



# Prophet Elias News

**News and Views for the Orthodox Church  
of the Holy Prophet Elias in Devon  
October 2022**



## **Some Personal Reflections on the Funeral of Queen Elizabeth**

For myself, I think the high point of the day has to be the sudden fortissimo shock as, after so much quietness, the coffin entered the Abbey to be greeted with William Croft's exultant 'I am the Resurrection and the Life', the first of the Sentences with which the Anglican funeral rite begins. The Queen's deep Christian faith was a central theme of the day's eulogies, and this moment gave sharp focus to the meaning of the entire day's proceedings.

(You can find the Croft at [Burial Service: I am the resurrection - YouTube](#) )

But there were many extraordinary things happening that day, and in the days leading up to it, and what struck me most strongly was that many, many ordinary people were looking to appease a huge hunger. Most obviously, there was the palpable hunger for meaningful ritual, which is so lacking from so many people's lives. In particular, there was a hunger for mourning – expressed not only by people who had been unable properly to mourn loved ones who died during Covid lockdown, but by many more whose grief for earlier bereavements had been awakened. So many people nowadays are misled by the fashionable view that ritualized mourning is somehow unnecessary, and that our dead should be remembered only in celebration. During those days of queuing to view the lying in state, as well as on the day of the funeral, many admitted that their tears were as much for their own dead as for the Queen.

And during those days of the long queue, another hunger was met. When people said they had found new families, what they were rediscovering was the joy of communion, of face to face encounters rather than virtual relationships filtered through commercially driven algorithms. In a time when so much of our thinking is affected by the poison of 'culture wars', they found they were able to forge relationships with people whose views they knew nothing about, simply because they were human beings on a shared journey.

Yet another hunger was expressed in the constant references to the late Queen's sense of duty, and her commitment to a life of service – both qualities which have come to be regarded as somehow quaintly old-fashioned, but which are fundamental qualities of a Christian life. The stark contrast was often mentioned between the Queen's understanding of leadership and that of so many of today's leaders. Let us fervently hope that her example may have given rise to reflection, not only among politicians, but among financiers, CEOs, press barons, social media/big tech magnates and - dare I say it - church hierarchs.

*Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20: 25-28*

At every Liturgy we pray for 'all devout rulers'. There can be few rulers, particularly in these irreligious times, more devout than the late Queen.

Martin Olsson

In a blessed falling asleep grant eternal rest, O Lord,  
to Thy departed servant Queen Elizabeth the Second,  
and make her memory to be eternal!

## Thoughts from The Queue

Twelve hours in the famous queue for the late Queen's lying in state afforded plenty of time for thought. Not least on the way in which the momentous national event of the Queen's death had brought into public consciousness a variety of ideas, feelings and ways of thinking that we are quite familiar with in our church life, but which more often seem to distance us as Orthodox Christians from the secular society in which we live. There is the very fact of publicly marking a death (not just celebrating a life) and the felt need to bid farewell to the body of the departed, even if in a closed coffin draped in a standard. There is the very familiar theme of death as the great leveller, vividly apparent when 'our sovereign lady' becomes 'the handmaid of God' in the panikhida, or in the state funeral 'our sister'. And indeed there is the very idea of our being not merely people, but *a* people, members of an organic whole, and indeed a whole that in some mysterious way is summed up and represented in its King or Queen. Of course this is an ancient way of thinking, integral to our language about Christ as King: Metropolitan Anthony was fond of quoting, with varying degrees of precision, a homily in which St John Chrysostom depicts the Thief on the cross saying of Christ that 'I see Him dying for His people; that is why I call Him a king'. But most of the time, this probably seems to us not especially relevant to modern nationhood or heads of state.

Already, people are talking about the death of the Queen as one of those pieces of news that makes you remember for ever where you were when you heard it. Personally, I was on Fr John and Dawn's doorstep – after an eight-hour journey from Cambridge that meant I had heard no news bulletins since first thing that morning. It was a great gift then to share the unfolding events with old friends. And indeed to be able to sign a book of condolence in Combe Martin parish church – in a village where I have been going to church for approaching 50 years, and beneath an exquisite rood screen restored many years ago by an old and dear friend, Anna Hulbert of blessed memory (whose work also endures in the ceiling bosses of Exeter Cathedral). This was a time when connections with other people, the sharing of experience across time and space, seemed to acquire a heightened importance.

