



The
Celtic Orthodox Church
in Britain
Community of St Gwenn

Contact *Fr Leonard Hollands*
Tel 01297 678566 Email frleonard@btinternet.com
www.stgwenns.org

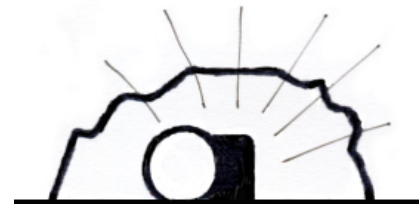


The **Celtic Orthodox Church** is an Ancient Christian Church, founded in AD37. It is the original Church of Great Britain, and its spirituality blessed our land for the first twelve centuries of the Christian era. Now it is revived!

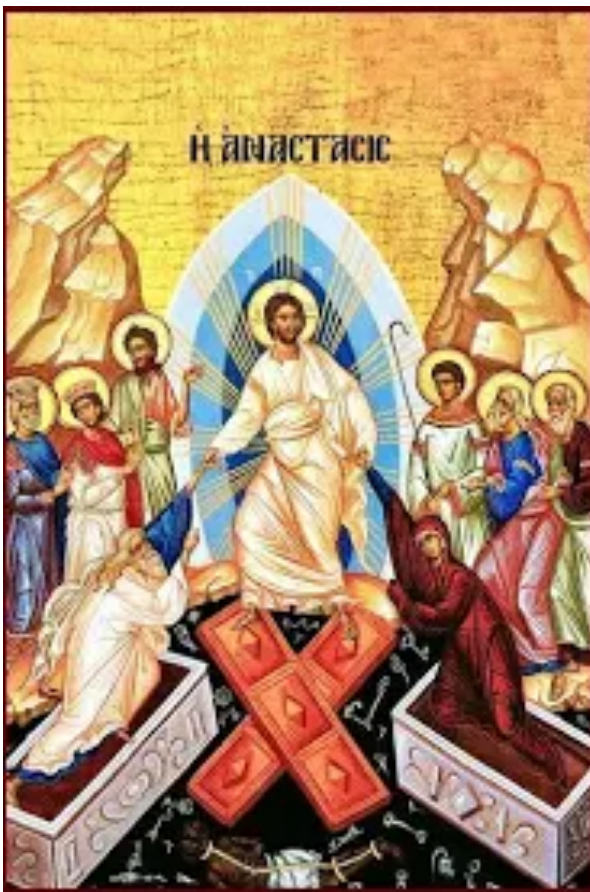
St Gwenn's News No 136 – April 2024

At present we are homeless.

When we find a church or hall where we can meet and celebrate the Divine Liturgy you will be notified.



PASCHA / EASTER



**Christ is risen!
Indeed He is risen!**

**Christos anesti!
Alethos anesti!**

**Khristos voskrese!
Voistinu voskrese!**

**Christos resurrexit!
Vere resurrexit!**

**Christ est réssuscité!
En verite il est réssuscité!**

Love, Joy, Peace!

April Liturgical Calendar

Mon 1 Apr	Bright Monday
Tue 2 Apr	Bright Tuesday
Wed 3 Apr	Bright Wednesday
Thu 4 Apr	Bright Thursday
Fri 5 Apr	Bright Friday
Sat 6 Apr	Bright Saturday
Sun 7 Apr	PASCHA 2 [no Liturgy]
Sun 14 Apr	PASCHA 3
Sun 21 Apr	PASCHA 4
Tue 23 Apr	Great Martyr and Wonderworker St George
Thu 25 Apr	St Mark, Apostle and Evangelist
Sun 28 Apr	PASCHA 5
Tue 30 Apr	St James, Son of Zebedee, Apostle

From Fr Leonard

31.3.24

Greetings to you all; Christ is risen!

It was a great joy to celebrate the Paschal ceremonies last night – the Vigil running seamlessly into the Paschal Liturgy. I admit that I do tend to get rather carried away with frequent interjections of ‘Christ is risen,’ and my all but dancing with the paschal candle – although I’m not as spry as I once was! – but these services and this Paschal Season really do mark the high point of our liturgical year. Indeed, we are marking the very pinnacle of the Christian Faith.

As I have said before, the Resurrection is not so much a miracle as an inevitability – how could Christ-God, the Creator of all life, *not* be alive? Great and Holy Friday when Christ passed through death for us is the miracle.

May the joy of this wonderful time lighten your lives.

Blessings and love

Fr Leonard +

St Mary's, Marshwood



Our Paschal (Easter) Liturgy was, sadly, the last of our services in the Anglican church dedicated to St Mary the Virgin, in Marshwood.

Since September 2022 we have been privileged to have had the use of St Mary's on the first Sunday of each month for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Now, the

liturgical use of the church is ceasing due to lack of funds.

We have been made most welcome and we are enormously grateful to the people of St Mary's. We are sad to be leaving, and we are sad also for the St Mary's community losing their church (it will probably still be used by the adjacent school as an additional classroom).



