July 4

Andrew of Crete (660-740) pastor and hymn writer

In 740 the pastor and hymnographer Andrew of Crete died on the island of Mitylene.
Born in Damascus, Andrew was a Greek-speaking Christian of Semitic ancestry. He became a monk at Jerusalem's Holy Sepulcher, and around the year 700 he was elected bishop of Gortina, on the island of Crete.
As a pastor he had many gifts, including an ability to revitalize his society's cultural and spiritual life and to comfort the population during the difficult years of the Muslim advance. His Semitic origins are reflected in his liturgical compositions, which closely follow biblical models and are interwoven with verses from Scripture. Andrew invented the liturgical and poetic genre called the canon, a mistagogical doxology that helps participants in the liturgy involve themselves more deeply in the mysteries they celebrate.
The best known of Andrew's liturgical odes is the Great Canon, which is sung during Lent in churches of Byzantine rite. It is a splendid Christian midrash on the themes of sin and repentance, and a contemplation of God's immense mercy manifested in Jesus Christ.

BIBLICAL READINGS

Heb 13:7-16; Lk 6:17-23

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
Elisabeth of Portugal (d. 1336; Roman and Ambrosian calendars)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (27 ba'unah/sane):
Hanania (1st cent.), one of the 70 disciples, martyr (Coptic Church)

LUTHERANS:
Ulrich of August (d. 973), bishop

MARONITES:
Andrew, bishop of Crete

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
Andrew of Jerusalem, archbishop of Crete
Anne (d. ca. 1200), Sava's mother (Serbian Church)
Luarsab of Karthli (d. 1622), martyr (Georgian Church)