



The New-Martyr

A Newsletter of the Parish of Saint Elisabeth the New-Martyr
*A Parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia
in the Diocese of Great Britain and Ireland*

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**Having foolishly abandoned thy paternal glory,
I have squandered on vices
the wealth Thou gavest me.
Therefore I cry to Thee,
O compassionate Father,
receive me as one repentant,
and treat me as one of thy hired servants.**

- Kontakion (Sunday of the Prodigal Son)

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*Each month we hope to keep readers abreast of
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A Word from the Saints

'Pride makes us forget our sins, for the remembrance of them leads to humility.'

- St John of The Ladder



'To suffer for Christ's sake is patiently to endure whatever happens to us. For the envy which the innocent provoke is for their benefit, while the Lord's schooling tests us so as to bring about our conversion, since it opens our ears when we are guilty. That is why the Lord has promised an eternal crown to those who endure in this manner.'

- St Gregory of Sinai



'In this present life, we may be born three times: first, when we are delivered from our mother's womb - thus coming from earth we again go to earth. The other two births cause us to ascend from earth to heaven. The one, brought about by divine grace, comes to us through Holy Baptism, which is true rebirth and regeneration. The third birth, wherein we now find ourselves, takes place through repentance, which is achieved by means of tears and good struggles. A fierce struggle have they who come to God in the monastic schema, for at its very commencement, they will struggle in many labours; yet, they will also receive inexpressible joy.'

- St Syncletika of Alexandria



'Whenever Christ, the Bridegroom of pure souls, is mystically united with each soul, He gives the Father occasion to rejoice over this as at a wedding. It is Christ Himself Who says, 'Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner who repents' (Luke 15:7). For joy, according to the Apostle, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22), Who through conversion brings back to Christ those living in repentance, and reunites them with Him. And this joy embraces both those in heaven and godly men on earth. That is why there is joy in heaven over one repentant sinner.'

- St Gregory Palamas



'See in each herb and small animal, every bird and beast, and in each man and woman, the eternal Word of God.'

- St Ninian of Galloway





Father says...

Dear Brothers and Sisters ,

As we prepare to make our journey through Lent as individuals and an Orthodox Community, an honest prayer that could guide our steps would be, "Lord help me to know my own faults and failings and not to judge my brother and sister." For there are always two aspects of our journey through life: both the spiritual journey we make as individuals and that journey as part of the church - the only true place in which our journey can be made. Saint Anthony, who himself spent years in solitude, once said: "It is only with our brother and sister at our side that we are saved."

In the days to come, the church invites us to begin to reflect on these matters. The journey of repentance where we turn our heart towards God is actually an incredibly positive journey to make.

For it is the process of letting go of so many things from the past that trouble us and have wounded us—things that affect our relationships with God and with other people. It also provides us with a chance to take a good and honest look at ourselves, whatever stage of our journey we are on, as the scripture reminds us: the treasure is in "earthen vessels" (2nd Corinthians 4:7). The honest truth is that each of us has areas that we are good at and have received gifts from God, and each one of us has areas that we struggle with. For some there may be profound questions that need to be faced in the future that have life-changing effects.

So does the brother and sister we pray next to in church. All of us can be quick to speak or lose our patience sometimes, quickly forgetting our own personal struggles; all too quick to speak without listening to the other person. Not just the words from their lips but the true story of their journey through life.

Who would I be to judge anyone if I have not walked in his shoes; loved and rejoiced as he has, lost and felt pain as he has? Who would I be to judge anyone if I have not cried her tears, faced the questions they she has had to face, fallen as she has, and had to pick myself up again? Perhaps it is a matter of thanking God for the gifts each of us has and receiving their benefit as a community. And the things with which a person needs help or cannot do for whatever reason, offering them help without judgement. Again the scripture reminds us: *"Carry each others burdens. In that way you will fulfil the law of Christ."* (Galatians 6:2).

Forgiveness Sunday in the Orthodox Church provides us with a moment when we can put this into practice in our prayers. First, we could make our confession to examine our own lives before asking forgiveness of each other as we prostrate before one another, asking "Forgive me a sinner"; and hearing the response "May God forgive. Forgive me."

