



Cathedral Newsletter

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

7/20 March

Beginning of Great Lent

1/14 March



Troparion. Tone 2

We venerate Thy holy icon, O loving Lord, / asking Thee to pardon our transgressions, O Christ our God, / for Thou of Thine own will wast pleased in the flesh to ascend upon the Cross, / so as to deliver from bondage of the enemy / those whom Thou hast fashioned. / Therefore in thanksgiving we cry aloud to Thee: Thou hast filled all things with joy, O our Saviour, // when Thou hast come to save the world!

Kontakion

The uncircumscribed Word of the Father became circumscribed, / taking flesh from thee, O Mother of God, / and He has restored the sullied image to its ancient glory, / filling it with divine beauty. / This our salvation we confess in deed and word, // and we depict it in the holy ikons.

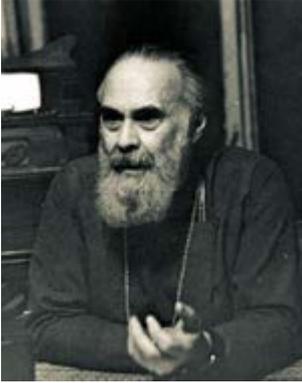
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The Legacy of Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

SERMON ON SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

16th March 1997



*Metropolitan Anthony
of Sourozh*

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

We are keeping today, as every year at the end of the first week of Lent, the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. And every year we must give thought to what is meant, not only as a historical event, but also in our personal lives. First of all we must remember that the Triumph of Orthodoxy is not the Triumph of the Orthodox over other people. It is the Triumph of the Truth Divine in the hearts of those who belong to the Orthodox Church and who proclaim the Truth revealed by God in its integrity and directness.

Today we must thank God with all our hearts that He has revealed Himself to us, that He has dispelled darkness in the minds and hearts of thousands and thousands of people, that He who is the Truth has shared the knowledge of the perfect Truth Divine with us.

The occasion of this feast was the recognition of the legitimacy of venerating icons. By doing this we proclaim that God - invisible, ineffable, the God whom we cannot comprehend, has truly become man, that God has taken flesh, that He has lived in our midst full of humility, of simplicity, but of glory also. And proclaiming this we venerate the icons not as idols, but as a declaration of the Truth of the Incarnation.

By doing this we must not forget that it is not the icons of wood and of paint, but God who reveals Himself in the world. Each of us, all men, were created in the image of God. We are all living icons, and this lays upon us a great responsibility because an icon may be defaced, an icon may be turned into a caricature and into a blasphemy. And we must think of ourselves and ask ourselves: are we worthy, are we capable of being called 'icons', images of God? A western writer has said that meeting a Christian, those who surround him should see him as a vision, a revelation of something they have never perceived before, that the difference between a non-Christian and a Christian is as

great, as radical, as striking, as the difference there is between a statue and a living person. A statue may be beautiful, but it is made of stone or of wood, and it is dead. A human being may not at first appear as possessed of such a beauty, but those who meet him should be able, as those who venerate an icon - blessed, consecrated by the Church - to see in him the shining of the presence of the Holy Spirit, see God revealing Himself in the humble form of a human being.

As long as we are not capable of being such a vision to those who surround us, we fail in our duty, we do not proclaim the Triumph of Orthodoxy through our life, we give a lie to what we proclaim. And therefore each of us, and all of us collectively, bear every responsibility for the fact that the world meeting Christians by the million is not converted by the vision of God's presence in their midst, carried indeed in earthen vessels, but glorious, saintly, transfiguring the world.

What is true about us, simply, personally, is as true about our churches. Our churches were called by Christ as a family, a community of Christians, to be a body of people who are united with one another by total love, by sacrificial love, a love that is God's love to us. The Church was called, and is still called, to be a body of people whose characteristic is to be the incarnate love of God. Alas, in all our churches what we see is not the miracle of love divine.

From the very beginning, alas, the Church was built according to the images of the State - hierarchical, strict, formal. In this we have failed - to be truly what the early, first community of Christians were. Tertullian writing in defence of the Christians said to the Emperor of Rome: 'When people meet us they are arrested and say: "How these people love one another!"' We are not collectively a body of people about whom one could say this. And we must learn to recreate what God has willed for us, what has once existed: to recreate communities, churches, parishes, dioceses, patriarchates, the whole church, in such a way that the whole of life, the reality of life should be that of love. Alas, we have not learned this yet.

And so, when we keep the feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy we must remember that God has conquered, that we are proclaiming the truth, God's own Truth, Himself incarnate and revealed, and there is a great responsibility for all of us collectively and singly in this world, that we must not give the lie to what we proclaim by the way in which we live. A western theologian has said that we may proclaim the whole truth of Orthodoxy and at the same time deface it, give it the lie by the way in

which we live, showing with our life that all these were words, but not reality. We must repent of this, we must change, we must become such that people meeting us should see God's truth, God's light, God's love in us individually and collectively. As long as we have not done this we have not taken part in the Triumph of Orthodoxy. God has triumphed, but He has put us in charge of making his triumph the triumph of life for the whole world.

Therefore, let us learn to live according to the Gospel which is the Truth and the Life, not only individually but collectively, and build societies of Christians that are a revelation of it, so that the world looking at us may say: 'Let us re-shape our institutions, re-shape our relationships, renew all that has gone or remains old and become a new society in which the Law of God, the Life of God can prosper and triumph.'

