

## Reflection Monday week 22 St Cuthbert 2023

**St Cuthbert (634? - 687).** According to tradition, he was a shepherd boy. He became a monk, and later prior, at Melrose. After the Synod of Whitby in 664 he became prior of Lindisfarne and gradually won over the community to Roman ecclesiastical customs. He was zealous in preaching the Gospel but attracted to living as a hermit, and in 676 he left the monastery and lived in solitude on the nearby island of Inner Farne. For the last two years of his life, he served as bishop of Lindisfarne, but he returned to his island to die, on 20<sup>th</sup> March 687. His remains were removed from their resting place at Lindisfarne to escape Viking raiders and were enshrined at Durham Cathedral. Because the anniversary of his death always falls within Lent, his feast is celebrated on the anniversary of the enshrinement of his remains at Durham.

The reading that Jesus proclaims in the synagogue:

*The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,  
for he has anointed me.  
He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,  
to proclaim liberty to captives  
and to the blind new sight,  
to set the downtrodden free,  
to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.*

. . . could well be applied to St Cuthbert, who was a well-loved shepherd of the people he served. Not only that but, like Jesus, he sought to spend time with the Father in prayer and contemplation. The inspiration and wisdom he received came from the same Father.

Quotes:

- *If I could live in a tiny dwelling on a rock in the ocean, surrounded by the waves of the sea and cut off from the sight and sound of everything else, I would still not be free of the cares of this passing world, or from the fear that somehow the love of money might still come and snatch me away.*
- Enlightenment can penetrate even the helm of iron.
- Preach quietly, but have a large cudgel handy.
- Capricious behaviour brings knots to the heads of those lacking wisdom.
- Foolishness can be beaten.
- Salvation is better than smart answers.
- Some good folk can only understand one thing.
- Evil which cannot be removed must be eliminated.