In the days of national mourning – as in the Church – the awareness of connection and solidarity extended far beyond people one actually knew, or liked, or felt much in common with. The Queue embodied this – it represented a remarkably broad cross-section of modern Britain. Like many others in it, I was not entirely sure why I had decided to join and might not have predicted making such a decision. Except perhaps – another way in which millions of people suddenly found themselves tuning in to something that in the Church feels quite commonplace – that keeping vigil for the departed in what we do. Queueing through the night on the banks of the Thames was eerily reminiscent of keeping vigil for Metropolitan Kallistos not three weeks earlier. Of course, there were big differences, not least in scale. But there was in both cases a blend of reverence and reflection with camaraderie, an intermingling of secular and sacred. Some people have spoken of the profound experience of at last finding themselves 'alone' before the Queen's coffin: but any such moment was fleeting, with pleasant but firm encouragement to 'keep moving'. As with large-scale church processions or festal services, there is little time for private and meditative contemplation. Unless you embrace the communal experience as a destination in its own right, you will be sorely frustrated.

The communal experience is not only one shared with other people, known or unknown: in a curious way, it also embraces place. At the vigil for Metropolitan Kallistos, comings and goings in the church through the night, and people going outside for a while and catching up with old friends, gave the quiet street outside something of the feel of an Orthodox village. But even more improbably, the days leading up to the Queen's funeral, with a sort of 'pilgrim route' snaking through the Docklands, transformed modern central London into something recognisably similar to the Scriptural meaning of a city: a place of security where people feel at home, where they share a sense of belonging, united by a common bond.

It was striking how the Church regained, for a week or two at least, a status in national life that it has not known for many decades. Church buildings were natural places of focus, where people could come to lay flowers, sign books of condolence, or be in silence. But there was also something more – a more churchly vision of life briefly glimpsed through the secular overlay. It makes one wonder whether the veneer of secularism and modernism in society might not be both thinner and patchier than we often assume.

## Memory Eternal – Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia

*There must be very few converts to Orthodoxy in the English-speaking world who would not list the writings of Metropolitan Kallistos – particularly The Orthodox Church (1963) and The Orthodox Way (1978) - as a major influence on their journey. We also owe him a huge debt of gratitude for his wonderful translations, together with Mother Mary, of The Festal Menaion and The Lenten Triodion, which so enrich our communal liturgical life. The following obituary was published in Parikiaki Cyprus and Cypriot News on 24<sup>th</sup> August.* Ed.

The Holy Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain sadly announces the falling asleep of His Excellency Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia on Wednesday 24th August 2022.

A noted scholar, lecturer and author, and devout and faithful clergyman, a beloved spiritual father, His Excellency served Christ and His Church for many years. His words, spoken and written, made Orthodoxy known to the entire world, especially to his native land.

Kallistos Ware was an English bishop and theologian of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Since 1982, he held the titular bishopric of Diokleia in Phrygia under the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. He was one of the best-known modern Orthodox hierarchs and theologians.

Born Timothy Richard Ware on 11 September 1934 to an Anglican family in Bath, Somerset, England, he was educated at Westminster School and Magdalen College, Oxford, where he took a double first in classics as well as reading theology. In 1958, at the age of 24, he embraced the Orthodox Christian faith. He described his first contacts with Orthodoxy and the growing attraction of the Orthodox Church in an autobiographical text entitled “My Journey to the Orthodox Church”. Thoroughly conversant in modern Greek, Ware became an Orthodox monk at the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian in Patmos, Greece. He also frequented other major centres of Orthodoxy such as Jerusalem and Mount Athos. In 1966, he was ordained to the priesthood within the Ecumenical Patriarchate and was tonsured as a monk, receiving the name “Kallistos”.

