

Reflection Thursday week 32 St Martin of Tours 2021

St Martin was born in the Roman province of Pannonia (western half of modern Hungary) c. 316 and educated at Pavia, Italy. He was baptized, left the army and spent time as a hermit. He founded a monastery at Ligugé, western France, where he lived a monastic life guided by St Hilary. He was ordained priest and became bishop of Tours. He was a good shepherd, founded other monasteries, educated the clergy, and preached the Gospel to the poor. He died in 397. The famous story about St Martin is that while a soldier in Amiens he gave half his military cloak to a beggar and later had a dream in which the beggar revealed himself as Christ.

"I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord." (Ps 88/89) was the theme song of Martin's life. It is clear that he responded to the Spirit of God at every turn without realising he had done so until afterwards. He should be our spiritual leader over the next few months as we continue our synodal journey together listening and responding to each other with the hope and genuine belief that the Spirit will lead us where we need to go.

Even the gospel of the last judgement suggests that those who did good did not recognise the presence of Christ in those they served. They saw them as family and therefore natural to want to help, support, encourage and show good example, and to speak with wisdom and courage. Like St Martin, they too discovered Christ in those they served and helped only after the event. And so will we, as we journey together as Church helping, supporting, encouraging, inspiring and motivating others just as we, too, will be inspired, motivated and encouraged along the way.

Overheard conversation:

Have you seen the dog bowl? Wow, I didn't know dogs could play cricket!!!