

**ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST AIDAN
AND ST CHAD NOTTINGHAM**



NEWSLETTER

July– Aug 2023 : Cost £1.00



Icon of the Apostles, St Peter and St Paul

THE PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD, NOTTINGHAM

Worshipping in the Church of St Aidan,

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Fr Julian's Letter

What would you consider to be your most valuable possession?

I recently explored Google to find 'The Most Expensive Things In The World'. This list included:

- The International Space Station, valued at around £120 Billion.
- Hubble Space Telescope, valued at around £1.7 Billion.
- Crown Jewel (AKA Koh-in-Noor), valued at £475 Million.
- Parking Spot, Manhattan, £0.8 Million.

Perhaps art is your thing. So, how about a tiger Shark in a tank full of Formaldehyde for a little over £9.5 Million.

I don't know about you, but I just find all of this bewildering. Can transactions such as these ever be considered 'smart'? Owning "Status Symbols" such as these may be seen by many as childish and the motivation for such transactions may be little more than getting an adrenaline rush, to make a name so that the world remembers.

What about you? What are you worth?

Scientifically, 99% of the mass of the human body consists of six elements; oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, calcium, and phosphorus; estimated value, less than £500.

However, we are more than a human body. We have something within of which our Lord, Jesus, says there is nothing more precious in the whole world.

For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:26)

Our Lord tells us that there is nothing more precious in the whole world than the soul of a man; and we know that every word of the Lord is true. That which gives this inestimable value to the soul is the gift of Pentecost, The Comforter, the Holy Spirit. Speaking of those who prophetically bore within themselves the gift of Pentecost, Saint Paul says that the world is not worthy of them.

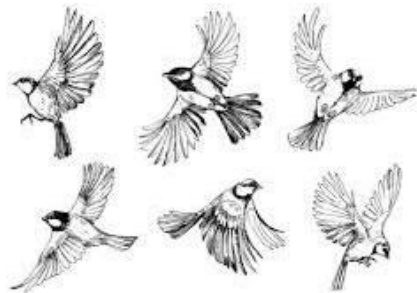
The 'Children of the world' often seem wise, ingenious, and successful on material and social levels and justify their lives through external events. However, in the sight of God, it is the hidden things that are precious, those things that are fashioned by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the depths of the heart.

So, what is your most valuable possession? What is the most precious thing in the world?

Look in a mirror!

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows.

Luke Ch12: v7



Website article

Fr John Musther Documentary / Interview 2022 has been published on the Deanery website on 08/06/23.

Donations for the newsletter and postage, if wished are always gratefully received. Cheques can be made payable to:

Exarchate Parish of St Aidan & St Chad
c/o 259 Ashby Rd, Scunthorpe, DN16 2AB

Or by Internet banking: 05-06-41 29601395

OUR LIFE

Pentecost

What a joyous event! Having celebrated the Liturgy, we said the traditional Kneeling prayers before sharing food and fellowship together. Smiles, laughs, food, and drink were all present in abundance. Thank you to all who helped make this Holy day so joyful.

Welcome back to the UK from Russia

We were very pleased to see William Hogarth, his wife Tatiana, and their daughter Agnia at our recent liturgy. William is still in the same job, which allows him to work remotely but buying a house here is one of his priorities.

Deanery Conference

After a few challenges and difficult decisions, we held our Annual Deanery Festival and Conference at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire. See Caroline's Report for details.

AGM

Our AGM was held on Sunday 21st May, following our Liturgy. Copies of the report submitted at the AGM are available from our secretary, Katharine Dryden. We are delighted that Jude Pink was

nominated and selected to be a member of our Parish Advisory Council (PAC)

We are also open to receive nominations for the position of Trustee. If you feel that this is something that you could undertake, please contact Fr David or Tina Lowe to express your interest.

University of Nottingham Chaplaincy

Work within the University Chaplaincy team continues. Together with pastoral support, the Orthodox Prayers of the Sixth Hour are said every Tuesday at 12 noon in the Portland Chapel, and Fr Julian is currently delivering ‘The Bereavement Journey’ a six week ‘virtual’ course to support those struggling with grief following bereavement.

