

ST FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY & PARISH
CHURCH
YARMOUTH ROAD, STALHAM NR12 9PG
Tel: 01692 580552
COMMUNITY PROGRAMME

FEBRUARY 2023



Troparion

REJOICE, O Mother of God, Virgin full of grace;
for from thee hath arisen the Sun of Righteous-
ness, Christ our God, who doth give light to those in
darkness. Do thou also, O righteous Elder, be glad
of heart, who receivest in thine arms the Christ who
hath set free our souls and hath bestowed upon us
resurrection.

BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS
COMMEMORATED IN
FEBRUARY.

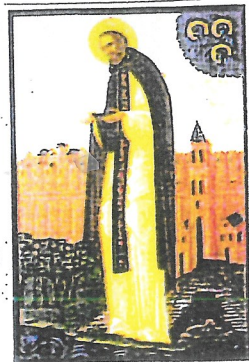
See selected lives of Saints on another page.

- 03 Laurence, Archbishop of Canterbury
Werburgh of Chester, Abbess
Werburgh, Abbess of Bardney
- 04 Aldate, Bishop of Gloucester and Martyr
Liephard, Bishop and Martyr in France*
- 07 Richard, Confessor
- 08 Cuthman of Steyning, Hermit
Elfreda, Abbess of Whitby
- 10 Merewenna, Abbess of Romsey
Trumwin, Bishop of Abercorn
- 11 Caedmon of Whitby, Monk and Hymnographer
- 12 Ethilwald, Bishop of Lindisfarne
- 13 Ermenhild, Abbess of Ely
Huna of Ely, Priest and Hermit
- 15 Sigfrid, and Companions, Apostle of Sweden
- 17 Finan, Bishop of Lindisfarne
- 18 Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne
Ethelina of Gloucestershire
- 21 Erkengota, Virgin
- 23 Jurmin of East Anglia, Confessor
Milburgh, Abbess of Wenlock
- 25 Ethelbert, King of Kent
Walburgh the Myrrh-Giver, Abbess
- 27 Alnoth of Stowe, Martyr
- 28 Herefrith, Monk
Oswald, Bishop of Worcester

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.

Where fore 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 FEBRUARY 2023

Wed Feb 1 st	Forefeast of the Meeting: St Bridget of Kildare Vesperal Divine Liturgy 7pm. (St Fursey's Chapel, Neville Rd, Sutton).
Thurs Feb 2 nd	The Meeting Our Lord in The Temple TYPIKA 9am.
Fri Feb 3 rd	St Simeon the God Receiver, Anne the Prophetess. TYPIKA 9am (St Fursey's Chapel).
Sat Feb 4 th	After Feast of the Meeting Vespers 4pm.
Sun Feb 5 th	Sunday of the Tax Collector & The Pharisee. The Beginning of the Lenten Tridion Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Sat Feb 11 th	Saturday of the Prodigal Son Vespers 4pm.
Sun Feb 12 th	Sunday of the Prodigal Son Divine Liturgy 9:30am
Sat Feb 18 th	Saturday of Meatfare, Saturday of Souls. Vespers 4pm.
Sun February 19 th	Sunday Meatfare: (Meat Fast) Sunday of the Last Judgement. Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Thurs Feb 24 th	1st & 2nd Finding of the Head of St John the Forerunner. Vespers 4pm.
Sat Feb 25 th	CONSECRATION OF ST FURSEY'S CHURCH Consecration Service 9:30am Divine Liturgy 11am (Approx). Metropolitan Silouan presiding. Divine Liturgy 11.am (Please let Fr Stephen know if you wish to come).

Sun Feb 26 th	<p style="text-align: center;"> Sunday of Cheese Fare Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise Forgiveness Sunday Divine Liturgy 9:30am Vespers of Forgiveness 11am approx. </p>
Mon Feb 27 th	<p> First Week of Great Lent (Vegan Fast until Pascha). Compline and Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete 7pm (Chapel). </p>
Tues Feb 28 th	<p> 3rd Hour 9am & Reading from Fathers.' Compline and Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete 7pm (Chapel). </p>

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

In addition to the above services in the Parish Church we have daily services at St Fursey's Chapel in Neville Road, Sutton normally 3rd Hour 9am with Reading from the Fathers 9am Monday and Friday; at the Parish Church on Tuesday and Thursday – 6th Hour during Lent. – Daily VESPERS: 4pm.

