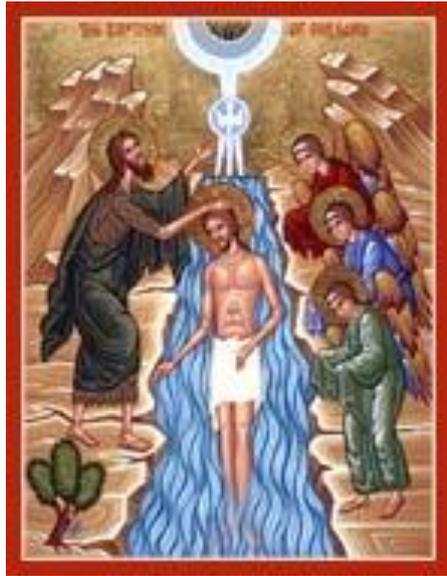


ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD NOTTINGHAM



NEWSLETTER

Jan –Feb 2021 : Cost £1.00



Thou hast appeared today to the world, and Thy light O Lord, has been signed upon us who with full knowledge sing to Thee. Thou hast appeared, O Unapproachable Light

Kontakion Tone 4 Jan 6

THE PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD, NOTTINGHAM

Worshipping in the Church of St Aidan,

Arnold Road, Basford, NG6 0DN

Rector: Revd Fr David Gill 0115-9622351

Priest: Revd Fr Julian Lowe 0115-9780574

Deacon: Ian Thompson 01724-337521

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Fr Julian Lowe

Dn Ian Thompson

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FATHER JULIAN'S LETTER

Newsletter: How ~~was~~ is Jesus found?



As I prepare this piece, I am very conscious of the prevailing uncertainty around us. The Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect most every part of our lives and we have all had to make sacrifices and learn to adapt to new ways of staying in touch with family, friends and loved ones. The question that seems to be dominant right now is will we be allowed to have a ‘**Normal**’ Christmas. But what does a ‘normal’ Christmas mean? When I asked that question of one person, they suggested that ‘normal’ was another way of saying ‘Traditional’; but what does traditional mean?

I think it is safe to say, that for many, a traditional Christmas would be a log fire in a holly decorated fireplace, a Christmas tree bedecked with baubles and surrounded by gifts. A Christmas dinner of turkey, with all the trimmings, enough for everyone present and more besides, etc, etc, etc. I’m sure you will have your own mental images of what a traditional Christmas looks like. Sadly, for many this kind of Christmas is not possible. But what is more heart-breaking is that for many, many people the whole significance of Christmas has been lost or has never been known.

Last Christmas I gave a homily looking at the Angel/Fairy that sits on top of many Christmas trees. This Christmas I would like us to consider a different Christmas Tree Topper – The ‘Star’. If you were asked why a star features on the top of many Christmas trees, I wonder how you would answer? The image we are often given is one of the three Magi, or wise men, searching for the new-born king and being guided by the star to the stable in Bethlehem. This image is not wrong, but I want to suggest that it is incomplete!

The four Gospels in the New Testament present four unique and yet complimentary pictures of Jesus — and this is evident in the way they record the birth of Jesus: Matthew presents Jesus as the King of the Jews, worthy of obedience and worship; Luke shows a humane Saviour that brings good tidings and liberation to the poor, neglected, and marginalized; Mark presents Jesus as the Lord that serves in secret and thus shows a new way, free from the fight for supremacy and status; and finally, John presents Jesus as God, who comes as the Word, becomes flesh and this shines in the darkness, to bring a new beginning in this world.

Of these four Gospels two offer narratives regarding the birth our Lord, Jesus. If we look at the account given by the Holy Apostle and Evangelist, Matthew we read how the wise men from the east arrive at Jerusalem asking, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” (Mat 2 v2). The star has led the Magi to Jerusalem and to King Herod.

Now, this is where things get really interesting. Matthew goes on to tell us that when Herod heard this, he was troubled and gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, in order to ascertain where

the Christ was to be born. These chief priest and scribes told Herod “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet; ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’” (Mat 2 v6). It is the words of the prophet, the Holy Scriptures, that identifies the birthplace of the King of the Jews as Bethlehem and it is Herod who sent the Magi to Bethlehem (v8). Not the star!

