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The Choir Tour to
Winchester Cathedral, England

Daily Devotions



August 2017

From *Holy Men, Holy Women*

Chosen by The Rev. Rod Quainton

“to capture the sweep of Anglican history through the contributions made by musicians, composers, artists, poets, and writers, who through their talents give us an insight into Christianity and spirituality.”

Prayer for Church Musicians and Artists *(BCP p.819)*

O God, whom saints and angels delight to worship in heaven:
Be ever present with your servants who seek through art and music
to perfect the praises offered by your people on earth;
and grant to them even now glimpses of your beauty,
and make them worthy at length to behold it unveiled for
evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen*

Daily Reflection Questions

- 1) What do each of these creative Holy Men/Holy Women of American/British/Anglican history teach us about faith? About God? About how to serve God?
- 2) How can we, with our own unique set of gifts and graces, serve God today?
- 3) Note the different ways that God is addressed in the prayers? How do you address God in your prayers?

Day 1 – July 30, 2017

John and Charles Wesley (*Priests, 1791, 1788*)

John was the fifteenth, and Charles the eighteenth, child of Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, Lincolnshire. John was born June 17, 1703, and Charles, December 18, 1707.

The lives and fortunes of the brothers were closely intertwined. As founders and leaders of the “Methodist” or evangelical revival in eighteenth-century England, their continuing influence redounds throughout the world and is felt in many Churches.

Although their theological writings and sermons are still widely appreciated, it is through their hymns—especially those of Charles, who wrote over six thousand of them—that their religious experience, and their Christian faith and life, continue to affect the hearts of many. Both brothers were profoundly attached to the doctrine and worship of the Church of England; and no amount of abuse and opposition to their cause and methods ever shook their confidence in, and love of it.

Both Wesleys were educated at Christ Church, Oxford. It was there that they gathered a few friends to join in strict adherence to the worship and discipline of the Prayer Book, and were thus given the name “Methodists.” John was ordained in 1728 and Charles in 1735.

The two brothers went together to Georgia in 1735, John as a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and Charles as secretary to James Oglethorpe, the Governor.

Shortly after their return to England, they both experienced an inner conversion, Charles on May 21, 1738, and John on May 24, at a meeting in Aldersgate Street with a group of Moravians, during a reading of Luther’s Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. John recorded, “I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.” So the revival was born.

The later schism of the Methodists from the Church of England occurred after the death of the two brothers—Charles on March 29, 1788, and John on March 2, 1791—but John’s uncanonical ordinations of “elders” for America (bitterly opposed by Charles) doubtless set the basis for it.

Prayer of the day:

Lord God, you inspired your servants John and Charles Wesley with burning zeal for the sanctification of souls, and endowed them with eloquence in speech and song: Kindle in your Church, we entreat you, such fervor, that those whose faith has cooled may be warmed, and those who have not known Christ may turn to him and be saved; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Day 2 – July 31, 2017

John Dunne – (Priest 1631)

“Any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls: It tolls for thee.”

These words are familiar to many; their author, John Donne, though less well known, is one of the greatest of English poets. In his own time, he was the best-known preacher in the Church of England.

He came to that eminence by a tortuous path. Born into a wealthy and pious Roman Catholic family in 1573, he was educated at both Oxford and Cambridge, and studied law at Lincoln’s Inn. Sometime later he conformed to the Established Church and embarked upon a promising political career of service to the State. The revelation of his secret marriage in 1601 to the niece of his employer, the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, brought his public career to an end. In 1615, he was persuaded by King James I and others to receive ordination.

Following several brief cures, Donne rose rapidly in popularity as Dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral, London, from 1622 until his death. He drew great throngs to the Cathedral and to Paul’s Cross, a nearby open-air pulpit. His sermons reflect the wide learning of the scholar, the passionate intensity of the poet, and the profound devotion of one struggling in his own life to relate the freedom and demands of the Gospel to the concerns of a common humanity, on every level, and in all its complexities.

In one of his poems, he wrote:

We thinke that *Paradise* and *Calvarie*,
Christs Crosse, and *Adams tree*, stood in one place;
Looke, Lord, and finde both *Adams* met in me;
As the first *Adams* sweat surrounds my face
May the last *Adams* blood my soule embrace.

