

April 10

William Law (1686-1761) priest

Today the Church of England commemorates the priest William Law, who led a profound spiritual renewal in 18th- and 19th-century England.

A native of Kings Cliffe, Northamptonshire, William studied at Cambridge's Emmanuel College. He was ordained a deacon and became a Cambridge University fellow, but his brilliant academic and ecclesiastical career was cut short by the political evolution that was taking place in England. Convinced, as were many of his contemporaries, that the new king George I had usurped the throne from James II, William refused to pledge his allegiance to the royal crown.

Deprived of his fellowship, William graciously accepted the consequences of his moral integrity. He was ordained a priest and dedicated the rest of his life to building up his parishoners' spiritual lives. His teachings on prayer and spirituality, contained in his works *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* and *The Spirit of Love*, were widely read during his lifetime. The Wesley brothers and many members of the nineteenth-century Oxford Movement drew inspiration from William Law's teachings and witness to the Gospel.

In 1740, William returned to his hometown, where he spent the last twenty years of his life serving the poor. He died on this day in 1761.

BIBLICAL READINGS

Tob 1:16b-18a; Rom 6:20-23; Lk 11:33-36

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:

William Law, priest, spiritual writer

William of Ockham (d. 1347), friar, philosopher, teacher of the faith

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (2 barmudah/miyazya):

Cristopher (d. ca. 250), martyr (Coptic Church)

LUTHERANS:

Thomas von Westen (d. 1727), missionary in Lapland

MARONITES:

Miracle of the Cross at Beiruth

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:

Terence, Africanus, Maxim, Pompeius and 36 companions (d. ca. 251), martyrs

John Mangleli (d. 1751), bishop (Georgian Church)

OLD CATHOLICS:

Ezekiel (6th cent. BC), prophet