The star does go ahead of them; “When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.” (v9). It was through the Holy Scriptures that Jesus was found, and it is through the Holy Scriptures that he can still be found!

We can get into all kinds of clever debates as to whether the scriptures **are** the word of God or **contain** the word of God. What I hope is beyond question is that the scriptures are the **language** of God! As Christians, we need to be people of the Scriptures or “people of the Book”. We see this clearly in our icons. Arguably the bishops are the Church’s main leaders and pastors, and when a bishop appears in an icon, he is usually carrying a book — i.e., the Gospel. Reading the Holy Scriptures is important; for if prayer is where we speak to God, The Holy Scripture is one of the best places we can listen and hear Him.

Coming after a long process of development, which has taken centuries, we receive the Holy Scriptures as a gift. In this Nativity Season let us receive the Scriptures as a Christmas Gift. –

A Gift for life (eternal), not just for Christmas!

May Our Lord bless us all in the coming year!

Fr Julian

Clergy Laity Meeting

This year saw our first ‘virtual’ ‘Deanery’ Clergy Laity Meeting (CLM), held on 31st October.

This meeting included the electronic election of two lay members of the CLM to serve on the Deanery Executive.

Lisa von Schlippe and Tina Lowe were duly elected.

Barry Dryden was also re-elected as Treasurer and Fr Julian was elected to the Deanery Executive

Refreshingly, there were no allegations of voter fraud or illegal votes!

OUR LIFE

Eternal Remembrance. Monica Brameld, a most faithful and founder member of our parish, who was also choir director for many many years, fell asleep in the Lord on 16th November. She is the widow of Fr Peter of blessed memory who fell asleep in the Lord 14 years ago. Her funeral was held on Friday 27th November in Southwell Minster to which she had a strong attachment. Fr Peter had been ordained there, she and Peter were married there, whilst their son, Mark, had been a member of the choir whilst at the Minster school. With covid restrictions, only 30 persons were permitted to attend and the service had to be shortened. It was conducted by Fr Julian with Katharine Dryden as cantor, who sang beautifully. Fr David read the Epistle, delivered the funeral oration and gave the final blessing. Afterwards all were able to walk to the graveyard at Holy Trinity church, a short distance away. The morning had begun very cold but by the time we processed to the graveside, the sun was shining and the temperature had risen considerably providing a bright day for the occasion, despite the sadness we all felt. Fr David led the committal and there was peace as we gave a good send off to such a remarkable woman, an inspiration to all, as she displayed love, joy, peace, kindness, patience, and so many gifts of the Holy Spirit. May she rest in peace in perpetual light.

Fr David's Funeral Oration:

MONICA BRAMELD Today we say Goodbye, Farewell, to a most wonderful lady who has inspired us all by her courage, her determination and amazing ability to cope with significant disablement. Monica suffered from polio as a very young child and had to spend the first ten years of her life in hospital, separated from her parents who were only allowed to visit her once a week. Despite all difficulties and without formal schooling, she passed her eleven plus and was admitted to an excellent Grammar School in Lincoln, the city of her birth. More than this, she was placed in the second year because of her academic standing. Later, after undergoing surgery to her feet and spending a whole year bedridden, she studied Social Science at Liverpool University. Whilst there, in the mid-sixties, and with her broad love of music she attended the Cavern Club where she met the Beatles and always loved their music. She worked as Medical Social Worker in the City Hospital Nottingham, fulfilling her desire always to help people in need. It was there that she met her husband to be Peter, a visiting curate, and they were married soon afterwards in this Minster. (Southwell).

