

walk with the northern saints
- a pilgrimage to lín dísfarne



trínty sunday to st aídán's day
31st may-31st august 2026
week 9

week 8

In Week 8 I walked around Royton and Chadderton, Derker, Waterhead and Clarksfield visiting St Thomas' Leesfield, St Agnes, Knolls Lane and St John Hey. I completed the rest of the Crompton Circuit, Very early on in this pilgrimage I walked to Christchurch Denshaw, this week I walked around the Saddleworth villages and visited the rest of the churches in the Saddleworth team – St Chad's Uppermill, St Thomas' Delph, Holy Trinity Dobcross, St Anne's Lydgate, Christchurch Friezland, St Mary's Greenfield, and Kilngreen Church Diggle as well as the Uppermill Parish Centre. During the pilgrimage I have walked to and around every parish church in the Oldham part of the Ashton and Oldham Deanery.

Spiritually we journeyed to the twin monasteries of St Oeter's Monkswearmouth and St Paul's Jarrow, where St Bede lived and worked. We then continued on to Newcastle Cathedral and finally to St Cuthbert's Bedlington. Our next stop is at the Franciscan Friary at Alnmouth.

week 9

This last week we journeyed spiritually to Alnmouth Friary and to Holy Trinity Embleton. Physically I have walked around Royton and Chadderton, and I went to my old church St John the Evangelist Hurst and Holy Trinity Bardsley, around Rochdale and RHS Bridgewater

sponsored walk

As well as being a virtual pilgrimage, where we pray each day and 'visit' holy and spiritual sites along the way to Lindisfarne, there is also the opportunity to sponsor Revd Liz for the physical challenge of walking 325 miles between Trinity Sunday and St Aidan's Day (31 May-31 August). Each Church, St Matthew and St Luke Chadderton and St Anne, Longsight Royton will be raising money for their own Church funds but they will also be raising money for Dr Kershaw's Hospice.

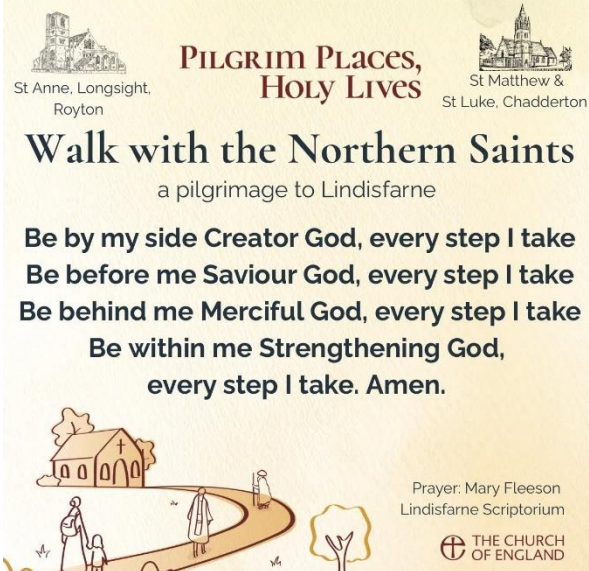
To sponsor Revd Liz and donate to **St Matthew and St Luke Chadderton and Dr Kershaw's Hospice** via our secure portal please click [here](#).

To sponsor Revd Liz and donate to **St Anne, Longsight, Royton and Dr Kershaw's Hospice** via our secure portal please click [here](#).

Please do share this newsletter with family and friends, tell them about the pilgrimage and maybe ask if they would follow along and be willing to sponsor Revd Liz.

Please do continue to pray for me as I pray for you.

With love and prayers Revd Liz



The poster features a yellow background with a central illustration of a winding path leading to a church. Pilgrims are shown walking along the path. At the top, there are two small church icons: St Anne, Longsight, Royton on the left and St Matthew & St Luke, Chadderton on the right. The title 'PILGRIM PLACES, HOLY LIVES' is prominently displayed in the upper center. Below it, the main heading 'Walk with the Northern Saints' is followed by the subtitle 'a pilgrimage to Lindisfarne'. A series of four lines of text, each starting with 'Be', describes the spiritual journey. At the bottom right, the prayer is attributed to Mary Fleeson of the Lindisfarne Scriptorium, and the logo of The Church of England is present.

St Anne, Longsight, Royton

PILGRIM PLACES, HOLY LIVES

St Matthew & St Luke, Chadderton

Walk with the Northern Saints
a pilgrimage to Lindisfarne

Be by my side Creator God, every step I take
Be before me Saviour God, every step I take
Be behind me Merciful God, every step I take
Be within me Strengthening God, every step I take. Amen.

Prayer: Mary Fleeson
Lindisfarne Scriptorium

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

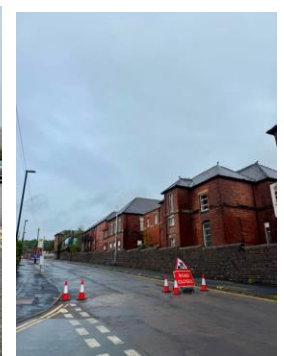
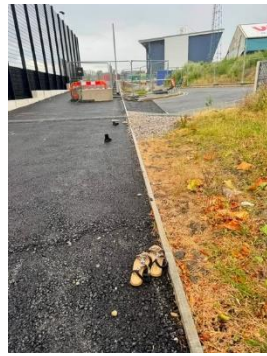
northern saints pilgrimage

Depart	Arrive	Miles	Total
St Matthew's Chadderton	St Anne's Royton	1.5	1.5
St Anne's Royton	St Mark's Heyside	1.5	3
St Mark's Heyside	St Thomas' Moorside	1.5	4.5
St Thomas' Moorside	Christchurch Denshaw	2.6	7.1
Christchurch Denshaw	St Bartholomew Marsden	7.2	14.3
St Bartholomew Marsden	Huddersfield Parish Church	7.4	21.7
Huddersfield Parish Church	CR Mirfield	4.5	26.2
CR Mirfield	Wakefield Cathedral	10.1	36.3
Wakefield Cathedral	All Saints Pontefract	9.5	45.8
All Saints Pontefract	Selby Abbey	13.3	59.1
Selby Abbey	Bishopthorpe	11	70.1
Bishopthorpe	York Minster	3.4	73.5
York Minster	Stanbrook Abbey	22.3	95.8
Stanbrook Abbey	Ampleforth Abbey	4.6	100.4
Ampleforth Abbey	St Mary's Lastingham	15.5	115.9
St Mary's Lastingham	All Saints Helmsley	10.8	126.7
All Saints Helmsley	St Hilda's Priory	27.8	154.5
St Hilda's Priory	Whitby Abbey & St Mary's Whitby	1.7	156.2
ST HILD'S WAY from Whitby	To Hartlepool		
Whitby Abbey & St Mary's Whitby	St Hilda's Whitby	0.7	156.9
St Hilda's Whitby	Sandsend	2.4	159.3
Sandsend	Runswick Bay	4.6	163.9
Runswick Bay	Staithes	4	167.9
Staithes	Skinningrove	5	172.9
Skinningrove	Huntcliffe Roman Station	3.3	176.2
Huntcliffe Roman Station	Saltburn	0.2	176.4
Saltburn	Transporter Bridge	13	189.4
Transporter Bridge	Greatham Creek	4.2	193.6
Greatham Creek	Seaton Carew	6.7	200.3
Seaton Carew	St Hilda's Hartlepool	4.7	205
St Hilda's Hartlepool	St Aidan's Hartlepool	3.5	208.5
St Aidan's Hartlepool	Durham Cathedral	18	226.5
Durham Cathedral	St Peter's Monkwearmouth	14	240.5
St Peter's Monkwearmouth	St Paul's Jarrow	7.5	248
Paul's Jarrow	Newcastle Cathedral	6.8	254.8
Newcastle Cathedral	St Cuthbert's Bedlington	13	267.8
St Cuthbert's Bedlington	Alnmouth Friary	23	290.8
Alnmouth Friary	Holy Trinity Embleton	9	299.8
Holy Trinity Embleton	St Aidan's Bamburgh	9.2	309
St Aidan's Bamburgh	Lindisfarne	16	325

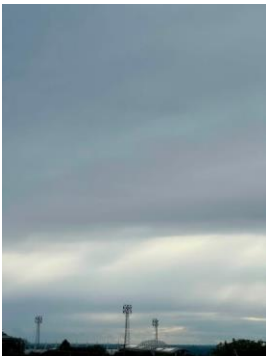
Day fifty seven 26th July Trinity 8 and St Anne

2.54 miles

It's hard to believe that this is the start of Week 9. Winnie and I set off in this drizzle this evening. We walked by the side of Clayton Playing Fields and saw 3 pairs of abandoned shoes! Walking past the hospital and praying for all receiving treatment at the moment, those waiting for tests procedures and those anxiously waiting for test results.



