



Prophet Elias News

News and Views for the Orthodox Church
of the Holy Prophet Elias in Devon
November 2023



For service times see Noticeboard on P5

On The Feast of The Presentation of The Mother of God by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

Since early days the Church has given to the Mother of God titles of holiness greater than those which are given to any saint. She is called the All-holy, Panagia. We venerate Her as One who is greater and holier than the Cherubim and the Seraphim, greater than the angels of God who, endowed with vision, can see, contemplate and adore, greater than the angels of God who are, as it were, the throne of the Most High. Because the ones as the others see, worship, serve God as their Lord, as their Master, and yet somehow they remain farther from Him than She, who in Her exceeding holiness has become the kin of God, has become the Mother of the Incarnate Word, who is the Bride, the perfect revelation of what the whole creation is called to be and to become.



The Feast of the Presentation of the Mother of God to the Temple quite obviously raises historical problems. We know that in Israel no one was allowed into the Holy of Holies, that the High Priest entered it only once a year after having undergone purification by sacrificial blood. What the feast stands for primarily is described, enlarged on, in a sermon on prayer written in the 19th century by Theophane the Recluse. The Holy of Holies, he says, is the heart of hearts of human worship. It is the place where men in the Old Testament can meet God to the extent to which God can be met. It is the heart of the mystery of Israel. It is also the point which somehow is beyond the point of the sacrificed. The sacrifice opens the door to it. The sacrifice somehow remains this side of it. And to enter into the Holy of Holies means first and foremost to enter into that depth of adoration, into that depth of prayer which makes one present to the living God, which makes one stand face to face with the living God. The presentation of the Mother of God, apart from historical features, is extolled by the Church because it indicates to us where She stands in the whole of Her life, in the divine presence in complete surrender, in complete adoration.

Tradition has it that she was brought by Joachim and Anna. On the icons you can see young girls with candles bringing her to the temple. She was handed over to the high priest, who took Her into the place to which he had no access himself. Now I don't think there is any advantage in discussing the possible historicity of an event of that kind. From a purely historical point of view it is unlikely

that it could have happened. But what matters is what it stands for, and it stands for a moment when, having reached the maturity of a young child, but the maturity of one who can already worship, serve, lend an ear, be ready to respond and to obey, She chose all that and went into that depth of obedience, of listening, of attention to what was God's will. By what I say I do not mean to say that it did or did not happen. But what matters as far as She is concerned is obviously this aspect of the thing much more than the historicity of the event as described in icons or in folkloric tradition.

Sermon given by Metropolitan Anthony on 7th December 1972.

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Grace for Grace **by Father Dumitru Staniloae**

'Fr. Dumitru Staniloae is one of those holy figures of the twentieth century that the Patriarchate of Romania intends to canonize in 2025, when it will celebrate the 140th anniversary of its autocephaly and the 100th anniversary of its patriarchal status. On October 5th 2023, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of his passing, memorial prayers were raised for the repose of his soul throughout Romania and beyond.'

Orthodoxie.com 9-10-2023

We shall only understand the character of the world when we think of it as a gift or present. The whole world ought to be regarded as the visible part of a universal and continuing sacrament, and all man's activities as a sacramental, divine communion.

Because man is unable to give God anything except that which he has already received from God, man learns to perceive the world as gift and sacrament by sacrificing something in this world for God's sake, as a sign of his grateful love, and as the vehicle of this love. God for his part returns to man what man has sacrificed in the form of fresh gifts, containing a new manifestation of his love, in a new and repeated blessing. 'Grace for grace.' And so an unbroken interchange takes place between God and man in man's use of the world, an ever renewed and growing mutuality of love. The more man discovers the beauty and higher use of created things, and the greater the gratitude and love with which he responds to God, the more God responds with still greater love and blessing, because man is in the position to receive it.

Man puts the seal of his understanding and of his intelligent work on to creation, thereby humanizing it and giving it humanized back to God. He actualizes the world's potentialities. Thus the world is not only a gift but a task for man. Man is able to mark the world with his seal because the world as the gift of God's love for man is not the fruit of necessity but the fruit of divine freedom. If it were the fruit of necessity there would be no freedom in it, and it would develop as an inexorable causal process. But it is so constituted that divine freedom and human freedom can manifest themselves in an unbroken dialogue.

From Father Dumitru Staniloae 'The World as Gift and Sacrament of God's Love' Sobornost 5.9 (1969)

Saint Philaret's Prayer for the Acceptance of God's Will

O Lord, I do not know what to ask of You. You alone know what are my true needs.

You love me more than I myself know how to love.

Help me to see my real needs which are concealed from me.

I do not dare to ask either for a cross or for consolation. I can only wait on You.

My heart is open to You. Visit and help me, for the sake of Your great mercy.

