



# *“Joy of All Who Sorrow”*

No. 99 February 2017



## On Fasting

By St Basil the Great

The Lord says: “Don’t be like the gloomy-faced, but wash your face and anoint your head.” Therefore, let’s agree, as it has been taught, that we won’t be looking gloomy on the days that are approaching. Rather, we will cheerfully, agreeably look forward to them. No one is despondent when he is receiving a victory crown. No one is gloomy when a victory monument is being erected for him. Don’t make being healed gloomy! It’s outrageous that you don’t rejoice over the health of your soul, but grieve over changing foods. You appear to be giving more concern to the pleasure of your stomach than to the care of your soul. Be encouraged, because the doctor has given you a powerful remedy for sin. As strong, powerful medicines can get rid of worms that live in the bowels, so fasting, when introduced into the soul, kills off the sin that lives deep within it. It is truly fitting to call it by this honourable name of medicine. So, run to greet the cheerful gift of the fast!

Fasting is an ancient gift, but it is not worn out and antiquated. Rather, it is continually made new, and is still coming into bloom. Do you think I am finding the ancient origin of fasting from the law? Fasting is even older than the law. If you will tolerate me a little while, you will find the truth from the Word. Don't think that the Day of Atonement, commanded to Israel in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, was the beginning of fasting. Come and walk through history, investigating its ancient origins. For the invention isn't new; it's an heirloom from the fathers. Everything of such great antiquity deserves respect for its importance. Show some respect for the grey head of fasting! Fasting is as old as mankind itself. It was given as a law in paradise. The first commandment Adam received was: "From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil do not eat." Now this command, "do not eat," is the divine law of fasting and temperance. If Eve had fasted from the tree, we would not have to keep this fast now. Even more than that, through contentment with little, humanity's likeness to the angels would have been established, because whatever kinds of diet human inventiveness later discovered, those in paradise had not yet come to understand. There wasn't the drinking of wine yet, nor the eating of meat.

All the saints have protected fasting, like an inheritance passed down from the fathers. They in turn passed it down, like a father passing something down to a child. So, we are the successors of this long line, and this possession has been entrusted to us. We have been taught about the fasting of Moses when he came onto the mountain. He wouldn't have boldly faced the smoking summit, neither would he have had the courage to enter into the thick cloud, if he hadn't been completely armed with fasting. Through fasting he received the commandments from the finger of God written on the tablets. What did Esau throw away, and so was made a slave of his brother? Didn't he sell his rights as first-born for a single meal? By contrast, wasn't it with fasting and prayer that Hannah was favoured to become the mother of Samuel? What great meal brought into being the invincible Samson? Wasn't it fasting, with which he was conceived in the womb of his mother? It made Elijah an observer of a marvellous vision. His soul was purified by fasting forty days, so that in the cave on Mt. Horeb he was considered worthy to see the Lord like one sees a man. Now Daniel fasted from desire, and went without eating bread or drinking water for three weeks. And when he was thrown down in their den, he taught the lions to fast! John's life was one of fasting. He had no bed, no table, no fruitful piece of land, no ploughing ox, no grain, no grinding and baking, nothing from the normal course of life. Because of this, "No one born of women has arisen greater than John the Baptist." Like the others, fasting also marked Paul, who considered severe trials something to boast about, and he was caught up into the third heaven. But above all that has been said, our Lord took flesh and fortified it with fasting on behalf of us. Then in that condition he welcomed the assault of the devil, teaching us to anoint and to train ourselves with fasting before struggling with temptations.

Count the domestic benefits of fasting by considering the following things. There's no sadness over the death of an animal, no blood. As thirst makes water sweet, and coming to the table hungry makes what's on it seem pleasant, so also fasting heightens the enjoyment of foods. One fasting has a healthy complexion, a gentle eye, a calm manner, and a thoughtful face; there is no intemperate, arrogant laughter, but rather fitting speech, and purity of heart. Fasting even makes known how the proper boundaries of marriage work. The excesses of even things permitted by law are curtailed, introduced by agreement for an appropriate time, in order that the couple might be devoted to prayer.

But don't limit the goodness of fasting by abstaining only from foods. Don't "fast unto judgment and strife." You don't eat meat, but you eat your brother. You abstain from wine, but stubbornly hold on to insolence. True fasting is the enemy of evil. "Loose the chains of injustice!" Forgive your neighbour's offense, and forgive his debts.





# Notes & Jottings

## ARCH-PASTORAL VISITATION

Metropolitan Hilarion, accompanied by the Diocesan Chancellor, Archpriest Paul Elliott, made his second visit to Mettingham in January. This time, he was making a formal visitation because we are now under his omophor (his direct pastoral oversight). Vladika Metropolitan enquired into the hopes and aims for developing the work the college and many aspects of our life and work here. It is a great joy to be the beneficiaries of such active interest and fatherly care.

On Tuesday 24 January Vladika served the Divine Liturgy in the collegiate church. There were three visiting priests, Archpriest Paul Elliott, Archpriest Andrew Phillips and Archpriest Philip Steer, concelebrating with Vladika and the clergy based here. In the Sixth Hour, Reader Mark was ordained as a subdeacon. At the Little Entrance in the Liturgy, Fr Antony was awarded the right to wear the nabadrennik and Fr Dn Andrew was awarded the right to wear the double orarion.

We wholeheartedly thank Vladika Metropolitan for his kindness, love and care, and wish him Many Years.

## YEAR'S MIND

The first anniversary of the repose of both Fr Elias Jones (27 March) and Matushka Barbara (16 February) is fast approaching. We are arranging a suitable date for the pannikhida (memorial service) with the family. Details will be made available as soon as this is decided.

