



"We exist to receive and share the love of God"

hurst virtual pilgrimage to lindisfarne week 14 the end of the pilgrimage



**pentecost to st aidan's day
31st may-31st august 2020**

week 14 Begins...

Thank you to everyone for your support and prayers as I continue on this physical journey of 309 miles and we spiritually journey together in prayer to Lindisfarne. I have been very grateful for the prayerful support of those whose holy sites I have visited this week.


At the end of last week I had physically walked to and prayed around High Crompton, Burnedge, Milnrow, Newhey and Shaw, Hurst Cemetery (twice), Dove Stones Reservoir on an imaginative journey around Lake Galilee with Revd's Penny and David Warner of Stalybridge and Mossley, and again on another occasion simply walking and praying on my own and a blustery walk around Hollingworth Lake. I walked a total of 38.19 miles last week bringing the total walked to 310.42 miles – pilgrimage completed!

I started last week spiritually walking towards Alnmouth Friary, and continued the journey to Holy Trinity Embleton, St Aidan's Bamburgh and then the final leg of the journey both physically and spiritually to Lindisfarne.

As the new week begins... I am welcomed to Lindisfarne at the St Aidan's Day Eucharist at St Mary Virgin Holy Island by The Revd Dr Sarah Hills, I sail around the Farne Islands, a place special to Cuthbert and on St Aidan's Day I walk along the Pilgrim Posts in the footsteps of so many pilgrims down the ages to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. The journey's end!

I hope that you will continue to walk with me on this spiritual pilgrimage and that you will make use of this booklet in your prayer over the coming week. We have arrived!

hurst virtual pilgrimage prayer



Hurst Virtual Pilgrimage Prayer

**Be by my side Creator God,
Every step I take,
Be before me Saviour God,
Every step I take,
Be behind me Merciful God,
Every step I take,
Be within me Strengthening God
Every step I take.**



Prayer- Mary Fleeson www.lindisfarne-scriptorium.co.uk

day ninety two 30th august welcome

Awake, my soul, and with the sun Thy daily stage of duty run; Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise, To pay thy morning sacrifice.



My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.



Then they were glad because they had quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind. Psalm 107.3



[Pilgrim thanks](#) – before going to St Mary the Virgin Holy Island. [What does a pilgrim carry?](#)

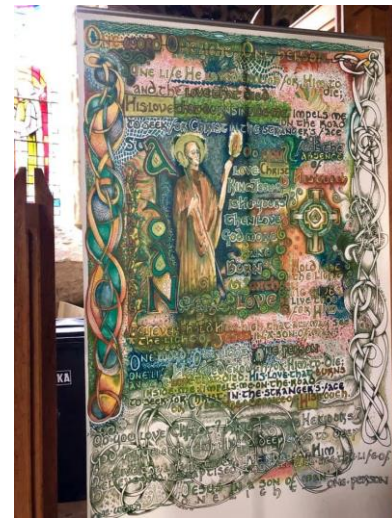
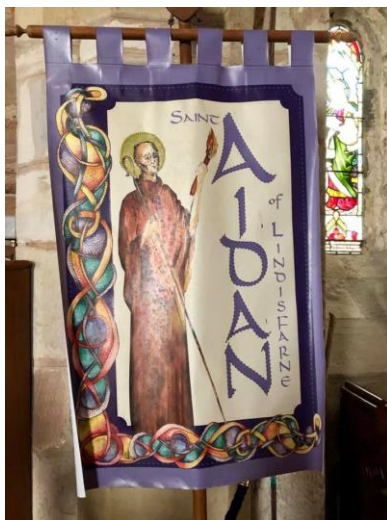


So wonderful to be at St Mary the Virgin Holy Island this morning as they celebrate St Aidan and as I come to the end of #HurstVirtualPilgrimage. Thank you to Revd Canon Dr Sarah Hills for the welcome and for allowing me to share about the Pilgrimage. Such a blessing to be here.



Huge thanks to The Revd Canon Dr Sarah Hills for the [welcome, prayer and blessing](#) as I near the end of #HurstVirtualPilgrimage at St Mary's this morning during the St Aidan day Eucharist.

Good to end the service out at the statue of St Aidan on #HurstVirtualPilgrimage morning. Praying for Sam Quilty as she prepares for ordination as Deacon on 3 October at St Mary's. Giving thanks for this pilgrimage and for this time in this holy "thin place" with the Northern Saints



st cuthbert

Cuthbert was probably born in the Scottish lowlands around the year 640 -around the time that Aidan was called to Bamburgh to help with the evangelization of Northumbria. At the age of eight he was playing with some friends when a 3 year old child became distressed. Cuthbert asked what was wrong and the child said "O holy priest and bishop, Cuthbert, these sort of games are not becoming of one of such a high calling." Cuthbert stored these words in his memory and later took them as a prophecy for his future.

Cuthbert was learning that when he prayed strange coincidences happened and more and more Cuthbert was learning to pray to the Lord who sent his angels to care for those in need and who delivered the poor out of their troubles. The words from Hebrew's often came to Cuthbert's mind. "Forget not to show your love to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angel's unawares."



He wondered what strange guises angels might wear if this were true and felt he needed to take great care of each individual, for in each one there was a chance of meeting with God.