So, in his purple wrapp'd receive mee Lord, By these his
thornes give me his other Crowne; And as to others soules I
preach'd thy word, Be this my Text, my Sermon to my
owne. Therefore that he may raise the Lord throws down.

Prayer for the day:

Almighty God, the root and fountain of all being: Open our eyes to see,
with your servant John Donne, that whatever has any being is a mirror in
which we may behold you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Day 3 – August 1, 2017

Frances Jane (Fanny) VanAlstyne Crosby (*Hymnwriter, 1915*)

Fanny Crosby was the most prolific writer of hymn texts and gospel songs in the American evangelical tradition of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She wrote more than eight thousand sacred texts in addition to other poetry.

Frances Jane Crosby was born in Putnam County, New York, on March 24, 1820. Although not born blind, she lost her sight as an infant as a result of complications from a childhood illness. At the age of fifteen, she entered the New York Institute for the Blind where she would later teach for a number of years. In 1858, she married Alexander van Alstyne, a musician in New York who was also blind. Crosby was a lifelong Methodist.

Crosby's texts were so popular that nearly every well-known composer of gospel music of the period came to her for words to accompany their melodies. In most hymn writing, the words come first and then a composer sets them to music, but for Crosby the words came so quickly and naturally that composers would often take her their tunes and she would immediately begin to shape words that fit the music.

Perhaps the best example of this process led to the creation of Crosby's most well known hymn *Blessed Assurance*. On a visit to the home of a friend, the composer Phoebe Knapp, a newly composed tune was played for Crosby. After listening to the tune several times, the text began to take shape, and in a very short time one of the world's most popular gospel hymns was born.

The American gospel song is a unique genre of sacred music that combines words expressive of the personal faith and witness with tunes that are simple and easily learned. Fanny Crosby's contribution to this genre is unequalled. Dozens of her hymns continue to find a place in the hymnals of Protestant evangelicalism around the world.

Fanny Crosby died on February 12, 1915, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where she is buried.

Prayer of the day:

O God, the blessed assurance of all who trust in you: We give you thanks for your servant Fanny Crosby, who, though blind from infancy, beheld your glory with great clarity of vision and spent her life giving voice to your people's heartfelt praise; and we pray that we, inspired by her words and example, may rejoice to sing of your love, praising our Savior all the day long; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God in perfect harmony, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Day 4 – August 2, 2017

Catherine Winkworth (*Poet 1878*)

Catherine Winkworth is celebrated as the premier translator of German hymns and chorales into English.

Winkworth was born in London in 1827, but grew up in Manchester where she spent most of her life. Her lifelong fascination with German hymns and chorales began during a yearlong visit to Dresden, Germany, in 1848. Her first set of translations, *Lyra Germanica*, 1855, contained 103 hymns, and a second series under the same title appeared in 1858, and contained 121 hymns. Her translations were immensely successful in expressing the theological richness and spirit of the German texts; *Lyra Germanica* went through numerous editions and reprints and remains today a monumental contribution to the history of hymnody. Among the most well known of Winkworth's translations are "Jesus, priceless treasure," "Now thank we all our God," "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," and "Deck thyself, my soul, with gladness."

In some cases, Winkworth's sturdy translations had been wed with tunes that did not always capture the spirit of the original German chorale. To help rectify this, Winkworth published *The Chorale Book for England* in 1863 that matched her translations with their original tunes. In 1869, she published a commentary that provided biographies of the German hymn writers and other material to make the German hymn and chorale more accessible to the English singers of her masterful translations.

She is also remembered for her advocacy for women's rights and for her efforts to encourage university education for women. In support of her advocacy for women, Winkworth sought inspiration in German literature and made it available in English translation. Notable are her translations of the biographies of two founders of sisterhoods for the poor and the sick: *Life of Pastor Fliedner*, 1861, and *Life of Amelia Sieveking*, 1863.

Winkworth was traveling to an international conference on women's issues when she died of a heart attack on July 1, 1878. She was 51. She was buried at Monnetier, near Geneva. Her life and work has been honored with a monument in Bristol Cathedral.

