



The magic of winter but....If winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD NOTTINGHAM



NEWSLETTER

Jan – Feb 2019 : Cost £1.00



St Gildas

Truly thou art surnamed 'the Wise', O righteous Gildas,
For in thy monastic solitude thou didst use thy God given gift of
words for His greater glory.
Teach us to despise nothing, that our talents, however small,
May be employed in God's service for the salvation of our souls

Troparion Tone 8
Jan 29th

THE PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD, NOTTINGHAM

Worshipping in the Church of St Aidan,

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!		
JAN	JANUARY 2019	
Sat 5th	The Holy Theophany of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ	Vigil 5.00pm in St Aidan's
Sun 6	The Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist, John	Liturgy 12 noon and Great Blessing of the Waters. St Aidan's
Sat 19	33 rd Sunday after Pentecost	Vespers 5.00pm Fr David's house chapel
Sun 20	Apostle Timothy of Seventy St Xenia of St Petersburg	Liturgy 12.00noon St Aidans
FEB		
Sat 2	Meeting of Our Lord in the Temple	Vigil 5.00pm in St Aidans
Sun 3	The Righteous Symeon and Prophetess Anna	Liturgy 12 noon St Aidans
Sat 9	Leave-taking of The Meeting	Liturgy 10.00 St Leos
Sat 16	The Publican and the Pharisee	Vigil Fr David's house chapel 5.00pm?
Sun17	St Leo the Great	Liturgy 12.00noon St Aidans
MARCH		
Sat 2	Sunday of the Last Judgement	Vigil Fr David's house chapel 5.00pm
Sun 3	St David of Wales St Chad of Lichfield	Liturgy 12.00noon St Aidans
Sat 9	Commemoration of monks and nuns Forgiveness Saturday	Vigil 5.00pm in St Aidans
Sun 10	FORGIVENESS SUNDAY 40 Martyrs of Sebaste	Liturgy 12.00noon St Aidans

*That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.*

John Betjeman

The things that went on!

Three quotes from a questionnaire sent out to archdeacons by a medieval bishop of Lincoln:

1. Are there any rectors or vicars of parishes enormously illiterate?
7. Do any clerks in Holy Orders frequent the churches of nuns without reasonable cause?
27. Does any priest use vinegar in the celebration of holy communion?

* * * * *

Two special messages to all the parish

Sue sends her love and very best wishes to all of us. She is still in hospital but is very patient. She never complains.

Tatiana has not forgotten us. Her message is: "Wishing Peace and Joy everybody in Nottingham in 2019!"

Front cover: GILDAS - (THE WISE).

BRIEF LIFE: One of the great Celtic Saints who had a reputation for scholarship and spiritual integrity. He was a priest/monk of Glastonbury and Rhuys. He wrote a famous piece of work entitled *De Excidio Britonum* - a treatise against worldliness. He is much revered in Wales and in Brittany

LATE NEWS: Fr David has had a health blip. He is well on the road to recovery but has been advised to rest for about a month.

Our prayers, love and good wishes to you Fr David, from all the parish.



FATHER DAVID'S LETTER

Standing at the Gate of the Year.

I have recently been reading Fr Cyrille Argenti's "Spiritual Journey of Faith and Freedom", a good theme for the beginning of a New Year. Fr Cyrille has a refreshing way to proclaim his beliefs. "What is the purpose of life?". It is this: we are made in the image of God and our purpose in life is to be transformed into His likeness. Our Lord Christ makes this clear, as God, He was able to become man because man is made in His image. He was able to take on the nature of man through birth as a human being because, He was taking on, in His birth, His own image and filling it with Himself so that this image became filled with the likeness of God. This is why he was perfect man and perfect God, a fully God Man which is the destination for all of us. We are all made in the image of God and are to be filled with His likeness. The Greatness of the Feast of the Nativity which we have just celebrated is that "God became man so that we might become God" - God put on His image in which we are made in order to enable us to be transformed into His likeness to which we aspire. It is our destiny and our purpose in life. In His Incarnation, Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit. There is within all of us a huge space ready to be filled with the Holy Spirit and this "Breath of Life", enables us to become what we are meant to be, so that, "When He (Christ) appears we shall be like Him", writes St John, "Transformed into His likeness." And there is no other path for human kind. The one who denies God, denies

