

Paul Halsall (c.)  
July 1994

## Calendar of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Saints

This is a Calendar of saints who were, or seem to have been, gay, lesbian, transgendered or "queer" in some way.

There are over 10,000 named saints, the vast majority being early Christian martyrs and ascetics about whom little if anything is known. Popes only began canonizing in 988AD and canonization in the Roman Catholic Church was only reserved to Rome in 1170, although this was probably not made effective until the Decretals of Gregory IX in 1234. The full canonization procedure only developed in the 17th century, although it has recently been modernized. About 400 people have been canonized by the popes. Other churches, the various Orthodox churches especially, also add saints. The Anglican churches have no process of canonization, but do add certain notable figures - such as Martin Luther - to their liturgical calendars.

Every saint has a feast day. Originally this was their "dia natalis", the day they died as martyrs and hence were reborn into the Lord. Not every saint is on the General Calendar of a particular church, or the general Roman Calendar, but each can be commemorated privately or by groups who wish to do so.

Historically the most important role of saints has been as intercessors. You pray to a saint for a miracle, or for the saint to pray for you. As a matter of semantics it may be noted that there is nothing about "praying through saints" in Catholicism. You pray *to* them, "prayer" being a general term for a certain sort of address to a second party. What you are not supposed to worship a saint as a god [technically called "latria"], but you may give a saint "veneration" [technically "dulia"]. This is just as much prayer as worship. The Angelic Salutation for instance [the "Hail Mary"] is a direct prayer to Mary. Protestants have on the whole rejected the cult of saints, but it is a powerful witness to the Catholic and Orthodox belief in the Church as a community of love that transcends life and death, time and space. In general the cult of saints became much more restricted, even in Catholic countries, after the Reformation, and religious practice became more Christocentric, more Mariocentric, and more focused on sacramental life. On a popular level, though, saints are still invoked by millions on a regular basis, especially St. Anthony as patron saint of lost things, and St. Jude as patron saint of lost causes! Saints are also important as exemplars of Christian virtue. This has probably become more important in recent years, hence Vatican searches for lay people to canonize (most new saints are still founders of religious orders, which spend much time and money on promoting the causes of their founders).

The saints here are from both the early Church - saints who gained a reputation for transgendered behavior and some same-sex paired martyrs - and, with better evidence of their "queerness", later saints whose writings or actions show some aspects of life that lesbian and gay people will recognize. Although the Roman Church no longer commemorates the saints of the Old Testament (Jewish Scriptures), I have also included some figures, with their old feast day, who play a role in lesbian and gay readings of the Bible.

As a general point, and taking a pointer from modern literary studies about the different ways different readers read the same texts, there is for many Catholics an inbuilt "queerness" to Catholicism: the distinct teaching that gender is irrelevant to salvation, religious women going around with men's names, an extraordinary number of men called "Mary" (St. John Vianney for instance), religious clothes for men which, when it comes down to it, are dresses, and a central service which involves the men present taking communion to put another male's body in their mouth (the situation with women communicants is different of course. This is not to mention the proliferation of homoerotic pictures of the Lord as naked on the cross, of St. Sebastian, and the whole notion of transforming suffering into holiness. All this queerness to the world, however far it seems from 1st-century Palestine, does seem to accord well with Jesus' stance toward the world. The downside is perhaps, that, like the queerness of male sports in which men touch and hug and spend time naked together as in no other aspect of society, a defense mechanism among some Church leaders leads to the intense homophobia of the modern institutional Church.

**Dates of Celebration taken from**

NRC: New Roman Calendar [from The Divine Office, London: Collins, 1974]  
ORC: Old Roman Calendar [from Omar Engelbert, The Lives of the Saints, London: 1951]  
ECUSA: Episcopal Church USA [from the US Book of Common Prayer]  
COE: Church of England [from the Alternative Service Book/1980]  
SYNAX: 12th Century Synaxarium of Constantinople  
ARM Armenian Calendar (ref. SSU)  
ARAB Arabic Calendar (Ref. SSU)  
dia natalis Date of birth, that is the day the person died and was reborn in Heaven

**Other Abbreviations**

CSTH John Boswell, Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality, (Chicago: 1980)  
OE Omar Engelbert, The Lives of the Saints, (London: 1951)  
ORTH translations from Dukakis, Megas Synaxaristes, done in various volumes by Holy Apostles Convent, Buena Vista, Colorado  
SSU John Boswell, Same Sex Unions in Premodern Europe, (New York: 1994)

January 5	ORTH	*St. Apollinaria/Dorotheos
January 9	ARM	SS. Polyuctus and Nearchus, martyrs
January 12	ORC/ECUSA	St. Aelred of Rievaulx, abbot
January 20	NRC/ORC	St. Sebastian, martyr
February 11	ORC	*St. Euphrosyne/Smaragdus (Sept 25 ORTH)
February 12	ORTH	*St. Mary/Marinos of Alexandria
March 7	NRC/ORC/COE/ECUSA	*SS. Perpetua and *Felicity, martyrs
March 10	ORC/ORTH	*St. Anastasia the Patrician (or "of Constantinople")
April 20	ORC	*St. Hildegonde of Neuss near Cologne
April 21	NRC/ORC/COE/ECUSA	St. Anselm of Canterbury, bishop and doctor
May 8	COE/ECUSA	*Julian of Norwich, mystic
May 20	ECUSA	Alcuin of Tours
May 26	NRC/ORC	St. Philip Neri, priest
May 30	ORC	*St. Joan of Arc
June 9	ORC	*St. Pelagia/Pelagios (Oct 8 ORTH)
June 22	NRC/ORC	St. Paulinus of Nola, bishop
June 29	NRC	St. Paul the Apostle (June 30 ORC)
July 17	ORTH	*St. Marina/os of Antioch (July 20 ORC as St. Margaret)
July 20	ORTH	*St. Marina/Marinos of Sicily
July 21	ORC	Daniel the Prophet [OT] (Dec 17/18 ORTH)
August 11	dia natalis	Cardinal John Henry Newman
August 28	NRC/ORC/COE/ECUSA	St. Augustine of Hippo, bishop and doctor
October 1st	ARAB	St. Bacchus, martyr
October 7	ORC	SS. Sergius and Bacchus, martyrs
September 11	ORTH	*St. Theodora/Theodoros of Alexandria
September 23	ORC	*St. Thekla of Iconium (Sept 24 ORTH)
October 9	ORTH	*St. Athanasia/Athanasios of Antioch
October 29	ORTH	*St. Anna/Euphemianos of Constantinople
November 1	NRC/ORC/ECUSA	All Saints
November 9	ORTH	*St. Matrona/Babylas of Perge
November 14	ORTH	St. Justinian [emperor],
December 14	ORC	St. Venantius Fortunatus, bishop
December 14	NRC/COE	St. John of the Cross, priest and doctor (Nov 24 ORC)
December 17	ORTH (with Daniel)	The Three Young Men [OT] (also Dec 18)
December 20	ORTH	*Ruth and *Naomi
December 24	ORTH	*St. Eugenia/Eugenios of Alexandria
December 24	ORTH	SS. Protus and Hyacinth, martyrs
December 27	NRC/ORC/COE/ECUSA	St. John the Evangelist
December 29	ORC	David the Prophet [OT]

**Saints - feast days as yet undetermined**

Nehemiah [OT], St. Peter Ordinski, \*St. Uncumber [or Wilgefertis]

## January 9th ARM

### St. Polyeuctus and St. Nearchus, martyrs

Two early martyrs who were paired together by early Christians as a same-sex couple, and invoked as such in the "adelphopoia" ceremonies, recently discussed by historian John Boswell as indicating a Christian tradition of exclusive and publicly recognized same-sex unions. St. Polyeuctus had a huge church, modeled after the Temple of Solomon, built in his name in 6th century Constantinople.