Our Leeds Community (Report by Fr David)

On several Sundays, when Fr David has been present, it has been a great joy to see increasing numbers of students gather after the Liturgy for coffee, cakes, and fellowship.

Some good news is that the Group of Coptic students is now reconvened, and their decision is that they should be together with us as an Orthodox Christian Society within the University.

After struggling for some time, Fr David Ephrem underwent hip replacement in late May. The surgery went well, and he is now making a good recovery and is hoping to be able to serve the Liturgy again on 18 June. His commitment to serving of Liturgy every Sunday has been very important in the gathering of the students and encouraging their commitment.

Serving Liturgy at St Mary Eleousa

During Fr Ioakim’s vacation, Fr David and Fr Julian will serve Liturgy for the Greek community on Saturday 1st July for St Cosmos and Damian and again on 17th July for St Margaret of Antioch. (See our

Parish calendar and website). Please give your support. These liturgies will be served at 9.30 am.

Memory Eternal : Stephen Bates

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Stephen Bates on the morning of Sunday 28th May.

Baptised in the Anglican Church, and having been a Quaker for many years, Stephen became a founder member of our Parish in 1995 when, by chrismation, he became Dominic. As an enthusiastic and committed member of our parish He, for many years, assisted with catechesis and was instrumental in Fr Julians journey to Orthodoxy. In 2005, Stephen decided to return to the Quaker Fellowship but waited until 2006 so that he could support our then bishop, Basil. For many years Stephen worked as a Staff Nurse at `Mapperley Hospital, caring especially for long-term mentally ill, before training as a teacher and becoming head of Religious Studies at Seally school. After some years he became a teacher of children with educational difficulties until that school closed. His final job before retiring was as a health worker support for those who had suffered with Mental ill-health. Steve was an avid reader and intellectual following a remarkable vocation in the caring and teaching professions.

In retirement Stephen joined the Bromley House Subscription Library where he catalogued and rearranged the Theology Books in the attic. An illustrated article, in the Church Times, described this project (<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2019/11-january/features/features/religious-treasure-in-the-attic>)

Stephen's funeral will be conducted at the Quaker Meeting Room in Brant Broughton, Lincolnshire, where he has been a member for many years.



DEANERY CONFERENCE, MAY 2023 held at Swanwick Christian Conference Centre in Derbyshire

Glorious sunshine, beautiful buildings and spacious gardens, wonderful company and delicious food, and all focussed on the theme.....JOY!!!

After Liturgy in the lovely Church, with 8 priests and joyous singing, Spyridoula Fotinis took the first talk, an inspiring woman in her twenties, having already worked with the church in Canada, for the UN, and now studying homelessness in Finland. She asked us all to discuss what gives us joy, and also what gives us joy in Church. Overwhelmingly the answers were joy of sharing, connection with people, joy of nature, of the liturgy and Feasts especially Pascha.

She made the point that people often don't show the joy of people who've been saved, and reminded us to say "Thank you God!" for everything good, and bad, in our lives. She shared her joy in working with the homeless, about meeting Christ in our neighbour, and a reminder that our home is not here so in a sense we are all homeless. Our home is in Heaven, and our joy is in helping each other, as part of the body of Christ.

Father John Behr gave the other talk of the weekend on Ascension joy, and the promise of joy.

A deep dive starting with the journey to Emmaus, where Christ is revealed through Scripture, and in the breaking of Bread, which is where we encounter Christ too.

Pascha is the pinnacle of joy, the pure white light, Christ trampling down death by death. This light through the prism of the Church becomes the spectrum of colours of the liturgical calendar.

The disciples didn't get it, and the Synoptic Gospels sort of get there, but in John's Gospel Jesus is declared Son of God from the beginning, referring to Genesis where God says 'Let there be...' and finally for

man: 'Let us make....' - the project of humankind. 'Behold the Man'
- culmination of creation.

Fr John gave us a sense of the joy that filled the early Christians happily going to martyrdom, quoting St Ignatias (c107 AD):

"It is better for me to die in Jesus Christ than be king. Birth pangs are upon me. On (martyrdom) I will be a human being".

Genesis = Greek 'Γένεσις,' or 'to come into life'. Christ has turned our mortality into birth into life. We (the dead) come into life (through Christ) and become human.

