

Dear Friends

Here we are in the week of the third Sunday before Advent. Each day we draw closer to the start of another church year on Sunday 28 November.

In coming days we might all reflect upon and marvel with gratitude at how we have survived during this second year of the pandemic. Most of us have benefited in many ways from care taken by others; and we have likewise given care to those whom we have met. We are particularly grateful for the scientists, engineers and others, including health professionals who have enabled us to be vaccinated in such safety.

We remain conscious that the pandemic is far from over. We pray that we shall remain vigilant and caring throughout this winter as Covid case numbers increase.

During this week we remember on Monday the ‘saints and martyrs of England’; on Tuesday Margery Kempe, mystic (1440); on Wednesday Leo the Great, bishop and teacher of the faith (461); on Thursday Martin, bishop of Tours (397); and on Saturday Charles Simeon, priest and evangelical divine (1836).

The British Library records that “Everything we know about Margery comes from her own account. She was unable to read or write and so she dictated her Book to an ‘amanuensis’ – a scribe who heard what she said and wrote it down for her. The autobiography is therefore written in the third person. In it, Margery is described as the ‘creatur’ [creature]”. For more see [here](#).

Almost a thousand years before Margery, Leo was elected Pope in 440 and was the first of two popes in two millennia to be called ‘Great’. See [here](#) to read about his life and character.

Martin is well remembered: so many churches bear the name ‘St Martin’. It was he who is remembered for “using his military sword to cut his cloak in two, to give half to a beggar clad only in rags in the depth of winter.” - see [here](#) for more.

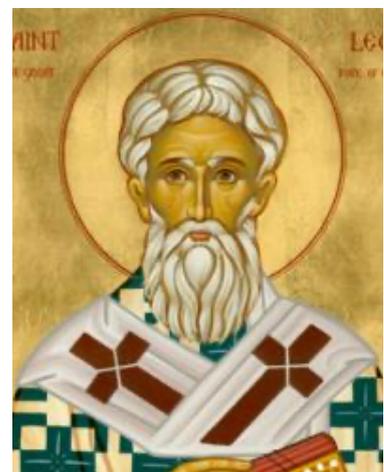
Following an education at Eton and Cambridge, Charles Simeon, an evangelical priest, received the living of Holy Trinity Church, Cambridge, in 1783. At first he was derided by parishioners, but over the years he attracted many to the church. Charles was one of the founders of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in 1799.

These varied saints illustrate how very differently Christian people offer their services. Yet, at the heart of the matter is pre-eminent care for others over care for oneself. May we too follow our Lord and Saviour in our own and various ways, risking ourselves for the benefit of others.

With every good wish, Richard Hinder



The Book of Margery Kempe



Leo the Great



Martin of Tours