

ST. FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY,
 ST. FURSEY'S HOUSE, 111 NEVILLE ROAD
 SUTTON, NORWICH. NR12 9RR.
 Tel. 01692 580552.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMME
 SEPTEMBER 2016.



SEPTEMBER 8

The Nativity of our Most Holy Lady,
 the Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary
Dismissal Hymn. Fourth Tone

THY nativity, O Theotokos, hath proclaimed
 joy to the whole world; for from thee hath
 dawned the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our
 God, annulling the curse; and bestowing the
 blessing, abolishing death and granting us life
 everlasting.

Kontakion. Fourth Tone

JOACHIM and Anna were freed from the re-
 proach of childlessness; and Adam and Eve
 from the corruption of death. O immaculate
 one, by thy holy nativity, which thy people,
 redeemed from the guilt of offences, celebrate
 by crying to thee: The barren woman giveth
 birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our
 life.

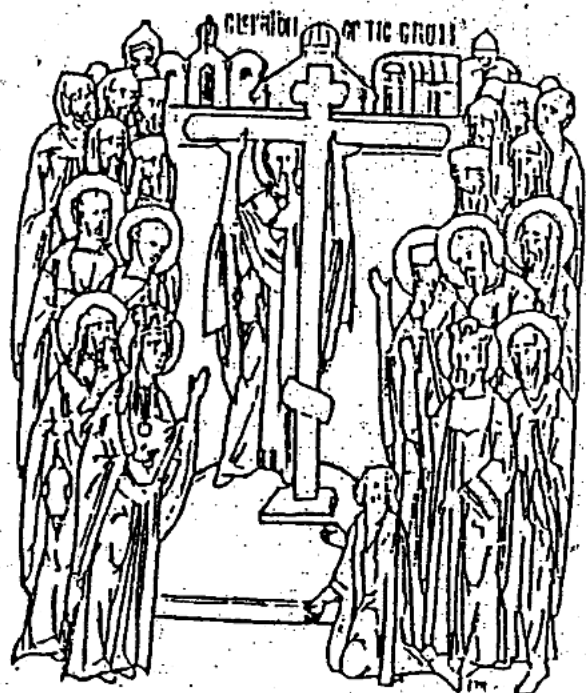
SEPTEMBER 14

The Exaltation of the Precious
 and Life-giving Cross
Dismissal Hymn. First Tone

SAVE, O Lord, Thy people, and bless Thine
 inheritance; grant Thou unto the faithful
 victory over adversaries. And by the power of
 Thy Cross do Thou preserve Thy common-
 wealth.

Kontakion. Fourth Tone

THOU Who wast lifted up willingly on
 the Cross, bestow Thy mercies upon the
 new Nation called after Thee, Christ God; glad-
 den with Thy power our faithful hierarchs,
 granting them victory over all heresy. May
 they have as Thy help in war the Weapon of
 peace, the invincible Trophy.



BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS
COMMEMORATED IN
SEPTEMBER.

- 01 Drithelm of Melrose, Monk
02 Hieu, Abbess of Tadcaster
03 Balin, Monk
Hereswith of Chelles Widow
06 Bega, Anchoress
Felix and Augebert, Martyrs*
07 Almund and Tilbert, Bishops of Hexham
08 Ethelburgh, Abbess of Lyninge
Ina and Ethelburgh, King and Queen of Wessex
09 Bettelin of Crowland, Hermit
Wulfhild, Abbess of Barking
10 Frithestan, Bishop of Winchester
Otger, Missionary
13 Wilfrida, Abbess of Wilton
16 Edith of Wilton, Virgin
17 Socrates and Stephen, Martyrs in Britain*
19 Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury
23 Cissa of Crowland, Hermit
25 Ceolfriht (Geoffrey), Abbot of Wearmouth
Egelred of Crowland, Martyr
28 Lioba, Abbess and Missionary
Tetta, Abbess of Wimborne
30 Honorius, Archbishop of Canterbury
Tancred, Tortured and Tova, Hermits and Martyrs

TROPARION OF ST. FURSEY

tone five

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 Furse. / Wherefore pray to God
for us / that we may all be bastions of Faith /
standing firm against the rising tide of falsehood /
that our souls may be saved. //



SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER.