St Mary's at Pascha 2023



St Mary's at Pascha 2024

St Gwenn's – The Future

In our March News we reported some optimism at the possibility of being able to use the nearby church of St Mary's, Thorncombe, in the Bath and Wells Diocese. As yet, however, we have not had confirmation as to whether this will come to fruition. So, as this News goes out, we are, as stated at the head of the Newsletter, currently homeless.

As our Paschal liturgy was so close to the beginning of April it is not a problem that we won't be having an April liturgy. If, however, we have not found a new home in time for the May liturgy, we shall invite those who wish to join a Zoom act of worship. You will be kept informed.



Were Jesus, Mary and Joseph refugees? asks James Martin, SJ

With refugees and migrants in the news, some commentators have sought to draw parallels between their plight and that of the Holy Family – Jesus, Mary and Joseph. How accurate are these comparisons? Were Jesus, Mary and Joseph what we would consider today 'refugees'? Yes.

In the second chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, we read the story of the flight into Egypt, [for], after the birth of Jesus and the visit from the Magi, an 'angel of the Lord' comes to Joseph in a dream and warns him to leave Bethlehem for Egypt (Mtt 2:12-15). Why? Because King Herod was planning to 'seek out the child to destroy him.' Mary and Joseph do leave, along with Jesus, and, according to Matthew, make their way into Egypt. Afterward, King Herod slaughters all the male children in Bethlehem under two years of age.

So what, according to the Gospel of Matthew, is going on? A family is forced to flee their homeland for fear of persecution. This is the classic modern-day definition of a refugee. In fact, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees defines that group of people as follows:

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

The Holy Family, as Matthew recounts the story, was fleeing because of a 'well-founded fear of persecution' because of their 'membership in a particular social group,' in this case people with young children living in Bethlehem.

I am not sure how you could get any clearer than that. We see a family fleeing to a foreign country out of fear of persecution – refugees.

Even the language used in Matthew illuminates their situation. As in all things with the New Testament, it's helpful to turn to the original Greek. Matthew, writing for a Jewish-Christian audience around AD 85, presents the angel's command as follows:

Ἐγερθεὶς παράλαβε τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ φεῦγε εἰς Αἴγυπτον.... IE
Arise, and take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt...." (Mtt 2:13)

The word to focus on is *φεῦγε* (*pheuge*), 'flee,' from which derives the word 'refugee,' the one who flees. So, even Matthew's angel identifies the Holy Family as refugees.

But even if the Holy Family does not fit the contemporary definition of refugees (and they do) and even if the Gospel of Matthew did not use the Greek word *pheuge* (and it does), we should still have compassion and be ready to care for modern-day refugees and migrants.



Icon of the Flight into Egypt

Lord, Have mercy. – Kyrie, eleison.

When, a few years ago, I was working with dear Bishop Paul on the definitive English translation of our Celtic Orthodox Liturgy, we had some discussion as to why we were, throughout, rendering 'Lord, have mercy' in the Greek – *Kyrie eleison*. Bishop Mael overheard us discussing this and told us that *Kyrie eleison* had a fuller meaning than 'Lord, have mercy,' but he didn't enlighten us as to why that might be so. When he left us we both admitted that we couldn't see what he meant. It seemed to us a quite straight forward literal translation from one language to another.

I then suggested that, to be consistent, we should use *Paraschou Kyrie* in lieu of 'Grant this, O Lord,' and *Soi Kyrie* in lieu of 'To You, O Lord.' That fell on deaf ears!

I hadn't thought any more about this until recently when reading *Two Views of the Cross – Orthodox and the West* by Frederica Matthews-Green. She says:

The Greek *Kyrie eleison*, 'Lord, have mercy,' resonates with the [Greek]word for olive oil, *ἐλαϊον* (*elaion*), the medium for healing balm. (The good Samaritan cared for the beaten man's wounds, "pouring on *elaion* and wine," (Luke 10:34.)

Perhaps then, Bishop Mael was referring to this – the element of healing. Perhaps a truer English translation would be: 'Lord, mercifully heal us.'

Fr Leonard



Lord, in your mercy: Hear our Prayers

For grateful hearts and joyful spirits as we celebrate this Paschaltide. Christ is risen!

For our Patriarch, Metropolitan Marc, Bishop Nicolas, and for all our clergy and monastics. For all who proclaim Christ.

For the Unity of the Christ's Church – that the blight of our disunity may be cleansed from us.

For peace in the world, especially for an end to the conflict in Ukraine, Gaza, Yemen and all places of conflict and unrest.

For refugees, the homeless and all in sickness, sorrow or distress. For our King and the Princess of Wales.

For Fr John's full recovery following his heart procedure.

For the departed – for all who have died recently; for Colin, Sophia, Edna, Bob, Carol, Arthur, HRH Prince Philip, Maureen, Olivia, Yodit, Daphne and Christian, whose anniversaries of reposing fall this month.

Memory eternal.

