

The Apostle

The Monthly Magazine of St Aidan's Orthodox Church,
Henderson Street, Levenshulme, Manchester M19 2JX

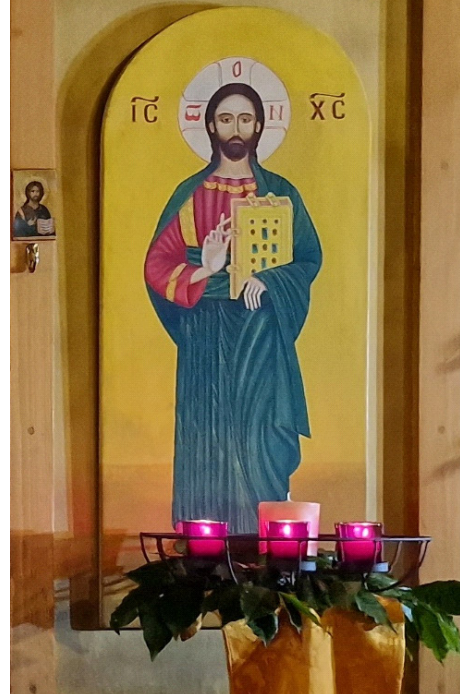
Advent in the Orthodox West and East – and why purple?

Remarkably there is no documentary evidence for the observance of the Advent fast before the Feast of the Nativity in the Orthodox Christian east until the 9th century. St Theodore the Studite's reference is a very general one and does not give any detail. It is not formally set forth as a liturgical observance in the Christian east until as late as a local council in Ruthenia in the Austro-Hungarian empire in 1720! From this Council we gather that Advent is to be observed as a "little Lent" - a fast with less rigour than the Great Fast before Pascha - some 40 days before Christmas, starting on the 15th of November.

Whereas in the Orthodox Christian west, Advent centres around the comparison between Christ's First Coming in the Incarnation and His Second Coming in judgement; in the Orthodox Christian east, insofar as there is any theme at all,

this concerns the Incarnation as being the fulfilment of prophecy. Originally the Orthodox Christian west may have observed Advent as a 40 day period, but this was gradually shortened to 4 weeks from the 9th century.

With the rather late adoption of Advent as a period of fasting and



preparation for the Feast of the Nativity in the Orthodox Christian east, not many pious traditions have coalesced around it. However, an important example of this in the west is the Advent Wreath, a circlet of 6 purple candles (in the west, 4) surrounding a central larger white candle. Each week of Advent one extra purple candle is lit until the Eve of the Nativity when the central white candle shines to indicate the birth of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

At St Aidan's we have adopted this pious Orthodox western custom and, if you can, I encourage you also to use the Advent Wreath at home.

Since we have mentioned the colour purple, I will explain the use of colour a little further. In the west there is a fairly firm adherence to the custom of allocating specific colours to specific seasons. Purple has always been the colour of penitence and fasting; hence its use in major fasting periods. In the east the original provision was simply the use of bright (festal) and darker (penitential) colours for vestments and hangings. The Greek tradition in Orthodoxy has largely kept to this tradition. However, Slavic use has for the most part followed the west. Antioch is situated somewhat in

between! We hold to bright / dark distinction but usually use blue for our Lady, green (not red) for Pentecost and purple for Little and Great Lent; the rest being more variable. Some might say that since Sunday is always a "little Pascha" we should, without variation, wear bright colours even during fasting and penitential periods. However, this is not generally followed in Antioch where on Sunday we also switch to purple or darker colours.

However you observe the "little Lent" of Advent, please remember that this is a sober, non-festal period of preparation for the Nativity. Of course, outside the Orthodox Church, the most we can expect to see of any lingering Christian tradition, is the Advent Calendar; now, for the most part, devoid of any reference to Christ. With and in us, however, there should a quite different spirit, a spirit of hopeful expectation that in the first and then second coming of Christ, the kingdom of God will finally come in all its fulness as EVERY knee bows and confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord. (Philippians 2:10-11)

- Fr Gregory

A walk along St Cuthbert's Way

By Chris Tsielepi

St. Cuthbert's Way is a long-distance walk from Melrose in Scotland where St Cuthbert started his religious life in 650AD, to Lindisfarne or Holy Island off the northeast coast of England, where St Cuthbert became abbot of the monastery founded by St. Aidan and where St Cuthbert was laid to rest until the Vikings came.



Although the route is inspired by St. Cuthbert known as "The Wonderworker of Britain", (Feast Day 20 th March) it is not a pilgrimage as such.