THUR. SEPT. 1st. CHURCH NEW YEAR. Day of Prayer for the Environment.
3rd. Hour and Reading from the Fathers 9am. Vespers 4pm.

FRI. SEPT. 2nd. VESPERS 4PM (St. Phoebe, Deaconess of Kenchreai, Corinth c60)

SAT. SEPT. 3rd. Blessing of William and Craig as Catechumens. 9.30am.

DIVINE LITURGY 10AM (Holy Prophet and God-seer Moses)

SUN. SEPT. 4th. VESPERS 4PM (Prophet Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth parents of St John the Baptist.)

WED. SEPT. 7th. FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

VESPERS 4PM

THUR. SEPT. 8th. NATIVITY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER VIRGIN MARY. TYPIKA 9AM VESPERS 4PM (Main celebration on Sunday)

SAT. SEPT. 10th. AFTER FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

VESPERS 4PM

SUN. SEPT. 11th. 12th. SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; AFTERFEAST OF THE NATIVITY,
DIVINE LITURGY 10AM VESPERS 4PM,

TUES. SEPT. 13th. FOREFEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS AND THE
COMMEMORATION OF THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH OF THE
HOLY SEPULCHRE IN JERUSALEM 335, VESPERS 4PM

WED. SEPT. 14th. EXALTATION OF THE CROSS. TYPIKA 9AM VESPERS 4PM
(Main celebration on Sunday)

SAT. SEPT. 17th. AFTER FEAST OF THE HOLY CROSS. VESPERS 4PM.

SUN. SEPT. 18th. 13th. SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; AFTERFEAST OF THE HOLY CROSS.
DIVINE LITURGY 10AM VESPERS 4PM.

SAT. SEPT. 24th. HOLY MATRIMONY 2.30PM (David and Alice-Photini)

SUN. SEPT. 25th. 14th. SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. (St. Ceolfrid Abbot of Jarrow 716)
DIVINE LITURGY 10AM. VESPERS 4PM (For St. John the Theologian)

FRI. SEPT. 30th. Metropolitan Silouan our Bishop will be coming today Vespers may be at the site
of St Fursey's monastery at Burgh Castle or later at St Furseys House.

SAT. OCT. 1st. EIGHTEENTH DEDICATION FESTIVAL; DIVINE LITURGY 10AM
Metropolitan Silouan will celebrate the Divine Liturgy; this will be the first time our
Diocesan Bishop has visited us and we are delighted that he is coming one of the
smaller parishes in the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of Britain and
Ireland.

DAILY SERVICES IN ST. FURSEY'S CHAPEL.

These are normally 3rd. Hour with a reading from the early church Fathers 9am. 6th. Hour 12noon this
may vary according to pressure of work. Vespers 4pm Compline 9pm when visitors are in residence
on retreat. Local readers are very welcome to come; several do but please check by ringing 580552
just in case I have been called away as sometimes happens.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND NOTICES.

MONDAY BIBLE STUDY

This resumes on Monday September 5th. After our summer break; It takes place in the library at St Fursey's House at 2.30pm Breat for tea and cake 3.30pm Vespers 4pm we finish about 4.30pm We will continue with our study of St. Johns Gospel using the Orthodox Study Bible as our guide. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO COME AND JOIN US.

NORWICH MARKET STALL.

This will be on Wednesday September 7th from 9am to 4pm. And is opposite PRIMARK. Do come and visit us if you can. It is a very important part of our missionary outreach and is important as a Christian witness in Norwich. We observed a decline in the market last year which affected us too but this year there has been an improvement ; Praise God.

SUMMER PILGRIMAGE REPORT.

Our pilgrimage to St Walstans Bawburgh took place on Monday July 18th. As planned; although numbers were small; only 7 and none from the parish it was a lovely warm sunny day and a very happy occasion. On arrival we had a look round the church and had the our Mid-day service after which we had our picnics In the talk we thought about St Fursey as the first Orthodox saint of Norfolk and St Walstan as the last Orthodox Saint dying in 1016. We hope to have our pilgrimage to the site of his mothers shrine at Martham next year. and we will hope to have it on a Saturday so that more people can come.

OUR FIRST WEDDING SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 24TH.

