

ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD NOTTINGHAM



NEWSLETTER

July – Aug 2020: Cost £1.00



The Catholic Saint Roch (Rock or **Rocco**) (traditionally lived c.1295 –1327). He is specially invoked for relief from plague, cholera, epidemics, knee problems, and skin disease.

He set out from Montpellier as a mendicant pilgrim for Rome and came into Italy during an epidemic of plague. He was very diligent in tending the sick in the public hospitals. and is said to have effected many miraculous cures by prayer and the sign of the cross.

He is a patron saint of invalids, of falsely accused people and of dogs.

Commemorated on Aug 16th

THE PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD, NOTTINGHAM

Worshipping in the Church of St Aidan,

Arnold Road, Basford, NG6 0DN

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FATHER DAVID'S LETTER

Silver Jubilee

This year we celebrate the Silver Jubilee of our Parish; twenty-five years since we were formed as a new Orthodox Community in Nottingham. In 1994 many Christians were being encouraged to find a new home for various reasons. Metropolitan Anthony of the Russian Diocese of Sourozh was approached in the summer of 1994 and he agreed to welcome those gathering together in Nottingham under his care. He sent Archpriest John Lee, the Dean of the Cathedral in London to welcome us into the Orthodox Church. Fr John suggested that all should go to the Cathedral in Ennismore Gardens, Knightsbridge to experience worship there. Bishop Anthony in his characteristic way said, 'No, you must go to them in Nottingham and take the Cathedral Choir with you'. This Liturgy was celebrated at the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross in September and held in a chapel near Chesterfield where Fr Edwin Hunt was Priest and also desirous to be received into Orthodoxy. The Liturgy was sung so beautifully and served so well that we were ecstatically lifted up into the beauty of the Holy Orthodox Church. All was such a spiritual experience that we all felt that God was leading us into a new part of our Christian life. Following this, Fr John continued to visit Nottingham every month and all interested gathered in Fr David's house to meet Fr John and receive his instruction and assistance as we prepared to become Orthodox. He was a very able saintly man whose words were always inspiring, challenging and relevant. Later, we arranged to have use of St Mary's Parish Church in the Lace Market, Nottingham, and we were able to continue meetings with Fr John giving instruction on the previous day. There were many, at the time, interested in exploring the Orthodoxy way and 'Pilgrimage to Orthodoxy' was formed, its members eventually being received into the Church of Antiochian tradition.

On 10th June, 1995, at the Eve of Pentecost, ten members were received by Chrismation given by Fr John and assisted by Fr Phillip Steer of The Walsingham Parish. Three others had been received in recent weeks and soon many others were added to the Parish including many cradle Orthodox from Russia and Byelorussia who had arrived in UK following the Second World War. Here is what was written in the Cathedral Newsletter by a member of our new Parish:

For all of us in Nottingham these last few months, the following Pentecost, have been a time of challenge, preparation and repentance, in other words, "normal life". We recognise that those who are called to the well-of-healing, forgiveness and salvation-by-means-of-love are, as Metropolitan Anthony reminded us, simultaneously called to the common vocation of suffering and Resurrection Joy for the sake of the world. We realise that it is an unusual privilege to take part in the birth of a new parish - a privilege entailing unusual responsibilities - and we shall all try, in our different ways, to support Fr David (our new deacon) ordained on the Sunday of All Saints, following Pentecost and soon to be made priest (in October), to help him bear the additional burdens. Nonetheless, we are also sure that in our first few months as a fully-fledged parish we shall still be in great need of the continuing help and support of the whole diocese. Please continue to pray for us, visit us, teach us by your example and come and share our life and liturgy. Now we, together with our new shepherd, ordained and blessed by the whole diocese, are now and forever all bound together in love, freely but indissolubly, with the One Holy Tradition of the Holy Orthodox Church within the Russian Diocese of Sourozh.

For all of us there was a sense of having 'come home'. We had been led to a new and further experience in our Christian life and we were indeed greatly supported. A choir director, Tom Carter, the Choir Director in Rugby, agreed to help us and on the first Sunday of every month travelled from Essex to be with us. He introduced us to Orthodox singing and was with us until our own Katharine Dryden née Greer was ready to take over. Members of the Cathedral in London also travelled each Sunday of Liturgy to be with us, and there was great joy when established Orthodox of the former Russian and Byelorussian church communities existing in Nottingham since 1947 were able to be with us. There had been an astonishingly rapid process of "gathering" which swept us together in an Orthodox Parish with special emphasis that this was to be an

English-speaking parish fully Orthodox and essentially free of ethnic traditions and ties in its core. Over the next few years many other were added to our numbers.