In those two acts of asking forgiveness before God and each other we should lay aside any past hurts, upsets, or misunderstandings and make a new beginning as individuals and a church. Then we may begin to see those we find most difficult in a new light, and understand the goodness in them and the struggles and questions they have to face in their daily lives.

Thanking you for all your love and support since I came here. Asking you to forgive me all my sins and failings: 'Forgive me a sinner.' Sometimes God entrusts the greatest things into human hands.

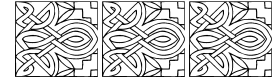
With love in Christ,

Priestmonk Lazarus





On Fasting



St Theodore the Studite

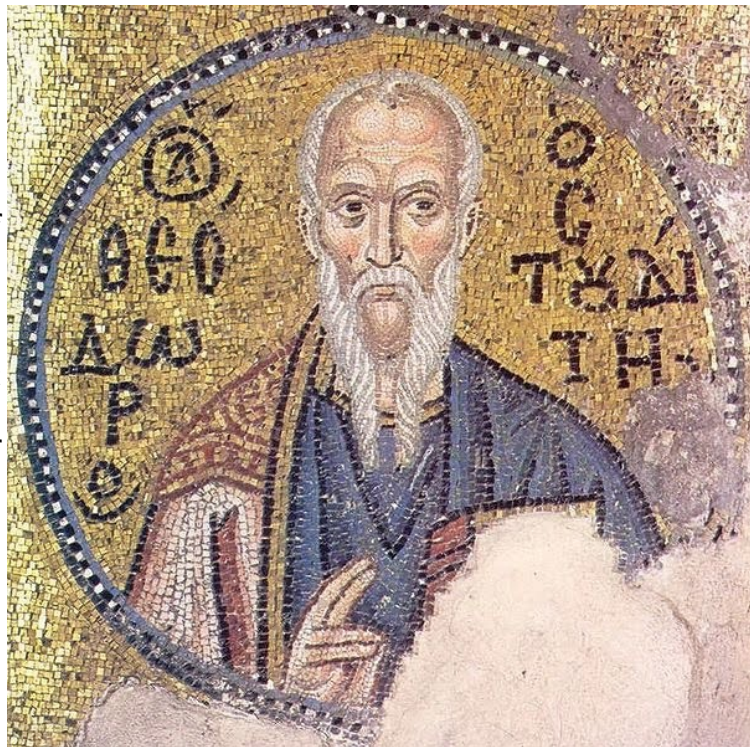
Fathers and brethren, the present days of the holy fast are, among the other periods of the year, a calm haven to which all gather and find spiritual serenity; not only monastics, but laymen as well, the small and the great, those in authority and those in submission, kings and priests; for this period is beneficial and salvific for every country and age of mankind. At this time every disruption and disorder comes to a halt, and doxology and hymnody are multiplied, charities and prayer by means of which our good God is moved to compassion and is propitiated to grant peace to our souls and forgiveness of sins; if only we shall sincerely turn to Him with all our heart, falling down before Him with fear and trembling, and promising to cease from every bad habit which we might have. But Christians living in the world have their teachers, that is, their bishops and pastors who guide and instruct them. And since I find myself desired among you in the place of leadership and abbacy, then it is my obligation to say to you a few words concerning this soul-saving fast.

Brethren, fasting is the renewal of the soul, for the Apostle says insofar as the body weakens and withers from the ascetic labour of fasting, then so much is the soul renewed day by day and is made beauteous and shines in the beauty which God originally bestowed upon in. And when it is purified and adorned with fasting and repentance, then God loves it and

will live in it as the Lord has said: 'I and the Father will come and make our abode with him.' (John 14:23). Thus if there is such value and grace in fasting that it makes us into habitations of God, then ought we to greet it with fear and great rejoicing and gladness, and not despond because of the meagreness of the food, knowing that when our Lord Jesus Christ blessed the five loaves in the wilderness He fed five thousand people with bread and water. He could, if He so desired, command all sorts of manifestations to appear; but He gave us an example of restraint, so that we might be concerned only for that which is necessary.