himself, for without God, we live a half life, emptied of all that should fill us and give us life. We are no longer fully alive. But when we are open to God and allow ourselves to be filled by Him, our life blossoms, we are filled with the Holy Spirit and life becomes full. “The glory of God is man fully alive” as St Irenaeus of Lyons famously wrote.

May this year, be a year of transformation into His likeness and all of us fully alive in our personal lives and in our life together, the Church.

A Happy and Joyful New Year.

Fr. David.

Communications relating to the Archdiocese of which we are a member.

On 27th November, 2018, The Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate decided to revoke the Tomos (founding document) which formally recognised the Archdiocese as an Exarchate of the Ecumenical Patriarch.

Spurious and misinformation of Social Media suggested that the Archdiocese had been dissolved or disbanded. This is clearly not the case (see below). These and all subsequent comments on Social Media should be disregarded, as misleading.

The follow-on letter of the Patriarch, which also was dated 27th Nov. 2018 expressed the view that a better arrangement for the future would be for each part of the Archdiocese to be linked to the local Greek Archdiocese for administrative neatness. i.e., to reorganise the status of the Exarchate.

The Archdiocesan Council issued a document on 30th November giving the history of the Archdiocese and its status in the Holy Orthodox Church.

Over the next few issues of the newsletter we will explore the nine Ranks. Who they are and what they represent.

At the present time, the Priest usually prepares five loaves (one loaf in the Greek tradition), in remembrance of the five loaves that fed 5,000 people in the Gospel, called Prospora (oblations) made of wheat flour, mixed with plain water, and leavened.

From the first loaf a cube, the size of the entire seal on top, is cut out. This cube, called the Lamb, signifies Jesus Christ, the Paschal Lamb.

This is placed on the centre of the Paten and prepared.

From the second loaf a particle is taken out, signifying the Mother of God, and placed at the Lamb's right (the left, looking down).

From the third loaf, nine particles are taken out. These are called ‘Ranks’. These nine particles are placed in three rows of three particles each, at the Lamb's left (the right, looking down).

From the fourth loaf particles are taken out for the living and placed in a row below the Lamb, and from the fifth loaf particles are taken out for the departed and placed in a row below that of the living.



Thus, all of the particles are arranged on the Paten around the Lamb, depicting the Church Militant on earth and Triumphant in heaven, united in the Liturgy as in common divine service.

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*No love that in a family dwells
 No carolling in frosty air,
 Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
 Can with this single Truth compare –*

time and we treasure the memories, of laughter and the love of our family

Some Christmases we had a new doll or a ball for my brothers, some other small toys and we were thrilled and thankful to our parents. I will always remember the hectic days that my mother had during the Christmas period but we four children were very happy.

Athena



Proskomedie - The Nine Ranks – Part 1

Fr Julian

Every time the Divine Liturgy is served, priest and deacon stand before the Table of Oblation/*Prothesis* and prepare the bread and the wine for the coming Eucharist. This first part of the Divine Liturgy (not really part of the Liturgy proper) is the Proskomedie (Greek the bringing of gifts). In ancient times the faithful brought gifts of bread and wine and from these the Priest selected that to be used at the Holy Eucharist.

