

Humanity needs a real awakening which is neither a political ideology nor a naïve aspiration but which takes into account the failings of human nature and the responsibility of stewardship. This requires a change of will and heart; a direction away from the idol of mammon to the image of God in others. For the Christian a simple **new way** of right thinking and right living in God's economy through obedience and generosity of spirit is set out in the Acts of the Apostles Chapter 2, 40:

“Be saved from this perverse generation. Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

“Feeding the hungry is a greater work than raising the dead.”

St John Chrysostom

Fr. Jonathan Hemmings

Announcements

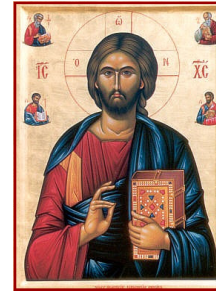
- **Iona Orthodox Retreats** : If you would like to visit the Isle of Iona, Scotland, from 10th to 17th September or 17th to 24th September, 2011, contact Reader Ignatios Bacon: Tel. 01320-366-457, email ionaorthodox@gmail.com . For more information : <http://www.iona-orthodox-retreats.org.uk/>
- **IOCS Distance Learning Certificate in Orthodox Theology**: Your unique opportunity for a high quality academic Orthodox Theological education from the comfort of your home! Distance Learning Inquiries: ca356@cam.ac.uk, Distance Learning Website : <http://distancelearning.iocs.cam.ac.uk/>
- **Fellowship Study Weekend "The Macarian Homilies - Life, Love and Prayer"** : Friday 27th to Sunday 29th January 2012 , Dr. Marcus Plested at All Saints of Lincolnshire, Lincoln. Booking details and program : <http://www.ofsjb.org/>
- **Change of Address** : On 15th August 2011 Father George Hackney (Assistant Priest at St. Matthias Orthodox Church, Lincoln) and Matushka Annis moved to 6 Breedon Drive, Lincoln, LN1 3XA. New Tel: 01522-533854

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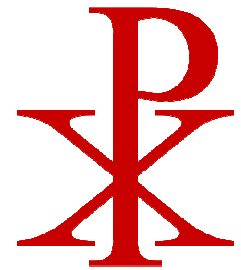
New Year
New Beginnings !



A Nineveh Moment

As we begin the Church's New Year on 1st September, the Church asks us to be mindful of our human responsibility to God for the creation of which he has made us both care-takers and co-creators. We are aware of how devastating the pollution of our environment can be. There is, however, another type of pollution that can be equally if not more dangerous - the pollution of our society's values and the erosion of its Christian beliefs. This contamination has been spreading quietly and insidiously now for many, many decades.

The disintegration of family life, materialistic self-absorption and lawlessness amongst both the law makers and the law breakers alike has taken a heavy toll. The working principle of a secular society is that this can only be turned around by addressing poverty and poor education. As important as these issues are, they do not address the sickness that lies at the heart of our society. The notion that if a youth can afford a plasma TV then he won't feel the need to smash a Curry's store window to get one stretches credulity to breaking point. Theft is not unknown amongst the wealthy and the middle class. The enjoyment showed by the perpetrators of this Summer's riots as they indulged in fire-raising and sheer wanton destruction shows a very different spirit than greed or even



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anger. Of course these criminals constitute only a hard core minority of young people, but that's hardly the point. So-called recreational violence and destruction emerges from the depths of corrupted hearts and minds when there is a sense that there is nothing to prevent it.



The law AND law enforcement exists precisely for this reason, to place a boundary and a barrier around hell; but if that cordon should weaken, just for a moment, then the stench of sulphur will soon overwhelm us all.

The law, however, (and that goes for education as well), is unable to regenerate humankind... to make a new living person out of the corpse of the old. We should pity the rioters in one sense... even as we arrest, try them and lock them up. We should pity them because in many cases they have been brought into the world by dysfunctional families, raised on estates rife with drug abuse and crime, undisciplined by parents who in a spiritual wasteland have precious little direction in their own lives. This generational cycle of corruption, in Orthodox terms, death, cannot be broken by the law. Normality cannot be regained by education. A change of heart is required and that only comes from God through the gospel. A former Prime Minister was once advised: "We don't do God". Generations of the British have lived effectively by the same slogan: "We don't do God". Well, look now at what you have created, or rather, at what you have destroyed.

