

SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

BOSA, bishop of York 678-86 and 691-705. This monk of Whitby was consecrated by *Theodore bishop of Delra (the southern half of Northumbria, roughly the equivalent of modern Yorkshire) when *Wilfrid had been expelled from Northumbria following his quarrels with King Egfrith. Bosa ruled his diocese until his death except for the years of Wilfrid's restoration. *Bede praised his 'singular merit and holiness'; one of his disciples was *Acca, later the follower and successor of Wilfrid at Hexham. Feast: 9 March.

Bede, H.E., iv. 12; v. 19-20.

EOSTERWINE (650-86), abbot of Wearmouth. Of noble birth, he joined the service of Egfrith, king of Northumbria, and fought in his army. At the age of twenty-four he became a monk at Wearmouth, the monastery just founded by his cousin *Benedict Biscop. Here he followed all the regular observance, taking his full share in the menial tasks. He milked the cows and the sheep, he worked in bakehouse, garden, and kitchen, he shared in the harvesting and winnowing. In 679, he was ordained priest and in 682 he was appointed abbot by Biscop to rule during his own absence. As abbot, he was kind and accessible to all, just as he had been before his promotion. He had the same food and sleeping accommodation as the rest of his community and joined in the manual work. He died at the early age of thirty-six, on 6 March, while the community were at Matins. He was buried by the church-door, but his relics, with those of Benedict Biscop and *Sigfrid, were translated by *Ceolfrith to a shrine close to the high altar. His cult was mainly local but his name also occurs in the OE martyrology from Mercia. Feast: 7 March.

C. Plummer (ed.), *Baedae Opera Historica* (1956), I. 364-404; II. 355-77; J. F. Webb and D. H. Farmer, *The Age of Bede* (1983).

ALKELDA (1) (Athilda) (d. c.800). She was patron of the church of Middleham (Yorkshire), also of Giggleswick (West Riding). Edward IV's patent survives which enabled his brother Richard (subsequently Richard III) to set up the college of Middleham in honour of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and St. Alkeld. Local tradition claimed that she was a Saxon princess (presumably a nun), who was strangled to death by Viking women and buried in the church at Middleham. Feast: 28 (27) March.

R. Challoner, *Memorials of Ancient British Piety* (1762), v; Stanton, p. 135.

WITHBURGA (1) (Witburh) (d. c.743), virgin. The youngest daughter of Anna, king of East Anglia and a sister of *Etheldreda, she lived as a solitary at Holkham (Norfolk), and later at East Dereham, where she is reputed to have founded a community and to have died before the buildings were completed. She was buried in the churchyard, but after fifty years her body was exhumed, found incorrupt and enshrined in the church.

In 974 Brithnoth, abbot of Ely, stole the body under the pretext that she would have wanted to be buried near her sisters. A band of his monks accompanied by soldiers went secretly by night to Dereham, having obtained the approval of King Edgar and *Ethelwold. They removed the body to their wagons, drove twenty miles to the river Braudun, on which they continued their journey by boat to the dismay of the men of Dereham, who had pursued them by land and could only watch helplessly while their treasure slipped away. The body was reburied at Ely where, however, the incorruption story was never exploited, as it might have detracted from Etheldreda's glory. In 1102 Withburga's relics were moved into the new part of the church; in 1106 they were joined by the bones of the other three Ely saints (Etheldreda, *Sexburga, and *Ermegild). The church at Holkham is dedicated to her; water in Withburga's well at Dereham churchyard was reputed to have sprung up when her body was first exhumed. Withburga's emblem in art, as on six Norfolk screens, is a tame doe, which William of Malmesbury described as her companion in solitude who provided her with milk. Feast: 17 March; translation 8 July.

