



# Celtic Orthodox Church

*Parish of St Gwenn, Wessex*

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## St Gwenn's News 53 MARCH 2017

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### Services at St Gwenn's

**Wed 1 Mar – ASH WEDNESDAY – Lent begins**  
**Divine Liturgy 10.30am**  
**with Imposition of Ashes**



**Sun 5 Mar – LENT 1 Sunday of Orthodoxy**  
**Divine Liturgy 10.30am**



**Wed 8 Mar – St Gregory Palamas**  
**Divine Liturgy 9.30am**



**Sun 12 Mar – LENT 2**  
**Divine Liturgy 10.30am**



**Wed 15 Mar – St Aristobulus**  
**Divine Liturgy 9.30am**



**Fri 17 Mar – St Patrick**  
**Divine Liturgy 9.30am**



**Sun 19 Mar – LENT 3 Veneration of the Cross**  
**Divine Liturgy 10.30am**



**Mon 20 Mar – St Cuthbert**  
**Divine Liturgy 9.30am**



**Sun 26 Mar – LENT 4 ANNUNCIATION [transferred from 25th]**  
**Divine Liturgy 10.30am**



**Wed 29 Mar**  
**Divine Liturgy 9.30am**



SEE FORWARD NOTICE OF HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA SERVICES  
AT THE END OF THIS NEWSLETTER

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**From your Parish Priest**

Greetings in Christ!

This month finds us in Lent, the Church's deepest season of spiritual cleansing. By fasting and prayer we prepare ourselves for the incomparable joy of Pascha/Easter, and we do this by associating ourselves with the forty days fast which Jesus underwent in the desert in preparation for His ministry and ultimate life-creating sacrifice. As Jesus was tempted by Satan you may be assured that the evil one will tempt us too. The harder we try to come close to God, the harder Satan will try to hold us back. As St Peter said, *"Be sober, be vigilant. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, strong in the Faith."* (1 Pet 5.8)

Our gospel reading for the last Sunday before Lent tells us to lay up for ourselves "treasure in heaven." Lent is our opportunity to do just that. Let's try, by the keeping of a good Lent, to make some substantial deposits in the 'Heavenly Treasury.'

Blessings to you all.

Fr Leonard

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**The Lenten Fast**

The strict fasting rule of the Celtic Orthodox Church is to abstain from meat, fish, dairy products, and alcohol. Dairy products create the greatest challenge for most of us. (If alcohol is your greatest challenge then you almost certainly drink too much and should take yourself in hand!) You should *not* give up anything which is, on medical advice, necessary for your health.

Wine (alcohol) is permitted on certain days, and fish is allowed on two occasions. These relaxations are indicated on the Calendar at the end of this News.

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**Mending the broken...but how well?!**



Our dear Primate, Metropolitan Marc, was given a replacement hip joint on 20th February. With his inimitable sense of humour he sent us this "e-postcard."

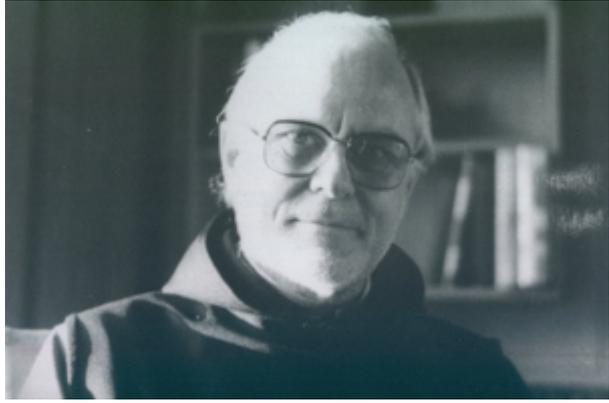
Our reply to Bishop Marc:

*We wish you well, dear Father, and may you soon be running a marathon.*

*Please make sure your new joint doesn't rust when you go diving. O yes, and be ready for trouble when you go through security at the airport.*

**Meditation: Part 1** From a talk given by Rev Rosemary Bassett ObOSB

Dom John Main OSB (1926–1982), was a Benedictine monk and priest who presented a way of Christian meditation which utilized the practice of a prayer-phrase or mantra. In 1975 he began Christian meditation groups which met at Ealing Abbey, his monastery in West London, and, later, in Montreal, Canada. These were the origins of the ecumenical network of Christian meditation groups which have become the World Community for Christian Meditation known as (WCCM).



