

A Synaxis of Latin Saints (Plain Reading)

April 19th

On April 19th we commemorate Saint Alphage of Canterbury, the Heiromartyr of Britain and Archbishop of Canterbury. Saint Alphage was born in a Christian family in Somerset, England. He received permission from his mother and father to leave home and become a monastic at a young age. He was tonsured at Deerhurst in Gloucestershire and was quickly made Abbot of Bath. Here Alphage learned to love the monastic cell, and to capture the ethos of purity of heart and an unclouded intellect. He reluctantly accepted to be made Bishop of Winchester and, after many years of faithful service, was made Archbishop of Canterbury. During his time as Archbishop, Saint Alphage worked towards maintaining peace in Britain, establishing missions in the Danish lands, converting monarchs in unenlightened territories and assisting in the canonization of Saint Dunstan of Canterbury. When the Danish pagans invaded in 1011, Saint Alphage was threatened by them to pay a large ransom. Though the people of England loved the Saint so much they were willing to pay, Saint Alphage refused and chose rather to be taken prisoner. Saint Alphage found himself once again in a cell, not so different from his original in Deerhurst, and there in prisoners clothes he preached the Gospel one final time, converting some of the Danes. After much brutality, Saint Alphage was martyred. He was immediately considered to be a holy patron of England, and until the Norman Conquest, was one of the most venerated saints in the British Isles.

Verses

On this day we commemorate Saint Crescentius the Subdeacon of Florence. Saint Crescentius was a disciple of Saint Zenobius and Saint Ambrose and served the church in Florence faithfully.

On this day we commemorate Saint Gerold. Of the family of the Counts of Saxony in Germany, he donated his land to the monastery of Einsiedeln in Switzerland where his two sons, Cuno and Ulric, were monks. He went to live as a hermit at a village near Mitternach.

By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.