

Christ Church Freemantle Sunday 21st March – Passion Sunday

I'm writing my article on St Cuthbert's Day whilst thinking about how this coming week it is a year since the first lockdown, and our lives changed quite considerably. For so many people in the last year, time has taken on a different meaning, days may have felt longer or far too short, or some of us may have not even known what day it is half of the time. We can feel displaced, confused, and bewildered. I feel very lucky that because I've been working the same pattern (although mostly at home) I have had that basic structure to the week, it has helped me focus.

I think the festivals and saints' days of the year can also act as pointers for us. I've always loved that sense of following the church year, starting at Advent, then Christmas and Epiphany, moving to Candlemas and Lent and Holy Week and Easter, then to Ascension and Pentecost. We've tried to ensure in our articles and pew sheets (as well as our services of course) that we are following the church year as closely as usual. For our forebears, that structure was even more important, especially when it was closely tied to the seasons of the year.

St Cuthbert was an Anglo-Saxon saint from Northumbria who lived in the 7th Century. He was part of what was then a Celtic form of Christianity, where the aim was simply following the Way, travelling the journey in the everyday ordinariness of life with a deep care for God's creation. And yet as the Roman form of Christianity took over, Cuthbert was tasked with teaching the new ways to the monks at Lindisfarne. He faced huge opposition and bitterness but won them round with his calm patience and tolerance.

Cuthbert and his humility, simplicity and tolerance can be an inspiration for us as we head into Passiontide and towards Holy Week and Easter. We are connected to each other as a community as well as surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses (including Cuthbert) who join us on our journey along the Way.

'Have faith and wholeheartedly trust God who will never abandon those who Love Him' *St Cuthbert*



Liz Coe