

ST. FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY
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Tel. 01692 580552.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMME
JANUARY 2016.



*The Epiphany, or the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ in
the Jordan (January 6th)*

Troparion

WHEN thou wast baptized in Jordan, O Lord, then
was made manifest the worship of the Trinity:
for the Voice of the Father bare witness to thee,
naming thee his beloved Son; and the Spirit in form
of a dove made good the certainty of his word. O
Christ our God, who wast manifested and hast
enlightened the world, glory be to thee.

BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS
 COMMEMORATED IN
 JANUARY.

- 01 Elvan and Mydwyn, Missionaries
- 03 Fugatius and Damian, Missionaries
- 06 Peter, Abbot of Canterbury
- 07 Brannoc of Braunton, Monk
- 08 Athelhelm, Archbishop of Canterbury
- Ethelbert, Bishop in Ireland*
- Pega, Anchoress
- Wulsin, Bishop of Sherborne
- 09 Adrian, Abbot of Canterbury
- Berhtwald, Archbishop of Canterbury
- 10 Sethrid, Abbess in France
- 12 Benedict, Abbot of Wearmouth
- 13 Kentigern (Mungo), Apostle of North-West England
- 15 Ceolfwulf, King of Northumbria, Monk
- 16 Fursey of East Anglia, Missionary
- 17 Mildgyth, Virgin
- 18 Wilfrid, Missionary and Martyr in Sweden*
- 22 Berhtwald, Bishop of Ramsbury
- 25 Sigebert, King of East Anglia, Martyr
- Thordgyth of Barking, Nun
- 28 John the Wise of Malmesbury
- 30 Bathild of Chelles, Queen*
- 31 Adamnan of Coldingham, Monk
- Wilgils, Hermit

TROPARION OF ST. FURSEY.

Establishing thy monastery in a Roman fortress
 thou didst teach men that the Orthodox Faith is
 a true bastion against the onslaughts of every evil
 force O Father Fursey.

Where fore pray to God for us that we may all be
 bastions of the Faith standing firm against the rising
 tide of falsehood that our souls may be saved.

KONTAKION OF ST. FURSEY.

Thou didst need the walls of stone to defend the Faith
 against its pagan enemies, O Father Fursey, but pray
 for us that we may have a spiritual wall around us to
 defend the Faith against its enemies. Following thee
 and praising thy eternal memory we stand firm against
 every error ever singing: Rejoice beloved of God,
 our Father Fursey.



SERVICES IN JANUARY 2016.

SUN. JAN. 3rd. 31st.SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. Sunday before the Theophany.
DIVINE LITURGY 10AM.
VESPERS. 4PM

MON.JAN. 4th. Forefeast of the Theophany Vespers 4pm
TUES. JAN 5th. Eve of the Theophany ROYAL HOURS.
3rd. Hour 9am and Reading from the Early Church Fathers,
6th. Hour 12noon. 9th. Hour 3pm.VESPERS 4PM.
WED. JAN. 6th. THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.
DIVINE LITURGY 10AM AND BLESSING OF THE WATERS.

SAT. JAN. 9th. Saturday after the Theophany Vespers 4pm.
SUN. JAN 10th.SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY.
DIVINE LITURGY 10AM.
BLESSING OF THE WATERS AT SUTTON STAITHE 12.30PM(Approx.)

PATRONAL FESTIVAL OF ST. FURSEY'S PARISH AND COMMUNITY.

FRI. JAN. 15th.Eve of St. Furseys Day. Vespers 4pm.
SAT. JAN. 16th.ST. FURSEY OF BURGH CASTLE (Enlightener of East Anglia)
DIVINE LITURGY 10AM
(Followed by a Feast to which all are invited.)

SUN.JAN. 17th.VESPERS 4PM (For St.Anthony the Great Founder of monasticism.356.)

SAT. JAN. 23rd.VESPERS 4PM.

