

SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS

BUDOC (Buoc, Beuzec) (6th century), Celtic saint, patron of Budock and Budoc Vean (Cornwall) and St. Budeaux (Devon). Budoc was honoured also in Pembrokeshire (Dyfed) in and near Steynton; to him was dedicated a Tironian monastery at Pill in 1200. An Oxford church (near the castle) was also dedicated to Budoc; it may well have been of pre-Conquest date.

Budoc is also venerated in Brittany. The 9th-century Life of *Winwaloe describes him as a teacher living in the island of Launea. The Life of *Maglorius, written c.900, and the 11th-century Chronicle of Dol, make him Maglorius' successor as bishop of Dol. He is the local saint of Plourin, where his relics are still preserved. There is a cult and no place-names at Dol, but place-names without a cult in Cornouaille. Whether this Breton bishop is the same as the abbot venerated in Pembrokeshire and Cornwall it is impossible to determine. The date of the Breton feast (9 December) is sufficiently close to the Exeter martyrology entry to favour an identification: it is a curious fact also that Budock faces St. Mawes across Falmouth harbour, while *Mawes was abbot of an island monastery in Brittany close to that of Budoc. The main centres of the cult(s) of Budoc are all close to the sea.

The most picturesque legend of Budoc concerns his birth at sea in a barrel. His mother Azenor had been falsely accused of infidelity to her husband by her jealous stepmother who had her thrown pregnant into the English Channel in a barrel. Fortified by visions of *Brigid she reached Ireland and became the washer-woman of the monastery of Beau Port, near Waterford, where her son was brought up. This story is derived from Greek mythology; with other late accretions it has done nothing to help unravel the tangled skeins of this saint's life and cult. Feast: 8 December; Glastonbury claimed to possess a relic.

HYBALD (Hibald, Higbald) (7th century), abbot in Lincolnshire. He is mentioned by Bede as being very holy and abstemious in connection with a vision of the death of *Cedd by Egbert. Four Lincolnshire churches were dedicated to him and Hibaldstow takes its name from his grave there, also recorded by R.P.S. His name occurs in the Durham *Liber Vitae*; it has been conjectured by D.C.B. that his monastery was Bardney. Feast: 14 December (in 11th-century martyrology of Exeter).

Bede, H.E., iv. 3; Stanton, pp. 451, 688; R.P.S.

OFFA OF ESSEX (d. c.709), king. Son of Sighere, king of the East Saxons, and of *Osith, Offa became king c.707, and was, according to *Bede, a lovable, handsome, and popular prince. But in 709 he left 'his wife, his lands, his kinsmen and his fatherland for Christ', abdicated, went to Rome where he was tonsured, and died a monk soon afterwards. His betrothal to Cyneswith, daughter of Penda of Mercia, claimed by Florence of Worcester and William of Malmesbury, is chronologically impossible. It must also be remembered that at this period the abdication and tonsuring of kings was sometimes the result of palace revolutions both in Gaul and in Britain. No record of an official cult of Offa has survived; Stanton assigns his feast to 15 December.

Bede, H.E., v. 19; G.R., i. 99; G.P., p. 317; Florence of Worcester, i. 46-7; Stanton, pp. 600-1.

DIUMA (Dimma) (d. 658), bishop of the Middle Angles and Mercians. Of Irish origin, Diuma was one of the four priests sent by *Finan, bishop of Lindisfarne, to evangelize Mercia after the baptism of Peada, son of Penda c.652. The others were *Cedd, Betti, and Adda, of whom nothing is known. Their apostolate in Mercia, according to *Bede, was most successful. When Penda died in 654, the Christian King Oswiu of Northumbria ruled Mercia for a few years; during this time Diuma was consecrated bishop by Finan over the peoples of the Mercians and Middle Angles. It seems that he worked mainly among the latter and died in a district called *Infepplingum*. The 11th-century Anglo-Saxon saints' list (R.P.S.) says that he lies buried at Charlbury (Oxon.); the form of his name led to a belief that Dimma (Diuma) was a woman. Feast: 7 December.

Bede, H.E., ii. 21; R.P.S.

FRITHEBERT, bishop of Hexham 734-66. The successor of *Acca, he is also mentioned as the administrator of Lindisfarne while its bishop, Cynewulf, was in prison. No other details are known of his life. His bones were discovered at Hexham in 1154. Feast: 23 December.