The great turning point in Cuthbert's life came when he was 16. It was the end of August and the dark nights were returning. Cuthbert was still in the hill country of what are now the borders of England and Scotland, accompanied by a group of shepherds. Cuthbert was on watch while his companions slept. During this time he prayed, conversing with God through the long watches of the night. Suddenly he saw movement in the sky, a stream of light cut into the darkness. He then saw a most wonderful sight. Angels descended and ascended, taking with them to his heavenly home a soul of exceeding brightness. Cuthbert gave thanks to God for what he had seen.

Meanwhile the visions began to fade. Thinking he might need witnesses to share this event, he woke the shepherds and asked them to search the sky for angels. The next day they heard the news that Aidan the holy man of Lindisfarne had died at Bamburgh and was taken to heaven. Their lives had touched each other and Cuthbert was sure it was for a purpose. He felt his life was linked with Aidan's and he knew that God was calling him. If Aidan had been alive, he would have gone to Lindisfarne, instead he went to Melrose and the prior Boisil saw something in the young Cuthbert, he recognised his potential as a leader and took him under his wing. Together they studied the Gospel of John and Boisil gave Cuthbert a deep love for that Gospel.

Cuthbert spent Boisil's last days with him discussing John's Gospel and when Boisil died Cuthbert became the Prior of Melrose Abbey, whilst still in his twenties. Boisil had told Cuthbert he would become a Bishop, Cuthbert did not like the idea and would have preferred to have lived his life in service of God as a hermit. Cuthbert spent his time teaching and in spiritual direction – his great delight was to go out in mission. He went into communities and told them stories from the Gospels and preached to them. He carried with him a small altar of oak with five crosses on it – one on each corner and one in the middle, depicting the wounds of Christ and if he visited a community with a Christian presence he would celebrate the Eucharist.



Cuthbert would disappear at night and one night one of the monks followed him. Cuthbert had gone into the waters of the North Sea up to his neck in order to pray and praise God with his arms outstretched singing to the sound of the waves. At day break, he went to the shore to kneel and pray again. While he knelt on the sands he two otters ran out of the sea and rubbed themselves against his legs and feet as if to dry them. Cuthbert blessed the creatures and they returned to the sea. Cuthbert forgave the monk when he realised he had been spying on him but he told him

not to tell anyone of what he had seen until after his death. The monk kept his promise.

The Synod of Whitby in 664 had far reaching consequences and after Eata was appointed Abbot of Lindisfarne he called on Cuthbert to be the Prior and to reconcile the differences that still divided the community over Celtic and Roman practices. The brethren were often overawed with by the love and devotion that Cuthbert showed as he celebrated the Mass, and it was noticed that he could not celebrate the holy mysteries without tears in his eyes. When Cuthbert heard confessions it was often he who was reduced to tears. He was known as a healer and a man of God and people came to the Island to seek his advice or simply to be with this holy man.

Cuthbert continued with his night vigils, he didn't need much sleep, and he would seek out a quiet place on the North of the Island or he would choose Hobthrusk Island, not far from the monastery and cut off from Lindisfarne for about 6 hours each tide. He would drive away drowsiness by singing the psalms. In 676 Cuthbert was given permission to go Greater Farne, not far from Bamburgh, but a proper Island, totally cut off from the sea. He now enjoyed the friendship of the birds and cultivating a small garden. People still sought him out on the Island and came to him for advice. In 684 another Synod was held and a new Bishop as needed and Cuthbert was the person everyone thought of. Cuthbert did not want to move but after much pleading he consented to leave

the Farne Islands with tears flowing down his face and he was made Bishop of Lindisfarne after spending the winter of 684-5 on the Farne Islands in prayer as preparation for his consecration.

On Easter Day 685 in York Cuthbert's consecration took place. He remained an indefatigable traveller and preacher, walking all over his diocese, and spending time as a hermit on Farne Island in between. After only a year however, he felt his end coming and resigned his office, dying on Farne in the company of a few of his monks on 20th March 687.



Cuthbert had wanted to be buried on the Farne Islands but the monks took him back to Lindisfarne and buried him in the church. Miracles were recorded by those visiting the tomb and after 11 years the monks decided to dig up his mortal remains, wash the bones and put them on display so that they might be seen and venerated. When the sarcophagus was open, to everyone's surprise Cuthbert's body was found to be intact and looked as if he was sleeping. Cuthbert's shrine became the most visited and richest in Europe. After a Viking invasion in 793 the monks decided to leave Lindisfarne and to take Cuthbert's body, along with Oswald's head and Aidan's relics, to a safer place. Over the next few years, the monks travelled all over the North of England evading capture until times became more settled, when they made their home in Chester-le-Street. In 995 after another Viking uprising they were on the move once more and after getting stuck in some mud in Chester-le-Street one of the monks heard a voice say "Take the body of the Saint to Dunholm". They built a wooden church

there as a shrine for Cuthbert's remains. By 999 the Saxon church was ready and on 11 August 1093 the foundation stones of the present Cathedral were laid. By 1104 the building was sufficiently complete for Cuthbert's coffin to be translated into the apse. Immediately before this the monks inspected Cuthbert's body and saw that it remained incorrupt. After the Reformation the relics were buried under the original site of the shrine.

