Cuthbert Crib Sheet! – More than you need to know.

* Cuthbert was born around AD 634. As a young child he was athletic and competitive. He excelled in wrestling and could wrestle to the ground boys who were several years older than himself. This made him the gang leader. One day he had a strange encounter with a 3-year-old boy who informed him that God had chosen him to be a priest. From then Cuthbert set his heart on pursuing God.
* His prayers were powerful! Once he witnessed monks from the monastery at Tynemouth being swept out to sea after ferrying logs down the river. The local people scoffed and laughed but Cuthbert rebuked them and began to pray. At once the wind died down and the monks’ rafts were carried back to the shore.
* As a young man, Cuthbert entered the monastery at Melrose, becoming a Prior around AD 662 (28yrs old). He would venture out of the monastery to teach the local people, urging them to stop trusting in witchcraft and spells to save them from illnesses but to ask the Christian God to save them. He liked to go out to the little villages up in the hills where the other priests were scared to go and sometimes would be away for weeks.
* In AD 665 Cuthbert was invited to become Prior of Lindisfarne. He strayed there until 676. His was charming and generous to the poor. His reputation for the gift of healing and insight with people, led them to call on him for help and they gave him the name “The Wonder worker of Britain.”
* In 676 he retired to Inner Farne, to become a hermit. People travelled to the island to seek his council and at first, he was happy to receive visitors. Later he confined himself to his cell and would only open the window to give a blessing.
* Cuthbert had an affinity with wildlife – he instituted laws to protect the seabirds nesting on the island – including the Eider duck, known locally as the Cuddy / Cuthbert duck.

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* It is said that whilst visiting a monastery on the coast, he waded into the sea late one night until the water was up to his neck. He stayed there, praying till the morning and as he emerged from the sea, he knelt down on the sand and 2 wild sea otters came out of the water and breathed on his feet and lay on them to warm them up. Cuthbert was said to have blessed the otters who then returned to the sea!

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* In 685 Cuthbert, reluctantly agreed to become Bishop of Lindisfarne and returned to live on the mainland. However, 2 years later he returned to Inner Farne to die.
* He died on 20th March 687 and was buried at Lindisfarne Priory.
* His coffin was moved several times, whilst the monks were escaping form Vikings and eventually ended up in Durham, where the Cathedral is now.
* In 1104 his coffin was opened and a copy of St John’s gospel was removed. It is a pocket sized, with a red cover and written in Latin. It travelled around for many years and was eventually bought by the British Library for £9,000,000 in 2012. It is usually displayed in London and but was displayed in Durham in 2017 with the Lindisfarne Gospels