J. Raine, *Memorials of Hexham Abbey*, i (S.S., 1864), pp. 199-200; D.C.B., ii. 566.



Antiochian Orthodox

St Fursey's Antiochian Orthodox

Christian Parish Church Stalham

Archdiocese Of the British Isles And Ireland

Parish Priest Fr Stephen Weston

Archbishop: His Eminence

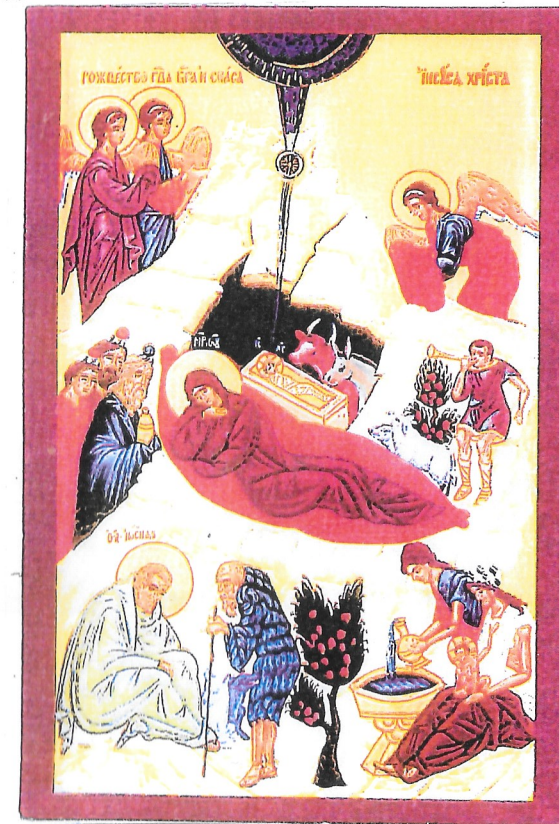
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COMMUNITY PROGRAMME & NEWSLETTER

December 2025



The Nativity of Christ (December 25th)

Troparion

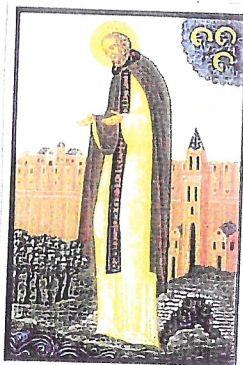
THE Nativity, O Christ our God, hath revealed to the world the Light of wisdom: for in it those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know thee, the Dayspring from on high. Glory be to thee, O Lord.

BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS
 COMMEMORATED IN
 DECEMBER.

- 03 Birinus, Apostle of Wessex
 Lucius, King in Britain*
 Sola, Hermit*)
- 07 Diuna, Bishop and Missionary
- 08 Budoc, Celtic Missionary
 Gunthild of Wimborne, Virgin
- 09 Ethelgiva, Abbess of Shaftesbury
 Wolfeius, Hermit
- 12 Agatha of Wimborne, Virgin
- 13 Edburgh of Lyminge, Virgin
 Edburgh, Abbess of Minster-in-Thanel
- 14 Hibald, Abbot
- 15 Offa, King of Essex, Monk
- 18 Winebald, Abbot and Missionary
- 23 Frithebert, Bishop of Hexham
- 25 Alburgh of Wilton, Nun
- 30 Egwin, Bishop of Worcester

Troparion of St. Furse

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 the faith standing firm against the
 Rising tide of falsehood, that our souls may be saved



SERVICES IN DECEMBER 2025

(In the Parish Church unless otherwise stated)

Sat Dec 6 th	St Nicholas the Wonderworker. c349. VESPERS 4pm.
Sun Dec 7th	26th Sunday after Pentecost St Ambrose of Milan 397. Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Tues Dec 9 th	Conception of the Most Holy Mother of God by the Righteous Anna Prophetess Hannah, mother of Prophet Samuel. Divine Liturgy 10am. St Furse's Chapel, Neville Road.
Sat Dec 13 th	St Herman of Alaska Wonderworker of America. VESPERS 4pm.
Sun Dec 14th	27th Sunday after Pentecost. Sunday of the Holy Forefathers Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Sat Dec 20 th	Saturday Before Nativity of Christ. Vespers 4pm.
Sun Dec 21st	28th Sunday after Pentecost Baptism & Chrismation of Andrew. Plus Divine Liturgy 9:30am.
Tues Dec 22 nd	Forefeast of the Nativity VESPERS OF CHRISTMAS EVE 4pm.
Wed Dec 24 th	Divine Liturgy for Christmas 9:30am. CHRIST IS BORN - GLORIFY HIM. (No services on Christmas Day).
Sat Dec 27 th	THIRD DAY OF THE FEAST OF NATIVITY. Protomartyr Stephen. VESPERS 4pm.
Sun Dec 27th	29th Sunday after Pentecost. Commemoration of St Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, St James Brother of the Lord, Holy Innocents slain by Herod (Their relics are in our Altar). Divine Liturgy 9:30am.