Amen.

Notes on the church calendar for March

SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGEMENT

March 6th, 2016



The Sunday of the Last Judgment is the third Sunday using the Lenten Triodion, the liturgical book used in the services of Great Lent. This Sunday is also called Meatfare Sunday since it is traditionally the last day before Easter for eating meat. Orthodox Christians observe a fast from meat all the following week, but still eat dairy products and eggs and fish till the start of Great Lent.

The Gospel reading this Sunday remembers Christ's parable of the Last Judgment (*Matthew 25:31-46*). This adds to the previous pre-Lenten Sundays and teaches that it is not enough to see Jesus, to see ourselves as we are, and to come home to God as his prodigal sons and daughters. The Church teaches that, in addition, we must also be God's children by following Christ, His only-begotten divine Son, by seeing Christ in everyone and serving Christ through them.

Salvation and final judgement will depend upon deeds, not merely on

intentions or even on the mercies of God apart from personal cooperation and obedience. All piety and prayer is ultimately directed towards the goal of serving Christ through his people.

... for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you took me in, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and in prison and you visited me. For truly I say to you, if you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me (Mt 25).

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY

March 13th, 2016



On the eve of Great Lent, the day called Cheesefare Sunday (as it is the last day on which dairy products are appointed to be eaten until Easter) and Forgiveness Sunday, we sing of Adam's exile from paradise. We identify ourselves with Adam, lamenting our loss of the beauty, dignity and delight of our original creation, mourning our corruption in sin. We also hear on this day in the Gospel reading (*Mt 6:14-21*) the Lord's teaching about fasting and forgiveness, and we enter the season of the fast forgiving one another so that God will forgive us.

If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses.

At the end of Vespers on Sunday evening a special rite of forgiveness is celebrated. The celebrant first asks forgiveness of all, and then we come to ask forgiveness of him and one another. It is especially important sincerely to ask forgiveness of those whom we know we have offended.

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

March 20th, 2016

Each of the Sundays of Great Lent also has its own special theme. The first Sunday is called the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. It is a historical feast commemorating the return of the icons to the churches in the year 843 after the heresy of iconoclasm was overcome. The spiritual theme of the day is first of all the victory of the True Faith. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith" (1 Jn 5:4). Secondly, the icons of the saints bear witness that man, "created in the image and likeness of God" (Gen 1:26), becomes holy and godlike through the purification of himself as God's living image.

A special Rite of the Triumph of Orthodoxy is celebrated immediately after the Divine Liturgy on this day. It is the custom in many places, including in London, for a Pan-Orthodox celebration to take place on this day, celebrating the unity in the Orthodox Faith of the various jurisdictions. This year it will take place at our Cathedral at 6pm.

SUNDAY OF ST GREGORY PALAMAS

March 27th, 2016

The Second Sunday of Lent is the commemoration of St Gregory Palamas. It was St Gregory (d.1359) who bore living witness that men can become divine through the grace of God in the Holy Spirit; and that even in this life, by prayer and fasting, human beings can become participants of the uncreated light of God's divine glory.

SUNDAY OF THE CROSS

April 3rd, 2016

The Third Sunday of Lent is that of the Veneration of the Cross. The cross stands in the midst of the church in the middle of the lenten season not merely to remind men of Christ's redemption and to keep before them the goal of their efforts, but also to be venerated as that reality by which man must live to be saved. "He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" (Mt 10:38). For in the Cross of Christ Crucified lies both "the power of God and the wisdom of God" for those being saved (1 Cor 1:24).

Adapted from 'The Orthodox Faith' by Fr Thomas Hopko.

Available online at www.oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith

The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian

The Prayer of St Ephrem is a prayer attributed to Saint Ephrem the Syrian used repeatedly during Great Lent. It is considered to be the most succinct summation of the spirit of Great Lent and is hence the Lenten prayer 'par excellence', prayed during all Lenten weekday services, and also in private.

O Lord and Master of my life, from the spirit of sloth, despondency, lust for power and idle talking, deliver me! (*Prostration*)

But the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love, give unto me thy servant. (*Prostration*)

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother, for thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen. (*Prostration*)

O God, cleanse me a sinner. (12 times with a bow each time)

O Lord and Master of my life (*with one prostration at the end only*)

Diocesan News

FESTIVE CELEBRATIONS ON THE PATRONAL FESTIVAL IN LEEDS



Festive celebrations on the Patronal Festival of the parish of the Diocese of Sourozh in Leeds took place on February 6th, the day of remembrance of Saint Xenia of St Petersburg, the fool-for-Christ.

This year the parish celebrates its five years' anniversary. It was Archpriest Gennady Andreev (now Bishop Matthew of Skopin and Shatsk.), who laid the foundation of church life in Leeds. On May 7th 2011, Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh led the first Divine Liturgy in the newly established parish.

Currently, spiritual guidance is entrusted to the rector of the parish Fr Dmitry Nedostupenko, Dean of the Diocesan Region of North of England and Wales. The churchwarden Karina Polyakova, the bursar Kristina Tambovskaya, the choir director Larisa Gladkih, and numerous other parishioners actively partici-

pate in the parish's life in their daily labours and acts of beneficence to the glory of God.