It was good to be able to meet in the old city centre Church dedicated to St Mary, one of the oldest Churches in Nottingham and we were welcomed there until we could acquire our own Church. This was the former Methodist Church Hall in Carlton where we celebrated our tenth anniversary with Bishop Basil in attendance. Later we were able to worship in St Leo's the oldest church in the north of the city, built on an earlier Saxon site of the tenth century.

So we have been very greatly blessed in these twenty five years, linked with the ancient 'Orthodox Tradition' of the early centuries of the Church in this country and supported by early British Saints, St Aidan, Apostle to the whole the North of England and Southern Scotland and St Chad, first English bishop of Lichfield and the Midlands. We continue in our mission to re-establish the Church in this country as we stand firmly in the continuing World Catholic Apostolic Orthodox Church. In this we are never abandoned. The blessing of Pentecost lives amongst us as we try to remain faithful to Our Lord and Saviour, guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit.

In God's time we hope that 'lockdown' will soon be ended so that we can be together again to celebrate the great blessings of our first 25 years and this special Jubilee.

Fr David

OUR LIFE

Well, what a difference - "Locked in!" Mostly stay-at-home, quietness, slow life, freedom from outside distraction, easing pressure from outside life, with opportunity for walking and essential shopping. Some have been able to work from home, many have taken a new interest in nature, flowers, shrubs, trees and birds, as these fellow sharers in creation, carry on unaware, or apparently un-distressed by our human predicament, perhaps as some of them did in the days of the Garden of Eden.

Whilst some have experienced the loneliness of isolation, despair and boredom, others have discovered the positive side of the "lock down". The silence, freedom from distraction and ability to be oneself with more time in the home and with family, has been a blessing. Fr David says that his life has been more monastic than usual, without outside involvement, he has been able to spend more time in prayer, experience the monastic routine more fully and with more time, he has been able to follow every episode of Downton Abbey, currently repeated daily on ITV 3.

We hope that for all it has been, in some form, a time of blessing.

Fr David and Fr Julian have circulated a homily for each Sunday and encouraged our life together with various pastoral letters and phone calls. We understand there has been a good sense of fellowship in our community. As far as we know, no one has succumbed to the corona virus, although some have had suspicious symptoms of a mild character.

Hopefully, our community life will be resumed fully whenever St Aidan's is again open for use.

Our Eucharistic Community in Leeds. The University Chaplaincy with its chapel has been closed. Fr David has sent homilies for circulation. The choir, meeting in three separate venues, has sung key hymns for each of the feasts and circulated them to members of the Community. The last one for Pentecost was the Great Prokeimenon, beautiful sung and a demonstration of what is possible through remote internet working.

Overcoming fear:

The nation is filled with fear at this time as a result of the Covid 19 infestation and something has to be done. As Christians, men and women of faith, we have an answer.

St Frances in his well know prayer said, "*O Lord, Make me an instrument of your peace.... Where there is doubt let me sow faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy;*"

We are to be a bastion of hope and a beacon of light to all around us; a fortress of prayer to lift our nation up from its knees; restored in health, education, prosperity, full employment and thriving economy. With this may there be a new normal, with a new understanding of how life should be; even fullness for all in Christ, as a nation of faith, hope and love.

A well-known writer and journalist wrote recently under the title, *Lessons from the dying*. She mentioned a wise priest who said, no matter how strong your faith, your view of what happens at death and 'the life of the world to come' should be an agnostic one. Atheists are stuck with their views; Christians have certainty by faith but do not know. All should be agnostic.

Nurses, in recent times, have experienced many dying patients. They have sat with them and noted that even in the noisy activity of an Intensive Care Unit, there has been 'a palpable stillness and peace which has surrounded the dying, a bubble in which they rested'. One nurse spoke of one Covid patient she sat with, who emerged from a deep coma, opened his eyes, his face suffused with amazement and joy, as he took his last breath - the easiest breath for weeks. All have noticed that, aside from the medical signs, at some point, seconds or minutes, after a patient dies, there is a strong sense that they have now 'left' - the soul has finally departed the body and gone on.

