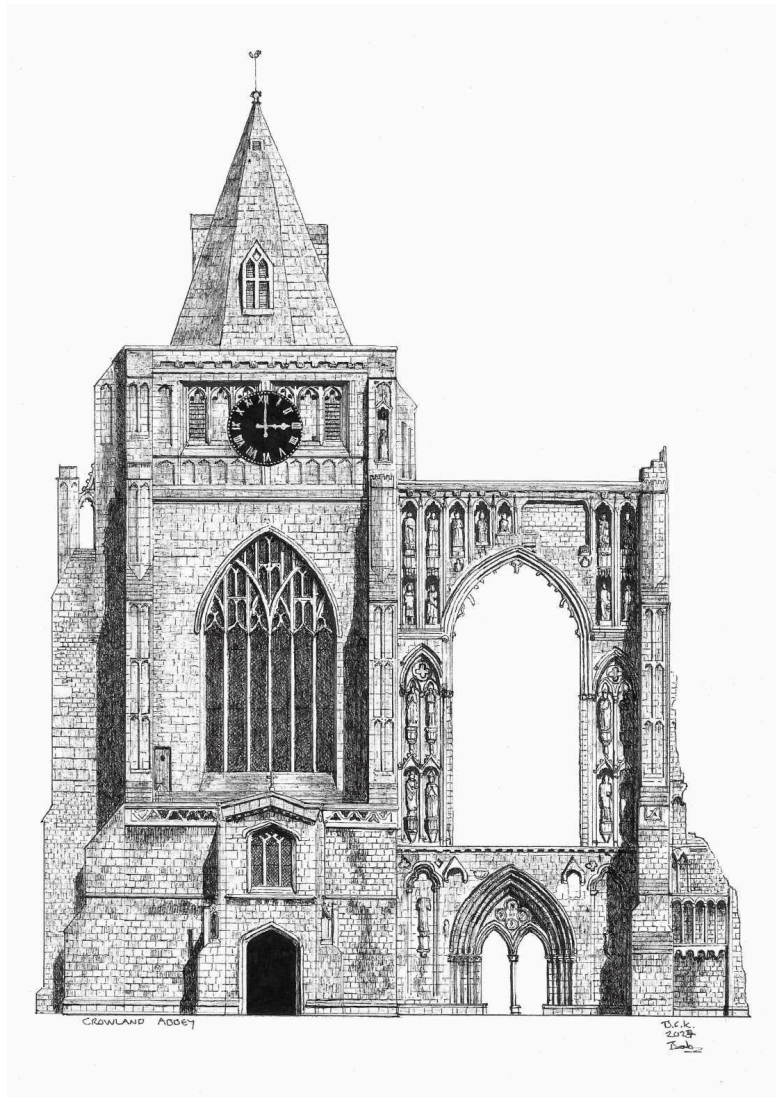
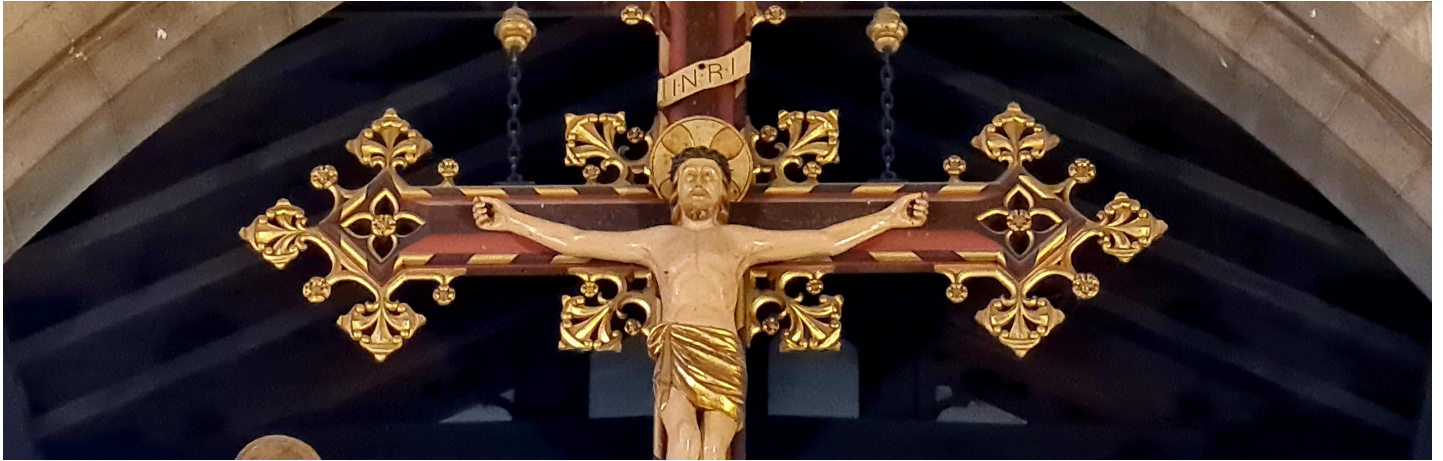