St Bede of Jarrow (Feast Day 27 th May) tells us a lot of St Cuthbert's life. While the saint was still young, he would tend his master's sheep in the Lammermuir hills south of Edinburgh near the River Leader.

One night while he was praying, he had a vision of angels taking the soul of Saint Aidan (August 31) to heaven in a fiery sphere. Cuthbert awakened the other shepherds and told them what he had seen. He said that this must have been the soul of a holy bishop or some other great person. A few days later they learned that Bishop Aidan of Lindisfarne had reposed at the very hour that Cuthbert had seen his vision.

Please read more about the saint's life. This is a good place to start



Saint Cuthbert, Wonderworker of Britain - Orthodox Church in America (oca.org)

The walk is 62 miles long and

usually people do it in 5 or 6 days. There are organisations who will ferry your luggage from your location to the next nights accommodation. Accommodation and campsites are limited and it's hard work lugging your backpack. The walk has been designed to give you the best views of the beautiful surrounding countryside. There are quite a few uphill sections which are a test of how good your knees are and of your stamina. What of the pilgrimage? You do pass a church dedicated to St. Cuthbert, not that you would know unless you read the guidebooks. There are no notice boards and the church was closed. The path passes St. Cuthbert's Cave where it is thought his coffin rested for a time. This is lovely spot to have lunch!

We also passed Ad Gefrin which



was where the summer palace of the Anglo-Saxon kings of Northumbria was located. This was an important place in the

early Christian history of England. Paulinus of York (Feast Day 10 th October) catechised the court and baptised them in 627AD.

St. Cuthbert could well have visited the palace.

It's actually quite possible that the footpaths we trod could have been trod by those early holy women and men as they travelled the kingdom

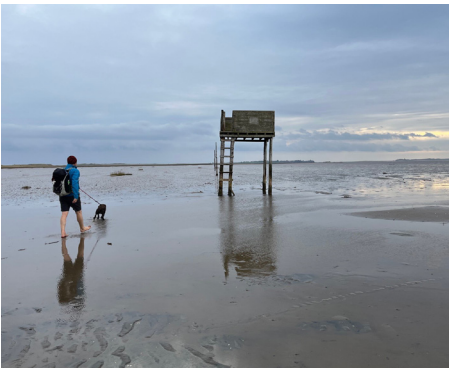


evangelising the small rural communities spread across the north of England or simply getting from A to B. There is a small exhibition of Anglo-Saxon life in Wooler at a new heritage centre called.... Ad Gefrin. It covers the arrival of Christianity as well as cultural objects. It's also a whisky distillery!

The highlight of the trip is crossing the bay at low tide to reach Holy Island. It's best to do this barefoot as you still wade through rivulets ankle-deep in places. Was it cold



..yes it was, but your feet soon go numb and you don't feel the cold anymore. It so much more interesting than going along the roadway again only available at low tide. You are much closer to the nature that St Cuthbert loved.



We saw deer, egrets, curlews and a large colony of very loud honking seals on a nearby sandbank. On arrival on the island, you join the day-trippers. There are many attractions to see but we chose to go to St. Cuthbert's Island. This little islet is only accessible at low tide as well. St Cuthbert chose to come here for solitude during his time at

the monastery on Lindisfarne. We lit a candle and sang the troparion to St. Cuthbert and prayed at the cross where it is believed a little chapel once stood.

O blessed child of God

Wonderworker of Britain

O holy Father Cuthbert Thou who didst converse with angels And through thy preaching became as for many a gateway to salvation

We honour thy memory and sing thy praise Glory to God who has glorified thee.

- Chris Tsielepi



St Cuthbert's Way

St Cuthbert's Way is one of the most beautiful, varied and enjoyable long distance walking routes in Britain. The route links Melrose in the Scottish Borders, where St Cuthbert started his religious life in 650 AD, with Holy Island off the Northumberland Coast, his eventual resting place and his original pilgrimage shrine. Although inspired by St. Cuthbert, this is far more than a pilgrimage route.

SCOTTISH BORDERS

NORTHUMBERLAND

Linking routes

For those looking for more of a challenge or a longer walk, St. Cuthbert's Way links directly to the following other long distance routes:

- Northern end of the Pennine Way at Yetholm;
- Southern Upland Way at Melrose;
- St. Oswald's Way at Fenwick;
- Northumberland Coastal Path at Beal

Accommodation and refreshments

Overnight accommodation is available at numerous places on or near St. Cuthbert's Way, including Melrose, Bealton, Newbawn, St. Boswells, Anzsum, Jedburgh, Crailing, Morebottle, Town Yetholm, Kirk Yetholm, Wooler, Lowick, Fenwick, Beal and Holy Island. In addition to these towns and villages, refreshments are also available from April to October at Harriestanes Visitor Centre. For further details see www.stcuthbertsway.co.uk

Please note that camping in England is restricted to established campsites, and is strictly prohibited on Holy Island.