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The Archdiocese is governed by statutes approved by the Holy Synod of Constantinople and it has a legal foundation in both France and Britain. Our Archbishop John has initiated, therefore, a process of consultation to consider the action of the Holy Synod and to determine the way forward. On Saturday 15th December, a Pastoral Assembly of all clergy was convened in Paris. This will be followed by a meeting of our Deanery clergy on Saturday 12th January. Then there will be an extraordinary meeting the Archdiocesan General Assembly on Saturday 23 February, 2019 when all clergy and lay representatives will again meet in Paris. At the end of this process we shall have guidance for the future. Until then we follow our Archbishop's request that we pray earnestly and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to determine our way forward. What is certain is that we are neither dissolved nor disbanded and that we remain, as we always have been, full members of the Holy Orthodox Church.

Our parish clergy and lay representatives should ensure that they are free to be in Paris on 23 February for the very important meeting of the Archdiocesan Assembly.

Fr David

OUR LIFE

Congratulations and Many Years! Two baptisms:

Gregory, son of Ekaterina and Roman Plehhov, was baptised on his first birthday, 18 November, 2018. His patron is St Gregory the Wonderworker whose feast is 17 November.

Susana, daughter of Iskra and Benjamin Potgieter was baptised on Sunday, 16 December, 2018.

Feast of the Nativity: Again celebrated on the evening of Monday, 24th December in St Aidan's, with the Vigil of the Nativity held in Fr David's

House Chapel on Sunday evening, 23rd (How things would be different if we had our own Church). After Vespers at 5.00, the choir sang two traditional carols and then followed the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom.

St Aidan's Christmas Fair was held on Saturday, 1st December. There was a very good turn out and a very warm camaraderie over lunch. There were the expected stalls of c

Christmas cards, gifts, toys, preserves, cakes. Over £800 was raised for St Aidan's church funds. This is very much an annual event which many local people attend and appreciate even though they are not church members - an important evangelical outreach enjoyed by all.

Use of St Leo's: On the Saturday of the second weekend of December, the Holy Liturgy was again served by Fr Julian at St Leo's. This is well attended and appreciated. This arrangement will continue in the months ahead. See calendar.

Enrichment of Faith Group: In recent weeks we have had an in-depth study of prayer: why pray, how to pray, vocal prayer, prayer of the heart, &c. The group meetings will continue from Monday, 14th January. All are welcome to these important times for sharing and enrichment of faith.

Walsingham November 2018

Our pilgrimage was a great success and enjoyed by all. That we plan to return next year says it all.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham could be called the Lourdes of the UK. It was established in 1061 as a replica of the house where the Annunciation occurred in Nazareth.

Today nothing remains of the original shrine but the holy atmosphere of the Shrine was not, and cannot be destroyed. Walsingham became one of the greatest Shrines in Medieval Christendom. During the pilgrimage season this year the Shrine attracted 150,000 visitors. We

colourful balloons all over the house. We didn't have a lot of presents, but we always had new clothes and shoes.

My mother used to wake us up very early on Christmas day to go to church. It was magical to listen to the church bells at four o'clock in the morning and my father used to chant the Christmas hymn.

Η γεννησίς σου Χριστέ ο Θεός ημών
ανέτειλε τω κόσμω το φώς το της γνώσεως
εν αυτή γάρ οι τοίς άστροις λετρεύοντες, υπό
αστέρος εδιδάσκοντο, σε προσκευνείν τόν
Ήλιον της δικαιοσύνης, και σε γινώσκειν έξ
ύξους Ανατολήν. Κύριε δοξα σοι.

We always had a big Christmas meal with all the extended family of uncles and aunts sitting around a big table. We used to have a variety of nuts, Christmas sweets but no chocolate. Then we played cards and other games and if the weather was fine we visited the nearest small wood and walked around. We also celebrated the New Year and Epiphany.

For New Year my mother used to bake a special cake (vasilopita) and inside put a small coin wrapped in grease proof paper. On New Year's Eve we had a big meal and at twelve o'clock midnight with the turn of the New Year my father had to cut the cake and distribute slices to all members of the family. First he made the sign of the cross and then started to cut the cake. The first slice was for Jesus, the second for the house and then for the rest of the family. The person that was lucky to have the coin in the slice was supposed to be the lucky for the whole year. Sometimes the coin represented a big gift or money for the lucky one. This custom is still in existence and is celebrated by many people.