With the blessing of His Eminence Elisey of Sourozh, the celebration of the Patronal Festival was headed by Archpriest Joseph Skinner of the London Cathedral. Fr Deacon Anatoli Vihroy, a clergyman of the Diocesan Region of the North of England and Wales, concelebrated. The regular parishioners and guests from the other parishes of the neighbouring towns gathered



together for worship in the small Catholic chapel. Following the Liturgy, Fr Joseph congratulated those who were present on the occasion of the Patronal Festival, expressing his gratitude for the warm welcome and wishing the worshippers many prosperous years.

The festival was marked with yet another happy event, the baptism of a baby girl, who became the youngest parishioner. In accordance with the

established tradition, all those who were present were invited to share the festive meal, organised by the parishioners.

**THE DIOCESAN BISHOP'S
METOCHION OF THE
VENERABLE MARTYR GRAND
DUCHESS ELIZABETH COM-
MEMORATES THE HOLY NEW
MARTYRS AND CONFESSORS
OF THE RUSSIAN CHURCH**

On the first Sunday of February, the Russian Orthodox Church commemorates the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of the Russian Church. In celebration of this great feast, the Divine Liturgy took place on 7th February in East Sussex, where the Diocesan Bishop's metochion of the Venerable Martyr Grand Duchess Elizabeth is based. The parishioners



of the metochion shared the joy of communal prayer and celebration with the worshippers and guests who came from different parts of South-East England. By virtue of the great Patronal Feast, all the believers felt themselves united as one big family. Splendid flowers deco-

rated the church, and the wonderful church choir and the generosity of the festive meal were appreciated by all.

In his sermon, Fr Stephen Platt underlined the importance of the martyrs and confessors of the Faith as living examples of witnessing to Christ in this world, which we are all called to do through our everyday actions. Following the Divine Liturgy, a church marriage took place for the first time in this parish: two couples got married at the same time.

Every second Saturday of the month, Fr Stephen comes from Oxford to serve the Divine Liturgy in the small church that is filled with God's grace. The iconostasis that is now placed in this church was formerly in the chapel of the old Parish House in Upper Addison Gardens, London. For many years, Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh was serving by this iconostasis. Due to the tireless efforts of Fr. Stephen, nun Martha, who manages the Sisterhood and the other parishioners, the amount of worshippers is vastly increasing. The community of Saint Elizabeth welcomes everybody!

By Tatiana Cambridge

The church timetable and the address of the community is available here: <http://www.gdelizabeth.org.uk/>

<http://www.gdelizabeth.org.uk/>

JOINT PRESS RELEASE OF ARCHBISHOP ELISEY OF SOUROZH AND ARCHBISHOP ANTONIO MENNINI

London 11/02/2016

Before the meeting between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill, Catholics and Orthodox in the United Kingdom as well the believers all over the world gather in prayer, well aware that through this epochal gesture it is offering to humanity – in this moment of severe tensions and conflicts – an extraordinary testimony, unique – of how it is possible to rediscover today – way of peace and unity. A testimony which, after all, by the will of God is placed in the journey of grace which both Churches are making.



This meeting doesn't mean that problems between the two Churches have disappeared – they continue to exist and respectful diplomacy and theological commissions will continue to work in order to resolve them – but it marks a new beginning, concentrated on sharing the sufferings of entire peoples, and in particular

of Christian communities in the Middle East, which ask help and solidarity and a preoccupation with the defence of Christian values.

A meeting, therefore, which is of historic significance, because it seals the encounter between the Heads of two Churches who have never met in history, who represent two cultural and spiritual traditions that for ages were considered in contrast, while they are complementary and are a chance of mutual enrichment, not only for themselves but for the whole of society in which they live and work.

For all these reasons, we are confident that this meeting will be of great social value also for nonbelievers, becoming a moment of rejoicing for respectful populations, as the Popes and the Patriarchs in history prayed for years during which they longed for this. But it will also require the work of ecclesiastical communities, to regain consciousness of what this would mean: a way to discover the true love granted by Christ, which eliminates every division and burns resentments, divisions, recrimination, misunderstandings and mutual sufferings.

We prayerfully wish for the success of this forthcoming meeting.

+ *Archbishop Antonio Mennini, Apostolic Nuncio in Great Britain*

+ *Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh, Diocesan Bishop of the Russian Orthodox Church in Great Britain*

Cathedral News

RELICS OF THE HOLY APOSTLE BARNABAS IN THE LONDON CATHEDRAL OF THE DORMITION



Relics of the Holy Apostle Barnabas, which were visiting England from Cyprus, were present in on Thursday Feb. 11th. As it was expected they were in the cathedral for most of the day. At 6pm the Vigil for the holy Apostle Barnabas was celebrated together with the service for the Three Holy Hierarchs appointed by the typicon.

St Barnabas, a Jew from Cyprus, became a close associate of St Paul on his missionary journeys. Eventually he returned to Cyprus and established the Church there. According to tradition, he was martyred at Salamis. He is referenced in Acts and in two of St. Paul's epistles, Galatians and I Corinthians.