Now at the beginning the fast seems to us a difficult labour, but if we shall apply ourselves from day to day with ardour

and discipline, then with the help of God it will be made easier. At the same time, if we desire that the fast be for us a true one and acceptable to God, then together with abstaining from food, let us restrain ourselves from every sin of soul and body, as the stikheron* instructs us in which it is said: 'Let us keep the fast not only by refraining from food, but by becoming strangers to all sinful passions.' Let us guard ourselves from sloth and carelessness concerning our cell rule and church services, and even more vainglory and envious zeal, from malice out of spite, and from enmity, and secret passions such as these, which kill the



**First stikheron of the Aposticha, Tuesday evening of the First week of Lent.*



soul; let us guard against ill temper and self-assertion, that is, let us not appropriate things for ourselves and indulge our self-will. For nothing is so loved of the devil as to find a person who has not forgiven another and has not taken advice from those able to instruct him in virtue; then the enemy easily deludes the self-assertive and traps him in all that he does and reckons as good.

Let us vigilantly attend to ourselves, especially in regard to the desires of the flesh; for it is just now, when we fast, that the chamaeleon serpent-devil fights us with bad thoughts. Beauteous in appearance and pleasant to the taste is the fruit of sin, but in reality it is not so. Thus sometimes the outside of the apple seems nice, but when it is cut open rot is found within; so the desires of the flesh seem to have within them delights, yet when a sin has been committed, it is bitter to the stomach like a two-edged sword. Our forefather Adam suffered this when he was deceived by the devil and tasted of the fruit of disobedience and hoped to receive life from it, but found death. Thus do all from that time to this suffer who are deceived by the ancient serpent with bad desires of the fleshly passions. For the devil is darkness that takes the semblance and appearance of an angel of the light. So the inventor of evil, Satan, makes evil appear as good; and bitter to appear as sweet; and dark as light; and the ugly, beautiful; and he repre-

sents death as life, and thus deludes the world and tortures it. But let us, brethren, pay special heed so that he will not trap us with his many and evil snares and we suffer like birds that fall from the bait into the nooses and nets. Let us be careful to scrutinise our mind for the craftiness of evil, and in every instance be aware of evil, where it is concealed in the chanting of the psalms and services of the Church; let us strive to keep our minds attentive to what is being read. For as the body, when nourished by bread, grows stronger, so also does the soul when fed with the word of God. Let us every hour of the day do prostrations, each according to his strength and as much as he is required; let us be occupied with handiwork; for he who does nothing, according to the word of the Apostle, is not worthy even of food: (2nd Thessalonians 3:10). Let us be helpful to one another; let us not be quarrelsome, but do only what is good; let us be gentle, of good speech, peaceful, gracious, kind, meek, submissive, filled with mercy and good fruit. And may the peace of God preserve our hearts and minds, and may He vouchsafe us the heavenly kingdom of Christ Jesus our Lord, to Whom is due glory and dominion with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

From the Catechetical Homilies and Testament of St Theodore the Studite—Homily 47 on the Wednesday of the first week of Lent.



Did you know?

The modern English word, *Lenten*, is from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning “of the springtime”. It has the same root as the word *lengthen*, which, of course, is precisely what the daytime is doing at this time of year with each passing day—at least here in the northern hemisphere.

The Church in the west adopted the word to refer to the season of fasting that falls during the springtime. Therefore, the term *Lenten fast* (or simply, *Lent*), is just a way of referring to the springtime fast that we keep as we approach Easter. In Greek and Russian, it is simply called *The Great Fast*.

In recent times, a curious usage has appeared in some parts of the English-speaking Orthodox world, in which the word *Lent* has begun to be used to refer to all of the fasting seasons throughout the year. So we hear such expressions as *Nativity Lent*, *Dormition Lent*, and so forth. These seasons are more properly referred to as the *Nativity fast*, *Dormition fast*, &c.

During this Great Fast of Lent, we abstain from all meat, fish, and food from animals, including eggs and dairy. We also abstain from wine and oil, although these are permitted on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as on certain feast days. An outline of the Great Fast may be found later in this newsletter.