SUN. JAN. 24th.34th.SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.Sunday of the Blind Man.(St. Xenia)
DIVINE LITURGY 10AM
VESPERS 4PM

TUES.JAN.26th.St.John Chrysostom.Translation of his Relics.
VESPERS 4PM

SAT. JAN.30th. VESPERS 4PM

SUN. JAN.31st.35th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. Sunday of Zaccheus.
DIVINE LITURGY 10AM.
VESPERS 4PM.

DAILY SERVICES IN ST. FURSEY'S CHAPEL.

These are normally 3rd.Hour 9am.6th.Hour 12noon(sometimes shortened) Vespers 4pm.Compline 9pm when visitors are in residence on retreat or when there are evening events.Local readers are welcome to attend you do not need to be Orthodox Christian to do so but please ring 01692 580552 to check before hand in case I have been called away as sometimes happens.

THE SUPPLIMENT.

After seven months of the art of prayer I thought a change would be good ; hence our look at an Orthodox Church building God willing we may be able to have something like this to the Glory of God and to aid the salvation of souls.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND NOTICES.

CHRISTMAS THANKS.

As I prepare this January Newsletter on Monday December 14th, may I thank all those who have sent cards and donations, they are much appreciated. As we prepare to celebrate Our Lord's Nativity we are also planning two very important events for January; the Theophany and our Patronal Festival.

THE THEOPHANY.

This Great Feast celebrates the Baptism of Our Lord by St John the Baptist in the river Jordan which is also the manifestation of the Holy Trinity. It reveals to us the sacredness of water and at the beginning of the Liturgy on January 6th. A large container of water is placed at the front of the church and this is blessed and the faithful bring containers which are filled with this Holy Water to take home and to use as a healing drink. On the Sunday after the Theophany after the Liturgy we go to Sutton Staithe and bless the waters there. It is also the custom for the priest to go to the homes of the faithful and to bless them with the Holy Water of the Theophany.

PATRONAL FESTIVAL'

St. Fursey's Day is January 16th. He died at Peronne in northern France in 650 having gone there in about 645 after 15 years at Burgh Castle bringing the Orthodox Christian Faith to the pagan English of Norfolk. We shall celebrate St Fursey's repose on Friday Jan. 15th with Vespers at 4pm and the Liturgy on Saturday Jan. 16th. 10 am followed by our usual feast; to which all our local readers are invited.

OUR PILGRIMAGE TO PERONNE MAY 9TH TO 13TH. 2016.

As I write this newsletter I am pleased to say that our friend Mr John Bullock the representative of Rondo travel has been working very hard on our behalf a draft itinerary has already been prepared and sent out and the final arrangements will be made early in the new year. We thank John for all his labour on our behalf as I would not be able to do all the work myself.

OUR WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY; NOW TO BE ON A MONDAY,

Our weekly Bible Study has been an important part of our programme since the Community was founded in 1998. After several years of it being on a Thursday circumstances have changed for several people and we have decided to move the Bible Study meeting to a Monday afternoon beginning on MONDAY JANUARY 11TH. The format will be as before; We begin at 2.30pm and have a break at 3.30pm for tea and cake. Vespers at 4pm and we usually finish about 4.30pm so we look forward to this and we hope that more people will come.