Fr John then talked about Irenaeus of Lyon, c188AD (his recent research subject) who was inspired by Blanchine, a young girl slave who was "so strong in her martyrdom. She hung on a stake, offered as food, seen as the image of Christ". To see this for ourselves, we have to be in the arena.

He then talked about the joy for the Virgin Mother. Not just the Theotokos, but also the church as Virgin Mother (Isaiah 53 hymn of the suffering servant).

He made the point that Christmas was calculated by the early Church as 9 months after 25th of Nisan, or Pascha, and drew on the imagery of swaddling/grave clothes, virgin cave/virgin tomb, manger Christ offered as food. All this made for much food (sorry!) for thought which is way beyond my understanding, but made our hearts burn within us as they did on the road to Emmaus.

During the lovely afternoon the children went for an adventure: walking, riding on a train, and discovering a rail workers' church. The rest of us stayed behind, and Father Julian led evening prayers as the glorious light filtered through the trees filled the church.

The evening was filled with music (the children led by our wonderful Vera, such joy to see them singing hymns from memory. A gift for life). Then more music with Andy on sweet soulful violin with James also on violin and Vera on flute, then me singing a couple of folk songs

and a hymn to the Holy Spirit by Hildegard. The evening ended with Viktor leading a rousing folk and pop ballad session with much joy and dancing!

Sunday started with Morning prayer and followed by discussions and packing and reluctant leave taking. A shorter conference this year, but uplifting and inspiring. May parishioners unable to join us have a taste of our joyous spiritual feasting! And may they be inspired to join next year, God willing!

Caroline Salmon

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Has it ever occurred to you that famous quotes are time bombs? They strike suddenly, exploding with a deeper understanding, or rather a revelation, like: “Oh, that’s what the author meant!”

This has recently happened to a rather hackneyed “All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players” from Shakespeare’s *As you like it*. Interestingly, I first read the play in the Russian translation, where the word “merely” was omitted, so I understood the phrase as follows: during our lives we play different roles that change from babyhood to the second childhood of old age. The implication is simple - try and play each role the best you can.

The English original came as a bit of surprise, one little word changed the whole thing: we are all merely players, merely actors following a script written by someone else and submitting to the will of the stage director. Someone Else and Stage Director could well be capitalised. The metaphor thus has a much deeper meaning referring to the dichotomy of “will of God vs. will of Man”.

A third, totally different understanding of this quote, struck me quite recently, while I was walking my mum up and down her bedroom following the instructions of the physiotherapist. He had examined

mum after she had a bad fall and fractured her arm. The instructions were: keep her active with daily walking exercise.

Have you ever tried to take a 97-year-old lady with advanced Alzheimer's and an arm on a sling for a walk? Well, it's quite a challenge, to be honest, mostly because each shaky little step sends an electric shock of fear through your system. The fear that you will not be able to hold her, that she will have another fall, that the nightmare of hospital routine will start all over again. The alternative is to give up and leave mum in bed, which is all she actually wants. That'll be defeat and betrayal, so we continue, with God's help. ...Ten steps – ooh, thank Goodness! – she flops on to the chair... another ten steps, and another ten...

All this time, out of reflex, I keep saying out loud, although she is completely deaf: "That's great! Well done! One more step! Good girl..." Why am I saying it, perfectly aware that she can't hear me? Why do I have this reflex? Why do I need to play the part of someone strong and confident?

My husband comes into the room asking if he can help, so I say, "Yes, please, just stay here and smile at mum". He is slightly perplexed, but does what I'm asking for, and you know what? Our walk gets easier and easier, mum's steps get longer, she weighs less heavily on my arm. Why? Because now we both have an audience, and we are both on stage! We are merely playing a part, the reality moves slightly aside, turns into a bit of theatre. So, my fear is also just part of the role I'm acting out... Mind over matter – yes! - but what has triggered this victory of the mind? Is it just seeing the world around as a stage?