OUR CATCHUMENS

Please continue to pray for Jane and William who are preparing for Chrismation in due course.

BIBLE STUDY

We expect this to resume after Pascha so that we can concentrate on the mid-week services during Great Lent. to resume the Bible Study on Thursday evenings in February.

OUT REACH IN STALHAM

We intend to have our Open Day & Coffee Morning quarterly as we did in 2022, March, June, September, December. Usually, first Friday in those months which involves many posters and leaflets, plus info on the website. We may also make an appearance at the Friday Car Boot Sales from time to time.

Every Blessing to our Readers

Father Stephen

ST ISAIAH THE SOLITARY

Introductory Note

There is some uncertainty about the identity of the author of the *Twenty-Seven Texts* that follow. According to St Nikodimos, St Isaiah the Solitary lived around the year 370 and was a contemporary of St Makarios the Great of Egypt. Most historians today consider him to be later in date. He is now usually identified with a monk Isaiah, who lived initially at Sketis in Egypt, and who then moved to Palestine at some date subsequent to 431, eventually dying in great old age as a recluse near Gaza on 11 August 491 (according to others, in 489). Whichever date is preferred, it is evident that the author reflects the authentic spirituality of the Desert Fathers of Egypt and Palestine during the fourth and fifth centuries. St Nikodimos commends in particular his advice on the rebuttal of demonic provocations and on the need to be attentive to the conscience.

St Nikodimos here gives no more than short extracts from a much longer work, as yet untranslated into English.¹

¹ Greek text edited by the monk Avgoustinos (Jerusalem, 1911; reprinted, Volos, 1962); French translation by Dom Hervé de Broc, *Abbé Isaïe: Recueil ascétique*, with an introduction by Dom L. Regnault (Collection Spiritualité Orientale, No. 7, 2nd edition, Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1976).

On Guarding the Intellect: Twenty-Seven Texts

1. There is among the passions* an anger of the intellect, and this anger is in accordance with nature. Without anger a man cannot attain purity: he has to feel angry with all that is sown in him by the enemy. When Job felt this anger he reviled his enemies, calling them 'dishonourable men of no repute, lacking everything good, whom I would not consider fit to live with the dogs that guard my flocks' (cf. Job 30: 1, 4. LXX). He who wishes to acquire the anger that is in accordance with nature must uproot all self-will, until he establishes within himself the state natural to the intellect.

2. If you find yourself hating your fellow men and resist this hatred, and you see that it grows weak and withdraws, do not rejoice in your heart; for this withdrawal is a trick of the evil spirits. They are preparing a second attack worse than the first; they have left their troops behind the city and ordered them to remain there. If you go out to attack them, they will flee before you in weakness. But if your heart is then elated because you have driven them away, and you leave the city, some of them will attack you from the rear while the rest will stand their ground in front of you; and your wretched soul will be caught between them with no means of escape. The city is prayer. Resistance is rebuttal* through Christ Jesus. The foundation is incensive power*. |¹ Practice* of the virtues.

3. Let us stand firm in the fear of God, rigorously practising the virtues¹ and not giving our conscience cause to stumble. In the fear of God let us keep our attention fixed within ourselves, until our conscience achieves its freedom. Then there will be a union between it and us, and thereafter it will be our guardian, showing us each thing that we must uproot. But if we do not obey our conscience, it will abandon us and we shall fall into the hands of our enemies, who will never let us go. This is what our Lord taught us when He said: 'Come to an agreement with your adversary quickly while you are with him in the road, lest he hand you over to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer and you are cast into prison' (Matt. 5: 25). The conscience is called an 'adversary' because it opposes us when we wish to carry out the desires of our flesh;* and if we do not listen to our conscience, it delivers us into the hands of our enemies.

4. If God sees that the intellect has entirely submitted to Him and puts its hope in Him alone, He strengthens it, saying: 'Have no fear Jacob my son, my little Israel' (Isa. 41: 14. LXX), and: 'Have no fear: for I have delivered you, I have called you by My name; you are Mine. If you pass through water, I shall be with you, and the rivers will not drown you. If you go through fire, you will not be burnt, and the flames will not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, who saves you' (cf. Isa. 43: 1-3. LXX).