The rain eventually stopped and the light changed and everywhere looked a bit brighter. Praying for Margaret and Kevin at St Matthew's who celebrated their Diamond (60) Wedding Anniversary last week. Praying too for Pat and Rodney celebrating their Blue Sapphire (65) Wedding Anniversary this week. "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." 1 Corinthians 13:7 I have walked 2.54 miles and we are still on our spiritually to Alnmouth Friary.

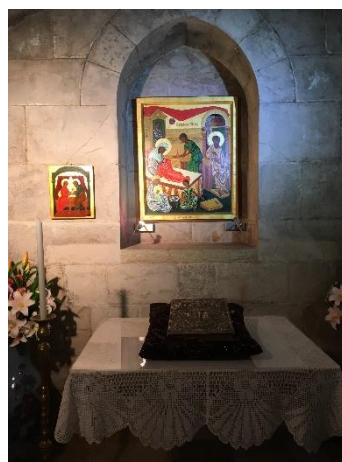
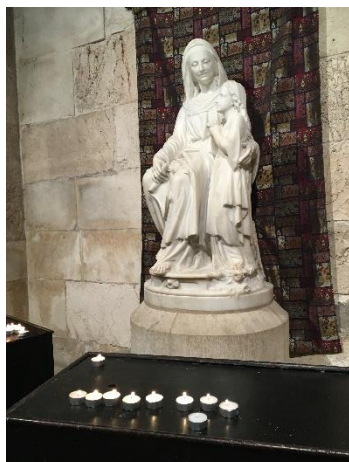


Today the Church celebrates the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Anne and St Joachim. In the proto-gospel of James, written in the middle of the second century, the parents of Mary the mother of Jesus are named as Anne and Joachim. The story appears to be based heavily on that of Hannah, the mother of Samuel. The Church maintains their feast day both to emphasise God's plan from the beginning to send his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem fallen humanity; and also to show God's faithfulness in keeping his covenant with all generations.

The Church of St Anne in Jerusalem stands next to the Pools of Bethesda at the start of the Via Dolorosa. People come here to venerate Since Crusader times this is believed to have been the site



of The Blessed Virgin Mary's childhood home. The church has incredible acoustics and when people sing the sound reverberates around the basilica and is breathtakingly beautiful. It has been said that when a choir sings in the church "Heaven begins to ring". Since 1878, it has been administered by the Missionaries of Africa, a catholic order, commonly called "The White Fathers", for the colour of their robes. Fr Peter (pictured) often greets pilgrims at the church.



Day fifty eight

27th July

6.7 miles

This morning I began the pilgrimage walk, in the place where I began the Hurst Virtual Pilgrimage to Lindisfarne 6 years ago- outside St John the Evangelist Hurst where I was Vicar for 8 years before I came to Royton and Chadderton.

Praying for Revd Carol Schofield, the Vicar of Hurst now, and for her family at this time.

Praying for David Southworth, the Churchwarden and Janet Matley the focal leader and for the PCC, all the congregation and the community they serve.

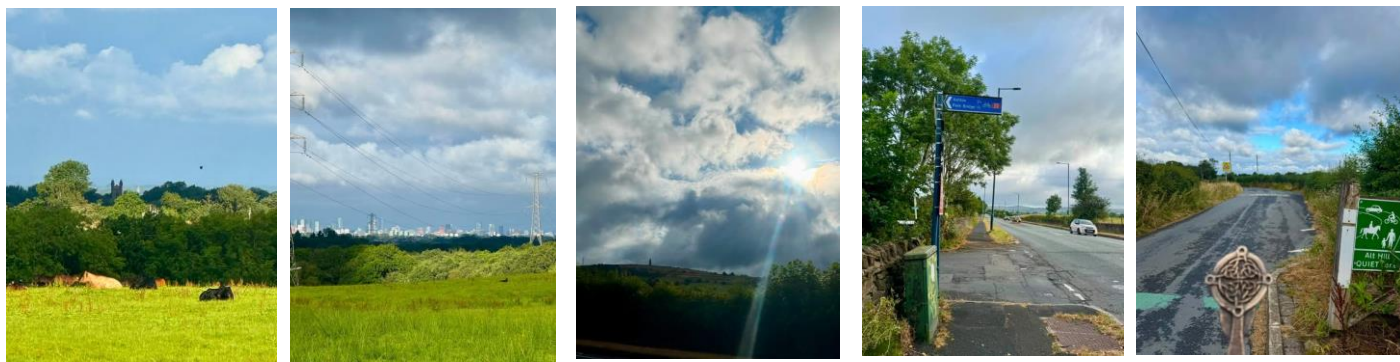
Giving thanks for the Wednesday Welcome which has served the Hurst community for the last 9 and a half years. Praying for all the volunteers and the guests.



Praying for all at Hurst Community Centre and all the groups that use it. Prayers for all at Ashton United and Ashton United in the community. Giving thanks for the work they do in the Hurst community. Prayers for Fr Jude and the congregation at St Christopher's. Prayers for all at BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir. I remember the temple being built just before I left Hurst.

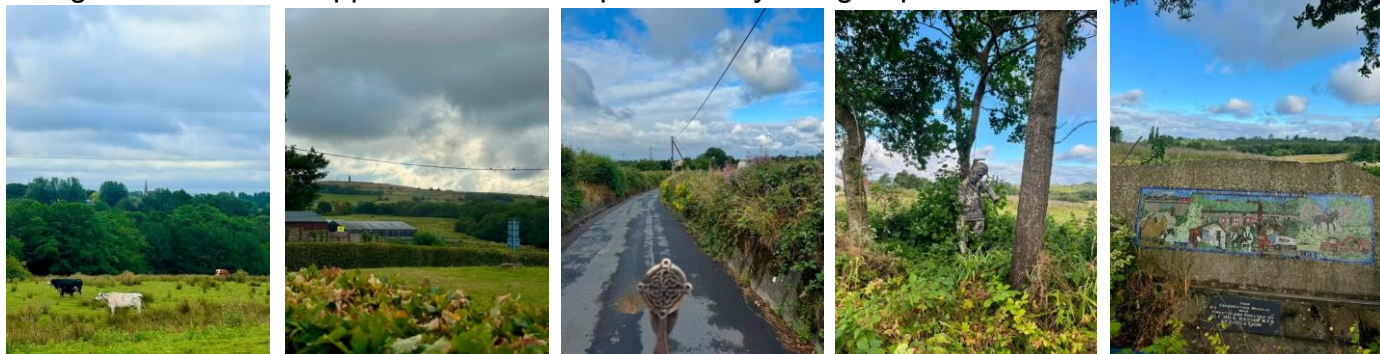


Walking down Lees New Road looking out over the fields. I can see Holy Trinity Bardsley - our next destination in the horizon, as well as the Manchester skyline. Walking towards Alt Hill Lane- a road I walked down many times during lockdown, on my daily walk. It has felt both comforting and a little strange, to be walking down roads I knew so well once and yet haven't walked down them for 5 years since I moved. Giving thanks for my time as parish priest in this place.



