

ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD NOTTINGHAM



NEWSLETTER

Mar – Apr 2023 : Cost £1.00



Icon of St Aidan and St Chad by Aidan Hart

THE PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD, NOTTINGHAM

Worshipping in the Church of St Aidan,

Arnold Road, Basford, NG6 0DN

Priest: Revd Fr Julian Lowe 07952 174 206

Very Revd Hegumen David (associate priest) 0115-9622351

Deacon: Ian Thompson (retired) 01724-337521

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Letter from Fr Julian

It's often said that English is one of the hardest languages to learn. Given the fact that many of the words we use in English stem from Latin and Ancient Greek words – in common with many other European languages – what is it about English that has attracted this reputation for being so fearsomely difficult? And is it really even that difficult, when so many other countries adopt it as their second language and speak it a lot more fluently than we Brits speak other languages?

I'll leave you to make your own mind up...

One of the reasons why English is known for being difficult is because it's full of contradictions. There are innumerable examples of conundrums such as - There is no ham in a hamburger. Neither is there any apple nor pine in pineapple. If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? "Overlook" and "oversee" have opposite meanings, while "look" and "see" mean the same thing. Then we have 'Bright sadness' which describes the Lenten "atmosphere".

Then we have the **oxymoron**; a combination of contradictory or incongruous words such as '*cruel kindness*', '*awfully good*', '*bittersweet*', or how about '*same difference*'.

Of course, we shouldn't forget the '**Janus word**'. A word that is its own opposite such as:

CLEAVE to divide by
or as if by a cutting blow
or to adhere firmly.

DUST to make free of dust
or to sprinkle with fine particles.

ROCK something like a rock in firmness
or a swaying or tilting movement.

And how about 'Fast', firmly fixed/attached or capable of moving fast. Then there is the 'Lenten fast'. Now what kind of word is that to you? For many it can be a Janus word in that, although it can mean fast moving, this is the last thing it feels!

'Fasting' can mean many things to many people. For those of the Orthodox faith it SHOULD have a very specific meaning and purpose. Our fasting **is not just about food**; it is also about practicing discipline and self-control. Essentially, this discipline of fasting, by simply controlling what goes into our mouth, provides us with the means to approach the ultimate goal and participate in the holiness of God. The tradition of the Orthodox Church shows us the whole person of body and soul is involved, in a spiritual and total commitment to God. The aspect of fasting regarding dietary elements is temporary, while the spiritual component includes even greater challenges and expectations and is sustained throughout our life.

The period of bodily fasting comes to an end, yes, but the period of spiritual fasting never ends! This spiritual fasting is superior to the bodily fasting, which has been established in the Church for the sake of this ongoing spiritual fasting. – Saint John Chrysostom

Fasting, in the Orthodox Tradition, has a dietary aspect but it also requires us **to put away all evil, To control the tongue, to forbear from anger, To abstain from lust, slander, falsehood and perjury.** If we renounce these things, then is our fasting true and acceptable to God.

I look forward travelling with you, as we journey together, toward the joy of Pascha and the

Glorious Resurrection of our Lord.

OUR LIFE

What a lovely Day!

The feast of Theophany (January 6) was, this year, commemorated on Sunday 8th January.

It was a time of great joy and blessing. This year we took a short walk to bless the River Leen before enjoying a festal buffet together.

We have a good supply of Holy water for your personal use. Please speak to the clergy or Tina, our Church warden, who will gladly provide you with a quantity.

Welcome back!

We were pleased that James Andrew, admitted to the Orthodox Church (and our Parish) 4th January 2020, was able to visit us during a two week stay in Nottingham. James Andrew now works as a teacher of Theatre and drama in a newly opened school in China. He is one of the staff of the fine arts department which includes drama, music and art. These are compulsory subjects in these schools for expatriates and the local Chinese. James is doing well and his recently produced and modified *Romeo and Juliet* was hailed by the Head of School as a great success.