Prayer of the day:

Comfort your people, O God of peace, and prepare a way for us in the desert, that, like your poet and translator Catherine Winkworth, we may preserve the spiritual treasures of your saints of former years and sing our thanks to you with hearts and hands and voices, eternal triune God whom earth and heaven adore; for you live and reign for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Day 5 – August 3, 2017

Isaac Watts (*Hymnwriter 1748*)

Isaac Watts is remembered as the father of English hymnody. He was born in Southampton, England, in 1674, the eldest child of a devout Nonconformist family. His academic capabilities and particularly his ability with the English language were recognized at an early age.

He was offered the resources to enroll at Oxford or Cambridge and pursue ordination in the Church of England, but Watts remained faithful to his background and in 1690 enrolled in a Nonconformist academy at Stoke Newington. In 1702, Watts was ordained and served the Mark Lane independent congregation in London for a decade before his health made it impossible to continue.

As a hymn writer, Watts wrote more than six hundred hymns, about a quarter of which continue in popular use. Among his works was his *Psalms of David*, a metrical psalter that versified the psalms in English for hymnic use. Perhaps his most enduring contribution in this genre is *O God, our help in ages past*, based upon the opening verses of Psalm 90.

Watts also wrote a wide variety of other hymns and spiritual songs that are well beloved. The attractiveness of his texts is often said to be reflective of Watts' own personal faith: gentle, quiet, sturdy, and deeply devout. This can easily be seen in the final stanza of *When I survey the wondrous cross*:

Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were an
offering far too small; Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

Among his more enduring hymns are *Jesus shall reign, Joy to the world*, and *I sing the mighty power of God*.

Due to ill health, Watts spent the last decades of his life in semi-seclusion, rarely preaching, but devoted his time to writing, as he was able. During this period, his writings take a new turn and he completed books on logic, human nature, and the English language, in addition to sermons, devotional literature, works for children, and more poetry and hymns.

Watts died in 1748. He is honored with a memorial in Westminster Abbey.

Prayer of the day:

God of truth and grace, you gave Isaac Watts singular gifts to present your praise in verse, that he might write psalms, hymns and spiritual songs for your Church: Give us grace joyfully to sing your praises now and in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen*.

Day 6 – August 6, 2017

John Bunyan (*Writer, 1688*)

John Bunyan was born in 1628 at Elstow in Bedfordshire England. Little is known about his early life. His parents were poor; his father was a brazier, a trade that Bunyan also followed for a time. Bunyan had little to no formal education, and he may have learned to read English from reading the Bible. He served as a soldier in the Parliamentary army during the English Civil War, after which he married. His wife introduced him to Arthur Dent's *Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* and Bishop Lewis Bayly's *Practice of Piety*, devotional books that set him on the religious path.

In 1653 he was baptized into the Bedford Baptist (Independent) Church, and was soon thereafter recognized as a preacher, a vocation at which he excelled. He claimed to have had visions similar to those of Teresa of Avila. After the

Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Bunyan was targeted and slandered by the new royalist government along with many others who had supported the revolutionary cause during the Civil War. Under the laws of the restored Stuart regime, congregational meeting houses were closed and citizens were required to attend their Anglican parishes. It was punishable by law for anyone, except those who had been ordained according to Episcopal orders, to conduct services or preach. Bunyan was arrested while preaching in 1660 and spent most of the next twelve years imprisoned in Bedford.

While imprisoned, Bunyan wrote the first part of his most famous work, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, an allegorical story that was completed in 1684. *The Pilgrim's Progress* tells the story of Christian, a lonely pilgrim who must cross such treacherous terrain as the Slough of Despond and the River of Death before finally reaching the Land of Beulah. Along with John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, it was one of the most influential works of the seventeenth century, and retained its influence for several centuries thereafter.