Despite the severely disabling polio and a disrupted childhood with no formal schooling, and perhaps to the surprise of many, she did well academically, and coped well at work. After marriage she was told that it would be too dangerous for her to have children, she had three, two daughters and a son. We see a woman with great strength and determination, allowing nothing to stand in her way. Now she was also the wife of a priest working with him in several parishes; in Nottingham; in Wiltshire and then in three parishes in the Vale of Belvoir, where Peter also became Rural Dean. They moved to Southwell when Peter retired and soon were able to become Orthodox and founder members of Our Parish 25 years ago. When Peter died very prematurely 14 year ago, it was wondered how Monica would manage without his support, and it was difficult for her, but with characteristic determination and an ability to cope in all adversity she was able to live alone, keeping the front door always unlocked so that she could welcome all who visited. Sarah and Mark describe how she was always incredibly patient, making light of all ailments. She had a strong sense of right and wrong and did not sway from her convictions (as many of us have noticed). She spent her life helping others, quietly and discreetly: a lady who had turned all the difficulties she had endured into a great positivity. In later life, Monica surprised us again by becoming a traveller, enjoying Paris, Lisbon, Spain, Malta and even travelling to Brazil. She enjoyed life, with a good sense of humour and hearty laughter. And, as a good Orthodox she enjoyed food and a couple of glasses of good wine. In Monica we see a fine witness of one who loved responding to God. She would have discovered that He loves us all and cannot stop doing so. God sees the Will to Goodness in everyone and He rejoices in this because, such goodness is His Goodness. If abundance of goodness brings us close to God, in Monica, God will have seen such abundance and will love her dearly. In the Paschal icon of Our Lord, descending to the resting place of souls, we see Him reaching out to take hold of the hands of Adam and Eve to raise them up into the Paradise, which He had now restored by His Resurrection. In the same way he will have taken the hand of Monica, this amazing Christian, and lifted her to be with Him in Paradise; perhaps even into heavenly Places with the saints, where we hope to join her in due course. May she rest in peace in perpetual light.



Divine Liturgy Our public worship was suspended again in November so its was a great joy to be able to meet again on Saturday 5th December to celebrate the Feast of St Nicholas. It had been a joy to serve Liturgy throughout September and October and then frustration with further lockdown. We hope to be able to celebrate the Feast of Nativity on 24/ 25 December and deferred Theophany on Saturday, 9th January (we are not able to use St Aidans during weekday mornings because food is being admirably prepared for those in need by St Aidan members).

Fr David was able to serve Liturgy in Leeds in October but this was not possible in November because both Nottingham and Leeds were under tier three restrictions. He will endeavour to be in Leeds on Sunday, 13th December.

Congratulations and Many Years. Fr David served Divine Liturgy on Saturday, 17 October to mark his 25 years as a priest in the Orthodox Church and a previous 14 years of ordained ministry in the Church of England. It was also a time to remember that this year is the 25 year Jubilee of our Parish. Fr David was ordained in the Cathedral in Ennismore Gardens, London on 16 October, 1995 and served Liturgy for the first time on St Thomas Day, 19 October (Old Calendar) 1995.

Congratulations and Many Years., Ryan and Letitia Cracknell who used to live in Nottingham are now our most distant parish members. On Tuesday 10th November, baby Harrison was born weighing in at **10 lbs.** Letitia and Harrison are both doing well and are now back at home with Ryan, Emilia and Kathryn.

I am sure you will all join me in rejoicing in this wonderful news and in wishing them all every blessing. A photo is on the inside of the back cover.

Good News from Vera in Chester

Congratulations to Dn John and Vera Slavtcheva-Petkova on the birth of their daughter Ioana on Sept 24th. The family moved from Nottingham to Chester in 2012. We miss them and their lovely children Zoya, Nadia and Jordan. We have yet to meet little Ioana.

Picture of baby Ioana is on the inside of the back cover.

A little more from the Petkovs

Vera writes ‘I’m sure that Zoya is still fond of heavenly bars but hasn’t recently had a chance to taste them. She is 20 years old now, a university student in Manchester reading English. Nadia is nearly 13, in year 8 at secondary school and completely devoted to netball, and Jordan is 9½ years old in year 5 still at primary school.

We miss you all and hope to be able to visit you in Nottingham once the coronavirus madness is over!

