

February 3

Oscar (ca. 800-865) monk and pastor

Oscar (Anskar), a Benedictine monk who served as bishop of Hamburg and Bremen, Germany, died in Bremen in 865. Oscar was born in northern France, near Corbie, and was of Germanic ancestry. He became a monk at Corbie's renowned Benedictine monastery, and was sent very young to teach school in northern Europe. From this it is clear that he was well educated and spiritually gifted.

The Frankish king Ludwig the Pious chose him to evangelize the peoples of Sweden and Denmark. Elected bishop of Hamburg, Oscar began to travel widely and to preach, announcing the Gospel from northern Frisia all the way to Iceland in accordance with the political plans of the Carolingian court.

Notwithstanding his relationships with the powerful of the time, Oscar was a caring pastor, and was particularly attentive to the poorest and most defenseless in the population. He also fought vigorously against the harsh treatment of slaves.

Oscar acquired the additional title of bishop of Bremen, and he continued to carry out his ministry as pastor and announcer of the word of the Gospel until the end of his life. He is the patron saint of Denmark.

BIBLICAL READINGS

Isa 52:7-10; Rom 10:11-15; Mk 6:7-13

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:

Oscar (Anskar), bishop of Hamburg, missionary in Denmark and Sweden

WESTERN CATHOLICS:

Blaise of Sebaste (d. ca. 316), bishop and martyr; *Oscar*, bishop (Roman and Ambrosian calendars)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (25 tubah/terr):

Peter the Faithful (4th cent.), monk at Scetis (Coptic Orthodox Church)

Sebastian (d. ca. 287), martyr (Coptic Catholic Church)

LUTHERANS:

Oscar, missionary to Northern Europe

Matthias Desubas (d. 1746), witness to the point of bloodshed in France

MARONITES:

Symeon the Righteous and Anna the Prophetess

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:

Synaxis of Symeon the God-Receiver, the righteous, and Anna, the prophetess

Maximus the Greek (d. 1556), monk (Russian Church)

WEST SYRIAN ORTHODOX:

Barsauma (5th cent.), father of the Syrian monastic life

OLD CATHOLICS:

Blaise of Sebaste, bishop and martyr