Walking down Alt Hill Lane, and I can see St John's spire over the fields. Revd Carol and myself are both members of The Society of Catholic Priests Praying for the members of the Manchester chapter. Holding in prayer our Rector, Revd Julian Heaton, our Secretary, Revd Caroline Hewitt and our Treasurer Revd Canon Daniel Burton.

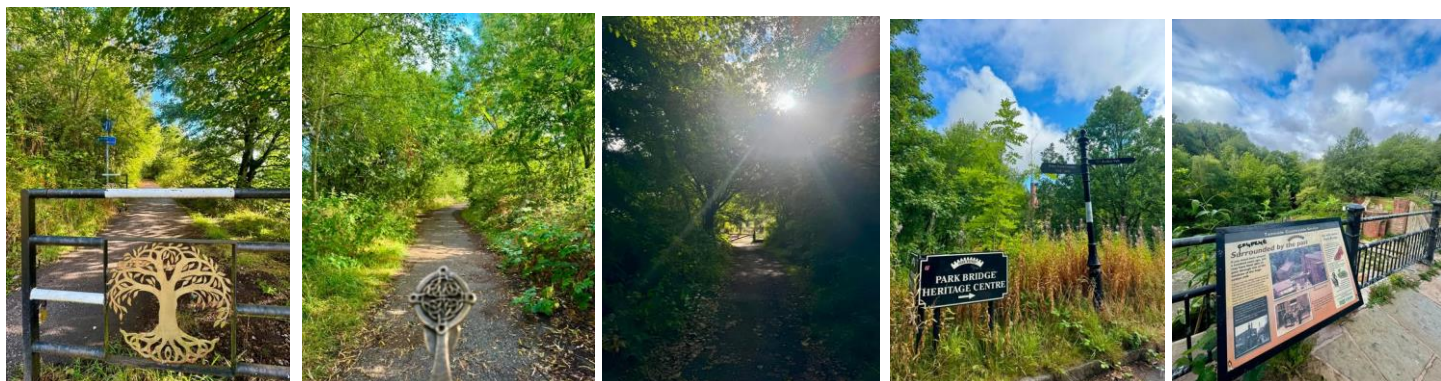
Giving thanks for the support and fellowship offered by this group.



Walking to Park Bridge Heritage Centre and the sun warmed the landscape.

This site was a hive of industry for 200 years, being the site of the Park Bridge Ironworks, which finally closed in 1963. In a relatively short time, nature is reclaiming the site, and wildlife is being encouraged by the planting of wildflowers. A symbol of renewal and restoration.

"Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Isaiah 55:13



The Lees family who owned the iron works built the houses here for their workers to live in and a co-op and a church. The church was a chapel of ease to St Thomas, Leesfield opened in 1866 and closed in 1964. The phone box in Dingle Terrace has been repurposed as a Book Exchange. "The LORD will fulfil his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands." Psalm 138:8
Praying for all those seeking a new purpose, a new role or direction in life.



I arrived at Holy Trinity Bardsley, praying for Revd Carol Schofield in her role as Vicar in this church and community. Praying for the churchwardens, Barbara Mickelthwaite as Focal leader and the congregation and the community they serve. Walking down past Daisy Nook. Thankful for beautiful places to walk and to be minutes away from our urban settings



I had intended to walk to Revd Carol's third church at Woodhouse, Failsforth, but I didn't really have enough time to do that- it would have added another couple of hours to the walk. As I continued to walk back to Hurst Cross I prayed for the Revd Carol in her role at Woodhouses and for the church wardens and the congregation and the community they serve there. My phone Sat nav took me a way back to St John's a way I didn't know, through Limehurst Farm. Two horses were playing or righting



with each other- not sure which! Another horse wanted to make friends. The black hen, pictured and some of their friends escaped down into the woods.

Leaving the farm I was directed up a narrow path behind some houses which led me out to a place I recognised. Once again on this pilgrimage I was surprised at where I ended up! Praying for all at Ashton Rugby club. Walking on towards Broadoak Community Centre and there are reminders to vote in the mayoral elections on Thursday. Praying for all at Broadoak Community centre and the various groups that meet there and for all that they do for the community.



Walking by Broadoak Primary school, a school I was invited into a number of times when I was in Hurst. Praying for staff and pupils. Walking back to St John's a way I had never walked- even after living there for 8 years! I have used my sat nav on my phone when I have walked on my own or I have been looking for quicker or more scenic paths.

"And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'" Isaiah 30:21 Praying I might be more alert to God's promptings and guidance. I arrived back at St John's, giving thanks for the life of this church and for those I served alongside here for 8 years and for all they taught me.

Today I have walked 6.7 miles, and we are still on our way spiritually to Alnmouth Friary.



day fifty nine 28th July 5.9 miles

Winnie joined me on the pilgrimage walk this morning, setting off from St Matthew's. We walked past St Matthew's schools- praying for those attending and leading the holiday club. We then walked through Chadderton Hall Park. There is a local history display curated by Chadderton Historical Society in the park . Praying for the members of the Society.



We got onto the canal towpath by the Rose of Lancaster and began walking towards Foxdenton Park. I had not walked along this part of the canal before and I wasn't sure where I was going to end up. I asked an early morning angler if I was going the right way, but he didn't know either! There were a couple of anglers sat on the die of the canal this morning.

The anglers were deep in active contemplation, still and seemingly inactive yet watching for signs of fish, and being aware of their environment around them. A posture and attitude for contemplative prayer.

Trappist monk, Thomas Merton talked about this.

"Contemplation is the highest expression of (human) intellectual and spiritual life. It is that life itself, fully awake, fully active, fully aware, that it is alive. It is spiritual wonder. It is spontaneous awe at the sacredness of life, of being. It is gratitude for life, for awareness and for being. It is a vivid realization of the fact that life and being in us proceed from an invisible, transcendent and infinitely abundant source. Contemplation is, above all, awareness of the reality of that source." ~ from NEW SEEDS OF CONTEMPLATION by Thomas Merton.



The ducks and geese swam hopefully towards us in search of food.

Lots of trees by the side of the canal. I remember being in retreat once and an elderly gentleman drew a wonderful picture of a tree with its roots in the water. That image has stayed with me.

"Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit." Jeremiah 17:7-8



When we came off the towpath I realised I knew where I was - I had walked this way a few weeks ago this pilgrimage when I had walked around the Chadderton churches. I hadn't realised how close I had been to Foxdenton Park then though! So much fruit by the side of the road.

Winnie enjoyed a little rest by the pond when we arrived at the park.

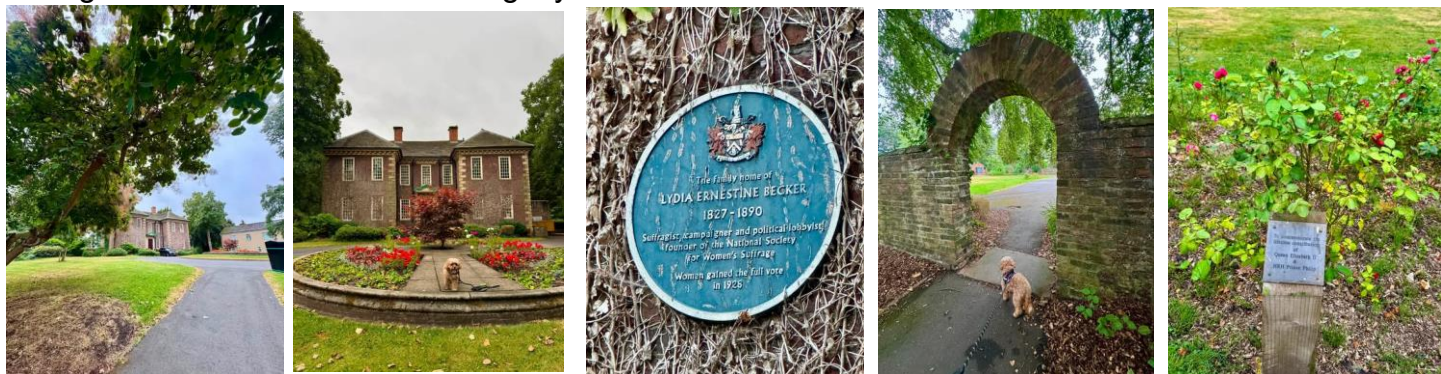


We are in the middle of "Keep Britain Tidy" 's annual "Love Park's Week" which celebrates parks and green spaces, the people who care for them, and the countless benefits they bring to people, communities and our planet. Praying for the Parks department in Oldham who work hard to keep our parks beautiful places to be.