5. When the intellect hears these words of reassurance, it says boldly to its enemies: 'Who would fight with me? Let him stand against me. And who would accuse me? Let him draw near to me. Behold, the Lord is my helper; who will harm me? Behold, all of you are like an old moth-eaten garment' (cf. Isa. 50: 8-9. LXX).

6. If your heart* comes to feel a natural hatred for sin,* it has defeated the causes of sin and freed itself from them. Keep hell's torments in mind; but know that your Helper is at hand. Do nothing that will grieve Him, but say to Him with tears: 'Be merciful and deliver me, O Lord, for without Thy help I cannot escape from the hands of my enemies.' Be attentive to your heart, and He will guard you from all evil.

7. The monk should shut all the gates of his soul, that is, the senses, so that he is not lured astray. When the intellect sees that it is not dominated by anything, it prepares itself for immortality, gathering its senses together and forming them into one body.

8. If your intellect is freed from all hope in things visible, this is a sign that sin has died in you.

9. If your intellect is freed, the breach between it and God is eliminated.

10. If your intellect is freed from all its enemies and attains the sabbath rest, it lives in another age,* a new age in which it contemplates things new and undecaying. For 'wherever the dead body is, there will the eagles be gathered together' (Matt. 24: 28).

11. The demons cunningly withdraw for a time in the hope that we will cease to guard* our heart, thinking we have now attained peace; then they suddenly attack our unhappy soul and seize it like a sparrow. Gaining possession of it, they drag it down mercilessly into all kinds of sin, worse than those which we have already committed and for which we have asked forgiveness. Let us stand, therefore, with fear of God and keep guard over our heart, practising the virtues which check the wickedness of our enemies.

12. Our teacher Jesus Christ, out of pity for mankind and knowing the utter mercilessness of the demons, severely commands us: 'Be ready at every hour, for you do not know when the thief will come; do not let him come and find you asleep' (cf. Matt. 24: 42-43). He also says: 'Take heed, lest your hearts be overwhelmed with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of this life, and the hour come upon you unawares' (cf. Luke 21: 34). Stand guard, then, over your heart and keep a watch on your senses; and if the remembrance* of God dwells peaceably within you, you will catch the thieves when they try to deprive you of it. When a man has an exact knowledge about the nature of thoughts,* he recognizes those which are about to enter and defile him, troubling the intellect with distractions and making it lazy. Those who recognize these evil thoughts for what they are remain undisturbed and continue in prayer to God.

13. Unless a man hates all the activity of this world, he cannot worship God. What then is meant by the worship of God? It means that we have nothing extraneous in our intellect when we are praying to Him: neither sensual pleasure* as we bless Him, nor malice as we sing His praise, nor hatred as we exalt Him, nor jealousy to hinder us as we speak to Him and call Him to mind. For all these things are full of darkness; they are a wall imprisoning our wretched soul, and if the soul has them in itself it cannot worship God with purity. They obstruct its ascent and prevent it from meeting God; they hinder it from blessing Him inwardly and praying to Him with sweetness of heart, and so receiving His illumination. As a result the intellect is always shrouded in darkness and cannot advance in holiness, because it does not make the effort to uproot these thoughts by means of spiritual knowledge.*

14. When the intellect rescues the soul's senses from the desires of the flesh and imbues them with dispassion,* the passions shamelessly attack the soul, trying to hold its senses fast in sin; but if the intellect then continually calls upon God in secret, He, seeing all this, will send His help and destroy all the passions at once.

15. I entreat you not to leave your heart unguarded, so long as you are in the body. Just as a farmer cannot feel confident about the crop growing in his fields, because he does not know what will happen to it before it is stored away in his granary, so a man should not leave his heart unguarded so long as he still has breath in his nostrils. Up to his last breath he cannot know what passion will attack him; so long as he breathes, therefore, he must not leave his heart unguarded, but should at every moment pray to God for His help and mercy.

16. He who receives no help when at war should feel no confidence when at peace.

17. When a man severs himself from evil, he gains an exact understanding of all the sins he has committed against God; for he does not see his sins unless he severs himself from them with a feeling of revulsion. Those who have reached this level pray to God with tears, and are filled with shame when they recall their evil love of the passions. Let us therefore pursue the spiritual way with all our strength, and God in His great mercy will help us. And if we have not guarded our hearts as our fathers guarded theirs, at least in obedience to God let us do all we can to keep our bodies sinless, trusting that at this time of spiritual dearth He will grant mercy to us together with His saints.