The period from Christmas Eve to Epiphany was always the best for us, and for all the children. We were always happy and pleased with the little things our parents could afford to offer us. It was a wonderful

more involved in creating entertainment for themselves, not depending on the official channels - (those were rubbish). My grandma always organised parties for my friends, we enacted plays of her own making, sang songs written by either us or parents, painted posters - it was all great fun. The presents were not very exciting, but (honestly) are they now?

Christmas in Greece in the Forties

Katerina was rather reluctant to tell me this as she wants nobody feeling sorry for her.

Times were hard and she received no presents but had a loving family which is much more important than any gift. Her father died young from TB and her mother died not long afterwards. She was brought up by her grandmother and great grandmother and the family unit was composed of eight people. There was only one breadwinner so money was tight. Even so, Christmas was an exciting time as there was special food. This was made from ingredients saved up and hoarded throughout the year.

One incident that Katerina remembers from her early school days was that a man walked round the classroom and looked at the shoes that the children were wearing. He made notes. Katerina was on this list and she was given a note to go to a special shop where she was given some new shoes. They were paid for by an ordinary man who had won the football pools and he wanted to share out his good fortune.

Katerina used to be a very regular and loyal member of the congregation but now finds transport difficult. We send her our good wishes and love.

A Greek childhood report from Christmas until Epiphany

We used to have a small Christmas tree and decorated it with various ornaments that the four of us prepared using colourful crepe paper, some glitter and small pieces of white cotton wool as snow. There were

were there out of season which was a bonus as there were no crowds thus making it possible to experience the peace and tranquillity of this holy site.

Our visit allowed us time to attend a Liturgy in Great Walsingham served by Fr David Davis in Fr Christopher Knight's chapel which had morphed from being a Methodist chapel into a very Orthodox church. There was opportunity to admire the wonderful stained glass windows at nearby Sculthorpe, or to visit the Georgian town of Holt – a mecca of art galleries, unusual shops and delicious cakes. We had one day in Norwich which included a visit to Mother Julian's church which was made more significant by Fr Julian's talk and explanation. Thank you Father.

We visited the two wonderful cathedrals and the 250 stall open market. The only downside in Norwich was the traffic congestion caused by diversions and road works aplenty.

When back at the shrine we had evening talk by Ian Randall on Maria Skobstova. Not only was it a superb talk but we were able to listen whilst sitting in armchairs! We were very pleased that Ian could join us in *The Bull* afterwards.

We were very grateful to Fr David and Fr Julian for their prayerful contribution and to John-Paul and Ruth for providing a choir.

Julian of Norwich

'In this vision he showed me a little thing, the size of a hazelnut and it was as round as a ball. I looked at it with the eye of my understanding and thought 'what may this be?' and it was generally answered thus: 'It is all that is made.' I marvelled how it might last, for it seemed it might suddenly have sunk into nothing because of its littleness. And I was answered in my understanding: 'It lasts and ever shall, because God loves it'.

Remembrance Sunday 2018

Here at St Aidan's 128 men of the parish died in the wars. Each one was represented on a named poppy attached to the Lady chapel screen.

Schools all over the land were involved by finding exactly who in their own area was being remembered and something about their family. The whole country seemed united with the church being the focal point. Thousands of people were inspired to knit or crochet red poppies which were made into cascades hanging from altars, window or even church towers.

The Perspex cut-outs of soldiers seen in churches across the land were an inspiration; 'There but not there' (it depended on the light whether or not you could see the outline figures) and fastened to the pews probably occupied by the men who died in the war if the church was pre 1918. The whole country was united. *Lest we forget.*

I was present at St Peters church in Bottesford in North Lincolnshire and felt honoured to ring the church bells to mark this occasion.