We look forward to this event very much indeed ; David and Alice-Photini were received into the Orthodox Church by Chrismation in May. Metropolitan Silouan has given his blessing for this to happen; they were married in a Registry Office several years ago. They tell us how they came to the Orthodox Church elsewhere in this Newsletter.

OUR NEW CATECHUMENS.

Our new Catechumens William and Craig are young men from Norwich William visited us several times on the market stall and Craig is his friend ; it is a great joy to have them in our Community; Sometimes William brings his little girl Eloise to the Liturgy she is only 4 years old and is a delightful child and she is a credit to William and Laura,

OUR HOPED FOR CHURCH IN STALHAM

As it is August not much is happening but I hope to be able to tell you something next month so keep hoping and praying.

THE TWO GREAT FEASTS OF SEPTEMBER.

The Feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God on September 8th. And the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14th. are very important to Orthodox Christians; these celebrations are a part of our Christian story and must not be forgotten. In larger parishes in towns it is usual to have the Liturgy on the day even when it falls in the week . As our faithful congregation is very scattered and travel long distances to get to the Liturgy it was felt that it would be best to have the Typika on the actual day for the more local parishiners and the main celebration on the following Sunday. We are not the only parish to do this. GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

Elevation of the Cross

The Elevation of the Cross, celebrated on the fourteenth of September, commemorates the finding of Christ's Cross by Saint Helen, the mother of the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century; and, after it was taken by the Persians, of its recovery by the Emperor Heraclius in the seventh century at which time it was "elevated" in the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem. From this latter event the "universal elevation" of the Cross was celebrated annually in all of the churches of the Christian Empire.

The day of the Elevation of the Cross became, as it were, the national holiday of the Eastern Christian Empire similar to the Fourth of July in the United States. The Cross, the official emblem of the Empire which was placed on all public buildings and uniforms, was officially elevated on this day by the bishops and priests. They blessed the four directions of the universe with the Cross, while the faithful repeated the chanting of "Lord have mercy." This ritual is still done in the churches today after the solemn presentation and elevation of the Cross at the end of the Vigil service of the holy day following the Great Doxology of Matins.

The troparion of the feast which was, one might say, the "national anthem" sung on all public occasions in the Christian Empires of Byzantium and Russia, originally petitioned God to save the people, to grant victory in war and to preserve the empire "by the virtue of the Cross." Today the troparion, and all the hymns of the day, are "spiritualized" as the "adversaries" become the spiritually wicked and sinful, including the devil and his armies, and "Orthodox Christians" replace the names of ruling officials of the Empire.

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by the virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation. (Troparion)

As Thou was mercifully crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Thy name; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace. (Kontakion)

The holy day of the Elevation of the Cross, although it has an obviously "political" origin, has a place of great significance in the Church today. It remains with us as a day of fasting and prayer, a day when we recall that the Cross is the only sign worthy of our total allegiance, and that our salvation comes not by "victories" of any earthly sort but by the only true and lasting victory of the crucifixion of Christ and our co-crucifixion with him.

When we elevate the Cross and bow down before it in veneration and worship to God, we proclaim that we belong to the Kingdom "not of this world", and that our only true and enduring citizenship is with the saints in the "city of God." (Ephesians 2:19; Hebrews 11:10; Revelation 21-22)

The first Old Testament reading of the Vespers of the day tells of the "tree" which changes the bitter waters into sweetness—the symbol of the Tree of the Cross. (Exodus 15:22 - 16:1) The second reading reminds us that the Lord chastens and corrects those whom he loves and that Divine Wisdom is "a Tree of life to those who lay hold upon her and trust in her, as in the Lord." (Proverbs 3:11-18) Again the reference is to the Cross which is, as the epistle reading of the day proclaims, "to those who are called. . . the power of God and the wisdom of God." (I Corinthians 18-25)

The third Old Testament reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah which tells of the "city of the Lord" where both Jews and Gentiles will live together and "shall bow themselves down" at the place of God's feet and "shall know that I the Lord am Thy Saviour and Thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Israel." (Isaiah 60:11-16) Here we have the direct reference to God's city where men shall worship at his feet; and together with the psalm line repeated constantly during the services which calls us to "bow before his footstool," we have once again the reference to the Holy Cross. (Psalm 99:5, 110:1, et. al.)