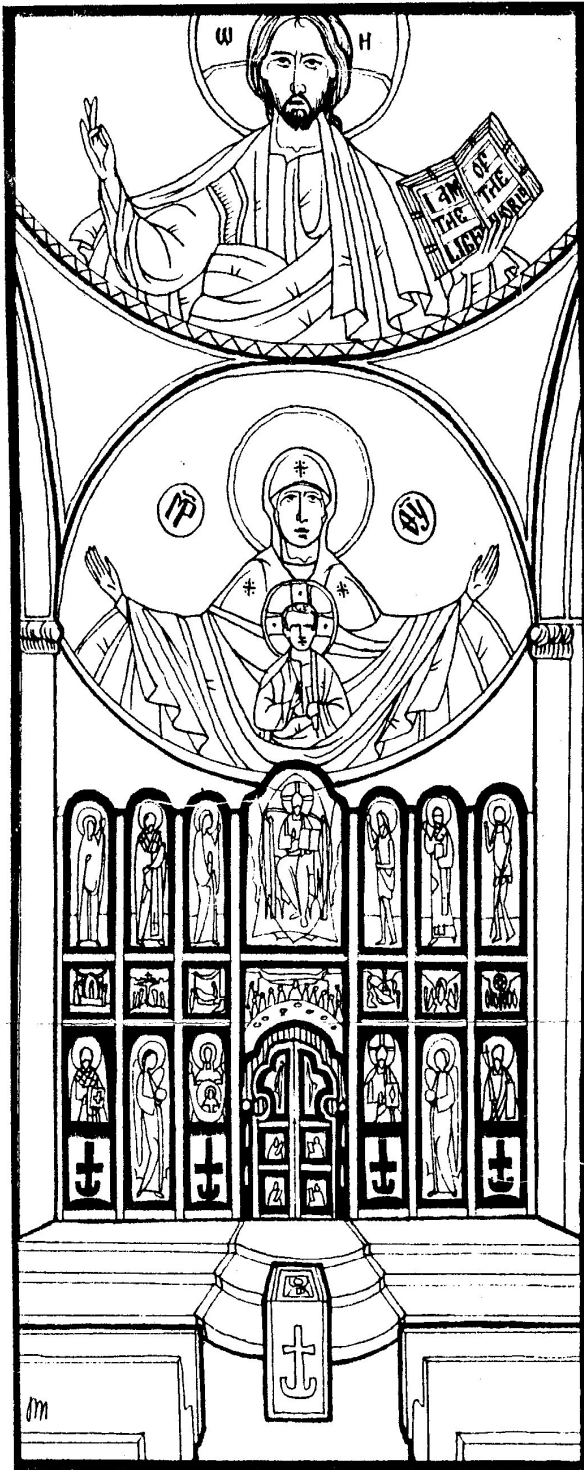
A POSSIBLE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN STALHAM.

As I prepare this Newsletter we are continuing to wait patiently for some more progress. Tescos representative told me in October that their negotiations with a developer for the George Bush abattoir land was at a delicate stage and expected these to be concluded by Christmas and then we could make some more progress in the New Year. KEEP PRAYING; GODS WILL BE DONE. It seems that 2016 will be a rather busy year as we also expect to have some more catechumens as well praise God.

THE ENTHRONEMENT OF METROPOLITAN SILOUAN

This event was postponed for various reasons and we do not have a new date yet but please continue to pray for both Patriarch John and Metropolitan Silouan that the various problems may soon be overcome and then he will be able to come to us and begin his work among us meanwhile we assure him of our love and prayers.

Church Building



In the long history of the Orthodox Church a definite style of church architecture has developed. This style is characterized by the attempt to reveal the fundamental experience of Orthodox Christianity: **God is with us.**

The fact that Christ the Immanuel (which translated means "God with us") has come, determines the form of the Orthodox church building. God is with man in Christ through the Holy Spirit. The dwelling place of God is with man. "The Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands," says St. Stephen quoting the Old Testament prophets. St. Paul says that men are the temples of God:

Christ Jesus himself (is) the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:21-22)

The words of St. Peter are very much the same.

