

November 6

William Temple (1881-1944) pastor and ecumenical witness

Born in Exeter in 1881, William Temple was one of the leaders of the ecumenical movement in the twentieth century. After successfully completing his studies in philosophy and theology at Oxford, William organized a social program to assist the most disadvantaged members of his society. His attentiveness to the poor was a constant in his life, and came to influence all of his important choices and public statements.

Temple was ordained a priest, and at the age of forty he was elected bishop of Manchester. After several years he was transferred to York, where he was made Archbishop. In his new position of authority in the Church of England, Temple spoke out courageously against social inequality and the extreme difficulty England's poor faced in trying to obtain a decent education. In 1942, he became Archbishop of Canterbury.

As one of the founding members of the British Council of Churches, Temple presided over the second international conference of Faith and Order at Edinburgh in 1937. There he proposed the creation of a "world council of churches," which came into being several years after his death.

On the threshold of the Second World War, Temple did his utmost to avert the disaster, which had as one of its outcomes the further impoverishment of society's disadvantaged classes. He died on November 6, 1944, and his holiness, already beyond question in the eyes of his contemporaries, was officially recognized when he was included in the calendar of the Church of England.

BIBLICAL READINGS

1 Kings 3:6-14; 2 Tim 4:1-8; Mt 23:8-12

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:

Leonard (6th cent.), hermit

William Temple, archbishop of Canterbury, teacher of the faith

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (27 bâbah/teqemt):

Macarius (5th cent.), bishop of Tkow (Coptic Orthodox Church)

LUTHERANS:

Gustavus Adolphus (d. 1632), king of Sweden

Heinrich Schütz (d. 1672), Christian musician in Saxony

MARONITES:

Paul (d. 351), archbishop of Constantinople

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:

Paul the Confessor, archbishop of Constantinople