

ST GEORGE.

The Christian Faith in all its fullness, looks to those who have shown in their lives the greatest devotion and example of Godly living. When valuing somethings worth, a reasonable test is to see how far a person is willing to go or prepared to do, to acquire it, defend or promote it. The importance of the faith, and fidelity to Christ is presented by ordinary Christians in the best ways possible, but there are some Christians who give their very lives, who sacrifice themselves as the ultimate response in defence of the truth of the Church and of its head Jesus Christ.

We honour one such man today, our patron St George. When George was raised to the altars by Pope Gelasius, Gelasius remarked that like most saints "whose names are rightly revered among us, their deeds are known only to God." Separating fact from fiction concerning St George is not easy, but the little facts we know are really only what we need to know. It is sufficient to say that in the late second century, this roman soldier stood firm against the treatment being metered out to Christians under the rule of the Emperor Diocletian, and because he spoke up for them he too suffered their fate. George was tortured and on the 23rd April 303 he was beheaded under orders of Diocletian.

George stands for the right to protest against the abuse of power in all its forms, for the truth of the Gospel and the triumph of Christ over tyranny and death, and the kind of example that gives substance to the faith claims of the Church. This is the bottom line of St George, and it is what we are left with when fantasy is removed from his history and when he is not being used for personal agendas and partisan actions.

Like all Saints, St George can be called on in intercession particularly in those areas singled out where he is deemed particularly effective. Amongst the many he is the patron saint of soldiers, archers and chivalry, also of saddlers, riders and land workers. I think more importantly in these difficult times St George is also one to call on during times of plague.

We pray today for England, for other lands under his patronage, for all Churches and other establishments dedicated to him, and ask for his prayers to bring about the end of the Coronavirus pandemic. St George, Pray for us.

