July 15

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Bonaventure (ca. 1217-1274) pastor

Today the Catholic and Anglican churches commemorate Bonaventure, a bishop and Doctor of the Church.
Born in Bagnoregio in central Italy around the year 1217, he entered the Order of Friars Minor in 1243 and became a professor at the University of Paris, where he had obtained his theology degree. Elected general minister of the Order in 1257, Bonaventure saw that the demands of a life according to the Gospel could be reconciled with the need for a minimum of instruction. Education had become indispensable in a time in which the Order was expanding and beginning to face serious conflicts.
In Bonaventure's theological reflection, an ardent desire for God, the Franciscan spirit, and scholastic theological methods all meet, with exciting results. Guided constantly by Scripture, where he was convinced he would find all that humanity can know about God, he traced out an itinerary for exploration of the divine. For him, the contemplation of God's fingerprints in creation should go hand in hand with the search for the Creator's presence in human beings, who are made in God's image and likeness. What emerged was a striking synthesis between nascent medieval speculative theology and the mysticism typical of Victorine and Cistercian monasticism, with its focus on the inner life.
Bonaventure was named bishop of Albano and participated in the Council of Lyon, where efforts were made to seek a union with Byzantine Christians. He died in Lyon a week after the Council ended.

BIBLICAL READINGS
Sir 15:1-6; Mt 5:13-16

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:
Swithun (d. 862), bishop of Winchester
Bonaventure, friar, bishop, teacher of the faith

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
Bonaventure, bishop and doctor of the church (Roman and Ambrosian calendars)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (8 abib/hamle):
Psoi (Bishoi) of Scetis (4th-5th cent.), monk; *Ababius* (4th cent.), monk (Coptic Church)

LUTHERANS:
Bonaventure, doctor of the church in Italy

MARONITES:
Cyriacus and his mother Julitta (d. ca. 305), martyrs

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
Cyriacus and his mother Julitta, martyrs

WEST SYRIAN ORTHODOX:
Cyriacus and his mother Julitta, martyrs

EAST SYRIAN ORTHODOX:
Cyriacus and his mother Julitta, martyrs