July 6

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Jan Hus (1369-1415) priest

The Catholic priest Jan Hus, condemned as a heretic after a long battle with Church authorities in his country, and then with the Holy See, was burned at the stake in 1415.
Hus was born in 1369 in the village of Husinec in southwest Bohemia. In 1400 he was ordained a priest, and four years later he became a bachelor in theology. He felt a strong need to reform the customs of the clergy of his time, and with his vibrant preaching he attempted to change a situation that was continuing to worsen on account of of the Great Western Schism.
A man whose spirituality was deeply biblical, Hus criticized the Church hierarchy but was equally committed to offering a spiritual education to lay people, whom he taught to seek a profound relationship with Jesus Christ through direct, personal reading of the Bible. His most serious accusation against the clergy was that of hiding from the faithful the simple, vital image of Jesus as he appears in the Gospels: humble, poor, suffering, and merciful.
Hus' thirst for reform led him to take theological positions similar to those of Wycliff, who had been condemned thirty years earlier in England. He met with increasing opposition, which culminated in his excommunication by the Holy See in 1412 and his death sentence in 1415. He was sentenced one year after the beginning of the Council of Constance, where he had made a last, unsuccessful attempt to explain his views.
Hus is considered a forerunner of the reform movements that led to the Protestant Reformation one century later.
In 1997, Pope John Paul II proclaimed Jan Hus' innocence during a visit to Prague, and asked forgiveness for the sins of the Catholic Church in his regard.

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:
Thomas More, scholar, and *John Fisher* (d. 1535), bishop of Rochester, martyrs of the Reformation

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
Maria Goretti, virgin and martyr (Roman and Ambrosian calendar)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (29 ba'unah/sane):
The 7 ascetic saints of Djabal Tunah (3rd-4th cent.), martyrs (Coptic Orthodox Church)

LUTHERANS:
Jan Hus, reformer and martyr at Prague

MARONITES:
Sisoes (4th-5th cent.), monk

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
Sisoes the Great, monk
Synaxis of the saints of Vladimir (Russian Church)

OLD CATHOLICS:
Jan Hus, martyr