ST FURSEY'S ACCOUNTS Oct - Dec 2022

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENSES</u>	
2021	2022	2021	2022
£ 863	£ 573	1450 Fr. Stephen	450
5583 Donations	3668	120 Postage	132
- Open Day	795	201 Books	400
451 com+ Books	225	130 lun prints	-
- Candle money	25	300 Bishop	300
<u>6517</u>	<u>5286</u>	250 Chapel	-
	Rents 1200	111 Loan	333
	<u>6486</u>	1234 Mrs cel.	1050
		- Safeguarding	114
Building Fund		<u>3736</u>	<u>2779</u>
Reserve Account			
<u>£ 4036</u>			
		cf to Jan. 2023	
			<u>2507</u>

THE MEETING OF OUR LORD

The Theotokos Mary carried in her arms Him who is borne aloft upon the chariot of the cherubim^r and praised in song by the seraphim, who was made flesh of her without her knowing wedlock, the Giver of the Law who fulfils the commandment of the Law. She gave Him into the arms of the priest and Elder; and holding the Life, he asked to be released from life, saying: 'Now, O Master, let me depart to declare to Adam that I have seen the pre-eternal God and the Saviour of the world made a babe without undergoing change.'

Glory be to the Father . . . Both now . . .

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tone eight

(by Andrew of Crete)

He who is borne on high by the cherubim and praised in hymns by the seraphim, is brought today according to the Law into the holy temple and rests in the arms of the Elder as on a throne. From Joseph He receives gifts fitting for God: a pair of doves, symbol of the spotless Church and of the newly-chosen people of the Gentiles; and two young pigeons,² for He is the Originator of the two Covenants, both Old and New. Simeon, having now been granted the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning himself, blesses the Virgin and Theotokos Mary, and foretells in figures the Passion of her Son. From Him he begs release, crying aloud: 'Now let me depart, O Master, as Thou hast before promised to me: for I have seen Thee the pre-eternal Light, the Lord and Saviour of the people that bear the name of Christ.'

tone one

Let the choir of angels be amazed at this wonder, and let us mortal men raise our voices in song, beholding the ineffable condescension of God. Aged arms now embrace Him before whom the powers of heaven tremble, He who alone loves mankind.

Glory be to the Father . . . Both now . . .

From a sermon by Saint Sophronius, bishop

(Orat. 3 de Hypapante 6. 7: PG 87, 3, 3291-3293)

LET US RECEIVE THE LIGHT WHOSE BRILLIANCE IS ETERNAL

In honor of the divine mystery that we celebrate today, let us all hasten to meet Christ. Everyone should be eager to join the procession and to carry a light.

Our lighted candles are a sign of the divine splendor of the one who comes to expel the dark shadows of evil and to make the whole universe radiant with the brilliance of his eternal light. Our candles also show how bright our souls should be when we go to meet Christ.

The Mother of God, the most pure Virgin, carried the true light in her arms and brought him to those who lay in darkness. We too should carry a light for all to see and reflect the radiance of the true light as we hasten to meet him.

The light has come and has shone upon a world enveloped in shadows; the Dayspring from on high has visited us and given light to those who lived in darkness. This, then, is our feast, and we join in procession with lighted candles to reveal the light that has shone upon us and the glory that is yet to come to us through him. So let us hasten all together to meet our God.

The true light has come, *the light that enlightens every man who is born into this world*. Let all of us, my brethren, be enlightened and made radiant by this light. Let all of us share in its splendor, and be so filled with it that no one remains in the darkness. Let us be shining ourselves as we go together to meet and to receive with the aged Simeon the light whose brilliance is eternal. Rejoicing with Simeon, let us sing a hymn of thanksgiving to God, the Father of the light, who sent the true light to dispel the darkness and to give us all a share in his splendor.

Through Simeon's eyes we too have seen the salvation of God which he prepared for all the nations and revealed as the glory of the new Israel, which is ourselves. As Simeon was released from the bonds of this life when he had seen Christ, so we too were at once freed from our old state of sinfulness.

By faith we too embraced Christ, the salvation of God the Father, as he came to us from Bethlehem. Gentiles before, we have now become the people of God. Our eyes have seen God incarnate, and because we have seen him present among us and have mentally received him into our arms, we are called the new Israel. Never shall we forget this presence; every year we keep a feast in his honor.

SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

ALDATE (Eidad) (d. 577?) bishop, reputedly a Briton who was killed by the Anglo-Saxons at Deorham. He is mentioned in the Sarum and other Martyrologies; his feast occurs in a Gloucester calendar (14th-century addition); churches were dedicated to him at Gloucester and Oxford, as well as a famous Oxford street. But nothing seems to be known of him; it was even suggested (unconvincingly) that his name was a corruption of 'old gate'. Feast: 4 February.

Baring-Gould and Fisher, ii. 426-8; E.B.K. after 1100, ii. 40.

CUTHMAN (d. 8th century), Anglo-Saxon hermit saint, associated with Steyning (West Sussex), where he died and was buried. His name appears in a few early calendars, and in R.P.S., which clearly indicate a pre-Conquest cult. However, Edward the Confessor gave Steyning church to Fécamp, which monastery established a cell of monks on the site of his old wooden church. After the Conquest a stone church was built by them, but Cuthman's relics were transferred to Fécamp. The Lives preserved there may contain some genuine material. They say he was born c.681 probably at Chidham,

near Bosham, which was the centre of early missionary work. After his father's death he looked after his paralysed mother, for whom he made a wheelbarrow couch; with the help of a rope over his shoulders he used to wheel her wherever he went, travelling as a mendicant hermit. He finally settled at Steyning, where he built a hut for his mother and himself and later a church. Feast: 8 February.

A.A.S.S. Feb. II (1658), 197-9; R.P.S.; C.S.P.; G. R. Stephens and W. D. Stephens, 'Cuthman; a neglected saint', *Speculum*, xii (1938), 448-53; F. W. Cox, 'St. Cuthman; what is known of him', *Sussex Notes and Queries*, iv (1933), 204-7; P. Grosjean, 'Codex Gothani appendix', *Anal. Boll.*, lviii (1940), 197-9.

HUNA (7th century), priest and monk. He lived under *Etheldreda, whom in fact he buried. He retired soon afterwards to the life of a hermit at Huneya in the Fens. Here he died; later his relics were translated to Thorney, where they were venerated in the 11th century or before. Feast: 13 February.

Stanton, p. 67; R.P.S.

MILBURGA (Milburh) (d. 715), abbess. Daughter of Merewald, king of Mercia, and *Ermenburga, princess of Kent; Milburga was the sister of *Mildred and *Mildgyth. Merewald founded the nunnery of Wenlock c.670 and placed it under the direction of *Botulf of East Anglia. Its first abbess was Liobsynde, a French nun from Chelles; its second abbess was Milburga. Goscelin's Life of her (late 11th century) said she was consecrated as a virgin by *Theodore, had miraculous healing powers, and lived and died in a conspicuously saintly way. During her abbacy occurred the famous Vision of the Monk of Wenlock, described by *Boniface. Goscelin also preserved her testament, which is a long, apparently authentic list of lands which belonged to her at her death. Her tomb was long venerated, but its site was unknown when Cluniac monks from La-Charité-sur-Loire refounded Wenlock in 1079. The church had a silver casket which contained relics of Milburga and documents describing the site of her grave, near an altar then unknown. After consulting *Anselm, the monks excavated an old, disused church. Some boys playing on the site fell into a tomb, where bones were found with the remains of a coffin and an altar. Details of this discovery and of cures in 1101 were described by Otto, cardinal bishop of Ostia, the next year. These included the healing of lepers and the blind, also the vomiting of an extraordinary worm, which had caused a wasting disease. The distinction of this writer contributed to the diffusion of Milburga's cult, which resulted in five ancient churches being dedicated to her. Her feast was common in English calendars from the Bosworth Psalter (c.1000) onwards. Feast: 23 February; translation (according to Goscelin), 25 June.

A.A.S.S. Feb. III (1658), 388-91; G.F. pp. 305-6; N.L.A., ii 183-92; A. Edwards, 'An early twelfth century account of the Translation of St. Milburga', *Trans. Shropshire Archaeol. Soc.*, lvii (1962-3), 134-51; H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of the West Midlands* (1962), pp. 197-224; P. Grosjean, 'Saints anglo-saxones des Marches Gavoises', *Anal. Boll.*, lxxix (1961), 163-6.