

Reflection Saturday Week 22 St Cuthbert 2021

St Cuthbert (634? - 687) was believed to be a shepherd boy who became a monk, and later prior, at Melrose. After the Synod of Whitby (664), he became prior of Lindisfarne and gradually won over the community to Roman ecclesiastical customs. He was zealous in preaching the Gospel but most attracted to living the life of a hermit, and in 676 he left the monastery and lived in solitude on the nearby island of Inner Farne. For his last two years, he served as bishop of Lindisfarne but returned to his island to die, on 20th March 687. His remains were removed from Lindisfarne to escape Viking raiders and enshrined at Durham Cathedral. His feast is celebrated on the anniversary of the enshrinement of his remains at Durham.

Having affirmed and praised the faithful for their commitment, like St Paul, Cuthbert strengthened and encouraged the followers of Christ in their faith rather than find fault with them. He said,

“Have faith and wholeheartedly trust God who will never abandon those who Love Him”

Today, both Paul and Cuthbert would call us urgently to change the way we live in order to save the planet from self-destruction. Creation has the power to heal itself if we would allow it. It does the impossible: growing plants out of concrete and walls; deserts spring to life immediately after rains; life and new growth rebound after devastating forest fires. However, the call to be carbon neutral, although good and to be encouraged, is not enough. We must work towards negative carbon - draw more carbon from the air than we are creating.

*The book of nature open lies, with much instruction stored;
but till the Lord anoints our eyes we cannot read a word.*

*Philosophers have poured in vain, and guessed, from age to age;
for reason's eye could ne'er attain to understand a page.*

*Though to each star they give a name, its size and motions teach;
the truths which all the stars proclaim, their wisdom cannot reach.*

*With skill to measure earth and sea; and weigh the subtle air;
they cannot, Lord, discover thee though present everywhere.*

*To saints the sun and stars on high, the flow'rs that paint the field,
and all the artless birds that fly, divine instruction yield.*

*The creatures on their senses press, as witnesses to prove
their Saviour's pow'r, and faithfulness, his providence and love.*

*Thus may we study nature's book to make us wise indeed!
And pity those who only look at what they cannot read. John Newton*

- Prison is just one word to you, but for some people, it's a whole **sentence**.
- Scientists collaborated to study the effects of alcohol on a person's walk, and the result was **staggering**.