*Dom John Main OSB*

Having graduated in Law (1954) and joined the British Colonial Service John Main, whilst serving in Malaya, met an Indian Hindu monk, Swami Satyananda, and was deeply impressed by this man's peaceful calm wisdom. From this Hindu monk he learned a simple way of meditation; the faithful recitation of a mantra. The monk encouraged Main to meditate as a Christian and to use the sacred Christian word Maranatha as a mantra. This opened his spiritual life to new depths.

In 1956 Main returned to Europe, and taught International Law at Trinity College Dublin and in 1959 he decided to join the Benedictines at Ealing Abbey in London.

In 1970 Main was appointed the headmaster of St Anselm's Abbey School in Washington, D.C. Here he was drawn back to the roots of his own tradition; and eventually to the desert tradition of early Christian monasticism. It was here that he began to uncover the practice of the prayer of the heart which he found in the teaching of John Cassian and the Desert Mothers and Fathers of the 4th century who all in turn influenced St Benedict's teaching on prayer. It was in Cassian's 10th conference that John Main recognised the Christian tradition of meditation which became the foundation of his major work. He says, "It was [with] wonderful astonishment that I read of the practice of using a single word or short phrase to achieve the stillness necessary for prayer. The mind thus casts out and renounces the rich and ample matter of *all* thoughts and restricts itself to the poverty of a single verse."

Main saw parallels between the spiritual practice taught by Cassian and the meditative practice he had been taught by the Swami in Kuala Lumpur. Now as he saw it and knew it to be part of his own Christian, spiritual and theological tradition, he began to meditate again. He had started to uncover the practice of the prayer of the heart, of 'pure prayer' with a 'formula' or short phrase or prayer word. He now realised that what he had learned in the East was indeed part of the Christian contemplative tradition. He found it described in Cassian and the Desert Fathers of the 4th Century and in the Cloud of Unknowing, the great work on Christian meditation from 14th century England. This led him to a much deeper reading of scripture. His journey of faith and his experience of meditation deepened John Main's understanding of the teachings of Jesus on leaving self behind, and in the teachings of St Paul that the Holy Spirit prays within us.

John Main's teaching on prayer is authentic and simple. He said: "All Christian prayer is a growing awareness of God in Jesus; and for that growing awareness we need to come to a state of 'un-distraction,' to a state of attention and concentration, [to] a state of awareness. The only way that I have been able to

find to come to that quiet, to that 'un-distractedness,' to that concentration, is the way of the mantra"

He doesn't say [that] this is the only way to pray, but he discovered it to be a way of deep simplicity and effectiveness. Jesus said, 'Anyone who wishes to be a follower of mine must leave self behind.' We meditate to follow the basic call of Jesus which is also the basis of Christian faith – to leave self behind so that we can journey with Christ in his return to the Father in fellowship with humanity and the universe. Saying the mantra is a discipline that helps us transcend all the limitations of fear and illusion. Meditation leads into an experience of liberty from all the distortions of the ego where, at the centre of our being, the Spirit dwells in love. The freedom to 'love is the greatest liberty.'

(Part 2 will follow in April)

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### **QUIET DAY** Forward notice.

There will be a Quiet Day at St Hugh's, Charterhouse on the Mendips on Tuesday 20 June. It is being organised by the South West Benedictine Oblates of Salisbury Priory, and the conductor will be Father Jonathan Herbert. The day will begin with a Celtic Liturgy celebrated by Fr Leonard. The cost of the day is £15 (to be confirmed) and you are most welcome to come along. For further details please contact Fr Leonard. It will be a chance to try out your meditation (see above).

