

## SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

**SEXBURGA** (Sexburg), abbess of Ely 679–c.700. Daughter of King Anna of East Anglia, Sexburga married Erconbert, king of Kent, by whom she had two sons who succeeded their father as kings, and two daughters, \*Erkengota and \*Ermengild. While Sexburga was queen, she founded a nunnery at Minster-in-Sheppey, to which she retired as abbess after her husband's death in 664. In 679, on the death of her sister \*Etheldreda, foundress of Ely, Sexburga became abbess there in her place. In 695 she translated Etheldreda's body, still incorrupt, into an old Roman sarcophagus from Granchester, which was brought to the church at Ely. Sexburga died on 6 July. In 1106 the relics of saints Etheldreda, Sexburga, \*Withburga, and Ermengild were again translated into new shrines at Ely, where they remained until the Reformation. Sexburga lay at the feet of Etheldreda, to her east. She is depicted with Etheldreda in a fine retable from Etheldreda's shrine, now at the Society of Antiquaries, London, and also figures in sculptured scenes of Etheldreda's life at Ely Cathedral. Feast: 6 July, translation, 17 October.

Bede, *H.E.*, iii. 8; iv. 19–21; *R.P.S.* E. O. Blake (ed.), *Liber Ellenis* (1962); J. Bentham, *The History and Antiquities of the Conventual and Cathedral Church of Ely* (1771), and W. Stevenson, *Supplement to Bentham's History* (1817).

**BOISIL** (Boswell) (d. c.661), abbot of Melrose. Formed in the Irish monastic tradition by an unknown master and monastery, Boisil, when a monk of Melrose, was so esteemed for his learning, holiness, and prophecies that he attracted \*Cuthbert, then a young man, to his community in 651. Boisil was also known for the preaching journeys in the neighbouring villages which Cuthbert too used to share. In c.659, when \*Eata, abbot of Melrose, left to found Ripon, Boisil succeeded him. On Cuthbert's return from Ripon c.661, Boisil was stricken by the plague. Together they read the Gospel of John before Boisil died. Cuthbert also caught the disease, but recovered from it in accordance with Boisil's prophecy.

Boisil gave his name to St. Boswells (Roxburghshire), and churches were dedicated to him at Lessuden and Tweedmouth. His relics were translated to Durham in the 11th century. The Stonyhurst College manuscript of the Gospel of John, written in uncial script of

the 8th century and, at an early date, placed in Cuthbert's coffin, probably came from Wearmouth or Jarrow, both of which were founded after Boisil's death; if so, it cannot have been Boisil's copy. A more authentic memorial of Boisil is the large fragment of his 8th-century shrine, which was brought to Jedburgh from Old Melrose. Feast: 7 July; translation, 8 June.

Bede, *H.E.*, iv. 27–8; v. 9; B. Colgrave, *Two Lives of St. Cuthbert* (1940); C. F. Battiscombe (ed.), *The Relics of St. Cuthbert* (1956); C. A. Raleigh-Radford, *Two Scottish Shrines: Jedburgh and St. Andrews*, *Archaeol. Jnl.*, cxii (1955), 43–80.

**ARILD** (Alkeld) (date unknown), virgin. The place of her death was Kingston-by-Thornbury (Glos.), the cause of it, according to Leland, was 'one Muncius a traunt, who cut off hir heade because she would not consent to lye withe hym'. After the Norman Conquest her relics were translated to Gloucester Abbey, where her shrine was famous for miracles. She was depicted in the East Window and a statue of her was on the reredos of the Lady altar. Two churches were dedicated to her: at Oldbury-on-Severn and Oldbury-on-the-Hill. Feast (at Gloucester): 20 July. J. Leland, *Itinerary*, ii. 60; v. 156; *E.B.K. after 1100*, ii. 41–2; E. S. Lindley, 'St. Arild of Thornbury', *Trans. Bristol and Glas. Arch. Soc.*, lxx (1951), 152–3.

**KENELM** (Cynhelm) (d. 812 or 821), prince of Mercian royal family. The historical Kenelm was the son of Coenwulf, king of Mercia 796–821. Kenelm signed a number of charters from 803 to 811; already in 798 Pope Leo III had confirmed to him the ownership of Glastonbury. But Kenelm died before his father, possibly in battle against the Welsh, and was buried at Winchcombe Abbey. When \*Oswald revived Winchcombe in the second half of the 10th century, Kenelm was regarded as a martyr and figured as such in liturgical books, including a sacramentary, written at Winchcombe.