# ST GUTHLAC'S PILGRIMAGE



This pilgrimage will guide you through St Guthlac's life. Each section gives you the opportunity to reflect on your own life and offer a short prayer to God. You can walk slowly and prayerfully, pausing as you read each section, or can you find a quiet place to sit and work through this "pilgrimage". Enjoy this opportunity to journey with God in this sacred space.



The crucifix

## Section 1 - Preparation

Reflection: Spend a few moments in quiet, emptying your mind of the concerns and worries of daily life that clutter up your thoughts and prevent you from hearing God's voice.

### Prayer

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Heavenly Father, you sent your servant Guthlac to minister to the forgotten people of the wild and desolate fens. I pray that by following the story of his life I may learn from his example. Amen

## Section 2 - Early life



St Mary's window

*St Gulthlac was born into an influential family, related to the Mercian royal family, in 673. He had a happy and privileged childhood.*

Reflection: Recall your own childhood, the happy times and the people who nurtured you and formed you. If there are sad moments to recall, acknowledge them and let them go.

### Prayer

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Heavenly Father, I pray for all parents and children; for those who are part of my own family and friendship groups, and for those I do not know by name but who are experiencing hardship. Amen





**Soldier War Memorial**

## Section 3 - The soldier

*St Guthlac became a soldier. He was a charismatic leader, attracting men of many races, from many lands. He was deemed successful; defeating enemies, spoiling their lands and taking their possessions. However, he felt uneasy at his lifestyle and had a revelation that changed his life.*

Reflection: Reflect on any actions in your life that you regret. Think about your current lifestyle. Is it ethical? Is it sustainable? Are there things you would like to change?

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, I pray that there be respect for the earth, peace for its people, love in our lives, delight in the good and forgiveness for past wrongs. I am sorry for all the things I have done wrong in my life and ask for your help in changing my life for the better. Amen

## Section 4: Reparations

*St Guthlac gave back the treasure he had taken during his military service and, despite the protests of his companions, decided to give up being a soldier.*

Reflection: Think of all the past benefactors of this church and this community, who gave generously to build this place and helped the community to flourish. Think of the times when you have failed to be as charitable as you might.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for all those who give generously of their time and money to help others. Help me to be more generous so others are blessed. Amen



**Light shining in the darkness**

## Section 5 - Conversion

*St Guthlac gave up all his possessions and turned to Christ.*

Reflection: Is there something in your life that you need to turn away from? Do you need to make a new start?

If you have been baptised in the Christian faith you have made promises or had them made on your behalf. You may wish to renew those promises now.

If you have not been baptised, you might want to ask God now for His forgiveness and commit to growing in your relationship with Him.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you that you are a God of love and forgiveness. Wash me clean and help me to follow in the path that you have set for me. Amen



The font

## Section 6: The monk

*St Guthlac entered the monastery at Repton, in Derbyshire, and spent two years there immersing himself in the life of prayer and studying of Scripture.*

Reflection: The monastic virtues are obedience, humility, patience, abstinence, sincerity and self-control. Which of those virtues have a place in your life? Which of them do you find hardest to practise?

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, help me to be still and silent, ready to hear and respond to your words. Guide me in your ways and fill me with your Spirit. Amen



The pulpit





Quatrefoil of the life of St Guthlac

## Section 7 - The traveller

*St Guthlac felt called to a solitary life and decided to make his home in the fens. He found a guide called Tatwine who took him by boat through the marshy landscape.*

Reflection: Think of those times in your life when you have found it hard to find your way through difficulties; those times when you have been faced with choices and have not been sure what to do.

