

ST FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND PARISH,
ST. FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PARISH CHURCH.
YARMOUTH ROAD, STALHAM. NR12 9PG.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMME
MARCH 2019.



TODAY is the fountainhead of our salvation and the manifestation of the mystery which was from eternity. The Son of God becometh the Virgin's Son, and Gabriel proclaimeth the good tidings of grace; for this cause, we also cry to the Mother of God with him: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace; the Lord is with thee.

BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS
 COMMEMORATED IN
 MARCH.

(See selected lives of Saints on another page.)

- 01 Swithbert the Elder, Bishop of the Frisians
- 02 Chad, Bishop of Lichfield
- Cynibil, Confessor
- 04 Owen of Lichfield, Hermit
- 06 Baldred and Billfrith, Hermits
- Cyneburgh and Cyneswith, Abbesses of Castor and Tibba,
 Anchoress
- 07 Eosterwine, Abbot of Wearmouth
- 08 Felix, Bishop of Dunwich
- 09 Bosa, Bishop of York
- 12 Alphege the Elder, Bishop of Winchester
- Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome and Apostle of the English
- 13 Gerald of Mayo, Abbot
- 16 Aristobulus the Holy Apostle, Bishop of Britain
- 17 Withburgh of Dereham, Virgin
- 18 Edward the Martyr, King of England
- Egbert of Ripon, Confessor
- 19 Alcmund, Martyr
- 20 Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne and Wonderworker of Britain
- Herbert of Derwentwater, Hermit
- 23 Ethilwald of Farne, Hermit
- 24 Hildelith, Abbess of Barking
- 25 Alfwold, Bishop of Sherborne
- 27 Alkeld, Martyr in Yorkshire
- 30 Osburgh, Abbess of Coventry

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.



SERVICES IN MARCH.

FRI.MARCH 1st.VESPERS 4pm.(St David of Wales 6th cent.)

SAT.MARCH 2nd.DIVINE LITURGY 10am. (Saturday of Meatfare&Saturday of Souls)

VESPERS 4pm.

SUN.MARCH 3rd.SUNDAY OF MEATFARE.SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGEMENT(St. Non.)

DIVINE LITURGY 10am.

SAT.MARCH 9th.VESPERS 4pm.(Saturday of Cheesefare ;Fourty Martyr of Sebaste 320)

SUN. MARCH 10th.SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE.The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.

DIVINE LITURGY 10am.(Forgiveness Sunday.

Vespers of Forgiveness 12noon approx..

MON MARCH 11th. FIRST WEEK OF GREAT LENT (Vegan fast until Pascha)

3rd Hour 9am with reading from the Fathers.

6th Hour 12noon with reading from Isaiah.

Vespers 4pm with reading from Genesis and Proverbs

Compline 7pm Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete

(This is our daily pattern of worship during first week of Great Lent at St Fursey's Chapel except for Vespers on Monday which is at the Parish Church.)

SAT.MARCH 16th.First Saturday of Great Lent.Commemoration of St Theodore the Recruit.

VESPERS 4pm.

SUN.MARCH 17th.FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT.(Sunday of Orthodoxy)

DIVINE LITURGY 10am (St Basil s) with Procession of Icons .

VESPERS 4pm.

MON.MARCH 18th.SECOND WEEK OF GREAT LENT.

(St Edward King and Martyr 978 & St Cyril of Jerusalem 386)

VESPERS 4pm.

SAT. MARCH 23rd.Second Saturday of Great Lent Saturday of Souls.

VESPERS 4pm.

SUN.MARCH 24th.SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT(St Gregory Palamas)

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST BASIL 10am.

VESPERS 4pm (The Annunciation)

MON.MARCH 25th.THE ANNUNCIATION TO OUR MOST HOLY LADY THE THEOTOKOS.

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM 10am (St Fursey's Chapel)

SAT.MARCH 30th. Third Saturday of Great Lent Saturday of Souls.

VESPERS 4pm

SUN.MARCH 31st. THIRD SATURDAY OF GREAT LENT.(The Veneration of the Cross)

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST BASIL 10am and Veneration of the Cross.