**TATWIN** (Tatuni, Tadwinus), archbishop of Canterbury 731–41. He was described by Bede as a man notable for his prudence, devotion, and learning. He was a priest of the monastery of Bredon in Mercia, to whose king, the powerful Ethelbald, he probably owed his promotion.

After receiving the pallium, he consecrated bishops for Lindsey (Lincs.) and Selsey (West Sussex) in 733, the only recorded act of his short episcopate.



Antiochian Orthodox

St Furse'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

July 2025



### TROPARION OF ANN

(Tone 4)

O divinely-wise Ann, you carried in your womb the pure Mother of God, who gave birth to the Life. Wherefore, you now have been carried up joyfully to the inheritance of heaven, to the abode of those who rejoice in glory. O blessed one, obtain the forgiveness of sins for those who honor you with fervor.

## SERVICES IN JULY 2025

(In the Parish Church unless otherwise stated)

### BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS COMMEMORATED IN JULY.

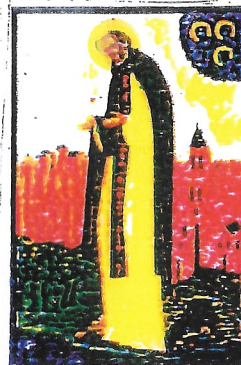
See selected lives of Saints on the back page.

- 01 Cewydd, Hermit
- 02 Swithun, Bishop of Winchester, Wonderworker
- 05 Modwenna of Burton, anchoress  
Modwenna of Whitby
- 06 Saxburgh, Abbess of Ely
- 07 Boswell, Abbot of Melrose  
Ethelburgh of Faremoutiers, Abbess  
Hedda, Bishop of Winchester  
Willibald, Bishop and Missionary
- 08 Edgar the Peaceful, King of England  
Grimbald, Monk  
Urith of Chittlehampton, Virgin-Martyr
- 09 Everild, Abbess of Everingham
- 11 Amabilis, Virgin\*  
Thurketyl, Abbot of Crowland
- 13 Mildred, Abbess of Minster-in-Thanel
- 14 Deusdedit, Archbishop of Canterbury  
Marchelm, Missionary\*
- 15 Edith, Abbess of Polesworth
- 16 Plechelm, Missionary and Bishop
- 17 Kenelm, Martyr
- 18 Edburgh, Virgin
- 20 Arild of Gloucestershire, Virgin-Martyr  
Etheldwitha of Winchester, Widow
- 24 Christiana, Virgin\*
- 24 Lewina, Virgin-Martyr  
Wulfhad and Ruffin, Martyrs
- 28 Ardwin, Gerald, Fulk and Bernard, Confessors\*
- 30 Ermengyth of Thanet, Virgin  
Tatwine, Archbishop of Canterbury
- 31 Joseph of Arimathea  
Neot, Hermit

### 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.



Sat July 5 <sup>th</sup>	St Athanasius, Founder of the Great Lavra Vespers 4pm.
Sun July 6 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost. St Sisoës the Great 429. Virgin Martyr Lucy, St Sexburga Abbess of Ely c.700 DIVINE LITURGY 9:30am.
Tues July 8 <sup>th</sup>	Appearance of the Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God (1579). 3 <sup>rd</sup> Hour 9am.
Sat July 12 <sup>th</sup>	St Veronica who was healed by Christ. Vespers 4pm.
Sun July 13 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost Commemoration of the 4 <sup>th</sup> Council. St Mildred Abbess of Minster 700. Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Thurs July 17 <sup>th</sup>	Great Martyr Maria (Margaret) of Antioch in Pisidia 1303. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Hour 9am.
Sat July 19 <sup>th</sup>	Uncovering of the Relics of St Seraphim 1903.
Sun July 20 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost Holy & Glorious Prophet Elijah Divine Liturgy 9:30am
Tues July 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Holy Myrrh-bearer and equal to the Apostles – Mary Magdalene 1c. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Hour 9am.
Fri July 25 <sup>th</sup>	Dormition of the Righteous Anna, Mother of the most Holy Theotokos. Divine Liturgy 10am. Fathers of the 5 <sup>th</sup> Council (553).
Sat July 26 <sup>th</sup>	Martyr Paraskevi of Rome (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) Vespers 4pm.
Sun July 27 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost. Great Martyr & Healer Panteleimon. Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Thurs July 31 <sup>st</sup>	Forefeast of the Procession of the Honourable Wood of the Lifegiving Cross of the Lord. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Hour 9am.
Fri 1 <sup>st</sup> August	BEGINNING OF THE DORMITION FAST.

