two hundred, many of them being, like the founder, of high social rank. A community of monks, abiding by a similar rule, was also instituted at the same time.

The courtier and poet Venantius Fortunatus (530-609) was an early visitor to the Poitiers convent, and he became a close friend of Radegund and her mother superior, Agnes. The two poems attributed to Radegund are published with Fortunatus' works; although some scholars believe that he had written the poems in her voice and others believe that they are Radegund's alone, the consensus is that they are collaborations between the two writers. Both poems, *De excidio Thoringiae* and *Ad Artachis*, are presented as letters to Radegund's surviving relatives, describing the loss of her family and homeland and the isolation she had known all of her life.

Radegund soon began to petition the Byzantine emperor for relics from the Holy Land to sanctify her convent. The first petition she sent was for a relic of the Cappadocian martyr, St. Mamas of Caesarea. The Patriarch of Jerusalem eventually authorized the transfer of the little finger of the saint's right hand from Jerusalem to Poitiers. The second petition was for a fragment of the cross on which Christ was crucified. In response, the emperor sent not only a large piece of wood from the cross, but also some gospel books studded with gold and gems.

Euphronius, bishop of Tours, deposited these relics in the convent in the year 569. (Radegund and Euphronius are depicted in icons receiving the cross and a gospel book.) Venantius Fortunatus wrote two poems in honor of the cross, the hymns *Vexilla Regis prodeunt* and *Pange lingua gloriosa*. Following the acquisition of these relics, Radegund had the convent renamed the Abbey of the Holy Cross, and it became the destination of pilgrimages.

In her last years, Radegund shut herself off from the daily life of the abbey and lived in a walled-up cell, where she devoted her hours to prayer and meditation. She died on 13 August 587. Her funeral three days later was conducted by her friend Gregory of Tours, with Venantius Fortunatus present. Since the nuns were forbidden, by the Caesarian Rule, ever to set foot outside the abbey, they stood on its walls, wailing, as Radegund's body passed beneath them.

According to Gregory of Tours, Radegund, worried about what might happen to her abbey after her death, wrote (perhaps in the mid-560s) a letter to the bishops of her area asking (or demanding) that they and their successors prevent anyone from disturbing the nuns, changing the rule, or alienating the abbey's property. One may question whether the two verse epistles are in fact Radegund's; with the prose letter there seems little question—the voice is definitely that of a strong queen.

After Radegund's death, the abbey fell into decay, due partly to the refusal of Maroveus, bishop of Poitiers, to perform his ecclesiastical duty to supervise it. Eventually a revolt by some of the nuns led to the convening of a council of bishops to investigate the allegations made by the nuns. Many of these were found to be without merit, but Maroveus was ordered to attend to the spiritual needs of the abbey. (See Edmond-René Labande, ed., *Histoire de l'Abbaye Sainte-Croix*

*de Poitiers: Quatorze siècles de vie monastique*, Poitiers: Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, 1986.)

Sometime after Radegund's death (perhaps after he became bishop of Poitiers in 590), Fortunatus wrote a courtier-like *vita*. Later, the nuns chose one of their own, Baudonivia, to complement his work. Baudonivia's memoir of Radegund, written between 600 and 602, has the full hagiographic set of miracles, but it also shows the founder as only her fellow nuns could have seen her—dealing with her husband's quarreling sons and with recalcitrant bishops, acting as a spiritual guide to the women around her, and living the kind of religious life that Baudonivia could only hope would be continued in the future. In the ninth century, both Radegund and her abbess, Agnes, were canonized as saints.

*August 16*

**Titus**, deacon and martyr, put to death by a soldier during the sack of Rome by the Visigoths, while distributing alms to the poor, in 410.

*August 17*

**Boniface**, deacon and martyr, with companion monks in North Africa, killed by Arians in 483.

The other martyrs were: abbot Liberatus, subdeacons Servus and Rusticus, monks Rogatus and Septimus, and Maximus, a child educated in the monastery. All were martyred under the Arian Huneric (king of the Vandals 477-484).

**James the Deacon**, Italian monk who accompanied Paulinus on his mission to Northumbria, died late seventh century.

James accompanied Paulinus of York on his mission to the court of King Edwin of Deira in 625 with Edwin's bride Æthelburh, sister of King Eadbald of Kent. After the death of Edwin in battle at Hatfield against Penda of Mercia and Caedwalla in 632, Paulinus fled to Kent, leaving James in Northumbria, as "the one heroic figure in the Roman mission" (Sir Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, Oxford University Press, 1971).

In his famous work *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (731), Bede writes that James lived in a village near Catterick, which "bears his name to this day." (Catterick village in North Yorkshire lies on an old Roman road and was home to a small Roman fortification.) He reports that James undertook missionary work in the area and lived to a great age. James was present at the Synod of Whitby in Bede's account of events there. Bede tells us that after this, and the return of Roman customs, James, as a trained singing master in the Roman and Kentish style, taught many people plainsong or Gregorian chant in the Roman manner. It has been suggested that James was Bede's informant for the life of Edwin, the works of Paulinus, and perhaps the Synod of Whitby, which would place his death some years after the birth of Bede in about 672.

*August 20*

**Geert Groote** (also **Gerrit** or **Gerhard Groet**, in Latin **Gerardus Magnus**), deacon, preacher, monastic founder, and victim of the plague in 1384.

Geert Groote was born in 1340 in Deventer in the diocese of Utrecht, where his father held a good civic position. He studied at Aachen and then went to the University of Paris when only fifteen. There he studied scholastic philosophy and theology at the Sorbonne under a pupil of William of Occam, from whom he imbibed the nominalist metaphysical view in philosophy. (Nominalists argued that general ideas are mere names without any corresponding reality and that only particular objects exist. The opposite concept was known as realism, derived from Plato's view that universals and abstract objects do exist.) He also studied canon law, medicine, astronomy, and even magic, and apparently some Hebrew. After a brilliant course he graduated in 1358. He pursued his studies still further in Cologne. In 1366 he visited the papal court at Avignon. About this time he was appointed to a canonry in Utrecht and to another in Aachen, and the life of the brilliant young scholar was rapidly becoming luxurious, secular, and selfish, when a great spiritual change passed over him which resulted in renunciation of worldly enjoyments.

This conversion, in 1374, appears to have been due partly to the effects of a dangerous illness and partly to the influence of Henry de Calcar, the learned and pious prior of the Carthusian monastery at Munnikhuizen near Arnhem, who had remonstrated with him on the vanity of his life. About 1376 Geert retired to this monastery and spent three years in meditation, prayer, and study, without, however, becoming a Carthusian. In 1379, having received ordination as a deacon, he became a missionary preacher throughout the diocese of Utrecht.

The success of his labors not only in the town of Utrecht, but also in Zwolle, Deventer, Kampen, Amsterdam, Haarlem, Gouda, Leiden, Delft, Zutphen, and elsewhere, was immense. According to Thomas à Kempis, the people left their business and their meals to hear his sermons, so that the churches could not hold the crowds that flocked together wherever he came. The bishop of Utrecht supported him warmly and got him to preach against concubinage in the presence of the clergy assembled in synod.

He directed censures not only against the prevailing sins of the laity, but also against heresy, simony, avarice, and impurity among the secular and regular clergy. This preaching provoked the hostility of the clergy, who brought accusations of heterodoxy against him. In vain Geert issued a *Publica Protestatio*, in which he declared that Jesus was the great subject of his discourses, that in all of them he believed himself to be in harmony with Catholic doctrine, and that he willingly subjected them to the candid judgment of the Catholic Church. The bishop was induced to issue an edict which prohibited from preaching all who were not in priest's orders, and an appeal to Urban VI was without effect. The date of this prohibition is uncertain; either it was only a few months before Geert's death, or it must have been removed by the bishop, for Geert seems to have preached in public in the last year of his life.

Perhaps in 1381, perhaps earlier, he paid a visit of several days to the famous mystic John Ruysbroeck, prior of the Augustinian canons at Groenendaal near Brussels. At this visit Geert became attracted to the rule and life of the Augustinian canons. Near the end of his life some of the clerics attached to him asked him to form them into a religious order, and Geert resolved that they should be canons regular of St. Augustine. Although he lost no time in beginning this project, Geert died before a foundation could be made. In 1387 however, a site was secured at Windesheim, some 20 miles north of Deventer, and here was established the monastery that

became the cradle of the Windesheim congregation of canons regular, embracing in time nearly one hundred houses and leading the way in the series of reforms undertaken during the fifteenth century by all the religious orders in Germany. The initiation of this movement was the great achievement of Geert's life; he lived to preside over the birth and first days of the Brethren of the Common Life. He died of the plague at Deventer in 1384, at age 44.

*August 23*

**Archelaus**, deacon and martyr, with bishop Quiriacus of Ostia, presbyter Maximus, and others, martyred at Ostia (harbor city of ancient Rome) during the reign of Claudius Gothicus (268-270).

The *Acts of the Martyrs at Ostia on the Tiber* tell the story of a girl of royal descent named Chryse in Greek and Aurea in Latin, or Goldie. Under the orders of Claudius, she and the other martyrs were persecuted and killed by the *vicarius urbis* (city governor) named Ulpian Romulus.

First the men were killed. The *Acts* record:

“Then Romulus said: ‘These men should die.’ And he ordered that Quiriacus the bishop, the holy Maximus the presbyter, Archelaus the deacon, and all the soldiers be beheaded near the arch [of Caracalla] in front of the theatre. He ordered that their bodies be thrown into the sea. The blessed Eusebius collected the bodies, hiding them near the seashore, in the fields, and burying them near Rome in the necropolis of the Via Ostiensis. He secretly buried Taurinus and Herculanus in Portus Romae. He put the blessed Theodorus the tribune to rest in his own mausoleum, and collected all the others, and put them to rest near the bodies of the holy Quiriacus the bishop and Maximus the presbyter.”