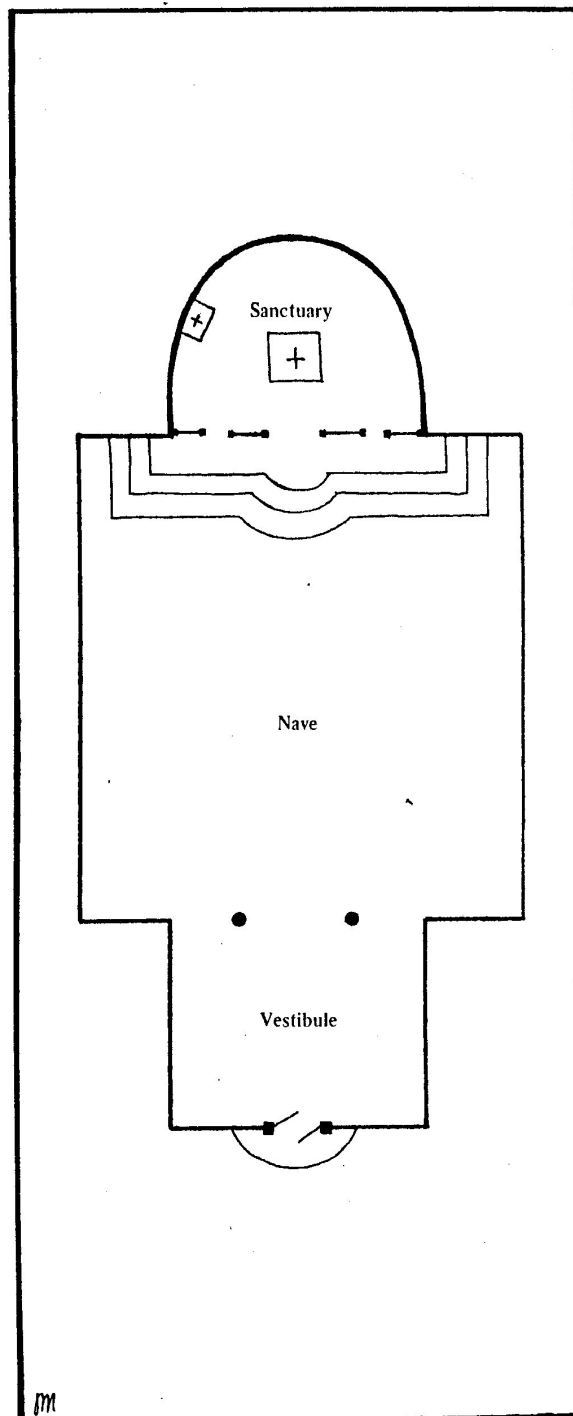
Come to him (Christ), to that living stone...and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house...to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (I Peter 2:4-5)

"We are the temple of the living God..." (II Corinthians 6:16). And it is exactly this conviction and experience that Orthodox Church architecture wishes to convey.

Orthodox Church architecture reveals that God is with men, dwelling in them and living in them through Christ and the Spirit. It does so by using the dome or the vaulted ceiling to crown the Christian church building, the house of the Church which is the People of God. Unlike the pointed arches which point to God far up in the heavens, the dome or the spacious, all-embracing ceiling gives the impression that in the Kingdom of God, and in the Church, Christ

“unites all things in himself, things in heaven and things on earth,” (Ephesians 1:10) and that in Him we are all “filled with all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:19)

The interior of the Orthodox Church building is particularly styled to give the experience of the unity of all things in God. It is not constructed to reproduce the upper room of the Last Supper, nor to be simply a meeting hall for men whose life exists solely within the bounds of this earth. The church building is patterned after the image of God’s Kingdom in the **Book of Revelation**. Before us is the altar table on which Christ is enthroned, both as the Word of God in the Gospels and as the Lamb of God in the eucharistic sacrifice. Around the table are the angels and saints, the servants of the Word and the Lamb who glorify him—and through him, God the Father—in the perpetual adoration inspired by the Holy Spirit. The faithful Christians on earth who already belong to that holy assembly—“...fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God...” (Ephesians 2:19)—enter into the eternal worship of God’s Kingdom in the Church. Thus, in Orthodox practice the vestibule symbolizes this world. The nave is the place of the Church understood as the assembly and people of God. The altar area, called the sanctuary or the holy place, stands for the Kingdom of God.



