

SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

ALDATE (Eldad) (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.*, [viii (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.P., pp. 305-6; N.L.A., ii 168-92; A. Edwards, 'An early twelfth century account of the Translation of St. Milburga', *Trans. Shropshire Archaeol. Soc.*, lvii (1962-3), 13-51; H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of the West Midlands* (1962), pp. 197-224; P. Grosjean, 'Saints anglo-saxones des Marches Gauloises', *Anal. Boll.*, lxxix (1961), 163-6.



Antiochian Orthodox

St Fursey's Antiochian Orthodox

Christian Parish Church Stalham

Archdiocese Of the British Isles And Ireland

Parish Priest Fr Stephen Weston

Archbishop: His Eminence

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Metropolitan Silouan Oner

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COMMUNITY PROGRAMME & NEWSLETTER

February 2025



Troparion

REJOICE, O Mother of God, Virgin full of grace; for from thee hath arisen the Sun of Righteousness, 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.**

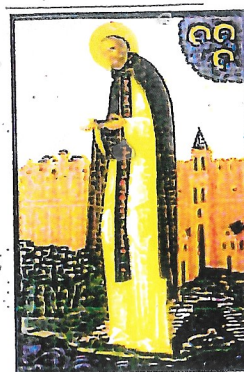
See selected lives of Saints on another page.

- 03 Laurence, Archbishop of Canterbury
- Werburch of Chester, Abbess
- Werburch, Abbess of Bardney
- 04 Aldate, Bishop of Gloucester and Martyr
- Liephard, Bishop and Martyr in France*
- 07 Richard; Confessor
- 08 Cuthman of Steyning, Hermit
- Elflæda, 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
- Hunia 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 2025

(In the Parish Church unless otherwise stated)

Sat Feb 1 st	Forefeast of the Meeting VESPERS 4pm.
Sun Feb 2 nd	The Meeting of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Temple Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Sat Feb 8 th	Great Martyr Theodore the General VESPERS 4PM
Sun Feb 9 th	Sunday of the Tax Collector and the Pharisee (Beginning of the Triodion) Divine Liturgy 9:30am. (Fast Free Week)
Sat Feb 15 th	Saturday of the Prodigal Son VESPERS 4PM.
Sun Feb 16 th	Sunday of the Prodigal Son Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Sat Feb 22 nd	Saturday of Meatfare VESPERS 4PM
Sun Feb 23 rd	Sunday of Meatfare Sunday of the Last Judgement Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Sat March 1 st	Saturday of Cheesefare Commemoration of all Monks & Nuns
Sun March 2 nd	Sunday of Cheesefare Expulsion of Adam from Paradise Forgiveness Sunday Divine Liturgy 9:30am. (Vespers of Forgiveness 11:30) Vegan Fast for Lent

Daily Services in St Furseys Chapel (Neville Road).

In Addition to the Above Services

These are normally 3rd hour 9am with a reading from the Fathers, **Monday & Friday** (in the Parish Church on Tuesday and Thursday). Vespers daily at 4pm. Local Readers are very welcome but please ring 01692 581849 to make sure it is still on.

NB: Fr Stephen has some time off on Wednesdays and Saturdays to spend with Rosalind. Confessions by appointment before or after services.

Meeting of the Lord

Forty days after Christ was born he was presented to God in the Jerusalem Temple according to the Mosaic Law. At this time as well his mother Mary underwent the ritual purification, and offered the sacrifices as prescribed in the Law. Thus, forty days after Christmas, on the second of February, the Church celebrates the feast of the presentation called the Meeting (or Presentation or Reception) of the Lord.