Five days later Chryse was tortured and thrown into the sea to drown. Her body was washed ashore, and on 24 August it was buried on her estate outside Ostia.

[From the Latin translation of an ancient Greek manuscript in the Vatican, published by Simone de Magistris in 1795. There is also an ancient Latin version of the same story, with slight differences, in *Acta Sanctorum*, Augustus IV, 757 ff.]

*August 25*

**Nemesius**, deacon and martyr, with his daughter Lucilla, beheaded at Rome in 257.

Stephen, bishop of Rome in 253-257, suffered martyrdom during the reign of Valerian (253-259). Stephen zealously contended against the heresy of Novatus, which taught that it is not proper to receive back those returning from heresy.

While hiding during a persecution against Christians, Stephen baptized many pagans. These included the military tribune Nemesius, who converted to Christ and was ordained deacon after Stephen healed his daughter, Lucilla. Nemesius was beheaded along with Lucilla.

The tribune Olympius brought their steward Symphronius into the temple of Mars for torture. Stephen's prayer shattered the golden idol, after which the tribune with his wife Exuperia and his son Theodolus believed and were baptized. They were all burned alive, and their remains were

buried by bishop Stephen. Then thirteen of his presbyters were beheaded: Bonus, Faustus, Maurus, Primitivus, Calumniosus, John, Exuperantus, Cyril, Theodore, Basil, Castelus, Honoratus, and Tertullinus, all converted by Stephen. Finally, Stephen himself was led before Valerian, who condemned him to beheading with a sword in the temple of Mars. By the prayers of Stephen, a large part of the pagan temple was destroyed, and the soldiers fled. Stephen concealed himself in the catacombs, where he was later killed by soldiers while he was teaching Christians.

*August 27*

**Margaret Hardy**, Navajo deacon, died 27 August 2001.

Margaret was born 28 October 1931 and ordained deacon 10 June 2000. She died a little more than a year later.

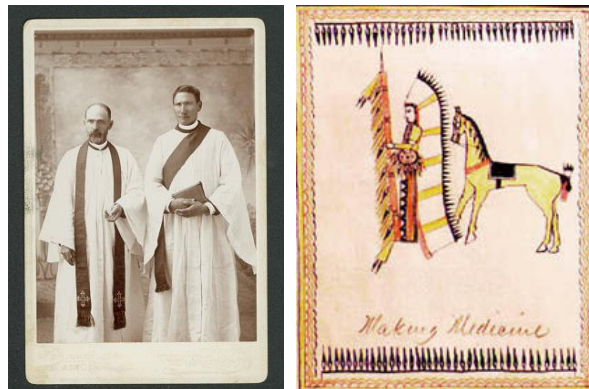
*August 29*

**Anna R. Armstrong**, deaconess at St. Clement's in New York City, died 29 August 1960.

Anna was born on 31 January 1873 and was set apart as deaconess in 1908 by Bishop David H. Greer of New York, after graduation from the Training School at Grace Church. Anna spent the majority of her diaconal life in the diocese of New York. From 1909 until 1917 she served various churches in the Bronx including St. Martha's and St. James in Fordham. After a brief tenure at St. Peter's Church in Westchester, Anna settled into an eleven-year term at St. Clement's Church located in Manhattan's notorious Hell's Kitchen neighborhood. While serving at St. Clement's, Anna, who had a theatrical background, produced many plays and pageants. Due to failing health, Anna retired from active parish service in 1940 and became co-supervisor of St. Clare's Home in Upper Red Hook, New York. She later retired to St. Anne's Guest House and Convent in Kingston, where she died at the age of 87 on 29 August 1960. Her funeral was held at Christ Church, Red Hook. She is buried in the churchyard of St. John the Evangelist in Barrytown, along with several other deaconesses. [research of Deacon Geri Swanson]

*August 31*

**David Pendleton Oakerhater**, deacon, former war chief, and missionary to the Cheyenne in Oklahoma, died on 31 August 1931.



*Left: Oakerhater with John B. Wicks  
Right: Self-portrait as war chief*

Oakerhater (Okuhhatuh, or Making Medicine) was born between 1844 and 1851 on a Cheyenne reservation in western Oklahoma. He grew up to become a war chief of the Southern Cheyenne. In April 1875 he and twenty-seven other warriors were taken prisoner by the U. S. Army. They were marched to a military post and, without trial, were eventually taken by train to Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida (originally Castillo de San Marcos, now a national monument).

The commander of Fort Marion, Lieutenant Richard H. Pratt, taught the prisoners English and educated them. Seeing that Oakerhater was a natural leader, he placed him at the head of the Indian self-discipline force. He also encouraged the younger Indians to earn some money giving lessons in art and archery to visitors. Using pencils, watercolors, and military ledger books, and drawing in a style adapted from traditional symbol or pictographic drawings on tepees, rocks, hides, and wood, the Indians recorded life on the plains and recent events at the fort. These "ledger drawings" are found today in private collections and museums across the country. Oakerhater's drawings bear the name "Making Medicine," a translation of his Cheyenne name.

As a result of Pratt's kindness, Oakerhater and some others converted to Christianity. In February 1877, at a gathering of the prisoners, Making Medicine spoke for the young men. In a letter sent to Washington, Pratt recorded the speech, as translated into English:

"I have learned to sing the saviors hymns and have given myself to him. Heretofore I have led a bad life on the plains, wandering around living in a house made of skins. I have now learned something of the Great Spirits road and want to learn more. We have lived in this old place for two years. It is old and we are young. [W]e are tired to it. We want to go away from it, anywhere. We want Washington to give us our wives and children, our fathers and mothers and sent us somewhere, where we can settle down and live like white men. Washington has lots of good ground laying around loose, give us some of it and let us learn to make things grow. We want to farm the ground. We want a house and pigs and chickens and cows. We feel happy that we have learned so much, that we can teach our children. I speak for the young men. We want to work. We young men all belong to you. You have put a great deal into our hearts that was never there before. Our hearts are getting bigger every day. We are thankful for what we have learned. This is the feeling of all the young men that are here. We are willing to learn and want to work."

In 1878 four prisoners decided to study for the ordained ministry. Deaconess Mary D. Burnham, of the House of the Good Shepherd in Syracuse, New York, raised the needed funds. Mrs. Alice Key Pendleton of Cincinnati (daughter of Francis Scott Key and wife of U. S. Senator George Hunt Pendleton of Ohio) paid Oakerhater's tuition for three years. Sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York, the four traveled north. They lived and studied in the home of the Rev. and Mrs. John B. Wicks of Paris Hill, New York. When Oakerhater was baptized in Grace Episcopal Church, Syracuse, on 6 October 1878, by Bishop Frederic Huntington, he took the name David Pendleton Oakerhater, in honor of the Bible warrior and the woman who paid his way. A few days later he was confirmed. His wife Nomee (Thunder Woman) joined him but died in childbirth in July 1880.

Oakerhater was ordained a deacon on 7 June 1881, and he and Wicks immediately set out for Cheyenne country. They established the Episcopal mission at the Darlington Indian Agency on



16 June 1881. On his first Sunday after returning to Oklahoma, Oakerhater gathered his people and told them, as translated into English:

“Men, you all know me. You remember me when I led you out to war I went first and what I told you was true. Now I have been away to the East and I have learned about another captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he is my leader. He goes first, and all he tells me is true. I come back to my people to tell you to go with me now in this new road, a war that makes all for peace, and where we have only victory.”

A few days later he conducted the first Christian burial service ever known among the Cheyenne. Later that summer Cheyenne agent John Miles, writing about the returned Fort Marion prisoners, said that Oakerhater was preaching in his native tongue, and no better example of Christian manhood was to be found. Wicks and Oakerhater taught and conducted services regularly in Indian camps, tents, or the agency school building.

On 4 January 1883, Oakerhater wrote to Pratt, now a captain:

“MY DEAR CAPT. PRATT, Your good letter come to me when I was received your kind letter and made me great delighted to hear that great many Indian children go study very hard and learn the white man way and want to know how read God Bible and write a letters. I know that great many white people very kind to us and show us that he is the Son of God is way I have been sitting and thinking about that is very good for us Christian civil people come up everywhere Indian country and teach to us and pray for us great deal and tell us that only one god in heaven and pray to him that great Father up heaven I think afterward all Indian tribes understand God is way and love him and pray great deal I know that my poor heathen people making medicine dances that makes great trouble I want you to tell Washington Indian medicine dance cut. I think I know all good white people they want better way that he is way the Son of God and also you want the same way and so you best to help Indian children and show Bible read and thank you My Dear Capt. Pratt God knows you and grant help you in your work I know before that made me sergeant what you say to me I will try hard to right you know how it is I love you I hope sometime to see you and shake hand with you. Oh! how much I glad see you since my return all the time think very often my kind friend at the East also Mr. Wicks want poor heathen medicine cut and want new better way that is all from your loving friend. DAVID PENDLETON.”

Oakerhater’s second wife, Susie, died on 5 February 1890. When the Missionary District of Oklahoma and Indian Territory was created, and Francis Key Brooke was sent in 1893 as its first bishop, he noted that “Oakerhater remained the only ordained representative of the Episcopal Church in Indian Territory.” Wicks had returned to New York due to illness in 1884. The Rev. David Sanford, who spoke Cheyenne, joined Oakerhater in 1894 to serve the camps at Darlington and Bridgeport. With funds that Bishop Brooke solicited in the East, a chapel was erected at Bridgeport where Sanford had his home.

In 1897 a government day school with fifteen pupils opened on Chief Whirlwind’s allotment southeast of Fay. Oakerhater ministered to these children and to their families camped nearby. When Oakerhater and Minnie White-Buffalo were married about 1898, their home was the

church facility.