Also in 1966, Ware became Spalding Lecturer at the University of Oxford in Eastern Orthodox studies, a position he held for 35 years until his retirement. In 1970, he was appointed to a fellowship at Pembroke College, Oxford. Following his consecration to the episcopate in 1982, Ware continued to teach at the University of Oxford and served in the Greek Orthodox parish in Oxford. On 30 March 2007, the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate elevated the Diocese of Diokleia in Phrygia to a titular metropolitan diocese and Ware to the rank of metropolitan.

Since his retirement in 2001, Ware had continued to publish and to give lectures on Orthodox Christianity. He served as chairman of the board of directors of the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies in Cambridge, and was chairman of the Friends of Orthodoxy on Iona (Scotland) and of the Friends of Mount Athos. He died at home in the early hours of 24 August 2022.

Metropolitan Kallistos was awarded honorary doctorates at Cluj-Napoca University in Romania, Lawrence University of Wisconsin in the United States, the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, Belgrade’s Orthodox Theological School, the St. Sergius Institute of Orthodox Theology in Paris, the School of Philosophy in Athens, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, St. Vladimir’s Seminary in New York, and the New Georgian University in Poti. In 2017, he was awarded the Lambeth Cross for Ecumenism by the Archbishop of Canterbury “for his outstanding contribution to Anglican-Orthodox theological dialogue”.

Being free, each human being realises the divine image within himself in his own distinctive fashion. Human beings are not counters that can be exchanged for one another, or replaceable parts of a machine. Each, being free, is unrepeatable; and each, being unrepeatable, is infinitely precious. Human persons are not to be measured quantitatively; we have no right to assume that one particular person is of more value than any other particular person. Such calculations are an offence to authentic personhood. Each is irreplaceable, and therefore each must be treated as an end in his or her self, and never as a means to some further end. If we find people boring and tediously predictable, that is because we have not broken through to the level of true personhood, in others and in ourselves, where there are no stereotypes but each is unique.

*From Metropolitan Kallistos Ware: The Orthodox Church*

## This Month We Celebrate

On Saturday October 1st: **The Protecting Veil of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God**

On Sunday 2nd: **Hieromartyr Cyprian, Virgin Martyr Justini and Martyr Theokistos** of Nicomedia (250)

We wish **Father Daniel and all parishioners at our sister parish of Saint Cyprian** in Uganda a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Monday 3rd: **Saint Dionysios the Areopagite**, Bishop of Athens (96)

We wish **Dionisius A** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Thursday 6th: **Holy Apostle Thomas**

We wish **Thomas S** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Sunday 9th: **Holy Apostle James, the son of Alphaeus**

Glorification of **Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow** (1989)

On Monday 10th: **Saint Ambrose**, Staretz of Optina (1891)

**Hieromartyr Peter**, Metropolitan of Krutitsy, who suffered under the Bolshevik yoke (1937)



Saint Ambrose of Optina

On Tuesday 11th: **Apostle Philip of the Seventy**, one of the Seven Deacons

On Wednesday 12th: **Saint Symeon the New Theologian** (1022)

On Friday 14th: **Saint Paraskevi (Petka)** of the Balkans, whose relics lie at Iasi in Romania (11thC)

On Saturday 15th: **Saint Athanasius the Confessor**, Bishop of Kovrov (1962)

See [When Time Does Not Matter: Saint Athanasius the Confessor, Bishop of Kovrov \(pravmir.com\)](http://pravmir.com) \*

On Sunday 16th: Commemoration of the **Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council** (787)

**Martyr Longinus the Centurion** who stood at the Cross of the Lord

On Tuesday 18th: **Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke**

We wish **Luke D** and **Luke K** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Wednesday 19th: Translation of the relics of **Saint John of Rila (Rilski)** Patron Saint of Bulgaria

We wish **Father Trayan** and **all our Bulgarian friends** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

**Saint John of Kronstadt** (1908) (also December 20<sup>th</sup>)

**Saint Frideswide** of Oxford (735)

We wish **Father Seraphim** and **all members of the Parish of the Annunciation in Oxford** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Sunday 23rd: **Holy Apostle James, the Lord's Brother**

We wish **James T** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Wednesday 26th: **Glorious Great Martyr Dimitrios** of Thessaloniki (c306)

