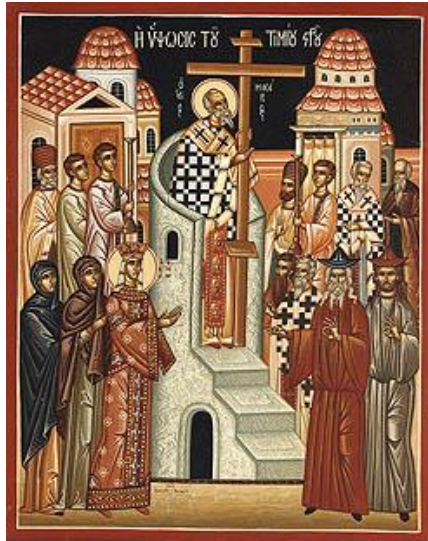


# ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD NOTTINGHAM



## NEWSLETTER

Sept –Oct 2021 : Cost £1.00



O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance  
Grant victory over their enemies to Orthodox Christians,  
and protect Thy people with Thy Cross

Troparion of The Cross,  
Tone One, Sept 14<sup>th</sup>

# 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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Dn Ian Thompson

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## FATHER JULIAN'S LETTER

Are you familiar with the phrase 'The Wonder Years'? What do you understand it to mean?

One interpretation I saw recently suggested that this is that time of life when we wonder where we left the car keys or even what day it is! For me a more agreeable interpretation would be that your 'Wonder Years' are those times, when as a child growing up, you were full of wonder.

I wonder, do you know that the Orthodox Church year begins on the 1<sup>st</sup> September? Do you know why? We are accustomed to think of 1<sup>st</sup> January as New Year's Day and therefore the beginning of the year. However, in the biblical lands and the lands around the Mediterranean Autumn marked the beginning of the new year. The summer harvest was at an end, the crops stored, and the people prepared for a new agricultural cycle; an appropriate time therefore to being a new year. Many of our prayers and hymns we recite at the beginning of the church year remind us that the coming year is God's to give and God's to bless – A YEAR OF THE LORD! The theme of these hymns can be found in Psalm 65(64), a psalm of praise to the awesome Creator, a psalm written by one who is filled with 'wonder'.

There is a clear message in the Scriptures, in the teachings of the Saints and of the Patriarchs of the Orthodox Church that calls us to repent of whatever ways we have abused the earth and to respect and protect the natural environment. This is of course nothing new, this same commission can be found in the Book of Genesis (Gen 1:26; 28:15). This duty, placed upon each of us, is made easier and more rewarding

if we, like the psalmist, can look upon creation with a sense of Wonder! This world of ours is full of wonder and it invites us into the realms of awe and adoration.

For much of our lives we are distracted. Our minds race ahead, we worry about what is coming, or, when things get difficult, we retreat to the past to find comforting memories. The challenge for us is to 'Be still' and to make space for the now; the only place where we can truly meet with the Lord of creation. We need to rediscover the thrill of song of the blackbird as dawn breaks and as evening approaches. To stop and enjoy the beauty of a flower, or to wonder at the industry of the bee, the ant or the spider. As St Gregory of Nyssa wrote, *'for when one considers the universe, can anyone be so simple-minded as not to believe that the Divine is present in everything, pervading, embracing and penetrating it?'*, or, as was revealed to Julian of Norwich, " ... he showed me a little thing, the quantity of a hazel nut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed. ... 'What may this be?' And it was answered generally thus, 'It is all that is made.' I marvelled how it might last, for I thought it might suddenly have fallen to nothing for littleness. And I was answered in my understanding: It lasts and ever shall, for God loves it. And so, have all things their beginning by the love of God. In this little thing I saw three properties. The first is that God made it. The second that God loves it. And the third, that God keeps it."

And so, as the sky becomes more dramatic, the leaves change, we move into the Autumn, my favourite season, let us take time to notice, leaves changing colour, birds migrating, fruits ripe and ready for foraging, seeds falling and dispersing and the many amazing species of fungi growing.