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### **For our Prayers**

For our Primate Metropolitan Marc and all our monastics, clergy and people, and for the future of the Celtic Orthodox Church, and the Western Orthodox Communion.

For Bishop Paul and the Monastery at Toms Brook. For the growth of the parish there.

For the Unity of Christ's Church – the unity He came to give us, and which we continue to shatter.

For PEACE and stability in our troubled world. For an end to the horrors of religious extremism and radicalisation. For all persecuted Christians and other religious and ethnic groups. For the refugees forced to flee their troubled homelands and those endeavouring to deal with the refugee crisis.

For America and its people as they begin a new chapter in their history.

For all in sickness, sorrow or distress, especially those on our prayer lists and on the hearts of all who read this. Please remember Bp Marc in his rehabilitation following a replacement hip joint, and continue to remember Fr Deacon Cwyfan awaiting further news regarding by-pass surgery.

For the departed – Alan, Henry, Clifford, Joy, Joyce, Sylvia, Pauline, Olga, and Rose (Bp Paul's Mother).

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### **FORWARD NOTICE OF HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA SERVICES**

Thursday 13 April **GREAT and HOLY THURSDAY** 7pm LITURGY & Washing of Feet

Friday 14 April **GREAT and HOLY FRIDAY** 3pm VESPERS of the SHROUD

Sat 15 April **PASCHA** 8.30pm VIGIL and LITURGY

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## FASTING CALENDAR FOR LENT

### MAR

W 1 *Fast*

Th 2 *Fast*

F 3 *Fast*

Sa 4 *Fast - wine*

**Su 5** *Fast - wine*

M 6 *Fast*

Tu 7 *Fast*

W 8 *Fast - wine*

Th 9 *Fast*

F 10 *Fast*

Sa 11 *Fast - wine*

**Su 12** *Fast - wine*

M 13 *Fast*

Tu 14 *Fast*

W 15 *Fast - wine*

Th 16 *Fast*

F 17 *Fast - wine*

Sa 18 *Fast - wine*

**Su 19** *Fast - wine*

M 20 *Fast - wine*

Tu 21 *Fast - wine*

W 22 *Fast - wine*

Th 23 *Fast*

F 24 *Fast*

Sa 25 *Fast - fish, wine* **ANNUNCIATION to the Theotokos**

**Su 26** *Fast - wine*

M 27 *Fast*

Tu 28 *Fast*

W 29 *Fast*

Th 30 *Fast*

F 31 *Fast*

### ASH WED

### LENT 1 Sunday of Orthodoxy

### S Gregory Palamas

### LENT 2

### S Aristobólus,

### S Patrick

### LENT 3 Veneration of the Cross,

### S Cuthbert

### S Benedict

### S John Climacus

### LENT 4

<b>APR</b>		
Sa 1	<i>Fast – wine</i>	
<b>Su 2</b>	<i>Fast – wine</i>	<b>LENT 5 Raising of Lazarus</b>
M 3	<i>Fast</i>	
Tu 4	<i>Fast</i>	
W 5	<i>Fast</i>	
Th 6	<i>Fast</i>	
F 7	<i>Fast</i>	
Sa 8	<i>Fast– wine</i>	
<b>Su 9</b>	<i>Fast – fish, wine</i>	<b>PALM SUN</b>
M 10	<i>Fast</i>	<b>Great and Holy Monday</b>
Tu 11	<i>Fast</i>	<b>Great and Holy Tuesday</b>
W 12	<i>Fast</i>	<b>Great and Holy Wednesday</b>
Th 13	<i>Fast – wine</i>	<b>Great and Holy Thursday – Com- memoration of the Last Supper</b>
F 14	<i>Strict Fast</i>	<b>Great and Holy Friday</b>
Sa 15	<i>Fast – wine</i>	<b>Great and Holy Saturday</b>
<b>Su 16</b>	<i>FAST FREE Until Ascension</i>	<b>Paschal Vigil PASCHA</b>