The Lost Sheep

"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one who is lost until he finds it? And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'"

- Luke 15:4-5

So often we hear stories of British converts to the holy Orthodox faith that we can easily forget that many people from traditionally Orthodox lands have themselves had to find their way to the narrow path of salvation, and that our mission here in these isles is as much to them as it is to anybody else. In this very personal testimony, Ljubov Lex—a Russian revert to the Orthodox Church—shares something of her own journey.



The life of every person is unique. As is said in *Desiderata*, "Listen to others, even the dull and ignorant: they too have their story." It is true: we all have our story.

A long time ago, when I was a student in Moscow, life was very predictable:

1. Finish school.
2. Go to work, which was already prepared for you.
3. Get married.
4. Have children.

If anyone had said to me 'You will live in England, speak English, and attend a Russian Orthodox church,' I would have laughed because it would sound so much like a funny joke.

I was in Consomol (from the age of 14 years), even Cosmorg (a type of leader in the group) of my course. We had "Atheism" as a subject, but we only believed in Communism - not in God. Sometimes we visited different churches in Moscow or Pavlov-Passad, not as houses of prayer but as an architect's beautiful works of art.

I was born in Siberia on the lake Baikal. In 1960, my parents, with my older sister Valentina, went on holiday in Moscow. It was 104 hours one way on the express train Russia, and 104 hours back again. At that time, my granny, Tanya took me in secret to the only church in Ulan-Ude, and had me baptised. I remember the smell of the church, the taste of the prosphora and wine, and the feel

of the oil on my forehead. After that, Granny Tanya strictly forbade me to tell anyone about our visit to the church. The Communist Party was extremely strict in that matter, and school was entirely separate from church. The fact of my baptism could have badly affected my dad's career. He was the director of a small factory in Tataurovo and mum worked as the general manager of the children's nursery.

In my family, nobody spoke about my baptism and I thought that we had done something very bad with Granny. For the next thirty years I did not go to church, although I firmly believed that God always looked after me.

Then the USSR collapsed. One day we lived in Estonia: the next day we found ourselves across the border from Russia. All three republics - Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, where I worked as a government inspector - became independent countries, and I lost my job.

Great problems came to my family. It reached the point where I was working as a lavatory attendant at Pevcheskoe Pole - a concert area out in the open air! Nobody on the whole earth could help me, and I turned to God. I covered my head with a scarf, put on a long skirt, and went to the cathedral of St Aleksander Nevsky. I stayed there and cried Sunday by Sunday, and God heard my cry. He showed me the way to England and turned all obstacles to my advantage - but that is a different story.



Let Us Attend!

Priest Paul Elliott

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ. At church I am seeking to explain aspects of the Holy Liturgy through a series of sermons. It may take many weeks but the Holy Mysteries are very profound, so it is worth making the effort to understand them better.

Last month we thought about the prayerful attitude of the people of God as they come to Church and as they hear the proclamation of the Kingdom in the opening sentence of the Liturgy. This next little study will encompass the first 3 petitions of the Great Litany or Litany of Peace, as it is sometimes called. The litany opens with the petition: *Mirom Gospodu pomolimsia*, (In peace let us pray to the Lord). This *peace* is of three kinds.

Firstly it is our peace with God. We have left behind any hurt, bitterness or misunderstanding that we may have harboured against God, and are here, attentive and hopeful of reconciliation. We express our yearning to be at peace with our Maker, acknowledging our need for his mercy and seeking to be his faithful children.

Secondly, this *peace* is our peace with each other. Again, we seek to leave behind all those sources of enmity we have between ourselves and our brothers and sisters. This enmity fractures peace so we come to church in order to forgive even if we have been ill-used by others. Again, we leave the hurt, bitterness and misunderstanding outside and seek reconciliation and forgiveness—we are at peace with one another.

Finally, there is the *peace* within ourselves. This peace is very elusive for it involves the reconciliation of our body our mind and our spirit. These should be united in prayerful action in the Holy Liturgy and not fragmented as they so often are. This is the peace of the faithful person who carries no prideful hurt

against God or fellow creatures and is able, through prayer, to be whole—the child of God as he or she was created to be. This being in *peace* is still resting in us.