It is the first time I've been to Foxdenton Hall and park. Good to see the blue plaque for Lydia Becker. We learnt a little about Lydia Becker on Week 2 of the pilgrimage. To look back at previous weeks newsletters you can see them on our A Church Near You page under notice sheets. Here is Week 2

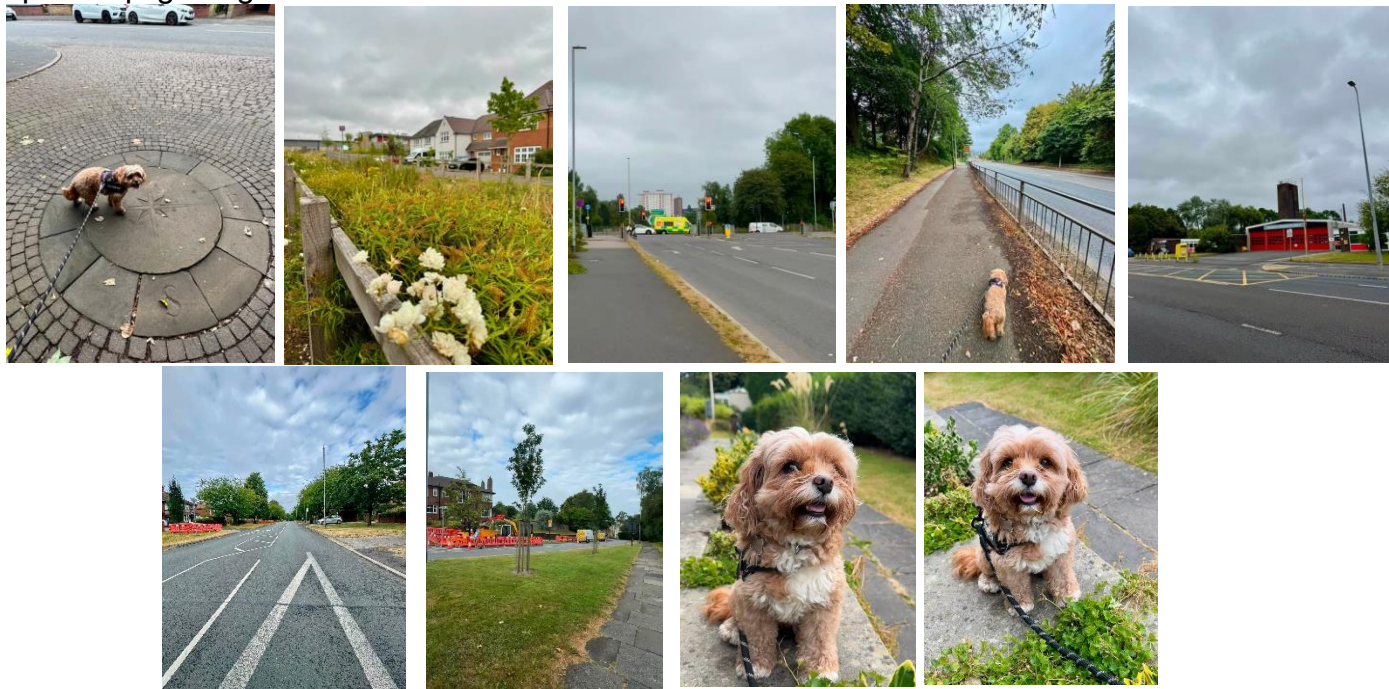
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Giving thanks for her life and her legacy.



Walking back to St Matthew's along Lydia Becker Way and Broadway. An ambulance rushed past and I walked by Chadderton Fire Station. Praying for all who work as part of our emergency response teams, who often put themselves at risk by doing their job and protecting and helping the general public. Praying particularly for our Fire Service at this time as they tackle the fires at Dovestones and Tinitwistle. We arrived back at St Matthew's and Winnie was glad of a rest!

We walked 5.9 miles this morning and are now only 3.52 miles away from Alnmouth Friary, on our spiritual pilgrimage to Lindisfarne.



Day sixty

29th July

3.7 miles

Winnie was excited to go out again this morning and took me on a walk to Royton Linear Park. The sun was trying to break through the clouds. "For it is the God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." 2 Corinthians 4:6

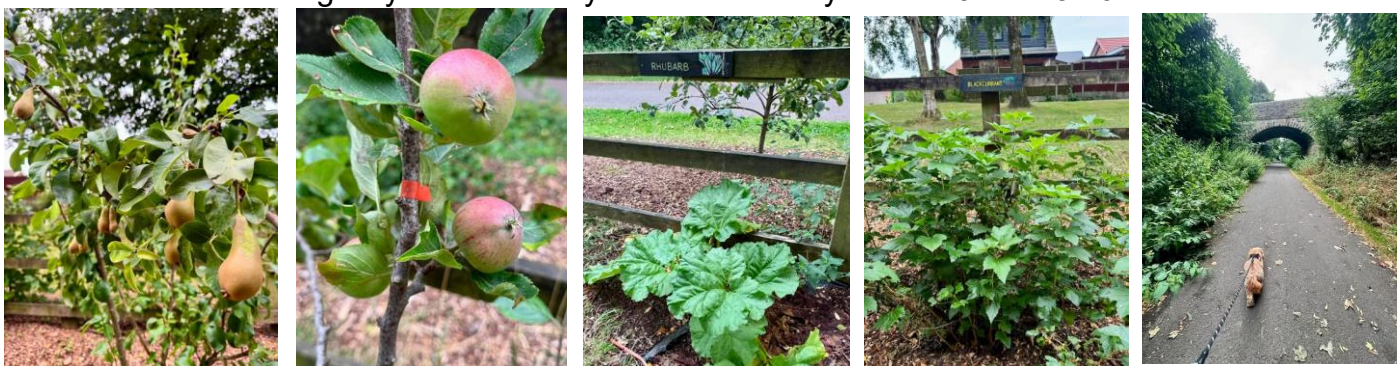


A new train planter and some bug hotels have been built since we last walked along this path on the pilgrimage. I was interested to see how the fruit was coming on since we last walked here. The blackberries are coming on well but I couldn't see any gooseberries or redcurrants. The place feels cared for- thanks to the Friends of Royton Linear Park, praying for them and the work that they do to care for and nurture the plants and wildlife here.



Apples, pears, blackcurrants and rhubarb all planted alongside the path and it has grown such a lot since we were last here. We are called to bear fruit in our lives.

"You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name." John 15:16



We continued walking along the path across Salmon Fields walking toward Higginshaw. Over the last couple of weeks I have visited and we have prayed for some churches that have been waiting for the licensing or appointment of a new Vicar or Rector. Last night Revd Kirsty Stott was welcomed as Vicar of Leesfield and Hey, serving at St Thomas, St Agnes and St Hugh Leesfield and St John the Baptist Hey. Prayers for Revd Kirsty as she begins this new role as parish priest in Leesfield and Hey and prayers for the churches and schools she will serve.