When the government day school closed in 1901, the building was given to Whirlwind's widow, who gave it to the Episcopal Church in 1904. The agency allowed a mission day school to be established "for the care of those unhealthy children who are debarred from government schools." The agency often accused Sanford of falsely certifying that a child was physically unable to attend boarding school and needed to be at Whirlwind. Sanford enrolled as many children as possible at Whirlwind regardless of physical condition in order to save their lives, as many children were dying in the boarding schools because of the excessive steam heated buildings.

In 1916 the government pressed the Episcopal Church to close Whirlwind School. The next year the mission was closed and sold, an irreparable loss to the religious life of the Cheyenne. Oakerhater was retired on a small pension after thirty-six years as a deacon. In retirement he continued to counsel, preach, bury, baptize, and prepare his people for confirmation. He was never ordained to the priesthood and therefore never celebrated Holy Communion with his flock.

Oakerhater worked hard to bring the peace of Christ to his people. He operated the Whirlwind Mission and school at Watonga, Oklahoma, at great personal cost, overcoming the apathy of churches and the opposition of the government. Guided by his great captain, he never gave up. The Cheyenne respected Oakerhater's faith and nicknamed him "God's Warrior."

Oakerhater died on 31 August 1931 and was buried in the small Indian cemetery at Watonga. In 1985 General Convention voted to add him to the calendar of saints of the Episcopal Church, with feast day of September 1. Biography, photos, and letters are available through Oklahoma State University at <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/Oakerhater/index.html>. Another site with letters and other documents is <http://home.epix.net/~landis/oakerhater.html>.

### *September 1*

**Ammon**, deacon and martyr in Thrace (now in southern Balkans), with forty young women he had converted, under the persecutions of Licinius (emperor 308-324), died 322.

Ammon was singled out and slain by having a red hot poker placed on his head.

**Laetus**, deacon and martyr, with Vincent of Xaintes (first bishop of Dax in Gascony, France), date of death unknown, perhaps fifth century.

Possibly born in Spain, they are venerated in Toledo.

**Hilaria**, deacon, daughter of bishop Remigius of Rheims in Frankish Gaul, died sixth century.

In 530 Remigius left a bequest to "my blessed daughter, Hilaria the deacon."

### *September 3*

**Phoebe of Cenchreae**, deacon, died about 64.



*Modern icon by Suzanne Schleck*

“I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon [διάκονον] of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well” (NRSV Romans 16:1-2).

Cenchreae was the eastern seaport of the city of Corinth and a popular stop for people traveling from Syria or Asia Minor. A prominent member of the church at Cenchreae, Phoebe was Paul’s ambassador or minister plenipotentiary, bringing his letter to the church at Rome.

Four centuries later, John Chrysostom praised Phoebe’s work for the church as an inspiration and model for both men and women to imitate. He called her a saint—a holy person and a woman who served the church through the office of deacon. Today Phoebe is honored as the prototype for women deacons just as Stephen is the prototype for men deacons. The name Phoebe means “bright” or “radiant”; Apollo and Diana, gods of the sun and moon, were often referred to as “Phoebos” and “Phoebe.” The Orthodox church in Cenchreae (now the small village of Κεχριές) is named St. Phoebe the Deacon.

*September 7*

**Memorius**, deacon and martyr of Tricassium or Tricassae, Troyes in present-day France, with companions, beheaded by Attila the Hun in 451.

Also called Mesmin or Nemorius, Memorius was sent by Lupus (Loup, meaning Wolf), bishop of Tricassium, with four companions to ask Attila to spare the city, on the Seine river northeast of Paris. Attila beheaded Memorius and his fellow delegates. Although there is some doubt about this account, the relics of the martyrs are still venerated. (Tricassium is derived from “Tricasses,” the name of a local tribe of Gauls.)

*September 9*

**Lonnie Herring**, deacon and prison minister, died 9 September 2011.

Born 22 July 1937 and ordained 18 February 1996, Lonnie Lee Herring was a member of the first class of deacons in the diocese of Mississippi. He served in several small parishes in the

Mississippi Delta, but his main ministry was with the inmates at the state prison at Parchman. He was the strength behind the Kairos prison ministry in Mississippi.

*September 14*

**Ann Pew**, deaconess of Philadelphia and St. Louis, died 14 September 1932.

Born in 1867, Hannah Annie Pew grew up in Burlington, New Jersey. She graduated from the Philadelphia School for Deaconesses in 1899 and was set apart by Bishop Ozi W. Whitaker of Pennsylvania. After five years working in Philadelphia, in October 1905 she came to St. Louis as the deaconess in charge of new settlement house work. She ran Holy Cross House in St. Louis from 1906 to 1912. An article in the diocesan *Church News* in 1912 stated:

“During the six years that Deaconess Anne was in charge of Holy Cross House she was everything to the people except their Bishop. Not only Deaconess, which I suppose means the feminine of ‘servant,’ but also their pastor, which must mean their shepherdess, for she watched over needs spiritual as carefully as any commissioned pastor could do . . . she filled all the functions of a minister if not of a priest.”

Deaconess Anne raised the money needed to provide social services. The diocesan article continued: “For outside her salary, guaranteed to her by the Church Woman’s Club, she had no money to run the Mission which she herself did not raise.” She funded Holy Cross by setting up an early 20th century version of a boutique.

“The store was a weekly affair. Its less successful kindred are called rummage sales. But they are sporadic and of questionable benefit to purchasers, while these [Deaconess Anne’s] were regular sales and of undoubted good to those who were fortunate enough to get excellent things at the small price at which the Deaconess, Caesar-like in her authority, sold them.”

Deaconess Anne worked tirelessly for the church and for the neighborhood she loved, but her work took a toll on her health. In 1912 she underwent an operation (type unknown), and “her health would not permit her to live in St. Louis and be ‘our Deaconess’ any longer.” In ill health she moved to California to recover. After a couple of years, she returned to Philadelphia, where she worked and lived for the rest of her life. In 1923 ill health again forced her to retire.

Deaconess Anne House, in the same neighborhood of St. Louis, is a new work of the Episcopal Service Corps and the Diocese of Missouri, named after Deaconess Anne Pew. [research of Deacon Mark Sluss]

*September 15*

**Emilas**, deacon and martyr, with Jeremiah, at Córdoba in Spain in 852.

The two young men were imprisoned and beheaded in Córdoba under the Emir Abderrahman. They are two of the forty-eight Martyrs of Córdoba, described in detail by Eulogius. They were executed for capital violations of Muslim law in al-Andalus. The martyrdoms took place between 851 and 859. With few exceptions, the Christians invited execution by publicly stating their faith and beliefs. Some appeared before the Muslim authorities to denounce Mohammed; others,

Christian children of Islamic-Christian marriages, publicly proclaimed their Christianity. The lack of an interested chronicler after Eulogius' own martyrdom in 859 has given the false impression that there were fewer episodes later in the ninth century.

*September 16*

**Abundantius**, deacon and martyr of Rome, arrested with presbyter Abundius for refusing to offer sacrifice to Hercules, tortured at Mammartine prison in Rome, and martyred by beheading, with Abundius and senator Marcian and his son John, in the persecution of Diocletian (emperor 284-305) about 304.

*September 19*

**Susanna**, deacon and martyr, adult convert, martyred at Eleutheropolis in Palestine in 362.

Susanna grew up in Palestine as the daughter of Arthemius, a rich pagan priest, and Martha, a Hebrew woman. After their deaths, she was baptized as a Christian, freed her slaves, gave her property to the poor, and decided to live as an ascetic. She cropped her hair, put on male clothing, took the name John, and presented herself at a men's monastery in Jerusalem. The monks assumed she was a eunuch and accepted her.

Still disguised, Susanna eventually became superior of the community. After twenty years in the monastery, a visiting nun fell in love with her and tried to win her affections. When this failed, the nun accused Susanna of seducing her. The local bishop, Kleopas of Eleutheropolis, was called in with two deaconesses. Susanna revealed her gender to the deaconesses, and her name was cleared. The bishop was impressed with Susanna and brought her back to his cathedral. He ordained her a deaconess and appointed her abbess of a convent. She served as spiritual elder for many years, served the poor, extended hospitality, and prayed for the healing of many.

During the persecution of Julian the Apostate (emperor 355-363) she was arrested by the prefect Alexander and tortured for refusing to offer sacrifices to pagan gods. When her torturers realized that they could not break her faith, they threw her into prison, where she died from her wounds and lack of food. (Eleutheropolis, Greek for "city of the free," was a Roman city on the ancient road from Jerusalem to Gaza.)

*September 24*

**Thyrsus of Smyrna**, deacon and martyr, with presbyter Andochius and merchant Felix, tortured and killed in Gaul in the second century.

Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna sent Andochius and Thyrsus to what is now Burgundy in central France. They settled in Augustodunum (now Autun), where they converted their host, a rich merchant named Felix. For teaching the gospel, all three were scourged, suspended all day by their hands (tied behind their backs), and thrown into the fire, but the fire did not consume them. Finally their necks were broken with heavy bars, killing them. They were venerated throughout Gaul.

**Anna E. B. Alexander**, deaconess and African-American teacher in the diocese of Georgia, died 24 September 1947.



*Anna Alexander (icon written by Louise Shipps)*

Born about 1865, Anna Alexander was the first African-American set apart as a deaconess in the Episcopal Church. She worked in rural southeast Georgia, in an area known as Pennick, in Glynn County, a community of former slaves and poor whites. In the 1890s near Darien, she founded first the Church of the Good Shepherd and then a school. There she taught young boys and girls to read—according to legend, from the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible—in a one-room schoolhouse, which was later expanded to two rooms with a loft where she lived.