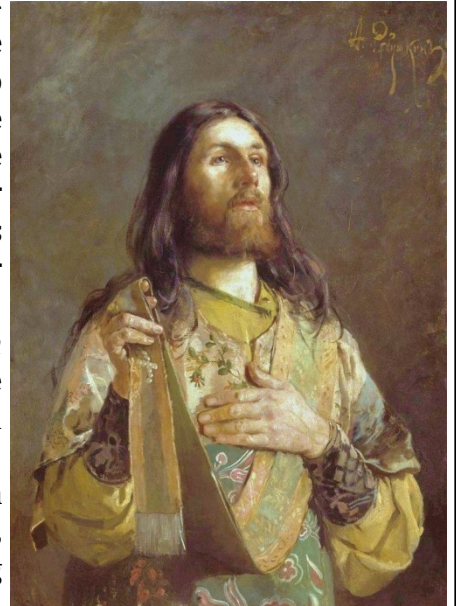
The next petition of the Litany also involves peace but this time the deacon or the priest is asking for peace:

‘O svyshnim miri’ (For the peace from on high).

This peace is a divine gift, something that is beyond

that which human beings can create on their own. It is *svyshnim* or from the heavenly realm. The English translation does not really do it justice for it is that peace referred to by the holy Apostle Paul as, "which passes all understanding" and has to do with the very nature of God Himself: Trinity and Unity. This is, therefore, grace-filled peace for which we are asking. The petition continues: *y spaseniyi dush nashykh*, (and for the salvation of our souls). This again is a prayer yearning for the grace and salvation of God, that we may be restored and made anew in the image and likeness of God. This very renewal and restoration is referred to later in the Anaphora, or Eucharistic prayer:

‘Thou it was who didst bring us from non-being into being, and when we had fallen away, didst raise us up again, and didst not cease to do all things until Thou hadst brought us up to heaven and hadst endowed us with thy kingdom, which is to come.’



This being taken up into heaven is indeed the salvation of our souls for which we implore God.

The last petition I want to look at in this little study again asks for peace: *O miri vsego mira*, (For the peace of the whole world). Here the prayer asks for the divine, grace-filled peace to come upon all creation. The words *whole world* again do not do justice to the language that actually lies behind this. In the Greek that lies behind the Slavonic, these words are, *Iper tis eirinis tou sympatantos kosmou*—the cosmos is actually all that is, seen and unseen, not just limited to the world in the modern English sense of the word.

The Greek and the Slavonic use expansive words, and it is this vastness that we should think of as we hear the prayer. The petition goes on: '*blagostoyaniyi svyatykh Bozhyikh tzerkviy*' (for the good estate of the holy churches of God). This refers to *tzerkviy* as the collective people of God, who are called to be holy, and to their spiritual condition. As a collective, of course, it includes our bishops and clergy as well as our laity all striving together for holiness, all yearning for restoration.

Finally the petition ends: '*y soyedineniyy vsikh*' (and for the union of all). This is much misunderstood, for some, in a modern ecumenist mindset, think that this refers to the union of the churches and that we are praying for divisions in the church to be overcome, e.g. between the Roman Catholics, Anglicans or Lutherans. This is very wrong. The prayer assumes the unity of the Church which cannot be divided for it is a divine entity. The union of all refers to all mankind and perhaps even all creation, united as it was before it was fractured by our disobedience and pride.

Again, going back to the Greek is helpful for the words *kai tis ton panton henosios* mean far more than the English conveys. *Henosios* is a profound theological concept used by the holy fathers to express the union of the Persons of the Divine Trinity and the union of God's children once they are restored in Christ—in his image and likeness.

It is this recreation in Christ that the prayer calls for, and the good estate—or good spiritual condition—of the Churches of God is absolutely crucial in this for the Church is the chosen vessel of Grace and the means by which we and all creation are restored.

