



“JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW”

No 15 February ‘10

HAITI APPEAL

We have all seen the distressing reports about the disastrous earthquake in Haiti and the consequent devastation. Our Church has five parishes in Haiti served by two priests who, by the mercy of God, are alive. On hearing news of the earthquake, Metropolitan Hilarion immediately issued this urgent appeal for aid:

It was with pain in my heart that I learned of the terrible catastrophe that has befallen the people of Haiti, and wish to express my profound empathy with the anguish felt by all the island's occupants, and especially our brothers and sisters carrying on their service to God and man within the Orthodox Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. I pray for the repose of the souls of those who died during the earthquake, I pray for those who survived, that the Lord bless them with His consolation and heavenly aid. May the Lord bless the rescuers and all those who are going to that country with the aim of helping its occupants!

Brothers and sisters, let us not forget that the poor and unfortunate are our joy, for they edify our character, and such tragedies give us the opportunity to be Christians not only in name, but in deed. Let us remember the words of the Gospel, how many images, parables and calls by the Lord in which He says that we must pray for each other, help and serve our neighbour. Much can be said about this, much can be understood, but the most important thing, my beloved, is to act and live in accordance with our faith. That is why I ask all of you, dear brother archpastors, reverend fathers, brothers and sisters, to help the Fund for Assistance to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia in its effort to provide necessary aid to our brothers and sisters in Haiti.

With love in the Lord and a plea for prayers,
+Hilarion,
Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York
First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia.
January 16, 2010

On Sunday 17 January donations received in our church totalled £168 (\$274) which was sent directly to the *Fund for Assistance* at the Synod office in New York. Thanks are due to all who contributed. If anyone wishes to offer any further contributions we will see that they are forwarded to the fund without delay.

CHURCH NEWS -

Christmas Celebrations

We were delighted to have Fr Philip Steer and Matushka Philippa with us for our Christmas celebrations. An additional source of celebration was the fact that Fr Philip received Laura Jordan-Tozeland into the

Orthodox Church before the Liturgy on Christmas morning. With heartfelt joy we wish Laura *Many Years*. Also we thank everyone who provided food and brought gifts making it a really memorable Christmas. The only note of sadness was that the heavy snow did prevent some of our friends from joining us.

Treasurer

We are grateful John Barry for taking on the task of being church treasurer and welcome him to the committee.

Notelets

The church has been much photographed recently. Some of the pictures taken during the first period of snow in December have been turned into notelets by Les Tozeland. These are available in packs of six, complete with envelopes for £1.50 per pack. The cards are blank inside enabling them to be used for greeting cards for a nameday, anniversary or any special occasion. There are two choices. The coloured ones have two different views of the church. The pictures rendered like charcoal drawings by the computer come with a selection of three views of the church. These will be available from the church bookstall or through SGOIS. Proceeds will go into the church fund.

Priest

An Orthodox priest has recently moved to Ditchingham. Fr Liviu Barbu will serve the Liturgy in our church for the first time on Sunday 31 January. Please do your utmost to be here to greet him. Fr Liviu will also be serving with us on Sunday 7 February.

First Week of Great Lent

Great Lent begins on Monday 15 February. At 6pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday there will be Great Compline together with the Canon of St Andrew of Crete.

Fr Philip Steer

The next visit of Fr Philip is scheduled for Sunday 7 March.

40th ANNIVERSARY OF SGOIS

This year, 2010, St George Orthodox Information Service celebrates 40 years of activity. Although the idea was first conceived by a group in London under the leadership of Fr Mark Meyrick (who later became Archimandrite David of Walsingham) in 1969, the name St George Orthodox Information Service was not registered until 21 July 1970 so we take that as the official beginning. To celebrate this anniversary we are thinking about having a Liturgy and Reception on Saturday 24 July here in our church at Mettingham. At this stage we are floating an idea but will welcome feedback from our many friends. So we are asking everyone to pencil it into their diary.

Calendar

The St Herman Calendar for 2010 has the Saints of Anglo-Saxon England as its theme. It contains an introduction to the saints by Fr Geoffrey Korz. The calendar is in book form and gives full details of the festivals, fasts, and saints who are commemorated each day together with details of the portions of Holy Scripture that are read each day in the Church's services. If you do not yet have a copy of the calendar, please let us know.