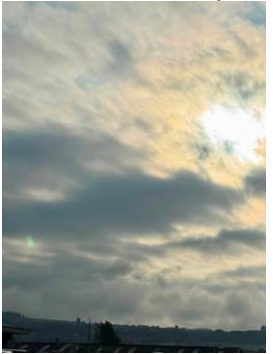




A moody sky as we left Royton Linear Park at Higginshaw and walked towards Heyside. The patch of land near St Mark's Church with the tall grasses looked quite different 6 years ago in lockdown. I remember photographing this same spot because it looked so beautiful with colourful wildflowers the council had sown. The last 2 pictures are from 6 years ago in the same spot.

Last week I walked and prayed around the churches in the Saddleworth team that have been waiting for the appointment of a new Team Rector. On Sunday it was

announced that The Revd Andi Chapman has been appointed as the new Rector of Saddleworth, comprising 7 parishes and 9 worshipping centres. Praying for Revd Andi and his family as they prepare to move to Saddleworth and take up this new post. Prayers for the parishes of Saddleworth as they prepare to welcome their new Rector. Continuing prayers for St Mark's Heyside as the work continues in improves accessibility in the parish halls.



The wildflowers 6 years ago.

Walking back to St Anne's physically but spiritually we are about to arrive at Alnmouth Friary.

More fruit by the roadside and the beautiful flowers on the railings. Giving thanks for the skill and care of those in the Parks Department (I think!) that care for them.

I have walked 3.7 miles this morning and we have arrived at Alnmouth Friary. Our next stopping off place is Embleton. We getting closer!



Since 31 May I have walked 290.28 miles meaning today we have reached Alnmouth Friary on our pilgrimage of the heart to Lindisfarne.

I stayed here for a retreat in 2013, before I was licensed at St John's Hurst. It is a beautiful place of peace and contemplation. It is an Anglican Franciscan Friary with a ministry of hospitality.

The Brothers live under the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Their mission statement is: As followers of Jesus in the way of Francis, we hope:

- In prayer and service, to find God in each other and in all we meet:
- To hold all things in common, and as lesser brothers, to live as simply as possible:
- To share in the mission of Jesus to proclaim the good news of God's love:
- To be a means of reconciliation, striving for peace and justice for all creation.

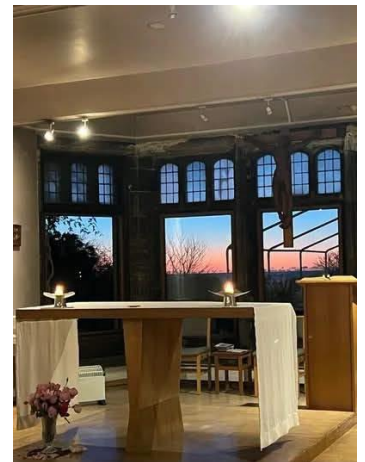
On 4th October 2026 In October 2026 Franciscans and indeed the wider Church mark 800 years since St Francis's death – not as a moment of mourning, but of renewal. The Franciscan website says "the anniversary invites us to walk again in his footsteps: to live simply, act justly, rebuild what is broken, and recognise Christ's presence in every person and every part of creation."

From 17 July to 2 October the On New Roads Pilgrimage of Peace will take place. If you visit <https://www.spiritoffrancis.com> you can find out more about the pilgrimages. Today the pilgrimage is leaving St Mary's Lastingham, a place we have visited virtually and is journeying to Beadlam.

On Friday 7 August a new stage of the pilgrimage begins at St Chad's Rochdale and you could join the pilgrimage, walking to Manchester, (14 miles) that day. There is a service at Gorton Monastery on Saturday 8th August at 9am. You can register on the Spirit of Peace website.

A beautiful prayer used by the Brothers:

Loving Father, we ask you to kindle in our hearts
the fire of your love:
that inspired by the example of Saint Francis
we may be united in obedience
to the life of the Gospel,
and find our freedom
in the service of your Kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.



mary, martha and Lazarus

The gospels describe how Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus gave Jesus hospitality in their home at Bethany outside Jerusalem. Jesus is said to have loved all three. After Lazarus' death, he wept and was moved by the sisters' grief to bring Lazarus back from the dead. Martha recognised Jesus as the Messiah, while Mary anointed his feet and, on another occasion, was commended by Jesus for her attentiveness to his teaching while Martha served. From this, Mary is traditionally taken to be an example of the contemplative life and Martha an example of the active spiritual life.

One of my favourite paintings which was influential in my discernment to the priesthood is Christ in the House of Martha and Mary by Johannes Vermeer. It resides in the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh and every time I visit Danny and go and visit the painting and spend time in prayer with it.



I was on a prayer course at Katherine House in Salford and this painting was one we were invited to pray with. As I spent time contemplating the picture. I loved the connection between the three people, the bread and the table and I was drawn to the open door in the background. I found myself wanting to know what lay behind it, where it would take me. Later that year I was on an Open Door Retreat and this painting and the story of Mary and Martha were important to me and it was then I finally admitted to myself I was feeling called by God. I knew I had to leave that comfortable and cosy scene behind and see what was beyond that open door and see where it would lead.

Why not take some time to pray with this picture, using the Visio Divina way of prayer we looked at in Week 6 of the Pilgrimage. Or use your favourite painting and see where you are drawn in the picture and spend some time praying and discerning what God may be trying to tell you.

Day sixty one 30th July 3.52 miles

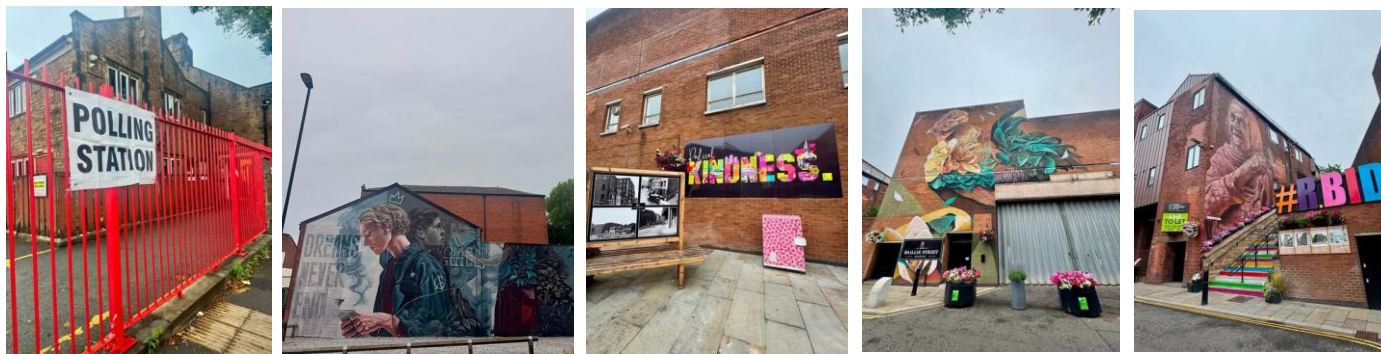
Second in the queue to vote this morning then off to Rochdale and walk around the centre whilst it is walking up to see some of the murals in the Common Walls, open air art exhibition.

Praying for the candidates and their teams and praying for the clerks at all the polling stations and those who will be involved in the count.

One of the murals, pictured here (2nd picture) is by the Rochdale born, artistic director of Common Walls I, Hayley Garner aka AYLO and is called Dreams Never End. It was inspired by the New Order track recorded locally at Cargo Studios. The bold mural speaks to the ongoing battle for women's rights and honours the role of the Rochdale-founded Co-operative movement in progressing this fight. Praying for Hayley and all involved in Common Walls, giving thanks for their artistic skill and the way they tell the stories, of people, history and culture through their art.