Prayer of the day:

God of peace, you called John Bunyan to be valiant for truth: Grant that as strangers and pilgrims we may at the last rejoice with all the faithful in your heavenly city; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Day 7 – August 5, 2017

Harriet Beecher Stowe (*Writer and Prophetic Witness, 1896*)

Harriet Beecher Stowe was born on June 14, 1811, and from an early age was influenced by the humanitarian efforts of her famous parents. Her father, Lyman Beecher, was known for his zealous preaching and involvement with the temperance movement, while her mother, Roxana Foote Beecher, ran a school for girls and publicly advocated for the intellectual development of women. Her sister Catharine led the women's opposition against the Jackson administration's Indian Removal Bill.

Harriet Beecher Stowe was an outspoken critic of slavery, an institution that she believed to be fundamentally incompatible with the theology of her Calvinist upbringing. An author of many works, she is justly famous for her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), a sermon-like work that chronicled the life of a slave family in the south. In particular, it recounted the tragic consequences of slavery on families, consequences that were for Stowe to be counted as one of the worst evils of slavery. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was the bestselling book of the nineteenth century, and was influential in both America and Britain.

Stowe's book inspired anti-slavery movements in the North and provoked widespread anger in the South. Her work intensified the sectional conflicts that would eventually lead to the Civil War. Abraham Lincoln, upon meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe, was alleged to have said, "So this is the little lady who started this great war!"

Stowe's book, together with her public anti-slavery work, was largely responsible for bringing the evils of slavery to light not only in America, but in Britain, Europe, even Russia. Tolstoy greatly esteemed her work and her moral courage, heaping lavish praise on her. She was renowned then, as now, for her boldness and willingness to expose the harsh realities of slavery to the public eye.

Prayer of the day:

Gracious God, we thank you for the witness of Harriett Beecher Stowe, whose fiction inspired thousands with compassion for the shame and sufferings of enslaved peoples, and who enriched her writings with the cadences of The Book of Common Prayer. Help us, like her, to strive for your justice, that our eyes may see the glory of your Son, Jesus Christ, when he comes to reign with you and the Holy Spirit in reconciliation and peace, one God, now and always. *Amen.*

Day 8 – August 6, 2017

Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frederick Handel, and Henry Purcell (*Composers, 1750, 1759, 1695*)

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany, in 1685 into a family of musicians. As a youngster he studied violin and organ and served as a choirboy at the parish church. By early adulthood, Bach had already achieved an enviable reputation as a composer and performer.

His assignments as a church musician began in 1707 and a year later he became the organist and chamber musician for the court of the Duke of Weimar. In 1723, Bach was appointed cantor of the St. Thomas School in Leipzig and parish musician at both St. Thomas and St. Nicholas churches, where he remained until his death in 1750. A man of deep Lutheran faith, Bach's music was an expression of his religious convictions.

George Frederick Handel was also born in 1685, in Halle, Germany. After studying law, he became organist at the Reformed Cathedral in Halle in 1702, and in 1703 he went to Hamburg to study and compose opera. His interest in opera led him to Italy and then on to England where he became a citizen in 1726.

Once in England, Handel supported himself with court appointments and private patronage. His energies were devoted to producing Italian operas and English oratorios, large choral works based upon religious themes. Handel's most popular work, *Messiah*, was first performed in Dublin in 1741, and is notable for its powerful musical interpretation of texts from the Holy Scriptures. A man of great charity and generosity, Handel died in London in 1759 and was buried in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey.

Henry Purcell was born in London in 1659 and became one of the greatest English composers, flourishing in the period that followed the Restoration of the monarchy after the Puritan Commonwealth period.

Purcell spent much of his short life in the service of the Chapels Royal as a singer, composer and organist. With considerable gifts as a composer, he wrote extensively in a variety of genres for the church and for popular entertainment. He died in 1695 and is buried adjacent to the organ near the north aisle of Westminster Abbey.

Prayer for the day:

Almighty God, beautiful in majesty and majestic in holiness, who teaches us in Holy Scripture to sing your praises and who gave your musicians Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frederick Handel and Henry Purcell grace to show forth your glory in their music: Be with all those who write or make music for your people, that we on earth may glimpse your beauty and know the inexhaustible riches of your new creation in Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Day 9 – August 7, 2017

Christina Rossetti (*Poet, 1894*)

Christina Rossetti, among the more important poets of the nineteenth century, was born in 1830 to a professor and his devout, evangelical wife. Her eldest sister, Maria, entered an Anglican convent and her poet-painter brother, Dante, was a leading figure in the Pre-Raphaelite movement of the nineteenth century. She suffered from poor health most of her life, being diagnosed variously with tuberculosis or angina and led a retiring, somewhat cloistered life. In spite of this she produced an enormous quantity of verse and was in lively and ongoing conversation with members of Dante's "Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood." She died of cancer in 1884.