CONFESSIONS

Confessions before or after any service or by appointment.

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

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

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Community News & Notices

OPEN DAY AND COFFEE MORNING SATURDAY 6TH DECEMBER FROM 10AM

Icon and Book Stall, Christmas cards, Calendars for 2026. Coffee, Tea, refreshments. Home made Cake Stall, Raffle, Tombola, bric-a-brac, CD & DVD Stand, second-hand books. Come and bring a friend. See Leaflet.

THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY

We continue to study the Book of Exodus with the help of the Orthodox Study Bible but we will have a short break before Christmas and resume in the New Year on Thursday January 3rd. Come and join us 7pm. Refreshments 7pm, Compline 8:30pm approximately.

LADY AND HER SUCCESSOR HONEY

Some of you will know my Cairn Terrier Lady died on Sunday July 2nd in my arms. She was 16 years old and a wonderful little friend and she was greatly missed. In August I contacted the RSPCA Kings Lynn and during September they invited me to visit them and a beautiful little dog wagged her tail at me and that was it! I was told that she was a French Terrier. She has a thick solid body but the face of a Jack Russell, with big ears! And a honey colour. She is six-years old and has settled down very well. She is very friendly and very affectionate. A lovely gift from God.

CHRIST IS BORN – GLORIFY HIM!

EVERY BLESSING TO OUR READERS.

Father Stephen

Telephone No: 01692 581849.

Nativity of Christ

The celebration of the feast of the Nativity of Christ in the Orthodox Church is patterned after the celebration of the feast of the Lord's Resurrection. A fast of forty days precedes the feast, with special preparatory days announcing the approaching birth of the Saviour. Thus, on St. Andrew's Day (November 30) and St. Nicholas Day (December 6) songs are sung to announce the coming birthday of the Lord.

Adorn yourself, O Cavern. Make ready, O Manger. O Shepherds and wisemen, bring your gifts and bear witness. For the Virgin is coming bearing Christ in her womb. . . (Vesperal Hymn of St. Nicholas Day)

On the eve of Christmas, the Royal Hours are read and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil is served with Vespers. At these services the Old Testament prophecies of Christ's birth are chanted, emphasizing the prophecy of Micah which foretells Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Saviour, and the prophecies of Isaiah about the appearance and character of the Messiah:

The Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, which translated is, God with us. (Isaiah 7:14-15)

God is with us, understand all ye nations, and submit yourselves, for God is with us. (Isaiah 8:9)

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. (Isaiah 9:6-7)

The Vigil of Christmas begins with Great Compline, highlighted once again by the solemn chanting of God is with us and the words of the prophecy of Isaiah.

At the Compline there is also the singing of the Troparion and Kontakion of the feast along with the special hymns glorifying the Saviour's birth. There are also the special long litanies of intercession and the solemn blessing of the five loaves of bread together with the wheat and the wine of which the faithful partake and the oil with which they are anointed. This part of the festal vigil, which is done on all great feasts, is called the litya (in Greek, the artoklasia or the breaking of the bread).

At the beginning of the Christmas Matins, which together with the Compline form the Christmas Vigil, the six matinal psalms begin as usual with the words: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will among men. (Luke 2:14)

At the Christmas services these words of the angelic song are normally sung with great solemnity rather than being chanted as at the daily service. The Christmas Matins proceed as usual. The gospel reading from Matthew (1:18-25) tells of the birth of Christ, and all of the hymns and verses glorify his appearance on earth.

Christ is born, glorify him. Christ is from heaven, go to meet him. Christ is on earth, be ye lifted up. Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing out with gladness, all ye people. For he is glorified. (First Ode of the Christmas Canon.)