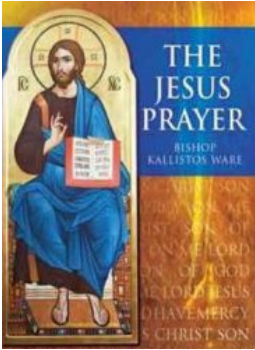
Further information

For more information on St. Cuthbert's Way, visit www.stcuthbertsway.co.uk or contact the Harriestanes Visitor Centre at Melrose (tel. 01893 853200, Harriestanes Centre, Harriestanes, Melrose TD10 1AP) or Beal (tel. 01667 330733).



Book Review - *The Jesus Prayer*

by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware



Metropolitan Kallistos begins this short booklet by writing that all of us join the apostles in saying, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1). The Jesus Prayer (“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me,” often with the additional words “a sinner”) is “a cry for mercy” (p. 5). The “discipline of repetition” helps us to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thes 5:17). This echoes Psalm 50 [51 Septuagint translation], verse 1: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your great mercy” (pp. 6-7).

As St Diadochus of Photike proposed in the 5th century, this appeal to Jesus is “a way of entry into the prayer of inner stillness” so “the intellect” can “continually concentrate of these words ... with such intensity that it is not turned aside to any mental images.... When using the prayer, we seek to still our imagination. Instead of calling to mind incidents from the life of Christ, we dwell upon

his total and immediate presence. When visual images occur, we set them aside.” (pp. 8-10). “We shall not even begin to appreciate the meaning of the Jesus Prayer unless we recognise how the name of Jesus is felt to contain within itself grace and power” (p. 12).

We can say the Jesus Prayer “at any time and in any place.... It can be our first thought as we wake in the morning and our last thought before we go to sleep at night. I find it helpful at committee meetings!” wrote Metropolitan Kallistos. “It can be easily taught to children” (p. 15).

“The purpose of the Jesus Prayer ... is to help us to discover directly and vividly how, by virtue of baptism, we are Christ-bearers, sharing in his death and resurrection, and at the same time bearers of the [Holy] Spirit, aflame with the fire of Pentecost” (p. 42). “The effect of the Jesus Prayer ... enables us [to become] our own true self, the person whom God calls us to be” (p. 49).

- Father Emmanuel

The Entrance of Our Lady into the Temple

Celebrated during Advent

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, also called The Presentation, is one of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church, celebrated on November 21. According to Tradition, the Theotokos was taken – presented – by her parents Joachim and Anna into the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem as a young girl, where she lived and served as a Temple virgin until her betrothal to St. Joseph. One of the earliest sources of this tradition is the reliable, but non-canonical, Protoevangelion of James, also called the Infancy Gospel of James. Mary was solemnly received by the temple community which was headed by the priest Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. She was led to the holy place to become herself the “holy of holies” of God, the living sanctuary and temple of the Divine child who was to be born in her. The Church also sees this feast as a feast which marks the end of the physical temple in Jerusalem as the dwelling place of God.

Troparion (Tone 4)

Today is the preview of the good will of God,
Of the preaching of the salvation of mankind.
The Virgin appears in the temple of God,
In anticipation proclaiming Christ to all.
Let us rejoice and sing to her:
Rejoice,
O Divine Fulfillment of the Creator’s dispensation.

Kontakion (Tone 4)

The most pure Temple of the Savior;
The precious Chamber and Virgin;
The sacred Treasure of the glory of God,
Is presented today to the house of the Lord.
She brings with her the grace of the Spirit,
Therefore, the angels of God praise her:
“Truly this woman is the abode of heaven

ВВЕДЕНИЕ ВО ХРАМ ПРѢ БЪЩЫ



Heating St Aidan's

By Paul Griffiths

Heating Options for St. Aidan's: A Comprehensive Overview

Heating a large space like St. Aidan's Orthodox Church is essential for the comfort of the congregation, especially during the colder months. As the church is not occupied throughout the week, the challenge lies in finding a cost-effective system that can provide quick warmth for services while minimizing energy consumption when the building is empty. This article explores the various heating options available, their advantages and disadvantages, and the potential impact on both comfort and cost.

