



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!*

Parish Priest – Fr Leonard Hollands Asst Priests – Fr John Francis, Fr Patrick Mary Fr Deacon Tugdual Meharg

St Gwenn's News No 164 – August 2026



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

August Liturgical Calendar

Sun 2 Aug	PENT 10 Roma Holocaust Memorial Day
Mon 3 Aug	St Nicodemus
Thu 6 Aug	The TRANSFIGURATION of the Lord
Sun 9 Aug	PENT 11 (Transfiguration transferred) – Liturgy 10.30am
Tue 11 Aug	St Tugdual the New, Abbot-founder of St Dolay
Wed 12 Aug	St Clare, Abbess of San Damiano
Sat 15 Aug	DORMITION of the Holy Theotokos
Sun 16 Aug	PENT 12 (Dormition transferred)
Sun 23 Aug	PENT 13
Mon 24 Aug	St Bartholomew, Apostle and Martyr
Tue 25 Aug	St Hilda, Abbess of Whitby
Sat 29 Aug	Beheading of Holy Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John
Sun 30 Aug	PENT 14
Mon 31 Aug	St Aidan of Lindisfarne. St Columbanus of Ireland
Sun 6 Sep	PENT 1 – Liturgy 10.30am

From Fr Leonard

Greetings to you all – and how quickly that monthly greeting comes round!

It is not easy to remain upbeat about our Faith when wars still rage, the aftermath of the twin earthquakes in Venezuela is too devastating to comprehend, and now so much of Europe in the deadly grip of advancing wildfires, and as we go to press an

earthquake in Japan – mercifully smaller -yet what do we have to help us through all this if not our Faith.

As it is all so overwhelming I feel that I cannot do better than to repeat some of what I said last month. It all seems too vast a problem for us to make any impression, but have faith. Who knows how God uses our prayer? Don't let the enormity of things dissuade us from praying. And don't try telling God what to do. Simply holding these situations before God with true compassion in our hearts is sufficient, even preferable. I know I quote this often, but St Paul's words in Romans (8.26) can be so helpful: "the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us through wordless groans." So may God take and use our feeble prayers.

Blessings and love in Christ

Fr Leonard +

Coincidence?

A dear friend, who happens to hold probably the greatest collection in existence of historic photographs of the Romany people, and has written many books on the subject, told me of something that I believe is more than coincidence. He says:

I had a blessed encounter the other day. I usually have to get taxis to medical appointments and one last week was to a distant hospital for routine treatment. As we drove, the driver told me about his family as he thought I seemed a 'nice person' and added that his father was a Romany but that he had never been able to get any pictures of his father's family. Of course I knew of his family, and I will be giving him a book full of his relatives' photos.

God works in a mysterious way.

RD

Roma Holocaust (the Porajmos)

In addition to the **six million Jews** systematically 'eliminated' by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945, up to **500,000 Roma and Sinti** people (Gypsies) were also murdered by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II. It is estimated that between a quarter and half of the European Roma population was killed.

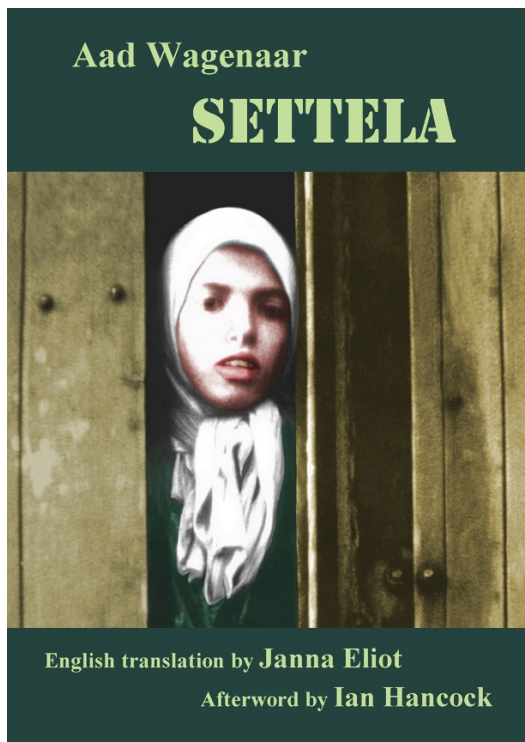


'Gypsy Camp' at Auschwitz Birkenau

The 2nd August is officially recognized as **Roma Holocaust Memorial Day**. In our area there will be a Memorial Service at 3pm at Wimborne Minster. The date commemorates the single day in 1944 when 2,897 Roma were murdered in the gas chambers at Auschwitz Birkenau – a calculated highly organised 'conveyor belt' of extermination, Lord have mercy.