The Christmas Liturgy begins with psalms of glorification and praise. The troparion and kontakion mark the entrance with the Book of the Gospels. The baptismal line from Galatians 3:27 once again replaces the Thrice-Holy. The Epistle reading is from Galatians.

But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And

because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So through God, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir. (Galatians 4:4-7)

The Gospel reading is the familiar Christmas story from Matthew (2:1-12), and the liturgy continues in the normal fashion. A specific two-day celebration follows, dedicated to Mary the Theotokos and St. Stephen, the First Martyr. The period of Christmas rejoicing extends to Epiphany during which time the Christmas songs are sung and fasting and kneeling in prayer are not called for by the Church.

The feast of Christmas is formally entitled the Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ. At Christmas we celebrate the birth as a man of the Son of God, the one who together with the Father and the Holy Spirit is truly God from all eternity. Thus, we sing in the Church.

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One! Angels, with shepherds, glorify Him! The wise men journey with the star! Since for our sake the Eternal God is born as a little child. (Kontakion)

The feast of Christmas was not a separate Church feast for the first four centuries of Christian history. It was celebrated with Epiphany in the one great feast of God's appearance on earth in the form of the human Messiah of Israel. The Nativity began to be celebrated as such on the twenty-fifth of December in order to offset the pagan festival of the Invincible Sun which occurred on that day. It was established by the Church quite consciously as an attempt to defeat the false religion of the heathens. Thus, we discover the troparion of the feast making a polemic against the worship of the sun and the stars and calling for the adoration

of Christ, the True Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2), who is himself worshipped by all of the elements of nature.

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it, those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness and to know Thee, the Orient from on high (Luke 1:78, translated as Dawn or Dayspring). O Lord, glory to Thee! (Troparion)

Thus, the feast of Christmas is the celebration of the world's salvation through the Son of God who became man for our sake that, through him, we might ourselves become divine, sons of God the Father by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit in us.



25 DECEMBER

THE NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE
FLESH OF OUR LORD AND GOD AND
SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

Vespers

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

ONE TWO

(by Germanos)

Come, let us greatly rejoice in the Lord as we tell of this present mystery. The middle wall of partition has been destroyed; the flaming sword turns back, the cherubim withdraw from the tree of life, and I partake of the delight of Paradise from which I was cast out through disobedience. For the express Image of the Father,¹ the Imprint of His eternity, takes the form of a servant, and without undergoing change He comes forth from a Mother who knew not wedlock. For what He was, He has remained, true God: and what He was not, He has taken upon Himself, becoming man through love for mankind. Unto Him let us cry aloud: God born of a Virgin, have mercy upon us (*twice*).

(by Anatolios)

When the Lord Jesus was born of the holy Virgin, all the world was enlightened. The shepherds watched in the fields, the Magi adored and the angels praised in song; but Herod was troubled: for God has appeared in the flesh, the Saviour of our souls (*twice*).

Thy Kingdom, O Christ our God, is a Kingdom of all the ages, and Thy rule is from generation to generation. Made flesh of the Holy Spirit and made man of the ever-Virgin Mary, Thou hast enlightened us by Thy coming. Light of Light, Brightness of the Father,¹ Thou hast made the whole creation shine with joy. All that hath breath praises Thee, the Image of the glory of the Father. O God who art, and who hast ever been, who hast shone forth from a Virgin, have mercy upon us (*twice*).

From a sermon by Saint Leo the Great, pope

(Sermo 1 in Nativitate Domini, 1-3: PL 54, 190-193)

CHRISTIAN, REMEMBER YOUR DIGNITY

Dearly beloved, today our Savior is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness.

No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to life.

In the fullness of time, chosen in the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom, the Son of God took for himself our common humanity in order to reconcile it with its creator. He came to overthrow the devil, the origin of death, in that very nature by which he had overthrown mankind.

And so at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: *Glory to God in the highest*, and they proclaim *peace to his people on earth* as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. When the angels on high are so exultant at this marvelous work of God's goodness, what joy should it not bring to the lowly hearts of men?

Beloved, let us give thanks to God the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit, because in his great love for us he took pity on us, *and when we were dead in our sins he brought us to life with Christ*, so that in him we might be a new creation. Let us throw off our old nature and all its ways and, as we have come to birth in Christ, let us renounce the works of the flesh.

Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God's own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God's kingdom.

Through the sacrament of baptism you have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not drive away so great a guest by evil conduct and become again a slave to the devil, for your liberty was bought by the blood of Christ.