Before the Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy resurrection, we glorify.
(Hymn of Veneration before the Cross)

This central hymn of the Elevation of the Cross which lasts for eight days in the Church is sung many times. It replaces the Thrice-Holy of the Divine Liturgy. The normal antiphons are also replaced by special verses from the psalms which have direct reference to Christ's crucifixion on the Cross. (Psalms 22, 74, 99) At the Matins, in the gospel reading from St. John, Christ says that when he is elevated on the Cross he will draw all men to himself. (John 12:28-36) The long gospel reading at the Divine Liturgy is the passion account from this same gospel.

Thus, at the Elevation of the Cross the Christians make their official rededication to the crucified Lord and pledge their undivided allegiance to him by the adoration of his holy feet nailed to the life-creating Cross. This is the meaning of this holy day of fasting and repentance in the Church today.

OFSJB CONFERENCE 1-3 JULY SWANWICK

BEING AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN IN A MULTI-RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Friday 1st July saw me driving to Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick for the Pan Orthodox conference of the Orthodox Fellowship of St John the Baptist. With me on the journey from St Fursey's Orthodox study centre in Norfolk were my wife Alice and a friend and church member Sue. There was a good deal of excitement as Alice and I had just been Chrismated on May 22nd. We were looking forward to the conference and meeting fellow Orthodox Christians from other regions and churches.

However, to get a picture and feel of my reflections I shall need to go back 12 months, to my attendance at the OFSJB conference 2015 in Walsingham, Norfolk. I attended this conference in a much different manner and with a different degree of interest. At that time, I was still Rector of a group of churches in the Norwich Diocese and had met Fr Stephen Weston a little while earlier. As I had a long standing interest in Orthodox faith, Fr Stephen suggested for me to attend the conference and see what I thought. It was a strange time as I was also a priest associate of the Walsingham shrine and frequently attended meetings there. When I was there, and as I went about, many people who knew me spoke to me and wondered what I was doing and what my involvement was. This same question was to be my constant companion throughout the conference. My reflections were on this group of people and the priests in long robes and sometimes longer beards. It was a very surreal event which both separated me from the whole yet thrust me forward to reflect on what the whole could mean and its implications for me. As I left the conference in 2015 I was both uplifted by the fellowship and worship and also one of sadness watching, as it were, from the wings.

Arriving at Swanwick had brought a flood of very different emotions. Here I was attending the conference as a member of the Holy Orthodox Church, a part of the group and looking forward to participating as fully as I could.

Registration and tea was a good time to meet people. It was uplifting to find that people were interested and overjoyed to hear of my Chrismation. Many times the words: 'welcome home' were uttered, and each time I felt a pang of joy.

The conference programme was inspiring and promised a depth and quality of study that increased my expectations. My expectations were not disappointed once HG Bishop Angaelos spoke, the content of which is available elsewhere, his words, wisdom and understanding went straight to my heart. The focus on love and respect of others within a faith that was sure of its history and confident of its foundations was something that I had not found in my past life experience. It was affirming and was to be the norm for the conference.

Speaker after speaker shared their knowledge and understanding and each in turn brought a love of God and his creation to the participants that at times it felt overwhelming.

It was just as well that we had plenty of opportunity to share time together over coffee and cake. I met and spoke with lots of people both then and while looking after the Icon and book stall of St Furseys. Here, too, was a great deal of interest in both Icons and books and I learned quite a lot from these discussions.

Saturday saw morning prayer with daily readings followed by a memorial service for the dead. Sharing worship with so many Orthodox Christians was a wonderful thing. The singing was awesome and the solemnity and sacredness of the worship really touched me in a way that I hadn't felt often before.

The morning was filled with a talk on learning and teaching the faith through encounters with other faiths by Fr Philip. It was very enlightening and unlike other such meetings I attended in my past Christian life, there was no embarrassment at being a Christian, no apology and no fear of upsetting others. There was no need for this because all spoke from their faith and with the utmost respect for others in their journey through life. After the talk, people gathered in their small groups and the conversations and discussions continued until we had to reassemble.

The afternoon sessions saw a talk from Dr Mangala Frost. Being Hindu becoming orthodox, a riveting talk allowing a view of someone coming from a non Christian background to Orthodoxy. It was inspiring and humbling at the same time and showed how the Holy Orthodox Church was appealing to people of different backgrounds, faiths and cultures.

