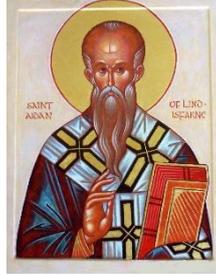


PRAYING WITH THE CELTIC SAINTS



ST AIDAN

'Flame of the North'

We light this candle, because Christ is the Light no darkness can extinguish



*In the name of the sending Father,
in the name of the gentle Son,
in the name of the teaching Spirit,
in Love's name, the Three-in-One.*

We come humbly into your presence, Lord.
Open our very being to your Truth and
fill us with your love and peace. **Amen.**

A LINDISFARNE RHYTHM OF PRAISE

Ebb tide, full tide, praise the Lord of land and sea!
Barren rocks, darting birds praise His holy name!

Poor folk, ruling folk, praise the Lord of land and sea!
Pilgrimed sands, sea-shelled strands, praise His holy name!

Fierce lions, gentle lambs, praise the Lord of land and sea!
Noble women, mission priests, praise His holy name!

Chanting boys, slaves set free, praise the Lord of land and sea!
Old and young and all the land, praise His holy name!

SCRIPTURE

Leviticus 19:18

Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the LORD.

Mark 12 : 29-31

‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength’. The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.



James 2 : 1-5 and 8-9

My brothers and sisters: believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favouritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes and a poor man in filthy, old clothes also comes in. If you pay special attention to the man wearing the fine clothes and say, ‘here’s a good seat for you’, but say to the poor man, ‘you stand there’, or ‘sit on the floor by my feet’, have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my dear brothers and sisters, has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and inherit the Kingdom he promised to those who love him?

However, if you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’, you are doing right. But if you show favouritism, you sin, and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

THE LIFE OF ST AIDAN



In 7th century, the Christian King of Northumbria, Oswald, invited the monks of Iona to send him someone to teach Christianity to his people. This followed a failed mission by a monk called Cormac, who declared the Northumbrians to be unteachable! Aidan was quickly made bishop and sent to Oswald's court. However, unlike Cormac, he declined to make his base at the royal palace at Bamburgh, choosing instead the island of Lindisfarne (later known as Holy Island), thus giving his mission centre a separate identity. So in 635AD a settlement, including a farm, school and monastery was established.

Aidan (whose name means 'flame' in Gaelic) mastered the language and spent much of his time travelling around the north-east on foot, speaking and listening to people. He chose not to ride, so that he would not appear above people, either physically or in status. On one occasion, the king commanded him to ride and gave him a fine horse with royal trappings. Full of compassion for a beggar he met, he gave it all to him. The king wasn't too pleased, but Aidan asked the pointed question : which is more valuable – an expensive horse or an apparently worthless beggar. On another occasion, Aidan was invited to a royal banquet and couldn't believe the amount of food laid out, while the poor and hungry hovered around the palace gates. Aidan not only took food out to them, but gave them the silver platters to sell! His teaching and example changed the king's understanding of what it meant to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

Aidan's deep compassion for all led him to use the money the monastery had been given to visit the slave markets and purchase slaves. He then gave them the choice of freedom or learning. Many chose the latter and so the first school for the English (the Angles) began to flourish.

He was a man of deep devotion, gentleness and humility. Rather than being someone who practised what he preached, he was someone who only preached what he practised.

With its emphasis on personal spirituality, education, law and compassion for the weak, Aidan's Celtic mission won the respect of the Roman bishops, who came to him seeking counsel. The difference between the two strands of Church was tolerated while Aidan was alive. It is probably the case that his death contributed to the calling of the Council of Whitby in 664 and the subsequent rift that ensued.

Aidan has been suggested as a better patron saint of England than St George (who became the patron saint in 14th century). Aidan certainly made a greater impact, transforming the religious, ideological and political landscape of Anglo-Saxon England.

REFLECTION



St Aidan was a man of deep compassion, who perfectly embodied the two commandments that Jesus declared the greatest. He loved God with his whole being and his neighbour as himself.

We cannot keep the first commandment without keeping the second. These extraordinary times in which we now live, afford us ample opportunity for both. Let's give thanks to God as we reflect on the many ways and the many places we are witnessing deep compassion, as people seek to love their neighbour – friend or stranger. Let's ask God to reveal to us new ways of sharing his love and bringing his healing into the world.

THE MANTLE OF ST AIDAN

Oh Aidan, you had the vision
of a population transformed in Christ:

You had the faith to reach out.

You had the gentleness to win the hearts of king and commoner:

You had the faith to reach out.

You ministered in power and patience to the sick and dying
and brought the Gospel to all you met:

You had the faith to reach out.

You are apostle to this land.

You are in pain that people here are heedless of your Lord.

You will not rest until they are won.

Father, put the mantle of Aidan upon us and give us the faith to reach out.

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD



Set us free, O God, to cross barriers for You,
as You crossed barriers for us.

Spirit of God, make us open to others in listening,
generous to others in giving
and sensitive to others in praying,

as we now bring before You those people and situations that are on our hearts,
trusting that You hear us and use our prayers in
the mystery of healing

Come, Lord Jesus, hear our prayer ...

We pray for those living in fear, in hardship, sickness and deep distress due to
this pandemic. We name those in special need at this time.

Come, Lord Jesus, hear our prayer ...

We remember all those who are lonely and now ever more isolated and we pray
the comfort of your presence in the loving kindness of others.
We pray for those known to us and those known only to you.
Come, Lord Jesus, hear our prayer ...

We give thanks and pray God's protection for those who care for the sick and
vulnerable at home, in hospitals, care homes and hospices. For all the returning
NHS workers, the volunteers and the emergency services.
Come, Lord Jesus, hear our prayer ...

We remember before God the people of the world for whom disease, famine and
death have long been a daily reality.
We name those people and places we carry on our hearts.
Come, Lord Jesus, hear our prayer ...

We offer prayers for the Church, here in Mount's Bay, in Cornwall and
throughout the world. As in the time of St Aidan, may we be a beacon of light in
these dark days, finding new ways to bring the love and peace of our Lord to
those in need.
Come, Lord Jesus, hear our prayer ...

We pray for all who are suffering, whether bodily, mentally or spiritually.
Those known to us, who are in need of healing, we name now before God.

We remember those who have died and ask the comfort of God's promises for
those who are grieving and a deep sense of his presence, as they are forced to
mourn in a way they would not have chosen.
Come, Lord Jesus, hear our prayer ...

We thank You Lord for Aidan and all the saints who brought
Your Light to this country; who fearlessly challenged injustice and violence
and who were a living example of Your love.
We pray that we might be part of a re-kindling of Christian imagination and the
vision of God on earth.
**We humbly offer our prayers in the name of our Lord and our Redeemer,
Jesus Christ. Amen.**

*We draw all our prayers together in the prayer our
Saviour taught us:*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING



Today and always, may we:
Look upon each person with the eyes of Christ.
Speak to each person with the words of Christ
and love each person in the strength of Christ.

*In the name of the Holy Father.
In the name of the Victor Son.
In the name of the Praying Spirit.
In Love's name, the Three-in-One.
Amen*