ALL THE ABOVE SERVICES WILL BE AT THE PARISH CHURCH UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

DAILY SERVICES AT ST FURSEY'S CHAPEL

In addition to the services at the Parish Church we continue with our daily worship at St Fursey's Chapel; 3RD HOUR 9am with reading from the Fathers (on Tuesdays at the Parish Church) VESPERS 4pm (on Mondays at the Parish Church) During Lent weekday services have a more penitential character with the use of the Prayer of St Ephraim the Syrian and this is printed below for your use.

O LORD AND MASTER OF MY LIFE

GRANT NOT TO ME A SPIRIT OF LAZINESS, DESPONDENCY, LUST OF POWER
OR OF GOSSIPING (prostration)

BUT GRANT UNTO ME, THY SERVANT, THE SPIRIT OF PURITY, HUMILITY, PATIENCE
AND OF LOVE, (prostration)

YEA O LORD AND KING, GRANT THAT I MAY SEE MY OWN ERRORS AND
TRANSGRESSIONS AND NOT TO JUDGE MY BROTHERS

AND SISTERS, FOR BLESSED ART THOU UNTO THE AGES OF AGES. AMEN. (prostration)

O GOD CLEANSE ME A SINNER. (12 times with the sign of the cross and a bow each time and
then the whole prayer is repeated
with a final prostration.)

COMMUNITY NEWS AND NOTICES.

The Community and Parish are very grateful for the presence and work of Father Paulinus among us and we are very pleased that he will not be leaving us as was feared but he has a heavy work load as prison chaplain and other cares. Our usual Saturday Liturgy the first Saturday of the month continues for evangelistic purposes but sometimes it is not possible for our younger working members to attend so omitting the Liturgy on the following Sunday is not always helpful especially as we approach Holy Lent so all being well there will be a Liturgy on Sunday of Meatfare March 3rd. and these liturgies will be shared between us two priests. If at the last minute this is not possible the Typika will be used and this can be taken by Sub-Deacon David.

THE BUILDING OF AN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN STALHAM

At the moment our builder and architect are working on detailed plans for the Building Control Department at the Council but all being well building work will proceed during the summer. Readers will remember that North Norfolk District Council have already approved the outline plans for our parish church these relate to the basic design and outward appearance of the church. The Building Control Department will be concerned with the detailed structure of the building.

DONATIONS TO OUR BUILDING FUND ARE STILL MOST WELCOME;

NAT WEST BANK; SORT CODE 60- 15- 54 ACCOUNT NO 73333301. ST FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHURCH
BUILDING FUND ACCOUNT

METROPOLITAN SILOUANS VISIT

We were greatly blessed with the visit of Metropolitan Silouans visit to us on Saturday February 9th and Sunday 10th. He arrived for Vespers at the Parish Church at 4pm and were blessed with a congregation of 12 people and Sayedna gave us a beautiful homily on Prayer which will always be in our minds. He presided at the Divine Liturgy on the Sunday when 21 people were present. He was pleased with the progress we had made and commented on the beauty of our temporary place of worship. We were very pleased to see him looking so well after the operations he has had.

WE ASSURE HIM OF OUR LOVE AND PRAYERS; AND THANKYOU DEAR SAYEDNA FOR YOUR VISIT TO US.

Directions on Spiritual Training

34. Blessed are the pure in heart, for there is no time when they do not rejoice in the sweetness of tears—in which too they see the Lord at all times. While tears are still wet in their eyes, they are granted a sight of His revelations at the height of their prayer; and no prayer of theirs is without tears. This is the meaning of the Lord's saying: 'Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted' (Matt. v. 4). For if, with the help of tears, a monk has succeeded in crossing the realm of passions and entering the plain of purity of soul, he meets with the comfort which God grants for their purity to those that mourn. To mourn and shed tears is a gift of the passionless. If the tears of a man, who for a time weeps and mourns, can not only lead him to passionlessness, but even completely free and cleanse his mind of all memory of passions, what can be said of those who day and night exercise themselves in this doing with knowledge?