Again, all of this is but a tiny portion of the Holy Liturgy. Some think that such emphasis upon the worship and its wording is not what Christianity should really be about. These critics fail to understand that the prayers of the Liturgy are perhaps the most profound expression of the Faith. These petitions are the insistent voice of the Church which She raises to her Saviour, and these petitions, if we truly enter into them, can change us, for they are filled with grace.

May God continue to bless and keep us in his love.



A Lenten Prayer of St Ephraim the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life,
Give me not a spirit of idleness, despondency, ambition, or vain talking.
But rather a spirit of purity, humility, patience and love bestow on me thy servant.
O Lord and King, grant that I may see my own faults and not judge my brother,
for blessed art Thou to the ages of ages.
Amen.



Eat Your Bread with Enjoyment



Michael Astley

*"Go, eat your bread with enjoyment, and drink your wine with a good heart,
for God has already approved your works."*

- Ecclesiasties 9:7

In ancient times, the bread and wine which were to become the Body and Blood of the Saviour were made by the faithful with prayer and reverence. Before the Liturgy, the people would take them to the deacons in a building separate from the main church, along with monetary and other offerings for the work of the Church, and the clergy would prepare the bread and wine for the Divine Liturgy. One beautiful custom that developed was that, on the loaves of bread (called *prosphora*) would be inscribed the names of those, living and departed, in whose honour and memory each loaf had been offered, and the deacons would make a note of the names and commemorate them during the Liturgy, particularly when the gifts were ceremonially carried into church at the Great Entrance. This custom of the loaves bearing people's names is still found in some parts of rural Greece.



Things are a little bit different in most Orthodox churches today. Often the task of baking the *prosphora* is assigned to some-

body with the necessary skills. However, the custom of symbolically offering them with the names of people to be commemorated has come down to us in our present day. So, when we come into church, we take one of the loaves set aside for the purpose, and on one of the slips of paper provided, we write the names of the people for whom we are offering our loaf (*prosphoron*). We only list the **Christian** name (no surnames) along with any sacramental description, (such as *Nun Maria*, *Priest Gregory*, and so forth).

When he prepares the Gifts, the priest cuts a large, square portion from the main loaf. This

is called the Lamb, and this alone will be consecrated as the Body of Christ. However, from the other loaves, the priest cuts small particles, which he places around the Lamb, as he commemorates the Mother of God, the various ranks of Angels, the different orders of Saints, and the bishop. This symbolises the whole communion of the Orthodox Church gathered around Christ the Head in mystical communion. It is to these that the priest adds the portions for the living and the departed, which he cuts from the loaves offered by the people, for they, too, are among the Orthodox faithful united with Christ in the communion of the Church.

While they are not consecrated and do not become the Body of Christ, these additional particles continue to surround the Lamb, and they remain there throughout the Holy Offering. In this way, our prayers for our brothers and sisters are offered along with and as part of the whole offering of prayer and worship to God, in an expression of the fullness of our communion with them in the life of the Church.

After the communion of the people at the Liturgy, the deacon carefully empties these commemoration particles into the chalice, saying, 'Wash away, O Lord, by thy Blood, the sins of thy servants herein commemorated, through the intercession of the Mother of God and of all thy Saints.' In this way, while our absent brothers and sisters may not be physically partaking in Holy Communion, we pray that they, too may be washed in the blood of the Lamb, and receive the grace of God. It is an act of love and a pious expression of unity and communion to commemorate our Orthodox brothers and sisters in this way. We are encouraged to do this at every Liturgy, at the end of which we receive back the loaves we offered, reverently consuming them in honour of those for whom they were offered.



News

Ava Katherine Symes

For some months now we have been praying in the Liturgy for the handmaid of God Rachael, and for her safe delivery. God has granted our requests and Rachael and Andrew are pleased to announce the birth of Ava Katherine Symes. Mother and baby are both well. Destined to be an early riser, Ava Katherine first made her appearance at 4.40 on the morning of Thursday, the 14th of February. Her baptism is scheduled for Sunday, the 7th of April, and will take place after the Divine Liturgy. Congratulations to Andrew and Rachael!