We remember Cuthbert on the day he died, 20th March but as this day always falls in Lent many keep 4th September, the day of his translation into the cathedral, as his main festival.



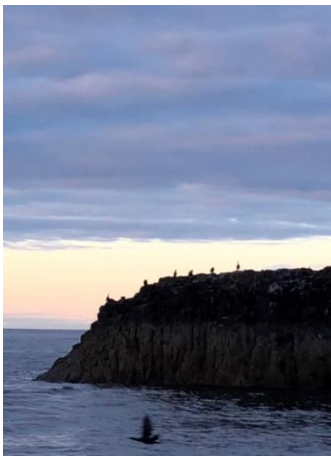
The Sculpture above is called The Journey and it is by Fenwick Lawson as is the Cuthbert sculpture (far right) which is set in ruins of Lindisfarne Priory. The window of St Cuthbert is in St Mary the Virgin, Holy Island.

the farne islands cruise

Sailing round the Farne Islands on the eve of St Aidan's day on #HurstVirtualPilgrimage and preparing to walk the final part of the pilgrimage across the pilgrim posts early morning. The birds, the seals and chapel- reminders of St Cuthbert - a companion of mine on this journey.



Almighty God, by triumphing over the powers of darkness Christ has prepared a place for us in the new Jerusalem: may we, who have this day given thanks for his resurrection, praise him in the eternal city of which he is the light...



day ninety three 31st august pilgrim posts st aidan

An amazing start to St Aidan's Day on #HurstVirtualPilgrimage. On Lindisfarne. A large puddle on the path to the way castle creates perfect reflections of the amazing light.

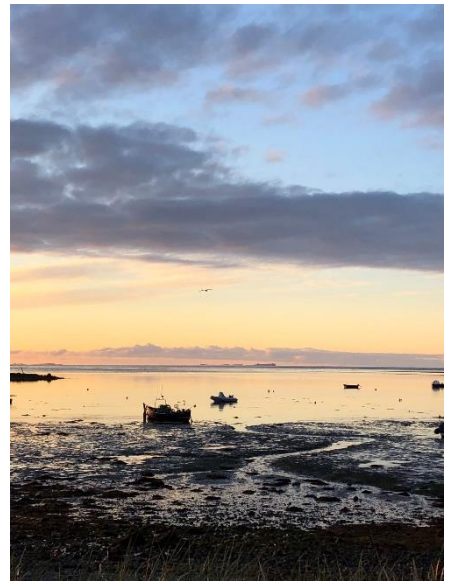
"Christ gave them as a light to the nations that his salvation might reach to the ends of the earth."



You can see St Oswald's Bamburgh Castle over the sea. Morning prayer on the beach looking out to both castles as I prepare for the walking along the pilgrim posts later. The beauty of this place is literally breath-taking.



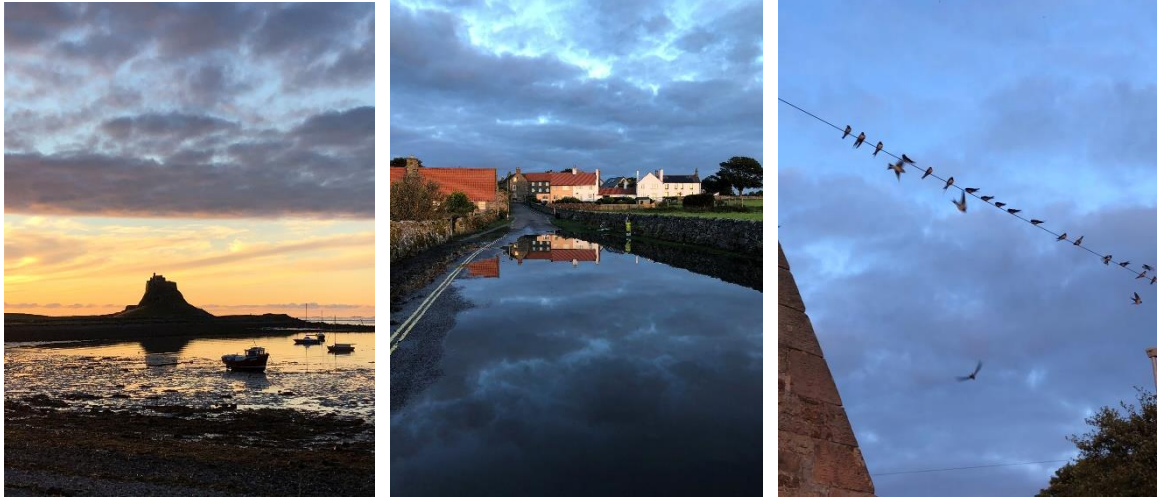
Praying on this day the church celebrates St Aidan for all who serve and worship at churches dedicated to St Aidan. Praying for The Revd Michael Read and all at St Aidan's Sudden and Fr Stephen Doyle at Ss Aidan and Oswald RC Church in Royton.



When morning gilds the skies,
My heart awaking cries:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Alike at work and prayer
To Jesus I repair:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

[A 360 Video of the view](#)

More reflections in the puddle walking back to where I'm staying. No social distancing for this choir of birds this morning! Sense of peace as I look forward to what the day may hold.



