

July 27

Guigo I (1083-1136) monk

Guigo, the fifth prior of the Grande Chartreuse, died in 1136.

Born in Saint-Romain-de-Mordanne in the French diocese of Valence, he entered the Grande Chartreuse in 1106. At that time three companions of the recently deceased founder of the Carthusian Order, Bruno, were still living. Guigo was elected prior at the age of only twenty-six. Peter the Venerable and Bernard of Clairvaux, friends with whom he corresponded by letter, call him a deeply charitable man and a spiritual father who was appreciated for his human warmth.

Guigo's spiritual authority drew so many people that in just a few years seven new Carthusian houses were opened. Guigo helped establish them by writing the *Consuetudines*, and his writings, dense with teachings on life in Christ and the spiritual combat that monks are called to carry out in solitude, enriched the new communities spiritually. He also went to great lengths to collect liturgical and patristic texts that would help the Carthusians deepen their prayer lives.

Guigo was the true force behind the establishment of the Carthusian Order, and his meditations are one of the summits of medieval theology.

Titus Brandsma (1881-1942) priest and martyr

On July 26, 1942 the Carmelite priest Titus Brandsma died in the concentration camp of Dachau after receiving an injection of phenol.

Titus was born in 1881 in Ugoklooster, Holland, and entered a Carmelite community at the age of seventeen. Intelligent and cultured, he became highly respected by the Catholics of the Netherlands, and was elected rector of the Catholic University of Nimega and named ecclesiastical assistant to Holland's journalists.

Brandsma opposed the Nazi ideology from the beginning through articles and various initiatives. On January 19, 1942, he was arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned in Scheveningen. As he not only refused to retract his views but attempted to write down his convictions, his fate was quickly sealed.

In each of the prisons where he was interned before he reached Dachau, Brandsma comforted his fellow prisoners, preached the Gospel, and offered the sacrament of reconciliation, astounding everyone with his serenity in all circumstances. Transferred to Dachau in June 1942, Titus Brandsma died after a month of harsh treatment, weakened to the point of exhaustion by illness and malnutrition. He is commemorated today by Carmelites of the Old Observance.

A READING

God leads the stars and planets in their orbit; he gives life to plants and animals. He holds the world in his hand and ensures the peaceful continuation of its existence. God lives in us and opens the eye of our heart upon what matters; he whispers his word in us and encourages us to carry it out...

God's indwelling and penetration should not only be the object of our intuition, but should manifest itself in our life, express itself in our words and actions, radiate outwards from our entire being and from everything we do.

(Titus Brandsma)

BIBLICAL READINGS

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:

Brooke Foss Westcott (d. 1901), bishop of Durham, teacher of the faith

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (20 abib/hamle):

Theodore the Stratilite (3rd-4th cent.), martyr (Coptic Church)

LUTHERANS:

Angelus Merula (d. 1557), witness to the point of bloodshed in Netherlands

Gustav Knak (d. 1878), preacher of the revival in Pomerania and Berlin

MARONITES:

Panteleimon of Nicomedia (d. 305), martyr

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:

Panteleimon of Nicomedia, megalomartyr

WEST SYRIAN ORTHODOX:

Simeon the Stylite the Old (4th-5th cent.), monk

OLD CATHOLICS:

Ursicinus (8th cent.?), hermit