The Nine Ranks – Part 13



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 **Seventy Apostles** are those whom the Lord chose, in addition to the original Twelve Apostles, to go before Him into the cities He would visit (Luke 10:1) and lay down the groundwork and infrastructure for the Early Church. According to the Gospel of Luke, the only gospel in which they appear (Luke 10:1–24), Jesus appointed them and sent them out in pairs to preach the Gospel. The Twelve generally remained at Christ's side, serving as witnesses to His life; but the Seventy preceded Him in every place He visited.

The Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles is commemorated on January 4 and was established by the Orthodox Church to indicate the equal honour of each of the Seventy. Besides the celebration of the Synaxis of the Holy Apostles, the Church also celebrates the memory of each of them during the course of the year. The Church in particular venerates and praises the Seventy Apostles because they taught us to honour the Trinity One in Essence and Undivided.

We do not know the names of all of the original Seventy, for as Saint John the Evangelist tells us, the time came when:

"...many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then said Jesus to the Twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" (John 6:66-67)

As the Lord's Passion approached, the number of His disciples decreased further: hardly any of the Seventy remained, and one of the Twelve betrayed Him.

After the Resurrection, Matthias was numbered with the Twelve, while the ranks of the Seventy were gradually filled with men newly converted to piety by the Twelve Apostles and by Saint Paul.

Hippolytus of Rome (+235) produced an early list of the Seventy Apostles. However it was regarded as dubious, and was put in the Appendix of his works in the voluminous collection of Early Church Fathers.

Dorotheus of Tyre (+362) traditionally is the one credited with recounting the names of the Seventy Apostles. These names were also given in the *Chronicon Paschale*, a 7th-century Byzantine universal chronicle of the world. However, there were errors in the list attributed to Saint Dorotheus, including the repetition of four names, the omission of other names, and the inclusion of some men who were Apostles at first, but later fell from the faith and the dignity of their office.

It was St. Dimitri of Rostov (+1709) who consulted the Holy Scripture, the traditions passed down by the Fathers, and the accounts of trustworthy historians in attempting to correct the mistakes and uncertainties in the list when compiling his collection of *Lives of the Saints*. A widely accepted canon in the Orthodox Church is thus given in "*The Great Collection of the Lives of the Saints, Volume 5: January*", compiled by St. Demetrius of Rostov

Inter faith week

Each year Inter Faith Week begins on Remembrance Sunday and runs until the following Sunday (8th -15 November). The purpose of this week is to highlight the good work done by local faith, inter faith and faith-based groups and organisations, to draw new people into inter faith learning and cooperation, to enable greater interaction between people of different backgrounds, help develop integrated and neighbourly communities, celebrates diversity and commonality and opens new possibilities for partnership.

It is the aim of Inter Faith Week to:

- strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels.
- Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society.
- Increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs.

As part of the University of Nottingham's contribution to Inter Faith Week Fr Julian was invited to join a multifaith panel as they host an interfaith conversation looking at the role faith can play in times of crisis; addressing questions such as: How does faith help in times of uncertainty and crisis? How has the Covid-19 pandemic changed faith practices for better or worse? How does faith fit into today's society?

The panel included Muslim, Orthodox Christian, Lutheran, Buddhist and Jewish perspectives with opportunities for audience members to participate in the conversation, ask questions and share their own individual experiences.

What became very clear to Fr Julian was that we need to accept inter faith dialogue not only as proper, but also necessary, as we inevitably interact with those of different faiths and religions. Our Orthodox faith requires us to recognize and accepts the mandate to seek Truth and to follow the Holy Spirit wherever He leads. This may indeed require us to explore other religions or philosophies when his Truth is to be found there.

Observation

In mid-November Fr Julian received a complaint from an Orthodox Christian, living outside of our parish, suggesting that the above use of a 'Holy image' was inappropriate. After a very brief and courteous telephone conversation between Fr Julian and the manager of the Lace Market Hotel it was agreed that the image was/is indeed inappropriate and, not wanting to cause any offence, the poster is being removed. Thank you, Steve (manager).



