



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 142 – October 2024



**We celebrate our Liturgies at the
Woodbury Community Hall,
Woodbury Lane, Axminster
EX13 5TL**



Liturgical Calendar

Tue 1 Oct	The Protecting Veil
Fri 4 Oct	St Francis of Assisi – Feast of Creation
Sun 6 Oct	PENT 20 (Feast of Creation) Liturgy 10.30am
Wed 9 Oct	St James, son of Alphaeus, Apostle
Fri 11 Oct	St Philip the Deacon, Apostle of the Seventy
Sun 13 Oct	PENT 21
Fri 18 Oct	St Luke Apostles, Evangelist
Sun 20 Oct	PENT 22
Wed 23 Oct	St James, Brother of the Lord
Thu 24 Oct	St Raphael, Archangel
Fri 25 Oct	St Clotilde of California, nun
Sat 26 Oct	St Cedd St Alfred the Great
Sun 27 Oct	PENT 23
Mon 28 Oct	St Simon and St Jude, Apostles, Martyrs
Sun 3 Nov	PENT 23 Liturgy 10.30am

From Fr Leonard

Greetings to you all, in the Name of Christ!

As I prepare this Newsletter, it is Sunday 29th September, the feast of St Michael and All Angels. This is a significant day for me. 54 years ago today I was made deacon, and 53 years ago today I was ordained priest. Whilst almost 40 years of that time I was a High Church Anglican, for the whole of that period I had been moving towards

Orthodoxy. Finally, in 2007 I became Antiochian Greek Orthodox but then discovered our wonderful Celtic Orthodox Church. I have never looked back!

If you are one of my Orthodox readers you will understand how deeply fulfilling it is to know Christ within the Orthodox Church. If you are not, then I hope you will feel blessed and fulfilled wherever you are.....and please feel free to come and sample *our* worship at any time.

Blessings and love in Christ

Fr Leonard +

Baptisms at St Melangell's

We, the Celtic Orthodox Church, are part of the Communion of Western Orthodox Churches. One of our Sister Churches, the Orthodox Church of the Gauls has a parish in Manchester, St Melangell's – you may remember we included a piece about them by their parish priest, Fr Cyprian, in a previous St Gwenn's News. Fr Cyprian and Fr Deacon Patrick asked if it would be alright for Dcn Patrick to go to Manchester to assist with a group baptism. Of course I enthusiastically agreed – the condition being that Fr Deacon tell us all about it afterwards! Hers are Deacon Patrick's reflections. (Fr L)



Fr Cyprian, Fr Dcn Patrick and the five Catechumens

There is much that could be said concerning our trip to Manchester in order to assist Fr Cyprian with the making of a new catechumen and the baptism of the five catechumens. There are also many points that could be emphasised such as the Gallican liturgical rites; of Vespers, Lauds, Making of a Catechumen, Baptism, Chrismation and the Mass. There are, however, two points in particular arising from

my time and experience over the short period we were gathered together at St Melangell's which I would like to share.

First of all, the whole reason we were there was for the baptisms. Seeing behind the scenes of the whole 'event,' for lack of a better word, showed God's provision and sense of mystical symbolism which we might call Divine appointment. Fr Cyprian shared the struggles and issues leading up to the day, such as getting of a baptismal pool, which had been 'sorted' in advance, but, human frailty and seasons of life led to a difficult situation which necessitated, the finding of an alternative. Our Lord, knowing our needs a head of time, provided, as He always does, a new baptismal that could be hired out in time. Fr Cyprian pointed out that this baptismal was not just a baptismal but also a birthing pool; the symbolism, having in mind the bible verses "being born of water and Spirit," and "born again," comes to mind. This added to the beauty of assisting these five catechumens, who had spent much time and effort in their preparing for baptism, in order to become fully the children of God through the washing of regeneration. All of the interconnectedness revealed God's weaving within the details.