She ministered in Pennick for 53 years, being consecrated deaconess in 1907. As part of her work in Glynn County, she helped make camps possible for young white members of the diocese, and they responded by building a cabin in her honor. The diocese segregated its black and white congregations in 1907, and the African-American congregations were not invited to another diocesan convention until 1947, the year of her death.

*September 26*

**Thomas Clarkson**, deacon, English campaigner for abolition of slavery and the slave trade, died 26 September 1846.



*Oil portrait of Thomas Clarkson*

Thomas Clarkson was born in Wisbech, in the Fens of Cambridgeshire, in 1760. He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, and was afterwards ordained deacon. In 1785 Cambridge University held an essay competition with the title: "Is it lawful to enslave the unconsenting?" Clarkson had not considered the matter before, but after carrying out considerable research on the subject he submitted his essay. Clarkson won first prize and was asked to read his essay to the University Senate.

On his way home to London he had a spiritual experience. He later described how he had "a direct revelation from God ordering me to devote my life to abolishing the trade." Clarkson

contacted Granville Sharp, who had already started a campaign to end the slave trade. In 1787 Clarkson and Sharp formed the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Of the twelve members on the committee, nine were Quakers. Influential figures such as John Wesley and Josiah Wedgwood gave their support to the campaign. Later they persuaded William Wilberforce, MP for Hull, to be their spokesman in the House of Commons.

Clarkson was given the responsibility of collecting information to support the abolition of the slave trade. This included interviewing 20,000 sailors and obtaining equipment used on the slave ships such as iron handcuffs, leg shackles, thumb screws, instruments for forcing open slaves' jaws, and branding irons. In 1787 he published his pamphlet, *A Summary View of the Slave Trade and of the Probable Consequences of Its Abolition*. Clarkson was a brilliant writer, and Jane Austen, who completely disagreed with his views on slavery, was so impressed with his writing style that she claimed after reading one of his books that she was "in love with its author."

After the passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807, Clarkson published his book *History of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade*. Clarkson was not satisfied with the measures passed by Parliament and joined with Thomas Fowell Buxton to form the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery. Clarkson had to wait until 1833 before Parliament passed the Slavery Abolition Act, which gave all slaves in the British Empire their freedom. Clarkson retired to Ipswich, Suffolk, where he died on 26 September 1846.

*October 1*

**Romanos Melodos**, deacon, hymn writer in Syria and then Constantinople, died about 556.



*Icons of Romanos*

Romanos, also known as Romanos the Melodist, was a hymn writer in Greek. He has been called "the Pindar of rhythmic poetry." From the scanty records of his life we know that he was born to a Jewish family about 490 in Emesa (Hems) or Damascus in Syria and lived in Constantinople during the reign of Anastasius I (491-518). He converted from Judaism to Orthodox Christianity and was ordained deacon. Having officiated as a deacon in the church of the Resurrection at Beirut, he moved to Constantinople, where he was attached to the churches of Blachernae and Cyrus.

According to legend, when he was asleep in the church of Cyrus, the Virgin appeared to him and commanded him to eat a scroll. On awaking (it was Christmas Day), he immediately mounted



the pulpit and sang his famous hymn on the Nativity. Romanos is said to have composed more than 8,000 similar hymns or *kontakia* (from Greek *κοντάκιον* or scroll) celebrating the festivals of the ecclesiastical year, the lives of the saints, and other sacred subjects. These subjects include the death of a monk, the last judgment, the treachery of Judas, and the martyrdom of St. Stephen. In the Russian Orthodox Church, Romanos is the patron saint of church singers.

Here is the prelude to his long (24-stanza) kontakion on the Nativity of Christ:

Today the Virgin gives birth to One who transcends all being,  
and to One we cannot approach the earth offers a cave.  
Angels and shepherds sing his glory,  
for to us is born a child,  
God in all eternity.

*October 4*

**Francis of Assisi**, deacon and founder of Order of Friars Minor, died 3 October 1226.



*Detail from fresco by Cimabue, late thirteenth century*

Francis was born in 1182 in Assisi, Italy. His father was the rich cloth merchant Pietro Bernardone, and his mother was Giovanna Pica. The boy was named Giovanni at baptism, but when his father returned from France, where he had been when the boy was born, he demanded that the name be changed to Francesco (little Frenchman or Frenchie), since his mother was from Provence and he had been in France at the time of the birth. He had an easy life as a child and youth, spending money without care. He wanted to become a knight and a troubadour. At the age of 20, he took part in the 1202 war between Assisi and Perugia, and was captured after the battle of Collestrada. He spent a year as a prisoner in Perugia, before his father was able to ransom him. His health suffered from the imprisonment, and he contracted a serious illness that would stay with him until his death. After spending most of the year 1204 in bed, he joined the campaign of Walter de Brienne, who was fighting in Puglia, in 1205. Planning to join the Fourth Crusade, he bought expensive equipment and rode off.

While on his way, he met a poor man, and being struck by pity he exchanged his expensive clothes for the man's rags. At Spoleto, he fell ill again. While he was sick, he heard a voice ask, "Where are you going, Francis?" He explained where he was going, and the voice asked, "Tell me, who can take you the farthest, the Lord or the servant?" He answered "The Lord," and was told to return to Assisi, where he would be told what to do. Back in Assisi, he lived more or less as before, but was not as joyful. Rather than spend time with his carefree friends, he started



going to a grotto outside Assisi, where he spent hours in prayer.

He went on a pilgrimage to Rome, where he met a leper with horrifying disfigurements. At first he felt fear and revulsion, but he overcame it quickly, and when the leper stretched out his hand to beg for money, Francis not only gave him money but kissed his hand. Going to St. Peter's tomb, he exchanged clothes with a beggar, and spent the rest of that day begging. He was still unsure about what he was supposed to do, but visited the hospital and started caring for the lepers.

In the autumn of 1205, he was back in Assisi and prayed in the church of San Damiano. It was a poor church, where the priest could not even afford oil for the lamp by the icon of Christ. While praying, he heard Christ speak to him three times, from the crucifix which is now in Santa Chiara in Assisi, telling him to set his house in order. He took this literally, and took several rolls of cloth from his father's store and sold them. He tried to give the money to the priest at San Damiano, who refused to take them. He did however, accept that Francis could live there as an oblate.

His father was furious, and came for Francis, who had hidden. After praying and fasting for days, he showed himself, and people said he looked as if he had gone insane. His father came, beat him senseless, and dragged him home in chains. He was locked in the house, but his mother set him free when the father had left. His father again came for him at San Damiano and demanded that he either return home or renounce his heritage and pay back the money. Francis gladly renounced his heritage, but claimed that the money belonged to God and the poor. Being an oblate, he was under the authority of the bishop of Assisi.

His father brought the case to the bishop, Guido, and Francis was told to return the money and trust in God. Again showing that he had a tendency to take things literally, he said that the clothes he wore also belonged to his father, and in front of the bishop and a large crowd he took them off and gave them to his father. The bishop gave him a cloak that belonged to one of his workers, and Francis accepted it with gratitude, drawing a cross on it. He left the town to "marry Madam Poverty." He wandered around, working at a monastery and in the leper colony at Gubbio.

In 1206 he returned to Assisi, where everyone thought he was mad. He begged for alms to repair San Damiano, and did some of the work on the church himself. After doing the same thing for the church San Pietro, he went to the small chapel Portiuncula, formally called Santa Maria degli Angeli, which belonged to the Benedictine monastery of Monte Subacio. He repaired it himself, and settled down there.

On the feast of St. Matthew in 1208, he heard the gospel for that day, Matthew 10:7-19, in which the disciples are told to go into the world bringing only one tunic, no shoes or staff, no money in their belt, and no purse. It's no surprise that he took the gospel literally; he gave away his shoes, belt, and staff, put on an undyed woolen cloak held together with a rope, and went into the world as a beggar. This was the origin of the Franciscan habit.

Francis had by now started to attract attention, and some chose to follow him. Bernardo da

Quintavalle and Pietro Cattani were the first, and Francis gave them the habit on 16 April 1208. The third to join was Egidius, who was given the habit on 23 April 1208. In 1209 he had 11 companions, and he decided to write a brief rule. He was ordained as deacon around this time. He was never ordained to the priesthood; his humility prevented him from seeking that for himself. In 1210, he went to Rome to seek the Holy Father's approval for the rule. Pope Innocent III at first thought it was too strict. But the night before the audience, he had a dream in which the Lateran Basilica was collapsing, and a single man came in and held it up. Recognizing Francis in his dream, he approved the rule.

This first rule, known as *Regula Prima*, is sadly lost to us. Francis and his followers were given the tonsure and formal permission to work as preachers. Francis gave his order the name *Ordo Fratrum Minorum*, or "Order of the Smallest Brothers." The brothers lived in strict poverty, working and begging for alms. Any surplus was given to the poor. By 1212 there were more than 100 Franciscans. In 1212 he founded a female branch, named the Poor Clares after his friend Clare (Chiara) of Assisi. In 1221 the Third Order of Franciscans was founded to allow lay people, married and unmarried, to join the Order.

In 1212 Francis went east to preach to the Saracens in Syria. After shipwrecking, he landed at the coast of Dalmatia, and had to return as a stowaway to Ancona. He preached in Italy for some time, and in 1213 he again tried to reach the Saracens. This time he tried to reach Morocco through Spain. He fell ill in Spain, and had to return. Others made the trip to Morocco, and the order had its first five martyrs there on 16 January 1220.

In 1217 what had begun more as a movement than an order held its first general chapter. The order was divided into provinces, and brethren were sent to other countries to preach. The lack of organization was taking its toll, and in 1219 Francis convened the second general chapter, at which 5,000 brethren were present.