Mid-nineteenth century England, during the Industrial Revolution and the establishment of the British Empire, experienced enormous political and cultural change and social displacement. The old, agrarian society was being swept away by the movement to cities and the creation of a new middle class. Many people, even those who had greatly benefitted from these changes, were revolted by the ugliness and misery that attended urban slums and abandoned rural areas alike. One response was a nostalgic attempt to recover England's mythic and legendary past. This produced a rather romantic interest in the Medieval. "Gothic," originally a derogatory term meaning rude or barbaric, became both a term of approval and a style of architecture and decoration that swept the country.

The Tractarian or Oxford Movement shared these concerns and protested against modernity by seeking a recovery of much of the doctrine and sacramental practice of the Medieval Church. Tractarian emphasis on the sacramental taught that the ordinary things of nature: water, oil, bread and wine were the means of God's grace and indeed God's presence. They also taught that a life of personal holiness dedicated to the service of others is the road to union with Christ.

Unlike some of the Pre-Raphaelites with whom she was in relationship, Rossetti embraced Christian faith and practice. Over five hundred of her poems were devotional. They were related to the liturgy, to the feasts and fasts of the liturgical year, and to biblical "dialogues" with Christ.

Prayer of the day:

O God, whom heaven cannot hold, you inspired Christina Rossetti to express the mystery of the Incarnation through her poems: Help us to follow her example in giving our hearts to Christ, who is love; and who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

Day 10 – August 8, 2017

Harry Thacker Burleigh (*Composer, 1949*)

Henry (Harry) Thacker Burleigh was an American singer, composer and arranger who did more than anyone else up to his time to make available the musical and spiritual riches of the American Negro spiritual to vast audiences.

Burleigh was born in Erie, Pennsylvania in 1866. His grandfather, Hamilton Waters, had been a slave who had been blinded by a savage beating, but passed along old songs by singing them to his grandson, Harry. Burleigh had a natural voice and sang when and where he could. In 1892, with some difficulty, he won admission to the National Conservatory of Music where he studied voice and music theory.

Although never directly a pupil of Antonin Dvorak, the director of the

Conservatory at the time, he worked for Dvorak copying orchestral parts. It was Burleigh who suggested to Dvorak some of the themes that would become Dvorak's Symphony No. 9: *From the New World*.

To support himself while at Conservatory, Burleigh became the baritone soloist at St. George's Episcopal Church in New York City. The presence of a black man in the choir initially caused dissension, but it died down when J. Pierpont Morgan, a member of the parish, took a clear stand on the matter. Even after gaining other employment and becoming a successful composer, Burleigh continued to sing in the choir at St. George's for many years and became a beloved part of the congregation.

Burleigh composed original music, mostly for voice, and was a well-respected arranger and music editor in New York. His art songs were musical settings of the poetry of such great African American poets as Langston Hughes and James Weldon Johnson, among others. His greatest achievement, and that for which he will always be celebrated, was recovering and arranging many Negro spirituals for solo voice and piano so they could be widely heard on the concert stage.

Various choral versions of the spirituals had been well known in the black churches, but it was Burleigh's arrangements that made this distinctively American music available to the masses. Burleigh died on September 12, 1949.

Prayer of the day:

God our strong deliverer, we bless your Name for the gifts of grace given to Harry Thacker Burleigh to gather and preserve the good heritage of African-American music and to lift up in song the struggles of his people. Let that Spirit of love which spurred him draw us also to join hands throughout the earth in Christ's one great fellowship of love; through the same Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Day 11 – August 9, 2017

**Albrecht Dürer, Matthias Grünewald, and
Lucas Cranach the Elder (*Artists, 1528, 1529, 1553*)**

In the turbulent sixteenth century as the Renaissance and the Reformation changed the cultural, social, political and religious face of northern Europe from medieval to modern, three artists stand as signs of those revolutions.

