

Every day prayers are said at the four services that take place here and at the six services on Sundays. Also throughout the day a chaplain will say prayers each hour to remind us of God's presence.

As you finish your visit with your family or friends please take time to light a votive candle* in the Nave and think of all those other people who have done the same thing over the past one thousand years.

* A votive candle is a candle that you light as a symbol of a specific prayer.

Children's Prayer

Holy God, help me to be still in this place
where people have prayed
for a thousand years:

Open my eyes that I may see you in the
beauty of the building,

Open my mind that I may learn from those
whose lives are remembered here,

Open my heart that I may hear you,
speaking within me,
filling me with your love,
this day and always.

Amen.

*The Dean and Chapter of Westminster hope that you have
enjoyed your visit to this extraordinary church*

House of God and House of Kings

E mail your questions to schools@westminster-abbey.org
Learn more about The Abbey at www.westminster-abbey.org

You have entered
as a young visitor
into a very old
building.

How old is the Abbey
you ask and why is it here?

If you read this leaflet you
will find out some facts about it.

WESTMINSTER
ABBEY



The Isle of Thorns or Thorney Island is an old name for Westminster and it was a likely place for an Anglo-Saxon church to have been built in the 7th and 8th centuries.

Notable events in the Abbey's 1000 year history

c 960	First Benedictine monks settle at Westminster
1065	December 28th. King Edward's Norman Church consecrated
1066	Christmas Day. First Coronation in the Abbey of William the Conqueror
1161	Canonisation of King Edward as Saint and Confessor
1245	Henry III begins building the present church
1300-01	Coronation Chair made to enclose the Stone of Scone. The Chair has been used at every Coronation since 1308
1400	Geoffrey Chaucer buried in South Transept
1503	Lady Chapel begun
1519	Vaulted roof in Lady Chapel completed
1540	Dissolution of the monastery by Henry VIII
1560	Elizabeth I establishes the Abbey as a Collegiate Church
1660	Restoration to the Throne of King Charles II
1745	West Towers completed
1838	Coronation of Queen Victoria
1920	Unknown Warrior buried in the Nave
1953	Televised Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II
1973-95	Restoration of the Abbey exterior
1997	Funeral of Diana Princess of Wales
2002	Funeral of Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother
2005	1,000th Anniversary of King Edward's birth

Saint Edward's Foundation

King Edward the Confessor (born 1005 – died 1066) built a new Abbey on this site, which was consecrated on 28th December 1065, just before he died on 5th January 1066.

The monks who lived here looked after the Church for him saying prayers and living their lives in a holy way.



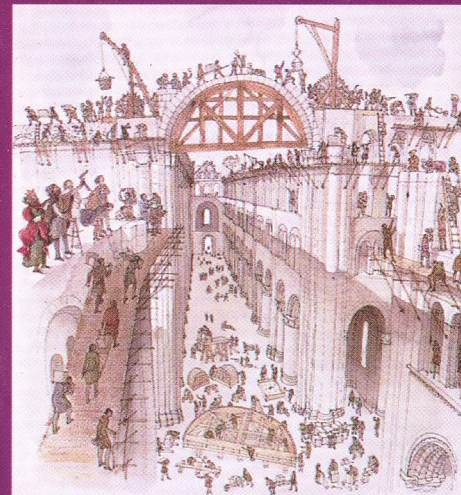
A detail from the Saint Edward Missal (a missal is a service book or prayer book).

What do you think his and the monks lives were like compared to yours? What were their food, clothes and heating like?

Henry III's Building

King Henry III (born 1207 – died 1272) then designed a new building, which was built by master masons and builders. As you go around on the tour you will visit the Nave, which was finally completed in 1517.

Other chapels were added to the main building: Henry V's Chapel (born 1387 – died 1422), at the East end of St Edward's Chapel, which contains the Tomb and Shrine of King Edward: and Henry VII's Chapel (born 1457 – died 1509) also known as the Lady Chapel.



Drawing by David Gentleman

Do you know how these men built this wonderful building without modern machinery to help them? Can you imagine what it was like? Look at the drawing.

Recent Restoration

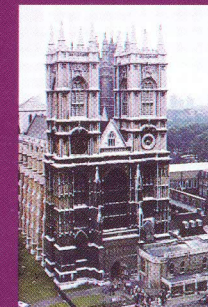
As you look around the Abbey today and see the outside looking so



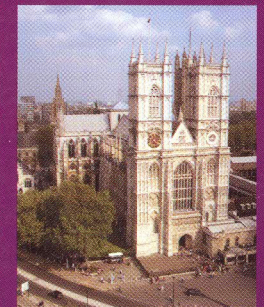
clean and well cared for, it is because of restoration

that took place from 1973 to 1995. This means that although repair work is never ending the Abbey will be enjoyed by worshippers and visitors for many years to come.

Can you see any repairs taking place today?



Before...



and after cleaning