There are things in life which cannot be explained by rational explanation

The Descent of the Holy Spirit by Olga Hudson

At Pentecost, light turned to flame, inspiration to passion, passion to action. Previously, the disciples had seen, heard, even touched but they had not yet witnessed. Until very recently, they had known their Lord as guru, host and friend. After the whole drama of Easter, all were able to recognise him as Saviour. Nevertheless, even after his Ascension, when Christ was swept up wholly into the mystery of his divinity, more than ever, they saw all this as his story rather than their own. Like fledglings before flight.

What happened between Ascension and Pentecost? Fortified by a promise of comfort, of power from on high, they alternated between joy, uncertainty and fear. Vitaly, they did not disperse but stayed together, waited; waited upon God in prayer. Crucially, when the great day came, they were all gathered together in one place. The gift of the Holy Spirit was sudden. Instantly each and all was bowled over by joy, staggering around like drunkards. With the rushing wind came the gift of speech. Suddenly they could make all they had seen, heard and experienced, all that they knew of Christ, known to all. The gift would be costly; for some it would be the gift of martyrdom, for others, lifelong struggle. They were being baptised in the Spirit for the sake of others. As Christ's followers, his body on earth, their ministry also, was to be for the life of the world.

Extra note for Orthodox Pentecost on the twenty fifth anniversary of Chrismation

Interestingly, at least two members of The Minster Meditation Group were actually present in St Mary's in the Lacemarket, Nottingham, on the day of our Chrismation at Pentecost 1995; the day the parish was born. At this point I must hugely thank Fr David, who first gathered us together as a Group exploring Orthodoxy, subsequently becoming a Russian Orthodox parish; also, the very dear departed Fr Peter, without whom I might well not have known of its existence.

That first visit to Russia at the time of 'white nights', culminated with gazing over the Baltic from sunset to sunrise – a very short time - and a visit to the Shrine of St Xenia. What more could anyone want? Now, under even modified 'lockdown', this seems such a faraway place, such a faraway time. One thing we must never forget is that, as Christians, we are all always, one in Christ.



Removing a third particle from this same prosphora and placing it below the second, he says:

“Of the holy, glorious and all-praised **Apostles Peter** and Paul, of the Twelve and of the Seventy, and all the holy apostles

The holy, glorious and all-laudable **Apostle Peter** is the leader of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ. His feast is celebrated on June 29 along with the Apostle Paul

From Bethsaida of Galilee, Peter was the son of Jonas and the brother of Andrew (the First-called). He was a fisherman by trade, uneducated and poor, and was called Simon; later being renamed Peter by Our Lord; saying, "Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)" [John 1:42]

As an Apostle Peter was inseparable from Jesus, following him from the very beginning of his preaching of up to ‘the Passion’, when, in fear, Peter denied Christ three times. But, after many tears, he received complete forgiveness. After Our Lords Resurrection and the descent of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost), Peter went and preached the gospel in Judea, Antioch, and certain parts of Asia, finally going to Rome, where he was crucified upside down.

The Holy Apostle has given us two ‘General Epistles’ (1 Peter & 2 Peter) and is generally regarded as being the primary source (i.e., in interview) for the Gospel of Mark.

Ostrich’s take on mental health during pandemic

Like everyone else, I’m shaken by the thought that our life has changed forever. Am I ever going to see my lovely home in Moscow? To hug my son and granddaughter? To meet my dear friends? Are we ever going to travel, go to cinemas and restaurants, throw parties and engage in social activities that were so important to us? No one knows the answers, and this is forming a lump in my throat.

The initial adrenaline of a “New Life under Lockdown” with its high tide of jokes about toilet rolls and masks, has died out. The lifting of restrictions is quite alarming: the deadly bastard is still there waiting for innocent victims. Members of our household (my husband, stepson and mum) are for various reasons among the most vulnerable. Me too, actually: 67 years old, with a long history of smoking. The uncertainty and fear of the future are demoralising. I feel apathetic, tired and weepy, which I absolutely hate. I even find it impossible to concentrate on my prayers. What’s happening to me? Or rather, to us? Most of my friends confess they feel the same.

The well-known quip about the importance of living in the present has suddenly got across: when the future is foggy and frightening, the best thing to do is to focus on “now” with a bit of short time planning. After I finish this paragraph I’ll go and make myself a cup of hot creamy coffee, with a biscuit. Oh, I need to put biscuits on my shopping list for next Wednesday’s delivery...

