



Monks return to Rushen Abbey

'Lifepath' was an event Scripture Union Ministries Trust (SUMT) held during the week of 22nd to 25th June 2010 at Rushen Abbey in Ballasalla for Year 5 pupils from across the island.

'Lifepath' is an educational day for pupils to explore the concept of faith, prayer and the lifestyle of a Christ follower through the life of a Cistercian Monk from the 11th Century. Organised by SUMT, The Board of Education and Manx National Heritage, the days were held to help the children meet some of their National curriculum targets in looking at the history and beliefs of people of faith, and also to explore for themselves their own spiritual journey. Over 300 children attended, with around 100 volunteers and the SUMT team to bring it all together.

Amanda Brown, Associate Worker SUMT, comments:

"Rushen Abbey resounded to the sound of bells once more as the monks, in full regalia, walked through the cloisters. They were there to meet with Year 5 children from the Island's Primary schools, who had a close encounter with history as they dressed up in monks' habits and questioned the brothers about their lives at the Abbey.

The children shared in cooking and tasting pulmentum, an interesting concoction eaten by the monks. Calligraphy and pyrography workshops saw the children trying their hands at traditional skills as well as having the opportunity to interview other characters about their beliefs. These included one of Jesus' disciples as well as more contemporary people, such as various clergy from different traditions, and SUMT workers who gave their perspective on being a younger Christian in the 21st Century.

There was lots of fun, laughter and song as the children were busily engaged painting, planting seeds, making bead bracelets, blowing bubbles and playing games in practical workshops. In more reflective moments, they considered issues and events, both internationally and closer to home, and their personal response to them.

As the children left the Abbey at the end of each day with their journey bags brimming over with their work, and big smiles on their faces, it was apparent that this had been a day at the Abbey that they would remember for a long time".