In 1219 Francis joined the Fifth Crusade to preach to the Saracens. He sailed to Damietta in Egypt, which was under siege by the crusaders. His illusions were soon stripped away; the crusaders were not as holy as he had thought. He managed to get through the lines, and was presented to the sultan, Malek al-Kamel. Francis did not manage to convert the sultan, but secured better treatment of Christian prisoners and was given the privilege of his order being custodians of the Holy Sepulchre.

After a few months in the Holy Land, Francis returned to Italy. While he had been away, the order had started changing. While the Franciscans had so far lived in simple huts, they had now built a monastery of stone. Francis refused to enter and sought shelter with the Dominicans. He felt that he had been betrayed and went to Rome. The Holy Father, Pope Honorius III, appointed Cardinal Ugolino as Protector of the Order in 1220. The cardinal was a close friend of Francis and wanted the whole church to take advantage of Francis' ideas. He also wanted some of the brethren to become bishops, to lead the work for reform in the church. Francis stepped down as General of the Order, and named Pietro Cattani as his Vicar.

In 1221 Francis made a revised rule, with the support of Cardinal Ugolino. It was more detailed than the first but similar in its insistence on poverty and humility. At the third general chapter in

May 1221, he presented it to the brethren. Many of them supported the new trends, including the new Vicar, Elias of Cortona, who had governed the order since the recent death of Cattani. The chapter still accepted the rule, being reluctant to defy the founder. The new rule was, however, not approved by the Pope and is therefore known as *Regula non bullata*. Francis revised the rule again in 1223. Many of the brethren protested against the ban on communal property, which they felt that it was impossible to live with. Some changes were made to accommodate everyone, and Pope Honorius III approved this rule—it became the *Regula bullata*. Francis was not completely happy with it, but could not have his will without breaking up the order.

Our knowledge that Francis was a deacon comes from his earliest biographer, Thomas of Celano, in an account of Christmas mass at Greccio in the Rieti Valley in 1223. There Francis made the first known Christmas crib, using real persons to play the parts. This was a way for him to emphasize the poverty of Christ. Farmers who came to midnight mass were impressed by him. As deacon he served in the mass and sang the gospel with such inspiration that many cried openly. In 1224 he returned to solitude, this time in the Appennines in Tuscany. He preached to the animals, and the birds are said to have listened quietly to him.

By this time Francis was weakened by illness and the harsh life he had led. Only one brother, Leo, was allowed to visit him. Francis concentrated all his remaining strength on becoming ever more like Christ, and he especially meditated over Christ's wounds. On or near the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross on 14 September 1224, he fell into ecstasy and received the stigmata, the wounds of Christ, from an angel. This is the first recorded case of stigmata. Because of his humble nature, he always tried to cover the wounds.

In the winter of 1224-1225 he managed to preach in Umbria and Marche. He gradually weakened more, in large part because of the stigmata. He was also going blind at this time. In the spring of 1225 Cardinal Ugolino made him see the Pope's physicians in Rieti. On his way there, he visited Clare for the last time. While there, almost crazed by pain, he wrote the famous *Canticum fratris solis*, "The Canticle of Brother Sun," which he set music to and taught to the brethren. (Incidentally, the well-known prayer "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace," was not written by Francis; it appeared around the time of the First World War.)

An operation for his eyes was a failure, and he weakened even more. In the spring of 1226 he was sent to Siena for treatment. But he no longer had any will to live and longed more and more for death's release. One night, suffering terrible pain and being certain that he was dying, he dictated the document known as the Siena Testament. He was moved to a hermit's hut, and there he dictated his last testament to Brother Elias. In the summer of 1226 he was at Bagnara, and it was decided to carry him back to Assisi on a stretcher.

He was given a large escort—people already thought of him as a saint, and there was a real danger that he would be held back to secure relics. In Assisi he was taken to the bishop's residence. Bishop Guido was away at the time. He asked the doctors to tell him the truth, and was given no more than two weeks to live. Hearing this, he exclaimed: "Welcome, Sister Death!" He asked to be taken to his old home in the chapel at Portiuncula. At a hill outside Assisi, he gave his blessing to the town and to his brethren, and then he was carried to Portiuncula.

Francis asked the brethren to fetch Giacoma di Settesoli, a close friend, who was to bring candles and a cloak for his funeral, and a cake that he loved. She came by herself before the messenger could go. He then dictated a few lines for Clare and the sisters and asked the brethren to sing the verse of the Canticle of Brother Sun that praises death. He then asked for a loaf of bread, which he broke and passed out as a sign of love and peace. According to his own wish, he was placed in the floor of the small hut and covered by a cloak lent to him by the guardian. He gave his admonitions to the brethren and gave instructions for the treatment of his mortal remains. The passion of our Lord from the gospel of John was read aloud, and Psalm 141 was sung. At sunrise on 3 October 1226, at the age of 45, he closed his eyes for the last time.

Francis had asked to be buried with the criminals at Colle d'Inferno, but on Sunday, 4 October, his body was carried to San Giorgio in Assisi and he was buried there. The funeral cortege stopped outside San Damiano, so that St. Clare and the sisters could say their farewells. Twenty-one months later, he was canonized by Pope Gregory IX, the former Cardinal Ugolino. His relics were hidden from grave robbers, and they were not rediscovered before 1818, in a subterranean crypt in the church San Francesco in Assisi. A richly decorated monument was erected over his tomb, but in 1932, in recognition of what he would have wanted, it was removed and a simple monument was placed there. The chapel Portiuncula has also been preserved; the church Santa Maria degli Angeli has been built around it.

#### *October 5*

**Firmatus**, deacon and martyr, with his sister the virgin Flaviana, died together for their faith at Antissiodorum in Gaul (now Auxerre in the Bourgogne region of central France), date unknown.

They are listed in *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* (Martyrology of Jerome), compiled in the late sixth century.

#### *October 6*

**Iwig** (also called **Iwi**, **Iwigius**, or **Ywi of Lindisfarne**), deacon and monk of Northumbria, died 690.

Iwig was a spiritual student of Cuthbert at Lindisfarne, who ordained him deacon. Following the Irish ideal of an exile for Christ, he took ship without bothering to ask its destination, planning to evangelize where it landed. The destination turned out to be Brittany, where he lived as a hermit and followed a ministry of miraculous healing. About 250 years later a group of Breton monks carrying the relics of Iwig arrived at Wilton Abbey in southwest England (three miles from modern Salisbury in Wiltshire). According to legend, when they were ready to leave they found they could not move the relics. The relics had found a home at the abbey altar, and the monks were forced to leave them behind. (This story may have been invented to justify the abbey's theft of the relics. The abbey buildings, including relics, no longer exist.)

#### *October 8*

**Demetrius (Dimitri)**, deacon and martyr, killed at Sirmium in Dalmatia (modern Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia), early fourth century.

The Greeks called Demetrius a military martyr and the “Megalomartyr” (Great Martyr). Early legends about Demetrius credit him with a military career. He was popular in the Middle Ages, and with St. George he was the patron of the crusades.

*October 9*

**Rusticus** and **Eleutherius**, deacons (or one of them was, see below) and martyrs, beheaded at Paris with bishop Denis, about 258.

The first mention we have of these three martyrs comes in the sixth century in the writings of Gregory of Tours. Denis (or Dionysius as he is also called) is the most famous of the three. Born and raised in Italy, he was sent as a missionary to Gaul about 250 by Clement of Rome, along with five other bishops. Denis made his base of missionary activity an island in the Seine near the city of Lutetia Parisiorum—what would become Paris. For this reason he is known as the first bishop of Paris and the Apostle of France. There he was captured by the Parisians along with Rusticus and Eleutherius. Later writers referred to these as Denis’ presbyter and deacon, or his deacon and subdeacon, but we have no further information on them.

After a long imprisonment and several aborted executions, the three martyrs were beheaded with a sword and their bodies were thrown into the river. Denis’ body was retrieved from the Seine by his converts and buried. The chapel built over his tomb grew into the Abbaye de Saint-Denis, in what is now a northern suburb of Paris, where the kings of France were buried from the tenth century until the Revolution. (According to legend, when Denis was beheaded he picked up his head and walked to what is now Saint-Denis. He is often represented thus in sacred art.)

**Poplia of Antioch** (or **Publia**), deacon and confessor, abbess, and music minister at Antioch, died about 363.

Poplia was married and gave birth to a son, John, who became leader of the presbyters of Antioch. After her husband died, she was ordained into the diaconate. After she had been ordained a short time, persecution broke out under Julian the Apostate (emperor 360-363), and she was able to counsel many women and strengthen them in their faith. She was a gifted leader of women and the local church. During persecution she was tortured for refusing to relinquish her Christian beliefs.

*October 11*

**Philip the Deacon**, one of the seven ordained by the apostles, died first century.



*Icons of Philip*

All we know of Philip is what we are told in Acts 6:5, 8:4-40, and 21:7-9. He was one of the seven chosen to assist the apostles. He was the first to preach in Samaria, where he converted Simon Magus. Later, on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, he instructed and baptized a eunuch who was chief treasurer of the Queen of Ethiopia. Philip preached in the coastal cities on the way to his home at Caesarea, and twenty-four years later Paul stayed at his home in Caesarea, where he still lived with his four unmarried daughters. A Greek tradition has him become bishop of Tralles in Lydia. He was so successful in his preaching that he was surnamed “the Evangelist,” which has sometimes caused him to be confused with Philip the Apostle. [observed 11 October in Orthodox and Episcopal churches, 6 June in Catholic Church]

*October 13*

**Papylas**, deacon and martyr, with bishop Carpus, killed at Pergamum in Asia Minor (now Bergama in Turkey) in 251.

*October 16*

**Baldwin** (also called **Balduinus**, **Baldunus**, or **Baudoin**), archdeacon and martyr at Laon in Gaul (now in Picardy in northern France), killed about 670-680.