After further group meetings we all gathered for a feedback from the groups chaired by Metropolitan Kallistos. This was a moving time for me, because like many, my first contact with Orthodoxy in 1977 was through the writings of Metropolitan Kallistos and I have held them dear ever since.

I retired Saturday night with a head spinning from all I had heard and learned through the day comforted by the friendship and good wishes of the people I had met, looking forward to the Divine Liturgy led by Archbishop Gregorios the following morning.

Divine Liturgy was moving and I concurred with my wife who said she had ceased to be on earth and had glimpsed heaven. I had not realised how beautiful, how sacramental and how the liturgy draws one from a Christian life to a life in Christ. The Archbishop was assisted by his clergy, deacons and sub deacons allowing me to participate in a sacramental act of worship that I shall remember for a very long time to come.

Sadly, so engrossing was the conference that we began to run short of time. After very informative talks by Marina Robb and Bede Gerrard, hopefully we can hear more at a later date, it was time for lunch and departure.

This conference stood out for me in many ways, but ultimately and most importantly as I packed up to leave, I reflected upon the holiness, religious integrity of the clergy, the devotion from the people and the care and nurture from a church that I am pleased to be a member of. Indeed, I have returned home and feel at home.

David Boddy.

David Boddy: Former parish priest within the Church of England, resigned in 2016 and took early retirement. Chrismated into the Antiochian Orthodox Church with his wife Alice in 2016. They now live in Suffolk with a variety of pets and attend the church of St Fursey in Norfolk.

Nativity of the Theotokos

In addition to the celebration of the Annunciation, there are three major feasts in the Church honoring Mary, the Theotokos. The first of these is the feast of her nativity which is kept on the eighth of September.

The record of the birth of Mary is not found in the Bible. The traditional account of the event is taken from the apocryphal writings which are not part of the New Testament scriptures. The traditional teaching which is celebrated in the hymns and verses of the festal liturgy is that Joachim and Anna were a pious Jewish couple who were among the small and faithful remnant—"the poor and the needy"—who were awaiting the promised messiah. The couple was old and childless. They prayed earnestly to the Lord for a child, since among the Jews barrenness was a sign of God's disfavor. In answer to their prayers, and as the reward of their unwavering fidelity to God, the elderly couple was blessed with the child who was destined, because of her own personal goodness and holiness, to become the Mother of the Messiah-Christ.

Your nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe. The Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from you, O Theotokos. By annulling the curse he bestowed a blessing. By destroying death he has granted us eternal life. (Troparion)

By your nativity, O most pure virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness; Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. And we, your people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to you: The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our Life. (Kontakion)

The fact that there is no Biblical verification of the facts of Mary's birth is incidental to the meaning of the feast. Even if the actual background of the event as celebrated in the Church is questionable from an historical point of view, the divine meaning of it "for us men and for our salvation" is obvious. There had to be one born of human flesh and blood who would be spiritually capable of being the Mother of Christ, and she herself had to be born into the world of persons who were spiritually capable of being her parents.

The feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, therefore, is a glorification of Mary's birth, of Mary herself and of her righteous parents. It is a celebration as well of the very first preparation of the salvation of the world. For the "Vessel of Light," the "Book of the Word of Life," the "Door to the Orient," the "Throne of Wisdom" is being prepared on earth by God himself in the birth of the holy girl-child Mary.



The verses of the feast are filled with titles for Mary such as those in the quotations above. They are inspired by the message of the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments. The specific Biblical readings of the feast give indications of this.

At the Vespers the three Old Testament readings are "mariological" in their New Testament interpretation. Thus, Jacob's Ladder which unites heaven and earth and the place which is named "the house of God" and the "gate of heaven" (Genesis 28:10-17) are taken to indicate the union of God with men which is realized most fully and perfectly—both spiritually and physically—in Mary the Theotokos, Bearer of God. So also the vision of the temple with the "door to the East" perpetually closed and filled with the "glory of the Lord" symbolizes Mary, called in the hymns of the feast "the living temple of God filled with the divine Glory." (Ezekiel 43:27 - 44:4) Mary is also identified with the "house" which the Divine Wisdom has built for himself according to the reading from Proverbs 9:1-11.

