



Vox Populi
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On Saturday, the Church celebrates the Memorial of Saints John Fisher and Thomas More, two great men who stood up to their king in defence of the Catholic faith.

Saints John Fisher and Thomas More were two men who trod very different paths in life, but both died as martyrs for failing to assent to King Henry VIII's decision to break away from the authority of the Pope and the Catholic Church.

Fisher was a priest who quickly rose through the ranks, becoming vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge before being made a Bishop and then a Cardinal. He was a famed academic and theologian.

More had desired to become a monk earlier in life but decided to marry instead and became a lawyer and judge. He also embarked on a political career, which led to him becoming a prominent figure in early 16th-century England.

Prior to their dissent, both men had enjoyed favour with King Henry VIII. Fisher had been tutor of the future king in the early 16th century just after he was appointed Bishop of Rochester, at the insistence of King Henry VIII's father, King Henry VII.

More meanwhile, served the King as Lord High Chancellor of England while also served as his secretary and a personal advisor.

As the English and Protestant Reformation began to spread through England and Europe, both men sacrificed everything to stand for the faith. They sacrificed their positions within society, their worldly comfort and safety, and their own lives.

Both men were put to death for standing against King Henry VIII, who had wanted to appoint himself head of the Church in England.

While their sacrifice may have seemed futile, as King Henry VIII took over and gutted the Church in England, their martyrdom was a shining light for many English Catholics over the next few centuries.

On Monday, the Church will then turn its attention to the Solemnity of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist.

This nativity is a celebration of the miraculous birth of John the Baptist after both his parents had passed the age of childbearing. Through the gift of his birth, God sent John out into the world to baptise people and to prepare the way for Jesus.