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

### In Addition to the Above Services

These are normally 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

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## Community News & Notices

### Open Day & Coffee Morning Report – June 6<sup>th</sup>

The weather was unsettled: we started outside but a shower made us move inside but then we risked moving outside again. We had a very happy day. Many thanks to all who helped and supported us. We raised £319 on the day. We also had the chance of talking to our visitors about our Orthodox Christian Faith. The next open day will be on Saturday September 5<sup>th</sup>. This is an experiment to see if a Saturday makes any difference to the support we get.

### Thursday Bible Study

This takes place in the meeting room at the Prish Church, 7pm. Refreshments 8pm. Compline 8.30pm. We will have a break in August.

### The Backdoor Porch

Some thought is being given to putting a door and window enclosure at the backdoor to make a storage area. We have been shocked to get an estimate for the work of £2,200.00, which we thought was too much. We will have to do the work ourselves I think but the cost of materials will be considerable, so any donations will be much appreciated.

September Thursday Evening Introductory Talks on Orthodoxy in place of Bible Study: details later.

### YOUTUBE & TIKTOK

Thanks to John the Sunday sermon gets several hundred listeners and we now do a short talk on Tuesday and Thursday on the Readings from the Fathers and this too, gets several hundred listeners. Praise God for modern technology: I never thought I would say this!!

A BLESSING TO ALL OUR READERS.

**Father Stephen - Telephone No: 01692 581849.**

## THE CHURCH

### AN EARTHLY HEAVEN

The church is the temple of God, a sacred precinct, a house of prayer, the assembly of the people, the body of Christ. Its name is the bride of Christ. It has been cleansed by the water of His baptism, sprinkled by His blood and adorned in bridal array, and sealed with the ointment of the Holy Spirit... The church is an earthly heaven, in which the God beyond the heavens dwells and walks about.

It represents the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Christ: it is glorified more than Moses' tabernacle of witness, in which were the mercy seat and the Holy of Holies. It is prefigured in the patriarchs, foretold in the prophets, founded in the apostles, adorned by hierarchs and fulfilled in martyrs.

## Other Feasts

On each day of the year the Orthodox Church commemorates certain saints or sacred events in its history. In addition to the twelve major feast days mentioned above, the entire Orthodox Church celebrates a number of other days with special liturgical and spiritual solemnity.

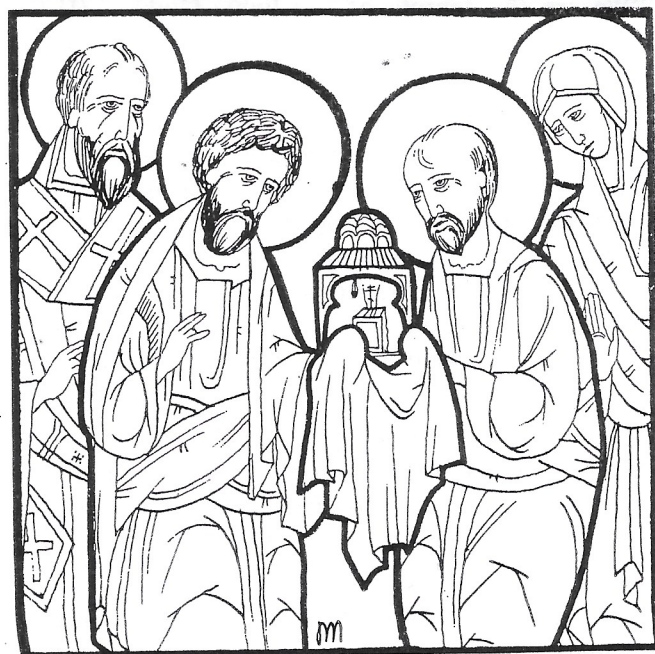
First among the feasts universally celebrated by all the Orthodox are those of **Saint John the Baptist** of whom Christ has said that "among those born of women there has arisen none greater." (Matthew 11: 11; Luke 7:28) The feasts of the apostles are also celebrated in all the churches, particularly the feast of **Saints Peter and Paul** which is preceded by a prescribed fasting period. Certain other saints are especially venerated throughout the world as well, such as **Saints Nicholas and George, the Prophet Elias** and the **Archangel Michael**, together with the hierarchs, **Saints Basil the Great, John Chrysostom** and **Gregory the Theologian**.