The Gospel reading of Matins is the one read at all feasts of the Theotokos, the famous Magnificat from St. Luke in which Mary says: "My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden, for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. (Luke 1:47)

The epistle reading of the Divine Liturgy is the famous passage about the coming of the Son of God in "the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of man" (Philippians 2:5-11) and the gospel reading is that which is always read for feasts of the Theotokos: The woman in the crowd glorifies the Mother of Jesus, and the Lord himself responds that the same blessedness which his mother receives is for all "who hear the word of God and keep it." (Luke 11:27-28)

Thus, on the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, as on all liturgical celebrations of Christ's Mother, we proclaim and celebrate that through God's graciousness to mankind every Christian receives what the Theotokos receives, the "great mercy" which is given to human persons because of Christ's birth from the Virgin.

THE BIRTH OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY

Aposticha:

TONE FOUR

(by Patriarch Germanos)

The Joy of all the world has shone forth upon us, the far-famed Virgin sprung from righteous Joachim and Ann. On account of her exceeding goodness she is become the living Temple of God, and is in truth acknowledged as the only Theotokos. At her prayers, O Christ our God, send down peace upon the world and on our souls great mercy.

ψ. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear (Psalm 44: 11).

As foretold by the angel, today hast thou come forth, O Virgin, the all-holy offspring of righteous Joachim and Ann. Thou art a heaven and the throne of God, and a vessel of purity, proclaiming joy to all the world, O Protector of our life. Thou dost destroy the curse and givest blessing in its place. Therefore on this feast of thy birth, O Maiden called by God, intercede that our souls be given peace and great mercy.

ψ. Even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour (*ibid.*, 13).

Today let Ann, barren and childless, clap her hands with joy. Let things on earth put on their bright array; let kings dance and priests make glad in hymns of blessing; let the whole world keep feast. For lo, the Queen and spotless Bride of the Father has blossomed from the root of Jesse. No more shall women bear children in sorrow: for joy has put forth its flower, and the Life of men has come to dwell in the world. No more are the gifts of Joachim turned away: for the lament of Ann is changed to joy. 'Let all the chosen Israel rejoice with me', she says: 'for behold, the Lord has given me the living Pavilion of His divine glory, unto the joy and gladness of us all and the salvation of our souls'.

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

MY JOURNEY TO ST. FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

I was born and brought up in Hong Kong with Chinese parents who were not members of any church. As the youngest of four children, I was first introduced to the ways of Christians as I queued up with my older siblings for a paste egg on Easter Day at the local Christian Church School at the age of three. I remember attending their annual Nativity Plays for a number of years, always wishing that I could be selected to take part as one of the angels. It was not until I entered a Roman Catholic Convent Senior School that I came to learn about the person of Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour of the world. I took Biblical Studies as a subject and also got Baptised as a Roman Catholic at the age of 17. I knew little about other Christian faiths until I came to UK to begin my Psychiatric Nurse training at the age of 18. At the marriage into a Church of England family at the age of 26 and when I became pregnant with my first child at 29, I approached the Bishop and was welcomed into the Church of England at one of their Confirmation Services. This change was my choice as I felt that it was very important to worship together as one family in the same church, knowing really very little about the Church of England at the time. Following divorce in the early nineties, I busied myself with raising two daughters as a single parent, and thankful for the love and support of the church family. I remained very inquisitive with regard to the many branches of Christian Churches, always seeking answers through reading of the Bible and other books. It was at one of my queries about the church and faith to the vicar that he proposed for me to be trained as a Reader (lay minister). Whilst the three years course did provide me with some grounding towards Christian faith from the perspective of Anglicanism, I still felt there was something amiss in its worship and liturgy.

It was around then that I first came across Orthodoxy, at a talk given by a Franciscan priest at a mission weekend that I attended. He explained the making and the use of icons, using Rublev's Holy Trinity Icon as illustration and taught us the Jesus Prayer. I found his talk most enlightening, raising for me a lot of curiosities on the different forms of worship and traditions. At my first opportunity, I got hold of an icon of the Holy Trinity for my bedside cabinet and it has been a focus for my prayer time ever since. A visit to the Holy Land in the mid-nineties marked the next stage of my faith journey, following which I found myself becoming more and more interested on the practice of Orthodoxy, whilst remaining rather thin with my understanding. As a licensed Reader in the Church of England, I had a number of opportunities over the years to share my knowledge of icons with fellow church members, including those belonging to the Deaf Church that I attended with my husband who was their chaplain, where the ability of using different senses had helped a great deal with their worship.