Lucas Cranach the Elder was born in south Germany. In his twenties he moved to Vienna where he became known in humanist circles. He later moved to Wittenberg where he became court painter to Frederick III, who was Martin Luther's protector. His work enjoyed great popularity in his day, but history best remembers him for his several portraits of Luther and for the exquisite woodcuts he provided for the first German New Testament in 1522.

Albrecht Dürer was born Nurnberg and is generally regarded as the greatest German artist of the Renaissance. While he produced exquisite, life-like paintings, he is best known for his woodcuts and copperplate engravings. This art form enabled numbers of prints to be made of each work, which could then be sold to satisfy the rising middle class's new demand for affordable art. His production was a sign of the shift in early modern society, especially in Protestant areas, from the church to the home as the center of life and religion.

Little is known of the early life of Matthias Grünewald, the name given to this artist by his seventeenth-century biographer. He is known to have been in Strasburg in 1479, already accomplished at portraits and woodcuts. He went to Basel in 1490, where Dürer was his pupil. Later he moved to what is now Alsace where he painted his famous Isenheim Altarpiece between 1512 and 1516. This piece was designed to go behind the chapel altar at the hospital in the monastery of the Order of St. Anthony. Grünewald was a deeply religious man who was particularly fascinated by the crucifixion as witnessed by the combination of raw physicality and mysticism that can be observed in the Isenheim Altarpiece.

Prayer of the day:

We give thanks to you, O Lord, for the vision and skill of Albrecht Dürer, Matthias Grünewald and Lucas Cranach the Elder, whose artistic depictions helped the peoples of their age understand the full suffering and glory of your incarnate Son; and we pray that their work may strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ and the mystery of the Holy Trinity; for you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Day 12 – August 10, 2017

Nikolai Grundtvig (*Bishop and Hymnwriter, 1872*)

Nikolai Grundtvig and Søren Kierkegaard were the most influential Danes of the nineteenth century both in theological and philosophical circles and in civic life.

Born in 1783, the son of a Lutheran pastor, Grundtvig inherited from his father a lifelong appreciation for classical Lutheran orthodoxy rooted in sacramental practice, a stark contrast from the dry rationalism common to Danish Lutheranism at the time. From his mother, Grundtvig received a fascination with the literature, legends, and poetry of the Norse.

Grundtvig was a student all his life. His academic passions were largely in history and theology, but education, he believed, opened one's heart and mind to a vigorous love of life. Grundtvig also believed in the power of poetry. He thought that poetry had the capacity to speak to the souls of human beings more deeply than prose, particularly in matters of the heart and the life of faith. During his lifetime he composed more than a thousand hymns, a number of which are still sung today: "Built on a rock the Church doth stand," "O day full of grace" and "God's word is our great heritage."

Grundtvig's father was pastor of a large congregation and as he aged he needed assistance. Grundtvig preached a trial sermon at his father's church during which he launched a scathing attack on Danish rationalism. The sermon met with a severe response and he was widely denounced.

Nonetheless he survived the resulting spiritual crisis and was ordained in 1811. He served as his father's curate until his father's death in 1813. After a long season with no work, Grundtvig served several short-term pastorates that usually came to an end because of his commitment to a Lutheran orthodoxy rooted in sacraments and liturgy. He believed that the dry, rational, almost gloomy approach favored at the time did not penetrate the depths of the human soul.

Toward the end of his life, Grundtvig's vision was taking hold and his influence upon both church and nation continued to increase. He was made a bishop in 1861. He died in 1872.

Prayer of the day:

Almighty God, you built your Church upon a rock: Help us remember, with your hymn writer Nikolai Grundtvig, that though steeples may fall and buildings made by hands may crumble, Jesus makes our bodies his temple through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Help us to recognize Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, that we may join our voices to the eternal alleluia; through the same Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

Day 13 – August 11, 2017

Richard (*Bishop of Chichester, 1253*)

Richard and his older brother Robert were quite young when their parents died, leaving a rich estate with a guardian to manage it. The guardian allowed the estate to dwindle, and Richard worked long hours to restore it.