35. One of the saints said that a body that feared trials, lest it be led to extremity and lose its life, becomes a friend of sin. Therefore the Holy Spirit constrains it to die. For He knows that if it does not die, it will not conquer sin. If a man wishes the Lord to dwell in him, he forces his body to serve the Lord, to work in the commandments of the Spirit, written by the Apostle, and to preserve his soul from the works of the flesh, described by the Apostle (Gal. v. 19). When the body is united with sin, it reposes in works of the flesh, and the Spirit of God does not repose in its fruits. For when the body is being exhausted by fasting and humility, the soul is strengthened by prayer.

36. When the body is greatly burdened by the sufferings of silence, endures privations and want, and comes near to losing its life, it is natural for it to implore you and say: 'Give me a little freedom to live decently; I now walk righteously, for I have been tried by all kinds of bitter sufferings.' But as soon as you take pity on it and give it some small rest from sufferings it begins little by little to cajole you (and its cajolings are very powerful) by whis-

pering: 'We can live as we should even close to the world, by following the same rules which guide us now, since we have been well tried. Put me to the test, and if I am not as you wish, we can always go back. The wilderness will not run away.' Do not trust it, however hard it implores you and whatever promises it makes. It will not do as it says. If you grant its request it will cast you into great downfalls, and you will not be able to rise up from them again.

37. When trials make you despondent and you weary of them, say to yourself: 'Again, you long for impure and shameful life.' And if the body says to you: 'It is a great sin to kill oneself,' answer it: 'I am killing myself because I cannot lead an unclean life. I will die here lest I see the real death of my soul—death in God's eyes. It is better for me to die here for the sake of purity than to lead a bad life in the world. I have willingly chosen this death for my sins. I am killing myself of my own accord, for I have offended the Lord. No longer shall I anger Him. What can I find in a life remote from God? I shall endure these afflictions lest I be deprived of heavenly hope. What is my life in this world to God, if I live it wrongly and anger God?'

38. It is harmful for a monk to see the world and worldly things. What a change occurs in the mind of a man who has for a long time been silent, alone with himself, and who suddenly finds himself once more in the vortex of the world and sees and hears things to which he is not accustomed! Let us not be seduced by those who assert that we suffer no harm from hearing or seeing anything, that we are the same in our thoughts whether we are in solitude or in the world, that our modesty is not troubled either in the cell or outside it, and suffers no change for the worse, and that we feel no stirrings of passions even when we meet people and things. Such things can be asserted only by men so strong in spirit that even if they suffer wounds, they do not feel them. But we have not yet attained to such health, we still bear in ourselves festering wounds, which will swarm with worms if left open and untended even for a single day, instead of being covered with a plaster and bound tight with bandages.

39. Once a soul has surrendered to God with faith and has often experienced His help, it no longer cares for itself, but is

enveloped in wonder and silence; it is impossible for it to return again to its own means of knowledge and apply them, lest it be deprived of Divine Providence, which secretly and unceasingly looks after the soul, cares for it and constantly watches over it. If the soul is thus deprived, it is because it has proved itself to be living in self-reliant fantasies, as though, on the strength of its own knowledge, it were able sufficiently to provide for itself.

40. Those in whom the light of faith is burning are no longer so shameless as to return in their prayers to their former petitions: 'Give us this,' or 'Take away that,' and they have no care for themselves. For at each moment, by the spiritual eyes of faith, they see the Fatherly Providence which gives them the protection of that true Father, Whose infinite love surpasses all fatherly love and Who, more than all, can and has the power to help us in a measure greater than anything we may ask, think or conceive.

41. He who has been given to taste the sweetness of faith, and who thereupon again returns to knowledge on the level of the soul, is like a man who has found a priceless pearl and has bartered it for a copper obol; or again like a man who has abandoned the freedom of being his own master and returned to a beggarly state of fear and slavery.

