

Reflection Monday Week 9 St Boniface 2023

For the first forty years of his life Boniface (b. 675) was known as Wynfrith. He was born in Devon and educated at the monastery in Exeter. He joined the Benedictine abbey at Nursling, near Southampton. He was a teacher and preacher but wanted to preach the gospel in a foreign land. In 718, Pope Gregory II commissioned him to do so, changing his name from Wynfrith to Boniface. He left England, never to return, and took the gospel to the heathen tribes of Germany, where he had great success. He was made Bishop of Mainz and founded or restored dioceses in Bavaria, Thuringia, and Franconia. Later in life he worked with King Pepin the Short reforming the Frankish church. Although over 70 he set out to evangelize Friesland (part of modern Holland) where he was set upon and murdered, on 5th June 754. He is buried at Fulda, near Frankfurt, in a monastery he founded, and is honoured as the apostle of Germany.

The Gospel of the Good Shepherd would appear to have been chosen for the feast of St Boniface because it was the Gospel that inspired him to leave his homeland for Germany. And, living as a model of the Good Shepherd, he brought very many people to God. Eventually, like the Good Shepherd, he gave his life for his sheep.

Be inspired by his wisdom:

Let us trust in Him who has placed this burden upon us. What we ourselves cannot bear let us bear with the help of Christ. For He is all-powerful, and He tells us: 'My yoke is easy, and my burden light.'

The Church is like a great ship being pounded by the waves of life's different stresses. Our duty is not to abandon ship, but to keep her on her course.

O Lord, you have been our refuge in all generations.