ALFWOLD (d. 1058), monk of Winchester and bishop of Sherborne. William of Malmesbury recorded the following details, derived from a priest of his diocese who knew him. He was noted for his habitual abstinence at a time when self-indulgence was said to be general; he used at table common wooden platters and bowls. He was specially devoted to *Swithun, whose image he set up in the church at Sherborne, and to *Cuthbert, whose shrine he used to visit and whose antiphon he would often repeat. He quarrelled at least once with Godwin earl of Wessex, who was smitten with sudden illness and recovered only at the saint's pardon. After his death, the sees of Sherborne and Ramsbury, both poorly endowed, were reunited and in 1070 became the see of Salisbury. Feast: 25 March.



Antiochian Orthodox

St Furseys 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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COMMUNITY PROGRAMME & NEWSLETTER

March 2024



TODAY is the fountainhead of our salvation and the manifestation of the mystery which was from eternity. The Son of God becometh the Virgin's Son, and Gabriel proclaimeth the good tidings of grace; for this cause, we also cry to the Mother of God with him; Rejoice, thou who art full of grace; the Lord is with thee.

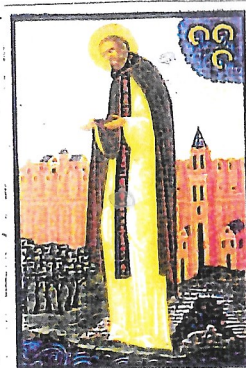
**BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS
COMMEMORATED IN
MARCH.**

(See selected lives of Saints on another page.)

- 01 Swithbert the Elder, Bishop of the Frisians
- 02 Chad, Bishop of Lichfield
- Cynibil, Confessor
- 04 Owen of Lichfield, Hermit
- 06 Baldred and Billfrith, Hermits
- Cyneburgh and Cyneswith, Abbesses of Castor and Tibba,
Anchoress
- 07 Eosterwine, Abbot of Wearmouth
- 08 Felix, Bishop of Dunwich
- 09 Bosa, Bishop of York
- 12 Alphege the Elder, Bishop of Winchester
- Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome and Apostle of the English
- 13 Gerald of Mayo, Abbot
- 16 Aristobulus the Holy Apostle, Bishop of Britain
- 17 Withburgh of Dereham, Virgin
- 18 Edward the Martyr, King of England
- Egbert of Ripon, Confessor
- 19 Alcmund, Martyr
- 20 Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne and Wonderworker of Britain
- Herbert of Derwentwater, Hermit
- 23 Ethilwald of Farne, Hermit
- 24 Hildelith, Abbess of Barking
- 25 Alfwold, Bishop of Sherborne
- 27 Alkeld, Martyr in Yorkshire
- 30 Osburgh, Abbess of Coventry

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 MARCH 2024

Sat March 2 nd	Saturday of the Prodigal Son St Chad Bishop of Lichfield 672 Vespers 4pm.
Sun March 3 rd	Sunday of the Prodigal Son Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Sat March 9 th	Saturday of Meat Fare (Saturday of Soul) Vespers 4pm.
Sun March 10 th	Sunday of Meat Fare (St Quadratus) Sunday of the Last Judgement Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Sat March 16 th	Saturday of Cheese Fare (Commemoration of All Monks & Nuns) Vespers 4pm. (St Finnan of Iona).
Sun March 17 th	Sunday of Cheese Fare The Expulsion of Adam & Eve from Paradise. Forgiveness Sunday Divine Liturgy 9:30am. Vespers of Forgiveness 12 Noon Approx (No more dairy products) Vegan Fast

Mon March 18 th	First WEEK OF GREAT LENT
	3 rd Hour + Reading from the Fathers 9am. (Chapel)
	6 th Hour Reading from Isaiah 12 Noon (Chapel) Vespers, Genesis & Proverbs 4pm (Chapel)
	Compline and Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete.
Tues March 19 th	3 rd Hour + Reading from the Fathers 9am. Compline and Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete.
Wed March 20 th	Compline and Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete 7pm.
Thurs March 21 st	3 rd Hour + Reading from the Fathers 9am. Compline and Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete.
Fri March 22 nd	Compline & First Salutation/Akathist 7pm.
Sat March 23 rd	First Saturday of Great Lent. Commemoration of St Theodore the Recruit Vespers 4pm.
Sun March 24 th	First Sunday of Great Lent Sunday of Orthodoxy Divine Liturgy of St Basil 9:30am Vespers of Orthodoxy (shortened) 12 Noon.