We must deny ourselves though any sense of superiority or smugness in all of this. The Prophet Jonah indulged these feelings as he complained about the people of Nineveh upon whom the Lord had mercy even as, together with their king, they committed themselves to national repentance. If we are truly to make a new beginning in our society then we must all be part of that and this must include our own repentance as well. We are collectively responsible for this mess, not individually. If, however, *together*, we repent to God and act in His Name, then we too shall have a "Nineveh moment" and be part of the long, slow, arduous yet glorious ascent back towards the kingdom of God, upon which principles and for whose Lord this nation was originally built by the saints. Without that, we are lost, utterly. This is the new beginning we must pray and work for.

Fr. Gregory Hallam

Isaiah 5:7-9

*⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel,
And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant.
He looked for justice, but behold, oppression;
For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.*

*⁸ Woe to those who join house to house;
They add field to field,
Till there is no place
Where they may dwell alone in the midst of the land!
⁹ In my hearing the LORD of hosts said,
"Truly, many houses shall be desolate,*

This prophecy of Isaiah from the 8th c. B.C. is one of impending judgement on the profligacy and excesses of a society which had abandoned the moral commandments of God and its social duties towards the widows and orphans. This picture of a vast chasm between the rich and poor is echoed in the other Old Testament prophetic books of Hosea, Micah and Amos. Sadly, humankind is slow to learn and the same sins of selfishness and injustice are being played out in the present global crisis. The old god of **greed** **opulence** and **debt** can be seen all too plainly in our own generation. The message of Isaiah is uncompromisingly blunt:

Isaiah 56:11

*Yes, they are **greedy** dogs which never have enough. And they are shepherds who cannot understand; They all look to their own way, every one for his own gain, from his own territory.*

The sin of Adam and Eve was to want more. They were not content with Paradise; in that curious and what proved self-destructive capacity for excess, they frowned at the limits imposed by God and disobeyed His commands building up more and more sins (debts).

However, God in His goodness in the Law of Moses provided for the cancelation of financial debts in the Sabbath (Seventh) Year.

Deuteronomy 15:1

*"At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release of **debts**.*

And in The Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:12 Our Lord teaches us to make this daily supplication: "*forgive us our **debts**, As we forgive our **debtors**."*

Adam and Eve justified their actions by blaming others for their own fault; history shows us that humanity continues to revel in the blame game and finds scapegoats and convenient excuses to justify sin. Yet God's salvation is gracious and forgiving for those who repent.

The present culture, which is a consequence of greed, whereby one borrows more and more and in so doing adds to the increasing national debt in order to stimulate growth is based on the false premise that our salvation rests on "prosperity" and the vagaries of market forces. This is idolatry, and the god of greed has a voracious appetite. The world's economy cannot be satisfied because it demands continual augmentation and expansion without constraint. Not content with enough-**more** is the password to this world of aggrandized abandonment to unsustainable opulence. The truth is that God has set boundaries to our desires and we have to face the consequence of our passions. Yet God's economy has given us enough to share with others if we change our mind set.

St. Dunstan's Parish, Parkstone

Since March, our parish has acquired its very own building which has had a very dramatic and positive effect on our community life, not least, doubling our Sunday congregation. The former Anglican church of St. Osmund, a unique building in the area, Romanesque in style and Grade II listed, has been bought, re-ordered and the necessary repairs begun. It is a famous church, modelled on St. Clemente in Rome and must be the largest church in the Deanery.

The building is owned by the **Bournemouth-Poole Orthodox Christian Foundation**, a limited company and registered charity set up by the parish. The Foundation is responsible for raising money for the upkeep of the building. A large portion of this comes from the renting of the church hall which raises good revenue and keeps the plant lit, heated and insured. This arrangement leaves the parish free to raise money from collections and to concentrate its energies on its liturgical life and mission.



So far we have renovated the car park, replaced the hall windows and put in place an iconostasis. We are currently engaged in building a side chapel in a spare room for use on weekdays (easily heated in the winter). It will be dedicated to the Saints of Britain. By the time of publication we will also have held an *open house* to draw in the public with an exhibition of icons by the Romanian iconographer, Simona Tudor.

So, as soon as you find yourself next in the ancient kingdom of Wessex, make sure you pay a visit to the St. Dunstan's church, where you will be assured of a warm welcome.

Fr. Chrysostom MacDonnell

Editorial : An old god - the new Way

"My other piece of advice, Copperfield, said Mr. Micawber, you know. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery. The blossom is blighted, the leaf is withered, the god of day goes down upon the dreary scene, and, in short, you are for ever floored. As I am!"