Fr Cyprian leading the Catechumens around the baptismal font

It was also clear to see the labour of love from each person who served in their individually unique way, such as the setting up, the printing of service sheets, the cleaning, food preparation, the choir, the sewing of fabrics and the rest! In particular Fr Cyprian who poured himself into everything in order to glorify God no matter how small the job and the cost, in order to ensure the day was a blessing for all, which leads me to my second point.

It was a blessing for both communities, and a recharging of the spiritual batteries to be able to have fellowship with our Sister Church. It is good and necessary for us to come out of our own parishes to mix within our Communion where possible. It strengthens our relationships, puts faces to names on a prayer list, strengthens the fraternal love and reaffirms the shared goal of advancing the kingdom of God where we are. We are not just a single parish in the back of nowhere, we are a part of a single dispersed body. "Iron sharpens iron" and we must remain sharp, recharge the spiritual batteries and remove the stones that block up the well-spring, else we might become stagnant or lukewarm. I personally have at times become disheartened when

we receive a newcomer who appears zealous to join our community and then disappears in the wind; however, I am reminded that we must be faithful in the work the Lord has given us and He will give the increase. It doesn't matter how small our part is, as we all make up that one body which needs all the little parts to function, and to function without division; as the priest's prayer over the consecrated body of Christ at the Fraction says "broken yet not divided." We have very few Western Orthodox communities within the world, let alone the British Isles; however, our efforts and labours are very much seeds within God's garden and our distance and distribution have been cast afar purposely. The Lord of the harvest has scattered us on to the good ground in order for us not to have a superficial growth, but rather growth with a good root.



Fr Cyprian, Deacon Patrick, Diakonissa Agnes Clare (aka Megan), Raphael (aka Harley), Gabriel (aka Jesse) and Brigid (aka Lucia).

More Diaconal Wanderings

As this News goes out, Fr Deacon Tugdual, Diakonissa Susanna and family are on their way to Lourdes and beyond. Hopefully, we shall learn about this in the November News.

The Liturgical Calendar for 2024-25

The year has somehow managed to run away from me and I will be extremely unlikely to be able to publish the 2024-25 Calendar in time for Advent, 12 November, when the New Church Year begins. I will send out an update as soon as it is available.

Meanwhile, you can obtain the French Calendar by requesting it at:
secretariat.aceca@eoc-coc.org

Alternatively, it can be seen on the COC website: www.eglise-orthodoxe-celtique.org/accueil/accueil-eglise-orthodoxe-celtique Close 'Page not Found' if you get it and go to the home page. Click on *ACCUEIL* and drop down to *Calendrier Liturgique* At present it is still the 23-24 Calendar, but it will change to 24-25 at Advent.

Fun Ending to our News



Raphael (aka Harley), Gabriel (aka Jesse) and Brigid (aka Lucia) at the Sidmouth Donkey Sanctuary.

Presbytera Trish and Fr Leonard took them out for the day so Mummy and Daddy could have some 'own' time on the forefeast of their wedding anniversary. Congratulations to them, love and blessings.

Congratulations also to the children who were so wonderfully well behaved.

(Old Uncle Tom Copley comes to mind!)



Lord, in your mercy: Hear our Prayers

For our Primate, Metropolitan Marc, Bishop Nicolas, and for all our clergy. For all who proclaim Christ and for the Unity of His Church which we have fractured.

For our country: for King Charles and the Royal Family, for our government, and all nations' leaders, most especially praying for them to place PEACE before conflict.

For those who tirelessly against all odds to bring about PEACE.

For our environment – that all the nations wake up to the reality of Climate Change and act before it is irrevocably too late.

For those suffering in any way – those in unspeakably wretched conditions in places of conflict, the bereaved, the homeless, the lonely, the persecuted, those suffering the effects of Climate Change, the marginalised and for those who live in fear or with anxiety. For the sick, especially remembering Fr John's wife, Libby.

For the departed – for all who have died recently; for Leslie, Steve, Eva, Charles, Ellie, Eric, Fred, Penny, Monica, Margaret, Leslie, June, Metropolitan Gabriel, Derek, David, Christine and Jean, whose anniversaries of reposing fall this month.

Memory eternal.