Despite the genocide committed against Roma and Sinti people by the Nazi regime, this atrocity was only fully recognised by the West German Government in 1981 and the Roma Holocaust is only now becoming more widely known.

Interesting reading around this subject:



Settela by Aad Wagenaar

Lamorna Publications

ISBN: 978-0-9933898-2-5

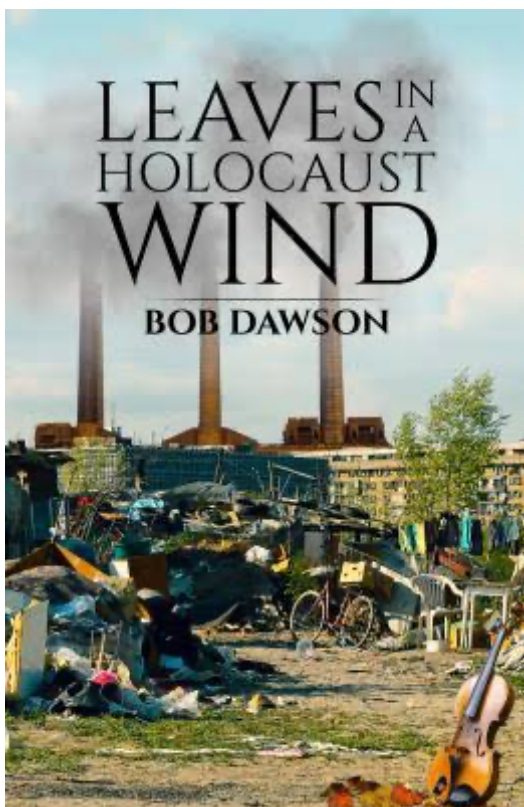
2016

Dutch Second World War historian Aad Wagenaar, haunted by the image of a young girl looking out from a cattle train bound for Auschwitz, determined to discover the girl's identity.

After visiting the Westerbork camp, searching the war archives in Scheveningen and Amsterdam, and meeting Jewish Auschwitz survivors, he finds the Dutch Sinti (Gypsy) community.....and the answer to his quest. That iconic face belonged to a Sinti girl known as Settela. She was not Jewish as had previously been assumed. She did not survive but was, at just nine years old, murdered at Auschwitz.

The book has been ably translated into English by Janna Eliot, herself an author of books with a Romani interest.

Settela is a compelling read and makes an important contribution to the Roma Holocaust history which remains little known.



Leaves in a Holocaust Wind by Bob Dawson

Austin Macauley Publishers

2017

ISBN-13 : 978-1786937179

The Holocaust, the final solution for Jews, is infamous in history. Robert Dawson's novel, *Leaves in a Holocaust Wind*, is the story of another community that suffered in the Holocaust - the Gypsies. Told by Demeter Fox and Zuzzi, the book follows their journey to freedom in the German occupied territory of Slovakia. From the horrors of slaughter in the woods, the lies about a safe future, the concentration camp of Majdanek and the hiding away in the countryside, Fox and Zuzzi must come to terms with what they have witnessed and find the courage to survive until freedom comes. It is a novel of the playful mind-set and culture of the Romanies in the face of a most brutal regime, and in which most of the major events are based on real incidents.

And to Lighten the Tone



Lord, in your mercy: Hear our Prayers

For our Patriarch His Beatitude Metropolitan Marc, Bishop Nicolas and all our clergy and people; for our sister Churches.

For the Unity and Integrity of the Holy Church of Christ, made One by Him and divided by us, Lord, have mercy.

For all who suffer; through wars, catastrophe, persecution, sickness, poverty, homelessness, tragedy, fear and all that prevents the living of a free and peaceful life.

For all who labour to alleviate suffering.

That PEACE may prevail. For all who seek peace.

For us and the environment as we seek to adjust to Climate Change

For Valerie and all who have died recently, and for the Roma Holocaust victims, Trevor, Betty, Paul, Vicky, Fr William, Jenny, Fool for Christ Roly, June, Jill, Cardinal John, Josie, Cyril, Bob, Peter, Fran, Chris, Geoffrey, Clarissa, Tony, Metropolitan Kallistos, George, Grace, Papa Spiros, Ray, Des and Yvonne, whose anniversaries of reposing fall this month.