Olga Grishina



KELMSCOTT

One winter afternoon, when I had dragged Frances all over Oxfordshire looking for traces of the Celtic Saints, we came across a signpost which said ‘Kelmscott’. It was like discovering a signpost to Camelot or Avalon or Atlantis, and every bit as romantic. For it was to Kelmscott Manor that William Morris, that great Victorian who hated everything Victorian, retired to pursue his vision of a medieval artistic complex. He was already busy producing miles and miles of acanthus leaf wallpaper for Victorian houses, until the whole of middle-class England began to resemble the outgrowth of an equatorial jungle. (We even had acanthus leaf wallpaper in our bedroom for a time). It was at Kelmscott that Morris hand-printed beautiful books, until he acquired a printing press that would do the job less expensively, utilizing gothic type which was incredibly difficult to read. It was here too, (though not for long) that he designed stained-glass windows for churches, most of which featured sulky-faced women angels with posh hair-dos, wearing expensive nightgowns (or in one case a cope and stole!) There are countless stories about Morris, two of which will perhaps bear repetition. On one occasion he is said to have appeared at the head of a staircase flourishing what looked like a small canon ball on the end of a fork, and bellowed down to his long-suffering cook: ‘Mary! D’you call this a plum pudding?’ And when Mary appeared at the foot of the stairs he hurled the offending article down onto her forehead. On another occasion he shouted down to her, ‘Mary! Those six eggs were bad! I’ve eaten them, but don’t let it happen again!’ Kelmscott! We just had to see the place.

It was while Morris was living at Kelmscott that he paid a visit to Burford church and found the incumbent happily engaged in stripping the plaster from the walls. When Morris remonstrated, pointing out

that there might be medieval wall paintings hidden between the plaster and its whitewashed surface, the Rector replied, ‘Sir! The church is mine, and if I choose to, I shall stand on my head in it!’ Morris was so enraged that he founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, one of whose chief objects was to prevent the restoration of churches. I believe it is largely owing to Morris that the south front of Tewkesbury Abbey has never been properly repaired and looks as if it was once the site of a medieval battle. It is indirectly owing to Morris that the great west window of Binham Priory is infilled with brick instead of glass (because to restore it to how it looked in the Middle Ages would be to ‘falsify history’). Well, there is no accounting for the logic of the human mind.

Eventually we found Kelmscott Manor. *Venimus*: we are come! As I say, it was the middle of winter. The sky was leaden with clouds, it was blowing half a gale, and a more unprepossessing place it would be difficult to imagine. The garden was unkempt, dead stalks waved in the wind, and to crown everything the house was shut up and deserted. (I afterwards learnt that it was undergoing restoration). Still, we had visited Kelmscott. I have never had the slightest desire to go there again.

Deacon Ian.

VESTMENT BRAID FROM INDIA

The mills of God grind slowly but they grind mighty fine.

There is an Orthodox church in South India which we have visited. By chance a lady from this church was at one of the Orthodox Liturgies held in the crypt of Sheffield Cathedral. In general conversation she told me that there was a braid factory in the town where she lived. All saris have some decorative braid or ribbon along

one edge. At that time I was sewing Orthodox vestments and the word 'braid' made me prick up my ears as braid for vestments at that time could cost as much as the fabric needed for the whole vestment. I fished around on the internet for this factory in Kerala and asked them what they could do. The reply was that they could do any design in any width, weight or colours. I asked for prices and mentioned that I wanted the braid for Orthodox vestments and was told that this depended on the amount required. I made a tentative enquiry for about 200 metres and there was no reply. I think I had insulted the firm but in another way my guess is that I had helped them in a big way. A few months later I noticed that the price of braid sold by Orthodox suppliers in the USA and Russia had dropped enormously. Saris in India were becoming less popular as Western dress was increasing so less braid was needed. Suppliers of sewing items for Orthodox vestments now always mention that their braid is Indian and it is now at a very reasonable price. I like to think that maybe I had suggested a new opening for the Indian braid firm.

Frances

Oddments

In my C.of.E. days, I was told on good authority, that donations on the collection plate were highest in this order:

1. Wide metal plate.
2. Metal plate with a felt mat.
3. Wooden plate
4. A bag with a narrow opening

Food for thought.

You stop doing things because you are old.

You become old because you stop doing things.



2023 Liturgy at Swanwick Conference Centre



Rehearsal by some of the children's choir. They all did so well at the party.