



July 12

Commemoration:

Nathan Söderblom, Bishop of Uppsala, 1931

Lars Olof Jonathan Söderblom (15 January 1866 – 12 July 1931) was a Swedish clergyman, Archbishop of Uppsala in the Church of Sweden, and recipient of the 1930 Nobel Peace Prize. He is commemorated in the Calendar of Saints of the Lutheran Church and in the liturgical calendar of the Episcopal Church (USA) on July 12.

Söderblom was born in a village called Trönö, today Söderhamn Municipality, Gävleborg County. His father was a priest and a devoted Christian with a strong personal faith.

He enrolled at Uppsala University in 1883. Although not initially convinced what he wanted to study, he eventually decided to follow in his father's footsteps. On returning from a journey to the U.S., he was ordained priest in 1893.

During the years 1892 and 1893, Söderblom was first vice president and the president of the Uppsala Student Union.

In 1912, he became a professor of Religious studies at Leipzig University. But already in 1914, he was chosen to become Archbishop. During the First World War, he called on all Christian leaders to work for peace and justice. He believed that church unity had the specific purpose of presenting the gospel to the world and that the messages of Jesus were relevant to social life. His leadership of the Christian "Life and Work" movement in the 1920s has led him to be recognized as one of the principal founders of the ecumenical movement. His was instrumental in chairing the Life and Work Conference in Stockholm, in 1925. He was a close friend of the English ecumenist George Bell.

After his death in 1931 his body was interred in Uppsala Cathedral.