David Copperfield by Charles Dickens

The character of Mr Micawber in Charles Dickens' novel "David Copperfield" is the epitome of optimism subject to, as he sees it, the vicissitudes of fate. He is convinced that 'something will turn up'. He lives in constant expectation of a better life but is realist enough to know that with debt comes misery. The Prophet Isaiah's message conveys a rather different perspective:

Obituary : Archimandrite Athanasius Ledwich

Father Athanasius (Ledwich) sadly fell asleep in the Lord on 20 July 2011 - appropriately the feast of St Elias. He was the founder of "*Orthodox Outlook*" in 1985, and edited it at its beginning and again years later at the end of his life. Tonsured a monk at Vatopedi on the Holy Mountain about 1998, he long had a vision of founding a monastery in Britain. Unfortunately, as with Father Barnabas in Wales, his vision came to nothing. So he lived the life of a hermit for short periods in Northumberland, Suffolk and latterly Essex.



My own feeling was that, though his eremitical life is what he would like to be remembered for, it could never have been his true vocation. He was both a man and a monk who needed to be with people as well as with Christ, who loved to talk with people and to lead them onward. He had the graces to do that - he was friendly, charming, intelligent, educated, open, interested in others, and had a deep and compelling spirituality.

His commitment to Christ and Holy Orthodoxy was total: he loved to pray and to attend the services of the Church; he was overjoyed when the Great Schema was conferred upon him; and grateful for being ranked as an Archimandrite in the last few months of his life. But he loved to have people around him too - and proved a great blessing to many. If at times a little unbending, yet he could be very sympathetic and understanding. Many valued his advice, and were devoted to him as a real icon of Christ.

He could be forthright, and as a young Anglican priest upset his authorities by his plain speaking, particularly displayed in his small book "*The Durham Affair*", which first brought him to public attention. He denounced David Jenkins on his election as Bishop for heretical opinions and the whole Anglican hierarchy for not disowning Jenkins and his views.

By the time the book appeared he had been received into Orthodoxy - but then he was involuntarily involved in the upsetting of both Anglican and Orthodox hierarchies by being ordained by Archbishop Methodius, who for this and other matters was removed by Constantinople. He founded the Rugby parish, and then an Orthodox school at Edgbaston, but while the parish has been successful, the school lasted only a short time, for lack of finance.

Many of us will miss Father Athanasius very much, and thank God for every remembrance of him. His peace of mind and contentment as he faced cancer and death for a period of some three years was remarkable and inspiring. He carefully planned his funeral in the Monastery of St John the Baptist, where he frequently worshipped right to the end, in spite of weakness. It was led by Archbishop Gregorios, Metropolitans Kallistos and John of Pergamum, and Bishop Paul of Tracheia, and attended by numerous Priests and lay people. He was laid to rest in Lawford churchyard near his final hermitage.

He now sleeps with the just. Eternal memory!

Father Alexander Haig

Welcome, Bishop Ephraim !

I was greatly honoured to be invited to Damascus to the Cathedral of St. Mary on Sunday 28th August for the ordination of a new auxiliary bishop to serve in the Archdiocese, his Grace bishop Ephraim. The Patriarch, his Beatitude Ignatios IV of Antioch and all the East, performed the ordination and served the Liturgy with many concelebrating bishops and other clergy present. This was a momentous and joyful celebration with sincere love and praise of God abounding. **Many years to our new auxiliary bishop and to the other 11 bishops ordained in recent weeks!**



I was also able to speak to our Archbishop on my mobile. As many will know, he had a terrible fall some weeks ago in Cyprus and sustained a serious triple leg fracture. He sends his love - as we send ours - and assure him of our continuous prayer before the Lord for a speedy and strong recovery.

Fr. Gregory Hallam



DEANERY NEWS

Holy Archangel Michael's Parish : Happy New Year

Our Community of the Holy Archangel Michael began in 1994 with eight people. Sixteen of us were Chrismated by Frs. Gregory, Jonathan and Stephen in September 1995.

In 1996 we took possession of a very small Wesleyan chapel in Audley several miles outside Stoke on Trent. Metropolitan John, at the request of Metropolitan Gabriel, consecrated the church, now fully paid for, in August 2002. By this time we had grown considerably and had to ask people not to come to the service of Consecration. We have continued to grow to around forty families, making our church in Audley uncomfortably cramped.

Sometime in mid-September we shall begin a ten year lease , from the C of E, for the Church of the Holy Resurrection, Dresden, Stoke on Trent (ST3 4PP).

Father George Robinson, a former resident in Audley, has returned to England from Australia with his wife and two of his sons. This will make it possible to serve both churches fully while maintaining one parish identity.

The New Year will bring with it, therefore, great blessings and great new responsibilities. We ask your prayers as we unworthy servants of God seek to witness to His great love for mankind and faithfully serve the liturgical offices.

Fr. Samuel Carter