#### Select bibliography

Boswell, John, SSU, 141-44

## January 12 ORC/ECUSA

### St. Aelred of Rievaulx, abbot

c.1110- 1167

**OE:** He is one of the most lovable saints. Of noble birth, Aelred first lives at the court of David, King of Scotland. There they thought him happy. He wrote: 'nevertheless the wound in my heart caused me unspeakable torments and I could not bear the intolerable burden of my sins'. Breaking the closest ties, he resolved to leave the world. "It was then, O my God," he went on, "that I began to taste the comfort, the joy, and the profound peace which is found after seeking you and serving you".

In 1135, at the age of twenty-six, Aelred entered the Cistercian abbey of Rievaulx. Ten years later he became abbot, which he remained until his death in 1167. This monastery, where a great fervor and charity reigned, counted more than three hundred monks. Aelred who only sought "to love and to be loved", tasted pure happiness there whilst making others happy.

Among the writings of St. Aelred there is one in which the charms of spiritual friendship are extolled in an incomparable manner.

#### How Aelred Made it to the American Book of Common Prayer

by Louie Crew, founder of Integrity, [email: lcrew@ANDROMEDA.RUTGERS.EDU]

Aelred was not in ECUSA's calendar until a Roman Catholic head of history at Yale, John Boswell, wrote about him powerfully in his book Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality. Boswell dwelt at length with the lesbian positive evidence. That spurred Integrity member, the late Howard Galley, one of the major architects of the 1976 Prayer Book, to initiate the actions which finally led to Aelred's inclusion: using Aelred's own texts, Galley shaped the readings which appear in THE LESSER FEASTS AND FASTS, including this collect:

*Pour into our hearts, O God, the Holy Spirit's gift of love, that we, clasping each the other's hand, may share the joy of friendship, human and divine, and with your servant Aelred, draw many to your community of love; through Jesus Christ the Righteous, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN*

#### Select Bibliography

Aelred of Rievaulx, Spiritual Friendship, trans. Mary Eugenia Laker, (Kalamazoo MI: Cistercian Publications 1977)

Boswell, John, CSTH, 221-20

McGuire, Brian P, "Looking Back on Friendship: Medieval Experience and Modern Context", Cistercian Studies 21:2 (1986), pp. 123-142

McGuire, Brian P, Brother and Lover: Aelred of Rievaulx, (New York: Crossroad, 1994)

## **January 20th NRC/ORC**

### **St. Sebastian, martyr**

**d. 288**

The martyrdom of St. Sebastian, about whom little is known, has been a subject for countless artists to portray the male body. St. Sebastian was killed by multiple arrow shots, an image of suffering and redemption which provided the basis for his cult.

#### **Office of Readings:**

He suffered martyrdom in Rome at the beginning of the persecution of Diocletian. His tomb in the place named Ad Catacumbas on the Via Appia has been venerated by the faithful from the earliest times.

#### **Select Bibliography**

Jarman, Derek, director, Sebastian, Film, UK, 1977

Saslow, James M, "The Tenderest Lover: Saint Sebastian in Renaissance Painting: A proposed Iconology for North Italian Art, 1450-1550", Gai Saber 1:1 (Spring 1977), 58-66

## **March 7th NRC/ORC/COE/ECUSA**

### **\*St. Perpetua and \*St. Felicity, martyrs**

**d. 203**

#### **Office of Readings:**

Died in the persecution of Septimus Severus in the year 203 at Carthage. There is an impressive narrative of their martyrdom in existence, partly written by the saints themselves and partly by a contemporary writer.

**CSTH:** The popularity of the story of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas...was largely due to the appeal of love between two women. Five Christians were martyred together at Carthage on March 7, 203, suffering death at the hands of wild animals and the sword, but only Perpetua and Felicitas captured the fancy of the Christian community, apparently because of the tale of the two women comforting each other in jail, suffering martyrdom together as friends, and bestowing upon each other the kiss of peace as they met their end, charmed the tastes of the age.

#### **Select Bibliography**

Boswell, John, CSTH, 135

Boswell, John, SSU 139-141

Castelli, Elizabeth, "I Will Make Mary Male': Pieties of the Body and Gender: Transformation of Christian Women in Late Antiquity", in Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub, eds., Body Guards: The Cultural politics of Gender Ambiguity, (New York: Routledge, 1991), 29-39

Miles, Margaret, Carnal Knowing: Female Nakedness and Religious Meaning in the Christian West, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989; pb New York: Vintage, 1991), 53-77

## **April 21st NRC/ORC/COE/ECUSA**

## St. Anselm of Canterbury, bishop and doctor 1033?-1109

from [Compton's Online Encyclopedia](#), (AOL, Downloaded 7/22/94)

ANSELM OF CANTERBURY (1033?-1109). In the late Middle Ages the attempt to use philosophy to explain Christian faith was called scholasticism. The founder of scholasticism was St. Anselm, a man who combined the careers of philosopher, theologian, monk, and archbishop.

Anselm was born at Aosta, Italy, in about 1033. In his youth he resisted family pressure to enter politics and obtained a classical education instead. In 1057 he entered the Benedictine monastery at Bec, in northwestern France. In 1078 he became the abbot there. As Anselm's abilities and great learning became known, Bec became one of the leading schools of philosophy and theology.

While on inspection tours of monasteries in England, Anselm had been befriended by King William I. In 1093 William I's son and successor, William II Rufus, appointed Anselm archbishop of Canterbury. His term of office was an unhappy one, for he immediately became involved in one of the major conflicts of the time--the investiture controversy. At issue was whether a king had the right to invest a bishop with the symbols of his office. On this issue Anselm resisted both William II and his successor, Henry I. The matter was finally resolved in Anselm's favor by the Westminster Agreement of 1107. He lived only two more years, dying on April 21, 1109.

Anselm is remembered principally as one of the great theologians in the history of the Roman Catholic church. His main works--the 'Monologium' (Monologue), the 'Proslogium' (Addition), and the 'Cur Deus Homo?' (Why Did God Become Man?)--were outstanding attempts to use reason to explain belief. He was canonized a saint in 1163 and declared a doctor of the church in 1720.

**OE:** He was canonized by Pope Alexander VI in 1492 and proclaimed a doctor of the Church by Pope Clement XI in 1720.

### **Anselm as a Gay Saint?**

Paul Halsall

I make no claims about Anselm's sexual practices, but I am sure he was what we would now call gay. I

Anselm had emotional relationships with Lanfranc and then a succession of his own pupils. He would address his letters to his "beloved lover" [dilecto dilitori]. Here is a sample:

*"Wherever you go my love follows you, and wherever I remain my desire embraces you...How then could I forget you? He who is imprisoned on my heart like a seal on wax- how could he be removed from my memory? Without saying a word I know that you love [amor] me, and without my saying a word, you know that I love you. [Epistle 1.4; PL 158:1068-69]*

Or again:

*"Brother Anselm to Dom Gilbert, brother, friend, beloved lover... Sweet to me, sweetest friend, are the gifts of your sweetness, but they cannot begin to console my desolate heart for its want of your Love." [Ep. 1.75, PL 158:1144-45].*  
refs. from John Boswell's [CSTH](#).

It is worth mentioning also, that St. Anselm was one of the first saints to address Jesus as mother, a practice and spirituality later taken up by Julian of Norwich.

### **Select Bibliography**

Boswell, John, [CSTH](#), 218-20

Bynum, Caroline Walker, Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages, (Berkeley: 1982)

McGuire, B., "Love, Friendship and Sex in the 11th Century: The Experience of Anselm", Studia Theologia 28 (1974), pp. 111-155

McGuire, Brian P., "Monastic Friendship and Toleration in Twelfth Century Cistercian Life", in W. J. Shiels., ed., Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition, Studies in Church History 22, (London: 1985)

Olsen, Glenn, "St. Anselm and Homosexuality", Anselm Studies (1988)  
Article by a conservative Roman Catholic scholar.