Barnabas was born to a wealthy family in the tribe of Levi. He studied with Saul (later St Paul) under Gamaliel but later became

one of the Seventy Apostles. It was St. Barnabas who introduced Paul to the other apostles after his conversion. From birth his given name was Joseph, but the Apostles called him Barnabas ("son of consolation") because he was gifted at comforting people's souls. St Barnabas was probably the first to preach in Rome and Milan.

He was martyred by the Jews on the island of Cyprus and was buried by St Mark. Many receive healing at his grave, which place was unknown for hundreds of years until the Council of Chalcedon in 451 when he appeared to Archbishop Anthemius in a dream and revealed its location. This appearance and the finding of St Barnabas' miraculous relics is what kept the Patriarchate of Antioch from absorbing Cyprus into its jurisdiction and thus this Apostolic Church of Cyprus has remained independent.

AN ARTISTIC EVENING WITH A PARISHIONER OF THE DORMITION CATHEDRAL – THE POET LYDIA GRIGORIYEVA

On February 14th our fellow parishioner, Lydia Grigoriyeva, who is a famous Russian poet, writer, director and founder of a new direction in creative art, "Photopoetry", held a special recital evening in the library of our Cathedral. The evening was opened

by Fr Tikhon Vasiliev, who said in his welcome speech that the word “poet” in Greek also means “God, the Creator”. Therefore, it is both challenging and requires a great deal of responsibility to be a poet, as the poet becomes a creator and thereby comes closer to God. Our life is meant to be creative, because the first poet was the Lord.

The vast majority of Lydia’s readership is Russian, as her books are published in Russian. However, lovers of poetry in the UK will soon see the translations of poems by Lydia Grigorieva into English.



During the recital the listeners also became spectators, as they were presented with the video “Jerusalem of my garden” - a poetic story about the extraordinary life of the Tibetan pop-

pies, settled in Lydia’s garden by the skilled hands of the oldest parishioner of the Dormition Cathedral - Alexandra Ivanovna Smirnova, who was “the Godmother of the film”. “My garden, my flowers, my texts, my photos, are not mine, but all belong to God” is how Lydia introduced her creation. Indeed, the video leaves the impression that the heavens and the earth are joined together - an allusion to the Old Testament prophets, the poetic perception of the life cycle of flowers, youth, the time of maturity and even the fading of the scarlet buds - all is filled with deep meaning, beauty and nobility, sunlight and bright colors. Lydia Nikolayevna read poems from her new and old books and answered questions. A lively and open discussion ensued. All the participants left this festival of poetry in high spirits, wishing to meet with the poet Lydia Grigorieva again in the future.

Lydia Grigorieva’s books can be purchased in the bookstore of the Dormition Cathedral.

By Julia Pliauksta

‘THE JOURNEY BEGINS ONCE YOU RETURN HOME FROM PILGRIMAGE’

*Pilgrimage to the places of Christian deeds of St Augustine, the
Apostle of the Angles and Wonderworker*

In the early hours of February 27th a group of pilgrims led by Archpriest Maxim Nikolsky sets off from the Cathedral of the Dormition. London appears to be still asleep under the deep blue sky of the winter morning. The morning prayers and the canons for Holy Communion are being read. While the city slowly awakes, we are rushing to leave



*Roman Catholic convent
of Minster Abbey*

it in order to meet the history that is filled with holiness and Christian deeds. After the prayers, Mikhail Sarni takes the microphone in order to tell us about the roots of Christianity in Britain. He also tells us how Angles, Saxons and Jutes were expanding their territories in this land, and about the mission of St Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, apostle of the Angles and Wonderworker.

On the way to the first stopping-place we were joined by our guides – John and Maria Harwood. Finally we reach our first planned destination: St Augustine's Cross, a stone memorial which commemorates the meeting between Saint Augustine and King Ethelbert, who was a pagan, near the place called Ebbsfleet in 527 AD.



Reliquary of St Mildred

This is exactly the place where Christianity started its revival in Britain. We could imagine vividly King (later Saint) Ethelbert meeting St Augustine and the monks. Having sung the troparion and kontaktion to the saint, our journey continued to the Roman Catholic convent of Minster Abbey that has stood in the village of Minster since the 7th century. Father Stephen Platt and the choir from the Community of the Venerable Martyr St Elizabeth near Bodiam were already expecting us in order to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. 'God is looking into our souls, not at our physical appearance. What we are trying to demonstrate to the

people around us is of no importance. A pilgrimage is a special journey that lets us encounter God. People go to pilgrimages for different reasons: one might go just out of curiosity, another would go in order to have a nice day out, some people might go to pray. All of these reasons are good, but what matters most, is that during the pilgrimage we find Christ by taking the Holy Communion and by looking into each other. However, there is also another reason to go on pilgrimage: returning back home, because this is exactly the time when your journey begins. You should bring the gifts that you received from God during the pilgrimage into your everyday life', noted Fr Stephen to the worshippers during his sermon. Notably, everyone had an opportunity to venerate



*St Augustine's Abbey
in Canterbury*

part of the relics of St Mildred, the second Reverend Mother of the monastery.

