

Reflection Monday Week 33 – St Edmund of Abingdon 2020

St Edmund Rich was born in St Edmund's Lane, Abingdon, on 20th November 1175. His father was a rich merchant. Edmund led an ascetic life, studied at Oxford and Paris, and was teaching by the end of the century. For six years he lectured in mathematics and dialectics, in both Oxford and Paris, winning distinction for helping to introduce the study of Aristotle. He is the first known Oxford Master of Arts, and where he taught was eventually named St Edmund Hall. Between 1205 - 1210 he studied theology and was ordained a priest. Earning a doctorate in divinity, he won fame as a lecturer in theology and as an extemporaneous preacher. Between 1219 and 1222 he was appointed vicar of the parish of Calne, Wiltshire, and Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral. He became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1233. He was a notable and effective reforming Bishop. His love for discipline and justice aroused opposition, and he found himself ranged against Rome as champion of the national Church. Eventually, like his predecessors, St Thomas Becket and Stephen Langton, he retired to Pontigny, where he is buried. He died at Soisy-Bouy on 16th November 1240. Edmund was canonised in 1246, and is the Joint-Principal Patron of the Diocese of Portsmouth. He is venerated as a vigorous and reforming bishop and as a peacemaker, as well as being a distinguished commentator on the Scriptures and an effective spiritual writer.

In the readings for the feast, Edmond is likened to Jeremiah, who was fearless in preaching the truth, speaking out against injustice and calling for self-discipline. Like St Peter in the Gospel, he showed his love for Christ in the care and service he gave to the people he served. And like St Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, he could say *God is the one who has given me the qualifications to be an administrator of the new covenant, which is not a covenant of written letters but of the Spirit: the written letters bring death, but the Spirit gives life*. Edmond fostered the Spirit of God throughout his life, for which we are truly thankful.

What's a sentence that can never be truthfully written down? "This pen isn't working"

Today I taught my son a lesson by eating his homework!! Tomorrow he will learn that most people do not believe you, even if you tell the truth.