## VISITORS TO OUR CHURCH

On Monday 16 January, Deborah Lay brought a group from the *University of the Third Age* to see our church and to enquire about Orthodox Christianity. The members of the, Halesworth based, Comparative Religion group are from a wide spread of backgrounds and showed a lively interest, asking many questions about both doctrine and discipline in Orthodoxy.

## ANNIVERSARIES IN 2017

We have already recorded the fact that on 18 November we will be celebrating the centenary of the restoration of the Patriarchate. One hundred years ago, to the day, Metropolitan Tikhon (Bellavin) was elected Patriarch of Moscow; the first patriarch after an interregnum lasting 217 years.

A few days prior to this, on 27 October we will reach another milestone in the sad history of this nation. It will be 50 years since the 1967 Abortion Law received the Royal Assent, thereby giving women the legal right to murder their babies without fear of prosecution. This daily holocaust has resulted in the deaths of over eight million babies whose *crime* was that they were unwanted by their mothers. The intentional destruction of unborn babies is no new problem. Only the techniques have changed. Even in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century this issue was a problem. Great theologians of the Church, including St John Chrysostom and St Jerome spoke out against this sin. St Basil, Archbishop Caesarea, was uncompromising in his language, describing as *murderers* those who are complicit in the ending of the life of an unborn child. Yet there are many, in this post-Christian era, who will think that this anniversary is a cause for celebration. This merely demonstrates how far this present generation has departed from a Christian understanding of right and wrong.

## DIARY DATES

Monday 20 February – beginning of Cheesefare week

Monday 27 February – first day of Great Lent

Sunday 16 April – Resurrection of Christ – Easter Day

Thursday 25 May – Ascension Day

Summer Pilgrimage to St Botolph at Iken – date to be confirmed later

Monday 6 November – Patronal Feast for the Mother of God, Joy of All Who Sorrow

Wednesday 15 November – Founder’s Day, being the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the repose of the Foundress.

ITEMS FOR SALE –when ordering please add 15% for p&p. Cheques should be made payable to SGOIS

St Herman Calendar 2017 – still a few copies left in stock £8.25

Pomyannik – book for commemorating both the living and the departed £2

Canon to our Venerable Mother Mary of Egypt – Pb 32pp £2.25

Akathists:

...Of Repentance for one who has aborted a child Pb 36pp £2.25

...To Jesus Christ s loved one who has fallen asleep Pb 32pp £2.25

...To the Mother of God “Healer of Cancer” Pb 32pp £2.25

...The the Mother of God “The Milkgiver” Pb 32pp £2,25

...To the Mother of God “Nurturer of Children” Pb 24pp £2.25

...To Righteous Joachim & Anna – for blessed married life Pb 36pp £2.25

...To Venerable Father Paisius (Velichkovsky) Pb 40pp £2.25

...To St Botolph of Iken Pb £2.50

...To Our Lady of Mettingham Pb £2.50

A Lifetime in Pilgrimage: Archimandrite Lazarus (Moore) Pb 36pp £2.95

The Dark Age Saints of Somerset by John Seal, Pb 177pp £12.00

The Orthodox Veneration of the Mother of God by St John Maximovitch Pb 82pp £5.95

Saint John Cassian on Prayer trans by A M Casiday Pb 59pp £3.00

On the Jesus Prayer – Ignatius Brianchaninov Pb 140pp £11.99

Meditations for Holy Week - Vassilios Papavassiliou Pb 131pp £6.95

Journey to the Kingdom – An Insider’s Look at the Liturgy and Beliefs of the Eastern Orthodox Church

– Fr Vassilios Papavassiliou Pb 185pp £7.50

Marriage and Virginity according to St John Chrysostom –Archpriest Josiah B Trenham Pb 257pp £12.50

The Lost Saints of Britain – Rediscovering our Celtic Roots = Ian Thompson Pb 131pp £6.00

The Montreal Myrrh-streaming Icon and Brother Joseph Pb 363pp £10.00

The Life of St Samson of Dol by Thomas Taylor Pb 78pp £10.00

Saint Nikolai Kasatkin and the Orthodox Mission in Japan edited by Michael Van Remortel and Dr Peter Chang - Pb 203pp £12.50

St Joseph of Arimathea at Glastonbury – Lionel Smithett Lewis Pb 211pp £12.99

Mount Athos – Renewal in Paradise by Graham Speake Pb 267pp £19.95

The Vita Prima of St John the Wonderworker by Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose) Pb 23pp £1.50

## NAMEDAYS

1 Feb – **St Mark, Archbishop of Ephesus** - Monk Mark (Underwood)

3 Feb – **St Maximos the Confessor** – Maxim Sarmulis

13 Feb – **St Victor of Corinth, Martyr** – Viktor Levine

16 Feb – **St Simeon the God-Receiver** – Simeon Bascu

21 Feb – **St Theodore Stratelates** – Tudor-Daniel Costec

26 Feb - **St Zoe of Bethlehem** – Zoe Andrews

We send congratulations to everyone who is celebrating a nameday at this time and wish them

**MANY YEARS!**



COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF THE MOTHER OF GOD  
*JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW*

**FEBRUARY 2017**

**Saturday 4 February**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 5 February**

**10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee)**

**Saturday 11 February**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 12 February**

**10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (Sunday of the Prodigal Son)**

**Saturday 18 February**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 19 February**

**10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (Meat-fare Sunday)**

**Saturday 25 February**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 26 February**

**10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (Cheese-fare Sunday)**



Before I formed thee in the womb I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee.

Prophet Jeremiah

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