



“JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW”

No 5 April ‘09

THE BEGINNING OF SERVICES IN OUR CHURCH

The first service in our new church will be on Thursday 16 April - the Thursday in Holy Week - 5.30pm The Twelve Gospel Service.

Friday 17 April - Friday in Holy Week (Good Friday)

9am Royal Hours for Good Friday

3.30pm Vespers

5.30pm Lamentations - the Burial of Christ

Sunday 19 April - Easter Day

3pm Paschal Vespers followed by an Easter Tea Party to which you are all invited. It would be helpful, to the kitchen staff, if you would let us know if you are able to come.

..o0o..

The regular weekly pattern of services in our church will include a Sunday Morning service at 10.30am. At 6pm every Friday evening we will sing the Akathist hymn and will commemorate the names of all who have asked for our prayers.

..o0o..

“COME AND SEE”

In St John’s Gospel (1: 45-46) we read *Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him come and see.*

Just like St Philip, we say to everyone *come and see*. Even if you have never encountered the Orthodox Church before, you might find that you are pleasantly surprised by looking into a different world. Mettingham might seem like an obscure and unlikely place to find a purpose-built Orthodox church, indeed in Suffolk it is unique.

..o0o..

BUILDING PROGRESS UPDATE

The past month has seen tangible progress but this has been frustrated by various delays and mix

ups. At the time of writing, 31 March, the church is fully watertight with roof and windows in place. The wooden cladding has also been put up but, due to a manufacturing fault, is the wrong colour, cream rather than white! However, we have now received assurance that this will be fully rectified in the near future. Meanwhile, inside, all the insulation has been installed and fully plaster boarded. The plasterer, who expressed some surprise at the magnitude of the building, began his work on Monday 23 March. Now that the plastering is complete, the walls are being painted, wooden flooring laid down and doors hung. The builders have given us an estimated project completion date of the 8 April which in terms of getting things ready for Easter (19 April) is leaving things quite tight. Nonetheless, leaving the church building to one side, open public services cannot happen until there is adequate access to the church and a safe pathway established round the building. The work on the paths is now well in hand.

LOGO

As you can see this issue carries the new logo for the church that has been specially designed for us by Peter Smith. We will be reproducing this logo on all publications and official correspondence made on behalf of the church.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

We are pleased to announce that with the permission of the St Herman Brotherhood of Platina, California the church will be publishing the short *Vita Prima* (First Life) by Fr Seraphim Rose of St John the Wonderworker who reposed in 1966 as Archbishop of San Francisco. The *Vita Prima* will be the first publication in the new *Mettingham College Series*, with all proceeds going to the upkeep and furnishing of the church. Due to demand, we have almost completely run out of the first printing of our Akathist to the Mother of God, *Joy of All Who Sorrow*, a second edition will be available shortly. Please order your copies now.

AKATHIST

Every Friday evening (with the exception of Good Friday) we sing the Akathist to the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow*. This is a long hymn of praise and intercession. At the end of this service we read the names of our benefactors, relations, parishioners, friends and all who have asked for our prayers. Many of you have sent us names to be included in this list. We should make it clear that, in this instance, the names should be of people who are living. Some of you have included the names of the departed. Whilst we can and do pray for the repose of the souls of the dead, this is not the remit of the akathist intercession list. So please separate the living and the departed when sending in names of people for whom you wish us to pray.

FURNISHINGS

Through the kindness of many readers of the bulletin, the church is gradually acquiring all the essential furnishings. The choir desk, with revolving top, that has been specially made for us by our friend Nick Clarke, has been delivered. We have also found two antique wooden analogs. These are stands that will display, on the south side of the church, the ikon of Christ and, on the north side, the patronal ikon of the Mother of God, *Joy of All Who Sorrow*. A large baptismal font has also been bought for the parish from Romania by Mary McCabe and will hopefully be

delivered over the forthcoming weeks. We have also received a beautiful golden blessing cross from Greece; a gift from Subdeacon Constantine Bell. Following the donation of a large roll of gold brocade by Valentine Meade, covers for the Holy Gifts, altar and vestments are also starting to be made for regular Sunday services. Further ikons are, at the moment, being varnished and mounted by our friends at the St Fursey's Orthodox Study Centre in Sutton, and we have just acquired a large reproduction of the famous Rublev Ikon of the Holy Trinity that will hang on the East wall of the altar. Our friend Carmen Bourne has donated the Gospel Book for the altar. May God bless all those who have given gifts to the church as well as all those who continue to pray for our community.

If you wish to contribute to church funds please make cheques payable to "*Joy of All Who Sorrow*" Church. If you need the bank details - the account is in HSBC Bank, 3 New Market, Beccles NR34 9HQ - account number 71395912 - branch sort code 40-09-24

HOLY WEEK SERVICES IN THE CHURCH

The whole calendar of the church year revolves around the 7 days of Holy Week which culminates in the joy of Pascha, Easter Day, the Feast of Feasts. The services of Holy Week are unique in the church year with special hymns and ancient liturgical features making the services longer and richer with a real spiritual momentum and energy. Here are some highlights of the Holy Week services:

1. Palm Sunday: Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, when our Lord, in His humility, triumphantly rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. In the church we also greet Him like the Hebrew children holding blessed palms and sing 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest'. In some northern countries, where there are no palm trees, willow or box is used instead.