Mon March 25 th	SECOND WEEK OF GREAT LENT
	The Annunciation to Our Most Holy Lady The Theotokos Liturgy of St John Chrysostom 9am. Fish allowed today.
Wed March 27 th	Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts 7pm. (Chapel).
Fri March 29 th	Compline + Second Salutation 7pm. (Chapel).
Sat March 30 th	Second Saturday of Great Lent Saturday Souls Vespers 4pm.
Sun March 31 st	Second Sunday of Great Lent St Gregory Palamas Divine Liturgy of St Basil 9:30am??

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

In addition to the above services there is also the 3rd Hour Service 9am on Tuesday followed by Coffee & refreshments and discussion. Also 3rd Hour Service 9am and reading from the Fathers. Also, at St Fursey's Chapel in Sutton 3rd Hour 9am reading from Fathers on Monday & Friday and Vespers 4pm each day.

Community News & Notices

NB: All the above services will be in the Parish Church unless otherwise stated.

Confessions: At Any Time: By Appointment

Lenten Services



The weekday services of Great Lent are characterized by special lenten melodies of a penitential character. The royal gates to the altar area remain closed to signify man's separation through sin from the Kingdom of God. The church vesting is of a somber color, usually purple. The daily troparia are also of an intercessory character, entreating God through his saints to have mercy on us sinners.

At the Matins the long Alleluia replaces the psalm: God is the Lord . . . The Psalmody is increased. The hymnology refers to the lenten effort. Scripture readings from Genesis and Proverbs are added to Vespers, and the Prophecy of Isaiah to the Sixth Hour. Each of these books is read nearly in its entirety during the lenten period. Epistle and gospel readings are absent because there are no Divine Liturgies.

At all of the lenten services the Prayer of St. Ephraim of Syria is read. It supplicates God for those virtues especially necessary to the Christian life.

O Lord and Master of my life: take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, lust of power and idle talk.

But grant rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to Thy servant.

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own errors and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen.

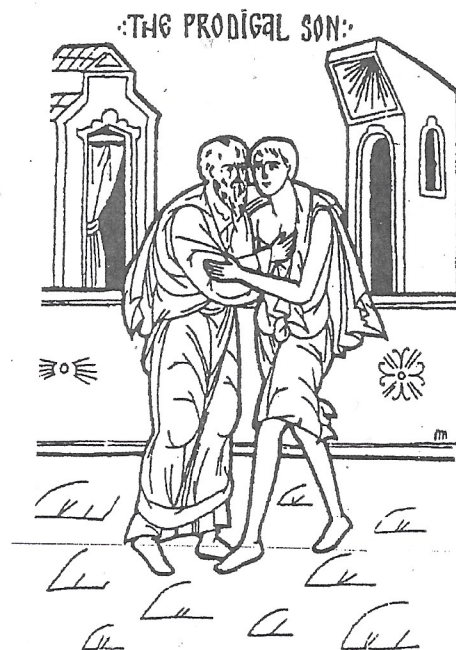
The Vesper service which begins the lenten season is called the Vespers of Forgiveness. It is customary at this service for the faithful to ask forgiveness and to forgive each other. At the Compline services of the first week of lent the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete is read. This is a long series of penitential verses based on Biblical themes, to each of which the people respond: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me. This canon is repeated at Matins on Thursday of the

fifth week. On Friday evening of this same fifth week, the Akathistos Hymn to the Mother of God is sung; and the Saturday Divine Liturgy also honors the Theotokos.

The first Saturday of Great Lent is dedicated to the memory of St. Theodore of Tyre. The second, third and fourth Saturdays are called Memorial Saturdays since they are dedicated to the remembrance of the dead.

On Memorial Saturdays the liturgical hymns pray universally for all of the departed, and the Matins for the dead, popularly called the parastasis or panikhida, is served with specific mention of the deceased by name. Litanies and prayers are also added to the Divine Liturgy at which the scripture readings refer to the dead and their salvation by Christ.

