

ST FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND PARISH,
ST. FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PARISH CHURCH.
YARMOUTH ROAD, STALHAM. NR12 9PG.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMME.

MAY 2019



*Sunday of St. Thomas the Apostle (Low Sunday),
Troparion*

WHEN the tomb was sealed, thou, the Life, O
Christ our God, didst rise up from the grave;
and when the doors were closed, thou, the Resurrec-
tion of all, didst stand among the disciples, and
through them, according to thy great mercy, didst
renew a right spirit within us.

**BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS
COMMEMORATED IN
MAY.**

- 02 Ultan, Missionary in East Anglia
03 Aldwyn, Abbot of Partney
Elwin, Bishop of Lindsey
Philip, Hermit*
04 Ethelred, Abbot of Bardney
05 Echa of Crayke, Hermit
06 Edbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne
07 John of Beverley, Bishop of York
Liudhard of Canterbury, Bishop
08 Indract, Dominica and Companion-Martyrs
Wiro, Bishop and Missionary
10 Simon the Zealot
11 Fremund of Offchurch, Martyr
12 Ethelhard, Archbishop of Canterbury
15 Bercthun, Abbot of Beverley
16 Carantoc, Monk and Missionary
17 Mailduf, Abbot of Malmesbury
18 Elgiva of Shaftesbury, Widow
19 Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury
20 Ethelbert, King of East Anglia, Martyr
21 Helen, mother of Constantine, Emperor of the Roman Empire
25 Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne
26 Augustine, Archbishop of Canterbury and Apostle of the
English
Bede the Venerable
30 Walstan of Bawburgh, Confessor

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.



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FRI.MAY 3rd BRIGHT FRIDAY;The Lifegiving Spring of the Theotokos Vespers 4pm.

SAT.MAY 4th.BRIGHT SATURDAY St Ethelred King of Mercia and monk 716.

DIVINE LITURGY 10 am. VESPERS 4pm (For St.Thomas Sunday)

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TUES.MAY 21st.Equal to the Apostles Emperor Constantine 337 and his mother Helena 330

VESPERS 4pm for MID-FEAST OF PENTECOST

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SAT.JUNE 1st. StJustin Martyr and those with at Rome (166) St Wistan of Repton Martyr (850)

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Usual services 3rd Hour 9am with reading from the Fathers (on Tuesdays at the Parish Church)

Vespers 4pm (on Monday at the Parish Church after BibleStudy) Compline 9pm at the Parish Church after an evening event.Local readers are very welcome.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND NOTICES.

OUR FOUNDERESS RUTH BRANDON.

Our friendship began in April 1990 when I was appointed the Anglican Rector of Catfield ,Sutton and Ingham and Ruth telephoned me to congratulate me and to introduce herself as the lay Reader of those parishes in the Interegnum.We soon became great friends and I appreciated her practical help and advice.We became very concerned about various changes in the Church of England and she was received into the Orthodox Church with her daughter Emma in 1996;Our friendship continued and Ruth was my sponser into the Antiochian Orthodox Church on October 3rd 1998 . Jean and Elly were received at the same time by Father Alexander from Colchester.We had a liturgy on the first Saturday of each month and I functioned as Reader on Sundays and at weekday services.Ruth was always very supportive even though she continued to attend the Liturgy at the Russian Orthodox Church in Norwich sometimes.When I was ordained in 2011 it soon became clear that our tiny chapel in my garden could not be our parish church as the congregation was growing helped by Ruth's strong faith and friendliness. After several years of searching we found that the old police station in Stalham was for sale and we were able to buy it thanks to the wonderful generosity of many people.During this difficult time Ruth kept us going by her encouragement.She had a stroke in December 2018 and was admitted into the James Paget Hospital in Gorleston and as a result of several more strokes she reposed in the Lord on March 16th .Her body was received into St Fursey's Parish Church for the Memorial Service on Wednesday April 3RD and she was then taken to Ingham Parish Church in the morning of April 4th for the main funeral service and she was buried in Sutton Church yard not far from the grave of her husband Paul.We will miss her greatly .MEMORY ETERNAL.

