

Tony Thinking Aloud liv

Time to think about Saint George. Our National Patron Saint's Day, Friday April 23rd.

Two mates of mine were thinking about a drink now the lockdown has been eased. Steve said, 'What about going to the George and Dragon?' Dave replied, 'Good idea, I know the landlord, his name is George. He is always good for a chat and a joke! And don't forget his feisty assistant, the Dragon behind the bar!'

George looked at in different ways – good for a joke – now for the serious side at what we know about him and how that can help us.

George was a Roman Soldier, probably a Centurion, a Christian martyred for his faith in the Diocletian persecution of about 303 . His eventual adoption as our Patron Saint comes from his valour and bravery respected at the time of the Crusades. In this context Edward III created him Patron Saint of England in 1327, the Order of the Garter was instituted the same day.

The dragon is symbolic. A legend is that George slayed a dragon which was overcoming a village and freed folk from annihilation and a princess from sacrifice to the dragon! However it is meaningful because it shows good overcoming evil. Courage in the face of adversity.

During the Middle Ages George was looked on as one of a group of saints that could help in an epidemic, fatal disease and the plague. He clearly had a special place - remember Shakespeare, who was born and died on Saint George's Day – 'God for Harry, England and Saint George' at the time of Battle of Agincourt.

So reflect, conquering Good over Evil, the foundation of his life. Help in desperate situations, and remember he was martyred for his Christian belief.

Like all the saints who inspire us, he put his trust in God. We are all called to be saints and be inspired by his example of putting others first. We are called to support others in the same way trusting that the Hand of God is with us.