Pressure was put on Richard to marry, but he, who from earliest years had preferred books to almost anything else, turned the estate over to his brother and went to Oxford. Often hungry, cold, and not always sure of his next day's keep, Richard managed to succeed in his studies under such teachers as Robert Grosseteste.

He continued to study law at Paris and Bologna, earned a doctorate, and returned to Oxford to become University Chancellor. Shortly afterward, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund Rich, appointed him to be his own chancellor. The friendship between the primate and his young assistant was close: Richard also became his biographer.

Conflict with King Henry III eventually forced Archbishop Rich into exile in France, where Richard nursed him in his final illness. After the Archbishop's death, Richard moved to the Dominican house at Orleans for further study and teaching. He was ordained priest in 1243.

He then returned to England, and was elected Bishop of Chichester in 1244. King Henry opposed the election, confiscated all the revenues of the diocese, and even locked Richard out of the episcopal dwelling.

Richard was given lodging by a priest, Simon of Tarring. During these years he functioned as a missionary bishop, traveling about the diocese on foot, visiting fishermen and farmers, holding synods with great difficulty, and endeavoring to establish order. Threatened by the Pope, Henry finally acknowledged Richard as Bishop in 1246.

For eight years, he served his diocese as preacher, confessor, teacher, and counselor. While campaigning in 1253, for a new crusade against the Saracens, he contracted a fatal fever. Nine years after his death, he was canonized. His best remembered words are:

Dear Lord, of thee three things I pray: To see thee
more clearly, Love thee more dearly, Follow thee
more nearly.

Prayer of the day:

We thank you, Lord God, for all the benefits you have given us in your Son Jesus Christ, our most merciful Redeemer, Friend, and Brother, and for all the pains and insults he has borne for us; and we pray that, following the example of your saintly bishop Richard of Chichester, we may see Christ more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Day 14 – August 12, 2017

Evelyn Underhill (1941)

The only child of a prominent barrister and his wife, Evelyn Underhill was born in Wolverhampton, England, and grew up in London. She was educated there and in a girls' school in Folkestone, where she was confirmed in the Church of England. She had little other formal religious training, but her spiritual curiosity was naturally lively, and she read widely, developing quite early a deep appreciation for mysticism. At sixteen, she began a life-long devotion to writing.

Evelyn had few childhood companions, but one of them, Hubert Stuart Moore, she eventually married. Other friends, made later, included such famous persons as Laurence Housman, Maurice Hewlett, and Sarah Bernhardt. Closest of all were Ethel Ross Barker, a devout Roman Catholic, and Baron Friedrich von Hügel, with whom she formed a strong spiritual bond. He became her director in matters mystical.

In the 1890's, Evelyn began annual visits to the Continent, and especially to Italy. There she became influenced by the paintings of the Italian masters and by the Roman Catholic Church. She spent nearly fifteen years wrestling painfully with the idea of converting to Roman Catholicism, but decided in the end that it was not for her.

In 1921, Evelyn Underhill became reconciled to her Anglican roots, while remaining what she called a "Catholic Christian." She continued with her life of reading, writing, meditation, and prayer. She had already published her first great spiritual work, *Mysticism*. This was followed by many other books, culminating in her most widely read and studied book, *Worship* (1937).

Evelyn Underhill's most valuable contribution to spiritual literature must surely be her conviction that the mystical life is not only open to a saintly few, but to anyone who cares to nurture it and weave it into everyday experience, and also (at the time, a startling idea) that modern psychological theories and discoveries, far from hindering or negating spirituality, can actually enhance and transform it.

Evelyn Underhill's writings proved appealing to many, resulting in a large international circle of friends and disciples, making her much in demand as a lecturer and retreat director. She died, at age 65, in 1941.

Prayer of the day:

O God, Origin, Sustainer, and End of all your creatures: Grant that your Church, taught by your servant Evelyn Underhill, guarded evermore by your power, and guided by your Spirit into the light of truth, may continually offer to you all glory and thanksgiving and attain with your saints to the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have promised by our Savior Jesus Christ; who with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Day 15 – August 13, 2017

William Byrd, John Merbecke, and Thomas Tallis *(Musicians, 1623, 1585, 1585)*

John Merbecke was born in 1505 and nothing is known of his childhood. As a young man he was a chorister at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and from 1541 until near the time of his death in 1585, he served as chapel organist.