## **May 8th COE/ECUSA**

### **Julian of Norwich**

1342- c. 1417

Mother Julian qualifies as transgendered for her name, if nothing else. But that is not her main interest for lesbian and gay people. Mother Julian was one of the foremost English mystics of the middle ages. As a young woman she had a series of intense visions, or "showings" as she said, of Jesus. She then lived as an anchoress, a sort of local hermit, for the rest of her life meditating and writing down her meditations on these visions. There is a pretty poor modern English version put out by Penguin, but the edition in the Classics of Western Spirituality Series is well worth the extra cost. Julian, although no feminist, experienced God directly as "our mother", and experienced God as pure love. She also saw Jesus as a loving mother, full of warm and care for her children. Julian's immensely attractive spirituality emphasizes that God loves human beings, and that in the end "all will be well, and all shall be well, and all will be well". In her awareness of the motherhood of God, in her emphasis on God's love and manifest intention that "every kind of thing will be well", Julian's spirituality has called many who have encountered it back to a joyful Faith. And a Faith that is not joyful hardly seems worth the effort.

#### **Chapter 60** (from Long Text of "Showings")

"The Mother can lay her child tenderly to her breast, but our tender Mother Jesus can lead us easily into his blessed breast through his sweet open side, and show us there a part of the godhead and of the joys of heaven with inner certainty of endless bliss. And that he revealed in the 10th revelation, giving us the same understanding in these sweet words which he says: See how I love you, looking into his blessed side, rejoicing"

#### **Chapter 31** (from Long Text of "Showings"), a passage Julian referred back to repeatedly,

"And so our good Lord answered to all questions and doubts which I could raise, saying most comfortably: I may make all things well, and I can make all things well, and I shall make all things well, and I will make all things well, and you will see yourself that every kind of thing will be well"

#### **Chapter 11** (from Short text of "Showings")

"Thus I chose Jesus for my heaven, whom I saw only in pain at that time. No other heaven was pleasing to me than Jesus, who will be my bliss when I am there; and this has always been a comfort to me, that I chose Jesus as my heaven in all times of suffering and of sorrow."

### **Select Bibliography**

Julian of Norwich, Showings, trans. Edmund Colledge and James Walsh, (New York: Paulist Press, 1978)

## **May 20th ECUSA**

## St. Alcuin of Tours

C. 735- 804

Alcuin was a leading figure in the Carolingian renaissance of the late 7th and early 8th centuries. The poet, who was a teacher also, knew his students by pet names such as "Cuckoo". It is sometimes asserted that Alcuin's writings reflect classical models, and were exercises rather than representations of his own thought. What must be noted is that there were many possible classical models to imitate - it is why a writer chooses some and not others that is interesting.

**CSTH:** A distinctly erotic element...is notable in the circle of friends presided over by Alcuin at the court of Charlemagne. This group included some of the most brilliant scholars of the day (Theodule of Orleans, Anglibert, Einhard, et al.), but the erotic element subsisted principally between Alcuin and his pupils. Intimates of this circle of masculine friendship were known to each other by pet names, most of them derived from classical allusions, many from Vergil's eclogues... A particularly famous poem is addressed to a pupil whom Alcuin calls "Daphnis" and laments the departure of another young student, "Dodo", who is referred to in the poem as their "cuckoo"....The prominence of love in Alcuin's writings, all of which are addressed to other males, is striking...

One expects hyperbole in poetry, but even in Alcuin's prose correspondence there is an element which can scarcely be called anything but passionate. He wrote to a friend (a bishop...):-

*"I think of your love and friendship with such sweet memories, reverend bishop, that I long for that lovely time when I may be able to clutch the neck of your sweetness with the fingers of my desires. Alas, if only it were granted to me, as it was to Habakkuk [Dan. 14:32-38], to be transported to you, how I would sink into your embraces,...how much would I cover, with tightly pressed lips, not only your eyes, ears and mouth, but also your every finger and toe, not once but many a time."*

### "Lament for a Cuckoo"

O cuckoo that sang to us and art fled,  
Where'er thou wanderest, on whatever shore  
Thou lingerest now, all men bewail thee dead,  
They say our cuckoo will return no more.  
Ah, let him come again, he must not die,  
Let him return with the returning spring,  
And waken all the songs he used to sing.  
but will he come again? I know not, I.

I fear the dark sea breaks above his head,  
Caught in the whirlpool, dead beneath the waves,  
Sorrow for me, if that ill god of wine  
Hath drowned him deep where young things find their graves.  
But if he lives yet, surely he will come,  
Back to the kindly nest, from fierce crows.  
Cuckoo, what took you from the nesting place?  
But will he come again? That no man knows.

If you love sings, cuckoo, then come again,  
Come again, come again, quick, pray you come.  
Cuckoo, delay not, hasten thee home again,  
Daphnis who loveth thee longs for his own.  
Now spring is here again, wake from thy sleeping.  
Alcuin the old man thinks long for thee.  
Through the green meadows go the oxen grazing;  
Only the cuckoo is not. Where is her?

Wail for the cuckoo, every where bewail him,  
Joyous he left us: shall he grieving come?  
let him come grieving, if he will but come again,  
Yea, we shall weep with him, moan for his moan.  
Unless a rock begat thee, thou wilt weep with us.  
How canst thou not, thyself remembering?  
Shall not the father weep the son he lost him,  
Brother for brother still be sorrowing?

Once were we three, with but one heart among us.  
Scare are we two, now that the third is fled.  
Fled is he, fled is he, but the grief remaineth;  
Bitter the weeping, for so dear a head.  
Send a song after him, send a song of sorrow,  
Songs bring the cuckoo home, or so they tell  
Yet be thou happy, wheresoe'er thou wanderest  
Sometimes remember us, Love, fare you well.

[trans. Helen Waddell, in Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse]

### Select Bibliography

Coote, Stephen, ed., The Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse, (Harmondsworth: Allen Lane, Penguin, 1983), 112-114

Boswell, John, CSTH, 188-191

## May 30th ORC

### \*St. Joan of Arc

c.1412-1431

and \*La Rousse

and \*Catharine de La Rochelle

Joan, who was executed at the age of 19, lived, as Marina Warner notes, one of the most classically heroic lives of any woman in history. She is the national heroine of France. She also refused to wear women's clothes and had her hair cut in the typical male "basin" style of the day. Even during her trial she insisted on male attire, an insistence which angered her prosecutors.

from Compton's Online Encyclopedia, (AOL, Downloaded 7/22/94)

JOAN OF ARC (1412?-31). One of the most romantic figures in European war history was Joan of Arc, a peasant girl who saved the kingdom of France from English domination. She has also been called the Maid of Orleans and the Maid of France. When she was only 17 years old, Joan inspired a French army to break the English siege of the French city of Orleans and to win other important victories.

Joan of Arc (in French Jeanne d'Arc) was born in the village of Domremy, in the Meuse River valley, probably in 1412. She was the daughter of a wealthy tenant farmer. From her mother she learned how to spin, sew, and cook, and also to love and serve God. She spent much of her time praying in church.

For almost 100 years France and much of Europe had been fighting in what became known as the Hundred Years' War. The English occupied much of northern France and the Duke of Burgundy was their ally. Because the impoverished French king, Charles VII, had not yet been crowned, he was still called the Dauphin (See Charles, Kings of France). Reims, where the coronation ceremonies for French kings had been held for 1,000 years, was in enemy hands (See Reims). The valley where Joan lived was constantly overrun by armies and guerrilla bands.

Joan was only about 13 when she first saw a heavenly vision. She later claimed that St. Michael had told her to be a good girl, to obey her mother, and to go to church often. For some time, however, she told no one of the visions. When St. Catherine and St. Margaret commanded her to journey to the Dauphin in order to inspire his armies to clear the way to Reims for the coronation, she told her parents and others. Her father refused to let her go.