Baldwin was son of Salaberga and brother of abbess Anstrude of Laon. He was murdered by personal enemies who were angered by the severity of his life—which they took as a rebuke to them.

*October 20*

**Maximus of Aveia**, also known as **Maximus of Aquila**, deacon and martyr, killed in 250.

Maximus was born in Aveia (now known as Fossa, a town in the province of L’Aquila, meaning “The Eagle,” in the mountainous Abruzzo region of central Italy). During the persecutions of Decius (emperor 249-251), Maximus submitted himself to the Roman authorities. Refusing to

deny the faith, he was racked and tortured, then beaten with rods. The authorities then threw him from a cliff near Aveia. In 1256 the episcopal seat of Aveia was moved to the city of L'Aquila, together with the relics of Maximus. He is the patron saint of the city, where the cathedral is dedicated to San Massimo.

*October 22*

**Severus**, deacon and martyr, with bishop Philip of Heraclea and presbyter Hermes, burned at the stake at Adrianopolis (now Edirne in northwestern Turkey) in 304.

The aged bishop Philip, Severus, and Hermes were arrested under Diocletian (emperor 284-305). Philip was ordered by the governor, Bassus, to hand over the church's sacred vessels and books. Philip agreed to the vessels, but not to the scriptures. The bishop and his deacon were then scourged and the wanted goods seized. Afterwards, they refused to make an act of worship to the emperors or to the goddess Fortune or to Heraclea's name-deity, Hercules. Later there was a fruitless interrogation by Bassus' successor, Justin, after which Philip was dragged back to jail by his feet. Together with Severus and Hermes, he was confined for seven months before all three were taken to Adrianopolis. Justin interviewed them twice again and had Philip beaten; he then sentenced them to death by fire at Adrianopolis. Philip had been so badly beaten that he had to be carried to the stake. Hermes, who was not much better, joked cheerfully and sent a last message to his son: "Tell them to pay back whatever I owe, and to work hard for his living as I have done, and to behave well to everybody." When the fire was lit the martyrs praised and gave thanks to God until the smoke suffocated them. Severus followed them the next day.

*October 24*

**Charles Sapibuana** (known as **Sapi**), deacon and evangelist in the Solomon Islands, Melanesia, died of influenza on 24 October 1885.

Sapibuana was born about 1854 in the village of Lango in Gaeta, on the south shore of Gela or Nggela (called Florida by Spanish explorers). A Christian teacher and evangelist among his own people, he was ordained deacon in 1882. While preparing for ordination to the priesthood, he took sick and died on Norfolk Island. His story is told by Frances Awdry, *In the Isles of the Sea: The Story of Fifty Years in Melanesia* (London, 1902), 73-85 (<http://anglicanhistory.org/oceania/awdry1902/14.html>).

*October 27*

**Clara Louise Schodts**, deaconess in Manhattan, New York, died 27 October 1941.

Clara Louise Schodts entered St. Faith's House in 1910. Originally from Peekskill, she trained as a nurse, graduating from Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan. She was head nurse in the surgical department at Good Shepherd Dispensary on the Lower East Side for eleven years and was an active member of the St. Bartholomew's Girls' Club. Schodts was set apart as deaconess on 9 May 1902 at the age of 40 at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and accepted an assignment to St. Thomas' Mission in Manhattan. She lived at St. Thomas' House at 229 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street during her tenure at St. Thomas' Parish. In 1913 Schodts organized the "Mothers' Meeting" group at St. Thomas. The Sunday School at St. Thomas' was also under her care. Deaconess Schodts served the people of St. Thomas until 1925, and in 1926 she accompanied Deaconess Susan Knapp on a

trip to Europe. On her return to the United States, Schodts moved to Astoria, Queens, N.Y. She later served at St. George's Church in Manhattan and at St. James on Madison Avenue. She was active in the Alumnae Association of St. Faith's, serving at various times as editor of the bulletin, board member, treasurer, and president. While president of the Alumnae Association, Schodts raised funds to establish the first scholarship to the school. Schodts retired in 1935. She died on 27 October 1941, a few weeks before the passing of her mentor and friend, Deaconess Susan Trevor Knapp. [research of Deacon Geri Swanson]

*October 30*

**Tabra** and **Tabratha**, deacons and martyrs, with bishop Teonesto at Treviso (north of Venice), killed in 380.

According to accounts in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the three were stranded at sea on a defective ship. Finally disembarking in the Gulf of Venice, they were killed by Arians. The names of the two deacons appear to be feminine. If so, there were women deacons in northeast Italy near Aquileia at the end of the fourth century.

*November 1*

**Caesarius the African**, deacon and martyr, with presbyter Julian, drowned at Terracina (a port on the Appian Way between Rome and Naples) in second century.

Caesarius, a deacon from Africa visiting Italy, denounced the pagan custom of having one youth per year immolate himself to the demons by jumping off a cliff in honor of the god Apollo. The priest of Apollo had him arrested and taken before the governor. He was sentenced to be sewn into a sack and thrown into the sea. He was martyred together with Julian, a local presbyter.

In the fourth century Valentinian (emperor 364-375) was cured at the shrine of Caesarius at Terracina. The emperor then decided to move the relics of Caesarius to Rome. They were taken to a church on the Palatine Hill, and they were later moved to a new church near the Appian Way which got the name San Cesareo in Palatio.

**Hilary**, deacon and martyr, with presbyter Valentine, beheaded at Viterbo near Rome during the persecutions under Diocletian (emperor 284-305) in 304.

*November 3*

**Aethalas**, deacon and martyr in Persia, with bishop Akepsimus of Naesson and presbyter Joseph, killed in 379.

The three Christians lived in Persia at the time of Shapur II (lived and reigned 309-379). They were leaders of the Christian church in the city of Naesson, where Akepsimus was known for his ascetic life and tireless pastoral work. Shapur ordered his men to seek out and kill Christian clergy. Akepsimas was arrested, even though he was already eighty years old. He was taken to the city of Arbela (now Erbil in the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq), where he came before the judge Ardarkh, a pagan priest of the sun god. The bishop refused to offer sacrifice to the Persian gods. For this he was fiercely beaten and thrown into prison. On the following day the seventy-year-old presbyter Joseph and the deacon Aethalas were severely beaten and thrown into jail



with him. For three years they were held in confinement and suffered from hunger and thirst.

Shapur came to the temple of the god of fire, located not far from Arbela, and wanted to take a look at the three Christians. Exhausted and covered with festering wounds, they were brought before the emperor. When he asked them to worship the pagan gods, they refused, confessing their faith in Christ instead. The bishop was beheaded, but the presbyter and deacon were taken into the city to be stoned. The execution of the presbyter Joseph was prolonged for several hours. A guard was placed near the place of execution, so that Christians would not take the body of the martyr. On the fourth night a strong windstorm raged near the city, lightning killed the guard, the wind tossed stones about, and the body of Joseph disappeared. Deacon Aethalas was taken to the village of Patrias, where he was stoned. Christians secretly buried his body. According to an old legend, a tree grew on the martyr's grave, and its fruit caused healings.

Orthodox churches commemorate the three martyrs on November 3, but Aethalas is sometimes also remembered on September 1.

#### *November 4*

**Jane Hall**, deaconess of the diocese of New York, died 4 November 1934.

Born in Philadelphia in 1850, Jane Harriss Hall attended the Deaconess School there. She arrived in New York at the age of 45 and remained in the metropolitan area until her death. In New York she served as deaconess at St. Mark's Church and the Church of the Transfiguration, commonly known as "The Little Church Around the Corner," where she developed her love of theater, which molded her life's ministry.

In New York she made her greatest contribution to the women working in the theatrical fields when she established the Three Arts Club, a place for struggling actresses to live while seeking work in the theater. Additionally she started the Professional Children's School for child actors, which is still in existence, established the Roosevelt Memorial House, and was a founding member of the Episcopal Actors Guild. In her later years she lived in Montclair, New Jersey. Two funeral services were held for Hall, one at St. Luke's in Montclair, the other at Transfiguration in Manhattan. She was buried in North Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia. [research of Deacon Geri Swanson]

#### *November 10*

**Anianus**, deacon and martyr, with bishop Demetrius, Eustosius, and twenty companions, killed at Antioch in Syria, date unknown.

#### *November 14*

**Vénérand of Évreux**, deacon and martyr, with bishop Maximus, killed at Acquigny in Normandy about 384. [the deacon only is also observed on May 25]

Their legend states that they were brothers, natives of Brescia (in Lombardy in modern Italy). Maximus and Vénérand (originally Venerandus and also called Victorinus) attempted to make converts to Christianity among the ranks of the barbarian armies but failed. The brothers were

sent by Pope Damasus I to preach in Gaul instead, to continue the work of Taurinus (Taurin) in the region. Taurinus, venerated as a saint, is considered the first bishop of Évreux.

They traveled to Gaul with two presbyters, Mark and Etherius, passing through Auxerre, Sens, and Paris until they reached Évreux, where Maximus was made bishop. At Acquigny they were captured and beheaded by either pagans or Arians. Mark and Etherius escaped and returned to bury the two brothers. Etherius later became bishop of Évreux.

Their relics were discovered around 960 by a man named Amalbert. He attempted to carry the remains off, leaving behind only the heads of Maximus and Vénérand. As he was crossing the Seine near Fontenelle Abbey, he fell sick. He left the relics at the abbey, where Richard I of Normandy built a chapel to house them. The relics were later burnt by the Huguenots. The saints' heads, however, remained at Acquigny. A Benedictine church was built over their tomb, but it fell into decay. The relics were moved to the parish church and deposited under the high altar. The saints were invoked against drought in 1559, 1615, and 1726, when they were carried after the head of Saint Swithun.