42. There are three modes by which knowledge ascends and descends. These modes are: body, soul, spirit. Knowledge is the gift of God to the nature of rational beings and was bestowed on them at their very creation. In its nature it is as simple and indivisible as sunlight, but corresponding to its application it undergoes changes and divisions. Listen to the order of this application.

43. *The first degree of knowledge.* When knowledge follows desires of the flesh, it embraces the following modes: wealth, vainglory, adornment, bodily comfort, care for book-learning, such as is suitable in the administration of this world and producing new things through inventions, arts and sciences, and all the other things which crown the body in this visible world. Because of these distinctive features knowledge becomes opposed to faith. It is called naked knowledge, for it excludes all concern for God, owing to the preponderance of the body, introduces into the mind an irrational impotence and limits all its concern to this world alone.

This is how this knowledge conceives itself: as if it were a mental power, which secretly governs man, a kind of divine management, which watches over man and takes perfect care of him. Therefore this knowledge does not ascribe the control of the world to God's Providence; on the contrary, all that is good in man, all that saves him from harm, all that naturally protects him from difficulties and the many adversities which accompany our nature, both secretly and openly, all this appears to this knowledge to be the result of its own care and its own methods.

Such is the opinion this blasphemous knowledge has of itself. It imagines that all things happen through its own providence; and in this it is in agreement with those who assert that nothing rules this world. All the same it cannot exist without constant cares and without fears for the body, and is, therefore, a prey to faint-heartedness, sorrow, despair and fears: fears that come from demons, fears that come from men, rumours about robbers, rumours about murders, worries brought by sickness, by want and lack of the necessities of life, fear of death, fear of sufferings and wild beasts, and of other similar things—all of which make this knowledge like a turbulent sea, on which sailors spend day and night, with no respite from attacks and buffetings by waves from every side.

Since this knowledge is incapable of placing all care of itself on God, through faith and trust in Him, it is constantly occupied in evolving and inventing various contrivances concerned with itself. But when these contrivances happen to fail in some case, it does not see in this the mysterious hand of Providence, and begins to quarrel with people, who resist or oppose it. In this respect, there is implanted in this knowledge the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tree which uproots love. Its qualities are pride and arrogance. It is puffed up, while yet it walks in darkness, it values what it has by earthly standards, and does not know that there is something better than itself.

44. *The second degree of knowledge.* When a man renounces the first degree, he becomes occupied with thoughts and desires of the soul; then, in the light of the nature of his soul, he practises the following excellent deeds: fasting, prayer, alms, reading of the Divine Scriptures, virtuous life, struggle with passions and so on.



Dignity and self-sufficiency for Somali Christian refugees

Impoverished Somali Christian refugees living in the sprawling Dadaab camp in Kenya received sewing machines and training in how to start up their own small businesses. "Their dignity is restored as they stop seeing themselves as beggars," said Barnabas' project partner.

Nine women and six men attended the first round of training and share five sewing machines. One 30-year-old father of two is deaf and already a skilled tailor. The training leader's guidance was translated into sign language for him. The project was "an answer to prayer" which has enabled vulnerable believers to "start working with their own hands to earn a living".

Winter relief for Christians in war-torn Syria

For Christian families in Syria, whose lives and livelihoods have been wrecked by civil war, Christmas amid the winter snow is cold and unforgiving.

Barnabas is providing heaters and blankets to Syrian Christians plus parcels of essentials such as rice, flour, cooking oil, tuna, canned meat and tea. We have also sent funds so Christian children in Damascus, Homs, Hama and Tartous can receive a special Christmas present pack with a winter blanket, scarf, hat and gloves. Each child will also get a matching school bag and pencil case, with exercise and drawing books, pens, colouring pencils, a ruler and a geometry set.

The children's gifts are not just to bring a smile to chilled cheeks, but help heal the trauma caused by conflict. Barnabas' partner explains

Solar panels help Guinea Church be light in darkness

Solar panels installed in five local churches in Guinea are transforming the entire Christian community. "[It] not only brought light to these churches but it also brought new life," said Pastor Michel, "It has ignited a new awakening in the midst of God's people."