After having a short rest, sharing some light lunch, conversing with the nuns and getting to know each other better, we are leaving for the next destination of our journey – the town of Ramsgate, the place where St Augustine's church keeps the parts of his relics. Then we moved on to the Church of St Martin of Canterbury

'the oldest church in the entire English-speaking world' as the note on the board outside the church states. Of course, the church was renovated and reconstructed several times, but nevertheless, this was the place where King Ethelbert was baptised. It is worth noting that his good attitude towards Christianity was partially due to his wife, pious Queen Bertha of Kent, a Christian Frankish princess. A small wooden statue is erected in the Church to commemorate her.

St Augustine's Abbey was founded in 7th century by St Augustine, and for a long time this was the place of burial for the kings of Kent and the Archbishops of Canterbury. Now in place of the magnificent monastery there are only massive ruins. One of the pilgrims noted 'Look at the thickness of the walls! They are more than three feet thick'. Currently, the Abbey is a UNESCO heritage site.

Our final destination was the famous Canterbury Cathedral, Mother Church of the worldwide Anglican Communion. There is no doubt that it was important to familiarise ourselves with this remarkable building, but our goal was to venerate the two Orthodox saints whose relics are kept in this Cathedral: Saint Alphege and Saint Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury. An article about St Alphege Church in Greenwich appeared in the February issue of 'Cathedral Newsletter'. By the grace of God, the workers of the Cathedral let us approach the tombstones where the relics of the two Saints lie, in order for us to pray.

This trip lasted only a single day, however it managed to include the history of several centuries. We could clearly feel the continuity of times, the succession of faith and our responsibility to live worthily on the land that was blessed by the deeds of such great Saints.

Sts Augustine, Mildred, Alphege and Dunstan, pray to God for us!

By Julia Pliauksta.

VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE FRIENDS KEEP THE CHURCH GOING



Natalia Vasilyevna Tkachuk

Natalia Vasilyevna Tkachuk, the Churchwarden of the Dormition Cathedral, is known to many in our parish. You can be sure to receive a warm welcome and to be cheered up by her kind words when you meet her, but not everyone knows that she also coordinates the preparation of the cathedral for celebrations to the minutest detail each time - even to the point of going to the flower market at night. One of the challenges that a Churchwarden of such a

large parish as ours constantly has to face is organising volunteers to do work for the glory of God in our cathedral. 'Cathedral Newsletter' asked Natalia Vasilyevna what does the work of volunteers entail and why does it give such joy to them and to the congregation at large.

– *Natalia Vasilyevna, what are the responsibilities of the Churchwarden?*

– The Churchwarden is the person who greets everyone and the person who says goodbye. The person who opens and closes the doors of the Cathedral.

– *So in other words, the church warden is a second Sacristan.*

- The Sacristan opens the Cathedral for services, so you could say he holds the keys to the spiritual life of the Cathedral. The Churchwarden's duties include all aspects of caring for the church – from house-keeping to organising everything to do with celebrations, coordination of volunteer activity and helping the needy. The Churchwarden is the hostess, who meets and greets everyone, is responsible for everything - like at home - so that everyone feels comfortable and happy to be there and, having received such a warm welcome, feels a little sad to leave the church after the service.

- *Who helps you with all of this?*

- Who helps me? Everyone helps me! All I can say is 'Glory to God for everything!' It's not even about helping me, as there is a general understanding that they are coming to the church and they see in every work they do here their small service to the Lord. It is an opportunity to give

something back to the glory of God - your time, your work, your talents, your knowledge. People do it with the greatest of pleasure. Possibly it's because of a special feeling that enters people's souls when they do something or are trying to do something without asking for anything in return. In the beginning people don't even understand why they feel so good. Volunteers leave the church tired, but feeling happy and smiling. They usually say 'I'll come back again!' I think on the one hand, it's a feeling of grace they receive, and on the other hand it's an incredible feeling of happiness associated with being able to contribute something and to help others.

- *How many volunteers are currently working in the church?*

- I think it would be impossible for me to count every single one of them and I have never tried to do this. Today a lady came in and said: 'I have five spare minutes and would like to do something'. I gave her a small task to wash the boxes for candles. Now we have a new volunteer! We also have people like Emilia, Matronushka and Igoriasha, who have been helping us for many years as volunteers. There are quite a few more people like them. Generally, I think we are all volunteers. Some volunteers help with their prayers, and others with physical work. When we have church meetings to discuss particular things, volunteers help with these as well. Volunteers contribute their mite to practically every event at the Cathedral. It happens that some volunteers don't physically attend, but they help us with various consultations, like for example on finance or employment law. All of this is done on a voluntary basis.

- *At the latest parish assembly you mentioned that from October last year volunteers are taking classes on catechesis and the history of our cathedral. Are there plans to develop these classes into a school for volunteers?*

- I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped us with organising these engaging lessons for volunteers, and Mikhail Sarni in particular, who holds encyclopaedia-like knowledge of our Cathedral. At pastoral councils Archbishop Elisey has been raising the question of the importance of spiritual education in the Sourozh Diocese. Whilst I am more of a worldly person, I do see the necessity for this, as I have watched people transform not only physically, but also spiritually when they become closer to the church. I see their faces change, their eyes light up. The person changes inside. However, for structuring regular courses or opening a school we would need a person with religious education - ideally a clergyman. We are working on it, but at this stage the initiative

has not taken a definitive shape.