As I was beginning to learn and discover more about orthodoxy, I could feel the gap within my spiritual life widening where I often felt lost. I felt rather stuck as a vicar's wife and a Reader in the Church of England. In August of 2015, my faith journey took an abrupt turn at the early retirement of my husband from his priest ministry when we jointly agreed that it was time to accept a change of direction and move towards the Antioch Orthodox Community Church of St. Fursey's in Sutton, near Norwich which was realised on 22nd May 2016 at our Christmation.

Photini Boddy (Alice Kwok Lai Cheung)

FROM ROME TO ANTIOCH

I was born in 1957, the youngest of three children, to a family firmly committed to the authority and rights of Roman Catholicism, hence my life was one of being taught by nuns and Fr was always on the horizon, always to be obeyed. Holy Communion was received at the age of 7 and Confirmation at 12. In between these times there was an ever present attendances at Mass, both Sundays and midweek and reading my small Roman missal in preparation for duties as a altar boy. I am looking at it now as I write this piece, which was bought in 1965, a constant companion and of course being bought in 1965 it is largely in Latin. Alas things were not to work out, due in part to my inquisitive nature, which was brought to a head at the tender age of 14 when I asked Fr where I could buy a bible and receiving the reply, 'you don't need one just do as I say'. I knew from that moment that my journey would inevitably lead me away from Rome

As the years passed by my reading grew and in 1977, I came across a book 'Writings from the Philokalia on prayer of the heart', and after years of studying other faiths and religions, it spoke to me of a truth and a method of prayer that was second to none, just a shame I thought, I am not of the Orthodox faith, but still a desire grew within me. I started to find the odd book on orthodoxy, 'The way of a pilgrim', 'The pilgrim continues his way', and I found books by Timothy Ware which all helped to feed me and nurture my Christian conviction. A conviction noticed by my parish priest, by now I was attending a church of England church, who advised me to seek discernment for ordination. To everyone's surprise, especially mine, 10 months later, 1990, I entered Lincoln Theological college to train for ordination as a priest and in 1992 was ordained as a deacon and raised to the priesthood a year later. On the face of it all seemed to be going along as God and the Bishop intended, however, I was constantly dogged by the feeling that there must be more than this. Something just didn't feel quite right. In 1995 I was having a meeting with Bishop Jack of Sheffield and we were talking about spiritual development and awareness and my difficulty finding a Spiritual Father who could appropriately lead me. This conversation led to Bishop Jack putting me in touch with Andrew Louth in Durham, sadly the hope for meeting never happened and my ministry in the church of England continued quite brightly with many successes as the world sees them. During this time I had developed my prayer life and was saying the Jesus Prayer and reading the Philokalia which had grown to 2 books, prayer of the heart and early fathers, both of which engaged me intensely but always seemingly to be just out of my reach.

Alice and I after spending 10 years in a parish in Durham was offered a move to a church in Somerleyton and after a little discussion we accepted the post and moved into Somerleyton in August 2013. All seemed set for a quiet descent into retirement, however as the saying goes, God laughs when people make plans and God must have been in hysterics because no sooner was I installed when my path crossed with Fr Stephen and a light seemed to be turned on, the puzzle was complete and I suspected life was going to be a little different.

After months of talking with Fr Stephen and much discussion with family and friends I was no further forward with how my future should develop and so in August 2015 I was sitting before the iconostasis looking at the Theotokos and I said, 'I'm giving up, you want me you sort it', a very harsh and arrogant thing to do. Afterwards I didn't know what happened, my world came crashing around me. Things that had been so right a week before were now in rubble around my feet and to such an extent that I could do no other than resign from the Church of England. So here I am completing a journey that began in 1977 a little older and a lot wiser knowing to be careful what you ask Theotokos for she may answer. I am also sure about the future, more sure than I have ever been that I am in the right place.