*"Bless, O Lord, the crown of the year with Thy goodness, preserve Thy people in peace, and through the intercessions of the Mother of God, save us. Amen.*

Fr Julian

## OUR LIFE

### **End of restrictions; full use of St Aidan's.**

The good news is that we can now use St Aidan's more fully. St Aidan's will hold their Service of the Word on first and third Sunday of each month so that we have access to the church from 11.15 am and thus can hold our Liturgy at 12 noon. This may also apply to fifth Sundays when there is one.

We shall continue to serve Vespers and Liturgy on Friday and Saturday, 7.00pm and 10.30am, of the First Sunday in the month whilst serving on Saturday and Sunday, 5.00pm and 12noon, on the Third Weekend. This will apply in September and October until we have ascertained whether there is a group which will continue to prefer Liturgy on Saturday mornings at 10.30 am. Please be sure to make your preferences known to Fr Julian.

**Feast of Transfiguration:** Unfortunately, we were unable to celebrate this important feast because of a wedding booked by St Aidan's on Saturday 7th August. However, a number of our parish members joined Fr Julian and Tina in celebrating the Feast and the liturgy with the Chesterfield parish.

**Feast of Dormition:** We were able to celebrate this even more important feast in fullness. There were only six people present at the Vigil on Friday 13th but it was served well. John Paul led the choir for the first time since 'Lockdown'. We always appreciate the help he gives.

At the Liturgy the following day, there were twelve present. Katharine and Caroline sang beautifully which made a very joyful and uplifting celebration. Afterward we were able to sit at tables and have tea and coffee served to us. It was so good to be able to sit and chat and share thoughts with each other; at last a return of the importance of Agape fellowship.

**Feast of St Aidan.** It was not possible to celebrate this Patronal Feast in Church. We are reminded how important is the blessing of local Saints. Some parishes have churches dedicated to important saints of Orthodoxy but what a joy when so many in Great Britain are dedicated to local saints and we have so many. Fr David, on one return from Mount Athos, met a man from Germany who said how lucky we are to have so many British Saints; in Germany they have so few. Many of us have personal experience of Saints' importance in our lives. Some of us have sat in the presence of St Cuthbert in Durham and St Herbert, the hermit who lived on St Herbert's Island on Derwent Water near Keswick. On occasions there has been a strong indication of the presence of St John of Beverley at Beverley Minster and of St Hybald in Hibaldstow when a sweet perfume has filled the atmosphere. Indeed, many such experiences occur across the country where Saints have lived and prayed. Some parishes make the possible mistake of choosing a Patron but it is better to wait in prayer for the Saint to make the adoption. This was true for us, when at the beginning when our parish was newly established, we felt certain that we were being adopted by St Aidan, the Apostle of the North and St Chad, his pupil at Lindisfarne, who became first English Bishop of the Midlands based in Lichfield. It was with sadness that we could not keep the feast of St Aidan, our faithful Patron who, in due course, led us to St Aidan's Church where we have been so warmly welcomed and provided for. May he continue to hold us in his prayerful support.

**Parish of St Bega, St Mungo and St Herbert IN KESWICK:** Fr David who has senior priest responsibility for this parish was not able to visit in 2020 but was able to do so for the Holy Feast of Transfiguration. For this feast, the new Bishop Raphael from Edinburgh visited Keswick and served Vespers of the Feast, with Fr David assisting. It is a great blessing that Fr Raphael has been consecrated bishop, an episcopal office in which he will perform well. He has responsibility for Scotland and the North of England and his

oversight of the parish in Keswick will be vital. He is a very diligent and engaging person and the Community there felt very blessed and uplifted by his visit. Although the feast was on Friday 6th, the Festal Liturgy was transferred to Sunday and Fr David was invited to be celebrant with Fr Christodoulos as concelebrant. Fr Christodoulos is the retired priest from Leyland near Preston and now living with his wife Audrey in Penrith. Fr John Musther values the support of Fr Christodoulos who serves Liturgy once every month. Presbyteria Audrey is also a great asset as are many others in the Parish which continues to be lively, well supported and with up to forty in attendance. The future of the Parish is now more secure; may this continue with God's blessing. Fr David, accompanied by three others of our parish experienced a very joyful and happy occasion.