New Altar Server



Chad Newman served at the Divine Liturgy for the first time on the Sunday in the Afterfeast of the Meeting of the Lord. Chad was baptised in September, 2011, and has quickly become an invaluable member of our parish family. May this latest form of service be a channel of grace for him as well as an immeasurable help to the clergy.

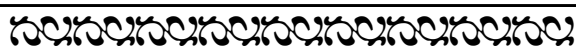
The servers at the Divine Liturgy and other services of the Church are an essential part of the ceremonial dignity of the worship that we offer to God. They attend to the needs of the clergy, freeing them to pray and perform their priestly duties, and they assist with the honorific gestures that we give to the holy things that feature in our worship: in the carrying of lights, fans, and incense. Something is always lost in their absence. If any men or boys of the parish would like to discuss the possibility of service in the altar, they may speak with one of the clergy.

Tatiana Kopilov

After many years of poor health, Tatiana reposed in the Lord on the 5th of February. Father Paul conducted her funeral at Frankby cemetery on the 18th. She is survived by her son, Evgen. May her memory be eternal.

Newsletter

The parish e-newsletter seems to have been generally well received. Articles, book reviews, and other contributions are welcome. Please contact Michael at editor@newmartyr.info to discuss ideas. It is asked that all contributions be submitted by the 23rd of the month prior to publication to allow time for editing and formatting, and that they be in an electronic, editable format.



Upcoming Events

Saturday, 2nd March—Evgenia Petrenko Presents...

Evgenia has organised a concert fundraiser featuring Western European and Russian music. This will be at church, starting at 7.30 p.m. Please note that this represents a change from the date previously advertised.

Thursday, 14th March—Film Night

A film about a Greek village struggling to keep the faith under Ottoman Turkish persecution. At church after the Akathist. Please bring food to share. The date for this, too, has changed since originally advertised.

Sunday, 17th March—The Rite of Mutual Forgiveness

In preparation for the Great Fast, following the Divine Liturgy and Vespers, we ask forgiveness of each other.

Monday, 18th March—Clean Monday

Lent begins today.

Sunday, 24th March—Moleben

Following the Divine Liturgy today will be a Moleben for the return and salvation of all who have departed from the Church.

Dates for Your Diary

Great and Holy Week & Pascha

Easter is very late this year, falling on the 5th of May. Holy Week begins with Lazarus Saturday on the 27th of April, followed by Palm Sunday. The core of the weekday services will take place from the evening of Great and Holy Wednesday, (1st of May).

It would be good if all of us could make arrangements to be present at as many of these services as possible.

The Great Anointing

His Grace Archbishop Mark will perform the rite of Holy Unction on the fourth Saturday in Lent, (13th April by the civil calendar).

In the Russian Orthodox Church, it is customary for this sacrament of physical and spiritual healing and wholeness to be served by the bishop in his diocese during the Great Fast. The service centres on the mystical number 7, which in the Old Testament is a sign of wholeness and completion. Seven priests serve together, blessing the oil with seven prayers;



Dates for Your Diary, cont'd.

seven Epistles and seven Gospels are read, and each person is anointed seven times, in keeping with the exhortation of St James for the sick to come to the priests of the church for anointing. Please do try to make plans to take part, and ask Fr Paul or Subdeacon Michael for directions. Full details of timings will appear on the [cathedral website](#) nearer the time.

Namedays



Monday, 11th March (26th February) - **St Photina the Samaritan**

Svetlana Jeneson

Svetlana Tingle

Thursday, 14th March (1st March) - **St David of Menevia**

David Zinculescu

Friday, 15th March (2nd March) - **St Chad of Lichfield**

Chad Newman

May God grant them many years!

Here are the references to the Scripture readings from the Divine Liturgy in the coming weeks.

