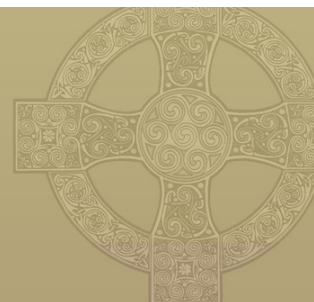


orthodox parish holy prophet elias



Newsletter No. 64 31st May 2011

Notes for your diaries

St Elias – will be celebrated on Sunday, 17th July.

There will be a bring and share meal afterwards at Deacon Peter's house.

Dormition – will be celebrated on Sunday, 14th August.

Bring and Share meal at Scilla's house (Hillside, Guineaford) after the Liturgy.

Children's camp – Monday 25th July to Sunday 7th August.

Please contact Deacon Peter Scorer for more details.

Announcements

BAPTISMS

6th February 2011 – Edward David, infant son of Cosmin and Rodica Ene, in St Anne's, Exeter. Fr John Marks officiated.

26th February 2011 – George, infant son of Cristina Canivet, in St Anne's, Exeter. Fr Nikanor Wilkins officiated. Godparents: Roxana and Resvan Pantelei.

DEATHS

9th May 2011, Betty (Elizabeth) Maynard.

FUNERALS

5th April 2011 – Vladimir Levitsky, at Plymouth Crematorium. Deacon Peter Scorer officiated.

18th May 2011 – Betty (Elizabeth) Maynard at Barnstaple Roman Catholic church. Fr John Marks officiated.

Memory Eternal

From our Parish Priest

Christ is Risen!

For the past 37 years I have been priest of this beloved and increasingly multi-ethnic parish, and the time has flown by. I have learned all I know from working together with this community and because of this I have managed to keep my head above the often turbulent waters of the Orthodox Christian world.

There are many enormous problems facing the Church, as there always have been since the first Pentecost. Christians have been regarded with suspicion, despised and rejected from the start and we should expect nothing less than what the Lord Himself suffered. One thing, though, is now clear to me and this is that we need to become increasingly aware of who we are and what we are doing in Western Europe. We are not a chaplaincy for those of our Orthodox brothers and sisters who have come from countries of Orthodox tradition to settle in Britain and yet choose to remain apart, cocooned in their own culture. What we are is a parish in the British deanery of the Exarchate of Western Europe of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Archbishop Gabriel addressed these words to Patriarch Bartholomew on his recent visit to Paris:

“Your All Holiness, today, our Exarchate has become, in reality, multinational. It is thanks to the Russian Orthodox ecclesial tradition received from Metropolitan Evlogios and from his successors, that we are what we are. We are all indebted to them and we are all the agents of the inheritance that they passed on to us, which is the inheritance of the Russian tradition. This expresses itself in the manner of celebrating the Liturgy, in singing, in the painting of icons, and in living the rhythm of the ecclesial year.... I express to you our gratitude for the respect which the Great Church has always showed us. For our part, we make a commitment to continue our pastoral work under the omophorion of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which never tried to “Hellenize” us, but which frees us to continue to follow our vocation, to prepare the way for the establishment of a local Church, in communion of prayer and action with all the Orthodox people of this country..... I would like to call to mind some words of Olivier Clément (of happy memory): “Let us try to work together, each one enriching the others with their own heritage, in the framework of a modest, open and evangelical Orthodoxy, being convinced that the Tradition, to be alive, must be creative.”

We have indeed inherited much of the wisdom of the émigré Russian Orthodox Christians, both clerical and lay, who settled in Paris after the Russian Revolution and Civil War, but we must not forget that these islands were Orthodox as part of the undivided Church for almost a thousand years before that. In the Archdiocese we have developed our own traditions and we should not be embarrassed by this. Christianity in Western Europe has evolved in ways that are different from the East, a fact that was recognised and respected in large part by Metropolitan Anthony.

For us, freedom of conscience is of the essence and the notion that Orthodoxy can be a state church is abhorrent.