You can find out more about Common Walls here

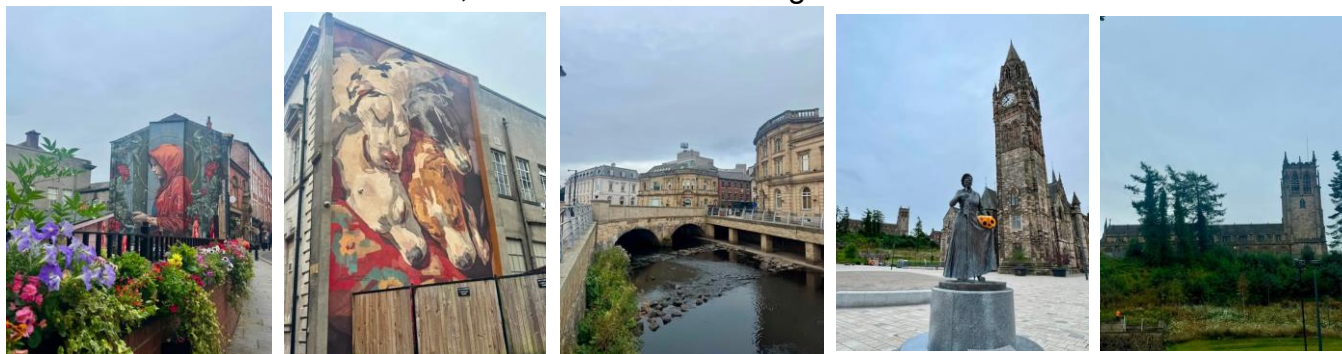
<https://www.rochdale.gov.uk/.../2932/festival-guide-with-map>



More murals, and the Rochdale Hounds mural is inspired by one of Rochdale's most famous daughters, Gracie Fields songs. Her statue in the Town Hall Square has been given a bunch of sunflowers to hold!

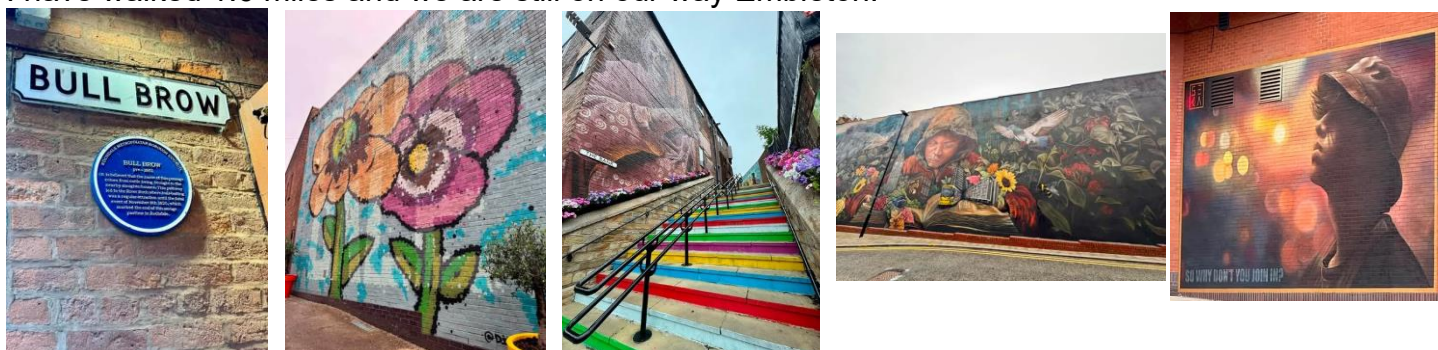
Praying for the churchwardens at St Chad's church, and the congregation whilst they are in interregnum. Praying for all who work in the beautiful Town Hall.

The only people about this morning were those cleaning the streets or taking care of the Rochdale in Bloom displays. Praying for all whose work makes an enormous difference in keeping our environment clean and beautiful, but whose work often goes unseen- unless it's not done!



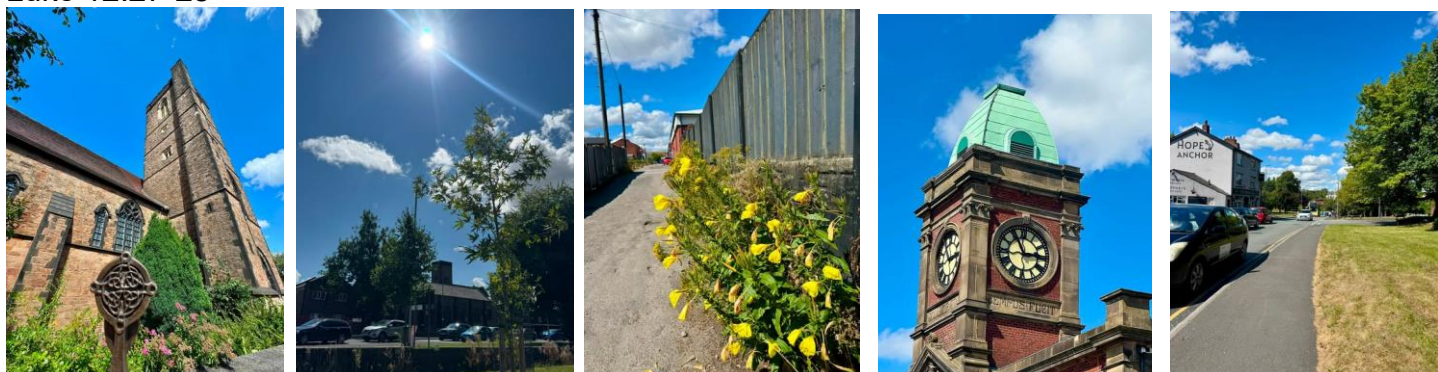
There are a number of history boards around the centre, giving details of Rochdale's rich history, as well as this blue plaque. I had noticed a number of bulls on the street furniture, like we see Owls in Oldham and Bees in Manchester and I wondered why a bull, until I saw this blue plaque. Praying for Rochdale born Bill Oddie, who as one of The Goodies, was a part of my childhood, who died yesterday.

I have walked 1.6 miles and we are still on our way Embleton.

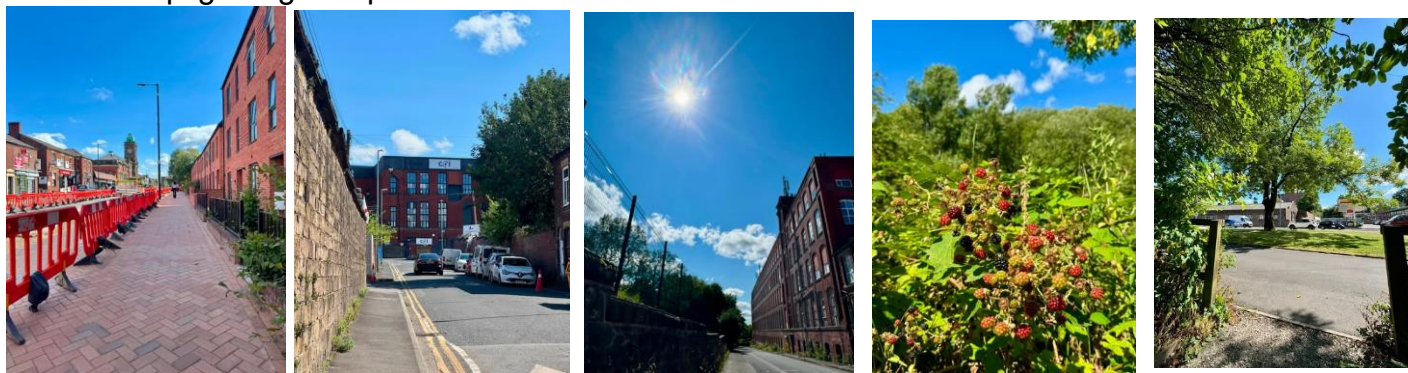


A short walk around Royton in the sunshine this afternoon. Which different light to this morning. The sky looks like a sky on a child's drawing- a deep blue with perfect fluffy white clouds and the sun high in the sky. Glorious flowers in unexpected places. I looked up what the yellow flowers on the rough dusty path were, thinking they were a very pretty weed. They are actually Evening Primrose which grow in seemingly inhospitable places like road verges and sand dunes

"Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!"
Luke 12:27-28



Walking back home through the town centre, past where my daughter works and up by Oldham Academy North. Praying for those in both churches who are in hospital at this time, and those waiting for operations or procedures and those waiting for test results. May they be held in God's light. I have walked another 1.92 miles, meaning that on our spiritual journey of the heart we are 5.3 miles away from Embleton and only 30.5 miles away from Lindisfarne! We are nearly there and we can see that on the pilgrimage map and see how far we have come!