Comfort Considerations

Comfort in a space like a church is influenced by several factors, not just air temperature:

Radiant Temperature of Surroundings:

When the sun shines through windows or radiant heaters are directed at people, they feel warmer even if the air temperature is lower.

Surface Temperatures:

Cold floors and walls can make people feel uncomfortable, while warm surfaces, like sitting near a radiator, enhance comfort.

Air Temperature:

This is the most convenient and controllable aspect of comfort. A room at 18°C may feel acceptable if you enter feeling warm, but if you're already cold, a higher temperature will be necessary to feel comfortable.

Key Insight: In a cold space, a slow warm-up is likely to leave people uncomfortable. A rapid increase in temperature can make people feel warmer sooner, and they are unlikely to complain of overheating until temperatures exceed 25°C. Therefore, a fast warm-up system could be both cost-effective and more comfortable for churchgoers.

Heating Systems for St. Aidan's Radiators (Convectors)

Pros:

Widely used and familiar, radiators are effective at maintaining a consistent temperature.

Cons: They are slow to heat up. As warm air rises, it takes time for the heat to circulate and reach the lower parts of the room. This makes radiators less ideal for spaces that need to be quickly warmed, like a church that is not heated continuously.

If the existing gas boiler is not replaced, other methods can be explored to heat water for the radiators.

Heat Pumps

Efficiency:

Heat pumps offer a high coefficient of performance (COP), producing up to four times the energy they consume. However, unless electricity is significantly cheaper than gas, the savings may be minimal.

Challenges:

Heat pumps work best at higher outside temperatures and perform poorly during winter, when heat is most needed. Air-source heat pumps can also suffer from frost blocking the fins, further reducing efficiency.

Ground-Source Heat Pumps:

These are more expensive to install, and the cost of reinstating the lawn after installation would be significant.

Boiler vs. Heat Pump Efficiency:

A traditional gas boiler operates at around 80°C with a 60°C return temperature, offering a substantial differential for heating.

A heat pump, however, operates at much lower temperatures (60°C flow, 40-50°C return), meaning radiators would emit only 60-70% of their usual heat output. Larger radiators and a more powerful water pump would be required to compensate.

Heat pumps are better suited for continuous heating of well-insulated buildings, particularly those with underfloor heating systems.

Underfloor Heating

This system is often paired with heat pumps. Pipes are laid under a thick layer of screed, which acts as a heat sink, allowing the building to maintain a steady temperature over time.

Pros:

Consistent, 24/7 warmth.

Cons: Installation is costly and disruptive. It is most effective in buildings heated continuously, which is not the case for the church.

Forced Air Systems

Pros:

Forced air heating provides the fastest warm-up time by circulating warm air quickly. Occupants will feel

warm before the building itself has fully heated.

Cons:

If the air temperature is significantly higher than the set point, it can feel like a cold draft, making it unsuitable for heat pumps, which operate at lower temperatures. However, direct gas-fired heaters can be used at higher temperatures without causing discomfort, depending on the system's setup.

Radiant Heaters

Pros:

Radiant heaters provide immediate warmth by directly heating people and objects rather than the air. This is an efficient solution for quick heating in a space like St. Aidan's.

Cons: While effective for fast warm-up, radiant heaters don't raise the overall air temperature quickly, so the building itself will remain cold.

Direct Gas-Fired Heaters

Pros:

These heaters can run at high temperatures, providing quick and efficient warmth with fewer units required. Installation costs are reduced, especially if external flues can be avoided.

Cons:

Future regulations may prohibit

new gas installations or the use of bottled gas, which could limit this option in the near future.

Contingency Planning: Boiler Failure

If the existing boiler fails suddenly, portable propane heaters can be rented at short notice, providing a temporary heating solution until a permanent replacement is installed.

Future Considerations:

Regulatory Changes

It is important to consider that future regulations could impact the feasibility of new gas installations or even the use of bottled gas. Therefore, any decision made today should account for the possibility of regulatory changes that may restrict certain heating options.

Cost and Payback Times

The payback period for any new heating system depends largely on the amount of time the building is occupied. With only 50-60 hours of usage per week, it could take much longer to recoup the costs of a new system. Therefore, a balance must be struck between upfront costs, operational efficiency, and long-term savings.

Any thoughts or feedback on any of the above issues then please speak to me directly.

- Paul Griffiths

St Chad's Orthodox Mission, Heywood

Services in St George's Church, Gore Close, Heap Bridge BL9 7JU

Directions...