NORWICH MARKET STALL

Our market stall will be on Wednesday May 1ST. and the charity stall is now back in its old place in the Haymarket opposite where the new Primark is being built.We have to pay £78 market stall insurance now and the daily rent is now £15 a time.The stall is an important part of our missionary outreach so please pray for us and those who come seeking information about the Orthodox Church.Many thanks to Sub-deacon David for his help and all who come and support us.We now have to build up our stock of icons to sell.

COFFEE MORNING AND OPEN DAY- THURSDAY MAY 23RD;PARISH CHURCH STALHAM

COFFEE MORNING BEGINS 10AM;Icon and bookstall;homemade cake stall; raffle ; tombola ;bric a brak;PLEASE COME AND BRING A FRIEND;

SHORT SERVICE 12NOON AND TALK ;" WHEN ENGLAND WAS ORTHODOX "

LIGHT LUNCHESS FROM 1PM

TALK ON ICONS 2PM " WINDOWS INTO HEAVEN "

TEA AND CAKE 3PM VESPERS 4PM FINNISH 4-30PM.

WE HOPE TO START BUILDING OUR NEW PARISH CHURCH IN JUNE.

IF THERE IS ENOUGH INTEREST WE WILL HAVE SOME EVENING TALKS ON ORTHODOXY IN JUNE.

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.

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.

Four Christians detained in Nepal on charges of forced conversion

NEPAL

After being secretly filmed, four Christians were arrested in November 2018 near Kathmandu, and charged with breaking Nepal's anti-conversion laws.

It was alleged that the individuals, two of them Japanese nationals, had been "proselytising" door-to-door, "targeting Dalits" (the lowest level of the Hindu caste system, considered "untouchable" by high-caste Hindus).

If convicted, the two Nepalis arrested could face five years in prison and a 50,000 rupee (around £340; \$440) fine, while the Japanese Christians could receive the same sentence or be deported.

In September 2018, a new law came into force in Nepal, where 85% of the population is Hindu, which makes it an offence to "involve or encourage in conversion of religion" or "hurt religious sentiment".

Dramatic rise in extremist attacks on Indian Christians in Uttar Pradesh

INDIA

The number of mob attacks on churches and arrests of Christians on false charges is rising at a dramatic pace in Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state.

The number of reported incidents in the north Indian state in 2018 had reached 64 in late October, higher than the previous year when there were 50 in the whole twelve months. Most were carried out by right-wing nationalists.

In one of the attacks, in October 2018, seven Christians were seriously injured by a mob of 40-50 Hindu extremists at a hotel in Agra city. None of the attackers were arrested.

Christians make up only 0.18% of the population of Uttar Pradesh.

Mass grave of Ethiopian Christian martyrs executed by IS discovered in Libya

LIBYA



A video posted by IS on social media in 2015 showed the brutal executions of the Ethiopian Christians on a beach near Sirte, on the north coast of Libya

A mass grave containing the bodies of 34 Ethiopian Christians martyred in 2015 by Islamic State (IS) militants was discovered in Sirte, Libya on 23 December last year.

The remains have been exhumed. According to the Libyan Interior Ministry, the grave was found as a result of evidence gathered from detained IS members.

Sirte, the hometown of deposed leader Colonel Gaddafi, was controlled by IS in 2015 until they were defeated in late 2016 by local forces with US support.

This is the second mass grave of Christians to be discovered in Sirte. In October 2017 the bodies of 20 Egyptian martyrs were uncovered and repatriated to Cairo. A martyred Ghanaian man killed alongside them was also exhumed. All those murdered refused to deny Christ, which would have saved their lives.

Government-approved Three-Self church in China told to remove First Commandment

CHINA



Exodus 20:3 in a Chinese Bible

Members of a registered Three-Self church in China's Henan province were ordered to erase the First Commandment from display during an inspection by government officials on 1 November 2018.

In an unusual intervention in a state-approved church, an official ordered that the First Commandment, "You shall have no other gods before me", be removed from the Ten Commandments displayed in the front of the pulpit, saying it was "national policy".