The culmination of #HurstVirtualPilgrimage the walk across the Pilgrim posts on St Aidan's Day to the island given to St Aidan by St Oswald and made its Bishop. Thanks to Mary Fleeson for the Pilgrimage Prayer which has begun each day's pilgrimage walk.

Video of the start of the [walk across the Pilgrim Posts](#)

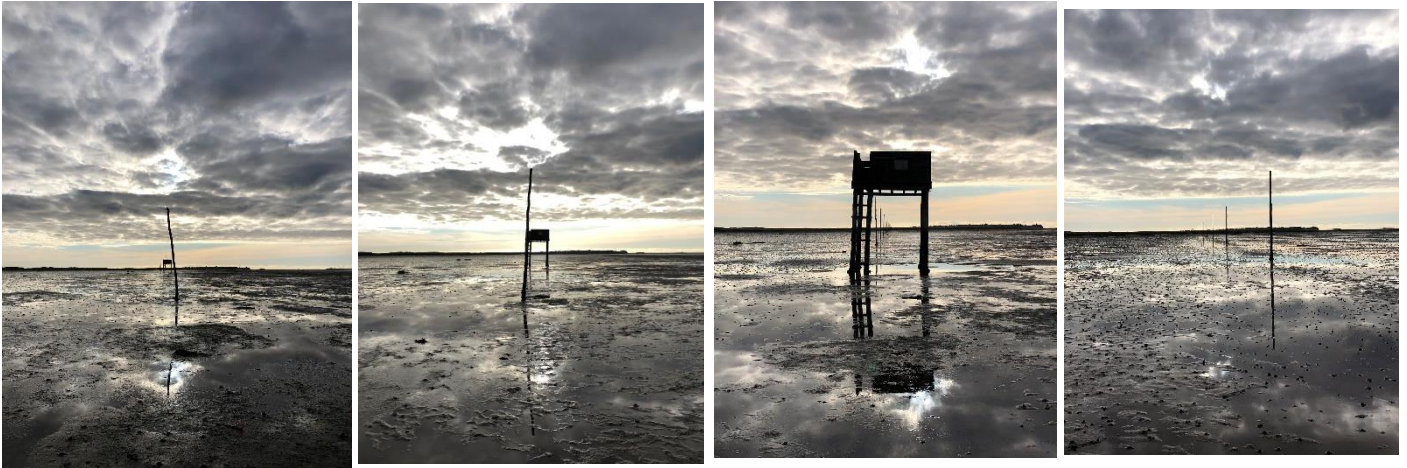
Walking across the pilgrim posts at 7.30am Footprints already in the sands from those who have already begun their journey. Conscious, as I have been throughout this pilgrimage, of all who have walked this pilgrim path before and those who will come after.



Guide me, O thou great redeemer, Pilgrim through this barren land; I am weak, but thou art mighty; Hold me with thy powerful hand: Bread of heaven, bread of heaven, Feed me now and evermore, Feed me now and evermore. I pray that this pilgrimage may continue to feed us spiritually in the weeks and months to come.



You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.' Psalm 91:1-2



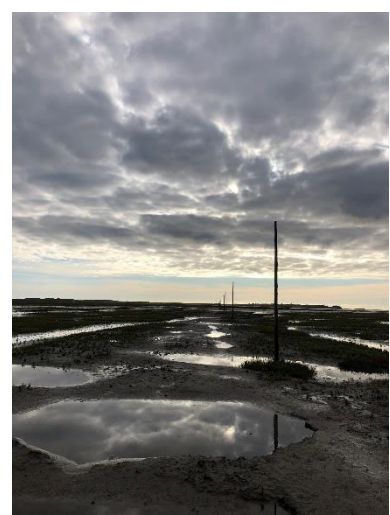
Last night I saw the seals on the Farne Islands, today I could hear the seal song as I walked.

Lord God, you make your salvation known in the sight of the nations;

tune the song of our hearts to the music of creation as you come among us to judge the earth

[Video of the view](#) and seal song.

The walk across the pilgrim posts went from beautiful silver like reflections in clear waters to thick dense black mud difficult to navigate in such a short time. Praying for all whose life has been turned upside down through bereavement or illness.



I was stuck in the mud and the safety box ahead seemed to be taunting me! Never in this pilgrimage have I looked more closely at how or where I have trod as I sought to find a safe way to walk. Lord help me tread more carefully and lightly on my pilgrimage through life.



Seeing the shells on the sands- giving thanks for my baptism as I walk the pilgrim posts - giving thanks for my parents and my St Mary's High Crompton family who brought me up in the faith to shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.



An emotional end on #HurstVirtualPilgrimage. The relief of a strenuous journey's end, the sheer joy of arriving, holding emotions of past 13 weeks and remembering my Grandad Bill, my pal, who was born on St Cuthbert's Day and died on St Aidan's Day, 27 years ago.

