



The
Celtic Orthodox Church
in the United Kingdom
Fellowship of St Gwenn

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Sadly, still no public services at present.

The **Celtic Orthodox Church** is one of the Ancient Christian Churches. Founded in AD37, it radiated across Europe, remaining faithful to its tradition and its spirituality during the first twelve centuries of the Christian era. It is the **original** Church of Great Britain.

Église Orthodoxe Celtique www.orthodoxie-celtique.net

CHRIST IS RISEN!!



INDEED, HE IS RISEN!!

Continued Paschal greetings, blessings, peace and love to you all!

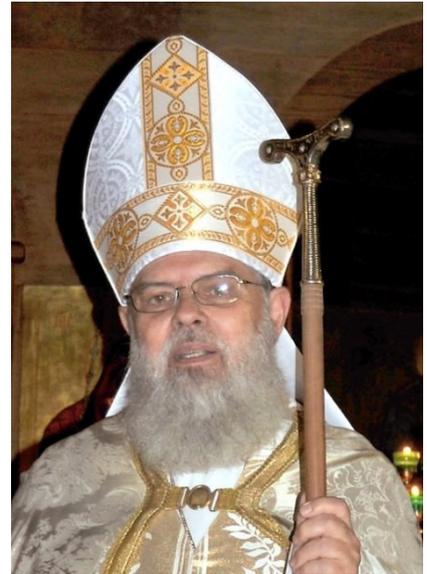
Fr Leonard +

(Paschaltide continues until the evening before the Feast of the ASCENSION:
see page 4)

Paschal Thoughts from Bishop Paul

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

If we do not radiate the Resurrection of Christ in our lives, then we are Christians in name only; phantoms. Many so-called Christians today, even priests and ministers, do not believe that Christ resurrected from the dead. An increasing percentage of our youth today openly proclaims itself atheist. And yet, the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the very heart of Christianity. People who refuse to believe in the Resurrection trust in the ultimate authority of fallen human reason rather than in Orthodox Tradition and God's Holy Scriptures. They are pagans without hope. Today, the devil has achieved a major success.



But we can thank God that His Resurrected Son illumines all the darkest regions of our souls. Christ helps us cleanse our sin and reminds us that: "apart from Me you can do nothing." (Jn 15:5) He is the very centre of our lives. From our being selfish slaves to sin He makes us His brothers and sisters, He changes us into parts of Himself to the point that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:39) He transforms us into His light so that "the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Mt 13:43)

Christ goes down into our personal hell to liberate us just as He descended into Hades after His Resurrection to break the gates of hell. This descent into Hades has a cosmic significance involving all people without exception, except for the devil and demons. While waiting for our personal resurrection at the end of time, we live in heaven already: "Our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." (Philippians 3:20-21) How can we ever praise Jesus enough and thank Him for giving us this living hope?

Saint Gregory Palamas tells us that "those who have lived here in a godly manner are separated from their bodies, they are not separated from God, and in the resurrection they will take their bodies with them to God, and in their bodies they will enter with inexpressible joy there where Jesus has preceded us (cf Heb. 6:20) and in their bodies they will enjoy the glory that will be revealed in Christ." (cf 1Pet. 5:1)

Without the Resurrection, there is no Christianity. The disciples of Jesus willingly suffered martyrdom for their faith. The enemies of the Gospel were totally unable to refute this central claim of the Gospel and put a stop to Christianity. We are part of Christ's resurrected body, and if we live as real Christians, Christ's enemies today will still be unable to put a stop to Christianity. Glory be to You, O Christ!

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!

Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!

Khristos voskrese! Voistinu voskrese!

Christ est Ressuscité! En Vérité, Il est Ressuscité!

A Better Resurrection by Christina Rossetti

I have no wit, no words, no tears;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numb'd too much for hopes or fears;
Look right, look left, I dwell alone;
I lift mine eyes, but dimm'd with grief
No everlasting hills I see;
My life is in the falling leaf:
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk:
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud nor greenness can I see:
Yet rise it shall—the sap of Spring;
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul
Or cordial in the searching cold;
Cast in the fire the perish'd thing;
Melt and remould it, till it be
A royal cup for Him, my King:
O Jesus, drink of me.

Easter 2020 by Malcolm Guite

Where was Jesus, this strange Easter day?
Not lost in our locked churches, anymore
Than he was sealed in that dark sepulchre.
The locks are loosed; the stone is rolled away,
And he is up and risen, long before,
Alive, at large, and making his strong way
Into the world he gave his life to save,
No need to seek him in his empty grave.

He might have been a wafer in the hands
Of priests this day, or music from the lips
Of red-robed choristers, instead he slips
Away from church, shakes off our linen bands
To don his apron with a nurse: he grips
And lifts a stretcher, soothes with gentle hands
The frail flesh of the dying, gives them hope,
Breathes with the breathless, lends them strength to cope.

On Thursday we applauded, for he came
And served us in a thousand names and faces
Mopping our sickroom floors and catching traces
Of that virus which was death to him:
Good Friday happened in a thousand places
Where Jesus held the helpless, died with them
That they might share his Easter in their need,
Now they are risen with him, risen indeed.

Ascension



As mentioned on page 1, Paschaltide comes to its climatic close with the Feast of the Ascension on 21st of May. Ascensiontide then lasts until 28th May, the Thursday before Pentecost.

At Ascension I always smile at verse 5 of Psalm 47 in the translation which reads, "God has gone up with a merry noise."

Perhaps at first the Apostles were none too merry at Jesus' physically leaving them, but as the Church is born in the descent of the Holy Spirit they were indeed merry and the message of joy in the risen, ascended and glorified Christ, has been with us ever since.

Ascended, Christ reigns with the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit, and as the Great High Priest intercedes for us eternally at the heavenly altar.

Pentecost

Jesus had promised His disciples and Apostles that He would not leave them comfortless when He ascended to the Father. He would send them 'Another,' the Comforter or Strengthener who would bring to their minds all that Jesus had taught them; and the Comforter would be an Advocate who would be with them for ever.

Today that same Holy Spirit is with *us* to strengthen and support us, to guide us and teach us.....but we must put self and selfishness aside in order to receive Him. At Pentecost, we are told, there was the sound as of a mighty rushing wind, but all too often today, the mighty rushing sound of the world's clangour drowns out the 'still small voice of calm.'

Let us pray that the flame of God's loving Spirit may ever shine forth in us and thereby give light and love to others.



For our Prayers

For our Primate Metropolitan Marc, Bishop Paul and all the monastics, clergy and people of the Celtic Orthodox Church; for *all* Christians; for the Unity of Christ's Church throughout the world.

For PEACE in our troubled world; that the love of God may touch the hearts of all who perpetuate strife and conflict. For God's blessing on peacemakers.

For all in sickness, sorrow or distress; especially at this time for those with, or devastated by, the coronavirus pandemic including those in bereavement.

For all who are struggling with being isolated and those whose income has been lost or severely reduced by the coronavirus pandemic.

For the Leaders of all Nations, for our own Government, Councils, the NHS, Hospitals, Clinics, Doctors, Nurses, all Medical Staff and all Volunteers as they fight against the Coronavirus pandemic.

For all Nations and their leaders, and for each of us to take seriously and respect the environment before our planet is irrevocably impaired.

For the departed – the thousands worldwide who have fallen victim to the coronavirus pandemic, starvation and warfare – for John, Patrick, Sheila, Dom Kenneth, Agnes, Bill, Sid, Sylvia, Enid(oblate), Julia, and Solange, whose anniversaries of reposing fall this month. Memory Eternal.

