

MONDAY
19 APRIL
Acts 6:8-15
Psalm 119:17-24
John 6:22-29

TUESDAY
20 APRIL
Acts 7:51 – 8:1a
Psalm 31:1-5. 16
John 6:30-35

WEDNESDAY
21 APRIL
Acts 8:1b-8
Psalm 66:1-6
John 6:35-40

THURSDAY
22 APRIL
Acts 8:26-end
Psalm 66:7-8.
14-end
John 6:44-51

FRIDAY
23 APRIL
George, martyr,
patron of England
1 Maccabees
2:59-64
or Revelation
12:7-12
Psalm 126
2 Timothy 2:3-13
John 15:18-21

SATURDAY
24 APRIL
Acts 9:31-42
Psalm 116:10-15
John 6:60-69

REFLECTION

John's Gospel is an extraordinary reflection on the life and ministry of Jesus. Some commentaries think that it's written with such insight, it must be one of the earliest Gospels, from one who knew Jesus personally. Others think it can only be the fruit of years of prayerful reflection, displaying the depth of understanding born of turning over and over what Jesus said and did to reach the profound truths it contains.

This week we have the chance to take a few verses at a time (bite-sized chunks) of John's account of Jesus' teaching after the feeding of the five thousand, which is recounted earlier in chapter six. Jesus carefully explains that it was more than just providing a picnic; it was a sign of God's provision of a heavenly diet – that to believe in Jesus was to feed on the bread of heaven. Even the disciples find this difficult to take in (see Saturday's reading), so we can be forgiven if we struggle to understand, but at its heart it is the message of the Eucharist, that in believing and receiving the life of Jesus in bread and wine, we receive his gift of eternal life, and are sustained in our life of prayer and discipleship.

PRAYER

Lord, you have the words of eternal life,
 and you offer them to us in bread and wine.
 Help us to receive your gift of life,
 and live it to your praise and glory,
 for the sake of the world.



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HOLY PLACES

PART IV – ST CUTHBERT'S CAVE

Heather Smith concludes her series about sacred sites of the UK.

St Cuthbert, Abbot of Lindisfarne Priory and Bishop of Lindisfarne, died on Inner Farne in 687. He had been living there as a hermit. The monks buried him on Lindisfarne and his tomb soon became a place of pilgrimage, with many miracles attributed to him. But almost a hundred years later the monastery was attacked by Vikings in a shocking raid, and after another eighty years the monks became concerned about invasion by the Danes. They left Lindisfarne, taking Cuthbert's body with them. They were to wander around the area for seven years, but legend has it that their first resting place was an impressive sandstone rock shelter near Belford – inland and a little south of the island they had left.

You can reach the cave only on foot, walking on part of the long-distance footpath known as St Cuthbert's Way. The route from the National Trust car park at Holburn Grange takes you across farmland and into a small forest plantation to the atmospheric cave. Far away from traffic and signs of civilisation, it is easy to imagine the monks arriving with their precious cargo and taking shelter.

If you climb up on top of the cave using the path to the side, you can see Lindisfarne in the distance, a poignant memory for the monks of the place they had left.

Of all the places associated with the monks of Lindisfarne, this is probably the one where you are most likely to find yourself alone. Here there is space and peace to contemplate the way in which certain places become holy places. You might wonder whether the monks found it to be a thin place, where heaven and earth are close, or whether it has become so for us because of its association with them. Whatever you conclude it has a numinous feel about it. If you allow it, it will draw you towards God, by its tranquillity or by joining your prayers with those of the monks who rested here.



LIVE
 the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU
 THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by
 Caroline Hodgson
 and
 Heather Smith

Third week of Easter

Monday 19 April to
 Saturday 24 April
 2021

WEEK