Remember those who stood by you and helped you to make the right decisions.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, I give you thanks for my family and friends who have helped me in difficult times. Thank you for standing by me, even though I might not have been aware of your presence. Amen

## Section 8: The hermit

*St Guthlac landed on the island of Crowland on St Bartholomew's day in 699 and made his home here.*

Reflection: Imagine what Crowland and the surrounding wild fens looked like in Guthlac's time and compare them with the cultivated farmland and comfortable housing of today. Reflect on all the changes you have seen in your lifetime; those which have made life easier and safer, and those that have made life more complicated. Think of those who are still struggling and living in poverty.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, help me to accept the changes in my life. Help me to embrace what is useful and stand against what is damaging and wrong. I pray for those living in poverty; that you will provide for them. Amen



A boss showing the contraction derived from the Greek word ΙΗΣΟΥΣ, Jesus.



Statue of St Guthlac and a demon

## Section 9 - The temptations

*St Guthlac was tempted to give up the difficult life that he had chosen and was tortured by evil spirits. St Bartholomew was his inspiration and helped him resist.*

Reflection: What temptations are you facing in your own life? How do you overcome them?

### Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come, your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
Amen

## Section 10: The holy man

*St Guthlac discovered he had the power of healing and the ability to discern people's thoughts. Bishop Hedda visited him and ordained him priest because he was so impressed with his wisdom.*

Reflection: Reflect on your gifts and talents, and what use you are making of them. Are there things you want to learn and skills you want to develop? Do you feel called to do something special with your life?

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, you have made me the unique person that I am and have given me talents to use. Help me discover what those gifts are and develop them, so I can use them to your glory. Amen



The altar and east window





Burial stone of William de Wermington, master mason

## Section 11 - Death

*St Guthlac suffered a short illness and died on 11th April 714. As he died his hermitage was filled with light, heavenly sounds and sweet scents.*

Reflection: Look around the abbey at plaques commemorating the departed and all the furnishings that have been given in their loving memory.

Remember those friends and family members who are no longer with you and recall some ways in which they have shaped the person you are today.

### Prayer

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Heavenly Father, I pray for those I love but am no longer able to see. May they rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen

## Section 12: Conclusion

Reflection: Spend a few moments thinking back over all the inward reflection that you have done while following the life of St Guthlac. When you are ready, end with this blessing.

### Blessing

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In our journeys to and fro, may God direct us.  
In our happiness and pleasure, may God bless us.  
In care, anxiety or trouble, may God sustain us.  
In peril and in danger, may God protect us.  
Amen



Crowland Abbey

# St Guthlac's Pilgrimage

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## St Guthlac's Prayer

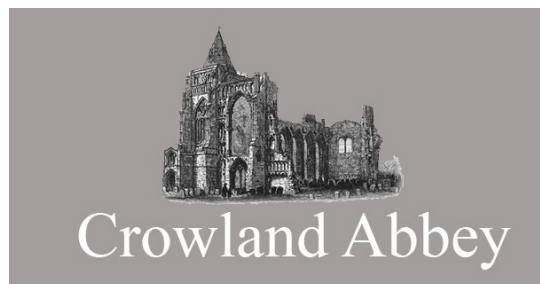
Lord, today we remember:  
all seekers after freedom  
all who abandon violence for faith  
all who commit themselves to hunger for God.

And we pray to the God of the wild places, and of the street, the park, and the church:  
that we may overcome the dark forces within or without which seek destruction,  
that we may find our own 'wild place' in which to encounter the living God,  
and that we may receive that same Spirit which Guthlac received to strengthen us  
and make the world whole.

And we thank God:  
for the fenlands and wetlands of this world, praying for their flourishing as havens for  
the wild and free  
for the example of spiritual warriors like Guthlac who inspire us and share their  
wisdom with all who seek it  
and we give thanks for everything which is natural, which is infinite, for the whole of  
creation!

So God, preserve to us the memory of Guthlac as we walk through the wilderness of  
this world with questions seeking and heart's longing, that we, like him, may live in  
the promise of your wild peace.

Adapted from [www.storyman.org.uk/desert/guthlac](http://www.storyman.org.uk/desert/guthlac)



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We hope that you have enjoyed your time at the Abbey today and wish you every blessing as you journey home. May God walk with you wherever you go.