

ST FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY & PARISH
CHURCH

YARMOUTH ROAD, STALHAM NR12 9PG

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COMMUNITY PROGRAMME

NOVEMBER 2022



*The Presentation in the Temple of the Most Holy Mother of
God (November 21st)*

Troparion

TO-DAY is the prelude of God's goodwill and the preheralding of the salvation of men: in the temple of God the Virgin plainly appeareth, and early proclaimeth Christ to all. To her let us also cry out with loud voice, Rejoice, O fulfilment of the Creator's dispensation.

BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS
COMMEMORATED IN
NOVEMBER.

- 03 Clodock, Hermit
Rumwold of Northumbria, Confessor
Wulgan, Confessor
- 04 Birnstan, Bishop of Winchester
Clair (Clarus), Priest and Martyr
- 05 Kea, Bishop in Devon
- 06 Edwen of Anglesey, Virgin*
- 07 Clement (Willibrord) of Northumbria, Apostle of the Frisians
- 08 Gregory, Abbot in Switzerland*
Willehad, Bishop and Missionary
- 10 Justus, Archbishop of Canterbury
- 11 Berhtwine, Bishop*
- 12 Liafwine of Deventer, Missionary
Ymar of Reculver, Martyr
- 14 Dubricius, missionary Bishop
- 16 Aelfric, Archbishop of Canterbury
- 17 Hilda, Abbess of Whitby
- 19 Ermenburgh, Abbess of Thanet
- 20 Edmund, King of East Anglia, Martyr
- 24 Enfleda, Abbess of Whitby
- 27 Congar, Abbot of Congresbury
- 29 Aylwine of Athelney, Monk

Troparion of St. Fursey

Establishing thy monastery in a Roman Fortress
Thou didst teach men that the Orthodox faith is
A true bastion against the onslaughts of every
Evil force O Father Fursey
Wherefore pray to God for us that we may all be
Bastions of the faith standing firm against the
Rising tide of falsehood, that our souls may be saved



SERVICES IN NOVEMBER 2022

Sat Nov 5 th	Vespers 4pm.
Sun Nov 6 th	21 st Sunday After Pentecost St Michael & The Other Bodiless Powers (Anticipated for Nov 8 th) Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Sat Nov 12 th	Vespers 4pm.
Sun Nov 13 th	22 nd Sunday after Pentecost St John Chrysostom 407 Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Tues Nov 15 th	Beginning of The Nativity Fast 3 rd Hour and reading from the Fathers. Prayers for the Fast. Vespers for St Matthew 4pm. (St Furseys Chapel, Sutton)
Sat Nov 19 th	Vespers 4pm. Prophet Obadiah
Sun Nov 20 th	23 rd Sunday after Pentecost. The Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos in the Temple. (St Edmund KM) Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
	(By Anticipation)
Fri Nov 25 th	Vespers
Sat Nov 26 th	Consecration of the Parish Church 10am By His Eminence Metropolitan Silouan Oner plus Divine Liturgy
Sun Nov 27 th	24 th Sunday After Pentecost Divine Liturgy 9:30am.

Tues Nov 29th

Vesperal Liturgy 7pm for St Andrew the
First called.
(St Fursey's Chapel, Sutton).

In addition to the above services the 3rd Hour and Reading from the Fathers is held at the Parish Church on Tuesdays and Thursdays 9am.

Daily Services in St Fursey's Chapel (Neville Road) Sutton

Normally 3rd hour 9am (not Wednesday) and VESPERS 4pm. (*Please check before coming*). Confessions by appointment (before or after services).

CATECHUMENS

Jane was Blessed as a Catechumen on Sunday October 16th. We hope to receive her by Chrismation the Sunday before Christmas. We look forward to William and James being ready for Blessing as Catechumens soon.

BIBLE STUDY

This has resumed on Thursday evenings at 7pm and seems to suit local members of the congregation. We continue to Study St Matthews Gospel using the Orthodox Study Bible and the Commentary of St Theophylact.

THE ART OF PRAYER No 4.

