

### Reflection Wednesday week 33 St Edmund of Abingdon 2022

St Edmund Rich was born on St Edmund's Lane, Abingdon, on 20<sup>th</sup> November, about 1175. His father was a rich merchant, hence the surname. Influenced by his mother, Edmund led an ascetic life. He studied in Oxford and Paris and became a teacher. For six years he lectured in mathematics and dialectics in both Oxford and Paris, winning distinction for introducing studies of Aristotle. He is the first known Oxford Master of Arts. Where he taught was eventually named St Edmund Hall. Between 1205 and 1210 he studied theology and was ordained a priest. As a Doctor in Divinity, he became a famed lecturer in theology and an extemporaneous preacher. Between 1219 and 1222 he was appointed vicar of Calne in Wiltshire and Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral, finally becoming Archbishop of Canterbury in 1233. He was a notable and effective reforming Bishop. His love for discipline and justice aroused opposition. He ranged against Rome for the national Church. Eventually, like his predecessors St Thomas Becket and Stephen Langton, he retired to Pontigny, where he is buried. He died at Soisy-Bouy on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1240.

Devotion to him was especially marked at Abingdon, and at Catesby where his sisters were both nuns. Edmund was canonised in 1246, and is the Joint-Principal Patron of the Diocese of Portsmouth. He is venerated as a vigorous and reforming bishop and peacemaker. He was a distinguished commentator on the Scriptures and an effective spiritual writer.

As St Paul writes in his letter, Edmund was a letter from Christ with the Good News written in his heart. Today Edmund says the same to us. We, too, are a letter from Christ with the Good News written in our hearts. May all those we encounter read the letter that we are so that Christ's name is glorified.

**Teacher: Give me a sentence that starts with "I".**

Student: I is the....

Teacher: Stop! Never put 'is' after "I". Always put 'am' after "I".

Student: OK. I am the ninth letter of the alphabet.