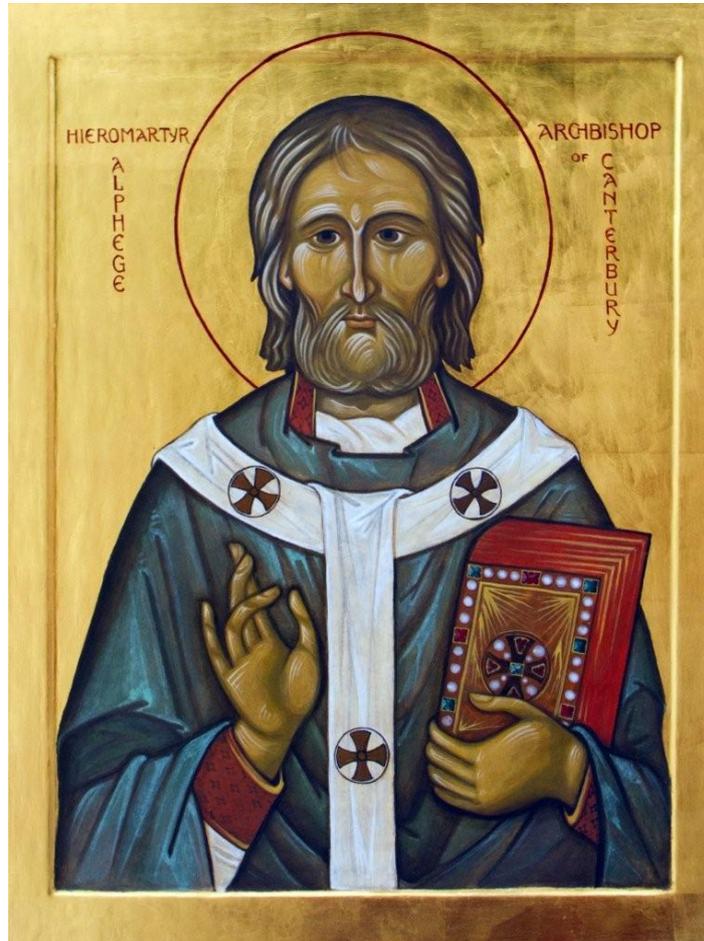




“Joy of All Who Sorrow”

No. 112 March 2018



St Aelfheah of Canterbury *Peacemaker*

St. Alphege, or more properly Aelfheah, was born of a noble family in Weston near Bath, about the year AD 953. While he was still very young, he renounced the world and, notwithstanding the tears and entreaties of his widowed mother, retired into the monastery of Deerhurst, in Gloucestershire, where he served God with great devotion for many years. After a time, he moved on to Glastonbury, where he became Prior. Afterwards, wishing to lead a life of greater seclusion and austerity, he lived as an anchorite near the hot springs in Bath. Here, he was followed by many of his former disciples until St. Dunstan, who was then primate of all England, persuaded him to become Abbot of the community of secular canons living nearby. On the death of Aethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, in AD 984, the latter, further, called on St. Aelfheah to take up the vacant dignity.

England was, at this time, a continual prey to the marauding Vikings. King Aethelred the Unready had recourse to repeated bribes, with which he hoped to purchase relief from their attacks; but Aelfheah sought to win them by the power of the Gospel. In AD 994, Olaf Tryggveson, King of Norway, and his men attacked London. The citizens bravely beat him off and he moved on to ravage the south coast, wintering at Southampton. King Aethelred then sent Aelfheah and the Ealdorman, Ethelward, to visit Olaf there and request him to confer with the English King; and they brought the Norwegian to Andover, where Aethelred was then residing. Olaf was a Christian, but he was unconfirmed. So Aelfheah persuaded him to enter into a peace whereby he would confirm Olaf and King Aethelred adopt him as his son. In return, Olaf promised that he would never invade England again; and he kept his promise faithfully.

After governing the See of Winchester for twenty-two years, Aelfheah was translated to that of Canterbury, on the death of Archbishop Aelfric in 1005. He was present at the Council of Enham, at which he inspired measures to be taken for the national defence. Not a moment too soon; for, only two years into his Archiepiscopate, Viking invasions began once more. A Danish fleet came to England, in two divisions. The first was commanded by Earl Thorkell, the second by his brothers Heming and Eglaf. From this time till the end of Aethelred's reign, the Danish ravages were unceasing. In 1011, the Danes took Canterbury, which was betrayed to them by Alfmar, the Abbot of St. Augustine's, whose life had once been saved by Archbishop Aelfheah. The Danes are said to have committed every sort of cruelty, the city was plundered and the cathedral burnt. They took many prisoners mostly to sell as slaves. Amongst them was Archbishop Aelfheah, who had remained at his post to reassure his people. He was kept in captivity, in the Danish base at Greenwich, for seven months in hope of a ransom.

