



The
Celtic Orthodox Church
in Britain
Community of St Gwenn

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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 144 – December 2024



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

December Liturgical Calendar

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| Sun 1 Dec | ADVENT 3 SORRY, LITURGY CANCELLED |
| Wed 4 Dec | Gt Martyr Barbara |
| Thu 5 Dec | St Sabbas the Sanctifier |
| Fri 6 Dec | St Nicholas the Wonderworker |
| Sun 8 Dec | ADVENT 4 Conception of the Mother of God |
| Thu 12 Dec | St Spyridon the Wonderworker |
| Fri 13 Dec | St German of Alaska, Wonderworker |
| Sun 15 Dec | ADVENT 5 |
| Thu 19 Dec | Beginning of the Forefeast of the Nativity |
| Sat 21 Dec | St Thomas, Apostle Forefeast of the Nativity |
| Sun 22 Dec | ADVENT 6 Forefeast of the Nativity |
| Tue 24 Nov | Eve of the Nativity NATIVITY in the Flesh of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: LITURGY 7pm |
| Wed 25 Nov | NATIVITY in the Flesh of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ |
| Thu 26 Dec | St Stephen |
| Fri 27 Dec | St Joseph the Just St John the Theologian, Apostle |
| Sat 28 Dec | Holy Innocents |
| Sun 29 Dec | NATIVITY 1 |
| Sun 5 Jan | NATIVITY 2/EPIPHANY/THEOPHANY (Transferred): Liturgy and Blessing Water – 10.30am |

From Fr Leonard

Greetings!

Towards the end of this month we emerge from our contemplative Advent period of preparation and emerge into the Light and Joy of Our Lord's birthday celebrations. Traditionally we give and receive presents. At this feast we remember with grateful thanks the great present God has given us – His Son, Jesus Christ. And what present shall we give him? I think the lovely words of Christina Rossetti say it all:

What can I give Him
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would give a lamb
If I were a wise man, I would do my part
Yet what I can, I give Him
Give my heart.

May God's blessings and love be with us all.

Fr Leonard +

PS Sorry for late notice cancellation of 1 Dec Liturgy – widespread illness among us.

Nativity/Christmas Service

Just to clarify: In Orthodoxy the new day begins at sundown/vespers, so our Liturgy at 7pm on 24th December really is Christmas! We do not need to follow the Latin Western custom of "Midnight Mass."

Fr Deacon Tugdual tells us of a Visit to Lourdes

With the postponement of the Canonisation of Bishop Mael and celebration of his life we decided to skip our projected visit to St Dolay and Taizé and head straight down towards Lourdes.

Our first stop was Carcassonne, a medieval World Heritage city on top of a hill, with a 6th century basilica, Cathedral of Saint Nazarius.



Our flat there was appalling, so after two sight-seeing days we swiftly moved on by train to Toulouse, a vibrant city with many magnificent cathedral-like churches.

Our hotel at Toulouse was by the beautiful and bustling boulevard which encircled the city centre and the Basilique Saint Sernin. We were drawn to the latter by its bells, (a wedding with English translation) and its many side chapels.



Another, the Basilica Notre Dame de la Daurade was originally a temple to the Roman God Apollo. Further, Saint Etienne Cathedral houses the Chapel of Joan of Arc, who is said to have saved the city from a fire in 1672.

Onwards, to the Pyrenees and Lourdes (to complete our 12-month journey to the 3 Marian sites – Fatima, Medjugorje & Lourdes).



An impressive Sanctuarie Notre-Dame, with a nighttime pilgrimage to the apparition Grotto. As expected, the town was very busy with far too many souvenir stalls. We stayed up the hill where it was less manic.



We had to stay a day longer than expected because of a national rail strike which sadly meant our next destination closed the day before we arrived!! We shall experience the Yellow Train journey through the Alps next time.

We always end our wanderings in Tarragona, my favourite city. Once again a magnificent cathedral and so much history.

2nd century Roman port with many traces of that past remaining.



Deacon Tugdual



"Never, never, never let anyone tell you that you must be Eastern to be Orthodox. The West was fully Orthodox for a thousand years..."

- St. John Maximovitch

Our Primate, Metropolitan Marc has issued his Pastoral Letter No 3

I had intended to attach it with this Newsletter, but unfortunately, I don't have it yet in a file type which my internet provider will support. I will work on this problem and hopefully send out with the January News.



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 Sovereign, King Charles, and the Royal Family; for our government – for wisdom and equality in its decision making.

For America as it prepares for a change of leadership – for wisdom and equality for them also in all policies.

For the Leaders of every Nation: that the Lord may grant to all a true desire for Peace and a de-escalation of waring, conflict and violence.

For all who suffer the consequences of these devastating conflicts and for all aid agencies seeking to bring relief.

For those who are suffering the consequences of the world acting too slowly and inadequately to reduce the effect of Climate Change.

For our loved ones in sorrow, sickness or distress.

For the departed – for Thelma, Presbyteria Annemieke and all who have died recently; for Mary, Sydney, Patriarch Alexei II, Patriarch Ignatius IV, Nelson, Elizabeth, Audrey, Lucy, Lorraine, Wendy, Kit, Terry, Len, Ann, Dom Boniface, oblate Ken, Henry, Père Jacques Ivor, Sr Wendy, Archbp Desmond, Benazir, Evelyn, Kingsley, 'Jack' and Pope Benedict XVI, whose anniversaries of reposing fall this month.

Memory eternal.