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### The Nine Ranks – Part 17

Fr Julian



*Removing a particle from this same prosphora and placing it next to the first (thus making the top of a new column), he says:*

Of our fathers among the saints and hierarchs: Basil the Great; Gregory the Theologian; John Chrysostom; **Athanasius and Cyril**; Nicholas of Myra in Lycia; Peter, Alexis, Jonah, and Philip of Moscow; Nicetas of Novgorod; Leontius, of

Rostov;) Patrick Enlightener of Ireland, David of Wales, Augustine of Canterbury and Ninian of Whithorn: and of all the holy hierarchs.

In the half-century after the First Ecumenical Council held in Nicea in 325, if there was one man whom the Arian heretics feared and hated more intensely than any other, it was the blazing lamp of Orthodoxy. Saint Athanasios the Great was born in Alexandria about the year 296. Athanasios received excellent training in Greek letters and especially

in the sacred Scriptures, of which he showed an exceptional knowledge in his writings. Even as a young man he had a remarkable depth of theological understanding; he was only about twenty years old when he wrote his treatise "On the Incarnation." Saint Alexander, the Archbishop of Alexandria, brought him up in piety, ordained him as deacon, and after deposing Arius for his blasphemy against the Divinity of the Son of God, took Athanasios to the First Council in Nicea in 325. Saint Athanasios was to spend the remainder of his life labouring in defence of this Holy Council. In 326, before his death, Alexander appointed Athanasios his successor becoming the 20th Patriarch of the Church of Alexandria, a position which he held for 45 years, 16 of which he spent in exile. As a result of rises and falls in Arianism's influence, he was banished from Alexandria only to be later restored on at least five separate occasions, perhaps as many as seven. During some of his exiles, he spent time with the Desert Fathers, monks and hermits who lived in remote areas of Egypt.

Athanasios was the first to identify the same 27 books of the New Testament that are in use today; up until his Easter letter, various similar lists were in use. However, his list was the one that was eventually ratified by a series of synods and came to be universally recognized as the New Testament canon. He also wrote a biography of Anthony the Great that later served as an inspiration to Christian monastics in both the East and the West. The Athanasian Creed is traditionally ascribed to him, though it is likely not his work. Athanasios was also the first to introduce the forty-day Lent to the Greek Churches in Egypt through his writing of Festal Letter XII around 337.

Athanasios guided the Alexandrian Church for seven years and died in 373, at the age of seventy-six.

Saint Cyril was also from Alexandria, born about the year 376. He was the nephew of Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who also instructed the Saint in his youth. Having first spent much time with the monks in Nitria, he later became the successor to his uncle's throne in



412. In 429, when Cyril heard tidings of the teachings of the new Patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius, he began attempting through private letters to bring Nestorius to renounce his heretical teaching about the Incarnation. When the **heresiarch** did not repent, Saint Cyril, together with Pope Celestine of Rome, led the Orthodox opposition to his error. Saint Cyril presided over the Third Ecumenical Council of the 200 Holy Fathers in the year 431, who gathered in Ephesus under Saint Theodosius the Younger. At this Council, by his most wise words, he put to shame and convicted the impious doctrine of Nestorius, who, although he was in town, refused to appear before Cyril. Saint Cyril, besides overthrowing the error of Nestorius, has left to the Church full commentaries on the Gospels of Luke and John. Having shepherded the Church of Christ for thirty-two years, he reposed in 444.

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## THE NEW NORMAL

No, things won't be the same. Nature abhors a vacuum and after any sort of tragedy or disaster, normality returns but it is an impoverished normality. Take sport as just one example where changes have occurred; all swimming pools and gyms closed and this resulted in an enormous increase in running and jogging which is still taking place. When one door closes people will move on to something different. This could also apply to churches. Rising concerns about the risk of spreading the virus led to many C of E churches closing for public worship. When they reopened even though bio-security inside churches was good, many worshippers felt uneasy about social distancing, masks, and possible mingling before and after services. Of course, being uneasy is not a criticism and people must always feel comfortable in what they do. Nationally it is said that of the regular congregation, around a fifth of the flock has wandered off.