Day sixty two

31st July

5.58 miles



The Avenue of sunflowers looked amazing when I first arrived at the garden but an hour so later the brilliant sunlight and the bright blue skies transformed the scene. The light brought everything to life and made it even more beautiful.

"God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another" 1 John: 5-7



Raindrops were still clinging on to some of the plants. The Bee and Butterfly garden had beautiful hollyhocks planted in it, though just after the rain there were few of either butterfly or bees in evidence. They all came out when the sun did! More sculptures in the garden, this time animals made of willow. The vibrant deep reds warmed the garden before the sun took over that job for them. This was a slow measured walk, giving myself time to notice everything around me. The sounds, the smells and the sights. A toddler ran joyfully to a bush and ran their finger through the leaves enchanted by how they felt, what it looked and smelt like. They encouraged then their dad to join in. May we be more like children, in how they experience the world with wonder, awe and joy. "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:3



The way the gardeners have trained the pear and apple trees up the walls or along fences is amazing. The gardens are bursting with fruit. Jesus calls us to be fruitful. May we stay close to him.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5



Beautiful reflections in the pond and lily pads.

"As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart" Proverbs 27:19



Lots of beautiful vegetables being grown here too planted alongside other flowers, "companion planting", to help each other thrive. Companion, comes from the Latin words com meaning , "with" or "together" and "pains" meaning bread. Literally translating to "bed fellow" or someone we share a meal with. Praying to all I share bread with in the Eucharist at St Matthew's and St Anne's, at all the different congregations.



The gardens were incredibly beautiful. A team of full time and volunteer gardeners were working all over the gardens today, planting new areas and taking care of established plants.

Praying for the gardeners who work at RHS Bridgwater and praying for those who take care of the churchyards at St Matthew's and St Anne's.



I left the walled gardens and walked towards the Chinese Streamside Garden and the lake. The birds I encountered along the way seemed quite tame and unbothered by people. I began to walk at my more usual pace now and prayed as I walked. Praying for all involved in the mayoral elections, as we await the election result.

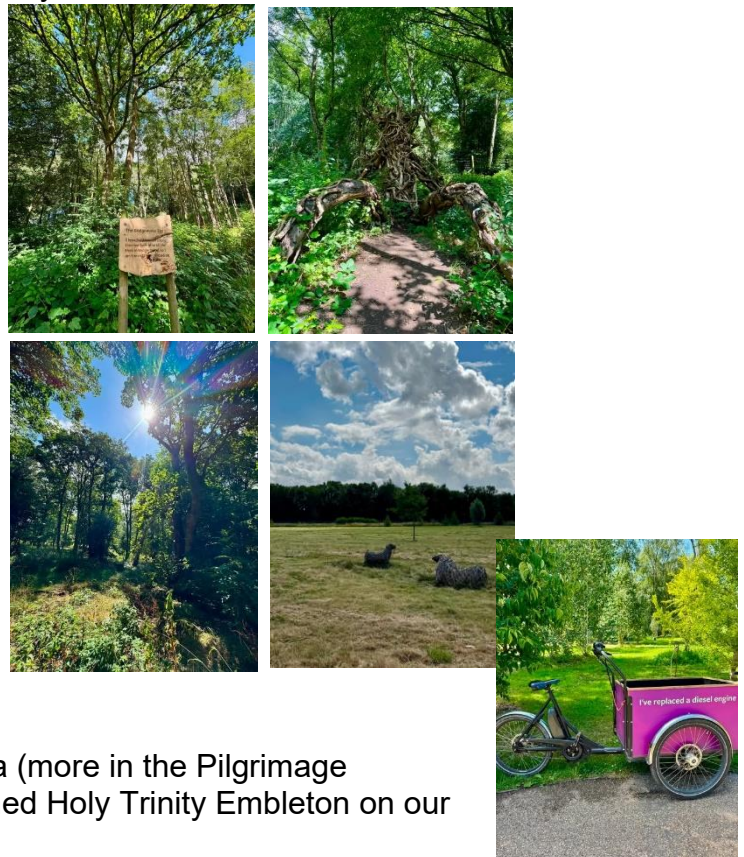


Walking around the lake, it made me think of some of the places I had planned to walk around on this pilgrimage and had not managed yet. One of those was Dovestones reservoir. Praying for the firefighters continuing their work to contain the fire.

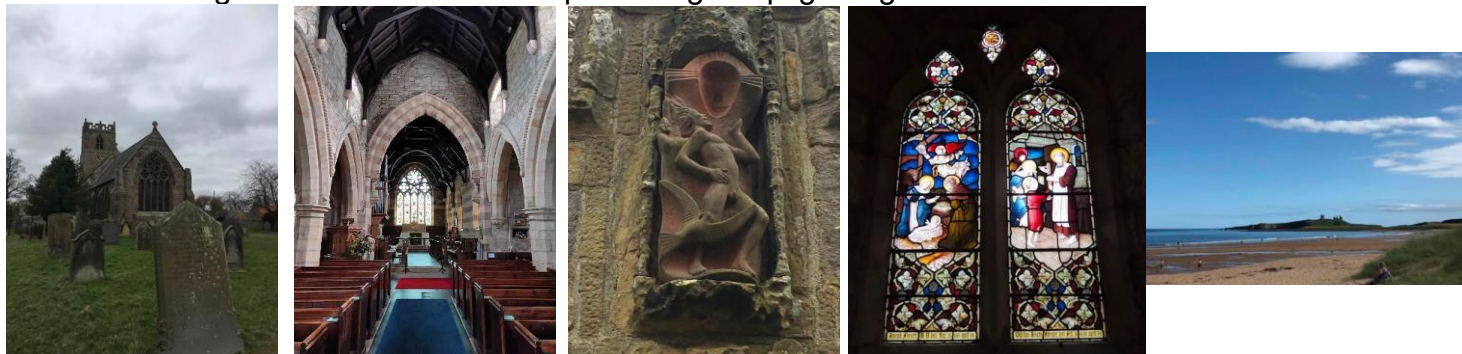


Walking through the woods with the light shining through the trees was a beautiful way to end today's pilgrimage walk. It reminded me of this poem by Mary Oliver called **When I am among the trees.**

When I am among the trees,
 especially the willows and the honey locust,
 equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,
 they give off such hints of gladness.
 I would almost say that they save me, and daily.
 I am so distant from the hope of myself,
 in which I have goodness, and discernment,
 and never hurry through the world
 but walk slowly, and bow often.
 Around me the trees stir in their leaves
 and call out, "Stay awhile."
 The light flows from their branches.
 And they call again, "It's simple," they say,
 "and you too have come
 into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled
 with light, and to shine
 I have walked 5.58 miles today meaning
 we have reached Holy Trinity Embleton.
 (More on that tomorrow) Only 24.92 miles to go!
 Today the Church celebrates St Ignatius of Loyola (more in the Pilgrimage
 newsletter when it comes out) we spiritually reached Holy Trinity Embleton on our
 pilgrimage to Lindisfarne.



Praying for Revd Canon Alison Hardy (formerly of All Saints Stand in Manchester Diocese) who is the Vicar here and of 8 other churches as well as being the Area Dean of Alnwick. She is Vicar of St John the Baptist Alnmouth, St Peter the Fisherman Craster, St Michael and All Angels Howick, St Mary Lesbury, St Peter and St Paul Longhoughton, St Mary's Newton by the Sea, All Saints Remington and St Philip and St James Rock. Praying for all the congregations and communities Alison serves. It was a huge milestone achieved yesterday too. I have now walked over 300 miles in 2 months! Only 24.92 miles to go! Please do consider sponsoring the pilgrimage.



