

Dear Friends

With the prospect of children returning to school this week and spring blossom appearing, are there now signs of hope in this long 'Lent' of lockdown?

At this point - mid Lent in the calendar of the church year - commemorations of notable Christians in history are few and far between. However, today stands out in remembering three: Bishop Felix, Bishop Edward King and the priest and poet Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy. What can we see that marks them out from others? What can we learn from them today?

Felix of Dunwich, a saint and first bishop of the East Angles, is credited as the man who brought Christianity to the kingdom of East Anglia. The Venerable Bede praised Felix for delivering "all the province of East Anglia from long-standing unrighteousness and unhappiness". Felix came from the Frankish kingdom of Burgundy and may have been a priest or bishop in Francia prior to his arrival here. Think of Felixstowe and you can now remember Bishop Felix.

Some 1,200 years later Bishop Edward King was born in Kent in a family which had previously produced an archdeacon and a bishop. On graduating from Oriel College Oxford he entered the church as an Anglo-Catholic. He was a strong supporter of the Oxford Movement. Later, as Bishop of Lincoln, he devoted himself to pastoral work in his diocese, particularly amongst the poor, both farmers and industrial workers, as well as condemned prisoners. However he was much criticised in some quarters for his leaning towards the church of Rome particular concerning the sacraments. See Wikipedia [here](#) for more if you wish.

Thirdly we remember today Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy MC (1883–1929). He was an English Anglican priest and poet. He was nicknamed Woodbine Willie during World War I for giving Woodbine cigarettes along with spiritual aid to injured and dying soldiers. An overview of his life and works may be read [here](#). Following his work as a chaplain to British forces on the Western Front in WW1, for which he was awarded a Military Cross, he became rector of St Edmund King and Martyr in the City of London. He wrote many works on Christian Socialism and undertook speaking tours around the UK. See [here](#) for further background.

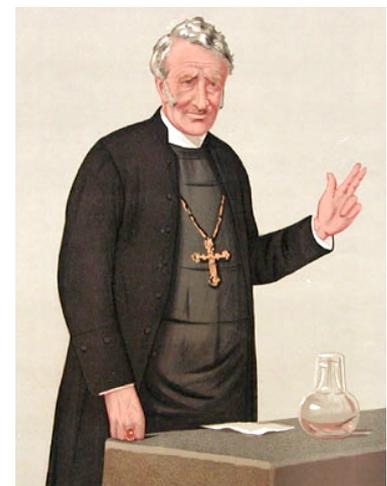
A poem by Studdert Kennedy is overleaf: most appropriate for Holy Week at the end of this month. So piercingly true.

With every good wish

Richard Hinder



BISHOP FELIX 647



BISHOP EDWARD KING 1910



STUDDERT KENNEDY 1929

Indifference

Geoffrey Anketell Studdert-Kennedy

When Jesus came to Golgotha they hanged Him on a tree,
They drove great nails through hands and feet, and made a Calvary;
They crowned Him with a crown of thorns, red were His wounds and deep,
For those were crude and cruel days, and human flesh was cheap.

When Jesus came to Birmingham they simply passed Him by,
They never hurt a hair of Him, they only let Him die;
For men had grown more tender, and they would not give Him pain,
They only just passed down the street, and left Him in the rain.

Still Jesus cried, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do,"
And still it rained the wintry rain that drenched Him through and through;
The crowds went home and left the streets without a soul to see,
And Jesus crouched against a wall and cried for Calvary.

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