Commenting as a bellringer I think the type of ringing that has gone on for centuries is doomed. In the church where I ring, practices have restarted. Only six ringers are allowed in the ringing chamber at any one time. There is no window so the church door has to remain open. After about ten minutes three of the ringers from the ringing chamber go downstairs and join those in the church. Three of those sitting out in the church go upstairs. Those sitting out talk and eat chocolates.

Our young ringers have dropped away. They are our future. A lot can change in around a two year gap – different friendship groups and different activities. We might get some recruits but I am not optimistic. The present bellringers in most churches are ‘of mature years’. Will teenagers want to join us?

Losers in this pandemic are our children and young people. The A-Level results appear to show that they have done wonderfully well in their exams. A quote from *The Gondoliers* (Gilbert & Sullivan) ‘When everyone is somebody, then no-one’s anybody’ seems to apply. The result is that this year there are not enough university places and some will defer for a year. That means that the 2022 students who have taken exams will also find a shortage of places.

Some school children’s education might have progressed very well indeed. That is fine for those who have, but what about those who live in high-rise overcrowded flats where access to online lessons might be difficult, with no quiet place to study and maybe not even a table. Will they ever catch up? Will they become disaffected teenagers with all the well-known social problems? Youth Clubs and other social activities have been closed but possibly some contact is available on-line. This is very much second best as proper social contact is missing.

Adults have been working from home and now are feeling nervous about re-entering the work place. Some adults prefer working from home as it avoids the daily commute. Others might find themselves out of work as furlough has ended and the business has gone under.

Another result of the pandemic is that there are shockingly long waits for routine surgery. Those who can afford it have had private treatment but those without the means have to suffer. There have been radical changes in the way people are using the NHS. During the pandemic the numbers attending A&E have been down by well over half. This suggests that previously too many people turned up but now regard hospitals as hot spots for Covid and are best avoided. There were too many cases of patients catching Covid whilst being treated for something else. GPs seem to have become very shy as face-to-face consultations are certainly rare in this area. Telephone consultations seem to be the norm but even those can involve a long wait in getting connected to the surgery to book a time.

We must have positive thoughts for the future. Survival is part of our psyche and many places have suffered worse than the UK. At least we have vaccines, no war zones, no earthquakes, no wild uncontrolled fires and no disastrous flooding.

### **Upwards and onwards!**

Frances

Be Inspired!

A very old lady – Joanne Louise Calment from Arles died aged 122 years and 164 days. She took up fencing in her 80s and continued to cycle in her 100s. She claimed that her secret to long life was olive oil, port and chocolate. She gave up smoking at the age of 120. Her father had a shop in Arles and Vincent Van Gough was a customer. He looked scruffy and smelt of alcohol and painted his famous *Sunflowers* in Arles.

Her longevity attracted media attention and medical studies of her health and lifestyle. According to census records, Mme Calment outlived both her daughter and grandson.

Mme. Jeanne Calment's philosophy:

*Always keep your smile. That's how I explain my long life.*

*Every age has its happiness and troubles.*

*Death doesn't frighten me; now I can think peacefully of ending a long life.*

*I'm not afraid of anything. I'd like to go to the moon.*



### **St Gregory's Report: The charity supported by the Deanery**

Our colleagues at Sunflower in St Petersburg have a fantastic record working with young people who have grown up in children's homes. With their support, the young people learn to understand and manage their emotions, to plan and take responsible decisions, and to develop healthy, trusting relationships. This takes time. The young people have complex needs having experienced a life-time of trauma. Several have previously run away from their children's home. Several are addicted to solvent abuse or have criminal records. Many of them have physical and/ or mental health problems. Vadim, aged 19, is one of the newcomers to Sunflower's support programme. He has yet to fully trust the staff and his peers, but this lad who others were unable to help, is engaged and motivated to change.