There’s safety and calming normality in manageable everyday routines. A strange dialogue is going on in my head: “You are becoming an ostrich hiding your head in the sand, what a shame!” – “Yes, but what can I do? How can I cushion the impacts of the disaster, let alone prevent it?” – “Follow the rules of the lockdown and wash your hands”. – “I do! In fact, I wash everything including blueberries with paranoid determination. But how do I stay calm? A weepy bundle of nerves is no big asset in an enclosed disinfected household...”

Keeping calm is now a priority. None of us has any experience of the surrealistic “Stephen-King” landscape that has suddenly become reality. Accepting it is quite a challenge for a normal human brain. I guess one of the reasons for the lack of concentration is that our minds are struggling to download and process a huge new programme of adaptation to the changed world. It slows us down and makes us restless at the same time. Introverts seem to cope with the task better than extraverts, who, like me, are desperately trying to connect with the outer world, if only online.

WhatsApp groups, Zoom meetings, Skype chats... The Internet that used to be an escape from the real world, has now become a vehicle that takes me back to reality linking me with life-long friends, recent acquaintances and family members scattered all over the planet. We are talking about life, discussing books and movies, sharing facts and jokes, holding quiz events and “Would I lie to you” parties, we are even singing together sometimes (the absence of the audience is a huge bonus).

It feels like we are building resistance to the common enemy, a kind of herd immunity, and who knows: perhaps we will win this war.

Olga Grishina (Sheffield)

The Coming of the Franciscan Friars to Nottingham, the Plagues, and other Medieval Matters.

On Tuesday 10th September 1224 a small boat landed near Dover, and from it there disembarked nine rather ragged men. They were Franciscan Friars, sent to England by St Francis of Assisi, who was yet still alive. Roughly dressed in their cassocks, belted with rope, barefooted and with no money or possessions, they made their way to Canterbury, London, and then Oxford. As they travelled, other men joined them, and within a few years they had arrived in Nottingham. They settled in the southwest corner of the Broadmarsh area, the poorest and most disease-ridden part of the town, by the river Leen, and within sight of the Castle. King Henry III, by then aware of their evident godliness and cheerful piety, granted them timber from the royal forests of Sherwood, for the building of a simple chapel and friary. From the very start, they set about tending and preaching to the poor of Nottingham. As St Francis made very clear in his First Rule;

The brothers shall appropriate nothing to themselves, neither a place nor anything, but as pilgrims and strangers in this world, serving God in poverty and humility, they shall with confidence go seeking alms. Nor need they be ashamed, for the Lord made himself poor for us in this world.

For Francis this mystical destitution was the central core of his Christianity, a literal imitation of the earthly life of Jesus, and it derived from a firm belief in the absolute poverty of Christ. Few records of their daily activities in Nottingham survive, but from other medieval chronicles it can be assumed that they acted in conformity with all the mendicant Franciscan friars of Europe and the Holy Land of the time. With little regard for their own welfare or health, possessing absolutely nothing, cheerfully begging, singing joyful hymns as they travelled barefoot around the land in all conditions, at times in winter leaving bloodstained footprints in the snow, they were regarded by some with hostility as fools and madmen, or as suspicious and disreputable heretics and drunkards. Yet the majority of the English rapidly developed a great affection for them. They were known for visiting the imprisoned, tending to the lepers and to all the sick, giving sanctuary to those in trouble with the law, and for interceding on behalf of those excommunicated by the Church. Although the Black Death pandemic had not yet arrived, pestilence and disease was an everyday fact of life, and also of death.

The Nottingham Friary (Greyfriars) was part of the Wardenship of Oxford. One of the early Minister Provincials of the English Franciscans was William of Nottingham, (d.1254) who was also acquainted with the Franciscan schools of theology in Oxford, and who attended there the lectures of Robert Grosseteste, the famed and saintly Bishop of Lincoln. William served under Pope Innocent IV and travelled with his

nephew Opizzo to the Holy Land when the latter was appointed Latin Patriarch of Antioch, with William being made Bishop of Loadicea (in Phrygia in present day Turkey) a city which had been an important Bishopric since Apostolic times. He was known to ‘think nothing of incurring the wrath of the powerful for the sake of justice’, and is recorded to have unceremoniously pulled down certain new and rather grand stone friary buildings and rebuilt the original humble wooden structures in their place. (He is reported to have said, ‘I did not become a friar for the purpose of building walls’) Because of his independent and outspoken frame of mind, he was deposed as Minister Provincial by the Roman Papal curia. The English Franciscan brothers, however, promptly disregarded this and re-elected him unanimously. A century later, another Minister Provincial of the English Franciscans was also a local lad, William II of Nottingham (d 1336). He was the Franciscan Lector at the Oxford schools, was a student of the great Duns Scotus, and wrote a noted *Commentary on the Gospels*.