As James Andrew continues as one of our most distant parish members, we hold him in our prayers and ask that he will continue to be greatly blessed.

We also welcome back all the students of the Universities of Nottingham and Leeds as they return from the Christmas/New Year break. Fr Julian and Fr David are grateful for the prayers that are offered in support of their Chaplaincy roles.

Congratulations...

To our Brother Iain, on his successful completion of The University of Edinburgh Online, course, *Philosophy, Science and Religion*.

St Aidan (and St Chad)

Rightly or wrongly, there is a perception that our patron St Chad is a little neglected when compared with our other patron St Aidan. In an effort to address this we are now members of the ‘St Chad Network’. This network is an association of people and organisations associated with St Chad and was instigated last year, by the Dean of Lichfield. Fr Julian will make available (electronically) the Network’s periodic newsletter and share any news or matters of interest. And, for those who do, there is a Facebook Group too!

Fr Julian has been asked, by some, what the white ribbon he has been wearing indicates?



White Ribbon is the UK's leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls. by addressing its root causes. The aim is to change long established, and harmful, attitudes, systems and behaviours around masculinity that perpetuate gender inequality and men's violence against women. The work is preventative, endeavouring to inhibit violence before it starts

OBITUARY : ARCHPRIEST JOHN MUSTHER

The tribute to Fr John below is by Fr David using details of an article for the local newspaper written by Presbytera Bega, Fr John's wife.

The saintly and exceptional priest, Fr John, fell asleep in the Lord on Saturday 4th February. He, with his wife Jenny, (Bega in Orthodoxy), were able to found the first Orthodox Church in Cumbria in recent times. Keswick now has one of the most lively and expanding churches in our Deanery with persons, including many young, seeking to join every month. This is entirely due to this remarkable, charismatic, founding priest.

Fr John was born in Halifax during the second world war. He attended Manchester Grammar School and then studied law at London University. With a scholarship he studied Theology in Oxford and then attended Mirfield Theological College becoming an ordained priest in the Anglican Church. John asked his Bishop to send him to the most challenging parish he could find. This was typical of John's great love for those in need, and his boundless energy and enthusiasm in everything he did.

John spent 17 years as a monk in a contemplative monastery in Sussex. Amongst other works he was in charge of the library where he was excited whilst reorganising the library to delve into the Great

Tradition of the Early Church. In this, he discovered the one way of holiness that could be traced through every century. It became his life's passion to promote this way of holiness, through a life of prayer, and this set him on his journey to Orthodoxy.

After leaving the monastery Fr John set up an open house on a notorious housing estate in Brighton. In this he helped the many people who came to him with broken lives. Many had addictions or mental health problems or were homeless. No one was ever turned away and all were given help. From 1994 he continued this work and soon met Jenny, a hospice matron. She joined him and together they kept a food store, a furniture store, and always a well-stocked fridge-but most of all, a heart full of love and compassion.

In due course John and Jenny were married and received into the Orthodox Church and John became a Deacon. They moved to Keswick in 2007, in partial retirement'. John was ordained Orthodox priest at St Bega's Church, Basenthwaite, in 2008. To his amazement, a thriving parish soon emerged, able to meet in the former Methodist Church in Braithwaite, near Keswick.

The Brathwaite Church has become known for its warm welcome and fervent worship attracting many young families and singles from all over Cumbria, from vastly different lifestyles and diverse nationalities.

Fr John was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2012 but this did not reduce his enthusiasm; he found the energy to travel all over Scotland and the North of England to write his third book, '*Sacred North*' outlining the lives of the saints and describing their locations.

In recent months his health deteriorated. Jenny was able to care for him at home until his peaceful death.

Fr John was a saintly man of prayer and dedication who always said that the unconditional love of Christ should be the centre and motivation for everything we do in life. We have witnessed the passing of a very great man and his legacy will continue to inspire.