2. Wednesday: On this day we hear from the Gospel two different responses to Christ. The first, that of the woman, who from her repentance over her former wicked way of life lovingly anointed Christ with the alabaster of ointment. This leads to the second response of Judas, one of the twelve disciples, who after falsely criticising our Lord for failing to think of the poor, then plotted to betray Him in exchange for thirty pieces of silver. Through the services stark contrast is made between Judas and the woman: 'Grievous was his lack of love! Great was her repentance!' It is because on this day that Judas betrayed Christ that Wednesday is kept as a fast day throughout the church year.

3. Thursday: In the services the main focus is the wondrous institution of Holy Communion at the Last Supper. In Cathedrals and monasteries bishops take the part of Christ in washing the feet of twelve priests who represent the disciples.

4. Good Friday: is kept as the most solemn day in the year as we remember our Lord's infinite mercy and compassion that he showed in being mocked and crucified by the creatures He had made and come to save. This day is a strict fast with many abstaining from both food and drink. There is no Liturgy permitted. At matins (usually held on Thursday evening), the twelve gospels are read with large excerpts from the Passion narratives of the four gospels. However, throughout the services the resurrection and raising of fallen human nature is still frequently mentioned despite the horror of Golgotha. The cross is not simply the end, but the portal to new Life.

5. Holy Saturday (the Great Sabbath) : At Matins held on the Friday evening, or very early on Saturday morning, whilst the *epitaphion* (burial shroud) is in the centre of the church. In a

beautiful hymn we remember the Noble Joseph of Arimathea who took Christ's body down from the cross. The choir then gathers round the shroud to sing the funeral service to the dead human nature of Christ. However, at the same time we proclaim with wonder Christ's preaching to the souls locked in hell with his human soul and unchanging Divine nature. Later in the morning there are a special selection of reading from the Old Testament where the many prophetic types of the resurrection are read.

6. Pascha: Late on Saturday evening people again assemble in church with a great sense of expectation in the air. After the Midnight Office, the lights are extinguished in the church as we wait for midnight. Then from the sanctuary a taper is lit symbolising the Light of the Resurrected Christ and after a procession around the church with the banners and holy ikons, the great Easter hymn is heard: 'Christ is Risen from the Dead, trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs bestowing life'. The church doors are thrown open symbolising the Resurrection, bursting open the tomb. The service is full of energy and joy with the priest coming out of the altar shouting 'Christ is risen!' throughout the service with the Royal Doors before the altar, like Christ's tomb, wide open.

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE EASTER EGG

It is easy to think that Easter eggs are nothing more than just another excuse to eat chocolate. However, Easter eggs have a very long history. The symbolism of new life bursting forth from the egg is recognised even by pagans long before the Incarnation of Christ.

The symbolism for Easter is easy to see. An egg looks lifeless in much the same way as a tomb. Yet within the confines of the egg there is life. Within the confines of the tomb, there was also life, the precious body of Christ that could not suffer the corruption of death. As new life bursts forth from an egg, so the new life, the life of the Resurrection, broke open the tomb.

There is an ancient tradition that after the Ascension of Christ, St Mary Magdalene offered an egg, which was coloured red, to the Roman Emperor with the greeting "Christ is Risen!". Traditionally eggs were coloured red because it is the colour of blood and it was therefore a reminder that Christ's blood had been shed on Calvary. But conversely, red is a happy colour, a colour of brightness, joy and beauty.

Today we still colour hard-boiled eggs at Easter. At the Easter party, it is customary to break them in a little ceremony. One person, hold an egg, will approach another and they knock the eggs together (not unlike a game of conkers!). Usually only one egg will crack. The person with the cracked egg says *Christ is Risen!* -whilst the other replies *He is risen indeed.*

The cracking of the eggshell symbolises the breaking of the seal on the tomb. The eggs are eaten in celebration of Easter and the ending of the fast during which eggs were not eaten at all.

EASTER TROPARION

A short troparion is a hymn with a single verse. There are many in the services books celebrating festivals, biblical events and the saints. This one is sung throughout Eastertide and is repeated many times in the services.

Christ is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and on those in the tombs bestowing life.

REPLY SLIP to

“Joy of All Who Sorrow” Church, The White House, Low Rd, Mettingham, Suffolk NR35 1TP

Telephone 01986 895176

E-mail churchmettingham@aol.com

Please add the following names to the intercessions list for commemoration before the ikon of the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow* and light a candle for all who are listed here.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Please send a free copy of the Akathist to

Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

.....
.....
.....

“Joy of All Who Sorrow” Church, The White House, Low Rd, Mettingham, Suffolk NR35 1TP - 01986

896708 - e-mail churchmettingham@aol.com

www.joyofallwhosorrow.org.uk