Joan's visions continued to command her. Her friends, who believed that she was truly inspired, secured boy's clothing and a horse for her. Several rode with her on the long trip to the Dauphin's court at Chinon. Perhaps as a test, the Dauphin made one of his courtiers pretend to be the king. Joan, however, went directly to the true king and greeted him. The Dauphin and his councilors were not entirely convinced of her mission, however. Months of doubt and indecision followed while she was questioned.

Slowly an army was gathered. The Dauphin equipped Joan with armor, attendants, and horses. A special banner was made for Joan to carry into battle. On one side were the words "Jesus Maria" and a figure of God, seated on clouds and holding a globe. The other side had a figure of the Virgin and a shield, with two angels supporting the arms of France.

When the army at last moved toward Orleans, Joan was not its commander, but her presence inspired the soldiers with confidence. At Orleans, after Joan disapproved of the plans made for entering the besieged city, her own plan was adopted. From the city she led a series of sallies that so harassed and discouraged the English that they withdrew. In one of the skirmishes Joan was wounded.

On May 8, 1429, the victory was celebrated by the first festival of Orleans. The army entered Reims on July 16. The next day the Dauphin was crowned king as Joan stood by with her banner. (See also France, Hundred Years' War, Orleans.)

A decision was made to attack Paris, but the new monarch's hesitation and indecision prevented Joan's soldiers from concerted attack. Nevertheless, Compiègne and other nearby towns were taken. A French attack on a Paris salient was driven back and Joan was again wounded. Charles VII disbanded his army for the winter and retired southward. Through the cold months Joan chafed at royal delay.

In the spring she returned to Compiègne, now besieged by forces of the Duke of Burgundy. On May 23, 1430, Joan, on a sortie into the Burgundian lines, was separated from her soldiers and captured.

### **Trial and Execution**

As a prisoner at Beaurevoir, she attempted to escape, but was injured in the leap from the donjon tower. Later she was sold to the English, who vowed that she would be executed. They removed her to Rouen, where she was held in chains.

Although the English wanted Joan's death, they desired her to be sentenced by an ecclesiastical court. The Burgundian-controlled University of Paris provided the charges of heresy and witchcraft. It also provided some of the members of the court. Other members came from areas under English occupation. Chief of the court was the bishop of Beauvais.

Joan was handed over to this bishop on Jan. 3, 1431. The sittings began on February 21 and continued intermittently for months. Joan's appeal to be sent before the pope for judgment was denied. On May 23 she was condemned to be burned unless she recanted. She had been held for many months in chains, threatened with torture, and harassed by thousands of questions. In spite of all this, she had maintained her shy innocence, often confounding her oppressors with simple, unaffected answers to tricky questions. Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret, she said, still counseled her.

Faced with death in the flames, she recanted, but many historians think she did not understand what was meant in the statement of recantation. As a result of her submission, her punishment was commuted from death to life imprisonment. This leniency enraged the English, however, and it was not long before she

was accused of relapsing from her submission. On May 30, 1431, when she was only 19 years old, Joan was turned over to civil authority and burned to death at the stake.

Charles VII had made no effort to save Joan. Some 25 years later he did aid her family to appeal the case to the pope, and in 1456 a papal court annulled the judgment of 1431. On May 16, 1920, Joan of Arc was canonized a saint by the Roman Catholic church.

### Select Bibliography

Marina Warner, St. Joan of Arc: The Image of Female Heroism, (London: 1981, pb. Penguin, 1985), esp. 149-59

## June 22nd NRC/ORC St. Paulinus of Nola, bishop 353-431 and Ausonius

Paulinus of Nola was an important figure in the Christian Roman Empire. He was passionately in love with his fellow Christian and writer, Ausonius. There is an element of copying classical homosexual poetry in these verses, but they clearly indicate a relationship distinct and more erotic than "friendship". Later in life Paulinus distanced himself from Ausonius, a victim perhaps of a narrowing view of sexual ethics.

### "To Ausonius"

I, through all chances that are given to mortals,  
And through all fates that be,  
So long as this close prison shall contain me,  
Yea, though a world shall sunder me and thee,

Thee shall I hold, in every fibre woven,  
Not with dumb lips, nor with averted face  
Shall I behold thee, in my mind embrace thee,  
Instant and present, thou, in every place.

Yea, when the prison of this flesh is broken,  
And from the earth I shall have gone my way,  
Wheresoe'er in the wide universe I stay me,  
There shall I bear thee, as I do today.

Think not the end, that from my body frees me,  
Breaks and unshackles from my love to thee;  
Triumphs the soul above its house in ruin,  
Deathless, begot of immortality.

Still must she keep her senses and affections,  
Hold them as dear as life itself to be,  
Could she choose death, then might she choose forgetting:  
Living, remembering, to eternity.

[trans. Helen Waddell, in Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse]

*An Epigram by Ausonius [c. 310-390]*

### **Epigram No 62**

*Glad youth had come they sixteenth year to crown,  
To soft encircle they dear cheeks with down  
And part the mingled beauties of thy face,  
When death too quickly comes to snatch your grace.  
But thou'll not herd with ghostly common fools,  
Nor piteous, waft the Stygian pools;  
Rather with blithe Adonis shalt thou rove  
And play Ganymede to highest Jove.*

[in Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse]

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## **June 29th NRC (June 30th ORC)**

### **St. Paul the Apostle**

**d.67**

At first glance, the argument that St. Paul was homosexual seems absurd, as it may be. After all was not he the one who condemned gay people in Romans, and elsewhere? There is considerable debate over those anti-gay "proof -texts", but whatever the conclusions, there is much, as Anglican Bishop of Newark John Spong has pointed out which leads one to suspect Paul might have been "queer" in some way. The fact he was never married, unusual for a Jew of his time, his companionship with a series of younger men, especially St. Timothy, his mention of an unnamed "thorn in the flesh". and, possibly, his disdain for some types of exploitative homosexual relationship in his period, all raise questions, questions which cannot be answered it must be admitted, about his sexuality. It should also be added that despite Paul's modern reputation for placing women lower than men, he also penned revolutionary words about the absolute equality of all believers in Christ, a complete destruction of prevailing social codes and norms that has only intermittently played out in full in Church history.

### **2 Cor 12:7-11**

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

### **Gal 3:26-28**

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

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## **July 21st ORC (December 17th/18th ORTH)**

### **Daniel the Prophet [0T]**

**c.650BCE**

**[eunuch]**

The prophet Daniel was understood by Byzantine commentators, including St. John Chrysostom, to have been taken to serve as a eunuch, the major defined sexual minority of the ancient world, at the King of Babylon's court. Note the emphasis on the physical beauty of the four young men. He is, nevertheless, along with David one of the heroes of the Jewish Scriptures. Kathryn Ringrose has written recently on this matter, and Fr. Helminiak reports suggestions that "eunuch" was just a general way of referring to "homosexuals" in the period, although remains merely a suggestion. More interesting has been discussion of the "favor and tender love" Daniel enjoyed with the chief eunuch. Nothing definite can be asserted, but Daniel is one of the most interesting biblical figures for gay people.

