

Tony Thinking Aloud ciii

This has been a very English week! We started by looking to the Commonwealth Games in England starting in 100 days' time. Thursday saw the 96th Anniversary of the birth of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and on Saturday we see, St George's Day, April 23rd also the day when William Shakespeare was born and died. My apologies to my non English readers for what follows!

How patriotic do you feel? Are you pleased to be English? The flags will fly at public places on St George's day, but it is a fact the day is not so significant to those who live in England, as Saint David's Day in Wales, Saint Patrick's Day in Ireland, and Saint Andrew's Day in Scotland.

There are some interesting facts ... Saint George was not English; he was born in Cappadocia (modern Turkey). Often depicted as a knight, the truth is fanciful! He was a martyr, he died for his Christian faith. He refused to sacrifice in honour of pagan gods in the Diocletian Persecution. He never visited England and became popular in England in the early 4th Century. The story of the dragon came later – it represents the battle between good and evil. He was canonised – made a saint – in 494 although it took a thousand years before his day became a holiday. Other countries have George as their Patron saint who in the Middle Ages turned to him for protection.

The Order of the Garter, the highest form of chivalry in this country, has Saint George on the Garter Badge. So, it is appropriate that, two days after the anniversary of her birth, the Queen, the Sovereign of the Order, presides over an annual Commemorative Service at Saint George's Chapel, Windsor.

So, things to think about it, we certainly come together to cheer English teams, be good to have a high number of medals at the games.

Think about Saint George and England, and think about each other, about generosity of sharing together and about George and the dragon! which is all about overcoming evil with good. We should all be looking to the good things in life for ourselves and others.

Perhaps we should echo words from one of Shakespeare's plays – God for Harry, England, and Saint George (Harry – Henry V was King at the time).