Approaching from the A58, the single track road to the church (not shown below) is a right off Heap Brow, just after the Crown Point building. Limited parking at the church.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/MUx2rPAZebxAWdfZ6> (map link)



The True Myth of Aristobulus of the Seventy

Apostle to the English

He called us out on the Jerusalem Road. When He descended from the mountain, face ablaze like Moses, how could we not follow Him? How could I not answer Him when He called me by my name?

“Titus may go with Mark. Cousin Cleopas, go with my brother, James. And Barnabas - take your brother, Aristobulus.”

How my heart sang within me! To be sent out by the Teacher, all of us Seventy. Little did I know, then, of the great sorrow that would grip us all; the sword that would pierce His Mother’s heart. Little did I know that an even greater joy would visit me.

And so we left, at the Teacher’s instruction, labourers scattered into the harvest. Two by two, without money bag, knapsack, or sandals.

“Peace be to you,” we said to Bethsaida. “The Kingdom of God is near,” we said to Chorazin. But they did not receive us. Neither did they receive God. We wiped the sand from our feet, and moved on to the next city.

We returned in joy at the wonders we had seen, and after a time witnessed that great sorrow that He had foretold. As our mourning turned to joy, my calling was raised up with Him. The greater works

that the Teacher - our Lord - had prepared for us must be brought forth. We Seventy were scattered to the four corners of the world, bringing with us the glorious news of our Lord’s victory.

In my heart, I knew I must head into the West. West! Where the sun sets beyond the Pillars of Hercules, beyond the night-terrors of a darkened world. But where precisely? Rome? The right place for my brother Barnabas. Gaul? For a time. Hispania? A fruitful harvest, but not my final field. Perhaps... that Isle of Tin, the place they call Britannia? Ah, yes.

As I sat on the boat, tossed about on the misty sea, I pondered the words of our Lord. He told us how He saw the Dragon of Old fall in



fire from the heavens; how the Dragon took seventy starry angels with him; how the guiding lights of the nations plunged into darkness. He told us how He was preparing a sacred assembly to be raised up over the fallen ones, to bring light back to those lost in darkness. The boat drifted into a grey harbour, and made landing on the beach. I jumped down, my bare feet crunching into the sand, still sandal-less as He had commanded. A boy, half my height and with a great shock of tangled brown hair, skipped down the beach towards me.

“Who are you?” he said. “And what do you bring?”

“I bring news, my son. The Kingdom of God is near.”

He grinned from ear to ear.

“I knew you’d come,” he said.

“We’ve been waiting.”

I would never have to wipe the sand from my feet again.

I leant over, and whispered in the boy’s ear.

“Prophets and kings have longed to hear the hidden things of God.

But He has revealed them to children.”

Author’s note

I have been taken with CS Lewis’ notion of Christianity as the “true myth” for quite a while. Lewis uses

myth, not in the sense of falsehood or fabrication, but rather a grand narrative that binds a people together. Just as stories of Hercules and Zeus bound the Ancient Greek peoples together, so hagiography and Scripture binds us Christians together into the renewed people of God. And by true, Lewis means true in a deep, fulfilled sense. As St Paul says “all God’s promises find their Yes in Christ” (2 Corinthians 1:20). If you would like to read more about the idea of the Seventy (or the saints more broadly) replacing the fallen angelic guardians of the nations, I recommend *The Religion of the Apostles* by Fr Stephen de Young or *Arise O God* by Fr Andrew Stephen Damick. You can find more about the Seventy and Aristobulus in Luke 10, the OSB’s study notes, or any synaxarion (the OCA has a good free one on their website). For the second, I drew on the text of Luke 10 itself (the passage about Satan’s fall is given directly after the Seventy’s return) and Fr Stephen de Young’s explication of patristic teaching on the topic, as outlined in *The Religion of the Apostles*.

Ed.

The Myrrh-Streaming 'Hawaiian'-Iveron Icon

Of the Theotokos.

Pilgrimage to Wallasey, Liverpool on Monday 11th November

I am organising a pilgrimage to St Elisabeth's Parish in Wallasey, Liverpool to venerate the Myrrh-Streaming, Hawaiian Iveron Icon.

'With profound joy the Diocese of Great Britain and Western Europe announces that the myrrh-streaming 'Hawaiian'-Iveron icon of the Mother of God will be visiting the Diocese in November of the present year. While the visit will mark the second time that this holy icon has visited the territory of the British Isles (read a report of its first visit in 2017), it will be the first occasion of its visitation to the territories of continental western Europe, and for this reason will mark a moment of great blessing for the faithful of the Diocese.'

For more information, or If you would like to come along, please let me know.

- Ed

[St Elisabeth's Website](#)