**Dan 1:1-20** In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

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**August 11th *dia natalis***  
**Cardinal John Henry Newman**  
**1801-90**

[Cause in process in Rome]

John Henry Newman, the most prominent 19th century-convert to Roman Catholicism, is best known for his writings, especially his superb spiritual biography, Apologia Pr Vita Sua. It is certain that Newman was sexually abstinent, nevertheless he spent most of his life with his closest friend, Fr. Ambrose St. John. Some reports [see Hillard ref. below for rebuttal] state that he lay all night on Ambrose St. John's death after Ambrose's death, and, certainly, stipulated in his will that he wished to be buried in the same grace as Fr. St. John at Rednal in the English midlands.

from Compton's Online Encyclopedia, (AOL, Downloaded 7/22/94)

NEWMAN, John Henry (1801-90). One of England's 19th-century religious leaders, John Henry Newman attempted to reform the Church of England in the direction of early Catholicism the church as it had existed in its first five centuries. Failing in this, he eventually joined the Roman Catholic church and rose in its ranks to become a cardinal. Newman was also an educator, a poet, and a master of English prose. His "Idea of a University" and "Apologia pro Vita Sua" (a defense of his life) are clear-cut, powerful essays on education and religion.

Newman, the eldest of six children, was born on Feb. 21, 1801, in London, England. His father was a banker. At Ealing Academy Newman mastered his lessons easily and spent much of his time editing the school paper. He was 16 when he entered Trinity College, Oxford. Newman won a fellowship to Oriel College, Oxford, in 1822. In 1824 he was ordained a priest in the Church of England.

Newman served as curate of an Oxford parish while a fellow of Oriel College. He became a leader of the Oxford Movement, which sought to bring about a renewal of catholic thought and practice within the Anglican Communion. His zeal for a church with the power and grandeur of medieval times led him to join the Roman Catholic church in 1845. He was convinced that the Protestant element in the Church of England would never accept his traditionalist views.

In 1847 Newman became a Roman Catholic priest in Rome. He joined the Oratorian order and founded congregations near Birmingham and London. Although at times his life was difficult, as he continued to write and preach, his views gradually won acceptance. He was made a cardinal in 1879. Cardinal Newman died near Birmingham on Aug. 11, 1890.

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**August 28th NRC/ORC/COE/ECUSA**

## St. Augustine of Hippo, bishop and doctor 354-430

Augustine has often been held responsible for the aggressive anti-sex stance of much of western Christian history, chiefly because of his linking the transmission of original sin with sexual activity. In fact, compared to some of the anti-sex zealots of his time, he was rather moderate in seeing at least some good in sex within marriage. At times he spoke violently against "sodomy", but as the extracts from his Confessions show, he was for a time completely in love with another man, whose death threw him into turmoil. In the passage below note that Orestes and Pylades were famous homosexual lovers.

from Compton's Online Encyclopedia, (AOL, Downloaded 7/22/94)

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (354-430). The bishop of Hippo in Roman Africa for 35 years, St. Augustine lived during the decline of Roman civilization on that continent. Considered the greatest of the Fathers of the Church in the West, he helped form Christian theology (See Fathers of the Church).

Augustine was born Aurelius Augustinus on Nov. 13, 354, at Tagaste in the Roman province of Numidia (now Souk-Ahras in Algeria). Although his mother, St. Monica, was a devout Christian, he was not baptized in infancy. His father, Patricius, a wealthy landowner, was a pagan.

In his 'Confessions' Augustine wrote seven chapters about an incident in his early life--stealing pears from a neighbor's tree. This sin troubled him for the rest of his life. He also confessed to immoral behavior at the University of Carthage, where he was sent at the age of 16.

Augustine remained in Carthage, teaching rhetoric, until he was 29. Then he went to Rome, taking with him his mistress and his son, Adeodatus. His religion at this time was Manichaeism, which combined Christianity with Zoroastrian elements.

By 386 Augustine was teaching in Milan, where his mother joined him. He came under the influence of the city's great bishop, St. Ambrose, who baptized Augustine and Adeodatus on the following Easter.

From this time Augustine lived as an ascetic. He returned to Africa and spent three years with friends on his family's estate. He was ordained a priest and five years later, in 396, was consecrated a bishop. He spent the remainder of his life in Hippo (now Annaba, Algeria) with his clergy, encouraging the formation of religious communities. Augustine, who was ill when the Vandals besieged Hippo, died on Aug. 28, 430, before the town was taken.

Augustine's most widely read book is Confessions, a vivid account of his early life and religious development. The City of God was written after 410, when Rome fell to the barbarians. The aim of this book was to restore confidence in the Christian church, which Augustine said would take the place of the earthly city of Rome. During the Middle Ages the book gave strong support to the theory that the church was above the state. Augustine's writings on communal life form the 'Rule of St. Augustine', the basis of many religious orders.

### From **Augustine, Confessions**

*[from electronic text archives at CCAT.SAS.UPENN.EDU]*

*Here describing his relationship with a man*

**Book 3: 1:** For this cause my soul was sickly and full of sores, it miserably cast itself forth, desiring to be scraped by the touch of objects of sense. Yet if these had not a soul, they would not be objects of love. To love then, and to be beloved, was sweet to me; but more, when I obtained to enjoy the person I loved, I defiled, therefore, the spring of friendship with the filth of concupiscence, and I beclouded its brightness with the hell of lustfulness; and thus foul and unseemly, I would fan, through exceeding vanity, be fine and courtly. I fell headlong then into the love wherein I longed to be ensnared. My God, my Mercy, with how much gall didst Thou out of Thy great goodness besprinkle for me that sweetness? For I was both beloved, and secretly arrived at the bond of enjoying; and was with joy fettered with sorrow-bringing

bonds, that I might be scourged with the iron burning rods of jealousy, and suspicions, and fears, and angers, and quarrels.

**Book 4: 6-8** In those years when I first began to teach rhetoric in my native town, I had made one my friend, but too dear to me, from a community of pursuits, of mine own age, and, as myself, in the first opening flower of youth. He had grown up as a child with me, and we had been both school-fellows and play-fellows. But he was not yet my friend as afterwards, nor even then, as true friendship is; for true it cannot be, unless in such as Thou cementest together, cleaving unto Thee, by that love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Yet was it but too sweet, ripened by the warmth of kindred studies: for, from the true faith (which he as a youth had not soundly and thoroughly imbibed), I had warped him also to those superstitious and pernicious fables, for which my mother bewailed me. With me he now erred in mind, nor could my soul be without him. But behold Thou wert close on the steps of Thy fugitives, at once God of vengeance, and Fountain of mercies, turning us to Thyself by wonderful means; Thou tookest that man out of this life, when he had scarce filled up one whole year of my friendship, sweet to me above all sweetness of that my life.

Who can recount all Thy praises, which he hath felt in his one self? What diddest Thou then, my God, and how unsearchable is the abyss of Thy judgments? For long, sore sick of a fever, he lay senseless in a death-sweat; and his recovery being despaired of, he was baptized, unknowing; myself meanwhile little regarding, and presuming that his soul would retain rather what it had received of me, not what was wrought on his unconscious body. But it proved far otherwise: for he was refreshed, and restored. Forthwith, as soon as I could speak with him (and I could, so soon as he was able, for I never left him, and we hung but too much upon each other), I essayed to jest with him, as though he would jest with me at that baptism which he had received, when utterly absent in mind and feeling, but had now understood that he had received. But he so shrunk from me, as from an enemy; and with a wonderful and sudden freedom bade me, as I would continue his friend, forbear such language to him. I, all astonished and amazed, suppressed all my emotions till he should grow well, and his health were strong enough for me to deal with him as I would. But he was taken away from my frenzy, that with Thee he might be preserved for my comfort; a few days after in my absence, he was attacked again by the fever, and so departed.

At this grief my heart was utterly darkened; and whatever I beheld was death. My native country was a torment to me, and my father's house a strange unhappiness; and whatever I had shared with him, wanting him, became a distracting torture. Mine eyes sought him every where, but he was not granted them; and I hated all places, for that they had not him; nor could they now tell me, "he is coming," as when he was alive and absent. I became a great riddle to myself, and I asked my soul, why she was so sad, and why she disquieted me sorely: but she knew not what to answer me. And if I said, Trust in God, she very rightly obeyed me not; because that most dear friend, whom she had lost, was, being man, both truer and better than that phantasm she was bid to trust in. Only tears were sweet to me, for they succeeded my friend, in the dearest of my affections.