Before the installation of the lighting, there had been a number of thefts at the churches and it was difficult to hold meetings after dark. The lighting has encouraged the congregation to take part in mid-week and evening services, as well as all-night prayer meetings, building up the faith of beleaguered Christians. "There is a paradigm shift," says Michel.

The churches are in the Forest Region of Guinea, one of only four areas not yet completely dominated by Islam.

ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

Small Vespers

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

TONE FOUR

Taking pity upon that which He has made and bending down in His tender mercy, the Maker hastens to dwell in the womb of a Maiden, the Child of God. To her the great Archangel came, saying to her: 'Hail, O thou who art full of divine grace, our God is now with thee.¹ Be not afraid of me, the chief commander of the armies of the King. For thou hast found the grace that thy mother Eve once lost: and thou shalt conceive and bring forth Him who is one in essence with the Father' (*twice*).

Mary said to the Angel: 'Strange is thy speech and strange thine appearance, strange thy sayings and thy disclosures. I am a Maid who knows not wedlock, lead me not astray. Thou sayest that I shall conceive Him who remains uncircumscribed: and how shall my womb contain Him whom the wide spaces of the heavens cannot contain?' 'O Virgin, let the tent of Abraham that once contained God teach thee:² for it prefigured thy womb, which now receives the God-head.'

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

TONE ONE

(*by Byzas*)

In the sixth month the chief of the angelic hosts was sent to thee, pure Virgin, to declare unto thee the word of salvation and to greet thee, saying: 'Hail, thou who art full of grace: the Lord is with thee. Thou shalt bring forth a Son, begotten before the ages from the Father, and He shall save His people from their sins.'¹

From a letter by Saint Leo the Great, pope

THE MYSTERY OF MAN'S RECONCILIATION WITH GOD

Lowliness is assured by majesty, weakness by power, mortality by eternity. To pay the debt of our sinful state, a nature that is incapable of suffering was joined to one that could suffer. Thus, in keeping with the healing that we needed, one and the same mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ, was able to die in one nature, and unable to die in the other.

He who is true God was therefore born in the complete and perfect nature of a true man, whole in his own nature, whole in ours. By our nature we mean what the Creator had fashioned in us from the beginning, and took to himself in order to restore it.

For in the Savior there was no trace of what the deceiver introduced and man, being misled, allowed to enter. It does not follow that because he submitted to sharing in our human weakness he therefore shared in our sins.

He took the nature of a servant without stain of sin, enlarging our humanity without diminishing his divinity. He emptied himself; though invisible he made himself visible, though Creator and Lord of all things he chose to be one of us mortal men. Yet this was the condescension of compassion, not the loss of omnipotence. So he who in the nature of God had created man, became in the nature of a servant, man himself.

Thus the Son of God enters this lowly world. He comes down from the throne of heaven, yet does not separate himself from the Father's glory. He is born in a new condition, by a new birth.

He was born in a new condition, for, invisible in his own nature, he became visible in ours. Beyond our grasp, he chose to come within our grasp. Existing before time began, he began to exist at a moment in time. Lord of the universe, he hid his infinite glory and took the nature of a servant. Incapable of suffering as God, he did not refuse to be a man, capable of suffering. Immortal, he chose to be subject to the laws of death.

He who is true God is also true man. There is no falsehood in this unity as long as the lowliness of man and the preeminence of God coexist in mutual relationship.

As God does not change by his condescension, so man is not swallowed up by being exalted. Each nature exercises its own activity, in communion with the other. The Word does what is proper to the Word, the flesh fulfills what is proper to the flesh.

One nature is resplendent with miracles, the other falls victim to injuries. As the Word does not lose equality with the Father's glory, so the flesh does not leave behind the nature of our race.

SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

BOSA, bishop of York 678-86 and 691-705. This monk of Whitby was consecrated by *Theodore bishop of Delra (the southern half of Northumbria, roughly the equivalent of modern Yorkshire) when *Wilfrid had been expelled from Northumbria following his quarrels with King Egfrith. Bosa ruled his diocese until his death except for the years of Wilfrid's restoration. *Bede praised his 'singular merit and holiness'; one of his disciples was *Acca, later the follower and successor of Wilfrid at Hexham. Feast: 9 March.