For many of our brothers and sisters, to be Orthodox is to be Greek or Romanian or Russian, but it is not correct to speak of the Orthodox Church as defined by any nation. We can only be the Orthodox Church IN whatever country we live, which is the reason why there can never be an “English” Orthodox Church. Most of the difficulties experienced by Orthodox Christians in the West are the consequence this false confusion of church and state, Tradition and cultural traditions. It is canonically improper for patriarchates abroad to establish dioceses in the West and to bypass our Orthodox communities which have existed here for a long time. As we can see from the constituency of the “Pan-Orthodox Assembly of Bishops” in this country, whatever had been the hope and expectation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in setting up these assemblies, the present reality is divisive rather than cohesive, as is also witnessed by the problems being faced by the Orthodox in America.

I am so glad to be the priest in charge of a parish in England that has been discovering and renewing itself for more than three decades now, moving through various stages of maturation until this point when we attract people from many national origins. We are all sinners, which we acknowledge in our practice of general confession before each Divine Liturgy, (which does NOT preclude the need for personal confession as often as appropriate to the circumstances of each penitent), and we recognise our need for one another in our joint response to the priest’s exclamation “Christ is in our midst!”, the Kiss of Peace at the Creed and the communal saying of the prayer before Communion. These are all practices that already exist in parts of the Church in Russia and in our Exarchate and are not just innovations of our own. They often seem strange and challenging at first to people of different Orthodox traditions, but the fact is that many remain with us or, on returning to their homelands, still express great attachment to the parish and keep in touch with us. Some say that they learned more about their ancestral faith here than they had before they came and we hope that they carry the experience of Orthodox parish life in England back to their own people. For them it has not just been ‘more of the same’, but MUCH more!

We welcome wholeheartedly those who make their home with us and share their lives with us, and the Liturgy is the coming together of the whole community in an act of thanksgiving and worship which is how it was understood by the early Church. It is not simply an expression of individual piety which can be replaced simply by popping into church at some point during the service, lighting a few candles and popping out again; neither is it the occasion for sending children up to receive Communion while their parents remain aloof from the Holy Gifts that are being offered to all. It is the when together we come face to face with Christ and we know Him in the breaking of bread.



Elizabeth Rose Maynard (Betty)

May 1937- May 2011

I have known Betty since we were both teaching at Ilfracombe College in the 70s when she had recently returned from a teaching exchange in America. Betty was Head of Modern Languages; she was elegant and vivacious and had been known to turn cartwheels in the staff room. She had suffered from bouts of serious depression for most of her life. The time came when she could no longer continue with her teaching career and was hospitalised for a while.

It was after this that she came to the Liturgy for the first time and asked subsequently to be received into the Church. She remained a devoted and committed member of our parish although in recent years she did not feel able to travel to Exeter.

The medication that she received for her condition seemed to have long-lasting and damaging effects on her, turning her from a bright and energetic person into someone who was physically very unsteady and who often seemed rather withdrawn. This was tragic because she was cultured and widely-read, with a passionate love of music especially opera and was, above all, such fun to be with.

Betty leaves a daughter Corinne who is a nurse and has been working for many years in Australia, where she lives with her partner Will and their whippet - Pippet - who was a great favourite of Betty's. Fortunately Corinne managed to be with Betty when she died.

Betty's presence will be greatly missed at Combe Martin, both in her regular place in church and sitting with a gin and tonic at our dining table after vespers.

May her memory be eternal!

Devon Historic Churches Day, 10th September 2011

This year, for the first time, Saint Anne's will be on the official list of Exeter historic churches which can be visited by people taking part in the Ride and Stride sponsorship scheme on September 10th. This scheme raises money for the upkeep of historic churches, regardless of denomination, and hundreds of people participate each year in Exeter.

Saint Anne's does not have to be open – participants can sign forms pinned to the door – but this would be to miss a wonderful opportunity for visitors to get a brief glimpse of what Orthodoxy has to offer, as well as to see the interior of a beautiful mediaeval church building which is normally closed. If anyone would like to volunteer to spend two or three hours on the day as part of a team ensuring Saint Anne's can be kept open between 10.30am and Vespers at 6.00pm, please have a word with Philip or Martin.



Uganda News

Letter from Fr Daniel, 7th April 2011

“Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

I once again take the pleasure to communicate to you. I congratulate all those who have registered success in their endeavours, and at the same time sympathise with those who have encountered shortcomings on the path of life. God sends all, according to Job 10. However also on the other side when trials come we should rejoice (James 1: 2-4)

This is Lent season. As we go along let us at the same time look back in order to put right what has gone wrong between us and our God, and our neighbour. As we fast let the eyes fast, and so should the ears, the hands, the legs and the whole body. And not forgetting to receive the sacrament of repentance during this season and afterwards.