A short walk just before sunset. Praying for Bev Craig as she is elected as the next Mayor of Greater Manchester.



Ignatius of Loyola

Born in 1491, the son of a Basque nobleman, Ignatius served as a soldier and was wounded at the siege of Pamplona in 1521. During his convalescence he read a Life of Christ, was converted and lived a life of prayer and penance, during which he wrote the first draft of his Spiritual Exercises. He gathered six disciples, and together they took vows of poverty and chastity and promised to serve the Church either by preaching in Palestine or in other ways that the Pope thought fit. By 1540, Ignatius had won papal approval for his embryonic order and the Society of Jesus was born. For the next sixteen years he directed the work of the Jesuits as it spread around the world, until his sudden death on this day in 1556.



The Examen – The Review of the Day

Fr Alan Butler, the priest at St Mary's who encouraged my vocation was greatly influenced by Ignatian Spirituality and was a wonderful teacher. He would regularly lead us in Imaginative Contemplation, a way of prayer that Ignatius taught and wrote about. More of that another day! Another way of Ignatian Prayer is the Examen - often called the review of the day. I find that this way of prayer helps me to recognise God at work in my life, in others and on creation. As I practice this way of prayer I find I am recognising God's presence or God's work not just upon reflection in prayer but also in the moment as I go about my daily life. So thankful all Alan taught me.

At the end of the day we often find ourselves mulling over our experiences, re-living the events of the day. This reflection, which can be done at any time of the day, builds on this natural tendency to play back what's been going on in our lives. But, instead of making our own analysis and judgement, we ask God to show us how the Creative and Life-giving Spirit has been working in the experiences of our lives. We can reflect back over a day, over a week, or even a year.

Why not try this way of prayer looking back over the last week?

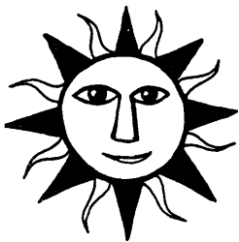
Prepare yourself for a time of prayer, light a candle and take some time to still yourself. Below are some ways of preparing yourself for prayer and coming to stillness you might find helpful. "Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10



Place & Posture

Find the place which is right for you. A place where you feel comfortable, with little or no distraction. The best posture is that which helps you to be both attentive and relaxed at the same time.

Opening to God



It's a bit like sunbathing! When you sunbathe, you take off your clothes to let the sun get to you and warm you. So in prayer, you open yourself to the light of God, that God may bathe you in light and warm you with rays of love. Prayer is God's gift to us. Our part is to be *actively receptive*.

"I hold myself in quiet and silence, like a little child in its mother's arms, like a little child, so I keep myself." Psalm 131:2

Some suggestions for becoming relaxed and attentive:

Awareness of the Body

Concentrate your attention on what you can *feel*. Begin with the crown of your head and work your way down through your body to your toes. Allow time (a few seconds) for feelings in each part of your body to become apparent.

Become aware of any sensation at the crown of your head, then your forehead, face, the back of your neck... Notice any feelings in your shoulders, arms, hands... your back, chest, stomach... Become aware of any sensation in your legs, ankles, feet, toes... Become aware of the touch of clothes, your body touching the chair, the floor...

Recognise God's presence in your body, in your feelings, in *you* as a person.

"In God I live and move and have my being." Acts 17:28

Awareness of Sounds

Listen to the sounds around you. Try to identify each one. Don't rush or strain. Concentrate your attention wholly on each sound.

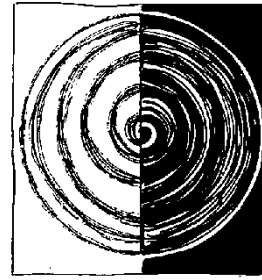
For a sequence, seek the source of the sound. Move from inside the room to outside and then back in again; then inside your self to the sound of your breathing, your pulse and your own heartbeat; then back out again...

Recognise God's presence in the sounds...

"And after the fire there came a still small voice." 1 Kings 19:12

Awareness of Breathing

- Turn your attention to your breathing...
- Listen to the sound of your breath...
- Don't deliberately change your breathing, simply be aware that you *are* breathing!
- Be aware of breathing in... breathing out... notice how this feels.
- Be aware of sensations in your nostrils... the rise and fall of your chest...



To turn this into more explicit prayer, let your in-breath be a breathing in of the goodness and love of God, and your out-breath be a breathing out of all your worries, guilt and anxiety.

or try:

Touching a stone, a shell, a piece of driftwood, rosary beads, a crucifix, a piece of material...

Listening to music

These exercises can be ways of relaxing into prayer. Or they can be, in themselves, a still, attentive prayer of loving presence to God.

Reviewing the day in God's Presence

- ❖ Let the day/week/time of lockdown 'play back'. First, allow the moments you **enjoyed** to come to the surface. Don't force it. Simply wait and let what comes, come. Let the **feelings** of these moments and events be really felt. Re-visit the experience, re-live it, take time to relish it. Be thankful!
- ❖ Ask God for light to see the time you are reviewing as **God** wants you to see it. *"Lord that I may see!"* Mark 10:51
- ❖ Let the weekend 'play back' again, this time trying to become more aware of the various **moods** and **feelings** of the weekend, especially where there were **shifts of mood**.

Let yourself feel again what you felt then.

Where did these moods or feelings come from?

Where did these moods or feelings take you?

What were the creative, life-giving moments?

Where did you feel connected, in tune, going with the flow, most fully alive, most truly yourself?

What were the destructive, life-denying moments?

Where did you feel disconnected, out of kilter, going against the grain, deadened, out of touch with yourself?

What is being revealed to you?

- ❖ Be **thankful** for all that's leading you to life.
- ❖ What do you want to own and express which needs **healing** and **redeeming**? Does any of this have the potential to become life-giving, or do you need to let it go?

❖ What choices does this reflection time reveal to you about tomorrow?

❖ **Ask God** for what you want and need.

"I have come that you may have life and have it to the full." John 10:10

"For all that has been, thanks. To all that shall be, yes!"

Dag Hammarskjöld

*"She treasured all these things
and pondered them in her heart."*

Luke 2:19



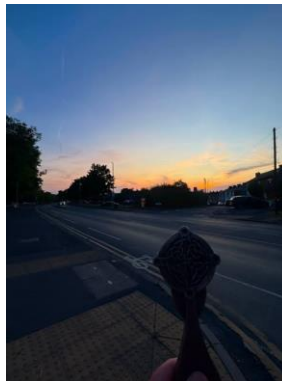
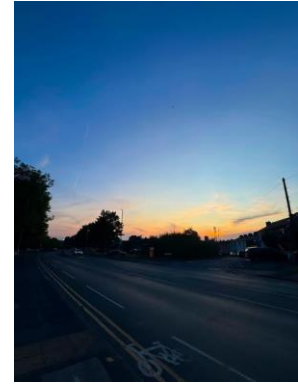
Day sixty three 1st august 1.51 miles

Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world, we pray
That you, with steadfast love, would keep
Your watch around us while we sleep.

From evil dreams defend our sight,
From fears and terrors of the night;
Tread underfoot our deadly foe
That we no sinful thought may know.

O Father, that we ask be done
Through Jesus Christ, your only Son;
And Holy Spirit, by whose breath
Our souls are raised to life from death.

I have walked 1.51 miles.
(29.45 miles this week)
Spiritually we are walking to
St Aidan's Bamburgh- our last stop before
we reach Lindisfarne.
Only 23.41 miles to go!



The map shows all the places we have visited on this pilgrimage and how close we are now to where we are going! I have gone over the 300 miles mark and walked 301.59 miles

Giving thanks for this pilgrimage and the blessing received from undertaking it.

I hope these newsletters provide some inspiration for your own walk with God. With love and prayers Revd Liz