Strengthened and encouraged. This is what we often hear from Christians who have received support from Barnabas Fund. Thank you for making this possible. The following pages are just a few examples of the many ways we have recently helped persecuted and pressurised Christians.

Burial ground for Keshobpur

"God has blessed our church and for that reason we like to give thanks to God with our open hearts."—Pastor Das, Keshobpur, Bangladesh

The issues for Christians who are in a minority in a country cut across all areas of life – and death. Bangladesh's public burial grounds provide for Muslims and Buddhists but not for Christians. Hindus cremate their dead and do not need burial grounds. Christian believers in Keshobpur had to bury their dead far away, which caused great emotional distress as well as practical problems in a hot climate.

The community of believers prayed for God to provide them with a place to bury their dead and now their prayers have been answered. With a grant from Barnabas Fund they have bought suitable land and built a protective boundary wall and security guard room around the new graveyard, which will serve 26 churches in the area.



Opening ceremony for the burial ground in Keshobpur

£7,861 for the church graveyard at Keshobpur
(US\$12,100; €10,900)

Project reference 00-637
(Church Building Fund)

Food for Sudanese refugees in Egypt

"Every time we eat this bread we remember the great effort that you did and we pray that God fill you with His grace and mercy, as God said, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" – Sudanese Christian refugee in Egypt

Every Sunday, a small church in Cairo hosts a service for Christian refugees from the Moro people group who have fled from government persecution in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The building is meant for 200 believers but the worshippers regularly number 600! About half of the refugee congregation is under 16 years of age.

A big feature of the refugees' Sunday is the hot meal served to everyone who comes, after their two-hours journey to church. Some will only have been able to afford a cup of tea for breakfast. "We have some aged and single people who can barely have someone even prepare this morning tea, so it's very comforting to provide this meal for them, as Jesus fed 5,000 after the sermon. The meal is also significant because the shared time together gives an opportunity for fellowship which enriches their lives. "This is a great social help", says the pastor who leads the service.



This small church in Cairo hosts up to 600 Sudanese refugees on a Sunday

£4,242 to feed Sudanese refugees in Egypt this year
(US\$6,600; €5,900)

Project reference 48-1138

Rebuilding lives in Nepal

For three days after the first earthquake struck Nepal back in April, Krishna's family slept under the open sky, their house badly damaged and unsafe. Then help arrived for his family and thousands of other Christians too, made possible by the swift response of Barnabas Fund supporters.

They now had some food to eat and a tarpaulin for shelter from the rain and heat, which was shared with other families. For ten days Krishna sought work but found nothing, no school for his teenage son and daughter, and the only habitable houses left standing were in such demand that rents had become unaffordable.

Then, says Krishna (a convert from Hinduism to Christianity), God answered his prayers. He found land to rent, and the support of Barnabas enabled aid workers to help him build a temporary home which will give better protection from the elements. Krishna held a meeting for prayer and thanksgiving in his new home.

Barnabas also provided medical supplies, utensils and toiletries. Basic tarpaulin shelters are now being replaced with temporary homes that will withstand monsoon winds and rain. We are also supporting the repair and rebuilding of churches in our continuing aid to the area.



Prayer meeting in Krishna's new home

£30,000 to help earthquake victims in Nepal
(US\$46,400; €41,500)

Project reference 00-634
(Disaster Relief Fund)

THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD

Vespers

On Lord, I have cried, *eight stichera are sung:*

TONE TWO

(by John the Monk)

The Forerunner beheld our Enlightenment, who has brought light to all mankind, draw near for baptism: and he rejoiced in soul while his hand trembled. And he shewed Him to the people, saying: 'Behold, the Redeemer of Israel, who sets us free from corruption.' O sinless Christ our God, glory to Thee (*twice*).

The hosts of angels were filled with fear, as they saw our Deliverer baptized by a servant and receiving witness through the coming of the Spirit. And the Father's voice was heard from on high: 'He upon whom the Forerunner lays his hand, the same is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'¹ O Christ our God, glory to Thee (*twice*).