**Book 4: 10** ...Wretched I was; and wretched is every soul bound by the friendship of perishable things; he is torn asunder when he loses them, and then he feels the wretchedness which he had ere yet he lost them. So was it then with me; I wept most bitterly, and found my repose in bitterness. Thus was I wretched, and that wretched life I held dearer than my friend. For though I would willingly have changed it, yet was I more unwilling to part with it than with him; yea, I know not whether I would have parted with it even for him, as is related (if not feigned) of Pylades and Orestes, that they would gladly have died for each other or together, not to live together being to them worse than death. But in me there had arisen some unexplained feeling, too contrary to this, for at once I loathed exceedingly to live and feared to die. I suppose, the more I loved him, the more did I hate, and fear (as a most cruel enemy) death, which had bereaved me of him: and I imagined it would speedily make an end of all men, since it had power over him. Thus was it with me, I remember. Behold my heart, O my God, behold and see into me; for well I remember it, O my Hope, who cleansest me from the impurity of such affections, directing mine eyes towards Thee, and plucking my feet out of the snare. For I wondered that others, subject to death, did live, since he whom I loved, as if he should never die, was dead; and I wondered yet more that myself, who was to him a second self, could live, he being dead. Well said one of his friend, "Thou half of my soul"; for I felt that my soul and his soul were "one soul in two bodies": and therefore was my life a horror to me, because I would not live halved. And therefore perchance I feared to die, lest he whom I had much loved should die wholly.

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## November 1st All Saints Day

The Church has never claimed to have recognized all the saints, and this ancient day had long been designated for All Saints. As lesbian, gay and bisexual people have realized in recent years, the AIDS epidemic has brought forth tremendous witnesses of courage and faith in the Lord and his promises. We have seen People with AIDS light up the world with their presence, before they departed for the light. The names here are a few of those who have illumined the Dignity Community in New York, but there are many others. I have given a special mention to Timothy McGinty, but he is representative rather than unique.

### Prayer for People Who Have Died of HIV Disease

(Used at Dignity/NY Liturgies)

All powerful . ever-living God  
you never refuse mercy  
to those who call upon you in faith  
Be merciful to your servants -  
our friends, brothers and sisters  
who endured the pain and suffering of HIV disease  
and left this life expecting and believing  
in your power to save.  
You redeemed them from sin and death  
in the water of baptism.  
In their illness they served you faithfully  
by imitating the patience of their Savior, Jesus  
As they shared in his passion and death,  
may they now share in his resurrection  
and enter your reign of eternal light and life  
there to be counted among your saints forever.  
May their favor with you bring new hope to us,  
the living,  
that we may draw strength from their lives  
and become for others  
instruments of your peace and consolation.  
This we ask in the name of Jesus.  
Amen.

Dios todo poderoso y eterno  
nunca niegas tu favor  
a quien te lo pide con fe'.  
Se' misericordioso con tus siervos -  
nuestros amigos y amigas, hermanos y hermanas  
que soportaron el dolor y el sufrimiento del SIDA  
y dejaron esta vida esperando y creyendo  
en tu poder de salvacio'n  
Les redimiste del pecado y de la muerte

por le agua del bautismo.  
En su enfermedad te sirvieron fielmente  
al imitar la paciencia de su Salvador, Jesucristo.  
Como participaron en su pasio'n y muerte,  
que puedan ahora participar tambie'n en su resurreccio'n  
y entrar en tu reino de luz y vida eterna  
y contarse entre tus santas y santos para siempre.  
Que el favor tuyo, de que disfrutan, nos traiga una  
nueva esperanza a los vivos,  
que podamos extraer fuerza y significado de sus vidas,  
y llegar a ser para otros  
instrumentos de tu paz y consuelo  
Te lo pedimos en el nombre de to hijo, Jesucristo.  
Ame'n

**Timothy McGinty, dia natalis July 1992**

Tim was the "golden boy". Raised in Ft. Lauderdale, he was successful at high school, college and law school. After beginning work he became ill, and supported by his friends, his parents, his lover and his colleagues embarked on a spiritual journey to Christ which he took care to make known to others who might need to know of it. Having everything material, he lost everything material, including at the end his eyesight. But through it all he lived life as a gift, a true living that inspired all. At his wake, people who came for ten minutes stayed hours. At his funeral, Kaddish, a prayer of life, was said by his lover, and the homilist called attention to the meaning Tim had given us. Referring to an incident during the 1992 Olympic Games when a runner had fallen, gotten up, and fallen again, then to be raised and carried across the line by his father, she told us what Tim, dead at 31, had taught us; that what is important in finishing the race is not who wins, or how long it lasts, but who holds and supports you to the end.

**2 Tim 4:5-8**

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

**Peter Seifert, dia natalis,**  
**Fr. Declan Daly, dia natalis,**  
**Alberto Arevelo, dia natalis, January 27 1989**  
**Allan Royale, dia natalis,**  
**Peter Hamory, dia natalis,**  
**Gus Alexiou, dia natalis,**  
**Lou Sacco, dia natalis, April 24 1990**  
**Craig Huston, dia natalis,**  
**Steven Smurr, dia natalis,**  
**George Moran, dia natalis, Fall 1992**  
**Michael Olivieri, dia natalis, June 1993**  
**John Taktikos (Axios), dia natalis, October 1993**  
**James Serafini, dia natalis, May 1994**

**October 7th ORC (October 1st for Bacchus in Arabic Calendar)**

**St. Sergius and St. Bacchus, martyrs**

**d. circa. 297**

Saints Sergius and Bacchus were two Roman soldiers and lovers. As John Boswell has shown recently they were invoked repeatedly in the middle ages in the blessing of ceremonies of union for couples of the

same sex. They were arrested and humiliated for being Christians. Bacchus was killed first, and then a few days later, Sergius. Their joint "passion" calls them "erastoi" - that is "erotic lovers", and after he died, Bacchus offers *himself* to Sergius as the prize for Sergius' martyrdom..The female clothes they were forced to wear may have been an early example of gay baiting. (One thing that cannot be found among the saints is a male saint who voluntarily adopted women's clothers). Their cult was one of the most intense in the eastern Mediterranean, with a huge pilgrimage site at Sergiopolis. The passage following, translated from the earliest passion by John Boswell, recounts Sergius' laments after Bacchus' death, and Bacchus appearance to him, promising himself as the prize of martyrdom.

from **The Passion of St. Sergius and Bacchus**

Meanwhile the blessed Serge, deeply distressed and heartsick over the loss of Bacchus, wept and cried out, "No longer, brother and fellow soldier, will we chant together, 'Behold, how good an pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!' You have been unyoked from me and gone up to heaven, leaving me alone on earth, bereft, without comfort." After he uttered these things, the same night the blessed Bacchus suddenly appeared to him with a face as radiant as an angel's, wearing an officer's uniform, and spoke to him. "Why do you grieve and mourn, brother? If I have been taken up from you in body, I am still with you in the bond of union, chanting and reciting, "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou hast enlarged my heart.' Hurry up then, yourself, brother, through beautiful and perfect confession to pursue and obtain me, when finishing the course. For the crown of justice for me is with you."

**SERGIUS AND BACCHUS**

by Richard Oliver

[email: ROLIVER@TINY.COMPUTING.CSBSJU.EDU]

Last August when the rumors about Boswell's book on medieval "marriage" ceremonies began appearing on the Internet, out of curiosity I did a brief investigation on the martyrs Sergius and Bacchus who were mentioned as an inspiration for the "rite." Perhaps now that the topic has resurfaced here some readers may be interested in what I found out about the martyrs:

Some information and sources for further investigation concerning the martyred/married(?) pair, Sergius and Bacchus. Feast day, formerly 7 October; "cults suppressed in 1969" (Ramsgate, 505).