We wish **Father Gregory Palamas, Presbytera Elizabeth** and **all members of the Parish of Saint Dimitrios and Saint Nikitas** in Plymouth a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Saturday 29th: **Martyr Anastasia** of Rome (3rdC)

We wish **Anastasia T** and **Anastassia N** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Sunday 30th: **Saint Barnabas (Varnava)** the New Confessor of Hvosno (Serbia 1964)

**Saint Issui** of Patricio (6thC) Patron Saint of the Children's Camp in South Wales

On Monday 31st: **Saint Aristobulus** of the Seventy, First Bishop of Britain(1st C)

See [Apostle Aristobulus of the Seventy, Bishop of Britain - Orthodox Church in America \(oca.org\)](http://oca.org) \*

\*We can provide printed copies of these articles on request to those without internet.

Cheerfulness consists in not regarding things as our own, but as entrusted to us by God for the benefit of our fellow-servants. It consists in scattering them abroad generously with joy and magnanimity, not reluctantly or under compulsion.

Saint Symeon the New Theologian

There is nothing impossible to those who believe; lively and unshaken faith can accomplish great miracles in the twinkling of an eye. Besides, even without our sincere and firm faith, miracles are accomplished, such as the miracles of the sacraments; for God's Mystery is always accomplished, even though we were incredulous or unbelieving at the time of its celebration. "Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" (Rom. 3:3). Our wickedness shall not overpower the unspeakable goodness and mercy of God; our dullness shall not overpower God's wisdom, nor our infirmity God's omnipotence.

From Saint John of Kronstadt *My Life in Christ*

## Noticeboard

Saturday October 1<sup>st</sup>: Feast of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God Vespers Saint Anne's 6pm

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup>: Typika Saint Anne's 10.30am. PAC meeting to follow.  
(Feastday of our sister parish of Saint Cyprian in Uganda)

Baptism of Melina Kotso Saint Anne's 3pm

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>: Divine Liturgy Saint Anne's 10.30am

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>: *Orthros and Divine Liturgy Plymouth 9.30am Torquay 9.30am*

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>: Vespers Saint Anne's 6pm

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>: Typika Saint Anne's 10.30am

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>: Divine Liturgy Saint Anne's 10.30am

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>: *Orthros and Divine Liturgy Plymouth 9.30am Torquay 9.30am*

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>: Feast of the Glorious Great Martyr Dimitrios of Thessaloniki

*Feastday of the Plymouth parish: Orthros and Divine Liturgy Plymouth 8.30am*

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>: Divine Liturgy Saint Peter's Church, Ilfracombe, North Devon 10.30am

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>: *Orthros and Divine Liturgy Plymouth 9.30am Torquay 9.30am*

Saturday November 5<sup>th</sup>: Vespers Saint Anne's 6pm

**Sunday November 6<sup>th</sup>: Divine Liturgy (with Father Patrick) Saint Anne's 10.30am**

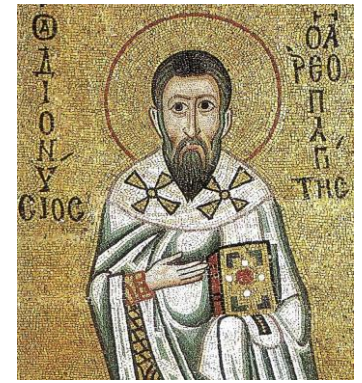
**Following the Liturgy the Parish Annual General Meeting will be held at the Belmont Park Hut. Suggestions for issues to be discussed should be submitted to the Parish Secretary, Ed Skidelsky ( [eskidelsky@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:eskidelsky@hotmail.co.uk) ) by Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.**

## Dionysius the Areopagite and Pseudo-Dionysius

Dionysius the Areopagite was an Athenian judge at the Areopagus Court in Athens who lived in the first century. As related in the Acts of the Apostles (17:34), he was converted to Christianity by the preaching of the Apostle Paul. After his conversion, Dionysius became the first Bishop of Athens. He is the patron saint of Athens and is venerated as the protector of the Judges and the Judiciary.

