

## **No Go!**

*August 3, 2018*

“We are not loading any more passengers,” said the flight attendant with her hand up in front of my face. My boarding pass had just been scanned. I was next to board.

“What’s going on?” I asked.

“Tornadoes in Boston have closed Logan Airport to incoming flights,” she answered.

“Tornadoes in Boston? What? When has there ever been a tornado in Boston?” I wondered, having lived in Massachusetts most of my life.

The entire shutting down of my only option to cross the Atlantic Ocean appeared to me like a giant red STOP sign.

As I gathered myself and my luggage, I stared outside at the white puffy clouds floating by in the bright-blue Florida sky. It seemed to be a perfect day to fly. I was now waiting for an announcement regarding departure to Boston. My evening flight to England was still scheduled to go out of Boston’s Logan Airport, despite its closure to my incoming flight. I sensed something spiritual in this unexpected “watching and waiting.” I sat as if in my own world, trying to tune out all the voices of disgruntled would-be passengers.

“It is not the auspicious time to go. I am not going to England,” I said under my breath. I already knew it. During the wait, I remembered that I had uncharacteristically taken out travel insurance in case of some unforeseeable interruption. I was certain the option to go had already been foreclosed. I simply sat for the next three-plus hours, waiting for the final decision by the airline to come. And it did: No go! I was officially grounded.

Back at home later that day, I pondered this unexpected turn of events. The “Why go?” of previous days had become “Why not?” I had set my intention when I first had a sense of “call” to make a pilgrimage. Most especially, this was to be a quest to understand the meaning behind self-imposed exile. Dame Julian had been called to it, and I felt more and more a sense of exile in my own life. Her exile and my sense of exile had moved me through six months of preparations. I was to visit Norwich to learn something of Julian’s life by walking where she would have walked in the fourteenth century. Her anchorage was calling me, as perhaps it had called her over six centuries ago.