An Orthodox Anthology

Compiled by
IGUMEN CHARITON
OF VALAMO

Translated by
E. KADLOUBOVSKY
and
E. M. PALMER

Edited with an Introduction by
TIMOTHY WARE

THE FRUITS OF PRAYER

(ii) DIVINE GRACE AND HUMAN EFFORT

The call of grace and man's free choice

At the first call and beckoning of grace, at the first entering within, the spiritual realm opens up before us, and we are granted the vision of another world, independently of whether we desire it or not. But afterwards this vision, together with the power to dwell constantly within, are left to man's free choice and we must work to attain them.

Complete serenity

Complete serenity of mind is a gift of God; but this serenity is not given without our own intense effort. You will achieve nothing by your own efforts alone; yet God will not give you anything, unless you work with all your strength. This is an unbreakable law.

Nothing comes without effort

May the Lord give you the blessing of a strong desire to stand inwardly before God. Seek and you will find. *Seek God*: such is the unalterable rule for all spiritual advancement. Nothing comes without effort. The help of God is always ready and always near, but is only given to those who seek and work, and only to those seekers who, after putting all their own powers to the test, then cry out with all their heart: Lord, help us. So long as you hold on to even a little hope of achieving something by your own powers, the Lord does not interfere. It is as though He says: 'You hope to succeed by yourself—Very well, go on trying! But however long you try you will achieve nothing.' May the Lord give you a contrite spirit, a humble and a contrite heart.

The tree of life

The essential mood of the penitent is this: 'In the way Thou knowest, O Lord, save me. For my part I will labour without hypocrisy, without deviation and misinterpretation, but according to a pure conscience, doing everything that I understand and that lies in my power.' Whoever can truly feel this in his heart, is accepted by the Lord, who then comes to rule as king within him.

God is his teacher, God it is who prays in him, God it is who wills and acts in him, God it is who bears fruit in him. God is his ruler. Such a state is the seed and the heart of the heavenly tree of life within him.

Poor, naked, blind, and worthless

There is no need to be afraid of illusion.¹ It overtakes those who become vain, who begin to think that as soon as warmth has come into the heart they are already at the summit of perfection. In fact this warmth is only the beginning and may not prove stable. For this warmth and peace in the heart may just be something natural—the fruit of concentrated attention. We have to labour and labour, to wait and wait, until the natural is replaced by the grace-given. It is best never to think of yourself as having attained anything, but always to see yourself as poor, naked, blind, and worthless.

Fellow-workers with God

The Lord sees your need and your efforts, and will give you a helping hand. He will support and establish you as a soldier, fully armed and ready to go into battle. No support can be better than His. The greatest danger lies in the soul thinking that it can find this help within itself; then it will lose everything. Evil will dominate it again, eclipsing the light that as yet flickers but weakly in the soul, and it will extinguish the small flame which is still scarcely burning. The soul should realize how powerless it is alone; therefore, expecting nothing of itself, let it fall down in humility before God, and in its own heart recognize itself to be nothing. Then grace—which is all-powerful—will, out of this nothing, create in it everything. He who in total humility puts himself in the hand of the merciful God, attracts the Lord to himself, and becomes strong in His strength.

Although expecting everything from God and nothing from ourselves, we must nevertheless force ourselves to action, exerting all our strength, so as to create something to which the divine help may come, and which the divine power may encompass. Grace is already present within us, but it will only act after man has himself acted, filling his powerlessness with its own power. Establish yourself, therefore, firmly in the humble sacrifice of your will to God, and then take action without any irresolution or half-heartedness.

The spirit of grace and the spirit of a Pharisee

When you undertake some special endeavour, do not concentrate your attention and heart on it, but look upon it as something secondary; and by entire surrender to God open yourself up to God's grace, like a vessel laid out ready to receive it. Whoever finds grace finds it by means of faith and zeal, says St. Gregory of Sinai, and not by zeal alone. However painstaking our work, so long as we omit to surrender ourselves to God while performing it, we fail to attract God's grace, and our efforts build up within us not so much a true spirit of grace but the spirit of a Pharisee. Grace is the soul of the struggle. Our efforts will be rightly directed so long as we preserve self-abasement, contrition, fear of God, devotion to Him, and the realisation of our dependence on divine help. If we are self-satisfied and contented with our efforts, it is a sign that they are not performed in the right way, or that we lack wisdom.