The streams of the Jordan received Thee who art the fountain, and the Comforter descended in the form of a dove. He who bowed the heavens,² bowed His head, and the clay cried aloud to Him that formed him: 'Why dost Thou command of me what lies beyond my power? For I have need to be baptized of Thee.'³ O sinless Christ our God, glory to Thee (*twice*).

Wishing to save man gone astray, Thou hast not disdained to clothe Thyself in the form of a servant. For it befitted Thee, as Master and God, to take upon Thyself our nature for our sakes. For Thou, O Deliverer, hast been baptized in the flesh, making us worthy of forgiveness. Therefore we cry unto Thee: O Christ our God and Benefactor, glory to Thee (*twice*).

Glory be to the Father . . . Both now . . .

SAME TONE

(by Byzas)

Thou hast bowed Thine head before the Forerunner and hast crushed the heads of the dragons.¹ Thou hast descended into the waters and hast given light to all things, that they may glorify Thee, O Saviour, the Enlightenment of our souls.

From a sermon by Saint Proclus of Constantinople, bishop

(Sermo 7 in sancta Theophania, 1-3: PG 65, 758-759)

THE WATERS ARE MADE HOLY

Christ appeared in the world, and, bringing beauty out of disarray, gave it luster and joy. He bore the world's sin and crushed the world's enemy. He sanctified the fountains of waters and enlightened the minds of men. Into the fabric of miracles he interwove ever greater miracles.

For on this day land and sea share between them the grace of the Savior, and the whole world is filled with joy. Today's feast of the Epiphany manifests even more wonders than the feast of Christmas.

On the feast of the Savior's birth, the earth rejoiced because it bore the Lord in a manger; but on today's feast of the Epiphany it is the sea that is glad and leaps for joy; the sea is glad because it receives the blessing of holiness in the river Jordan.

At Christmas we saw a weak baby, giving proof of our weakness. In today's feast, we see a perfect man, hinting at the perfect Son who proceeds from the all-perfect Father. At Christmas the King puts on the royal robe of his body; at Epiphany the very source enfolds and, as it were, clothes the river.

Come then and see new and astounding miracles: the Sun of righteousness washing in the Jordan, fire immersed in water, God sanctified by the ministry of man.

Today every creature shouts in resounding song: *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord*. Blessed is he who comes in every age, for this is not his first coming.

And who is he? Tell us more clearly, I beg you, blessed David: *The Lord is God and has shone upon us*. David is not alone in prophesying this; the apostle Paul adds his own witness, saying: *The grace of God has appeared bringing salvation for all men, and instructing us*. Not for some men, but for all. To Jews and Greeks alike God bestows salvation through baptism, offering baptism as a common grace for all.

Come, consider this new and wonderful deluge, greater and more important than the flood of Noah's day. Then the water of the flood destroyed the human race, but now the water of baptism has recalled the dead to life by the power of the one who was baptized. In the days of the flood the dove with an olive branch in its beak foreshadowed the fragrance of the good odor of Christ the Lord; now the Holy Spirit, coming in the likeness of a dove, reveals the Lord of mercy.

SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

FURSEY (Fursa) (d. 650), Irish abbot or bishop. He became a monk in Ireland but left it as a 'pilgrim for Christ', coming to East Anglia c.630. King *Sigebert received him and his companions, especially *Foillan, kindly and gave them the old fortress of Cnobheresburg (Burgh Castle, Suffolk) with adjacent lands for a monastery. On the death of Sigebert in battle against Penda, king of Mercia, Furseay left for France. Again he was helped by a ruler, Erchinoald, mayor of Neustria, who gave him land for another monastery, which he built at Lagny-sur-Marne. He died at Mezerolles (Somme); his body was buried at Péronne (Picardy), afterwards called *Perrona Scottorum*, in another Irish monastery.