**"Sergius and Bacchus, MM.**

They were Roman soldiers, officers in the household of Emperor Maximian. Sergius is said to have been 'primicerius gymnasii trionum' at Trieste, and Bacchus a subaltern officer. For refusing to sacrifice to the gods, they were ignominiously dressed in women's clothing and conducted through the streets of Arabissus (near Comana in Cappadocia). Then they were scourged until Bacchus died, 1 Oct. 290. Sergius was brought to Resapha (Augusta Eupratasiae) in Syria, where, after various tortures, he was decapitated, 7 Oct. 290.

"The tomb of S. Sergius at Resapha was a famous shrine. In 431, Bishop Alexander of Hierapolis built a magnificent church in his honor. In 434, the town of Resapha was raised to the rank of an episcopal see and was named Sergiopolis. Emperor Justinian I enlarged and fortified it. Sergius was venerated as patron of Syria. Parts of his relics were transferred to Venice, where these saints were patrons of the ancient cathedral.

In the seventh century a church was dedicated to them in Rome. F. 7 Oct"

Holweck, R.G., A Biographical Dictionary of the Saints (St. Louis; London: Herder, 1924), 901

Variations/expansions on the above life:

"...absenting themselves when Emperor Maximian was sacrificing to Jupiter...." "Sergiopolis became one of the greatest pilgrimage centers of the East. Many churches bore the name of Sergius (sometimes with Bacchus), and his cultus was extraordinarily widespread and popular; the nomads of the desert looked on him as their special patron saint" (Attwater, 305-6).

"These martyrs were said to be officers of the Roman army on the Syrian frontier, Sergius being described as commandant of the recruits' school and Bacchus as his subaltern. ... On their refusal they were stripped of their arms and badges of rank, dressed up in women's clothes, and so paraded through the streets. ... St. Bacchus died under the lash. His body was thrown out on to the highway, were vultures protected it from the attacks of dogs, an incident recorded of several other martyrs. St. Sergius was made to walk a long distance in shoes with nails thrust through into his feet, and was beheaded. ...the particulars of their passion are far from trustworthy. ... Sergius and Bacchus became the heavenly protectors of the Byzantine army, with the two Theodores, Demetrius, Procopius and George. ... Their "acts" are preserved in Latin, Greek and Syriac" {Butler's Lives of the Saints, "Oct. 7"}.

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### December 14th ORC

## **St. Venantius Fortunatus, bishop** c.530-c.603

Venantius Fortunatus was a poet, born c. 530 in Treviso, near Ravenna in Italy. He spent his time as court poet to the Merovingians. After visiting the tomb of St. Martin of Tours at St. Hilary at Poitiers, he decided to enter a monastery. He continued to write poetry, some of which have a permanent place in Catholic hymnody, for instance the Easter season hymn *Vexilla Regis* and the *Pange Lingua* (Sing, O my tongue, of the battle) which is sung on Good Friday. Three or four years before he died he was made bishop of Poitiers. As this poem shows, he is also a spiritual ancestor of same-sex lovers.

### **"Written on an Island off the Breton Coast"**

You at God's altar stand, His minister  
And Paris lies about you and the Seine:  
Around this Breton isle the Ocean swells,  
Deep water and one love between us twain.

Wild is the wind, but still thy name is spoken;  
Rough is the sea: it sweeps not o'er thy face.  
Still runs my lover for shelter to its dwelling,  
Hither, O heart, to thine abiding place.

Swift as the waves beneath an east wind breaking  
Dark as beneath a winter sky the sea,  
So to my heart crowd memories awaking,  
So dark, O love, my spirit without thee

[trans. Helen Waddell, in Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse]

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## **December 14th NRC/COE (November 24th ORC)** **St. John of the Cross, priest and doctor** 1542-1591

St. John of the Cross was one of the great Spanish mystics, whose outstanding Dark Night of the Soul is still read by all interested in Catholic mysticism. He also wrote a series of intense religious canticles. St. John, like other mystics such as St. Theresa of Avila, used the language of courtly love to describe his relationship with Christ. He also discussed, with rare candor, the sexual stimulation of prayer, the fact that mystics experience sexual arousal during prayer. With the male Christ of course, this amounts to a homoeroticism of prayer. It must be said that St. John was not entirely happy with this aspect of prayer. He was beatified by Clement X in 1675, canonized by Benedict XIII in 1726, and declared a Doctor of Church Universal by Pius XI in 1926

### **Office of Readings:**

Born at Fontiveros in Old Castile in Spain about the year 1542. He was a Carmelite Friar and about the year 1568 he was persuaded by St. Theresa of Avila to be the first to go to undertake the reform of his order, which cost him much hard work and many trials. He died at Ubeda in Andalusia in 1591. he was outstanding in holiness and knowledge as his many spiritual writings testify.

from **The Dark Night of the Soul, I.4.1-2**

I.4.1...For it often comes to pass that in their very spiritual exercises, when they are powerless to prevent it, there arise and assert themselves in the sensual part of the soul impure acts and motions, and sometimes this happens even when the spirit is deep in prayer, or engaged in the sacrament of penance or in the Eucharist. These things are not, as I say, in their power; they process from one of three causes.

I.4.2 The first cause from which they often proceed is the pleasure which human nature takes in spiritual things. For when the spirit and the sense are pleased, every part of a man is moved by that pleasure to delight according to its proportion and nature. For then the spirit, which is the higher part is moved to pleasure and delight in God; and the sensual nature, which is the lower part, is moved to pleasure and delight of senses, because it cannot possess and lay hold upon aught else, and it therefore lays hold upon that which comes nearest to itself, which is the impure and sensual. Thus it comes to pass that the soul is deep in prayer with God according to the spirit, and on the other hand, according to the sense it is passively conscious, not without great displeasure of rebellions and motions and acts of the senses, which often happens in Communion, for when the soul receives joy and comfort in this act of love, because this Lord bestows it (since it is to this end that he gave himself), the sensual nature takes that which is its own likewise, as we have said, after this manner. Now as, after all, these two parts are combined in one individual, they ordinarily both participate in that which one of them receives, each after its own manner....Now when this sensual part is renewed by purgation of the dark night which we shall describe, it no longer has these weaknesses; for it is no longer this part which receives aught, but rather it is itself received into the Spirit. And thus it then has everything after the manner of the Spirit.

*[St. John goes on to say that such arousal can be caused by the devil or even the fear that people have of such erotic feelings. In I.4.7 he discusses, apparently with some knowledge, friendships which spiritual people make with others and how these can be discerned as coming from God or from "luxury"]*

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## December 17th/18th ORTH (with Daniel)

### The Three Young Men [OT]

c. 650BCE

[eunuchs]

Byzantine commentators were quite aware, as Kathryn Ringrose has recently shown, that Daniel and the three young men would have been taken to Babylon as court eunuchs. Eunuchs are by far the most discussed sexual minorities in both the Jewish Scriptures and the New Testament. It is interesting to note that while eunuchs were excluded from the community of Israel by Deuteronomy, Third Isaiah and Wisdom both specifically include them in God's blessing. The Bible talks to itself! Isaiah rejects then provision of the law which reject the eunuch. He expands the definition of God's people beyond the patriarchal family that characterized the early history of Israel. The following passages affirms that the lord offers salvation to all, not just those in conventional heterosexual family life.

### Isaiah 56:1-8

Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and

of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.

#### **Wisdom 3:13-14**

Blessed the barren women...Her fruitfulness will be seen at the scrutiny of souls. Blessed too the eunuch...For his loyalty special favour will be granted him, a most desirable portion in the temple of the Lord.

