

Pilgrimage, place, heritage and England's cathedrals, past and present

The Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture at the University of York has produced research focusing on pilgrimage, spirituality and the role of English cathedrals past and present. For the last 14 years the Centre has produced resources explaining the influence of Christianity on culture and society which are used widely in universities, schools and churches; recently it has also been developing clergy training with English Heritage and the Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division and creating interpretation schemes in partnership with churches and cathedrals.

The Pilgrimage project was created as a response to the general growth of interest in pilgrimage in the UK today, the very large numbers of visitors to cathedrals, and the Centre's experience of creating Pilgrim trails and other kinds of interpretation for a number of Anglican cathedrals. The project has a strong focus on cathedrals in England and the ways in which a fuller understanding of their history, together with current research on contemporary responses to 'place', might support cathedrals in helping visitors to engage and respond.

The current resurgence of pilgrimage in England both crosses denominational and faith boundaries in unprecedented ways and draws in many without formal religious beliefs. It includes new uses of historic Christian sites (e.g. Asian and African communities now hold pilgrimages to Aylesford Priory while Hindus visit St Jude's Shrine, Faversham). Pilgrimage is also a key topic in the RE curriculum. The project website offers a unique resource for individuals, organisations and schools, providing articles, images and a database of resources, and encouraging information exchange through an online forum.

For Canterbury Cathedral, the team have created a 3D model of the experience of medieval pilgrims at Canterbury, based on archaeological, archival, literary and art historical evidence. This material can be used to enhance learning and understanding of this major heritage/sacred site through enhanced interpretation and access.

See the Pilgrimage project website at <https://www.york.ac.uk/projects/pilgrimage/>

Download the 3D CGI clips from the Resources page on www.becket2020.com