Each local church also has its own particularly holy days. In the Greek Church **Saints Spiridon, Demetrios, Nektarios** and others are highly venerated, just as **Saints Sergius, Seraphim, Tikhon** and **Vladimir** are in the Russian Church; **Saint Sava** in the Serbian Church; and **Saint Herman** in the American Church.

In addition to those special festal days of the particular national churches, there exists also the practice for certain cities, towns and monasteries to have liturgical celebrations of holy persons or events proper to their own particular interests and desires. Thus there exist certain saints, for example, which are celebrated with great solemnity in just a very few places in the Church, perhaps even in just one particular place where they have a special importance for the faithful.

It is necessary to note that in the Orthodox Church the liturgical feasts are not "institutions" which are

legislated by some ecclesiastical authority apart from the interest and consent of the people. The feasts of the Church, and even the **canonization of saints**, always follows from the living devotion of the Christian people. If there were no popular interest and veneration of a certain holy person, there would be no official canonization and no liturgical festival established in his or her honor. Once a person is recognized as a saint, however, and it is agreed that God himself is presenting this person as a living witness to himself and his Kingdom, then the Church hierarchy will set the day of the feast and will compose the proper liturgical service and hymns to be used in the celebration. The frequency and fervor of the celebration will then depend solely upon the will of the people, and once established the feast could only disappear organically, in a way similar to its appearance. It would not, and indeed it really could not be "disestablished" by the decree of any church authority.



# Church Building

In the long history of the Orthodox Church a definite style of church architecture has developed. This style is characterized by the attempt to reveal the fundamental experience of Orthodox Christianity: God is with us.

The fact that Christ the Immanuel (which translated means "God with us") has come, determines the form of the Orthodox church building. God is with man in Christ through the Holy Spirit. The dwelling place of God is with man. "The Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands," says St. Stephen quoting the Old Testament prophets. St. Paul says that men are the temples of God:

Christ Jesus himself (is) the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:21-22)

The words of St. Peter are very much the same.

Come to him (Christ), to that living stone...and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house...to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (I Peter 2:4-5)

"We are the temple of the living God..." (II Corinthians 6:16). And it is exactly this conviction and experience that Orthodox Church architecture wishes to convey.

Orthodox Church architecture reveals that God is with men, dwelling in them and living in them through Christ and the Spirit. It does so by using the dome or the vaulted ceiling to crown the Christian church building, the house of the Church which is the People of God. Unlike the pointed arches which point to God far up in the heavens, the dome or the spacious, all-embracing ceiling gives the impression that in the Kingdom of God, and in the Church, Christ "unites all things in himself, things in heaven and things on earth," (Ephesians 1:10) and that in Him we are all "filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:19)

The interior of the Orthodox Church building is particularly styled to give the experience of the unity of all things in God. It is not constructed to reproduce the upper room of the Last Supper, nor to be simply a meeting hall for men whose life exists solely within the bounds of this earth. The church building is patterned after the image of God's Kingdom in the Book of Revelation. Before us is the altar table on which Christ is enthroned, both as the Word of God in the Gospels and as the Lamb of God in the eucharistic sacrifice. Around the table are the angels and saints, the servants of the Word and the Lamb who glorify him—and through him, God the Father—in the per-



petual adoration inspired by the Holy Spirit. The faithful Christians on earth who already belong to that holy assembly—"...fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God..." (Ephesians 2:19)—enter into the eternal worship of God's Kingdom in the Church. Thus, in Orthodox practice the vestibule symbolizes this world. The nave is the place of the Church understood as the assembly and people of God. The altar area, called the sanctuary or the holy place, stands for the Kingdom of God.

## The ordination of a Reader or a Chanter

On the day of the ordination, following the Great Doxology, but before the Troparion before the Divine Liturgy, the candidate is led to the center of the solea in front of the Bishop. He makes three (3) prostrations toward the Holy Altar. Then, he turns and makes one (1) prostration toward the Bishop. The Bishop takes the cassock, blesses it and, puts the cassock on the new candidate. The new candidate kneels, before the Bishop. The Bishop blesses him three times, in crosswise form, and he says in each time:

**In the name of the father and the son and the holy spirit. Amen. (3 times).**

The bishop lays his hand on the candidate head.