Thanks for all the cards full of love and kind words. May God bless. The last funeral rights of Papazia (Josephine) will be held God willing on 20-5-2011.

We need your prayers.

Greetings full of love from St Cyprian parish, wishing you the best of the Lent season and the Easter festivities.

Fr Daniel Kaddu”

Cards were sent to Fr Daniel for the feast days of the two sub-parishes, Saint Procopios (27th February) and Saint Mary of Egypt (1st April), as well as an Easter card made by many of the children with Emma's help between the services on Good Friday.

Life Beyond The Deanery

Our Deanery is a (very) small part of an Archdiocese estimated at 100,000 people stretching from Spain to Germany and from beyond the Arctic Circle to the Mediterranean. At Fr John's suggestion I recently made contact with Krister Tano, a member of the parish of Overkalix in the far north of Sweden. Here are some extracts from Krister's e-mails.

6th February

I received a copy of your letter from f. Benedikt and it was really exciting to read about your parish.

Our parish started in December 2004, when our f Benedikt was ordained as priest in Paris by our Archbishop Gabriel. F Benedikt was a former priest in the Swedish Lutheran Church and so was I. I have been interested in the Orthodoxy during the last ten years, but when the parish formed after 2004, me and my wife Liselott converted to Orthodoxy and to the parish in Överkalix in the summer 2005.

As with your parish, our parish is very international – we have Greek members, members from Russia and Finland and also Swedish converts from southern Sweden up to the very north of Sweden. Our members are thus scattered geographically over large areas, why we do not meet everyone that often. Interestingly we have a member that have been a member of the parish of Anthony Bloom in England, but now lives in Paris. She usually visits us at least in the summertime – she has a small cottage in the woods outside Överkalix. We have made some pilgrimages from our parish: We have been to the Monastery of New Valamo in Finland a couple of times and 2 years ago we visited Moscow and the Monastery of Optina in Russia.

Last summer we started a pilgrim route between Överkalix and Övertorneå at the Finnish border near the Torne river, a distance of 50 km. We called it the “wandering of Andrew”, because we know that in a place just North of Övertorneå there was a church at the 15th century, dedicated to the first called of the disciples, st Andrew. This church was probably originally an Orthodox Church, but was taken over by the Catholics during the 16th century and later swept away by the river at 1615. This wandering of Andrew will take place every year at first weekend of August.

The wife of f Benedikt, Monika, is a very good teacher of Icon painting and I am attending the courses that she gives. We usually meet about one weekend every month, combining painting with Vigils and Liturgy and at times also seminars in Orthodox Faith.

We celebrate the Liturgy in Swedish, but because of the distances we do not have Liturgy every Sunday. An ordinary Sunday we are about 10-15 people at Liturgy and most of us have travelled 100-200 kilometers (one way) from our homes to the church. [And I sometimes complain about the distance I have to travel to church! M.)

Our priest, f Benedikt, is also a writer and now retired. He has built the church by his own means and it is a beautiful church. We have also a deacon, Urban. We do not have a real

choir, but we are about 3-4 persons that lead the song and we want that everybody takes an active part in the Liturgy regarding the singing.

I am working as a doctor at Sunderby Hospital in Luleå and my wife is also a doctor in Family Medicine (GP). I am 53 year old and we have 3 grown up children living in Stockholm and Gothenburg.

15th February

Thank you for your letter! It would really be nice if someone from your parish would like to visit us in the future. Summertime is of course the best time for a visit, although the midnight sun is not visible in August, when we have the wandering of St Andrew. During 2-3 weeks around mid-summer (22nd of June) we have daylight all night long. Unfortunately we have a long and cold winter, especially this year when we have had 10 to 30 degrees below zero from beginning of November and until this day. The latest days we have had -30 degrees, so you do not want to be outdoors if you don't have to. In December we have daylight only between 9 am and 2 pm. We have nearly one meter of snow, so the work in the garden sounds very distant at the moment. The snow disappears in the beginning of May and returns typically in November.