Fr David

Keswick: Fr John Musther, the founder priest of the Parish fell asleep in the Lord on. 4th February. Fr David was present and able to pray for the departure of the soul on Friday 3rd whilst also being present soon after death to serve a First Panikhida. He sang the Panikhida again on the following day after the Divine Liturgy. Fr John's legacy will continue because Bishop Raphael from Edinburgh has taken an interest in the Parish and visits every three months. Fr Antonios, also from Edinburgh visits two or three times each month and has been available for some time. for weddings, funerals, baptisms and visitation of the funerals sick. He will continue now as priest in charge whilst Fr David will continue as senior priest from the Deanery, visiting more often.



OBITUARY: Alan Marshall

Alan was one of those men who, if present, you knew that everything would be fine. He was the church warden at Stow and we got to know him well as he was so helpful at our liturgies in Stow Minster. He always arrived about an hour before the liturgy started as he wanted to ensure that we had all that we needed. On our last visit there, Dn Ian said, 'Thank you Alan, I think we have got all we need.' Alan replied that he thought it would be better if he stayed a bit longer as he was sure we would have forgotten something. Alan was right. We

were missing a censer. He produced one from a dusty cupboard and all was well. Alan liked to stay for the service but he also kept an eye on the mobile Post Office which is held on Thursdays in the north transept. The post office customers were interested in our service and often lingered, listened and watched what was going on.

Alan could be described as our friend and helper who was part of the backbone of the Church of England. We and many others will miss him greatly and the world is now a poorer place.

Frances



News from the north

The Northumberland Orthodox Community that Fr David pioneered in the early years of the century has at last been taken under the wing of Bishop Raphael and the Edinburgh Community with a monthly Holy Liturgy at the Catholic Church of Our Lady and St Cuthbert In Berwick on Tweed, who have been very welcoming. This new venture began last February, and has absolutely taken off, with regular support from both Edinburgh and Newcastle Communities (both Thyateira). This is both a great joy and blessing, and gives us an extraordinary sense of being part of a single parish spanning the Tyne and the Firth of Forth. Our priest is Father Antonios, who also serves at the Keswick parish, (also Thyateira, but Russian Tradition) now that Fr John there has had to retire through ill health. We are also blessed with many young people, and as this is not an 'immigration area' our members are largely British converts. Please remember us in your prayers as we continue to build up our Community.

Michael Mountney

From Barbara

As the cancer affecting my husband progresses, we are being offered more and more support. One of these facilities is the Nottinghamshire Hospice. We are amazed to find that it is funded largely on a charitable basis, and provides many excellent services. Today Steve was invited for a morning of day care, and so we turned up at the appointed hour.

I have been past the building many times, knowing of its existence, admiring the work they do, and not thinking about it much more than this. But now we were on the receiving end, feeling the reality and the inevitability of our situation.

We were met by a number of extravagantly kind, mostly older, ladies, who I understood were volunteers, all with their own stories and experiences relating to themselves or loved ones. As soon as we went through the door, without any hesitation at all, someone was on our case, smiling, guiding, offering drinks, a perfect mix of unobtrusiveness and definitiveness. It was overwhelming.

I have met a few people in my life that I would unhesitatingly describe as 'pure in heart' They don't know that this is what they are; they would be astonished to be told that they are perceived in this way, and they are often simple, ordinary, unpretentious people, but with a radiance and purity that is unmistakable. These volunteers were like that. I thought about the experiences that must have led them to this work, and it seemed to me that each of them had been pressed, like a diamond, into a kind of holiness.

Later in the day, I reflected, isn't this rather like the love of God, and even like heaven? I felt that I stumbled into a place of great healing and peace, feeling battered, frightened, embarrassed, and all other manner of intense emotions, thinking, I should be doing better than this, I'm not being very brave, and all kinds of self-judgement. And yet I was instantly gathered up into this infinite kindness, given to me as an individual, just where I was and as I was. Not because of me,

but because of them, because of the lovingkindness with which they operated.