Saturday, even during the non-lenten season, is the Church's day for remembering the dead. This is so because Saturday, the Sabbath Day, stands as the day which God blessed for life in this world. Because of sin, however, this day now symbolizes all of earthly life as naturally fulfilled in death. Even Christ the Lord lay dead on the Sabbath Day, "resting from all of his works" and "trampling down death by death." (See below pp. 94) Thus, in the New Testament Church of Christ, Saturday becomes the proper day for remembering the dead and for offering prayers for their eternal salvation.



Sundays of Lent

Each of the Sundays of Great Lent 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 John 5:4) Secondly, the icons of the saints bear witness that man, "created in the image and likeness of God" (Genesis 1:26), becomes holy and godlike through the purification of himself as God's living image.

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.

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." (Matthew 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 Corinthians 1:24)

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to St. John of the Ladder (Climacus), the author of the work, The Ladder of Divine Ascent. The abbot of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th century) stands as a witness to the violent effort needed for entrance into God's Kingdom. (Matthew 10:12) The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is a real one, "not against flesh and blood, but against... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places..." (Ephesians 6:12) Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, according to the Lord, only "the who endures to the end will be saved." (Matthew 24:13)

The Fifth Sunday recalls the memory of Saint Mary of Egypt, the repentant harlot. Mary tells us, first of all, that no amount of sin and wickedness can keep a person from God if he truly repents. Christ himself has come "to call sinners to repentance" and to save them from their sins. (Luke 5:32) In addition, Saint Mary tells us that it is never too late in life—or in Lent—to repent. Christ will gladly receive all who come to him even at the eleventh hour of their lives. But their coming must be in serious and sincere repentance.

Great Lent

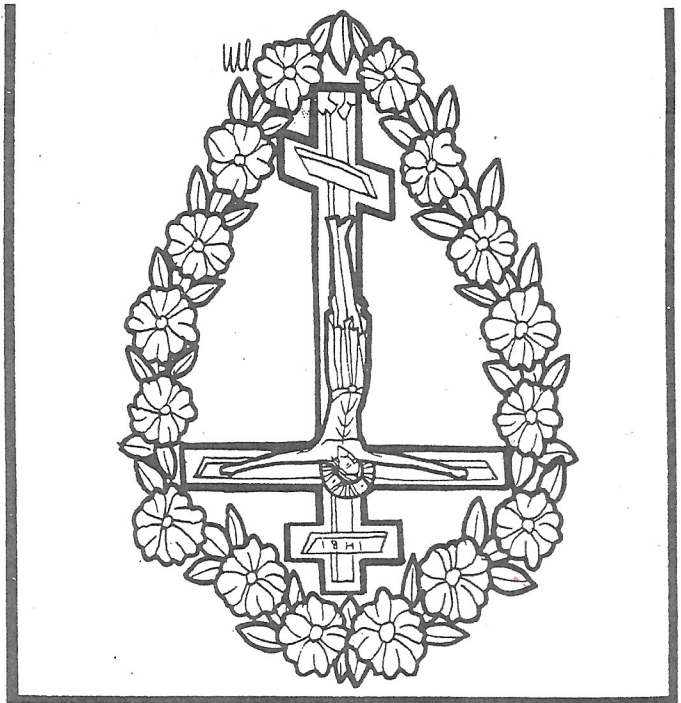
The season of Great Lent is the time of preparation for the feast of the Resurrection of Christ. It is the living symbol of man's entire life which is to be fulfilled in his own resurrection from the dead with Christ. It is a time of renewed devotion: of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. It is a time of repentance, a real renewal of our minds, hearts and deeds in conformity with Christ and his teachings. It is the time, most of all, of our return to the great commandments of loving God and our neighbors.

In the Orthodox Church, Great Lent is not a season of morbidity and gloominess. On the contrary, it is a time of joyfulness and purification. We are called to "anoint our faces" and to "cleanse our bodies as we cleanse our souls." The very first hymns of the very first service of Great Lent set the proper tone of the season:

Let us begin the lenten time with delight... let us fast from passions as we fast from food, taking pleasure in the good words of the Spirit, that we may be granted to see the holy passion of Christ our God and his holy Pascha, spiritually rejoicing.