As the centuries went by, the rich and the powerful continually attempted to shower the Franciscans with gifts, and this eventually became a source of strife and division within them, and some of them, (‘The Spirituels’) controversially sought a drastic return to the original absolute poverty of Francis and his early followers, and were consequently persecuted by the Papacy. Eventually, the Franciscans met the same fate as all the monastics of England, when the rapacious King Henry VIII and his henchman Thomas Cromwell ransacked and destroyed the monasteries. However, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the friars began to return. They have Friaries at Glasshampton in Worcestershire, Alnmouth in Northumberland, and other locations. Their ‘Third Order’ of lay Franciscans is also active around the country (there is a group that meets at the Bridge Chapel in Derby). Happily, in the past decade, and after a hiatus of some years, the Franciscan Capuchin Friars Minor have now returned to Oxford. Several friars are now accommodated at the Anglican Convent of the All Saints Sisters of the Poor, near the Cowley Road. They pursue their theological studies at Blackfriars Hall in the University, and can also be seen going out into the local community to spread the Gospel message by word and example, in their simple brown cassocks and sandals.

It is a notable fact that the veneration of St Francis by ordinary Christians was not unknown in more western parts of the Orthodox world for several centuries, especially in the Greek/Italian Mediterranean where ecclesiastical jurisdiction swung back and forth between Orthodox and Latin influence, and in Constantinople (where early Byzantine frescos of St Francis have recently been discovered). This is not surprising, for although the official ‘schism’ between East and West is regarded as having happened on a certain date in 1054, most ordinary Christians would have been unaware of it, or at the very most would have viewed it as yet another distant ecclesiastical/ political dispute with little relevance to their own daily lives and devotions. Orthodox Christians who were aware of St Francis and who regarded him simply as a man of God would have been taken aback to be eventually informed that their Francis (Il Povarello - ‘The Poor One’) was in fact now a Papist heretic. As Bishop Kallistos Ware has written, ‘Even after 1054 friendly relations between East and West continued. The two parts of Christendom were not yet conscious of any great gulf between them... Long after the anathemas of 1054, long after the sack of Constantinople in 1204, long after the formal repudiation of the Council of Florence in 1484, Greeks and Latins continued in practice to quietly ignore the separation and to behave as if no breach in communion had occurred’. A still little-known example of this is the fact that a Latin Benedictine monastery of St Mary continued to exist on Mount Athos for a couple of centuries after the official schism. It is thought to have been in existence from around 980 AD to 1287 AD and was founded by Italian monks from the city state of Amalfi. It seems to have been an example of long-term peaceful co-existence between east and west on Athos.

In conclusion, one can say that the voluntary destitution of Francis and his followers identified them closely with the most deprived and despised sections of society. In his rule of 1223, Francis wrote;

God made himself poor for us in this world. This is the pinnacle of the most exalted poverty, and it is this, my dearest brothers, that has made you heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven, poor in temporal things but rich in virtue. This should be your portion, because it leads to the land of the living. And to this poverty,

my beloved brothers, you must cling with all your heart, and wish never to have anything else under heaven, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, one might quote the major German Protestant Church historian, Von Harnack, who was certainly no great admirer of monasticism. Of 'the poor one' he wrote, 'If ever there was a man who practiced what he preached, that man was Francis'.

Philip Gorski

The Saint Gregory Foundation

Barbara Bates is our link with the work of the St Gregory Foundation which was set up by Irina von Schlippe: *Helping vulnerable children and families in Russia and Georgia*. This is the charity for which we have a collection at our Deanery Conference.

2020 How Corona virus will affect the summer plans of the St Gregory Foundation.

As quarantine conditions begin to ease in Russia (although with strong regional variations) we are advised that some of our summer activities can go ahead.

Our summer camps

At the moment, our colleagues at Sunflower, are planning to run two summer camps for parents who grew up in orphanages. One is for families with young children, and the other for families with teenagers. Over the next month, they will be working out what precautions they will need to take to reduce risks

In Kondopoga, the daily lunches for children from poor families will be needed more than ever. The parish won't be hosting lunches at parish house, but they will be delivering food parcels, school supplies and, where needed, clothes and medicines to families. For those who have internet access, the parish is working out a programme of online classes in crafts, cooking etc.