Isn't the spiritual life a bit like this? I have heard it said that God loves us, not because of how we are, but because of how He is - Infinitely loving, infinitely available, infinitely forgiving. And I hear again the words of Julian of Norwich - 'All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.' Mother Julian could say this in the fourteenth century, a most unpleasant time to live in, with plagues and wars; yet she could say it confidently.

Barbara Bates

A New Life for Sewing Machines.

A few years ago, on one of our Indian jaunts, Dn Ian and I saw an enormous pile of unwanted sewing machines awaiting disposal in Bundi in Rajasthan. The man with his treadle sewing machine in any bazaar has now almost disappeared. My theory is that the cheap clothes made in China and maybe in India have altered and flooded the market. Thirty years ago, traditional dress in India was almost universal. Every visit since then has seen clothing become more westernised. In towns and cities ready-made western style dress is now the norm but perhaps with a pashmina as an optional extra. Sewing machines and traditional dresses have had their day.

In the cities, saris, generally are now worn only at weddings or on other very special occasions but they are still worn in isolated villages.

Bundi in India is not the only place where sewing is no longer a skill known by the locals. The situation in the UK is just as bad. Sewing is no longer taught in schools and mothers do not pass on the skill to their children. Rolls of fabric sold by the yard at a bargain price are no longer available in shops or on market stalls so there is neither

choice of fabric nor financial saving. Sewing at home is doomed. Possibly things might change.

I discovered recently that there is a small business in Oxford where they are glad to receive unwanted sewing machines. These are sent to villages in Africa where the local women make oven gloves, aprons, sponge bags etc. which are then sent to the shop in Oxford where they are sold to the general public. The profits are sent back to Africa. One uneasiness of mine is that aprons are not used daily in many households in the UK. Cooking goes straight from the packet into the microwave, washing-up goes in the dishwasher and any clothes with kitchen splashes on them go into the washing machine so pinafores are no longer universal.

Hand knitting disappeared for a time but knitting wool/yarn is now readily available. In our area crocheted pillar box toppers are a new idea. They just seem to appear, are liked by many and never seem to be vandalised. They seem to have inspired some ladies to get out their knitting needles and crochet hooks again so the future can never be predicted with certainty.

Frances

An alternative version of the Jesus Prayer

It seems to me important that the recurring petition of the Jesus Prayer: ‘have mercy on me a sinner’ or (in its other common form): ‘have mercy on us’, should not be understood too narrowly or passively, to the disadvantage of a rich and symbiotic relationship with Christ. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls his disciples ‘the salt of the earth’ and ‘the light of the world’, referring to the role which they are destined to fulfil so that the Kingdom of God may be made manifest. Sometimes the Jesus Prayer is amended to bring this dimension a little more clearly into focus: ‘have mercy on us *and upon thy world*’. Yet

even here the prayer for mercy may be understood in two ways: passively (as ‘save us’) or actively (as ‘cleanse us so that we may become instruments of thy will’). In order to emphasize the dynamic element implicit in the Jesus Prayer I have therefore added other petitions, corresponding to some of the ways in which grace works within us, so that, as St Paul says, we may effectively ‘put on the Lord Jesus Christ’ (Rom.13: 14). It is perhaps unnecessary to add that the proposed additions are merely suggestions, and that a more considered version would probably benefit from various amendments.

Each petition to be repeated ten times.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

- (1) have mercy upon us.
- (2) come and abide in us.
- (3) open the doors of our hearts.
- (4) cleanse our perceptions.
- (5) heal our infirmities
- (6) guide our footsteps aright.
- (7) be with us in times of temptation.
- (8) succour us in times of tribulation.
- (9) hasten the coming of thy Kingdom
- 10) grant us thy peace.

Instead of the usual doxology (Glory to the Father, etc.) I have substituted the well-known Prayer of St Richard of Chichester, partly to forge an English connection with the Jesus Prayer, but also because it fits so well:

Thanks be to Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ
For all the blessings Thou hast won for us,
The pains and insults Thou hast borne for us;
O most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,
Grant that we may see Thee more clearly,

Love Thee more dearly,
Follow Thee more nearly,
Day by day

Dn Ian

NOT FOR LENT!

