

August 2024

I'm sure I'm not alone in thinking that summer seems to be passing us by this year and I hope that by the time you read this the weather will have improved and the sun will be shining – especially important for our farmers as harvest approaches. Coincidentally as I write this it is July 15th – St. Swithun's Day – and according to folklore if it rains today it will rain for the next forty days, and looking out of my window it doesn't look too hopeful. Time will tell!

Swithun spent ten years as Bishop of Winchester in the ninth century and appears to have been a trusted advisor of Egbert, king of Wessex. His wish to be buried 'humbly' was granted after he died on 2nd July 862. However, when a new cathedral was being built the new bishop, Ethelwold, decided to move Swithun's remains to a shrine in the cathedral, despite warnings that to move them would result in terrible storms. Nevertheless, his remains were moved on the 15th July 971 and although many healings and other miracles were seen it did apparently rain for forty days, as predicted. That is why St Swithun's feast-day has become synonymous with wet summers ... although the more philosophical among us will probably put it down to the jet stream being in the 'wrong' place! Maybe as we think about the life of St Swithun we would be better off remembering his Christian simplicity, gentleness, holiness and service in the example of Jesus rather than anxiously watching the skies!

Anyway, wherever you find yourself this summer and whatever you are doing I pray that the sun will shine on you and that God will bless you.

Revd Sue

If you would like to talk please contact me on stanley.thehole@btinternet.com or 01327 341307