- *What are the main difficulties working with volunteers? Generally speaking, working with people represents certain difficulties in life, but this is also a church.*

- There is only one difficulty - not everyone knows how to bake cakes and we need lots of cakes to keep us going! My personal observation in my nearly ten years of work here is that people who come here at a certain point suddenly become like children. Perhaps it's because we are all God's children. Questions arise and together we try to find solutions, we think about how we could do things better. We have some more experienced volunteers who know more and can help with their knowledge. I notice that when a person helps in the church, they start to think about the meaning of life, to be grateful for what they have. There will always be difficulties, but they can be overcome when people are together. The most important thing is that when people come to the church they find the way that leads to salvation.

- *If a person wants to help, where do they start?*

- If someone wants to help, I think the best way to start is by speaking to a Father. A Father who hears their confessions knows if a person is ready to help. Sometimes it's better for a person to attend services and pray more prior to becoming a volunteer. It does sometimes happen that volunteers pay less attention to praying while they are helping with candles during the service, for example. Therefore one has to be prepared for voluntary work. Only when the Father has spoken to a person and feels that he or she is ready to serve in the church consciously can the person ask for the blessing for volunteering. Some people come to the church and say that they want to help straight away. In some situations I can say 'Ok, you can do a bit here', but usually I speak to each person first, advise them to have a confession, stay in the church for a bit longer, pray more, and then with the Father's blessing, start working as a volunteer in the church.

Finally, I would like to say that we are really grateful to each and every one of you, whose work contributes to all the good things at our Cathedral.

Julia Pliauksta interviewed the Churchwarden

The Ten Commandments of God

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

“Honour thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and that thy days may be long upon the earth.”



Here the Lord God enjoins us to respect our parents, and as a reward for this He promises a felicitous and long life. To honour one's parents means to respect their authority, to love them and under no circumstances to offend them by any word or action, to submit to them, to assist them in their work, to be solicitous in their time of need and especially during illness or old age, and like-

wise to pray to God for them during their life as well as after their death. Dishonouring one's parents is a grave sin. In the Old Testament, anyone who slandered his parents was punished by death. (*“He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death”* (Ex. 21:17)).

In His sermons the Lord Jesus Christ reminded the Jews of the importance of honouring one's parents (Mk. 7:10). Being the Son of God, He respected his earthly parents, submitted to His Mother and helped Joseph in his daily work. Jesus reproached the Pharisees, who under the guise of dedicating their wealth to God, refused to their parents needful support. (Mat. 15:4-6).

Because the family is the most basic cell of both human society and the Church, the Apostles were always concerned with strengthening proper relationships among family members. In apostolic epistles we often find such instructions as: *“Children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right ... And you fathers do not provoke your children to wrath ... Wives submit to your own husbands as is fitting in the Lord ... Husbands love your wives and do not be bitter toward them”* (Eph. 6:1, Col. 3:18-20; 1 Tim. 5:4).

As to relationships with non-family members, the Christian faith teaches the necessity to show respect to every person, in accordance with his age and status. Saint Paul wrote, *“Render to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour”* (Rom. 13:7). In the spirit of this apostolic directive, a Christian should honour pastors of the Church and spiritual authorities; civilian administrators who concern themselves with justice, peace and the welfare of the na-

tion; educators; teachers; benefactors and, in general, all who are older. It is very sad that many contemporary youngsters disrespect their parents, teachers and elders, considering them “foolish” or “backward” people, disregarding the commandment that says: “*You shall rise before the gray headed and honour the presence of an old man*” (Lev. 19:32).

But if it should happen that our parents or superiors should ask of us something contrary to the Christian faith or the Law of God, then we must say to them what the Apostles said to the Jewish chiefs when they insisted that the Apostles should not preach about Jesus: “*We ought to obey God rather than men*” (Acts 4:19, 5:29). In such instances of conflict between the Divine and human one should be ready to endure whatever the outcome might be, because suffering for the Christian faith is an integral part of our Christian calling and is rewarded in Heaven by Him Who suffered from unjust rulers (Mat. 5:11-12).

By Bishop Alexander Milliant

http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/command.htm#_Toc513258227

British and Irish Saints

HOLY HIERARCH DAVID, PATRON SAINT OF WALES

Commemorated: March 1/14



*St David,
Archbishop of
Menevia*

St David (in Welsh: “Dewi Sant”), Archbishop of Menevia (in Welsh: “Mynyw”), one of the greatest and most beloved saints of Wales, was born in about 500. The surviving version of his life, written in about 1090, is one of the best medieval literary monuments describing the life of early Celtic monasteries. From time immemorial David, a great wonderworker, has been venerated as the patron-saint of Wales.

His mother was St Nonna who descended from the royal house of Dyfed in Wales. David already worked miracles in his mother’s womb. Once pregnant, Nonna entered the church to listen to a sermon. But the priest lost his speech for a while. This was understood as a sign that the infant in Nonna’s

womb was to surpass all teachers of faith in Wales.

From childhood, David excelled in piety and love for the church. He be-

came a monk and a priest when still very young. He was trained in the monastic life in various monasteries of Wales. A relatively developed Church and monastic life already existed in Wales by the time of David, but it was he whom the Lord chose as the greatest saint of this nation, builder of over 10 monasteries and founder of one main spiritual centre. David filled the Welsh land with the spirit of holiness and asceticism, providing the country with great spiritual potential for many centuries.