My earliest Christian steps, I made within a kind of "revival" movement (some similarities with the Methodists) in the Northern Sweden. This movement started by a priest in Northern Sweden in the 19th Century and the spirituality and spiritual guidance had many similarities with the tradition of the Russian Elders. Later, as a priest in the Lutheran Church of Sweden, I was disappointed with the increasing influence of politicians on the everyday life and the management of the parish work. Nowadays, the Church of Sweden is very much a social institution, serving people with baptism, confirmation and funerals. I could not be part of it, so I studied to be a physician instead and continued to lead Sunday services and also was engaged in "Alpha groups" (started in England). However, when I attended Liturgies in Överkalix during 2005, I felt that the Masses in the Lutheran Church were very shallow, compared to the Liturgies, and it was inevitable to take the step into the Orthodox Church.

The Orthodox Church is fantastic in its aim of "including everything". It is like the Church is a Hospital, aiming to cure our whole being, both spiritually and physically. The important thing is not to become "religious" but to become healthy, and this is really a big difference! How meager it sounds when the Lutheran Church proclaims: "Scripture alone" or "Faith alone". Of course it is only the grace of God, through Christ, that we are saved, but it is fantastic to experience that in the Orthodox Church, Christ has left all the necessary means for our salvation, like the merciful Samaritan: "Take good care of him and if something more will be needed, I will provide for that when I come back"(Luk 10:35).

1st March

Thank you for your kind letter. Yes, it is not strange if you long for a better climate than ours. I feel like being in a dark prison for 4 months during the wintertime, when you cannot go out and it is dark when you go to work and dark when you come home. Please tell me

that your winter consists of heavy raining every day! Springtime for us is when you can be outdoors and go skiing and sit on the ice in the sunshine near a fire. The snow disappears in beginning of May - not really a climate for human beings - at least not in wintertime!

Now it is the healthy Lent period and although we still have snow here, I hope that this period will sow some seeds in my heart that will eventually bear eternal fruits, fruits that does not burn like straw in the Last Judgment.

26th April

He is truly risen indeed!

At last also the earthly light has reached to us up north! The snow has disappeared and we have daylight between 4 am and 9 pm! At Easter Sunday we had about 15 degrees centigrade and we could for the first time in many years walk around the church during the Easter liturgy.

We have some new pictures at our webpage [www.khristiforklaring.se] from the Easter service under the heading: "Aktuellt"

Truly Risen!

Krister and Liselott

In case anyone else would like to contact other parishes across the archdiocese – leading perhaps, who knows, to invitations to visit San Remo, Biarritz or Barcelona – the directory can be found on the Exarchate website www.exarchate.org.uk or www.exarchat.eu under Directories or Annuaires.



Then As Now

The Lord teaches us to pray for all people, to pursue on every occasion the interests of our fellow man, since we all partake in the same greatest and most necessary gifts of our God. By accepting to be called Father of us all, He gave to all of us the same noble origin. Thus we are united and no one possesses more than the other, neither the rich than the poor, neither the lord than the slave, neither the ruler than the subject, neither the king than the soldier, neither the philosopher than the barbarian, neither the wise than the illiterate.

Saint John Chrysostom:
Treatise on Matthew, Homily 19



Summer Camp

The roar of the thunderous river echoes through the quiet field,
The peaceful trees surrounding waver in the wind,
The gentle breeze soon reaches you,
Washing over you with its cool breath,
Bringing the scent of the iconic smell of lasagne from the mud green
Marquee which looms over you at the far end,
The ten ancient army tents all neatly in line like the trained regiment
Which once inhabited them lie to the right,
As you slowly turn the marquee blurs out of sight,
You carry onto scan across the rapid roaring river opposite the tents
Still standing to attention,
Until you have finally turned to face the horde of towering giants,
With their untamed leafy hair,
They all just stand and stare,
As your gaze beings to wonder,
You look up the merciless hill by your side,
Only to find a swarm of children playing in the dazzling sun,
You have the young ones dancing to their shadows,
The middle ones playing football with flying headers,
And the seniors doing nothing but relaxing in the burning sun,
The elders just stand and oversee,
While the children indulge themselves while they're still free,
This is but a small camp in Wales,
But to me,
It's the only place I want to be.

Alexei Bulpett



Deadlines for the next issue are:

28th August 2011 by hand and post AND email

EARLIER THAN USUAL BUT I WILL BE AWAY FOR MOST OF SEPTEMBER

Celia Olsson - 01837 82 796

Email: martin@macolsson.freeseve.co.uk