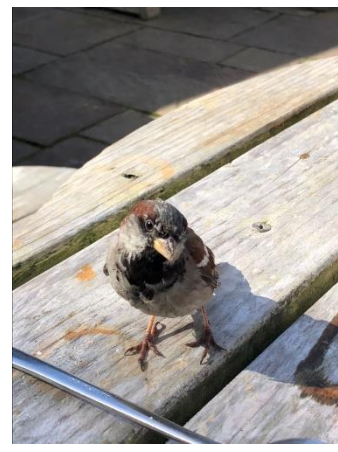
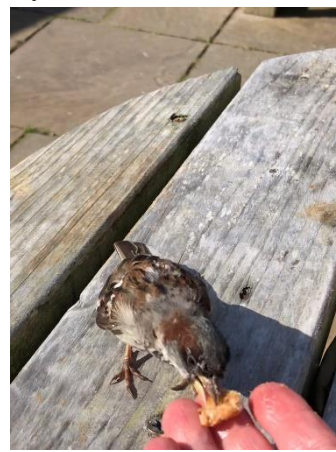


I've reached the final post on #HurstVirtualPilgrimage on St Aidan's day. As we remember the first Bishop of this Island I'm praying for our Archbishop Stephen Cottrell on his birthday. Aidan walked wherever he could-it seems fitting to arrive here on his day having walked over 310 miles!

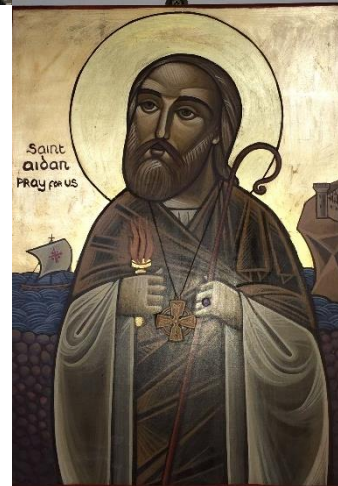
St Bede pray for us, St Cedd pray for us, St Oswald pray for us, St Mary the Virgin pray for us, St Hilda pray for us, St Cuthbert pray for us, St Aidan pray for us. [End of pilgrimage video](#)



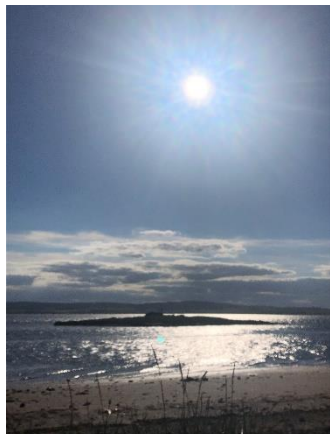
A pilgrim's breakfast as I finish #HurstVirtualPilgrimage and share it with some feathered friends! As they say round these parts - shy bairns get nowt! Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them....



Spent some time with St Aidan & St Cuthbert at the end of #HurstVirtualPilgrimage on this glorious day. For all that has been -Thanks. To all that shall be -Yes.



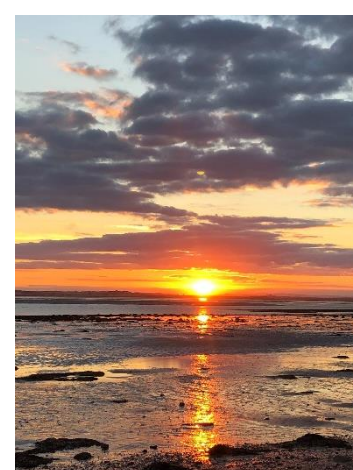
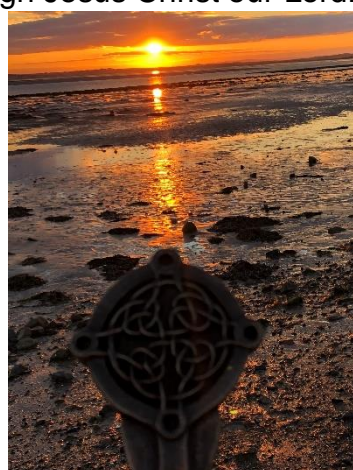
Evening prayer by Cuthbert's Island on St Aidan's Day Everlasting God, you sent the gentle bishop Aidan to proclaim the gospel in this land: grant us to live as he taught in simplicity, humility and love for the poor, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.



It's time to take off and put away my pilgrimage shoes. I've worn them every day that I've walked on #HurstVirtualPilgrimage from the first to the last- well I walked bare foot today. I wonder if they can be considered holy? They are certainly holey! #tiredpilgrim #holeyshoes



Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the silent hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this fleeting world, may rest upon your eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



"If we must choose one man to be called Apostle of England it has to be claimed that Aidan is that man." Kate Tristram, Priest and Historian.

st aidan

King Oswald, the King of Northumbria had spent some time on Iona in exile. He had become a Christian and hoped that one day he might share in the bringing of Christianity to Northumbria. As soon as he regained control of his Kingdom, he sent to Iona for teachers and preachers, that his people might be educated and hear the Gospel of Christ.

The monk that was sent, Cormac, soon returned complaining of the brutish and uncouth peoples of Oswald's Kingdom. Aidan knew this great opportunity could not be missed for the sake of the community on Iona and for the sake of the Gospel.