Best wishes to all our readers (whichever date you celebrate)

*Merry
Christmas*



Thought for Today

Prometheus Bound, a play by Aeschylus, Prometheus is chained to a rock as punishment for giving humans the gift of fire (and thus technology). In addition, he gave us another gift: he made it impossible for us to foresee our own deaths. But since we still know that we can suffer and die (because we observe others doing so), this ignorance and uncertainty tends to make us miserable. We can use technology to predict the future, but this can also make things worse if the predictions are both accurate and dire. The chorus in the play asks Prometheus, “What cure did you discover for their misery?” And Prometheus responds, “I planted firmly in their hearts blind hopefulness.” But blind hope is a fickle companion for our woe. It is not enough. Still, by forcing our gaze to the future, hope can serve another purpose: it can motivate us to prepare. Microbes have shaped our evolutionary trajectory since the origin of our species. Epidemics have done so for many thousands of years. Like the myth of Apollo’s arrows, they have been a part of our story all along. We have outlived them before, using the biological and social tools at our disposal. Life will return to normal. Plagues always end. And, like plagues, hope is an enduring part of the human condition."

(Reference: Christakis, Nicholas A. (2020). *Apollo's Arrow: The Profound and Enduring Impact of Coronavirus on the Way We Live*. Little, Brown and Company. Kindle Edition)

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Is it true that when a person is baptized or received into Orthodoxy they must take the name of an Orthodox saint?

This seems to be the almost invariable rule nowadays, though it can be interpreted in slightly different ways. It is however a matter which is fraught with historical inconsistencies.

1. If you already bear the name of an Orthodox, Apostolic or Old Testament saint then usually you are allowed to keep it. This also applies to linguistic variations. My Christian name is Ian, a variant of John, and when I was received the question of a change of name was never mooted.

2. When a country, tribe or people was evangelized it seems always to have been the custom that existing names were recognized and accepted. Think of our early English saints: Hilda (meaning battle), Edith (rich war), Chad (battle), Alfred (elf-counsel), Edgar (happy spear), Edward (rich guard), Herbert (army-bright): all, clearly, expressions of a militant, Teutonic and pagan culture. Likewise Oswald, Oswin, Oswy, Edwin,

Cuthbert, Guthlac, and all those names beginning with *Æthel-* (*Æthelwold, Æthelstan, Æthelthryth, etc.*) were entirely unknown to Christianity before the seventh century. It was the same in Slavonic countries (Boris, Vladimir, Olga, Ludmilla), and I have yet to find an earlier namesake of St Herman of Alaska, who died as recently as 1837.

If we go back to the first three centuries of the Christian era we see the same thing happening. Dionysius (Dennis), Bacchus, Mercurios, Hermes, Athena, Aphrodite, Helena and Barbara were all popular pre-Christian names, and six of them were the names of classical gods! They subsequently *became* the names of saints (and, yes, there is even a Dionysius mentioned in the New Testament); but to start with these names were only Christian by adoption. All such examples pose uncomfortable precedents, especially for those Orthodox Christians who like to imagine that there is an inflexible rule-book.

3. To converts born in the UK it can be a real hardship to have to relinquish the name of any Western saint who died after 1054. The list of those who are not recognized includes Francis of Assisi, Hugh of Avalon bishop of Lincoln, Thomas of Canterbury, Richard of Chichester, Thomas More, and the great English mystics Richard Rolle and Julian of Norwich, whose books are still read all over the world. There is a lack of consistency even here since all Eastern Orthodox jurisdictions recognise Isaac of Nineveh (c.613-700) who was a non-Chalcedonian East Syrian. Also, one would have expected some latitude in favour of the saints I have mentioned since in 1965 Patriarch Athenagoras and Pope Paul VI agreed to “remove from memory and from the mind of the Church the sentence of excommunication which has divided our two Churches since 1054.” An interesting contrast to the current Eastern Orthodox position was that of the late Coptic Pope Shenouda, who, after consecrating an ex-Anglican church, pointed to the stained-glass windows emblazoned with images of medieval saints and remarked, “These are now *your* saints. Get to know them. Venerate them!”