Only a small handful of works by Merbecke have survived, most notably the *Booke of Common Praier Noted, 1550*, composed to accompany the 1549 Book. The appearance of the 1552 Prayer Book made it obsolete, but more recently, Merbecke's musical setting has been widely used.

Thomas Tallis was born near the beginning of the fifteenth century and very little is known of his early life. After a succession of appointments as a church musician, he spent most of his vocation in service to the Crown as musician to the Chapels Royal under four successive monarchs, both Catholic and Protestant. Although always a Roman Catholic, Tallis had the political savvy to survive the shifts in ecclesial loyalties and the musical acumen to respond to the changing needs of the Church of England. He is regarded as the father of English Church music since the Reformation.

William Byrd was a student, colleague, business partner, and successor of Thomas Tallis. Most likely born in Lincolnshire in 1543, he was appointed organist and choirmaster of Lincoln Cathedral in 1563 and served until he

joined Tallis as a gentleman of the Chapels Royal in 1572. Like Tallis, he was a lifelong Roman Catholic but was successful in winning the support for his music among Anglicans of Puritan tendencies, though not without occasional difficulties. His liturgical compositions cover a variety of musical forms: mass settings, motets, graduals, psalm settings, English anthems, and occasional music for the great feasts of the church. Byrd composed for the keyboard and wrote works perhaps best described as consort music for the more popular enjoyment of the court.

Tallis and Byrd collaborated on a number of projects and together held the Crown Patent for the printing of music and lined music paper for twenty-one years.

Prayer of the day:

O God most glorious, whose praises are sung night and day by your saints and angels in heaven: We give you thanks for William Byrd, John Merbecke and Thomas Tallis, whose music has enriched the praise that your Church offers you here on earth. Grant, we pray, to all who are touched by the power of music such glimpses of eternity that we may be made ready to join your saints in heaven and behold your glory unveiled for evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Day 16 – August 14, 2017

James Weldon Johnson (*Poet, 1938*)

James Weldon Johnson was born in 1871 in Jacksonville, Florida. His parents stimulated his academic interests and he was encouraged to study literature and music. Johnson enrolled at Atlanta University with the expressed intention that the education he received there would be used to further the interests of the black people. He never reneged on that commitment. In the summer after his freshman year, Johnson taught the children of former slaves. Of that experience he wrote,

“In all of my experience there has been no period so brief that has meant so much in my education for life as the three months I spent in the backwoods of Georgia.” After graduation, he became the principal of the largest high school in Jacksonville, during which time he was paid half of what his white counterparts were paid even though the school excelled under his leadership.

In 1900, he collaborated with his brother, Rosamond, a composer, to create “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing.” Written in celebration of President Lincoln’s birthday, the song, still popular today, has become known as the “African American National Anthem.” Due to the success of their collaboration, Johnson moved to New York in 1901 to join his brother and together they attained success as lyricist and composer for Broadway.

In 1906, Johnson was invited to work for the diplomatic corps and became U.S. Consul to Venezuela and later Nicaragua. During his Nicaraguan tenure, Johnson was a voice of reason and reconciliation in a time of civil unrest and turmoil. His ability to bring together people of differing viewpoints toward a common vision served Johnson well in the 1920’s when he became an organizer for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Johnson was a prolific poet and anthologist. He edited *The Book of American Negro Poetry* (1922), a major contribution to the history of African-American literature. His book of poetry *God’s Trombones* (1927), seven biblical stories rendered into verse, was influenced by his impressions of the rural South.

James Weldon Johnson died in 1938.

Prayer of the day:

Eternal God, we give thanks for the gifts that you gave your servant James Weldon Johnson: a heart and voice to praise your Name in verse. As he gave us powerful words to glorify you, may we also speak with joy and boldness to banish hatred from your creation, in the Name of Jesus Christ; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