Bede, *H.E.*, iv. 12; v. 19-20.

EOSTERWINE (650-86), abbot of Wearmouth. Of noble birth, he joined the service of Egfrith, king of Northumbria, and fought in his army. At the age of twenty-four he became a monk at Wearmouth, the monastery just founded by his cousin *Benedict Biscop. Here he followed all the regular observance, taking his full share in the menial tasks. He milked the cows and the sheep, he worked in bakehouse, garden, and kitchen, he shared in the harvesting and winnowing. In 679 he was ordained priest and in 682 he was appointed abbot by Biscop to rule during his own absence. As abbot, he was kind and accessible to all, just as he had been before his promotion. He had the same food and sleeping accommodation as the rest of his community and joined in the manual work. He died at the early age of thirty-six, on 6 March, while the community were at Matins. He was buried by the church-door, but his relics, with those of Benedict Biscop and *Sigfrid, were translated by *Ceolfrith to a shrine close to the high altar. His cult was mainly local but his name also occurs in the OE martyrology from Mercia. Feast: 7 March.

C. Plummer (ed.), *Bædæ Opera Historica* (1956), I. 364-404; II. 355-77; J. F. Webb and D. H. Farmer, *The Age of Bede* (1983).

ALKELDA (1) (Athilda) (d. c.800). She was patron of the church of Middleham (Yorkshire), also of Giggleswick (West Riding). Edward IV's patent survives which enabled his brother Richard (subsequently Richard III) to set up the college of Middleham in honour of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and St. Alkeld. Local tradition claimed that she was a Saxon princess (presumably a nun), who was strangled to death by Viking women and buried in the church at Middleham. Feast: 28 (27) March.

R. Challoner, *Memorials of Ancient British Piety* (1772), v; Stanton, p. 135.

WITHBURGA (1) (Witburh) (d. c.743), virgin. The youngest daughter of Anna, king of East Anglia and a sister of *Etheldreda, she lived as a solitary at Holkham (Norfolk), and later at East Dereham, where she is reputed to have founded a community and to have died before the buildings were completed. She was buried in the churchyard, but after fifty years her body was exhumed, found incorrupt and enshrined in the church.

In 974 Brithnoth, abbot of Ely, stole the body under the pretext that she would have wanted to be buried near her sisters. A band of his monks accompanied by soldiers went secretly by night to Dereham, having obtained the approval of King Edgar and *Ethelwold. They removed the body to their wagons, drove twenty miles to the river Brandun, on which they continued their journey by boat to the dismay of the men of Dereham, who had pursued them by land and could only watch helplessly while their treasure slipped away. The body was reburied at Ely where, however, the incorruption story was never exploited, as it might have detracted from Etheldreda's glory. In 1102 Withburga's relics were moved into the new part of the church; in 1106 they were joined by the bones of the other three Ely saints (Etheldreda, *Sexburga, and *Ermeigild). The church at Holkham is dedicated to her; water in Withburga's well at Dereham churchyard was reputed to have sprung up when her body was first exhumed. Withburga's emblem in art, as on six Norfolk screens, is a tame doe, which William of Malmesbury described as her companion in solitude who provided her with milk. Feast: 17 March; translation 8 July.

ALFWOLD (d. 1058), monk of Winchester and bishop of Sherborne. William of Malmesbury recorded the following details, derived from a priest of his diocese who knew him. He was noted for his habitual abstinence at a time when self-indulgence was said to be general; he used at table common wooden platters and bowls. He was specially devoted to *Swikhun, whose image he set up in the church at Sherborne, and to *Cuthbert, whose shrine he used to visit and whose antiphon he would often repeat. He quarrelled at least once with Godwin earl of Wessex, who was smitten with sudden illness and recovered only at the saint's pardon. After his death, the sees of Sherborne and Ramsbury, both poorly endowed, were reunited and in 1070 became the see of Salisbury. Feast: 25 March.