David gained spiritual experience from monastic fathers. He visited St Paulinus (whom he healed from blindness) in Whitland and the monastic school in Llantwit Major. Well prepared in the divine knowledge, David set off travelling all over the country, establishing monasteries and churches. In the south of Wales he healed a ruler from blindness.

In the southwestern part of the country (Pembrokeshire), David together with his companions founded his best-known monastery in Mynyw (the latinized form - Menevia), now called St Davids after him. David became its abbot. The brethren followed a very strict rule. The disciples of David read Lives of the desert fathers of Egypt and tried to follow them in their ascetic practices and monastic life. Menevia Monastery, where manual labour and education flourished, became a seedbed of saints. Strict discipline under the direction of the abbot was kept; the food of the brethren was simple and consisted of bread, herbs and water. Alcohol was excluded, and fish was given only in extreme cases.

The abbot led the same simple life as his monks and worked as hard as any of them. The community members wore simple clothes and their belongings were held in common. Voluntary poverty and the refusal of all possessions were among the rules of the monastery. The brethren attended long church services. David himself used to retreat to the river to read the whole Psalter, standing in the cold water even in winter. All conversations, except for very necessary ones, were forbidden. Ascetic preparation of the mind and heart in inner prayer was common among Celtic foundations of Wales. The community distributed food to the needy, widows, the sick, the disabled, guests and pilgrims.

David participated in the Church Council held at Llanddewi Brefi in Wales ca.545. The Council condemned the heresy of Pelagianism and discussed Church discipline. David was so inspired from above at the Council that a hill miraculously rose up under him and a white dove descended onto his shoulder. At this meeting David was elected Archbishop of Menevia and the whole Welsh Church, and his monastery was declared the spiritual capital of the country. One biographer of David claimed that



St. David's Cathedral

he was raised to the rank of Archbishop by the Patriarch of Jerusalem.

David stood for purity of the Church from heresies, and he became known as “the enemy of Monothelites”. Many contemporary saints were his friends. David established or restored monastic life in Glastonbury in Somerset.

The glory of David as a divinely-inspired preacher and a great helper of the people spread all over Britain and Ireland. The saint worked many miracles during his life and after his repose. Once he gave a traveller a horse, which took him across the sea. David and his disciples preached the Gospel very zealously, especially in South Wales. Many rulers and princes, hearing David’s sermons, gave away their riches to the poor and in some cases left their thrones and took up monasticism. David used to say: “Be joyful, brothers and sisters, keep the holy faith and do little good works... Do the same little deeds that I did: you yourselves saw them and heard of them. I am following the path which our fathers walked before us.”



St. David's restored shrine. Photo credit: www.stdavidscathedral.org.uk

The holy hierarch reposed on March 1st, 589 (or 601), “and the church was filled with angels on that day”. His veneration grew, spreading from South Wales throughout the whole country, and from there to Ireland, Cornwall, Western England and Brittany. David himself made frequent trips to Cornwall, Brittany and other regions where he built monasteries. For every Welshman, David is an embodiment of Wales.

The relics of David have survived and are in the magnificent St Davids Cathedral (12th-14th centuries) to this day. This Cathedral stands on the site of the original monastery, and St Davids is considered to be the smallest city in UK. David’s monastery existed for many centuries, though in the 10th and 11th centuries it was plundered by the Vikings. His relics were greatly venerated by the faithful till the Reformation (it was said that two pilgrimages to St Davids were equivalent to one pilgrimage to Rome), when his splendid shrine was desecrated; however, the relics survived.

Hundreds of churches are dedicated to St David across Wales, Western England and other countries. David is usually depicted on icons as a bishop with a dove on his shoulder, standing on a small elevation. March 1st,

the feastday of David, is the national holiday of Wales. On this day Welsh people wear a daffodil — an emblem of the saint — in their buttonholes. This is due to the similarity between the flower's name and the saint's name (in Welsh a daffodil is a 'dafid').

The saint's shrine was restored through efforts of the Dean of St Davids Cathedral in 2012 and solemnly installed in the Trinity Chapel for veneration. The niches at the foot of the shrine contain reliquaries with relics of St David and St Justinian of Ramsey, his disciple. Three newly-painted icons at the front of the shrine depict Sts Patrick, David and Apostle Andrew; at the rear of the shrine there are icons of Sts Nonna and Justinian. A painted and decorated canopy is installed above the shrine; wooden carvings on its top represent aspects of lives of the saints depicted on icons.

Dmitry Lapa

The text is mainly based on the article: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/69157.htm>

The Russian Church in London

A BRIEF HISTORY. PART II

The first Divine Liturgy in the Church of the Dormition was celebrated at the end of November 1716, most probably on 21st, on the Feast of the Presentation of the Mother of God to the Temple. The London Patriarchal Cathedral of the Dormition still has the first Altar Gospel of the Russian church in London (Greek, printed in 1686 in Venice).

Shortly after that Yakov Sinyavich and Archimandrite Gennadius travelled to Holland for an audience with the Tsar, who was expected there. Peter the Great issued a decree ordering the provision of state funds for the upkeep of the London Embassy church and its priest. The Tsar also said he wanted Russians in London to have a church built on their own land. It was God's will that the Tsar's wish came true only in the last third of the 20th century.

