



# Celtic Orthodox Church

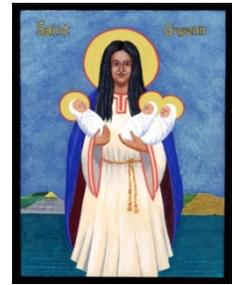
*Parish of St Gwenn, Wessex*

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[www.stgwenns.org](http://www.stgwenns.org)



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## St Gwenn's News 56 JUNE 2017

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### Services at St Gwenn's

**Thurs 1 June – S Wite (Gwenn)  
Matins + communion 9.30am**



**Sun 4 June – HOLY PENTECOST  
Divine Liturgy 10.30am**



**Sun 11 June – HOLY TRINITY  
Divine Liturgy 10.30am**



**Thurs 15 June – All Saints and Righteous of the  
Celtic Orthodox Church  
Divine Liturgy 9.30am**



**Sun 18 June – PENTECOST 2  
Divine Liturgy 10.30am**



**Sun 25 June – PENTECOST 3  
Sorry NO Liturgy Today**

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## From your Parish Priest

Greetings dear people, in the Name of Christ, risen, ascended, glorified!

It has been such a joy celebrating the Paschal season and then Ascension. And at the beginning of this month we celebrate Pentecost before settling into the long run of the Sundays after Pentecost. Spring now gives way to Summer, and many of us will be off on holiday in the coming weeks and months. But our God doesn't have a holiday; He doesn't go away and forget us. He is always there for us; we just need to give Him space to enter our hearts.....and when we go on holiday, remember that He goes with us. He will be waiting to welcome us into a church wherever we are going.

May all who read this be blessed – wherever you are, wherever you go.

Fr Leonard+

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## Pentecost

This is the Sunday when we celebrate the sending down of the Holy Spirit upon Christ's followers, often called the **Birthday of the Church**.

Jesus had promised (John 14.16) that He would not leave his disciples comfortless, but, when He returned to the Father, He would send *another* comforter, advocate, or strengthener – the Holy Spirit – Who would lead them into all truth, bring back to their minds all that Jesus had taught them, and abide with them forever. So the Holy Spirit is a *gift* from Christ.

The day of Pentecost, was dramatic to say the least! Saint Peter exclaimed, "Being exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, [Jesus] poured out this which you see and hear." (Acts 2.33) Christ prayed to the Father, received the promised gift, and bestowed the Spirit on the Church; He gives the Holy Spirit as the seal of the redemption He has wrought.

It is that same Holy Spirit Who ensures the '*Christ in us*.' Jesus promised, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come back to you." (John 14.18) And He came back at Pentecost through and in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit didn't come to compensate for Christ's absence, but to *ensure* His *presence*, the presence of the Jesus who had said, "Lo, I am with you always." (Mtt 28.20)

We must train our souls to be receptive to this presence, to be aware and to heed. And we should make use of the beautiful Orthodox prayer addressed directly to the Spirit of God:

*O Heavenly King, the Comforter, Spirit of Truth, You are everywhere and fill all things; Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life, come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.*

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## St Gwenn's website

I have been thinking for some time that our website should be improved, and having shared these thoughts with Paul Newlin who hosts our website he has realised my dreams and we now have a much more improved website. Many thanks, Paul. Do please take a look and let me know what you think.

[www.stgwenns.org](http://www.stgwenns.org)

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## Intercessory Prayer at St Gwenn's

It's a while since I've included a reminder that there are votive candles on the table by the entrance. There are also slips for you to write names of people that you would like to be prayed for during the Liturgy – best to hand them to one of the clergy in case we forget to check the table!

Some of you may not be aware that, in addition to our praying by name for the sick, needy, departed, etc, each morning at Matins, we hold weekly services specifically for the sick on Fridays and for the departed on Saturdays. Any names offered at the Sunday Liturgy will be added to these weekly services.

Please also feel free to write, 'phone or e-mail with names of people you would like included if you are not able to add them to the slips on a Sunday.

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## Spiritual Paralysis *Edited, with permission from one of Bishop Paul's homilies.*

Jesus tells the paralysed man (Jn 5.8) to take up his bed and walk, and the man was cured. We understand what physical paralysis is like and what causes it, but do we know that there also exists a spiritual paralysis? This paralysis has causes and cures. Also, be aware that God will never allow us to be tempted beyond our strength.

In seventeenth century Quebec there was a saintly, very practical and level-headed, nun called Marie of the Incarnation. At a certain point in her life legions of demons entered into her and blasphemed God through her mouth. She writhed with sorrow, and though her lips pronounced horrible things against God, yet in her heart she kept repeating that she loved Him and asking why He abandoned her. After a long period of spiritual paralysis, the demons were finally routed and Christ made Himself manifest. "Where were you during all this time?" she asked. I was within you rejoicing that a feeble woman was able to humiliate and rout legions of demons by your faithfulness to Me," He answered.