#### **Vadim's story**

Vadim joined Sunflower's programme in March 2020. He had left his children's home six months earlier and returned home to his mother and grandmother. He was 16 when his mother's parental rights were taken away and he was sent to the home. From the age of 11, from time to time Vadim had spent spells in a psychiatric hospital. "Mum said

that I was going on holiday. We would get on the tram in the morning, and the whole way I would be saying, “Are we nearly there yet?”. When we arrived, it turned out that it was a hospital for psychos.”

Vadim didn’t settle into the children’s home. He even ran away to Dagestan once. Vadim remembers that as the best trip of his life. When he turned 18, Vadim left the children’s home straight away and went home. There were constant arguments with his grandmother and his mother, who drank and had mental health problems.

When the pandemic hit, Vadim made contact with Sunflower’s psychologist. Sunflower were also able to help him with food because he hadn’t been able to find work after leaving the children’s home. In the summer, when the restrictions eased a little, he was able to find a job. He doesn’t have a contract, but he is happy that he gets paid every day, and takes his work seriously. He says, “I have had to change a lot of things in my life, like thinking about what I look like, what I’m wearing, and how I behave.

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## **A WORLD OF GRIME**

When people ask me who is the greatest British novelist I find myself hesitating. Is it Dickens – or Trollope? Dickens can be wickedly funny, extraordinarily inventive (has any writer ever created so many unforgettable characters?), and he is our genial guide to places and situations into which we would be highly unlikely to venture alone. He is as much at home with corpses, coffins, ghosts and opium dens as he is with polite society, rustic merrymaking and the tender secrets of a maiden’s heart. He has an imaginative power which, at its best, outrivals that of Poe or Dostoevsky. But Dickens also has faults, and they are big ones. He can be outrageously and tediously irrelevant, pumping out verbiage for no better reason than the need to write a certain number of words. At times he is revoltingly sentimental, and does his utmost to make us drip tears. Moreover what we call Dickens’ imagination is sometimes no more than a childlike gift for fantasy. A

grotesquely carved chair converses amiably with a visitor. A grumpy old sexton is carried off by goblins. Only with time and experience did Dickens' imagination evolve into something greater and more penetrating, as in *A Christmas Carol*, *David Copperfield*, *Our Mutual Friend* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

By contrast Trollope is the master of classical elegance: shrewd, stylish, and straight to the point. Even his humour is soft-toned and subtle. Where Dickens waxes poetical, Trollope keeps his feet firmly on the ground. Dickens is a showman; Trollope is restrained, economical, and his greatness harder to discern. What makes Trollope a master of novel writing is his truly remarkable ability to understand the workings of the human mind and the human heart, coupled with an extraordinary capacity to convey personality through conversation. When Trollope's characters speak you can hear their exact intonation, and you have a very good idea of the sort of people they are. I nearly always find myself coming down in favour of Trollope, even though Dickens' canvases tend to be more colourful. Trollope never wrote badly; Dickens often did.

There is one further thing to be said about Dickens, however, and it is the key to much of his writing. Dickens was haunted – not by a ghost, but by a texture in the fabric of things. It was monstrous, infernal, and death-like: the texture of early Victorian London, or rather, London eastwards from the City to the wharves and warrens of dockland. We find it almost impossible to visualise nowadays, for it corresponds to nothing in most people's experience. It survives only in some huge Eastern cities like Old Delhi, Varanasi, and places further afield. It is the spectacle of unspeakable, unimaginable grime; coating everything with a black-grey film and present as ineradicable rust in every scrap of old ironwork. It is the product not just of industrial smoke and corrosion but of human filth, horrendous overcrowding, abject poverty and perpetual neglect. It is more oppressive to the spirit than anything I know. And I can't help thinking that it must have been *here*, under

the awful and gigantic influence of that same horror, that Dickens' darkly sublime and sometimes nightmarish imagination had its strange genesis.

Deacon Ian.