True Christian life is the life of grace

Life is the strength to act. Spiritual life is the strength to act spiritually, according to the will of God. Man has lost this strength; therefore until it is restored to him, he cannot live spiritually, no matter how much he intends to. That is why the flow of grace into the soul of a believer is essential for a true Christian life. True Christian life is the life of grace. A man makes some religious resolution: but in order to be able to act according to it, it is necessary that grace be united with his spirit. When this union is present, moral strength, hitherto evident only temporarily in his first enthusiasm, is impressed on his spirit and remains there always. This re-establishment of the moral strength of the spirit is effected by the regenerating action of baptism, through which man is granted justification and the strength to act 'after God in righteousness and true holiness' (Eph. iv. 24).

Truths which the finger of God inscribes

You write that at times, during prayer, a solution to some problem that perplexes you in your spiritual life comes of itself from an unknown source. This is good. It is the true Christian way of being taught God's truth. Here the promise is fulfilled, 'And they shall be taught of God' (John vi. 45). So indeed it is. Truths are inscribed in the heart by the finger of God, and remain there firm and indelible. Do not neglect these truths which God inscribes, but write them down.

Purifying the source

In order to purify and heal man, divine grace begins first of all by entrusting the source and fountain-head of all human activities to God. In other words, grace turns man's consciousness and power of free will towards Him, so that, using this as its starting point, it may in due course effect healing of all man's powers by means of their own activity: the source has been healed and sanctified, and so all the faculties dependent on that source are gradually purified from this same fountain-head.

THE CONSECRATION OF THE CHURCH

We look forward to Metropolitan Silouan coming on Saturday November 26th for the Consecration of our new church. We look forward to the Mayor Kevin Bayes coming too as well as the builders of the church, Alan Brown, Tony Day and his son Tony Junior. They did such an excellent job for us. As the church is of only moderate size, we expect a crush!

EVANGELISM: OPEN DAYS

Our Icon and book stall at the charity stall in Norwich has not been functioning since the Charity Stall was demolished at the beginning of the COVID lockdown. However, Subdeacon William and Jonathan have been distributing leaflets in Norwich market place instead. Next year we hope to have a presence at the local car boot sale on a Friday morning. We have had two Open Days! (June & September) which enabled several talks to be given about our Orthodox Faith and Church. We plan another Open Day for Friday December 2nd from 10am. Do come and support us if you can. Usual Stalls.

Every Blessing to our Readers

Father Stephen

NOVEMBER 21st

1. The Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Mother of God.

When the most holy Virgin Mary had reached the age of three, her parents, holy Joachim and Anna, took her from Nazareth to Jerusalem, to give her to the service of God in fulfilment of their promise. It was three days' journey to Jerusalem, but, going as they were on God's work, they did not find the journey difficult. Many of Joachim and Anna's kinsmen gathered to take part in this celebration, in which the invisible angels of God also took part. Maidens went ahead with lighted candles in their hands, followed by the most holy Virgin, led on either side by her father and mother. The Virgin was clad in royal and beautiful garments, like those of the 'king's daughter', the Bride of God (Ps. 44:9,10). Behind them walked many of their kinsfolk and friends, all bearing lighted candles. There were fifteen steps leading to the Temple. Her parents stood the Virgin on the first step, and she ran quickly to the top on her own, where the High Priest, Zacharias, the father of St John the Forerunner, met her and, taking her by the hand, led her not only into the Temple but into the Holy of Holies, the holiest place of all, into which none could enter except the High Priest, and that once a year. St Theophylact of Ochrid says that Zacharias was 'out of himself, and moved by God' when he led the Virgin into the chief place in the Temple, beyond the second curtain — otherwise there could be no explanation of his action. Her parents then offered sacrifices to God, according to the Law, received the priest's blessing and returned home, leaving the most holy Virgin in the Temple. She dwelt in the Temple for nine whole years. While her parents were alive, they visited her often. When they departed this life, the holy Virgin was left an orphan, and longed to remain in the Temple for the rest of her days, without entering into marriage. This being contrary both to the Law and Israelite custom, she was confided at the age of twelve to St Joseph, a kinsman of hers in Nazareth, so that she might, under the protection of betrothal, live in virginity and thus fulfil both her desire and the demands of the Law, for it was unknown in Israel at that time for a girl to vow perpetual virginity. The holy Virgin Mary was the first to do this, and was later followed by thousand upon thousand of virgin men and women in the Church of Christ.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

BIRSTAN (Brynstan, Beornstan), bishop of Winchester 931-4. Although his feast occurs in calendars of the 11th century (Winchester) and of the 12th (West Country), the only information about this saint comes from William of Malmesbury. He stressed his personal daily service of the poor, his devotion to the dead evidenced by his frequent prayers for them in the cemetery (to which the departed souls once answered 'Amen'), his assiduous private prayer, during which he died. His memory was neglected for some years but was revived by *Ethelwold, following a vision in which it was claimed that Birstan enjoyed equal heavenly glory with the other Winchester saints *Birinus and *Swithun; therefore he should receive equal honour on earth. Feast: 4 November.