Aidan stood up with a firm voice and said, "Brother, it seems to me that you were too hard on these untaught minds. You expected too much too soon. You should have followed the example of the apostles and begun by giving them the milk of simple teaching, gradually instructing them until they were able to accept more. You cannot force people to be where you want them to be without showing them what they are missing by remaining as they are." A strong reprimand from a gentle soul. Cormac was amazed and stung by Aidan's words more or less said if you can do better pick a band of fellow workers and see what you can do!

Abbot Segne offered Aidan the chance to go as a bishop and evangelist with a group of men to educate and evangelise the Court of Oswald and the people of Northumbria. Aidan felt he had been preparing for this moment his whole life and felt called to adventure for Christ!



As Aidan and his men journeyed to Northumbria they recited the psalms as they travelled – they knew all 150 of them by heart. Aidan knew that they should not live in the King's fortress, they had to win hearts through the love of Christ not through the power of the King. He was delighted to see lots of Islands off the coast at Bamburgh and asked the King if they might use one of those for their base. Oswald explained they were too small and little more than rocks – "Not one of them is large enough or productive enough for you to settle on them." "Not one?" asked Aidan disappointed. "Well there is one if you can call it an Island, it is larger than the rest and has its own water supply with good fishing around the shores. But it is not a proper Island." Aidan was puzzled but Oswald explained that twice a day as the tide goes out the sea no longer surrounds it and it becomes part of the

mainland joined my sand and mudflats. Then twice a day the tide comes back in and it becomes an island again. The tide changes every day so you have to understand the rhythm to live there in safety.

Aidan could only see good in this – they were near enough the centre of power but far enough away for the quiet of prayer. The idea of being cut off and then open appealed to Aidan's idea of what their mission would be like. There must always be times of a balance between prayer and outward actions, between stillness and activity.

Oswald gave Aidan and his monks the island and offered to provide everything they needed. They set aside 40 days of prayer for the dedication and preparation of the site as a "city of God." Mission had often failed because people sought to talk about God when they had not yet talked enough to him.

Aidan was incredibly generous and gave away all he had given to him – one time he gave a beggar a horse that the King, Oswin, had given him to aid him in his mission. Aidan had a great

talent for meeting and making contact with people and to help with this he preferred to walk as horse riding would set him above people. Walking made it easier to pray too, especially with others. (I found that walking made it easier to pray too!)

You could imagine Aidan instructing his students to keep their feet on the ground. They should not think of themselves as more important than or above others, for all are children of God. Nor should they be so heavenly minded as to be of no earthly use. They must have their feet firmly on the earth even if their hearts were set on heaven.

In the 16 years since Aidan first went to Bamburgh Aidan had worshipped God and brought others to him – there were centres of worship and places of learning throughout the land. All down the coast at every river mouth there was a Christian settlement and often a monastery. Churches and wayside crosses were springing up across the land. With Oswy as King after Oswin died things were beginning to change and war and internal strife was hindering the Christian mission and the unity of the Kingdom.

Aidan began to look back on his life and he thanked God for Columba and the saints of Iona, especially those who had accompanied him to Lindisfarne. He remembered the hospitality of Kings especially Oswald and Oswin, He remembered when he persuaded Princess Hilda to stay in England and become a nun. At the age of 12 Hilda had been baptised alongside King Edwin by Paulinus in York. When she was 33 Aidan persuaded her to help establish a monastery in England rather than go to France and Hilda was given a hide of land on the north side of the River Wear, but she had been there only a year when he made her abbess of the monastery at Hartlepool. The first woman in Northumbria to take the vows and habit of a nun and herself consecrated by Aidan. Aidan was aware of so many monasteries that had been founded and of the good work they were doing. So many exciting things had happened, but there was still so much more to be achieve.

It was at Bamburgh at the wooden church Aidan had established that Aidan died on the evening of 31 August 65. His feet had always been firmly planted on the ground but his heart had always belonged to God and the kingdom of heaven. (see Week 13)

It would be impossible to say how many lives Aidan had touched and influenced in his lifetime. He influenced kings and kingdoms, he taught future teachers and missionaries. His life touched the lives of Chad and Cedd, Hilda and Ebba. Countless unnamed people were brought to faith and a whole land changed. We have heard of Cuthbert's heavenly vision on the night Aidan died of Cuthbert seeing the angels take Aidan's bright soul into heaven, so Aidan influenced even this young man, though Cuthbert was over forty miles away in the hills looking after sheep.

Aidan was buried at Lindisfarne in the monk's cemetery. Later his bones were translated into the church on the Island. After the Synod of Whitby Colman took some of Aidan's bones with him first to Iona and Ireland. The rest of Aidan's bones remained on Lindisfarne until the second Viking invasion of 875. Then his relics, along with the body of Cuthbert and the head of Oswald, were removed from the island by members of the community seeking a safe home for them. After years of wandering Aidan, Oswald and Cuthbert would find rest. Aidan of course especially remembered on 31 August the day he died at Bamburgh.

Joseph Barber Lightfoot, Bishop of Durham in the times of Queen Victoria, said of Aidan and his lasting influence. "Augustine was the apostle of Kent, but Aidan was the apostle of England."



Extracts from the David Adam book, Aidan, Bede and Cuthbert: Three Inspirational Saints © David Adam 2006 have been used in the pieces about Cuthbert and Aidan in this newsletter.