*Dementia walk in memory of Mum*

*On 19<sup>th</sup> September, at 10am Tina, Fr Julian and family will be participating in the Alzheimer's Society memory walk 2021. This is a sponsored 5.5K walk on Wollaton Park and is being undertaken as a memorial to Tina's Mum, who had been living with dementia until 13<sup>th</sup> of June this year when sadly she fell asleep.*

*Should you feel able and willing to sponsor either Tina, or Fr Julian, your contributions would be most appreciated either by signing their sponsorship forms or by online donations.*

## **Choruses from The Rock**

T S Elliot Written in 1934

What life have you if you have not life together?  
There is no life that is not in community,  
And no community not lived in praise of GOD.  
Even the anchorite who meditates alone,  
For whom the days and nights repeat the praise of GOD,  
Prays for the Church, the Body of Christ incarnate.  
And now you live dispersed on ribbon roads,  
And no man knows or cares who is his neighbour  
Unless his neighbour makes too much disturbance,  
But all dash to and fro in motor cars,  
Familiar with the roads and settled nowhere.  
Nor does the family even move about together,  
But every son would have his motor cycle  
And daughters ride away on casual pillions

Much to cast down, much to build, much to restore  
Let the work not delay, time and the arm not waste;  
Let the clay be dug from the pit, let the saw cut the stone,  
Let the fire not be quenched in the forge.



**HIS ALL HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW  
PLANS TO VISIT THE UK IN 2022.**

He has persistently proclaimed the primacy of spiritual values in determining environmental ethics and action. His endeavours have earned him the title "Green Patriarch" – coined and publicised by the media in 1996, while being formalised in 1997 by the Vice President of the United States. In 2008, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was named one of *The most Influential People in the World* for "defining environmentalism as a spiritual responsibility."

Quote:

*"To commit a crime against the natural world is a sin. For human beings to cause species to become extinct and to destroy the biological diversity of God's creation, for human beings to degrade the integrity of the earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the earth of its natural forests, or by destroying its wetlands; for human beings to injure other human beings with disease by contaminating the earth's waters, its land, its air, and its life, with poisonous substances – all of these are sins."*

**CALENDAR SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER**

Wed 1 CHURCH NEW YEAR. Day of Prayer for the Protection of the Environment. No Services

**Fri 3** 11th Sun after Pentecost. **Vespers 7.00 pm**

**Sat 4** Zacharias and Righteous Elizabeth **Liturgy 10.30 am**

Wed 8 Nativity Of Our Most Holy Lady No Services

St Betti of Wirksworth

Tues 14 Universal Exaltation Of The Lifegiving Cross No services

## **Continuation of Calendar**

**Sat 18** Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross **Vigil 5.00pm**

**Sun 19** 13th Sunday After Pentecost **Liturgy 12.00 noon**

St Theodore Archbishop of Canterbury

**Thurs 23** Conception of Holy Glorious Forerunner John Baptist

**Liturgy 10.30am at STOW MINSTER**

<sup>1</sup>**THU 1** Protection of Our Most Holy Lady, **Vespers 7.00 pm**

### **OCTOBER**

**Sat 2** 15th Sunday after Pentecost **Liturgy 10.30 am**

Holy Apostle Thomas

**Sat 16th** SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST **Vespers 5.00 pm**

**Sun 17** Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council **Liturgy 12 noon**

Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke.

**Sat 30** Clergy Meeting in London **No vespers today**

<sup>2</sup>**Sun 31** 19th Sunday After Pentecost **Liturgy 12 noon**

Unmercenaries Cosmos and Damian

### **NOVEMBER**

**Fri 5th** 20th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST **Vigil 7.00pm**

**Sat 6th** Synaxis Archangel Michael & All Angels **Liturgy 10.30 am**

### **NOTES:**

<sup>1</sup> Change of day since the paper newsletter went to print

<sup>2</sup> Sunday 31 October liturgy is to be confirmed

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Stow Minster: *Photo by Dominic Pote*



Ready to celebrate the Feast of the Dormition  
Photo by Yelena Gorbachova