Thy grace has arisen upon us, O Lord, the illumination of our souls has shown forth; behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the time of repentance. (Vesper Hymns)

It is our repentance that God desires, not our remorse. We sorrow for our sins, but we do so in the joy of God's mercy. We mortify our flesh, but we do so in the joy of our resurrection into life everlasting. We make ready for the resurrection during Great Lent, both Christ's Resurrection and our own.



Daily Services in St Furseys Chapel (Neville Road) Sutton

There continue to be 3rd Hour 9am with a Reading from the Fathers. Vespers 4pm. During Great Lent the weekday services have a more penitential character with the use of the Prayer of St Ephraim the Syrian below for use at home.

Prayer of St Ephraim the Syrian

O Lord and Master of My Life

Grant not to me a spirit of laziness, despondency, lust of power, or of gossiping (*prostration*).

Yea O Lord and King, Grant that I may see my own errors and transgressions and not to judge my brothers and sisters, for blessed art thou unto the ages of ages. Amen (*prostration*).

O God cleanse me a Sinner. (*12 times with the sign of the cross and a bow each time and then the whole prayer is repeated with a final prostration*).

Our Observance of Great Lent

During Great Lent Orthodox Christians try to follow a vegan diet (*no animal products like meat, fish, milk, eggs, or cheese*) but this can be difficult in our missionary situation, especially for a single Orthodox in a non-Orthodox family or at work. Do the best you can prayerfully but avoid red meat. The principle behind the Fast is to uphold the fact that we are in charge of our bodies rather than our bodies in charge of us. Fasting assists our prayer and goes back to the practice of Our Lord Himself, so we follow his example for the benefit of our souls.

Every Blessing to our Readers

Father Stephen

From a letter by Saint Leo the Great, pope

(Epist. 28 ad Flavianum, 3-4: PL 54, 763-767)

THE MYSTERY OF MAN'S RECONCILIATION WITH GOD

Lowliness is assured by majesty, weakness by power, mortality by eternity. To pay the debt of our sinful state, a nature that is incapable of suffering was joined to one that could suffer. Thus, in keeping with the healing that we needed, one and the same mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ, was able to die in one nature, and unable to die in the other.

He who is true God was therefore born in the complete and perfect nature of a true man, whole in his own nature, whole in ours. By our nature we mean what the Creator had fashioned in us from the beginning, and took to himself in order to restore it.

For in the Savior there was no trace of what the deceiver introduced and man, being misled, allowed to enter. It does not follow that because he submitted to sharing in our human weakness he therefore shared in our sins.

He took the nature of a servant without stain of sin, enlarging our humanity without diminishing his divinity. He emptied himself; though invisible he made himself visible, though Creator and Lord of all things he chose to be one of us mortal men. Yet this was the condescension of compassion, not the loss of omnipotence. So he who in the nature of God had created man, became in the nature of a servant, man himself.

Thus the Son of God enters this lowly world. He comes down from the throne of heaven, yet does not separate himself from the Father's glory. He is born in a new condition, by a new birth.

He was born in a new condition, for, invisible in his own nature, he became visible in ours. Beyond our grasp, he chose to come within our grasp. Existing before time began, he began to exist at a moment in time. Lord of the universe, he hid his infinite glory and took the nature of a servant. Incapable of suffering as God, he did not refuse to be a man, capable of suffering. Immortal, he chose to be subject to the laws of death.

He who is true God is also true man. There is no falsehood in this unity as long as the lowliness of man and the preeminence of God coexist in mutual relationship.

As God does not change by his condescension, so man is not swallowed up by being exalted. Each nature exercises its own activity, in communion with the other. The Word does what is proper to the Word, the flesh fulfills what is proper to the flesh.

One nature is resplendent with miracles, the other falls victim to injuries. As the Word does not lose equality with the Father's glory, so the flesh does not leave behind the nature of our race.