(Évreux and Acquigny are the modern names of towns in Haute-Normandie. In the fourth century the Roman name of Évreux was *Mediolanum Aulercorum*, "the central town of the Aulerci," the local Gallic tribe. Later the town was called Ebuovices, after another Gallic tribe, from which Évreux derives. The Roman name of Acquigny was Aciniacius.)

*November 15*

**Abidus**, deacon and martyr of Edessa in Syria (modern Urfa in Turkey), killed by burning in 322.

*November 17*

**Zachaeus**, deacon and martyr, with Alpheus, beheaded at Caesarea in Palestine in 303.

In the first year of Diocletian's persecution (emperor 284-305), Zachaeus and Alpheus received capital punishment after having undergone many tortures.

**Eugene**, deacon at Florence under Zenobius, and a disciple of Ambrose of Milan, died in 422.

*November 18*

**Romanos of Caesarea**, deacon and martyr, killed at Antioch in Syria in 303 or 304.

At the beginning of the Diocletian persecution (emperor 284-305), deacon Romanos of Caesarea in Palestine suffered martyrdom at Antioch. On the proclamation of Diocletian's edict, Romanos strengthened the Christians of Antioch and openly exhorted the weaker brothers and sisters, who were willing to offer heathen sacrifices, not to waver in the faith. He was taken prisoner, condemned to death by fire, and bound to the stake; however, as Galerius (emperor 305-311) was then in Antioch, Romanos was brought before him. At the emperor's command his tongue was cut out. Tortured in various ways in prison, he was finally strangled.

Eusebius speaks of his martyrdom in *De martyribus Palestin*, c. ii. Prudentius (in *Peristephanon*,

X in PL, LX, 444 sq.) relates other details and gives Romanos a companion in martyrdom, a Christian named Barulas. Several historians, among them Baronius, consider that there were two martyrs named Romanos at Antioch, although more likely there was only the one whom Eusebius mentions. Prudentius introduced legendary features into his account, and his connection of the martyrdom of Barulas with that of Romanos is probably arbitrary.

*November 19*

**Faustus**, deacon and martyr of Alexandria in Egypt, killed fourth century.

Faustus was the companion in exile of bishop Dionysius of Alexandria. He was killed in extreme old age.

*November 20*

**Susan Trevor Knapp**, deaconess and missionary to Japan, died in Los Angeles about 20 November 1941.



*Deaconess Susan Knapp (with icon by Suzanne Schleck)*

Susan Trevor Knapp was born in 1862. She graduated from the New York Training School for Deaconesses in 1894 and was consecrated deaconess at Grace Church, New York, in 1899 by Bishop Henry Potter. In 1903 she was made dean of the school commonly called St. Faith's. She was a leader in both the American and worldwide deaconess movement. Because of a power struggle with the board of directors, Knapp was removed as dean in 1916 and offered the position of house mother. She declined and spent the next twenty-two years as a missionary in Japan, teaching English and Bible studies to Japanese and Korean college students. She returned to the United States in 1939 when Japan began to expel foreign missionaries. She died in Los Angeles about 20 November 1941, shortly before the bombing of Pearl Harbor. [research of Deacon Geri Swanson]

*November 23*

**Jeffrey Ferguson**, deacon, prison minister, and community networker in Maine, died 23 November 2004.

*November 29*

**Sisinius**, deacon and martyr, with presbyter Saturninus, sentenced to hard labor and later martyred at Rome in 309.

Saturninus was a presbyter from Carthage who went to Rome and was arrested with deacon Sisinius, during the persecutions of Maximian (co-emperor 286-305). They were sentenced to hard labor and either died during their ordeal or were tortured and then beheaded. Saturninus lived, was martyred, and was buried on the Via Salaria in Rome, although details are not reliable.

*December 2*

**Marcellus**, deacon and martyr, with companions, beheaded at Rome in 254-259.

Marcellus and others were martyrs in Rome under Valerian (emperor 253-260). Marcellus, presbyter Eusebius, Neon, and Mary were beheaded. Adria and Hippolytus were scourged to death. Paulina died in a torture-chamber. Maximus was thrown into the Tiber.

*December 4*

**Nicholas Ferrar** of Little Gidding, deacon, died 4 December 1637 (Episcopal Church Dec. 1).



*Oil portrait of Nicholas Ferrar*

Born 22 February 1592, Nicholas Ferrar was the founder of a religious community that lasted from 1626 to 1646. After Nicholas had been ordained a deacon in 1626, by Archbishop William Laud, he and his extended family, including his mother and his brother and sister and their families, and a few friends retired to the deserted village of Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire, England, to devote themselves to a life of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. They restored the abandoned church building and held regular services there. They taught the neighborhood children and looked after the health and well-being of the people of the district. They prayed the daily offices of the Book of Common Prayer, including the recital every day of the complete Psalter. Day and night, there was always at least one member of the community kneeling in prayer before the altar, that they might keep the command, "Pray without ceasing." They wrote books and stories dealing with various aspects of Christian faith and practice. They fasted with great rigor and in other ways embraced voluntary poverty, so that they might have as much money as possible for the relief of the poor.

The community was founded in 1626 (when Nicholas was 34). He died in 1637 (age 45), and in 1646 the community was broken up by the Puritans of Cromwell's army. His tomb still stands in front of the church at Little Gidding. The memory of the community survived to inspire and influence later undertakings in Christian communal living. One of T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* is called "Little Gidding" (1942), in which he writes:

If you came this way,  
Taking any route, starting from anywhere,  
At any time or at any season,  
It would always be the same: you would have to put off  
Sense and notion. You are not here to verify,  
Instruct yourself, or inform curiosity  
Or carry report. You are here to kneel  
Where prayer has been valid. And prayer is more  
Than an order of words, the conscious occupation  
Of the praying mind, or the sound of the voice praying.  
And what the dead had no speech for, when living,  
They can tell you, being dead: the communication  
Of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language of the living.  
Here, the intersection of the timeless moment  
Is England and nowhere. Never and always.

*December 8*

**William West Skiles**, deacon, farmer, missionary, and monk at Valle Crucis, North Carolina, died 8 December 1862.



*Grave of William West Skiles at Church of St. John the Baptist (photo by Nicholas D'Amato)*

William West Skiles was born 12 October 1807 on a farm in eastern North Carolina. Young Skiles grew up in an Episcopal family before there was a diocese or bishop. As a young adult he became a successful farmer and overseer of a lumber mill.

In 1842 Bishop Levi Silliman Ives of North Carolina decided to begin mission work in a wild area near Boone where two valleys cross. He bought two thousand acres and called the area Valle Crucis. Over the next several years, Bishop Ives established a mission to spread the gospel, teach agriculture, and train clergy for the diocese.

In 1844 Skiles, 37 years old, known to be a simple, kind man and to have sound practical judgment, was appointed to oversee the mission farms and livestock and to teach farming skills to boys enrolled in the school. In 1847 Bishop Ives encouraged the mission to form itself into a religious community, the Order of the Holy Cross, taking vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, with the Rev. William G. French as superior. Skiles, impressed by the religious life of the mission, took the vows and also prepared himself for holy orders. On 1 August 1847 he was ordained to the diaconate. For two years the community flourished: prayer book offices were said daily, there were eight men preparing for holy orders, missions were formed at Upper Watauga, Lower Watauga, and Valle Crucis. Mountain people were strengthened by the reverence of the liturgy and, unable to read, loved to hear the scriptures read aloud. A school was established to teach the children the catechism as well as reading and writing.

As successful as the mission was, and as sincere the devotion of the brothers was, there was

dissension within the diocese between the bishop and those who believed rumors that the Valle Crucis community was a “hotbed of Romanism” (the chief objection being the use of sacramental confession). In 1849 the bishop dissolved the Valle Crucis religious community, and the diocese cut off all support. The superior and the brothers left, leaving only Brother Skiles, the faithful deacon and shepherd, who would not abandon his scattered flock. (In 1852, his health deteriorating, Ives resigned his office, sold the land, and became a Catholic.)

For thirteen years Brother Skiles was the shepherd to the mountain people. He walked or rode on horseback, often in severe weather, to read and answer letters for those unable to do either, to explain legal documents and settle disputes, to pray with his beloved flock, and to teach them catechism. He continued to live in poverty, never married, and gave his obedience to his bishop and the priests who came to administer the sacraments. The mountain people called him “Father Skiles.”

He delighted in the growth of the mission on the Lower Watauga River and wanted to help the faithful build their own chapel. With contributions of labor, lumber, and small financial gifts, he designed and supervised the construction of a simple but architecturally beautiful chapel, dedicated to St. John the Baptist. On 22 August 1862, Bishop Thomas Atkinson consecrated the chapel, with Brother Skiles taking his part in the glorious liturgy. The desire of his heart had been granted, but failing health did not permit him to enter this lovely chapel again. He died of cancer on 8 December 1862. He was buried near the entrance to the Church of St. John the Baptist, overlooking the Watauga River. Moved in 1882 to a spot higher up the Watauga, the church still stands and is used during the summer and for special services. In 1889 Skiles’ body was moved to the new site.

In his tribute to Brother Skiles at the diocesan convention the following spring, Bishop Atkinson stated, “He was loved and honored for his humility, self-denial, diligence, affectionate temper towards his fellow men, and his unwearied zeal in the service of his Master.”

Susan Fenimore Cooper wrote an account of his life and ministry, *William West Skiles: A Sketch of Missionary Life at Valle Crucis in Western North Carolina 1842-1862*, published in 1890. The book is reproduced online at [http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/cooper\\_skiles1890/](http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/cooper_skiles1890/) and may be purchased at the Valle Crucis Conference Center (<http://www.highsouth.com/vallecrucis/pubs.htm>).