The officials then wiped off the words. Later that day, the church took down all Ten Commandments under pressure from the authorities.

Earlier in the year the communist government's White Paper on religion announced new policies of "sinicisation" (i.e. making Chinese) with the intention of selectively reinterpreting Christianity and Scripture.



THE SUNDAY OF ANTIPASCHA

THOMAS SUNDAY

*To Wit, the Commemoration of the Holy Apostle Thomas'
Touching of the Master's Side*

It should be noted that on this holy day of Thomas Sunday, the Resurrection hymns are not chanted, but only those of the Feast.

SATURDAY EVENING SMALL VESPERS

For Lord, I have cried, we allow for four verses and chant the following Stichera:

First Tone. Of the arrays of the Heavens

CHRISt our God, having arisen from the grave on the third day * while yet the tomb was sealed fast, in His great love for mankind * now endureth touching, as He endured * both the Cross and His unjust death; * and while the doors were shut, He entered in unto * the disciples as Almighty God. (*Twice*)

WHEN with his probing right hand Thomas felt the Word's wounded limbs, * his unbelief established the world-saving arising * for the world's

assurance; for the God-man, * in His great love for all mankind, * arose from Hades' abysses and thus destroyed * all its strength as the Almighty One.

WHILE the Apostles were gathered out of great fear, O Word, * because of Thy dread Passion, of a sudden Thou didst come * and enter in their midst while the doors were shut fast, * and Thou didst bestow peace on them; * and Thou didst offer to Thomas the wounds of Thy * most august side that he might touch them.

Glory; both now.
Second Tone

AFTER Thine arising, O Lord, Thou didst stand in the midst of Thy disciples when they were gathered together, while the doors were shut, and Thou didst grant them peace. And as for Thomas, convinced at beholding Thy hands and side, he confessed that Thou art the Lord and God, Who dost save them that hope in Thee, O Friend of man.

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IT WAS NECESSARY THAT CHRIST SHOULD SUFFER
AND SO ENTER INTO HIS GLORY

Christ, who has shown by his words and actions that he was truly God and Lord of the universe, said to his disciples as he was about to go up to Jerusalem: *We are going up to Jerusalem now, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the Gentiles and the chief priests and scribes to be scourged and mocked and crucified.*

These words bore out the predictions of the prophets, who had foretold the death he was to die in Jerusalem. From the beginning holy Scripture had foretold Christ's death, the sufferings that would precede it, and what would happen to his body afterward. Scripture also affirmed that these things were going to happen to one who was immortal and incapable of suffering because he was God.

Only by reflecting upon the meaning of the incarnation can we see how it is possible to say with perfect truth both that Christ suffered and that he was incapable of suffering, and why the Word of God, in himself incapable of suffering, came to suffer. In fact, man could have been saved in no other way, as Christ alone knew and those to whom he revealed it. For he knows all the secrets of the Father, even as *the Spirit penetrates the depths* of all mysteries.

It was necessary for Christ to suffer: his passion was absolutely unavoidable. He said so himself when he called his companions dull and slow to believe because they failed to recognize that he had to suffer and so enter into his glory. Leaving behind him the glory that had been his with the Father before the world was made, he had gone forth to save his people. This salvation, however, could be achieved only by the suffering of the author of life as Paul taught when he said that *the author of life himself was made perfect through suffering*. Because of us he was deprived of his glory for a little while, the glory that was his as the Father's only-begotten Son, but through the cross this glory is seen to have been restored to him in a certain way in the body that he had assumed. Explaining what water the Savior referred to when he said: *He that has faith in me shall have rivers of living water flowing from within him*, John says in his gospel that *he was speaking of the Holy Spirit which those who believed in him were to receive, for the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified*. The glorification he meant was his death upon the cross for which the Lord prayed to the Father before undergoing his passion, asking his Father to give him the glory that he had in his presence before the world began.

SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

ALDWYN (Aldwine) (early 8th century), abbot of Peartney (Lincs.). A brother of Elwin, second bishop of Lindsey, and of Ethelhild, abbess. Aldwyn's uncertain claim to sanctity is reflected in the absence of any clear feast-day: he did, however, give his name to Coln St. Aldwyn, Glos.