The end of the Pilgrimage?

We have journeyed together on Hurst Virtual Pilgrimage, making a pilgrimage of the heart to Lindisfarne for 93 days – a quarter of the year! I have walked physically over 310 miles around Tameside, Oldham, Rochdale, Edinburgh, York, and Northumberland. As I have walked on this pilgrimage I have prayed and through photos, words and scripture shared that prayer journey with you, which I hope has been helpful in your own reflections and prayers over these 13 or so weeks.

As we set out on this journey of the heart I hoped that it would give us as a Church, a focus as we navigated these strange and often bewildering times. I hoped it would be a way of walking together during this time when we could not physically worship in our church. I hoped that it would be beneficial to our spiritual and emotional growth and that at the end of our Pilgrimage together we would be blessed with a deeper understanding of our relationship with God, we would know ourselves more as God made us to be and we would discern his presence with us more and more in ourselves in others, and in any circumstance we find ourselves in as we continue our pilgrimage through life. I sense that for many of us those hopes have been or are being fulfilled.

I, of course, also hoped that through sponsorship we would raise much needed funds for our church in a time when regular fundraising avenues were closed off to us. Sponsorship money is still coming in and I hope will do so over the next few weeks – I think some people wanted to make sure I completed it! At the time of writing (1 September 2020) we have raised well over £3000 which is an incredible achievement. Thank you so much to all who have sponsored the 309 mile walk – it is very much appreciated. For those who still wish to sponsor you may [Donate Now here.](#)

I want to thank everyone for their encouragement and most importantly their prayer, both for me as I walked the pilgrimage, and with me as we made this journey of the heart together. I have felt held and carried in prayer by people from St John's family, people following on social media, the people we have virtually visited along the way and by the intercession of the saints. Cuthbert, Hilda, Cedd, Oswald, St Aidan and of course St Bede, amongst many others, have been companions on this journey they have encouraged me, supported me and prayed with and for me.

It has been a great encouragement that our pilgrimage has inspired and encourage others and Revd Anne Gilbert Assistant Curate at Dearnley, Wardle and Smallbridge and Fr Simon from the Catholic churches in Ashton have also embarked on pilgrimages of their own. Fr Simon arrived at Walsingham on Saturday after walking 155 miles, as I arrived at Lindisfarne. He is now carrying on to Canerbury – another 150 miles. Please hold him in prayer.

Well the 93 days are over, the 309.3 miles have been walked. Is that it? Is the pilgrimage finished? It certainly isn't for me and I hope it isn't for you who have made the journey with me. The prayer begun on this pilgrimage continues to shape and form us, our reflections on that prayer continue to feed us and nourish us. When we go on any pilgrimage we cannot help but be changed and transformed by it. TS Elliot in his poem Little Giddings famously says about pilgrimage,

*"We shall not cease from exploration
and the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we started
and know the place for the first time."*

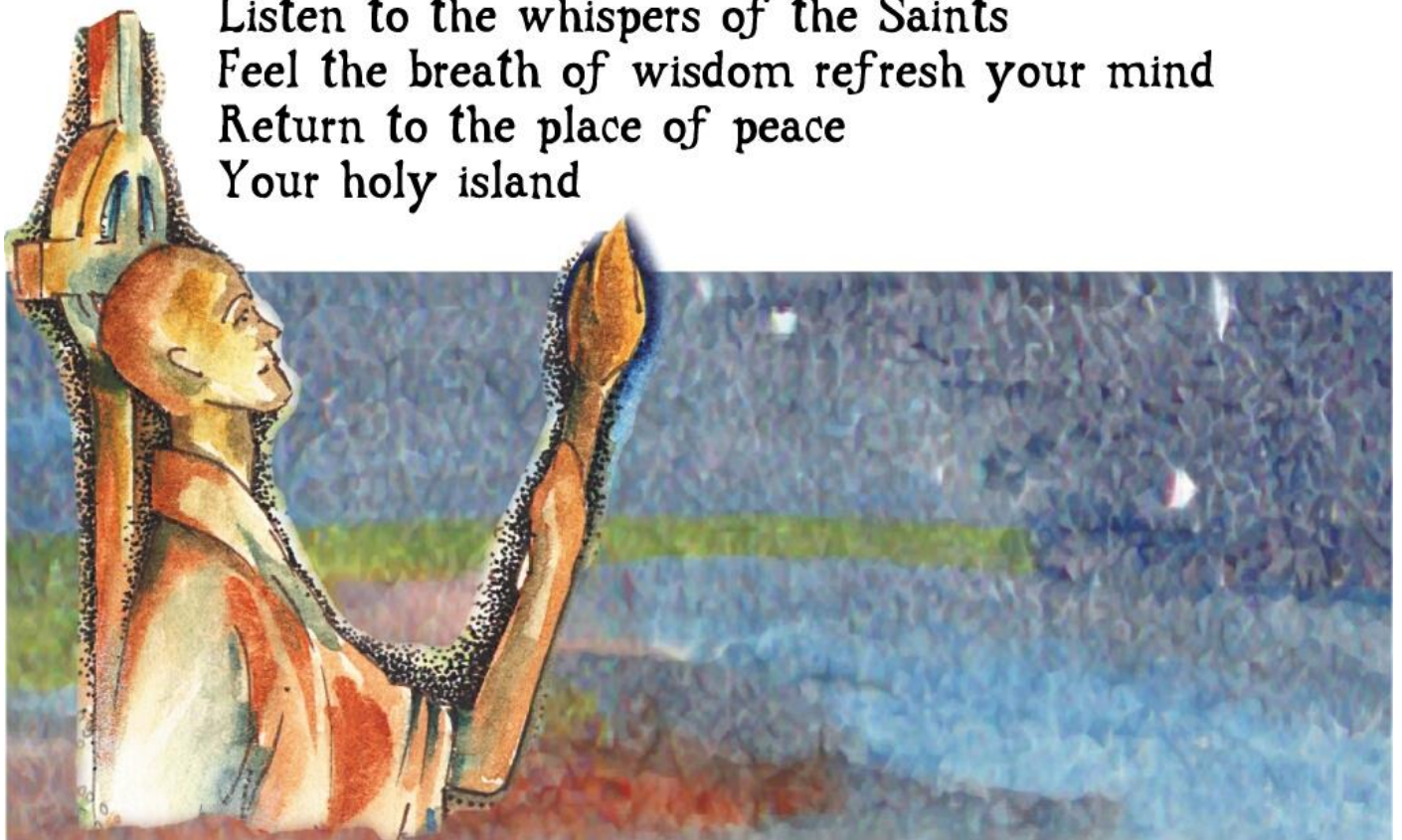
We will all return from this pilgrimage back to where we started but I hope we do so open to God continuing to work in and through us, open to his gentle nudging, his pruning, his nurturing and his all-encompassing, unconditional love.