#### *December 10*

**Abundius**, deacon and martyr, with presbyter Carpophorus, martyred at either Spoleto in Italy, or Seville in Spain, in 300.

In the persecution of Diocletian (emperor 284-305), they were first beaten with clubs and then thrown into prison, where they were denied food and drink. They were tortured for a second time on the rack and again cast into prison for a long period. Finally, they were slain by the sword.

#### *December 13*

**Justus Richard Van Houten**, SSF, deacon, friar, and advocate for those on the edge of society, died of pneumonia at Kompiai in Papua New Guinea, on 13 December 2006.





*Brother Justus with missionaries Bonnie Wepler (left) and Jennifer Wheeler (right), in Papua New Guinea in July 2006. (from the web site Volunteers in Mission of the Anglican Church of Canada)*

Justus Van Houten was born on 6 October 1948 in Staunton, Virginia. After serving in the Army in Vietnam, he came home in 1973 with a desire to become a Franciscan friar. At that time he felt that the vocation of friar was incompatible with the vocation of deacon (although Francis of Assisi had been a deacon). In the early 1980s, after ten years as a friar, he changed his mind and with the support of his brothers was ordained at the annual chapter of the Society of St. Francis (SSF) on 26 May 1986, as the society's first deacon friar. For his first two years as deacon, Brother Justus worked for the San Francisco Night Ministry, spending Saturday nights in the streets, bars and coffee shops, and other places where people hang out. He helped and befriended robbed tourists, stranded people, patients who had lost their medication, recovering alcoholics, and potential suicides.

Later, in 1993, he was elected Minister General of the American Province of SSF, and in 1993-1995 he also served as president of the North American Association for the Diaconate. After a long sabbatical, he joined the Franciscan brothers in Papua New Guinea. At the time of his illness and sudden death on 13 December 2006, he was serving as principal and lecturer in liturgy, sacramental theology, and church history at Newton Theological College in Popondetta, Papua New Guinea.

Alan Wali, a student, recalled his final days:

Our actual day of leaving or left Newton College for visiting my Diocese and particularly my Parish (Koinambe) was on Wednesday 6th December. He had just arrived from Port Moresby a day before we began our trip. After leaving Newton College I found out that he had hard cough and a sore throat. He actually mentioned to me that he had hard cough and a sore throat after his recent trips from New Zealand and coming to and from Port Moresby for the College Council Meeting.

However, we left Popondetta on the 6th December for Mt. Hagen. We had to fly from Girna to Port Moresby, changed the flight and we caught another flight to Mt. Hagen. We stayed two nights and a day in Hagen. The cough and sore throat in him doesn't change. During our staying in Hagen we were given The Mepang Missionary home to overnight there two nights.

While we were in Hagen on Thursday I showed him the city in actually taking a walk, just



around the central part of the city or township only for sight viewing, because this is his first time to the Province (WHP) and the Highlands.

On the 8th December, we flew by MAF to Koinambe, where we met The Parish Priest (Fr. Nicholas Kaam), all the church leaders and the Christians fully dressed in customs and welcomed us from the airstrip to the Parish Hall for refreshment and rest.

There were lots of greetings and joy with tears from the Christians in receiving us. We rested the whole day after arrival on Friday at the Parish. We stayed with the Parish priest for three days, which were: Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

On Saturday I took him around the station for sight viewing and visited the school, Parish itself and the health Centre. One thing we did while at Koinambe for this three days was visiting and praying for the patient at the Health Centre. That reminds me of how Br. Justus love to serve and care for the soul of others in the ministry he was called to serve.

On Sunday 10th December we had a very spectacular service. Late Br. Justus was told to take the Gospel reading and preached. In his preaching all done in Pidgin, I can remember and recall one thing he mention in Pidgin that 'Yumi Mas Redi Long Kambek Bilong Jesus Long Laip Bilong Yumi.' This phrase in his preaching in Pidgin meant that we must be prepare and ready for the Lord coming in our lives today. Anyway we ended the Sunday service with speeches, 'bungka' and presentation of items. Then we stayed overnight the last night at the Parish St. Johns the Baptist Parish at Koinambe.

On Monday 11th December we had to take our walk from Parish to Kompiai which is another out station. We started the journey at 7.30 am and reached to the village at 4.00 pm in the afternoon. Christians and the leaders both the church and the community welcomed us with refreshment and rest. After our arrival at Kompiai I found out about his cough and sore throat that it got worse.

On Tuesday morning I told him that we should stop at Kompiai and not to go further to Mengik, but he insisted and mentioned that we should finish the trip. So, we went over to Mengik on the 12th December started the journey at 7.30 am but it took us a while or a day before reaching the village. At Mengik he cannot say or do anything because he was very tired and very weak after the walk, not only that was the cause but also the hard cough and sore throat. And eventually he was having a complication of breathing and the symptom of the case grew worse and in the same night he had diarrhea. I have to nurse him all night with the help from community up until Wednesday morning.

In the early hours on Wednesday I told the Christians to make a stretcher so we will carry him to the near Health Centre, which is at Koinambe. So we carry him on the local made stretcher left at Mengik at 9.00 am and carry him all the way and just reaching Kompiai my own family village Late Brother Justus had passed away at 1.00 pm in front of my Christian community and me his own student and his brother.

I would like to recall the last words from Late Br. Justus Van Houten. 'Adam my brother, this is

the end of my ministry in Christ. Our visiting here at your Parish is not a waste, but we fulfill the ministry that we are called to do in Jesus, Thank you.'

Then as I have said he took the last breath and end of his life at 1.00 pm at Kompiyai, my own village.

After his death or he has passed away the Christians continually carry the body all the way down to Koinambe for chopper lift to Mt. Hagen. The information about his death gone through the VHF Radio to be air broadcast to the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea. We carry the body down to Koinambe and it took us one and half hour, and we finally put the body on the chopper lift. We arrived in Mt. Hagen at 5.00 pm and took the body straight to the morgue with the help from Diocesan Staff here at Mt. Hagen.

Now to be honest in my report about the instant death of Late Brother Justus SSF is from the hard cough and the sore throat and as a result of those that final night at Mengik the problem grew bigger and also that night he had diarrhea. His death was end with very high breathing symptoms, meaning that he had pneumonia or what we call sort win in Pidgin.

[Alan Wali, "The Final Hours of Brother Justus," <http://aidanspiritatwork.blogspot.com/2006/12/final-hours-of-brother-justus-by-alan.html>, 31 Dec 2006]

On 8 July 2007 his funeral was celebrated at the friary at Little Portion, Long Island, New York, and his ashes were buried in the garden.

*December 15*

**Susanna**, deacon and martyr in Palestine, archimandrite, died in the third century.

*December 17*

**Abbacum (Habakkuk)**, deacon and martyr of Serbia, with abbot Paisius, impaled by Turks on 17 December 1814.

Paisius was abbot of the monastery of Trnava near Cacak in Serbia, and Habakkuk his companion and deacon. Both of them were impaled on stakes by the Turks on Kalemegdan in Belgrade. Before the execution, dragging his spike through the streets of Belgrade, Habakkuk sang in praise of God. When his mother begged him to save his life by accepting Islam, he thanked her for her motherhood but not for her advice, quoted the great figures of the Old Testament who suffered for God, and looked forward to his own martyrdom.

*December 19*

**Timothy**, deacon and martyr, burnt alive in Morocco, Africa, about 250.

After enduring a harsh imprisonment for his faith in Christ, Timothy was thrown into the fire.

*December 26*

**Stephen the Deacon**, first martyr, died in Jerusalem about the year 34.



*Icon at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Cohasset, Massachusetts*

Stephen is remembered as the first Christian martyr (the protomartyr) and as one of the first seven deacons. The latter tradition is an early one. In the year 185, Irenaeus in his treatise *Against Heresies* (Book III, ch. XII, 10) refers to “Stephen, who was chosen the first deacon by the apostles.” All we know of his life is found in Acts 6:1—8:3.

According to legend, Stephen was a Jew living in the Hellenic provinces, related to the apostle Paul. The Holy Spirit worked powerfully through his faith, enabling him to perform many miracles and always to defeat those who disputed with him. Some in their hatred lied about Stephen to the people. But Stephen with his illumined face reminded the people of the miracles God had worked through him and even rebuked the crowd for killing the innocent Christ.

The people were enraged by what they thought was blasphemy and “gnashed their teeth” at Stephen. It was then that he saw his Christ in the heavens and declared this to the people. Hearing this, the crowd took him outside the city and stoned him to death, with his kinsman Saul (later Paul) holding their coats while they killed him. Far off on a hill stood the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist, who witnessed this first martyrdom and prayed for Stephen while he was being stoned. This occurred about a year after the first Pentecost.

Those who stoned Stephen left his body at the foothill of the city for two days to be eaten by dogs. On the second night, Gamaliel—teacher of Paul and Barnabas—came and moved the body to his own land in Capharganda. Nicodemus, who died while weeping at this grave, was also buried there along with Gamaliel’s godson Abibus and Gamaliel himself.

After many years Stephen’s burial place was forgotten, until 415 when Gamaliel appeared three times to Lucian, priest at Capharganda. He revealed to Lucian the place of the burial and everything about it. Lucian received the blessing of the patriarch to exhume the saints from their grave where a strong, sweet fragrance filled the cave. Stephen’s relics were translated to Zion

and honorably buried, and many of the sick were healed by his relics. The other three relics were placed inside a church atop the cave on a hill. Eventually, his relics were translated to Constantinople.

*December 28*

**Domitian**, deacon and martyr, with presbyter Eutychius, killed for defending the faith, at Ancyra in Galatia (modern Ankara, the capital of Turkey), date unknown.