In 654 his relics were translated to a shrine 'in the shape of a little house', supposedly made by *Eloi. Another translation took place in 1056. Most of the relics remained until the French Revolution; a head reliquary survived even the Prussian bombardment of 1870. French, Irish, and English calendars (especially Canterbury, which claimed head-relics) attest his cult.

This was assisted by Bede's account of his vision of the after-life, one of the earliest of its kind. During a state of trance he saw visions of heaven and hell, angels and devils; on recovering he described his experiences and warned against future and detailed punishments for sins. Feast: 16 January.

AA.SS. Ian. II (1643), 35-55; Bede, II.E., iii. 19; *Vita Prima S. Fursei* in M.G.H., *Scriptores rerum theov.*, iv. 423-49; W. Stokes, 'Betha Fursa', *Revue Celtique*, xxv (1904), 385-404; J. Hennig, 'The Irish Background of St. Furseay', *I.E.R.* (1952), 18-28.

MILDGYTH (7th century). She was the youngest and least famous of the three daughters of Merewald, king of Mercia, and *Ermenburga, princess of Kent; her sisters were *Mildred and *Milburga. According to one tradition she became a nun in Northumbria and was buried there; the Thanet tradition, however, made her a nun of Eastry, and the successor of Mildred, abbess of that monastery, and claimed that both of them were buried there. When the Danes destroyed Thanet, the bones of both of them were hidden at Lymington until Lanfranc translated them to his hospital of St. Gregory, Canterbury, in 1085. This tradition is represented by C.S.P., a 13th-century saints' list. Feast: 12 January.

C.S.P.: Stanton, pp. 24, 623.

SIGEBERT (1) (d. 635), king of East Anglia and martyr. Virtually all we know of him comes from *Bede. During the reign of his predecessor Redwald (who had attempted to combine the worship of Christ with that of the Germanic gods in the same church), Sigebert went into exile in Frankia and became a Christian. He returned as king in 630, a very learned man (*doctissimus*), and with the help of Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, introduced *Felix as bishop of East Anglia, based at Dunwich (or possibly Felixstowe) and enabled with royal endowment *Furseay to establish his monastery at Burgh Castle. Felix under royal patronage also set up schools in East Anglia.

Sigebert did not reign for long: he resigned in favour of Ecgric and became a monk, possibly at Burgh Castle. Meanwhile Penda, king of Mercia, the scourge of other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, made war on East Anglia. Sigebert's countrymen, fearful of the morale of the troops in battle, took him against his will out of his monastery and brought him to the army, hoping that the presence of one who had been a brave and famous general would allay their fears. He, however, refused to carry a weapon but only a staff. He was killed with Ecgric in the total defeat which followed. Sigebert, like some other Anglo-Saxon kings who died in battle, was venerated as a martyr. East Anglian liturgical books were destroyed in the Danish invasions and his feast has been variously assigned to 16 January and 27 September.

Bede, II.E., ii. 15 and iii. 18; P. Hunter Blair, *The World of Bede* (1970), pp. 106-9; Stanton, pp. 35-6.

PEGA (d. c.719), virgin, sister of *Guthlac. She lived as an anchoress at Peakirk (i.e. 'Pega's church') in Northamptonshire, not far from Guthlac's hermitage at Crowland. When he realized that his end was near (714), he invited her to his funeral. For this she sailed down the Welland, curing a blind man from Wisbech on the way. She inherited Guthlac's psalter and scourge, both of which, it was claimed, she later gave to Crowland. She went on pilgrimage to Rome and died there c.719. Ordericus Vitalis claimed that her relics survived in an unnamed Roman church in his day, and that miracles took place there. Feast: 8 January.

AA.SS. Ian. I (1643), 531-3; B. Colgrave, *The Life of St. Guthlac by Felix* (1956); G. F. Warner, *The Guthlac Roll* (Roxburghe Club, 1928); E. Clive Rouse, 'Wall paintings in the church of St. Pega, Peakirk, Northamptonshire', *Archaeol. Jnl.*, cx (1953), 135-49.