

Reflection Wednesday Week 4 – Sts. Theodore, Dunstan and Laurence 2021

St Laurence of Canterbury (- 619) succeeded St Augustine as Archbishop of Canterbury and played a large part in establishing the Anglo-Saxon church. In 597 Pope Gregory I assigned Laurentius, a Benedictine friar, to the first Anglo-Saxon mission aimed at converting England to Roman Catholicism. He died at Canterbury on 3rd February 619. **St Theodore of Canterbury (602 - 690)** was born in Tarsus in about 602. In 667 he was living in Rome, still a layman, when the Pope chose him to be Archbishop of Canterbury. He was ordained priest, consecrated as Archbishop, and arrived in Canterbury in May 669. The English Church at this time was troubled and divided, and he travelled round the country filling vacant bishoprics and promoting peace and unity. He died at Canterbury on 19th September 690. **St Dunstan of Canterbury (- 988)** began at Glastonbury, where he became abbot in 945. In 960 he became Archbishop of Canterbury, where he remained until his death on 19th May 988. He worked hard for the spiritual and temporal well-being of his people, restoring churches, judging lawsuits, defending the weak and friendless, reforming institutions and even promoting the draining of parts of the Somerset Levels so that they could be used for agriculture. In folklore he figures in many duels with the Devil, which he wins by ingenuity as much as by holiness.

Not only were Laurence, Theodore and Dunstan great leaders they are the foundation stones on which the Church was built in England. They were true labourers for the harvest and it is good that we remember them today with great thanksgiving. They stand before us as faithful and loyal servants of the Gospel and of Jesus Christ but also as model labourers in the harvest. They met with many difficulties and challenges but remained true to their calling placing all their trust in God. The best way we can show our thanks to God and pay tribute to these great men is to be labourers for the Gospel today in our families, in our places of work and in our local communities.

"We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20), is a summons to each of us to "own" and to bring to others what we bear in our hearts. Our life of faith grows weak, loses its prophetic power and its ability to awaken amazement and gratitude when we become isolated and withdraw into little groups. By its very nature, the life of faith calls for a growing openness to embracing everyone, everywhere. ". . . even those who are most frail, limited and troubled can be missionaries in their own way, for goodness can always be shared, even if it exists alongside many limitations" (Christus Vivit, 239). Pope Francis

Today we pray for Sir Captain Tom Moore who inspired a Nation and brought Good News to many. May he rest in peace.

A couple was going out for the evening. The last thing they did was to put the cat out. The taxi arrived, and as the couple walked out of the house, the cat shoots back in. So, the husband goes back inside to chase it out.

The wife, not wanting it known that the house would be empty, explained to the taxi driver *"He's just going upstairs to say goodbye to my mother."*

A few minutes later, the husband got into the taxi and said, *"Sorry I took so long, the stupid thing was hiding under the bed and I had to poke her with a coat hanger to get her to come out!"*