

Dear Friend

On this day we remember Alcuin of York who died 1,216 years ago in 804 CE.

Earlier this year in January 2020 Alcuin was remembered in Radio 4's 'In Our Time'. That broadcast remains available for you to listen or download [here](#). Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss 'the cleric, educator and poet from York who put learning for its own sake at the heart of the Carolingian Renaissance'.

Alcuin was born perhaps in the 730s of 'noble English stock' though little is known of his family. He was fortunate in coming under the guidance of the first Archbishop of York, Egbert, who had been influenced by the Venerable Bede to establish a place of learning for the church. York became a centre not only for theology but also for the liberal arts, literature and science.

Graduating from York, Alcuin became a teacher in the 750s, ascending in his profession to become head of York school. He was ordained deacon. Though he practised as a monk, he did not take monastic orders.

In 781 Alcuin was sent by King Ælfwald of Northumbria to Rome to deliver a petition to the Pope. Returning via the city of Parma in Italy, Alcuin met Charlemagne who persuaded him to join his court. Within a year Alcuin was Master of the Palace School of Charlemagne in Aachen (Germany): a school for the education of royal children. Alcuin remained closely allied with Charlemagne as adviser and teacher until he was in his sixties.

Alcuin retired from court duties in 796, moving to Marmoutier Abbey not far from Tours. There he encouraged monks working on manuscripts using the beautiful Carolingian minuscule script, ancestor of modern Roman typefaces.

As we remember Alcuin today, let us pray today's Collect:

**God our redeemer,
you have delivered us from the power of darkness
and brought us into the kingdom of your Son:
grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life,
so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen**

May you and yours stay safe this day and at peace.

With every blessing,

Richard