This Athenian Dionysius should not be confused with the late 5<sup>th</sup>-early 6<sup>th</sup> century theologian and philosopher known as Pseudo-Dionysius or Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, who wrote a set of works known as the *Corpus Areopagiticum* or *Corpus Dionysiacum*, which became hugely influential on later theologians. According to pseudo-Dionysius, God is better characterized and approached by negations than by affirmations. When all names and theological representations are negated, "divine silence, darkness, and unknowing" will follow.

His theology was incorporated into the mainstream of Orthodox theology through its adoption by St. Maximus the Confessor, and by St. John of Damascus, who quotes Dionysius' *Letter to Titus* in his work *On the Divine Images*. In his *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, Vladimir Lossky sees the Dionysian interpretation of the unknowability of God as fundamental to any Christian thought and as setting the stage for the work of St. Gregory Palamas. In England, his influence is most clearly seen in the anonymous 14<sup>th</sup>C spiritual guide *The Cloud of Unknowing*.



Sources: Wikipedia; Orthodox Wiki

## UNRAVELLING - Climate Crisis Art at the Cathedral

Exeter Cathedral is to host a "challenging" climate crisis themed exhibition by artist, Ilya Fisher. The exhibition, titled *Unravelling*, aims to explore the human response to climate change. As Fisher explains: "It is clear that we need to change and prepare for what is coming, to take action on all levels; personal, political, local, global. Yet most of us carry on as usual. Unravelling is a series of art works looking at the climate crisis and our response to it. Our need to look away, and our need to face it. It is about the anxiety that is stirred up in us and the excuses we tell ourselves. And it is about hope."

*Unravelling* is at Exeter Cathedral from 3 September until 30 October. Admission to the exhibition is included with the standard Exeter Cathedral entry price, and advance booking is not required.

## News from CTaX (Christians Together Across Exeter)

**Food Hub** Thursdays 11am – 1pm At Rediscover Church, Northernhay, Exeter EX4 3ER  
Every Thursday in the church building we run a Food Hub, whereby anyone who is struggling with the purchasing of food at the moment, can come along and pick up a range of different items to take home for free.  
If you have any food you would like to donate or would like to join our team of volunteers,  
email: [jason.ham@rediscoverchurch.com](mailto:jason.ham@rediscoverchurch.com) or ring 07963948860  
More info: <https://www.rediscoverchurch.com/foodhub>

### 5000 CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

We all know during the Christmas season it can be really tough on finances. For those on little money and already struggling, it only makes things even more difficult. In a simple way, these hampers are a much-needed boost and relief to help people get by, when things can be so stressful.

Would your church like to partner in this project this year to rise to this increased need by donating items for Christmas hampers for people who would otherwise go without?

Wouldn't it be so amazing if, as churches across the city, we can love on our community in this practical way and be the hands and feet of Jesus this festive season! Showing that the local church cares and our faith goes out beyond the walls of a Sunday service.

If this has sparked your interest, please reply to [jason.ham@rediscoverchurch.com](mailto:jason.ham@rediscoverchurch.com) or 07963948860

### Updates

**Fr John** has severe mobility problems as a result of several infections, necessitating hospital admissions. Unfortunately he is no longer able to get into church easily, so is unable to celebrate services any longer.

'We often think of you all in the parish, and always light candles in the church here in Combe Martin, when there is a Liturgy in Exeter.'

Fr John and Dawn

**Christa Antonina** has moved to an Anglican Supported Housing Scheme in Broadclyst. Her new address is:

Christa Studd, Flat 22, Gracey Court, Woodland Road, Broadclyst EX5 3AG

Phone: 01392 469735, (or via the office - 01392 462574)

Christa is finding not the adjustment to her move at all easy, and would much appreciate being remembered in our prayers – also for her son Raleigh. She sends her love to all.

If you find that you have no love but desire to have it,  
do the works of love  
and the Lord will see your desire and effort  
and put love in your heart.

Saint Ambrose of Optina

*Contributions for the November issue should reach the Editors at [martinolsson827@btinternet.com](mailto:martinolsson827@btinternet.com) or by post at Little Linhay, Boodleigh, EX20 2AJ by **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October**, please.*

*Any opinions expressed in this newsletter are entirely those of the named authors or identified sources and should not be taken as representing the views of the parish as a whole.*