SOME NOTES ABOUT GREAT LENT

The Canon of St Andrew of Crete

This is sometimes called *The Great Canon* both because of its importance and its length. St Andrew was born in Damascus in about AD 660 and lived for a time in Jerusalem where he became a monk. Later he went to Constantinople and eventually became a bishop in Crete, where he died in 740. He was an extremely eloquent preacher and skilled writer of liturgical texts.

A canon is a poetic construction in a set form with both hymns and prayers. In the daily services, there is always a canon in Matins and sometimes in Compline. The theme can be an explanation of the meaning of the festival, as on Great Feasts (Christmas, Easter, Pentecost etc), or the canon for a particular saint can be simply praising that saint and setting out his/her virtues and witness for Christ. Another category includes canons with the theme of repentance that are read during Great Lent.

St Andrew's Great Canon is much longer than most canons. It is divided into four sections to be read on the first four days of Great Lent (Monday - Thursday). The refrain between each troparion (verse) is *Have mercy upon me, O God, have mercy upon me*. The theme of the canon is repentance and is extremely Biblical. It uses examples of the transgressions of notable individuals from the Old Testament but works on two levels, because much of it is in the first person. Thus the historical and the personal aspects are skilfully interwoven into a unique poetic form. As it says in the introduction to the Triodion (Lenten Service Book) "The events of the sacred history are revealed as events of *my* life; God's acts in the past as acts aimed at *me* and *my* salvation, the tragedy of sin and betrayal as *my* personal tragedy.

Bible readings in church

In the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom and the Liturgy of St Basil, the Old Testament is never read. The two readings are from the Epistles and the Gospels. However, in Vespers on the Great Feasts, that commemorate Biblical events, and on some Saints Days we do read three Lessons from the Old Testament. These are usually from the Prophets.

In Great Lent, the Old Testament is read every day in sequence at the services. In Vespers, the first reading is from Genesis throughout the six weeks and the first reading at Vespers in Holy Week are taken from Exodus. The second lesson in Vespers is taken from *Wisdom Literature*. In the first six weeks this reading is from Proverbs and in Holy Week it is from Job.

In the Sixth Hour, there is a reading from Isaiah in the six weeks and a reading from Ezekiel at the Sixth Hour in Holy Week.

St Mary of Egypt who died in AD 522

The life of St Mary of Egypt was written by Patriarch St Sophronios of Jerusalem. Mary grew up in Egypt and was very wayward in her lifestyle; not as a prostitute but just for fun. It happened that the people of Alexandria were boarding ships to go to Jerusalem to venerate the Holy Cross. Everyone was going so Mary went too. In Jerusalem an invisible force prevented her from entering the church. Seeing there an ikon of the Mother of God, Mary prayed fervently to her promising to repent and reform her life if she was granted grace to enter the church and venerate Cross of Christ. Her prayer was granted and, having confessed her sins and received communion, Mary crossed the Jordan and departed into the wilderness where she passed the remainder of her life in solitude repenting of her former life. Towards the end of her life she was found by St Zosimas. He was a monk and, as was the custom, he went into the desert to spend Great Lent alone in prayer. He had spent his whole life in the monastery and thought himself well advanced in the ascetic life. His encounter with St Mary, who ascetic podvig (strict regime, discipline) had reduced her to skin and bone, burnt by the scorching sun, taught Zosimas that he was a mere beginner. This is a lesson we all need to learn if we think that we have made any progress in the spiritual life. In church, we read the Life of St Mary of Egypt, for our edification, in the evening service on Wednesday of the fourth week of Great Lent - 17 March this year.

Orthodox Church of the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow*
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REGULAR SERVICES: Every Sunday 10.30am - Every evening 6pm

Extra services for festivals and saints days will be announced in the bulletin.

e-mail churchmettingham@aol.com Website www.joyofallwhosorrow.org.uk

Cheques for the church fund should be made payable to "*Joy of All Who Sorrow*" Church.

The account is in HSBC Bank, 3 New Market, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9HQ

Account No 71395912 Sort Code 40-09-24