

Reflection Wednesday Week – St Wulstan 2022

St Wulstan (1008?) became a Benedictine monk at Worcester Cathedral priory and later became prior. He reformed the monastic observance, and became known as a preacher and counsellor. In 1062 he became Bishop of Worcester and effectively combined the tasks of monastic superior and diocesan bishop. He is the first English bishop known to have made a systematic visitation of his diocese. With Lanfranc he helped abolish the slave trade from Bristol to Viking Ireland, and supported Lanfranc's policy of reform. He built parish churches and re-founded the monastery at Westbury-on-Trym. He insisted on clerical celibacy, and helped make Worcester an important centre of Old English literature and culture. He was known for his abstinence and generosity to the poor. After the Norman Conquest he remained one of the few Englishmen to retain office. In the Barons' Rising, he was loyal to the Crown and defended the Castle of Worcester against the insurgents. He was buried in his Cathedral (1095) and canonised in 1203.

Wulstan worked for the good of people like Jesus in the Gospel. David fought for the salvation of his people allowing God to work through him. Then he used the weapon, threatened to kill him, to take Goliath's life. Jesus' strong desire was to bring healing and wholeness to people. Those who plotted his death, met with the same fate and lost their inheritance in their uprising against Rome.

*Geoffrey Bishop of Coutances once asked why Wulstan wore lamb-skins when he could and should wear sable, beaver or wolf. Wulstan replied that Geoffrey and other men well versed in the way of the world should wear the skins of crafty animals but he was conscious of no shiftiness in himself and was happy with lambskin. Geoffrey pressed the point and suggested he could at least wear cat. But **'Believe me,'** answered Wulstan, **'the Agnus Dei is more often chanted than the Cattus Dei!!'***