

Forward Toward Faith

An Experience in Duty to God for Scouts at the National Jamboree

Welcome!

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew, a worldwide ministry to men and boys in The Episcopal Church and The Anglican Communion, welcomes you to the National Scout Jamboree.

This web page has brief biographies of ten Christians whose saintly lives are examples of people who led the Church Forward Toward Faith. By reading several of these biographies we hope you too will learn more about how you can grow in your faith by learning from their example. If you then report what you learned in your reading, you will receive a kit for Anglican Prayer Beads (Anglican Rosary) when you return it to the Episcopal Scouting display. The report form is available at the Episcopal Scouting display.

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Scroll down to read all of them.

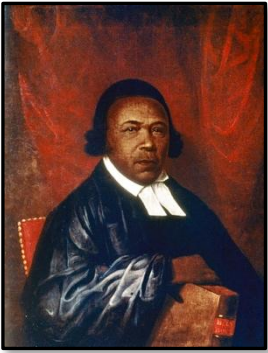


The Brotherhood of St. Andrew
Making a difference in the Kingdom of God since 1883

A worldwide ministry to men and youth in the Episcopal/Anglican Communion & beyond

Absalom Jones

Priest



Absalom Jones was born a house slave in 1746 in Delaware. He taught himself to read out of the New Testament, among other books. When sixteen, he was sold to a store owner in Philadelphia. There he attended a night school for Blacks, operated by Quakers. At twenty, he married another slave, and purchased her freedom with his earnings.

Jones bought his own freedom in 1784. At St. Georges Methodist Episcopal Church, he served as lay minister for its Black membership. The active evangelism of Jones and that of his friend, Richard Allen, greatly increased Black membership at St. Georges. The alarmed vestry decided to segregate Blacks into an upstairs gallery, without notifying them. During a Sunday service when ushers attempted to remove them, the Blacks indignantly walked out in a body.

In 1787, Black Christians organized the Free African Society, the first organized Afro-American society, and Absalom Jones and Richard Allen were elected overseers. Members of the Society paid monthly dues for the benefit of those in need. The Society established communication with similar Black groups in other cities. In 1792, the Society began to build a church, which was dedicated on July 17, 1794.

The African Church applied for membership in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania on the following conditions: 1, that they be received as an organized body; 2, that they have control over their local affairs; 3, that Absalom Jones be licensed as lay reader, and, if qualified, be ordained as minister. In October 1794 it was admitted as St. Thomas African Episcopal Church. Bishop White ordained Jones as deacon in 1795 and as priest on September 21, 1802.

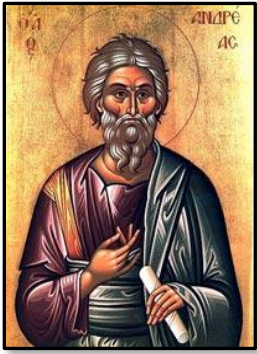
Jones was an earnest preacher. He denounced slavery and warned the oppressors to clean their hands of slaves. To him, God was the Father, who always acted on behalf of the oppressed and distressed. But it was his constant visiting and mild manner that made him beloved by his own flock and by the community. St. Thomas Church grew to over 500 members during its first year. Known as the Black Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Jones was an example of persistent faith in God and in the Church as Gods instrument. His feast day is February 13.

Collect

Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear; that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servant Absalom Jones, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Andrew

Apostle



Most biographical notes on this Apostle begin Andrew was Simon Peter's brother, and he is so described in the Gospels. Identifying Andrew as Peter's brother makes it easy to know who he is, but it also makes it easy to overlook the fact of Andrew's special gift to the company of Christ. The Gospel according to John tells how Andrew, a disciple of John the Baptist, was one of two disciples who followed Jesus after John had pointed him out, saying, Behold the Lamb of God (John 1:29). Andrew and the other disciple went with Jesus and stayed with him, and Andrew's first act afterward was to find his brother and bring him to Jesus. We might call Andrew the first missionary in the company of disciples.

Though Andrew was not a part of the inner circle of disciples (Peter, James, and John), he is always named in the list of disciples, and appears prominently in several incidents. Andrew and Peter were fishermen, and Matthew's Gospel records Jesus calling them from their occupation, and their immediate response to his call. Andrew was the disciple who brought the boy with the loaves and fishes to Jesus for the feeding of the multitude.