Strike me and heal me; cast me down and raise me up.

I worship in silence Your holy will and Your unsearchable ways.

I offer myself as a sacrifice to You. I have no other desire than to fulfil Your will.

Teach me to pray. Pray in me Yourself. Amen.

Saint Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow (November 19th)

This Month We Celebrate

On Wednesday November 1st: **Unmercenary Healers Cosmas and Damian** of Mesopotamia (3rdC)

On Friday 3rd: **Saint Winifred of Holywell** (Treffynon) in North Wales (7thC)

On Monday 6th: **Saint Paul of Constantinople** (c350)
Saint Illtyd of Llanilltyd Fawr in South Wales (6thC)

On Wednesday 8th: **Synaxis of the Archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Salathiel, Jegudiel, Barachiel and Jeremiel.**

We wish **Michail C and Mike L** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Thursday 9th: **Saint Nektarios of Pentapolis** (1920)

On Friday 10th: **Saint Arsenios the Cappadocian** (1924)
We wish **Charlie Arsenios** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Saturday 11th: **Saint Martin the Merciful**, Bishop of Tours (397)
We wish **Martin M and Martin O** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Monday 13th: **Saint John Chrysostom**, Archbishop of Constantinople (407)
We wish **William O** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Tuesday 14th: **Holy Apostle Philip**
We wish **Philip S** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**
Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessaloniki (1359)
We wish **Father Gregory Palamas** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Wednesday 15th: **BEGINNING OF THE NATIVITY FAST**
Saint Paisios Velichkovsky, Renewer of monasticism in Russia (1794)

On Thursday 16th: **Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew**
We wish **Hugh A** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Friday 17th: **Saint Hilda**, Abbess of Whitby (680)

On Sunday 19th: **Saint Philaret**, Metropolitan of Moscow (1867)
New Martyr Elias Fondaminsky, Co-worker with Saint Maria of Paris (1942)

On Monday 20th: **Saint Edmund**, King of East Anglia and Passionbearer (869)
New Martyr Cyril, Metropolitan of Kazan, Victim of the Bolshevik yoke (1937)

On Tuesday 21st: **FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF THE MOTHER OF GOD IN THE TEMPLE**

On Wednesday 22nd: **Martyrs Cecilia, Valerian, Tiburtius and Maximus**, at Rome (c230)
We wish **Celia O** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Thursday 23rd: **Saint Columbanus** of Ireland, Abbot of Luxeuil in France and Bobbio in Italy (615)
Saint Alexander Nevsky (1263)

On Friday 24th: **Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria** (c310) (Russian use)
We wish **Catherine L** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**

On Saturday 25th: **Saint Clement of Ochrid**, Enlightener of the Bulgarians, founder of the first Christian university in Europe and Patron Saint of North Macedonia (916)

On Sunday 26th: **Saint Stylianos of Paphlagonia**, Protector of children (4th – 6th C)

On Thursday 30th: **Holy Apostle Andrew the First Called**
We wish **Andreas A** a **Happy Feast and Many Years!**



Saint Stylianos

As Abbess of Whitby, **Saint Hilda** (November 17th) hosted and presided over the Synod of Whitby in 664 which decided whether the traditions of Celtic or Roman Christianity would be adhered to in Britain and, even when the vote went against her side, stood beside the Church's decision and encouraged unity of vision. Her life is first recorded in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (731). Hilda's virtuous life, wisdom, and unceasing care for others, no matter their social status, led to her veneration shortly after her death.

Source: [Hilda of Whitby - World History Encyclopedia](#)

Baptism of Elizabeth and Douglas Alexander



As noted in our September issue, Elizabeth Axon and her son Douglas (Alexander) were baptised before the Liturgy at Saint Anne's on Saturday September 23rd. Elizabeth was sponsored by Michelle Gallaher. Her patron among the saints is the Righteous Elizabeth, mother of Saint John the Forerunner and cousin of the Mother of God – Feastday September 13th. Douglas was sponsored by Philip Scorer. His patron is Saint Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria and leader of the opposition to Arianism at the first Council of Nicea. His Feastday is May 29th.



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Noticeboard

Services

Saturday November 4th: Vespers 6pm
Sunday 5th: 22nd Sunday after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am
Saturday 11th: Vespers 6pm
Sunday 12th: 23rd Sunday after Pentecost - Remembrance Sunday Divine Liturgy 10.30am
followed by Panikhida for all who have lost their lives in war.
Wednesday 15th: CHRISTMAS FAST BEGINS
Friday 17th: Vespers 6pm
Saturday 18th: Divine Liturgy 10.30am
Sunday 19th: 24th Sunday after Pentecost No service
Monday 20th: Vespers for the Feast of the Mother of God 6pm
Tuesday 21st: **FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF THE MOTHER OF GOD INTO THE TEMPLE**
Divine Liturgy 10.30am
Saturday 25th: Vespers 6pm
Sunday 26th: 25th Sunday after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am
Saturday December 2nd: Vespers 6pm
Sunday December 3rd: 26th Sunday after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am

All services in Saint Anne's unless stated otherwise

For services in the Romanian parish (Exeter and Newton Abbot) consult <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064673836911> or telephone Fr Julian on **07469 262827**.