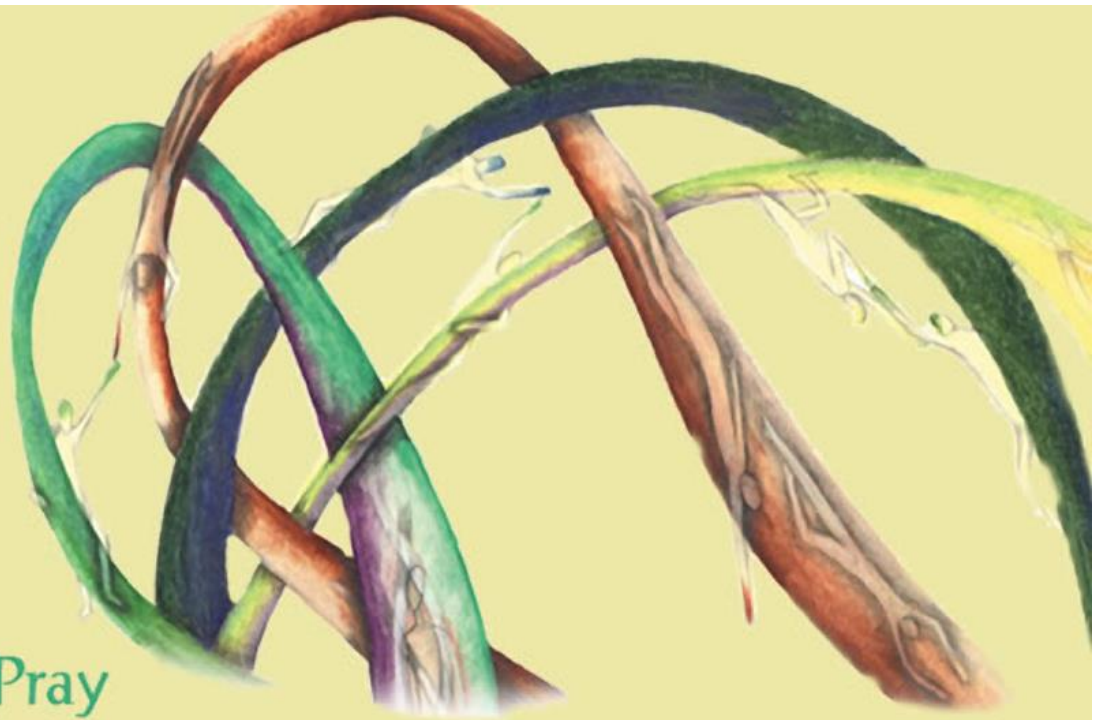
What difference will this Pilgrimage make to your life? Have you been encouraged to try different ways of prayer? Do you want to visit some of the places we have visited virtually? Do you want to find out more about some of the saints we have met along the way?

Thank you, my fellow pilgrims, for being companions on this journey of the heart to Lindisfarne. Pray for me, as I will continue to pray for you, as we see where our pilgrimage will lead us.

With love and prayers, Revd Liz.

Be still,
let the tide of memories wash over you.
Listen to the whispers of the Saints
Feel the breath of wisdom refresh your mind
Return to the place of peace
Your holy island





A Call to Pray

May my conversations be significant,
May my meetings be blessed,
May my path cross the paths of others who love You.
May my path cross the paths of others who don't know You.
May my touch be Your touch of infinite gentleness,
May my words be Your words of wisdom,