ETHELWIN (2), bishop of Lindsey, died c.700. Brother of Edilhum (friend of Egbert and of Aldwin), abbot of Peartney (Lincs.) and also of abbess Ethelhild nearby, Ethelwin was consecrated by *Theodore in 680. His diocese (roughly modern Lincolnshire) had formerly been part of Northumbria, but was later under the rule of kings of Mercia. Little is known of his achievements or even the place of his seat (see *Herefrith), but *Bede mentions him and his family. Feast: 3 May (or 29 June in Wilson's *Martyrologe*).

Bede, *H.E.*, iii. 11. 27; Stanton, p. 193.

ECHA OF CRAYKE (North Yorkshire) (d. 767). He was a hermit renowned for his holiness and gift of prophecy. Feast: 5 May.

ETHELBERT (2) (779-94), king of the East Angles. He was venerated as a martyr because of his violent death for political reasons at the hand of Offa, king of Mercia, whose daughter Ælfthryth he visited, with a view to marriage, at Sutton Walls (Hereford and Worcester). There he was assassinated in 794, presumably on 20 May. The body was buried by the river Lugg at Marden and later translated to Hereford, where it remained until the Danes burnt it in 1050. His head was buried at Westminster. William of Malmesbury, however, said that Ethelbert's relics were still at Hereford; he clearly felt some misgiving about his cult as a martyr and invoked the authority of *Dunstan as well as the witness of miracles in favour of its continuance. Ethelbert is titular of Hereford cathedral, of churches at Marden (Herefordshire), Little Dean (Glos.), and of eleven others in East Anglia. The cult flourished in medieval England: Hereford was reckoned as second only to Canterbury as a pilgrimage centre; fragments of the shrine remain. Feast: 20 May.

WIRO (Wera) (d. c.753), monk and bishop of Utrecht. A Northumbrian who was, like *Willibrord, an apostle of Frisia; Wiro was appointed to the see of Utrecht by *Boniface c.741, but was not archbishop or metropolitan. It is possible that Wiro had been consecrated at Rome earlier, as his biographer claims. He also joined with Boniface in his letter of correction to Ethelbald, king of Mercia, in 746. The centre of his cult was Odilienberg, near Roermond, where he and his companions Plegelm and Otger had built a church and monastery. Pepin of Herstall had given them the land for these and had encouraged their diffusion of Christianity in Frisia. Wiro was English and died in Holland, but some writers wrongly made him an Irishman who died in Ireland. In this latter they were followed by the Roman martyrology. Feast: 8 May.

AA.SS. Maii II (1680), 309-20 prints the unreliable Life which is no earlier than 858; L. van der Essen, *Étude critique et littéraire sur les Vies des saints mérovingiens* (1907), pp. 105-9; W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (1956), pp. 82-3; I. Snieders, 'L'influence de l'hagiographie irlandaise', *R.H.E.*, xxiv (1928), 849-50.

INDRACT (d. c.700), martyr. He is described in the Martyrology of Tallaght (c.800) as a martyr for the faith at Glastonbury, and his name also occurs in an 11th-century litany. William of Malmesbury portrayed him as the son of an Irish king, who, with his nine travelling companions, was set upon and killed by brigands: 'credulous antiquity regarded them as martyrs.' Another Life says that Huna, the king's thane, murdered them, believing that they carried gold. The place of their death is believed to be Huish Episcopi. Ina, king of Wessex (688-726); translated the relics to Glastonbury, where they were buried beside the high altar of the Old Church, destroyed by fire in 1184. William Worcestre mentions that his body lay at Shepton Mallet in 1478: by then his companions were estimated at one hundred. Feast 8 May, but the Bollandists list him under 5 February.

G. H. Doble, 'St. Indract and St. Dominic', *Som. Rec. Soc.*, lvii (1942), 1-24; M. Lapidge, 'The cult of St. Indract at Glastonbury' in *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe* (ed. D. Whitelock, 1981), pp. 179-212.