Similarly for the Torquay parish either visit https://www.facebook.com/standrewtorquay/?locale=en_GB or telephone Robert Skrivanos on **07971 316416**. For services in Plymouth visit plymchurch.com

Exeter Philharmonic Choir: Music of the Baroque

Saturday 4 November, 7:30pm-9:30pm

Exeter Philharmonic Choir's 2023/24 season opens with an evening of glorious Baroque music at Exeter Cathedral. Joining the choir's 100 singers, under the baton of Howard Ionascu, will be the well-known Isca Ensemble, with rising young oboe player Fergus McCready and internationally renowned vocal soloists. The concert opens with Handel's familiar anthem, *Zadok The Priest*, most recently sung at the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, followed by the lovely early 18th-century *Concerto in D minor* for oboe, strings and continuo by Venetian composer Alessandro Marcello. Exeter Cathedral's generous acoustics are ideally suited to the bright tones of the oboe.

Vivaldi's ever-popular *Gloria* then precedes the main work of the evening, Handel's sublime setting of Psalm 110, *Dixit Dominus*, written in 1707 for five-part chorus and soloists.

Tickets £22 (Front Nave), £16 (Rear nave) and £12 (Unreserved – side aisles)

[Book your ticket](#)

Tickets are also available by telephone: 07989 161117

Cathedral Life

Prayers for the Sick

We received this email message as we were going to press. Veronica and Luke were regular worshippers at Saint Anne's before they moved to France several years ago. They have only recently returned to Somerset.

Dear Martin and Celia,

Following a number of tests and scans over the past 3 months, I (Veronica) have now been diagnosed with cancer of the right kidney which requires removal of the kidney and part of the tube leading to the bladder. I may have the op in about 4 weeks, which will be done here at Taunton. We had rather expected this to be the outcome of the tests but even so, it is not the news we could have wished for. Could I ask you to kindly add me to your prayer list – it will be a great comfort to both of us.

We hope you are both well,

With love in Christ,

Veronica and Luke xxx

Prayers for Peace

This year Remembrance Sunday falls on November 12th. We keep it on the nearest Sunday to Armistice Day – November 11th – the date of the end of the First World War, the 'Great War' which many people had hoped would be 'the war to end all wars'. In fact, there has barely been a year in the century since when there has not been war in some part of the world, and more have died in wars in that time than in the whole of human history previously. The toll has been particularly high for civilians, with the unavoidably indiscriminate use of intensive aerial bombing.

In the face of so much intransigence, warped ideology, and plain hatred, it is tempting to shut our eyes and ears – to feel that there is nothing we can do. But we can do something. We can – we must – pray, both privately and communally, for the divine gift of peace. Because Christ himself has promised us, 'If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.' (John 14:14) Ed.

A Prayer for Peace

We thank You, Master and Lover of mankind, King of the ages and giver of all good things, for destroying the dividing wall of enmity and granting peace to those who seek your mercy. We appeal to You to awaken the longing for a peaceful life in all those who are filled with hatred for their neighbours, thinking especially of those at war or preparing for war. Grant peace to your servants. Implant in them the fear of You and confirm in them love one for another. Extinguish every dispute and banish all temptations to disagreement. For You are our peace and to You we ascribe glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

From *The Book of Needs*, St. Tikhon's Seminary Press

A Prayer for the Holy Land from Hosam Naoum, Anglican Archbishop of Jerusalem

O God of all justice and peace, we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land. Be with those who need you in these days of suffering. We pray for people of all faiths - Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land. While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call to you to bring justice and equity to the peoples.

Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children - for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Exeter Cathedral News

Never Confuse the Person with the Evil

Never confuse the person, formed in the image of God, with the evil that is in him: because evil is but a chance misfortune, an illness, a devilish delusion. But the very essence of the person is the image of God, and this remains in him despite every disfigurement.

Saint John of Kronstadt

You are invited to
Universal Peace Prayers
To mark Interfaith Week 2023
Including prayers for all involved in
the Israel-Gaza conflict

Saturday 11th November
The Mint Methodist Church
Fore St, Exeter EX4 3AT

Prayers start at 11.00am
Refreshments after the service
Organised by
Devon Faith and Belief Forum

Contributions for the December issue should reach the Editors at martinolsson827@btinternet.com
or by post at *Little Linhay, Boodleigh, EX20 2AJ* by **Monday 21st November**, please.

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