Supporting orphanage leavers

Sunflower's work goes on, supporting both families and young orphanage-leavers now online and by phone. Initially, they were in crisis mode: checking that their young people had money to buy food, and delivering food parcels where necessary. Many orphanage-leavers work in the informal economy, so didn't get any cash benefits when they suddenly lost their jobs. In some cases, the charity has also paid for internet connections, so the young people can keep in touch. The financial difficulties have been joined by a series of practical problems, which Sunflower have been helping their young people to work through.

The first problem seems an unlikely one. The young people, although they use their phones a lot, found it difficult to download and use new services like Zoom. With their anxiety levels high, it was difficult for them to follow a simple set of instructions. They needed a lot of virtual hand-holding before they could establish regular online sessions

Once that issue was resolved, the young people living independently have needed help with:

- planning their budget
- cooking with the ingredients they can get hold of (many are used to eating at work or out at cafés),
- working out where to go for help if they feel ill or if they have lost their job
- and understanding the guidelines and new patterns of behaviour

The groups have also been thinking about how they can support each other through these difficult times. As for many of us, some unexpected positives have emerged. Through the increased use of social media, young people from the different groups, who rarely met before, have been getting to know each other. Orphanage-leavers are extremely vulnerable during this crisis. Sunflower's approach of building resilience, financial, practical and emotional is absolutely vital.

Thoughts from Vaila

I am haunted by the over burdening of the earth by the human population. The God of the Old Testament assures faithful Jews that their progeny will be as the sands of the sea.

Descriptions of the effects of the one child policy on the hearts of Chinese women are too agonising to describe. "Foetuses on the rubbish heaps": sadder than the grief of the pro-lifers.

Here we are on June 4, the anniversary of Tiananmen Square with Beijing determined to promote the policy of the central government at no matter what cost.

Freedom is to be abolished in Hong Kong today, in Europe tomorrow? I know of no-one and nowhere who examines these things from a Christian Perspective. It had better be from outside our church, being so controversial. But who?

SURPRISED BY JOY

Too often, I suggest, we look at the negative rather than the positive side of life. Like everything that exists, humans are born to die, and the knowledge of death is a dark undercurrent, spoiling what ought to be an unalloyed joy in the awareness that we are alive. Of course, life is blighted in all kinds of ways by what is outside and beyond our power to rectify: the universality of human greed and deceit; bereavement; the inexplicable sufferings of our friends and fellow creatures. These are things we have to live with; but they should not destroy, though they may temporarily impair, the element of joy we feel in being alive. What often does so is the subconscious knowledge that 'somewhere in the waste the Shadow sits and waits for me.'

Theologians tend to call this knowledge *corruption* and refer it back to Original Sin. *Corruption* is an appropriate word to use in this context, for just as death leads rapidly to the corruption and decay of the body, so the awareness of our own forthcoming death (however distant), is apt to corrupt and poison the mind by anticipation. From time to time we may fall victim to non-clinical depression, the 'Monday morning feeling', anxiety, insecurity, or even absenteeism. In extreme cases we may virtually opt out of life, preferring sterile idleness with its illusion of ease and permanence to a life of effort and involvement, with its attendant risks of discomfort, pain and failure (yet the beginning of wisdom is the realization that we all fail).

We tend to suffer from this kind of melancholia more than we used to because life is in some ways easier. We are less constrained than previous generations by the business of sheer survival; less hardened against life's shocks; and there is more time to sit and brood. Also, the relief of anxiety has become a state-sponsored industry, which was almost bound to make things worse. One thing however is clear: the shadow of death gains in potency if we are alone and without moral support. It is strongest of all where there is no love.

The early Celtic saints wandered across the face of the earth seeking 'the place of their resurrection'. Where they felt they had found it they settled, and lived out the remainder of their lives. We too need to seek that place, not geographically but psychologically. We may find it in a moment of sudden illumination, in another person, in the miracle and wonder of creation, or in a hundred other ways. Yet however it comes, it brings with it the perception that life itself is miraculous, divine, immortal. And because that perception nullifies not the fact but the *power* of death, we begin to experience an inexpressible and unexpected joy. We are able to say with Mother Julian of Norwich, 'All shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.' The Christian Gospel is, first and foremost, a Gospel not of penitence but of *Joy*. And as Jesus reminds us: 'that joy, no man shall take from you' (John 16 :22).