The meeting of Christ by the elder Simeon and the prophetess Anna (Luke 2:22-36) is the main event of the feast of Christ's presentation in the Temple. It was "revealed to Simeon by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26) and, inspired by the same Spirit, he came to the Temple where he met the new-born Messiah, took him in his arms and said the words which are now chanted each evening at the end of the Orthodox Vesper service:

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for the revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Thy people Israel. (Luke 2:29-32)

At this time as well Simeon predicted that Jesus would be the "sign which is spoken against" and that he would cause "the fall and the rising of many in Israel." He also foretold Mary's sufferings because of her son. (Luke 22:34-35) Anna also was present and, giving thanks to God "she spoke of Jesus to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem." (Luke 2:38)

In the service of the feast of the Meeting of the Lord, the fact emphasized is that Christ, the Son and Word of God through whom the world was created, now is held as an infant in Simeon's hands; this same Son of God, the Giver of the Law, now himself fulfills the Law, carried in arms as a human child.

Receive him, O Simeon, whom Moses on Mount Sinai beheld in the darkness as the Giver of the Law. Receive him as a babe now obeying the Law. For he it is of whom the Law and the Prophets have spoken, incarnate for our sake and saving mankind. Come let us adore him!

Let the door of heaven open today, for the Eternal Word of the Father, without giving up his divinity, has been incarnate of the Virgin in time. And as a babe of forty days he is voluntarily brought by his mother to the Temple, according to the Law. And the elder Simeon takes him in his arms and cries out: Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, O Lord, who has come to save the human race—glory to Thee! (Vesper Verses of the Feast)

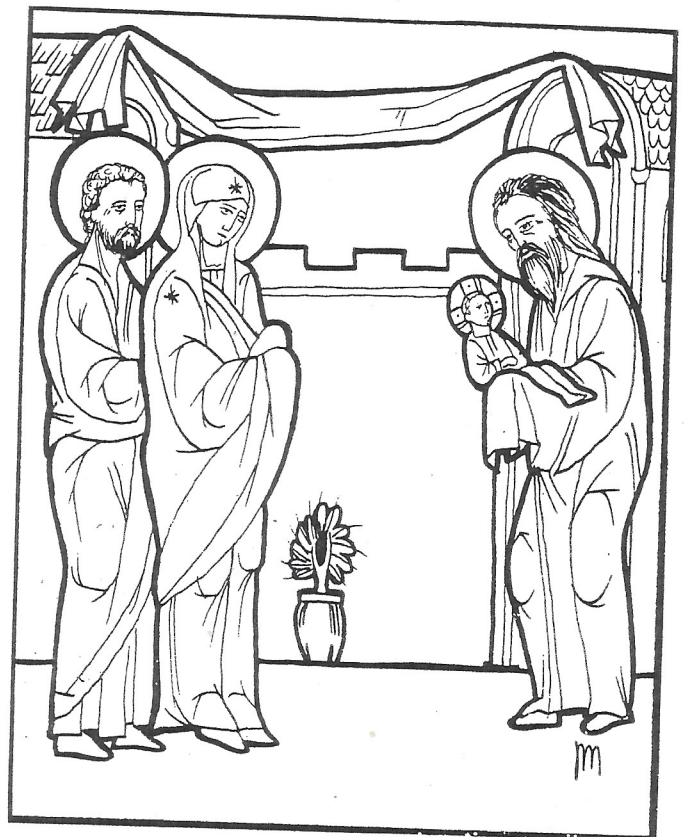
The Vespers and Matins of the feast of the Meeting of the Lord are filled with hymns on this theme. The Divine Liturgy is celebrated with the lines from the canticle of Mary forming the prokeimenon and the words of Simeon being the verses for the Alleluia. The gospel readings tell of the meeting, while the Old Testamental readings at Vespers refer to the Law of the purification in Leviticus, the vision of Isaiah in the Temple of the Thrice-Holy Lord, and the gift of faith to the Egyptians prophesied by Isaiah when the light of the Lord shall be a "revelation to the Gentiles." (Luke 2:32)

The celebration of the Meeting of the Lord in the Church is not merely an historical commemoration. Inspired by the same Holy Spirit as Simeon, and led by the same Spirit into the Church of the Messiah, the members of the Church also can claim their own "meeting" with the Lord, and so also can witness that they too can "depart in peace" since their eyes have seen the salvation of God in the person of his Christ.

