

Reflection Thursday Week 4 Sts. Laurence, Dunstan and Theodore 2022

St Laurence (- 619) was one of the original missionaries who accompanied St Augustine in 597. He succeeded Augustine as Archbishop of Canterbury about 604 and died at Canterbury on 3rd February 619. **St Dunstan (- 988)** became an abbot in Glastonbury in 945. In 960 he became Archbishop of Canterbury until his death 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 helped drain parts of Somerset for agricultural use. Folklore describes his many duels with the Devil, which he won by ingenuity as much as by holiness. **St Theodore (602-690)** was born in Tarsus about 602. In 667, although a layman in Rome, the Pope appointed him Archbishop of Canterbury. He was ordained priest, consecrated Archbishop, and arrived in Canterbury May 669. The English Church was troubled and divided, and he travelled round the country filling vacant bishoprics and promoting peace and unity. He died at Canterbury 19th September 690.

The Chinese New Year began on 1st February. It is the year of the **water tiger** who is action-oriented and represents strength, clearing away evil and bravery. Laurence, Dunstan and Theodore inherited the qualities of the water-tiger in their work for the Church in England. We owe them a great debt. Whereas Moses pleaded with God for the life of the Israelites, these archbishops spent their lives caring for the people they served, creating supportive structures, instructing them and setting them an example to follow, like the good shepherds God chose them to be.

Almighty God, you called your servants Laurence, Dunstan and Theodore to Canterbury and gave them gifts of grace and wisdom to establish unity where there had been division and order where there had been chaos: Create in your Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, such divine union and concord that it may proclaim, both by word and example, the Gospel of the Prince of Peace, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.