

LIFEPATH 2025

AT BRINKBURN PRIORY

REFLECTION 1

Theme: The Faithful King

Over the course of these reflections I'm going to share with you three stories of St Oswald, three Bible readings about Jesus and a prayer at the end of each one. We're also going to visit three places offer a link to the life of St Oswald.

So today we start here at Heavenfield just outside the church which is dedicated to St Oswald. It's near here that the battle took place between the forces of St Oswald and Cadwallon to decide who would sit on the throne of Northumbria. Here's what the venerable Bede wrote about St Oswald;

"Oswald set up the sign of the holy cross and, kneeling down, prayed God to send his heavenly aid to those who trusted in him in their dire need. This place is pointed out to this day and held in great veneration..... At this spot where the king prayed, innumerable miracles of healing are known to have occurred which serve as a reminder and memorial of the king's faith."

The Faithful King

King Oswald had been instructed in the Christian faith by bishop Aidan, with the result that the king and the English people under his rule, not only learned to hope for the kingdom of heaven, which had been unknown to his ancestors, but were also granted by almighty God, creator of heaven and earth, an earthly kingdom greater than anything they had possessed. For Oswald gradually brought under his sceptre all the people and provinces of Britain speaking the four languages British, Pictish, Irish and English."

Oswald had been in exile among the Irish and Picts of the kingdom of Dal Riata and there he was educated and he fully embraced the faith of the Monks of Iona with whom he spent his formative years. At that time many Kings would choose the Christian Faith for political reasons however Oswald's was an authentic faith which affected the whole of his life and through his faithful commitment to God Christianity spread across Northumbria which, under Oswald, stretched from coast to coast and from the Humber to North of the Scottish border.

Oswald's faithfulness reminds me of the way in which David committed to the call of God on his life. We know from

The Faithful King

Scripture that David trusted God for protection, help and to be with him through all that he faced in life.

The Faithfulness of Oswald also reminds me of Jesus too who was so committed to trusting in His Father and in the way that His Father was leading Him. Our scripture reading today is from John's Gosepl, chapter 17 verses 1 – 5.

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

"Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. ²For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. ⁵And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Silence

Let us pray.

The Faithful King

Lord God we thank you for the faith of all those who have gone before us like David and Oswald, whose faith impacted and affected the whole of their lives. And now we pray, as Jesus prayed, that through Lifepath you might be glorified and those who come and share in this event with us might discover your great love, presence and faithfulness just as David and Oswald did.

We thank you that through your Son's commitment to the work you gave him to do He has ensured that we can know you and make you known to those whose lives we touch each day. May the way we live express our faith in you.

Amen.