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### **December 20th ORTH**

#### **\*Ruth and \*Naomi [OT]**

**c1100BCE**

Ruth was great-grandmother of King David, and hence a direct ancestor of Jesus. Although Deuteronomy 23:3 specifically states that no Moabite is to be admitted to the assembly of the Lord (a position vigorously pursued later by such nationalists as Ezra and Nehemiah [Ezra:1,2,12; 103,18,44, Neh 13:23, 25, 27-28, 30]), Ruth was a Moabite women. This is a book of the inclusivity of God's call, and another Biblical illustration of the limits of the Law.. The focus of the story is on her loving relationship with Naomi. At Naomi's suggestion, Ruth marries a kinsman of Naomi, called Boaz, but this is the perpetuate her dead husband Mahlon's line (see Ruth 4:12-14, 17). Is this a story about Lesbianism, which was not forbidden at all in the Law? Whatever the answer, it is a story of love and loyalty between two women.

**Ruth 1:16-18** And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

#### **Select Bibliography**

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### **December 24 ORTH**

#### **St. Protus and St. Hyacinth, martyrs**

**eunuchs**

Companions of St. Eugenia of Alexandria, these were two of her teachers who accompanied her on a somewhat romantic journey, and at the end were martyred with her.

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## December 27th NRC/ORC/COE/ECUSA St. John the Evangelist 1st Century CE

The Beloved Disciple.

### Select Bibliography

Boswell, John, SSU, 138-39

## December 29th ORC David the Prophet [OT] and Jonathan 1035?-960?BCE

### The Love Story and Covenant Between David and Jonathan 1 Sam 17:57-18:9

And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite. And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle. And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants. And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

*[Saul's daughter also falls in love with David in chapter 18]*

### I Sam 19: 1-6

1 Sam 19:1 And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David. But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself: And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will

commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee. And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good: For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause? And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, As the LORD liveth, he shall not be slain. And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan showed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past.

### **I Sam 20:1-42**

And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life? And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will show it me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so. And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death. Then said Jonathan unto David, Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee. And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to morrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even. If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem his city: for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family. If he say thus, It is well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him. Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldest thou bring me to thy father? And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee? Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or what if thy father answer thee roughly? And Jonathan said unto David, Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field. And Jonathan said unto David, O LORD God of Israel, when I have sounded my father about to morrow any time, or the third day, and, behold, if there be good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and show it thee; The LORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will show it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the LORD be with thee, as he hath been with my father. And thou shalt not only while yet I live show me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not: But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul. Then Jonathan said to David, To morrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty. And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down quickly, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself when the business was in hand, and shalt remain by the stone Ezel. And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark. And, behold, I will send a lad, saying, Go, find out the arrows. If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them; then come thou: for there is peace to thee, and no hurt; as the LORD liveth. But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the LORD hath sent thee away. And as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the LORD be between thee and me for ever. So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat. And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall: and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty. Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, he is not clean; surely he is not clean. And it came to pass on the morrow, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday, nor to day? And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem: And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table. Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine

own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness? For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die. And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done? And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David. So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame. And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him. And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee? And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city. And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

### **I Sam 23:14-18**

And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand. And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood. And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God. And he said unto him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth. And they two made a covenant before the LORD: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.

### **II Sam 1-27**

2 Sam 1:1 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag; It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also. And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead? And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord. Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed? And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD'S anointed. And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: (Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.)

The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen!  
Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon;

lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,  
lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.  
Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew,  
neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings:  
for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away,  
the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.  
From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,  
the bow of Jonathan turned not back,  
and the sword of Saul returned not empty.  
Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,  
and in their death they were not divided:  
they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.  
Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet,  
with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.  
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!  
O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places.  
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:  
very pleasant hast thou been unto me:  
thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.  
How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!

## **II Sam 9:1-13**

And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake? And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he. And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet. And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar. Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar. Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually. And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am? Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house. Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons. And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Micha. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants unto Mephibosheth. So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

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## **OTHER SAINTS (no dates)**

## **Nehemiah the Cup bearer [OT]**

**Fifth century BCE**

**eunuch**

According to Neh 1:11 Nehemiah was a cup bearer to the Persian king. Extrabiblical texts and artistic representations reveal the importance of this office. From a variety of argument, chiefly references in Ctesias, most scholars have concluded that Nehemiah was probably a eunuch. A critical examination of these arguments, however, reveals that many of them are untenable or less than convincing. Though Nehemiah may have been a eunuch, we cannot assert that this was more than a possibility.

### **Neh 1:11-2:6**

O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cup bearer.

And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

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## **St. Peter Ordinski**

**1257-66**

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## **TRANVESTITE SAINTS**

I have treated these saints as a group as their stories are often similar. These are the large number of saints who were famous for their holy cross-dressing. All of these were women, and the stories, largely but not exclusively fictional, generally have them escaping marriage or some other dreaded end by dressing as monks. This is no short term ploy, however. The women then live their lives as men (in direct contradiction to the Levitical Law which calls cross-dressing an "abomination"), some of them becoming abbots of monasteries. In such positions it is hard to imagine that they would not perform roles such as confessor. Their biological sex is only discovered after they die. It is sometimes argued that these transvestite saints did not cross-dress because they wanted to but because they had to, and so calling them "transvestites" is wrong. It is true that we know nothing of the psychology of these women, but when they dressed as man for 20 years and became abbots of monasteries, it is hard to know in what way they were being "forced" to cross-dress. These women chose to live their Christian lives as members of the opposite

biological sex - it is fair to see them as "transgendered". There are no male saints, it seems, who dressed as women (with the possible exception of Sergius and Bacchus, who were forcibly paraded through the streets in women's clothes). At work here is an old notion that women are saved in so far as they have "male souls", a repeated term of praise in lives of female saints. These women's lives do show that the Levitical Law was not determinative in Christian estimations of holiness, and that modern rigid gender categories had much less role in earlier epochs of Christianity than nowadays. These saints found a place in both Orthodox and Roman calendars.

**\*St. Anastasia the Patrician (or "of Constantinople")**  
**March 10th ORC/ORTH**

**\*St. Anna/Euphemianos of Constantinople**  
**Oct 29 ORTH**

**\*St. Apollinaria/Dorotheos**  
**Jan 5, 6 ORTH**

**\*St. Athanasia of Antioch**  
**Oct 9 ORTH**

**\*St. Eugenia/Eugenios of Alexandria**  
**Dec 24th ORTH**

**\*St. Euphrosyne/Smaragdus**  
**Feb 11th ORC (Sept 25 ORTH)**

**\*St. Marina of Sicily**  
**July 20th ORTH**

**\*St. Marina/Marinos of Antioch**  
**July 17th ORTH (July 20th ORC - as St. Margaret)**

**\*St. Mary/Marinos of Alexandria**  
**Feb 12th ORTH**

**\*St. Matrona/Babylas of Perge**  
**Nov 9 ORTH**

**\*St. Pelagia/Pelagios**  
**June 9 ORC (Oct 8 ORTH)**

**\*St. Theodora/Theodorus of Alexandria**  
**Sept 11 ORTH**

**\*St. Thekla of Iconium**  
**Sept 23 ORC (Sept 24 ORTH)**

**\*St. Hildegonde of Neuss near Cologne**  
**April 20th ORC**  
**d. 1188**

**OE:** A nun who lived under the name "Brother Joseph" in the Cistercian monastery of Schoenau near Heidelberg.

**\*St. Uncumber [or Wilgefortis]**  
A bearded woman saint, also known as St. Liverade (France), Liberata (Italy), Liberada (Spain), Debarras (Beauvais), Ohnkummer (Germany), and Ontcommere (Flanders)

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## **Possibles**

*[more information needed on these figures]*

**May 26th NRC/ORC**  
**St. Philip Neri, priest**

**Oct 15 NRC/COE/ECUSA**  
**St. Theresa of Avila, mystic**

**Nov 14th ORTH**  
**St. Justinian [emperor]**