We hear little of Andrew as a prominent leader, and he seems always to be in the shadow of Peter. Eusebius, the Church historian, records his going to Scythia, but there is no reliable information about the end of his life. Tradition has it that he was fastened to an X-shaped cross and suffered death at the hands of angry pagans. Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland. His feast day is November 30.

Collect

Almighty God, who gave such grace to your apostle Andrew that he readily obeyed the call of your Son Jesus Christ, and brought his brother with him: Give us, who are called by your Holy Word, grace to follow him without delay, and to bring those near to us into his gracious presence; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Augustine of Canterbury

First Archbishop of Canterbury



Although Christianity had existed in Britain before the invasions of Angles and Saxons in the fifth century, Pope Gregory the Great decided in 596 to send a mission to the pagan Anglo-Saxons. He selected, from his own monastery on the Coelian hill in Rome, a group of monks, led by their prior, Augustine. They arrived in Kent in 597, carrying a silver cross and an image of Jesus Christ painted on a board, which thus became, so far as we know, “Canterbury's first icon.” King Ethelbert tolerated their presence and allowed them the use of an old church built on the east side of Canterbury, dating from the Roman occupation of Britain. Here, says the Venerable Bede, they assembled “to sing the psalms, to pray, to say Mass, to preach, and to baptize.” This church of St. Martin is the earliest place of Christian worship in England still in use.

Probably in 601, Ethelbert was converted, thus becoming the first Christian king in England. About the same time, Augustine was ordained bishop somewhere in France and named “Archbishop of the English Nation.” Thus, the see of Canterbury and its Cathedral Church of Christ owe their establishment to Augustine's mission, as does the nearby Abbey of SS. Peter and Paul, later re-named for Augustine. The “chair of St. Augustine” in Canterbury Cathedral, however, dates from the thirteenth century.

Some correspondence between Augustine and Gregory survives. One of the Pope's most famous counsels to the first Archbishop of Canterbury has to do with diversity in the young English Church. Gregory writes, “If you have found customs, whether in the Roman, Gallican, or any other Churches that may be more acceptable to God, I wish you to make a careful selection of them, and teach the Church of the English, which is still young in the faith, whatever you can profitably learn from the various Churches. For things should not be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things.”

This counsel bears on the search for Christian “unity in diversity” of the ecumenical movement of today. Augustine died on May 26, probably in 605. His feast day is May 26.

Collect

O Lord our God, by your Son Jesus Christ you called your apostles and sent them forth to preach the Gospel to the nations: We bless your holy Name for your servant Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, whose labors in propagating your Church among the English people we commemorate today; and we pray that all whom you call and send may do your will, and bide your time, and see your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen*

Barbara Harris

First Woman Bishop in the Anglican Communion



Barbara Clementine Harris was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on June 12, 1930. She was active in the civil rights struggles of the 1960s and continued as a powerful advocate for the civil enfranchisement of all people in the United States. Ordained as a priest in 1980, her ministry was in both the parish and the public square. She continued to address issues of civil injustice while also offering a prophetic critique of the Episcopal Church for its homophobia, racism, and sexism.

Although General Convention included the provision for electing and consecrating women to be bishops in 1976, no woman became a bishop until Barbara Harris was elected as bishop suffragan for the Diocese of Massachusetts on September 24, 1988. Her election and subsequent consecration were not without controversy, including threats on her life by those opposed to the inclusion of women in the House of Bishops. Despite these threats, she was consecrated bishop on February 11, 1989. Sixty bishops served as co-consecrators before a congregation of eight thousand people.

As a bishop, Harris shaped a generation of leaders through her powerful preaching as chief pastor at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston; her witnessing, preaching, and teaching in the Diocese of Massachusetts and beyond; her advocacy for, in her words, “the least, the last, and the lost”; and her joy in sharing her faith, especially through hymns. She said of her work as a bishop, “I certainly don’t want to be one of the boys. I want to offer my peculiar gifts as a black woman . . . a sensitivity and an awareness that comes out of more than a passing acquaintance with oppression.”

Bishop Harris served the people of the Diocese of Massachusetts as their suffragan bishop for thirteen years, until her retirement in 2002. After her retirement, she served from 2003 to 2007 as an assisting bishop in the Diocese of Washington, D.C. and she continued to be in demand worldwide as a preacher until the end of her life.

The first woman ordained as a bishop in the Episcopal Church and the worldwide Anglican Communion, Barbara Harris has been joined by more than fifty women in the episcopate. She died on March 13, 2020. Her Consecration is commemorated on February 11.

