

16 November

St Edmund of Abingdon

Bishop, Joint-Principal Patron of the Diocese

SOLEMNITY

St Edmund Rich was born at St Edmund's Lane, Abingdon, on 20 November, probably in the year 1175. His father was a rich merchant, hence the surname (which he never in fact used himself). Under the influence of his mother he led an ascetic life. He studied at Oxford and Paris, and became a teacher in about 1200 or a little earlier. For six years he lectured on mathematics and dialectics, apparently dividing his time between Oxford and Paris, and winning distinction for his part in introducing the study of Aristotle. He is the first known Oxford Master of Arts, and the place where he taught was eventually renamed St Edmund Hall.

Between 1205 and 1210 he changed direction, studying theology and being ordained a priest. He took a doctorate in divinity, and soon won fame as a lecturer on theology and as an extemporaneous preacher. Some time between 1219 and 1222 he was appointed vicar of the parish of Calne in Wiltshire and Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral, and finally became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1233. He was a notable and effective reforming Bishop. His love for discipline and justice aroused opposition, and he found himself ranged against Rome as champion of the national Church. Eventually, like his predecessors St Thomas Becket and Stephen Langton, he retired to Pontigny, where he is buried. He died at Soisy-Bouy on 16 November 1240.

His cultus was especially marked at Abingdon, and at Catesby where his sisters were both nuns. Edmund was canonised in 1246, and is the Joint-Principal Patron of the Diocese of Portsmouth.



Illustration of St Edmund of Abingdon from the Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493

Entrance Antiphon (1 Sam 2:35)

I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, says the Lord.
He will do all that is in my heart and mind.

or

Saint Edmund, poor and humble in this world,
enters the kingdom of heaven rich by the grace of God.

The Gloria is said

Opening Prayer

God of justice,
by whose inspiration Saint Edmund was vigilant
for the cause of integrity in public office
and discipline in religious life,
grant, we pray you,
that your Church may have that same spirit of constancy,
and be fearless in proclaiming
the righteousness that you demand of all.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Liturgy of the Word

from the Common of Pastors, especially the following:

1st Reading Jeremiah 1:4-9 (Lectionary Vol II, p. 1478, no. 7)
Go now to those to whom I send you.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 95:1-3. 7-8. 10 R/ v. 3 (p. 1479)
*Proclaim the wonders of the Lord
among all the peoples.*

2nd Reading 2 Corinthians 3:1-6 (p. 1487, no. 5)
He has given us the qualifications to be the administrators of this new covenant.

Gospel Acclamation John 10:14 (p. 1500, no. 12)
*I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my own sheep and my own know me.*

Gospel John 21:15-17 (p. 1500, no. 12)
Feed my lambs, feed my sheep.

The Profession of Faith is said

Prayer over the Gifts

Lord,
we bring you the same gift that Saint Edmund offered.
Accept it as you accepted his struggle for truth and justice.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Preface of Pastors (P67, Roman Missal p. 470)

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks.

You give the Church this feast in honour of St Edmund;
you inspire us by his holy life,
instruct us by his preaching,
and give us your protection in answer to his prayers.

We join the angels and saints
as they sing their unending hymn of praise:

Communion Antiphon (Mt 24:46-47)

Blessed is the servant whom the Lord finds watching when he comes;
truly, I tell you, he will set him over all his possessions.

Prayer after Communion

Father,
at your altar we are sustained and fed
in the communion of all your people.
May the faith of Saint Edmund
inspire us in our Christian life,
for he put his hope in the same Lord
who gave us this eucharist.

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus the Lord.

Solemn Blessing or **Prayer over the People**

Adapt from Roman Missal pp. 374-5 or 384