G.P., pp. 163-4; E.B.K. before 1100. s.d. 4 Nov.

KEA (Ke, Quay), monk and bishop, who worked in Devon and Cornwall, where Landkey (Devon) and Kea (Cornwall) bear his name. He is identical with Breton Quay (Saint-Quay in North Brittany) and Saint-Quay-Portrieux near Saint-Brieuc, whose Legend survives. It seems likely that Kea, Fili, and *Rumon came from Glastonbury; as they travelled into Devon and Cornwall they founded Christian centres. Noble parentage is claimed for Kea and some association with *Gildas, who is brought into the story as a bell-founder. He is also associated with stags in his Legend and in Breton pictures of him. It is probable that Kea migrated to Brittany and died there. He is invoked for the cure of toothache. Feast: 5 November.

G. H. Doble, *The Saints of Cornwall*, iii (1964), 89-104.

ERNIN (Ernan) (1) (6th century), monk. Ernin came from North Wales, the son of Helig whose territory on the mainland opposite Anglesey was permanently flooded by the sea. Ernin, on losing his lands, became a monk at Bardsey.

ERNIN (2) (6th century), Breton hermit. He was reputedly a native of Britain who settled on land at Duault, near Carhaix, where, the local tradition says, a stag took refuge and hounds did not dare attack it. Ernin died and was buried at Locarn. Count Conmore (later of Domnonia) ordered a chapel to be built there; this was on the site of the present church at Locarn where Ernin's head and arm are

JUSTUS (1) (Just) (d. 627), archbishop of Canterbury. He was one of the Roman missionaries sent in 601 by *Gregory the Great, to reinforce *Augustine. He was consecrated first 'bishop' of Rochester in 604. Together with *Laurence of Canterbury and *Mellitus of London, Justus wrote to both the Irish and the British Christians asking them to conform their customs to those of the Roman see: the extract of the letter in Bede is not tactfully worded and it seems to have been largely ignored. In 616 there was a pagan reaction in Kent and Essex after the death of *Ethelbert: without support from the pagan King Edbald, Justus and Mellitus thought the situation untenable and retired temporarily to France. But they returned after the conversion of the king; Justus became archbishop of Canterbury in 624 and received from Boniface V both the pallium and the power to consecrate bishops in England. Justus was buried like other early archbishops of Canterbury at St. Augustine's monastery. When the church was rebuilt in the 11th century his relics were translated with those of other archbishops to a site behind the high altar. Goscelin now wrote his Life. Justus and the writers of the letter to the Irish are mentioned in the diptychs of the Irish Stowe Missal. Feast: 10 November.

Bede, H.E., i. 29-ii. 9; A.A.S.S. Nov. IV (1925), 533-7, W. St. John Hope, *Recent Discoveries in the Abbey Church of St. Austin at Canterbury* (1916).

CONGAR (1) (Cungar, Cyngar, Docco) (6th century), eponym of Congresbury (Somerset). Probably of Pembrokeshire origin (Llanwngar near St. David's), Congar was one of the Welsh missionaries who founded Christian communities in Somerset and Devon. A Winchester litany of c.1060 contains his name. Congresbury claimed to have his body enshrined during the Middle Ages (it is mentioned in 11th- and 14th-century pilgrim guides), most Somerset calendars have his feast, and there seem to have been no rival claimants to his relics. Late medieval wills include legacies for lights at his shrine. Congresbury is first mentioned in Asser's *Life of Alfred* as a derelict Celtic monastery which was assigned to Asser, bishop of Crediton. A 12th-century Life was concocted at Wells: this consists of a hotch-potch of hagiographical and folkloric elements mainly drawn from Lives of other Welsh saints. Feast: 27 November.