Collect

God of the prophets, we give you thanks for calling Barbara Clementine Harris to the office of bishop. Open our eyes to behold the wondrous works you have prepared for your church in calling women to share in the ministry of the episcopate. May we, inspired by their example as faithful shepherds, wise teachers, courageous prophets, and guardians of the faith, proclaim the Good News and carry out the works of Jesus Christ in the world; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

David Pendleton Okerhater

Deacon and Missionary of the Cheyenne



God's warrior is an epithet by which David Pendleton Okerhater is known among the Cheyenne Indians of Oklahoma. The title is an apt one, for this apostle of Christ to the Cheyenne was originally a soldier who fought against the United States government with warriors of other tribes in the disputes over Indian land rights. By the late 1860s Okerhater had distinguished himself for bravery and leadership as an officer in an elite corps of Cheyenne fighters. In 1875, after a year of minor uprisings and threats of major violence, he and twenty-seven other warrior leaders were taken prisoner by the U.S. Army, charged with inciting rebellion, and sent to a disused military prison in Florida.

Under the influence of a concerned Army captain, who sought to educate the prisoners, Okerhater and his companions learned English, gave art and archery lessons to the areas many visitors, and had their first encounter with the Christian faith. The captain's example, and that of other concerned Christians, from as far away as New York, had their effect on the young warrior. He was moved to answer the call to transform his leadership in war into a lifelong ministry of peace.

With sponsorship from the Diocese of Central New York and financial help from a Mrs. Pendleton of Cincinnati, he and three other prisoners went north to study for the ministry. At his baptism in Syracuse in 1878 he took the name David Pendleton Okerhater, in honor of his benefactress.

Soon after his ordination to the diaconate in 1881, David returned to Oklahoma. There, he was instrumental in founding and operating schools and missions, through great personal sacrifice and often in the face of apathy from the Church hierarchy and resistance from the government. He continued his ministry of service, education, and pastoral care among his people until his death on August 31, 1931.

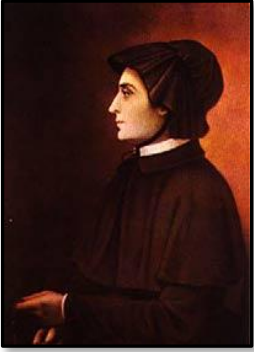
Half a century before, the young deacon had told his people: "You all know me. You remember when I led you out to war, I went first, and what I told you was true. Now I have been away to the East, and I have learned about another captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he is my leader. He goes first, and 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." His feast day is September 1.

Collect

O God of unsearchable wisdom and infinite mercy, you chose a captive warrior, David Okerhater, to be your servant, and sent him to be a missionary to his own people, and to exercise the office of a deacon among them: Liberate us, who commemorate him today, from bondage to self, and empower us for service to you and to the neighbors you have given us; through Jesus Christ, the captain of our salvation; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Elizabeth Ann Seton

Founder of The American Sisters of Charity



Elizabeth Ann Seton was the founder of Sisters of Charity, the first community of sisters native to the United States. She was also a wife, a widow, a single mother, an educator, a social activist, and a spiritual leader.

Elizabeth Ann was born in New York in 1774. She endured a turbulent childhood and suffered severe bouts of depression. She survived by immersing herself in poetry, piano lessons, and devoted participation in the Episcopal Church.

In 1795 she married William Seton. Samuel Provoost, the first Episcopal Bishop of New York, presided. Three years later, her father-in-law died leaving her husband with the responsibility for a large family and a struggling family business and Elizabeth with a large, inherited family to care for.

In 1801 the business failed and the Setons lost everything. Her husband showed the symptoms of tuberculosis and in 1803, they set sail for Italy in the hopes that the warm climate would cure his disease. The Italian authorities fearing Yellow Fever quarantined them in a cold stone hospital for the dying. William soon died and left Elizabeth Ann a young widow with five children and few resources. While in Italy, she discovered Roman Catholicism.

Returning to New York, she encountered bitter opposition to her new religious leanings. With five children to support, she felt alone and estranged. She turned to Roman Catholic clergy for support and in 1805 she formally converted to Roman Catholicism.