Usually spiritual paralysis doesn't take such dramatic forms. Ordinarily people want to do the right thing – like going to church, praying and helping others – but instead make up excuses such as they don't have the time, or are distracted with interruptions or other priorities. They just don't feel like doing what they know God wants them to do. They may end up praying selfishly for the wrong things or hurting instead of helping others. They have difficulty controlling their thoughts or feelings. They forget what St Paul says: "If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat." (2 Thess 3.10) In spiritual terms, if we are unwilling to work at our relationship with God, our souls will go un nourished.....and the devil has an easy time turning us away from divine things.

But these distractions, this resultant spiritual paralysis, can be cured if we cleanse our souls and seek the forgiveness of our sins. When we wash away our sins by confession, we can renew our minds, refresh our souls, retrain our bodies, and soften our hearts. This process starts with confession, prayer and worship; it is fed by fasting, educated by scripture, and deepened with love for our neighbour. Jesus will continuously inspire us always to elevate our hearts, as St Tugdual says, "above the order of nature," so that we may rise above nature to the supernatural "where alone we can find happiness, peace and joy."

So, may the Lord Christ, as we contemplate His eternal mercy, help in this elevation of our hearts and prevent our being overcome by spiritual laziness and paralysis. And let us not forget that we were prisoners of Egypt by sin, so to speak, that we cross the Red Sea by baptism, that we cross the desert by our Christian life, and that by death we will cross the Jordan and enter into eternal life symbolised by the Promised Land.

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## QUIET DAY



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 the Salisbury Priory, and the conductor will be Father Jonathan Herbert from Hilfield Priory. The day, which will have a broad spiritual appeal, will begin with the Liturgy celebrated by Fr Leonard. The cost for the day is £7 per person and you are most

welcome to come along. For further details please contact Fr Leonard.

“Be still and know that I am God.”

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## **Western Rite Orthodoxy**

Archdeacon Cameron Luke posed the following:

Orthodoxy is often seen in its Eastern guise be it Greek, Russian, Romanian etc. But there is also the Western Rite Usage within the Orthodox fold. What are the considered opinions concerning the Orthodox Western Rite? Is it a true, legitimate and permanent restoration of tradition, or is it a mere staging post, to help those into Orthodoxy from some Western background, which means consequently that it is only a temporary measure either in its entirety or for those who transit through it to 'proper' Orthodoxy? Is or can Orthodoxy only be 'Eastern'?

Fr Leonard responded:

This is a complex issue. Certainly Orthodoxy is not exclusively Eastern. The Celtic Orthodox Church is living proof of that. Many would claim that for the first centuries of the Church there was ONLY Orthodoxy. It would be more accurate to say that in the Early Church, those who would become known as Orthodox and those who would become known as Catholic were one and the same.....and to this day both would claim to be both orthodox and catholic in the true and wider meaning of those terms. However, Western Orthodoxy is not the same thing as Western Rite Orthodoxy. The former is Orthodoxy derived from the pre-Schismatic Church in the West before being overwhelmed by the influence of Rome. The latter consists in branches of the Eastern Churches using Western rites. In the Celtic Orthodox Church we use a Liturgical Rite re-constructed from fragments of ancient manuscripts used in the Celtic monasteries, most notably Bobbio. It is, therefore, essentially a Western Orthodox Rite. The Western Rite Orthodox on the other hand adapt a form of the Latin Mass. As I said at the outset - this is a complex issue!

### NOTE 1

St. John Maximovitch said: “Never, never, never let anyone tell you that in order to be Orthodox you must be Eastern. The West was fully Orthodox for a thousand years, and her venerable liturgy is far older than any of her heresies.”

### NOTE 2

What it seems the Western Rite Orthodox have not tried is to use Orthodox texts set out in the *order* used within the Latin Mass. What would that achieve, you may ask? It would, without abandoning the lovely texts of the Orthodox Liturgy, present a service format familiar to Western worshipers; which, it is assumed, is the purpose of the Western Rite movement.

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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 speedy and lasting relief for those starving in the severe FAMINE across the world. For faithfulness to Christ's injunction to love and serve one another; for generous hearts to impel us to give what we can.

For our country as we vote this month for our future Government.

For PEACE and stability in our troubled world. For peaceful solutions to the growing tensions in the Far East. For an end to the horrors of terrorism, 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 all in sickness, sorrow or distress, especially those on our prayer lists and on the hearts of all who read this. For Bishop Marc's recovery of full mobility following his hip surgery. For Fr Deacon Cwyfan awaiting heart surgery.

For the departed – Fr Kentigern, Nancy, Pamela and Suzie, whose anniversaries of reposing fall this month. Memory Eternal.