Deacon Ian.

Notes from Fr Julian

"Many complain against technology. Many accuse modern technology for all the woes in the world. Is technology really to blame, or those who create technology and use it? Is a wooden cross to blame if somebody crucifies someone on it? Is a hammer to blame if a neighbour breaks his neighbour's skull? Technology does not feel good or evil. The same pipes can be used for drinking water or the sewer. Evil does not come from unfeeling, dead technology, but from the dead hearts of people."

St. Nikolai Velimirovich

For me, and I suspect for a number of others, the wisdom of St Nikolai has become very apparent during the pandemic. A number of our community have been able to use assorted, and much maligned, social media platforms to engage with Orthodox service both here and abroad. We are particularly grateful to Fr Peter Scorer, of our Deanery, for streaming services from his home.

Fr Peter serves the Divine Liturgy every Sunday at 9.30 am and vesper/vigil on Wednesdays and Saturdays. (Using Facebook view: **Orthodox Parish of the Holy Prophet Elias**)

It's not only archaeologists who can learn a lot from rubbish

On wheely bin and box day before the collection, on an early morning trip to the corner shop, I glanced in the glass and metal recycling boxes. Wine bottles and beer cans were very prolific. The other things in many boxes were oven cleaner and furniture spray cans. Cat and dog food cans were on view with the labels still showing. Other cans had the labels torn off apart from one house where they appeared to be addicted to spaghetti hoops in tomato sauce. A fortnight later I cast an eye at the same house and they are still eating them.

Lockdown home coiffures has had some interesting results. Success or failure seemed to be the luck of the draw. One granddaughter did quite a good job on her sister's hair but she had first practised on the dog!

Frances

*We have now received notification from Jeanne, St Aidan Church warden, that the church is now being opened for limited times and for **PRIVATE PRAYER ONLY**.*

Please see Jeanne's message below.

PRIVATE PRAYER AT CHURCH

We are able to open Church for Private Prayer with effect from 15th June. Church will be open from 1pm to 2pm on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Social distancing must be maintained at all times. Use the hand gel provided when you enter the building. Face masks must be worn

The garden at the side of church is always open if you wish to sit there for personal reflection and prayer.

Deuteronomy Ch 6 v31
 Be strong and of good courage, fear not nor
 be afraid, for the Lord thy God will not fail
 thee, nor forsake thee.

CALENDAR AUG – 2020		
AUG 1 Sat 1	Beginning of the Dormition Fast Procession of the Holy Life-giving Cross	Vigil 5.00 pm
Sun 2	8th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Protomartyr Stephen	Liturgy 12. noon
Thurs 6	THE HOLY TRANSFIGURATION Liturgy in Stow Minster	10.30am
Sat 8	Afterfeast of the Transfiguration 9th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST St Blane of Dunblane, St Tikhon, Bishop of Voronezh	Liturgy Sat 10.30 am
Sat 15	DORMITION OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY	Vigil 5.00
Sun 16	THEOTOKOS AND EVER VIGIN MARY	Liturgy 7.45am
Sat 29 Sun 30	Beheading of St John Baptist 12th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST St Aidan Bishop of Lindisfarne and Patron	Vigil 5.00 Liturgy 12 noon
SEPT		
Sat 5	13th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	Vespers 5.00pm
Sun 6	Prophet Zacharia and Righteous Elizabeth, St Bega of Copeland	Liturgy 12 noon
Tues 8	NATIVITY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY St Betti of Wirksworth	

Stow post code: **LN1 2DE**. We hope the planned service will be permitted. If so, please bring a packed lunch as the Cross Keys is unlikely to be open. Further information will be given at a later date when we know more.

**SERVICE TIMES FOR JULY WILL BE
CIRCULATED WHEN PERMITTED**

Sun 5th **4th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**St Athanasius, founder of Mt Athos,
St Sergius of Radonezh.**

Sat 11th **5th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

Synaxis of Archangel Gabriel,
Great Prince Vladimir, Enlightener of Russia

Sun 19th **6th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

St Seraphim of Sarov
St Margaret of Antioch
The Imperial Royal Family of Russia
Grand Duchess Elizabeth and Nun Barbara



..... now it is the turn for the roses – *Cecile Brunner*



Spring has come and Spring has gone