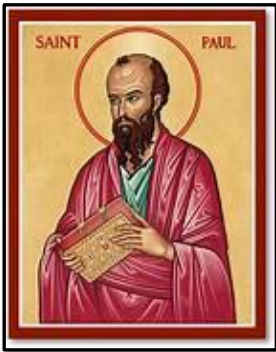
In 1806, she met Father Louis Dubourg, S.S. who wanted to start a congregation of women religious, patterned after the French Daughters of Charity. In 1809 Elizabeth Ann took vows and became Mother Seton to a small community of seven women dedicated to teaching. The sisters were given land in rural Maryland and in 1810 they opened St. Josephs Free School to educate needy girls. The Sisters intertwined social ministry, education, and religious formation in all their varied works. Mother Seton dispatched sisters to operate orphanages in Philadelphia and New York. Elizabeth Ann Seton remained the Mother of the Sisters of Charity until her death on January 4, 1821. Her feast day is January 4.

Collect

Holy God, you blessed Elizabeth Seton with your grace as wife, mother, educator and founder, that she might spend her life in service to your people: Help us, by her example, to express our love for you in love of others; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Paul

Apostle to the Gentiles



Paul, or Saul as he was known until he became a Christian, was a Roman citizen, born at Tarsus, in present-day Turkey. He was brought up as an orthodox Jew, studying in Jerusalem for a time under Gamaliel, the most famous rabbi of the day. Describing himself, he said, I am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin (Romans 11:1).

A few years after the death of Jesus, Saul came in contact with the new Christian movement, and became one of the most fanatical of those who were determined to stamp out this dangerous heresy. Saul witnessed the stoning of Stephen. He was on the way to Damascus to lead in further persecution of the Christians when his dramatic conversion took place.

From that day, Paul devoted his life totally to Christ, and especially to the conversion of Gentiles. The Acts of the Apostles describes the courage and determination with which he planted Christian congregations over a large area of the land bordering the eastern Mediterranean.

His letters, the earliest of Christian writings, reveal him as the greatest of the interpreters of Christ's mind, and as the founder of Christian theology. He writes, I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20). Paul describes himself as small and insignificant in appearance: His letters are weighty and strong, it was said of him, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account (2 Corinthians 10:10). He writes of having a disability which he had prayed God to remove from him, and quotes the Lord's reply, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." "Therefore," Paul went on to say, "I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Paul is believed to have been martyred at Rome in the year 64 under Nero. His Conversion is commemorated on January 25.

Collect

O God, by the preaching of your apostle Paul you have caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world: Grant, we pray, that we, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show ourselves thankful to you by following his holy teaching; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Samuel Seabury

First Bishop of The Episcopal Church in the United States



Samuel Seabury, the first Bishop of the Episcopal Church, was born in Groton, Connecticut, November 30, 1729. After ordination in England in 1753, he was assigned, as a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, to Christ Church, New Brunswick, New Jersey. In 1757, he became rector of Grace Church, Jamaica, Long Island, and in 1766 rector of St. Peters, Westchester County. During the American Revolution, he remained loyal to the British crown, and served as a chaplain in the British army.

After the Revolution, a secret meeting of Connecticut clergymen in Woodbury, on March 25, 1783, named Seabury or the Rev. Jeremiah Leaming, whichever would be able or willing, to seek episcopal consecration in England. Leaming declined; Seabury accepted and sailed for England.

After a year of negotiation, Seabury found it impossible to obtain episcopal orders from the Church of England because, as an American citizen, he could not swear allegiance to the crown. He then turned to the Non-juring bishops of the Episcopal Church in Scotland. On November 14, 1784, in Aberdeen, he was consecrated by the Bishop and the Bishop Coadjutor of Aberdeen and the Bishop of Ross and Caithness, in the presence of a number of the clergy and laity.

On his return home, Seabury was recognized as Bishop of Connecticut in Convocation on August 3, 1785, at Middletown. With Bishop William White, he was active in the organization of the Episcopal Church at the General Convention of 1789. With the support of William Smith of Maryland, William Smith of Rhode Island, William White of Pennsylvania, and Samuel Parker of Boston, Seabury kept his promise, made in a concordat with the Scottish bishops, to persuade the American Church to adopt the Scottish form for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

In 1790 Seabury became responsible for episcopal oversight of the churches in Rhode Island; and at the General Convention of 1792 he participated in the first consecration of a bishop on American soil, that of John Claggett of Maryland. Seabury died on February 25, 1796, and is buried beneath St. James Church, New London. His feast day is November 14.