As a lover of chocolate, I want to share this with you. These *Signature Collection* chocolates are delicious, decadent and probably known to Bacchus who was the Roman god of wine and ecstasy. The good news for those who live in Nottingham is that this is where these chocolates are made and they have their own shop. They also have a postal option for those who are unable to visit the shop.

www.martinschocolatier.co.uk

THESE ARE 'LEGAL' FOR LENT:

Just looking around any supermarket I think you would now find, Vegan Lasagne, Vegan Pizzas, Vegan Readymeals. Vegan Tortilla, Vegetarian sausages and Hummus in a wide array of flavours - basil, lemon, coriander and sundried tomatoes. Around New Year and Burns Night, vegetarian haggis is available from M&S.

Oat milk, Almond milk and Soya milk are readily available plus Vegan Vanilla ice-cream and a dessert called Almond Choco Dream.

Gone are the days when the post-liturgy meal might be plain biscuits, bread and jam plus a choice of tea or coffee without milk.

Are these meals nowadays within the spirit of the Great Fast? Or was the strict rule meant for monasteries and then carried over to the ordinary people of the world?

Who is right? Some will say that in this busy world it is almost impossible to follow the rules. Others will say that it is only a matter of organising yourself.



Possibly Muslims have a harder time fasting than we do. During Ramadan the rule is that there should be abstinence from all food and drink between dawn and sundown. And that includes water and chewing gum! Cleaning teeth and showering is permitted but you must not drink the water.

There was a case of a Muslim mariner on a submarine which surfaced around the North Pole This was a misfortune for him as at certain times of the year at the North Pole, the sun never sets. The mariner was very devout and fasted for several days but the captain of the submarine radioed in to some authority and permission was granted for relaxing the rules.

Frances

ON A LIGHTER NOTE

You gotta be who you **is**,
and not who you **ain't**,
because if you ain't who you **is**,
then you **is** who you **ain't**.
And that **ain't** good.

BE CAREFUL WHEN TALKING TO CHILDREN!

TEACHER: Glenn, how do you spell 'crocodile?'

GLENN: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L

TEACHER: No, that's wrong

GLENN: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it

TEACHER: Winnie, name one important thing we have today that we didn't have ten years ago.

WINNIE: Me!

TEACHER: Now, Simon, tell me frankly, do you say prayers before eating?

SIMON: No sir, I don't have to, my Mum is a good cook.

TEACHER: Clyde, your composition on 'My Dog' is exactly the same as your brother's. Did you copy his?

CLYDE: No, sir. It's the same dog.

TEACHER: George Washington not only chopped down his father's cherry tree, but also admitted it. Now, Louie, do you know why his father didn't punish him?

LOUIS: Because George still had the axe in his hand.

THE ANNUAL DEANERY CONFERENCE & FESTIVAL

This a unique church gathering with origins going back to 1975; it is organised by the Thyateira Deanery, but members of the other parishes in the Archdiocese are also welcome to take part.

Why do we call the event a *Conference & Festival*? This is because the opportunity to listen to talks, and discuss what we have heard, is only part of a whole event that is a celebration of the Orthodox Christian Faith, that unites our church family. It celebrates the special joy of praying with and spending time with fellow believer of all ages from across the country. Through learning together and sharing a common life, even if only for a weekend, we grow in awareness that we are part of the one Body of Christ.

The Conference & Festival takes place over the late Spring Bank Holiday weekend, but this year for reasons beyond our control it will begin on Friday evening and end before lunch on Sunday - the 26th to the 28th May 2023. Unfortunately this is for only two nights instead of usual three. The usual venue for many years has been *High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon*, but- unfortunately - this was already fully booked for the weekend that we requested, and so our venue this year is *The Hayes, Swanwick*.

Friday, 26th May 4pm.