On Remembrance Sunday the church was full. Without being asked, people brought items that had belonged to their great grandad when a soldier – among them, a brass whistle, a metal Queen Mary box given to each soldier – originally containing cigarettes or tobacco and chocolate, identity cards, and old treasured photos.

A Princess Mary Gift Fund Box was a treasured possession of many veteran soldiers of the First World War, This embossed brass box was air-tight, and made a useful container for money, tobacco, papers and photographs. Many are still in existence in homes up and down the country. They can even be bought on ebay with an asking price varying from £14 to £149!

At the local village War Memorial Service there was a good crowd which included 15 dogs and their owners. During the Two Minute's

as community centres in the UK). The working parents could obtain up to 5 tickets with a 25% price reduction for each child for a performance simply called *New Year Tree* which very much resembled traditional English Pantomime. At the end of the show a "present" would be given to a lucky ticket holder by a *Grandfather Frost* and/or a *Snow-maiden* (known as "*Snegurochka*").

In the same way as in an English Pantomime the *Dark Forces* would try to spoil the festival. Then "*Snegurochka*" would encourage children shout altogether: *New Year Tree, light up*; and: *Grandfather Frost come!* and by the mere appearance of *Him the Foe* would retreat.

One cannot get away from some sort of miracle connotations even in the antichristian society!

Of course the loud patriotic music would be played, and one by one up to 200 to 300 hundred children would go to the stage, and receive a brown paper bag filled with much desirable treats: a lollypop, a few walnuts, a tiny chocolate, a mandarin orange, an apple, a cardboard doll, a cardboard clown, etc., with the strings attached to them, which allowed to use them as a *new-year-tree* decoration.

There were *New Year's Trees* in almost each house and children would be encouraged to make handmade decorations too.

Also, there would be an ice skating-ring made in the central square of each small district; so, disregarding -20C cold everybody would spend many hours on it, showing off their skills.

Strange and probably... happy times... 10 days a year!

Tatiana

A happy time for Olga in Moscow

I just loved the New Year, always have done. Wonderful holiday times, with quite a lot of magic, creativity, games - all stimulated to an extent by the lack of merchandise diversity. In fact, people seemed to be a lot

We had a Christmas tree and crepe paper decorations were festooned along the picture rail. We had a coloured picture of Humpty-Dumpty drawing pinned to the wall. Coloured pictures were a treat as all the books which came our way only had black and white illustrations. This did not detract from our enjoyment of reading them.

A special treat for us was having two coal fires – one in the living room and one in the sitting room. That happened only at Christmas. A shovel full of lit coals was taken from the living room fire to light the second fire. Such an event was highly exciting. We always went out for a Christmas walk after our Christmas dinner and, the silver teapot made its annual appearance at Christmas teatime. Like everybody else our mother had to save up the ingredients throughout the year to make the Christmas cake. In the evening we played games or cards.

It was a wonderful time. In a material sense we had very little but in a different sense we had everything.

Frances

Christmas in Russia in the 1950s

Ёлка/New Year's Tree Festival

Those who were born in Russia after the WWII remember the great expectations of people of a better life, fed by the media, propaganda, and patriotic films, songs and arts.

The Trade Unions also would play their part by providing the employees with the government sponsored health resort and holiday packages.

As for children, the anticipation of the New Year's half school term – 10 days break – was the most exciting expectation!

There were “*New Year's Trees*” (not Christmas trees) erected. Some were up to 10 meters high and were put in the *People's Halls* (known

Silence it appeared that all the dogs were standing to attention. There was not one bark or tail wag. We rang the bells again in the evening – open (normal) to celebrate peace, and muffled (to show sorrow) in the morning. To ring ‘muffled’ the clapper of the bell has a horse's knee cap tied round the end of the clapper. Many village churches still use genuine horse knee caps but bespoke muffles are also available.