Collect

Eternal God, you blessed your servant Samuel Seabury with the gift of perseverance to renew the Anglican inheritance in North America: Grant that, joined together in unity with our bishops and nourished by your holy Sacraments, we may proclaim the Gospel of redemption with apostolic zeal; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Thomas Cranmer

Archbishop of Canterbury and Martyr



Thomas Cranmer was the principal figure of the English Reformation and was primarily responsible for the first Book of Common Prayer of 1549 and for its first revision in 1552.

Cranmer was born in Nottinghamshire on July 2, 1489. At fourteen he entered Jesus College, Cambridge, where by 1514 he had obtained his B.A. and M.A. degrees and a Fellowship. In 1526 he became a Doctor of Divinity, a lecturer in his college, and examiner in the University. During his years at Cambridge, he diligently studied the Bible and the new doctrines emanating from the continental Reformation.

A chance meeting with King Henry VIII at Waltham Abbey in 1529 led to Cranmer's involvement in the Kings Affair - the annulment of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Cranmer prepared the Kings defense and presented it to the universities in England and Germany, and to Rome.

While in Germany, Cranmer associated with the Lutheran reformers, especially with Andreas Osiander, whose daughter he married. When Archbishop Warham died, the King obtained papal confirmation of Cranmer's appointment to the See of Canterbury, and he was consecrated on March 30, 1533. Among his earliest acts was to declare the Kings marriage null and void. He then validated the Kings marriage to Anne Boleyn. Her child, the future Queen Elizabeth I, was Cranmer's godchild.

During the reign of Edward VI, Cranmer had a free hand in reforming the worship, doctrine, and practice of the Church. But at Edwards death he unfortunately subscribed to the dying Kings will that the succession should go to Lady Jane Grey. For this, and also for his reforming work, he was arrested, deprived, and degraded by Queen Mary I, daughter of Henry VIII by Catherine, and a staunch Roman Catholic. He was burned at the stake on March 21, 1556.

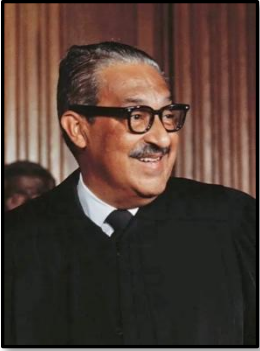
Cranmer wrote two recantations during his imprisonment, but in the end, he denied his recantations, and died heroically, saying, "Forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, there my hand shall first be punished; for if I may come to the fire, it shall first be burned." His feast day is October 16.

Collect

Merciful God, through the work of Thomas Cranmer you renewed the worship of your Church by restoring the language of the people, and through his death you revealed your power in human weakness: Grant that by your grace we may always worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Thurgood Marshall

Lawyer and Jurist



Thurgood Marshall was a distinguished American jurist and the first African American to become an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Marshall was born in 1908. He attended Frederick Douglass High School in Baltimore and Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. Pushed toward other professions, Marshall was determined to be an attorney. He was denied admission to the University of Maryland Law School due to its segregationist admissions policy. He enrolled and graduated *magna cum laude* from the Law School of Howard University in Washington.

Marshall began the practice of law in Baltimore in 1933 and began representing the local chapter of the NAACP in 1934, eventually becoming the legal counsel for the national organization. He won his first major civil rights decision in 1936, *Murray v. Pearson*, which forced the University of Maryland to open its doors to blacks.

At the age of 32, Marshall successfully argued his first case before the United States Supreme Court and went on to win 29 of the 32 cases he argued before the court. As a lawyer, his crowning achievement was arguing successfully for the plaintiffs in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, in 1954. The Supreme Court ruled that the separate but equal doctrine was unconstitutional and ordered the desegregation of public schools across the nation.

President Lyndon Johnson appointed Marshall as the 96th Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court in 1967, a position he held for 24 years. Marshall compiled a long and impressive record of decisions on civil rights, not only for African Americans, but also for women, Native Americans, and the incarcerated; he was a strong advocate for individual freedoms and human rights. He adamantly believed that capital punishment was unconstitutional and should be abolished. During his years in Washington, Marshall and his family were members of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, where he was affectionately known as The Judge. He is remembered as a wise and godly man who knew his place and role in history and obeyed Gods call to follow justice wherever it led. His feast day is May 17.

Collect

Eternal and ever-gracious God, you blessed your servant Thurgood with exceptional grace and courage to discern and speak the truth: Grant that, following his example, we may know you and recognize that we are all your children, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, who teaches us to love one another; and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*