4. It will be said that taking a saint’s name is good because it offers the child the patronage of the saint in question. But one can have a patron saint without taking his or her name (Guthlac’s patron saint was St Bartholomew). And talking of patronage don’t forget that you also have a guardian angel!

5. On the matter of names I must also confess to a theological anxiety. It is not just that the present system gives the nod to particularism (“Eastern Orthodoxy is the one and only true Church”); it also sits uneasily with a basic tenet of Christianity, namely that *everything* - the whole of creation - exists to be Christianized and transfigured. Yet how can that happen if certain names are off-limits? You may say that this is a small matter and not worth the fuss. But a person’s name is bound up with his or her identity, and anything which breaches a basic principle is cause for disquiet. As Peter Abelard expressed the matter in his splendid hymn *O quanta qualia sunt illa sabbata* (echoing 1 Cor.15: 28):

God shall be all, and in all ever blest.

Deacon Ian.

BAKERY HYGIENE



The wonderful work done by our hosts at St Aidan's



Please note that the St Aidan cooks have hygiene standards which are immaculate – not like those shown in the picture on the previous page!
Frances

St Aidan's Church building has been the location for a meals delivery and takeaway service since 23rd March 2020. This provision was an immediate response to the national lockdown due to Covid -19 and the closure of Sherwood Community Centre, from which Christine's Community Café was based.

Meals are prepared to order and our customers have come to us by word of mouth, from the parish, the church and families of key workers already linked to the café, and more recently, from leaflets delivered to homes in the parish of St Leodegarius.

The opportunity to open the church doors at 12.30 each day for collection of meals has provided a lifeline for several people living alone, benefitting from a walk and brief conversation.

Thank you to all who have shopped, prepared and delivered meals; and to yourselves, who have changed arrangements for midweek services so that the meals can be prepared, and to all who have prayed and spread the news of the meals in the community.

Meals are charged at a realistic rate and any surplus goes into the maintenance and repair costs of St Aidan's. The government furlough scheme has enabled people to volunteer during this time.

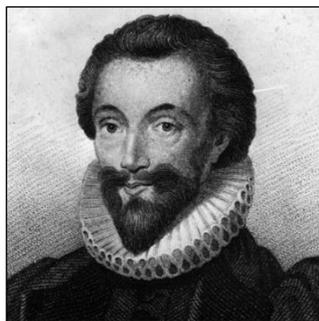
We wait with eager anticipation to see the way forward in 2021

Christine Batchelor
Paul Stevenson

No Man is an Island John Donne 1572-1631

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

John Donne was an English poet, scholar, soldier and secretary born into a Catholic family, a remnant of the Catholic Revival, who reluctantly became a cleric in the Church of England. He was Dean of St Paul's Cathedral in London



High Flight

by

John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds, — and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of — wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air . . .

Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or ever eagle flew —
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

This poem is in the public domain.

CALENDAR JAN – FEB 2021		
We continue to meet on Saturday for the Sunday Liturgy Vespers is usually served on Friday evening at 5.00 pm except when the vigil is at 7.00 pm		
JAN		
Sat 2	The Circumcision of Our Lord No Services	
Fri 8	Vigil of Theophany	Vigil 7.00 pm
Sat 9	CELEBRATION OF HOLY THEOPHANY With blessing of the waters	Liturgy 10.30 am
Sat 16	32nd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Sts Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria St Fursey Enlightener of East Anglia	Liturgy 10.30 am
Sat 30	34th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Feast of The Three Hierarchs	Liturgy 10.30 am
FEB		
Fri 5	Celebration of The Meeting	Vigil 7.00 pm
Sat 6	MEETING OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR IN THE TEMPLE	Liturgy 10.30 am
Sat 20	36th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST St Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna St Boisil of Melrose	Liturgy 10.30 am
MAR		
Sat 6	38th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Commemoration of St Theodore the recruit St Felix of Burgundy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste	Liturgy 10.30 am



Emilia and Kathryn Cracknell with their new baby brother Harrison.

Welcome to the world!



Baby Ioana Petkova



Monica Brameld reposed in the Lord, Nov 16th 2020

Memory Eternal