Although diplomatic ties between Russia and Britain were broken off at the end of 1720, and almost all Russians returned home, services at the Graeco-Russian Church of the Dormition continued. The parishioners were mostly Greek merchants and seamen, and some Russians. In time a number of English people embraced the Orthodox Faith, most of them fiancées and wives of the Orthodox faithful. The Church register entry for 15th August 1724 says that Elizabeth, the English wife of

Bartholomew Cassano, has been received into the Church. To prepare Elizabeth Burton for Holy Baptism, Cassano translated the Catechism of the Orthodox Church into English. On Christmas Day in 1731, the first English family – Robert Wright, his wife Elizabeth and their children – received Baptism.

In 1726 Archimandrite Gennadius wrote to the Holy Synod asking that Bartholomew Cassano, who was in St Petersburg at that time, be ordained to the priesthood. His request was granted, and Bartholomew was made priest at the instruction of Archbishop of Novgorod Feofan (Prokopovich). Three years later Archimandrite Gennadius travelled to Russia to meet Metropolitan Arsenius, who was living in retirement in Moscow. Having received funds for the upkeep of the church, icons and the Epitaphion (the icon of the Burial Shroud of the Lord), he returned to London. The decoration of the Embassy church was quite modest: the church inventory of 1739 shows a two-tier iconostasis with nine icons, two small framed icons and four hinged ones.

By Michael Sarni

Holy places in London

ST ETHELDREDA'S CHURCH IN ELY PLACE, HOLBORN, LONDON



St. Etheldreda's Church

Photo credit:

www.Quintessentialruminations.worldpress.com

Holborn, which is situated close to the centre of London, is one of the capital's oldest streets (first mentioned in 959). It derived its name from a river that once flowed there. Court officers, jewelers and others settled in Holborn, but its most famous resident is Charles Dickens, who described the area in some of his novels. Holborn has many architectural monuments, but its real gem is St Etheldreda's Church in Ely Place, which is the oldest Roman Catholic building in Britain now in use and one of only two surviving London buildings dating back to the time of Edward I.

The church consists of an upper chapel and the crypt or lower chapel. It is dedicated to St Etheldreda, one of the greatest English female saints, who was a queen, a recluse, and abbess of the famous Monastery of Ely in Cambridgeshire. She worked



St. Etheldreda

miracles and is venerated as patroness of chastity and those suffering from throat and neck diseases. The church was built in 1250-1290 and for centuries was part of the complex of the palace of the Bishops of Ely in London. William Shakespeare mentions this palace in his plays *Richard II* and *Richard III*. Beautiful orchards and vineyards were located near. The bishops distributed food to 400 poor people every day. In 1534, by order of Henry VIII, the chapel in Holborn was closed, and the major relics of Etheldreda in Ely were destroyed, except for her incorrupt hand

which was owned by the Duke of Norfolk's estate for several centuries onwards. Catholic services were prohibited in England till 1829. For some while the chapel was used as a tavern, and after the Civil War – as a prison and hospital. In the 1620s it was given to the Spanish ambassador and Catholic masses resumed in it, but only for two years. Under Cromwell most of the palace and gardens were demolished. A true miracle occurred in 1666 during the Great Fire of London: when the fire approached the church of St Etheldreda, the wind changed direction and the church remained intact.

In the 1770s the church was restored in the Georgian style and used for Anglican worship. In the 1820s the church was transferred to an Irish community and later to Welsh Anglicans. Finally, in 1874 the church was purchased by a Catholic priest of the Rosminian order, its original appearance was restored by the architect George Gilbert Scott and Catholic services resumed. Soon part of the hand of St Etheldreda was given to the church and it is kept there to this day in a casket in the niche of the eastern wall, to the right of the high altar.

During the Blitz in 1941 the church roof was damaged and Victorian stained glass destroyed, but the church was restored very rapidly. This wonderful church with its history and atmosphere is very fine both inside and out. It is the only church in London which has the relics of an ancient national saint. Apart from the saint's relics the following monuments are in this church: statues of Catholic martyrs who suffered under Henry VIII and Elizabeth I; the great east window (probably the largest stained glass in London and depicting the Holy Trinity, Mary with Joseph, angels, the Evangelists, the Last Supper, Sts Etheldreda and Brigid); the west window, and the statue of Etheldreda above her relics.

Dmitry Lapa

Forthcoming Events

The annual Pan-Orthodox Vespers, which brings together clergy and parishioners of many different Orthodox jurisdictions, will this year **take place at our Cathedral on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, March 20th, at 6 pm.** It will be preceded by a **concert of spiritual music at 5pm.**

Father Joseph Skinner will continue **the Bible Studies on the themes of the Sunday Gospels on March 8th and 22nd at 7.30 pm.**
All are welcome.

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We welcome your stories of finding faith, conversion, pilgrimages etc. If you would like to leave feedback or contribute content to the Newsletter, please contact us at the above address. We are always happy to hear from our readers.

As you will be aware, the restoration and refurbishment of the Cathedral continues. Any donation, however small, is welcome and will help to maintain and beautify the Cathedral, which is our common spiritual home. You can donate by:

- Cash to the church collection boxes
- Online via the diocesan website www.sourozh.org (click «Donate»)
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