David Boddy July 2016

SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

ALCMUND (1) (Ealhmund), seventh bishop of Hexham, ruled 767-81. He was buried beside *Acca outside the church; during the Danish invasions all trace of his grave was lost, but in 1032, following a supposed revelation, his relics were found and reburied inside the church. In 1154 the relics of all the saints of Hexham were collected into a single shrine; in 1296 they were scattered by the Scots. The date of Alcmund's death was 7 September, but no trace of a feast apart from the general one of the saints of Hexham has been found.

ETHELBURGA (1) (Ædilburh) (d. 675), abbess of Barking. Of a wealthy (possibly royal) family and sister of *Erkenwald, Ethelburga was quite likely the owner, as well as the ruler, of Barking. A late tradition says that Erkenwald invited *Hildelith from Chelles to be prioress and future abbess of Barking: her difficult task was to teach Ethelburga monastic traditions while retaining a subordinate role.

*Bede devoted several chapters to marvellous events just before Ethelburga's death, such as the death of a three-year-old boy after calling 'Edith' three times for his favourite nun, and the cure of the nun *Tortgith after a vision of Ethelburga. Feast: 11 October; Barking had translation feasts on 7 March, 4 May, and (with those of Hildelith and Wulfrida) 23 September.

LIoba (Liobgytha) (d. 782), abbess of Bischofsheim. Born of a noble Wessex family (her mother was a relative of *Boniface), Lioba was educated first at the nunnery of Minster-in-Thanet and then at Wimborne (Dorset), where she became a nun under abbess Tetta. After some years correspondence Boniface asked in 748 and obtained that she should be sent to help him in the evangelization of Germany by establishing convents. About thirty nuns were sent in all; they were settled at Tauberbischofsheim, possibly in Boniface's own previous residence, under Lioba as abbess. The *Life* by Rudolf of Fulda, written about fifty years after her death and based on the testimony of four companions, paints an attractive portrait. Lioba was both beautiful and accessible, intelligent and patiently kind. Her community was so highly esteemed that abbesses for other houses were taken from it, while Lioba's advice was sought by magnates of both Church and State. Her monasteries followed the Rule of

St. Benedict: all the nuns had to learn Latin: manual work in scriptorium, kitchen, bakery, brewery, and garden was assiduously practised, but all was subordinate to the public prayer of the Church.

Before his final mission to Frisia in 754 Boniface said goodbye to her, recommended her care both to *Lull and to the monks of Fulda, and said that he would like her body to be buried near his. After his death she used to visit Fulda on privileged terms. When she had been abbess for twenty-eight years, she resigned and retired to Schornsheim, but once visited Charlemagne's court at the invitation of his queen Hildegard. Lioba died soon afterwards and was buried near Boniface's tomb at Fulda. Her relics were translated in 819 and again in 838, this time to the church of Mount St. Peter. Hrabanus Maurus inserted her name into his martyrology c.836; it also occurs in litanies of the 9th century. Her cult has always been centred in Germany, but seems surprisingly to have been little known in England. Feast: 28 September.

Life by Rudolph of Fulda in *AA.SS.* Sept. VII (1757), 748-69; Eng. tr. by C. H. Talbot, *Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany* (1954); M. Tangl, *Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus* (M.G.H., 1916); W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (1946); *B.T.A.*, iii, 668-71. See also T. Schieffer, *Wlfrid-Bonifatius und die christliche Grundlegung Europas* (1954), pp. 162-6.

HONORIUS (d. 653), archbishop of Canterbury. He came to England in 601, one of the second band of Roman missionaries to Kent. He succeeded *Justus as archbishop in 627, being consecrated at Lincoln by *Paulinus. He received the pallium from Pope Honorius with the instruction that when one archbishop died, the other would consecrate his successor. During his twenty-five years' rule he consolidated the work of conversion by sending the Burgundian *Felix to evangelize East Anglia. He received the exiled Paulinus to the see of Rochester after the disastrous battle of Hatfield Chase (634). He lived to see the apostolate of *Aidan in Northumbria, the replacement of *Birinus of Wessex by *Agilbert, the conversion of Peada and the Middle Angles, and the arrival of the young *Wilfrid in Kent on his way to Rome. Honorius, like his predecessors, was buried at Canterbury in the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul (later St. Augustine's), the centre of his cult. He is mentioned in the Roman and other martyrologies. Feast: 30 September.

Bede, H.E., ii, 15-18; iii, 14, 20, 25; v, 19.