**Deacon: let us pray to the lord.**

**People: lord, have mercy.**

**Bishop:**

**O Lord God Almighty, elect this thy servant (these Thy servants), and sanctify him (them); and enable him (them), with all wisdom and understanding, to exercise the study and reading of thy divine words, preserving him (them) in blamelessness of life.**

**Through the mercy and love towards mankind of Thine only-begotten Son, with whom thou art blessed, together with thine all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.**

**People: amen.**

The new candidate stands and kisses the Bishop's right hand. The Bishop presents the new Reader the Epistle Book. The new Reader faces the people and reads the randomly-selected passage. At the conclusion of the reading. The Bishop blesses the new Candidate.

The new candidate takes his place among the Readers. The Troparion before the Divine Liturgy begins.

July 25

Feast of the Dormition of Holy Ann,  
the Mother of the Theotokos

(GREAT) VESPERS

∞ At "O Lord, to You I call..."

FOR ANN

(Tone 1)

6. O faithful, celebrating the memory of the holy and wondrous ancestors of the Lord, Joachim and Ann, with sacred hymns we glorify the compassionate One who has made them fervent intercessors for our salvation.
5. Today, the previously barren and childless one, who gave birth to the first-fruits of our salvation, is transferred from this life to the next. She entreats the Lord to grant remission of sins to those who sing to her with faith.
4. Celebrating the memory of Your just ancestors, O Christ, we sing to You, for today You transferred Ann from this temporal life to the everlasting life in the presence of God. She is the mother who bore the divine and ever-virgin Mother who wondrously gave birth to You without seed.
3. Behold, the radiant solemnity, a feastday for the whole world, the holy and glorious dormition of Ann, the wondrous mother who gave birth to the Mother of Life, the living Ark who contained the uncontainable Word. She delivered us from suffering, bringing us never-ending joy, and grants great mercy to all the faithful.
2. O marvelous wonder! The woman who gloriously gave birth to the Virgin who alone is blessed among women, the source of our Life, passes from this temporal life to the never-ending life. Today, the glorious Ann is lifted up from earth to heaven to exult together with the choirs of Angels; and today we celebrate her sacred feast.
1. Today, in the fervor of the Holy Spirit, all we the faithful celebrate the glorious feast of your holy dormition: behold, you are still with us, granting the grace of healing, consuming all evil spirits around us, and enlightening the hearts of the faithful who sing of your venerable passing. O holy Ann

From a sermon by Saint John Damascene, bishop

(Orat. 6, in Nativitatem B. Mariae V., 2. 4. 5. 6: PG 96, 663. 667. 670)

BY THEIR FRUITS YOU WILL KNOW THEM

Ann was to be the mother of the Virgin Mother of God, and hence nature did not dare to anticipate the flowering of grace. Thus nature remained sterile, until grace produced its fruit. For she who was to be born had to be a first-born daughter, since she would be the mother of the first-born of all creation, *in whom all things are held together.*

Joachim and Ann, how blessed a couple! All creation is indebted to you. For at your hands the Creator was offered a gift excelling all other gifts: a chaste mother, who alone was worthy of him.

And so rejoice, Ann, that *you were sterile and have not borne children; break forth into shouts, you who have not given birth.* Rejoice, Joachim, because from your daughter *a child is born for us, a son is given us, whose name is Messenger of great counsel and universal salvation, mighty God.* For this child is God.

Joachim and Ann, how blessed and spotless a couple! You will be known by the fruit you have borne, as the Lord says: *By their fruits you will know them.* The conduct of your life pleased God and was worthy of your daughter. For by the chaste and holy life you led together, you have fashioned a jewel of virginity: she who remained a virgin before, during and after giving birth. She alone for all time would maintain her virginity in mind and soul as well as in body.

Joachim and Ann, how chaste a couple! While safeguarding the chastity prescribed by the law of nature, you achieved with God's help something which transcends nature in giving the world the Virgin Mother of God as your daughter. While leading a devout and holy life in your human nature, you gave birth to a daughter nobler than the angels, whose queen she now is. Girl of utter beauty and delight, daughter of Adam and mother of God, blessed the loins and blessed the womb from which you come! Blessed the arms that carried you, and blessed your parents' lips, which you were allowed to cover with chaste kisses, ever maintaining your virginity. *Rejoice in God, all the earth. Sing, exult and sing hymns.* Raise your voice, raise it and be not afraid.