Frances

ONE OBSESSION IS ENOUGH TO RUIN THE EARTH

I remember, one night in 1957 or 1958, catching an early evening train from Durham to Newcastle. I recall the incident well because it was the first time that I had noticed a curious phenomenon. It was winter, and by 6 p.m. Durham was already freezing. But when I alighted from the train at Newcastle I found myself bathed in comfortable warm air. I thought at first that it must be something to do with the railway station – its enclosed space, and the heat generated by the huge steam locomotives which were forever pausing there in those days. But no. As I walked through the streets away from the city centre the warm air still cossetted and surrounded me, and I remember mentioning it to my girlfriend, herself a former Newcastle lass. ‘Oh yes,’ she replied. ‘Newcastle is always warmer than the surrounding countryside. I’ve often noticed it.’

The fact is, of course, that all big cities and conurbations generate huge amounts of heat. Indeed, it is becoming common, during the winter months, for weather forecasters to predict night temperatures of around freezing point in rural areas, with major towns and cities two to four degrees warmer. Here quite definitely is evidence of man-made global warming. But would a carbon-free atmosphere make much difference? Cities would still be at the top of the temperature chart because buildings need to be heated, regardless of how that heat is generated.

That brings me to a related point: the exploding world population. As the population increases, more and more houses, schools, offices, shops, warehouses, distribution centres, hospitals and surgeries need to be built – and heated; add to which every human being generates a small but significant amount of heat. (That thought prompts another memory – of a liturgy in Moscow on the first Sunday in January 1987 when the street temperature was minus 25. When we arrived, the church – actually Moscow’s largest cathedral – was almost empty and our hands were soon numb with cold. However the church began to fill up, and within twenty minutes or so it was quite warm.) Also, more people mean more roads, more factories, more reservoirs, etc., etc. Every year the countryside shrinks, more earth goes under brick and concrete (or under wind turbines and solar panels), and more and more vehicles add to the incessant noise. How long can it be before the natural world ceases in any real sense to be a spiritual resource, a habitat for wildlife, or a haven of peace? What price the incredible beauty of the earth?

You would expect environmentalists to be up in arms about these things, but they aren’t. You would expect governments and climate change bodies to be shrieking Domesday – not because of carbon emissions but because without some form of population control the world (other things being equal) must go on getting hotter, becoming more crowded, noisier, busier, with less living space, more traffic gridlocks, tail-backs, and all the attendant psychological ills of urban life and overcrowding. In fact there is a deafening silence. Why?

I can think of only one reason: that the various bodies which control our lives – which control the future and all future lives – actually *want* the population to go on increasing, either because a shrinking population would play havoc with investments, or for ideological reasons, or more probably for both. Fifty years ago, demographers were loud in their warnings of what would happen if the global

population was allowed to go on growing. Well it *has* gone on growing, and their warnings have died away – or been smothered. Again I wonder why?

Now there *is* an ideology which favours population increase, though we don’t hear much about it nowadays. It was the brainchild of a dissident Roman Catholic priest, Fr Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. He believed that the ever -increasing world population would force us all more closely together psychologically as well as physically, and that this would bring about the end of racism, class hatred and various other phobias, ushering in the brotherhood of man and *the unification of human thought*. He had an immense influence on the New Age movement.

You may call this kind of thing naïve. Personally I would put it more strongly. But Teilhard still has many admirers – more perhaps than we know – and it only takes one obsession to ruin the earth.

Deacon Ian.

Christmas in the 1940s in the UK

Times were sparse as it was wartime but even so it was magic and we could not have been happier! Even the air had a special tingle.

My sister and I were allowed to share a bed on Christmas Eve. Opening our Christmas stocking was wonderful. One year we each received a doll made by our mother. We both still have these dolls which shows how much we treasured them. Other presents might have included a jig-saw, a book, a bar of scented soap (that was very special), two sugar mice and a balloon each. All our relatives lived at least 80 miles away so there were no outgrown toys handed down to us.