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!
From you shone the Sun of Righteousness,
Christ our God, enlightening those who sat in
darkness! Rejoice and be glad, O righteous elder;
you accepted in your arms the Redeemer of our
souls who grants us the resurrection. (Troparion)

By Thy nativity, Thou didst sanctify the Virgin's
womb. And didst bless Simeon's hands, O Christ
our God. Now Thou hast come and saved us
through love. Grant peace to all Orthodox
Christians, O only Lover of man. (Kontakion)

It is customary in many churches to bless candles on the feast of the Meeting of the Lord.



Pre-Lent

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of **Great Lent**, which is itself preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about **Zacchaeus** the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man and how his life was greatly changed simply because he "sought to see who Jesus was." (Luke 19:3) The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through lent towards Easter. It is the first movement of salvation.

The following Sunday is that of the **Publican and the Pharisee**. The focus here is on the two men who went to the Temple to pray, one a pharisee who was a very decent and righteous man of religion, the other a publican who was a truly sinful tax-collector who was cheating the people. The first, although genuinely righteous, boasted before God and was condemned, according to Christ. The second, although genuinely sinful, begged for mercy, received it, and was justified by God. (Luke 18:9) The meditation here is that we have neither the religious piety of the pharisee nor the repentance of the publican by which alone we can be saved. We are called to see ourselves as we really are in the light of Christ's teaching, and to beg for mercy.

The next Sunday in the preparation for Great Lent is the **Sunday of the Prodigal Son**. Hearing the parable of Christ about God's loving forgiveness, we are called to "come to ourselves" as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves as being "in a far country" far from the Father's house, and to make the movement of return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that the Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only "arise and go," confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that "home" where we truly belong. (Luke 15:11-24).

The next Sunday is called **Meatfare Sunday** since it is officially the last day before Easter for eating meat. It commemorates Christ's parable of the **Last Judgment**. (Matthew 25:31-46) We are reminded this day that it is not enough for us to see Jesus, to see ourselves as we are, and to come home to God as his prodigal sons. We must also be his sons by following Christ, his only-begotten divine Son, and by seeing Christ in every man and by serving Christ through them. Our salvation and final judgment will depend upon our deeds, not merely on our intentions or even on the mercies of God devoid of our own personal cooperation and obedience.

...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. (Matthew 25)

We are saved not merely by prayer and fasting, not by "religious exercises" alone. We are saved by serving Christ through his people, the goal toward which all piety and prayer is ultimately directed.

Finally, on the eve of Great Lent, the day called **Cheesefare Sunday** 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 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. (Matthew 6:14-18)

THE MEETING OF OUR LORD

Great Vespers

We sing Blessed is the man (the first portion of the first kathisma).

On Lord, I have cried, eight stichera are sung:

TONE ONE

(by Patriarch Germanos)

Simeon, tell us: whom dost thou bear in thine arms, that thou dost rejoice so greatly in the temple? To whom dost thou cry and shout: Now am I set free, for I have seen my Saviour? 'This is He who was born of a Virgin: this is He, the Word, God of God, who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man.' Let us worship Him (3 times).

Receive, O Simeon, Him whom Moses once beheld in darkness granting the Law on Sinai, and who has now become a babe subject to the Law. This is He who spoke through the Law: this is He whose voice was heard in the prophets, who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man. Let us worship Him (3 times).

Come, and with divine songs let us also go to meet Christ and let us receive Him whose salvation Simeon saw. This is He whom David announced: this is He whose words the prophets uttered, who for our sakes has taken flesh and speaks to us in the Law. Let us worship Him (twice).

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

TONE SIX

(by John the Monk)

Let the gate of heaven be opened today: for He who is without beginning, the Word of the Father, has made a beginning in time without forsaking His divinity, and as a babe forty days old He is of His own will brought by the Virgin His Mother as an offering in the temple of the Law.

From a sermon by Saint Sophronius, bishop

[Orat. 3 de Hyppapante 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.