3rd March 18th February	<i>The Sunday of the Prodigal Son</i>	1st Corinthians 6:12-20	Luke 15:11-32
10th March 25th February	<i>The Sunday of the Last Judgment</i>	2nd Corinthians 8:8-9:2	Matthew 25:31-46
17th March 4th March	<i>The Sunday of the Expulsion of Adam</i> (Forgiveness Sunday)	Romans 13:11-14:4	Matthew 6:14-21
24th March 11th March	<i>The First Sunday of Lent</i> (The Sunday of Orthodoxy)	Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2	John 1:43-51
31st March 18th March	<i>The Second Sunday of Lent</i> St Gregory Palamas	Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Hebrews 7:26-8:2	Mark 2:1-12 John 10:9-16

The Pre-Lenten Sundays

During these weeks of preparation for Lent, Holy Church helps us to make the transition to the austerity of the Great Fast by gradually increasing the severity of our dietary discipline.

<i>Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee</i>	There is no fasting at all this week, even on Wednesday and Friday.
<i>Sunday of the Prodigal Son</i>	This week we observe the usual Wednesday and Friday abstinence.
<i>Sunday of the Last Judgment</i>	This is the last day on which we eat eggs and meat products.
<i>Sunday of the Expulsion of Adam</i> from Paradise	Today we remove dairy products from our diet.

The Great Fast

The Great fast begins on Clean Monday, when, in addition to the above, we remove wine and oil from our diets. Thus Lent begins in earnest. On the Sabbath (Saturday) and on the Lord's Day (Sunday), the fast is relaxed, and we may consume wine and oil. On certain feasts falling in Lent (such as the Annunciation), in addition to wine and oil, we may also eat fish.

As a general rule, a relaxed form of the fast may be legitimately presumed for pregnant or nursing mothers, the very young, the elderly (particularly those who are infirm), or those with other particular needs, although the spiritual father or mother should be consulted.

St Elisabeth's is a Christian church. We hold to the ancient Orthodox faith of the Apostles, confessing our faith in the Holy and Indivisible Trinity: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We are a parish of the [Great Britain & Ireland Diocese](#) of the [Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia](#), a self-governing part of the international Russian Orthodox Church with our chief bishop in New York. Our own bishop is His Grace Archbishop Mark of Great Britain.

Among our regular congregation are Britons, Russians, Romanians, Ukrainians, Serbs, Americans, and others. Our Sunday services are approximately 85% in English with the rest in Slavonic and occasionally some Greek and Romanian, according to who is present. We tend to use more English for other services. Conversation is predominantly in English, and we share refreshments after the service. On one Sunday each month, we stay for a bring-and-share luncheon together. All are welcome.

The Hours and Divine Liturgy (The Holy Eucharist) are served every Sunday morning at 9.45, as well as on other feast days as announced. Only Orthodox Christians receive Holy Communion, and our parish practice is that communicants should confess regularly. Visitors who wish to receive communion are asked to make themselves known to one of the clergy beforehand.

We follow the traditional Church calendar which was established by the First Ecumenical Council. Currently, this is 13 days behind the civil calendar. (Therefore, for instance, our celebration of Christmas, which is the 25th of December, falls on the 7th of January in the civil calendar). Both dates are usually given in published details of church services and other events, which may be found on [our parish website](#).

Our parish supports the Wirral Churches' Ark Project for homeless men and women. Donations of clothes, toiletries, and non-perishable foodstuffs may be made at church, and monetary donations may be made either directly to the Ark Project or through Mrs Irina Burnip at church.

We have two priests:

Priest Paul Elliott

Address: 58 Shrewsbury Road, Oxtot, Birkenhead, Merseyside. CH43 2HY

Telephone: 07926 194 031

e-mail: fatherpaul@newmartyr.info

Priestmonk Lazarus

Address: Flat 1, 4 Rake Lane, Wallasey, Merseyside. CH45 5DF

Telephone: 07906 578 313

e-mail: fatherlazarus@newmartyr.info

Father Lazarus prays the Hours in church on most days of the week and is happy to receive visitors, as well as requests for prayers, molebens, and other services.

For pastoral or other enquiries for Russians who do not speak English, our parish has a Russian-language contact:

Mrs Svetlana Jeneson

Telephone: 01704 212 959

e-mail: svetlana@newmartyr.info



The New-Martyr is published with the blessing of the Revd Fr Paul Elliott, Rector of the Parish of Saint Elisabeth the New-Martyr. Questions and comments may be sent to the editor:

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