Suggested Readings: *1 Timothy 6: 11 – 16; Ps 40: 6 – 8, 11 – 13; Luke 9: 51 – 56.*

Hugh was born in about AD 1140 in the Kingdom of Burgundy. At fifteen he became an Augustinian canon and, after ordination became known as a preacher. Soon after he visited the chief monastery of the Carthusian Order and was drawn by its silence and disciplined life. He spent ten years at La Grande Chartreuse. Then Henry II of England (himself more than half French) invited him to take charge of the priory at Witham in Somerset, which the king had founded as part of his reparation for the murder of Becket, but which was failing. The Carthusian chapter agreed, and Hugh moved to England. On arrival at Witham he found that building had not begun, and that those who had been dispossessed of land for the priory had not been compensated. Hugh insisted that this be done and continued to fight for the rights of the priory – even against the king. Despite this – and the king's notoriously hot temper – his advice was frequently sought and often accepted.

In 1186, under pressure from the prior of La Grande Chartreuse, Hugh was consecrated as bishop of Lincoln, a diocese which had been without a bishop for most of the previous eighteen years. There was much to be done. The cathedral was in ruins after an earthquake, so Hugh took on the task of restoration: most of the present fabric was designed by him, and he contributed with both money and his own physical labour to the work. He, being himself an able administrator and scholar, attracted able and committed clerics to help in bringing the people back to a lively faith. But, alongside his work for the Church and people of his diocese, Hugh spent much of his energy defending justice. He protected Jews when, during the Crusades, they were attacked in Lincoln, Stamford, and Northampton. He rebuked Richard 'Lionheart' for unjust acts, and – with little effect – warned his successor, John, to avoid the same errors

Each year he returned for a time to Witham to maintain his life of prayer and contemplation.

One author writes of him: *"Hugh was a saint indeed – that is, he was one who appeared to those who knew him best as a pure reflection of Christ, and as such able in a strength not his own to transcend the limits of human virtue and endurance."* (Dom David Knowles)

He died after a long illness on 16th November 1200 and was buried in his cathedral.