Until 12 noon Sunday, 28th May

at

The Hayes Conference Centre

Swanwick, Alfreton,

Derbyshire DE55 1AU

Theme: *Granting joy to your disciples*

Cost: Adults £146 Under 16s Free

Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain
Deanery



Festival & Conference

Friday 26th to Sunday 28th of May 2023

Theme: *Granting Joy to Thy Disciples*

Speakers: Fr John Behr and Spyridoula Fotinis

The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Alferton,
Derbyshire DE55 1AU

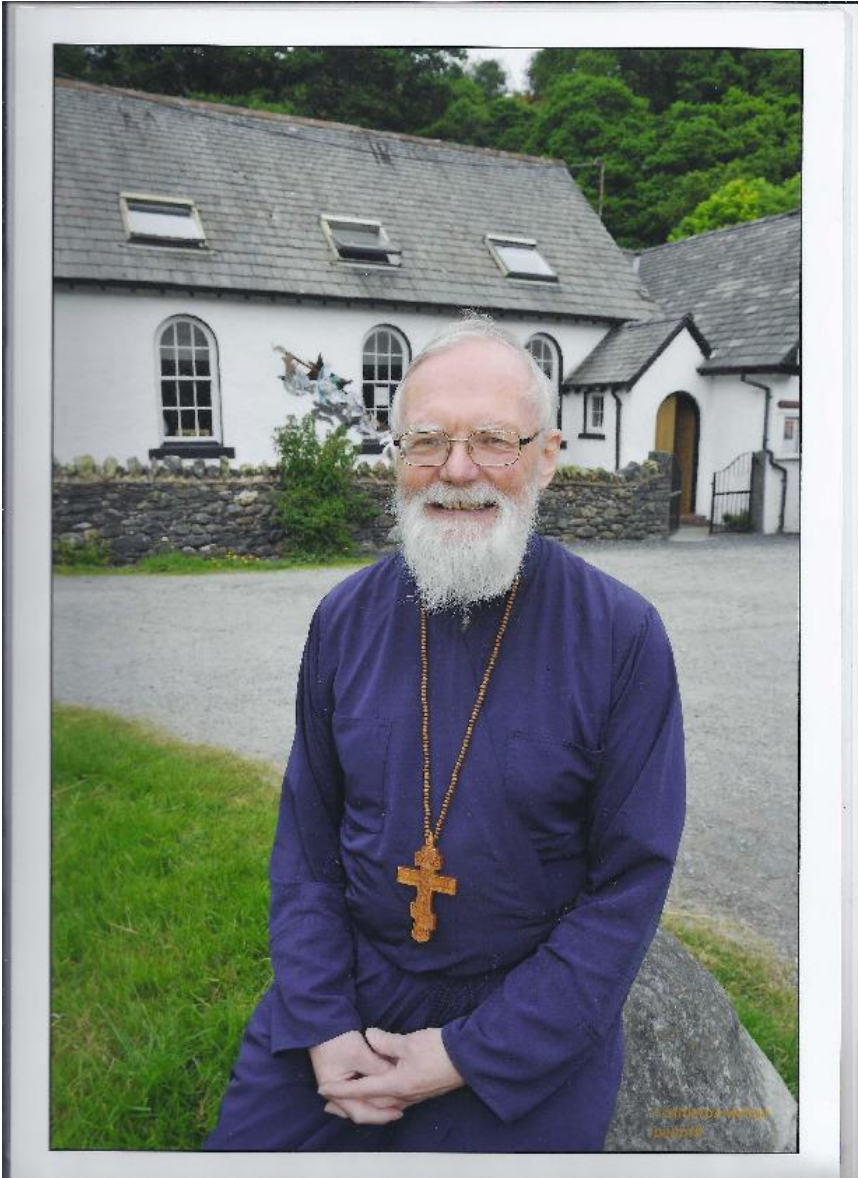
Adults: £146 Under 16s: Free

For more information and to book visit:

www.thyateira-deanery.uk/conference

(Or if you have no internet access, please phone 01223 234 248)





ARCHPRIEST FR JOHN MUSTHER – LOVED BY ALL