In April the following year, the Witan met in London and agreed to pay the Danes £84,000 in Danegeld in order to persuade them to leave. However, the Archbishop refused to burden the country further by allowing them to pay his extra £3,000 ransom. His captors got drunk one night and, angry at his defiance, they pelted him with ox-bones. Their leader, Earl Thorkell, tried to save him, but his men were uncontrollable. The dying Archbishop was finally put out of his misery through a blow from an axe wielded by a sympathetic Dane, named Thrum, whom he had converted whilst a prisoner.

The murder took place where the current parish church of St. Alphege now stands in Greenwich. He lay there for several days, the Viking warriors refusing him a decent burial. However, when a dead stick, which had become anointed with his blood, grew green again and began to blossom, they relented and carried St. Aelfheah's body to London. Here, Bishops Ednoth of Dorchester and Elfhun of London buried him in St. Paul's Cathedral. By his countrymen, Aelfheah was justly esteemed a martyr, and pilgrims flocked to his grave. In 1023 however, London lost its most holy of relics. King Canute the Dane was prevailed upon by his pious queen, Emma, to make amends for the cruelty and sacrilege which the followers of his father had committed in England. He removed the body of St. Aelfheah to Canterbury Cathedral, where it was laid in a noble tomb, near the high altar, and the cathedral was enriched by many costly gifts from the king and queen.

Sermon for Lazarus Saturday by Metropolitan Philaret

It often happens that a child does a bad thing, and his father properly punishes him. But when he sees the child crying in sorrow, parental love takes hold and the father seeks to console the punished child. A terrible sentence was imposed upon our fallen ancestors living in the Garden of Eden. The Lord, after their terrible sin, when they betrayed Him and heeded the tempter, His enemy, said: “thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken,” that is “unto dust thou shalt return.” In this way, the Lord sentenced our ancestors and their progeny to death, for before this, mankind was not to taste death. Having no sin, man could not before then die and would have lived forever, but after that, he became the prey of death. But our Lord knows that death is terrifying for man, that nothing terrifies him more. That is why, in order to ease the very thought of death, in order to alleviate this fear, the Lord performed His wondrous deeds of which we read in the Holy Gospel. In particular, He performed the miracle we remember today, the greatest of His miracles—the Raising of Lazarus.

The Lord had earlier told the Apostles: “he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” He said that the moment would come when those in the grave would hear the voice of the Son of God and would emerge alive. And yet death, which destroys the body of man, horrifies us. And the Lord, consoling us, encouraging us, made an example of Lazarus, who, hearing the voice of the Son of God, came out of his tomb. He spoke, His Omnipotent Voice shook the depths of hell, and Lazarus, whose body had already begun to decay, came out of the tomb alive, unharmed and in good health. Today’s holiday is for this reason especially close to our hearts, especially joyful. Today we celebrate our future resurrection. In eight days, the Holiday of Holidays will arrive, the Triumph of All Triumphs, when we will celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord, “raising us with Him,” as the Church sings. And so, to illustrate how this will occur, how the dead will rise from their graves to the sound of the voice of the Son of God, the Lord raised the dead Lazarus. That this is so is declared by the troparion which will be sung today and tomorrow: “By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou confirmed the universal resurrection, O Christ God!”—that is, it confirmed that there will be resurrection for all.

Our souls are filled with special joy on this day, a brilliant joy, because death ceases to terrify us. How unfortunate are the godless! Of course, we know that they are in error, that man is not annihilated after death. But these poor folks think that death comes and everything comes to an end, the person is dead, his body is killed and there is no question of any life. All their talk about how their leaders live in eternity in the hearts of their followers are simply nonsense! The human soul does not seek this, it seeks only an escape from the fear of death. The Lord grants it, for after all He had done for us, it turns out that death is not disappearance into the abyss of non-existence, but only a temporary slumber, longer than earthly sleep, but sleep nonetheless, for with His Almighty Voice, He will wake us all at a time known only to Him so that we pass into eternity. How bright and happy is this day! The human soul cannot but tremble with elation because, again, we are celebrating our universal resurrection! Remember this, O human soul, and thank your Lord for His great mercy to you. Amen.



The oldest ever depiction of the Raising of Lazarus from the Catacombs in Rome

Notes & Jottings

OUTDOOR LIGHTING

We have outdoor lighting around and between the main buildings, but the carpark and the main driveway have been a source of concern until now. This is especially true on dark winter evenings. Now the electrician has devised a plan to run a power supply to these areas for greater safety. This will be especially beneficial on Easter night.

LOCAL INTER-CHURCH QUIZ

This annual event is hosted the Anglican All Saints Parish in Mettingham and is held in the village hall. We normally take part but, sadly, we cannot send a team this year because they have arranged it on Good Friday (8 April).

SACRED NORTH

A new book, *Sacred North – walking in the footsteps of the earliest Christian missionaries of Cumbria, Northumberland, Scotland and beyond*, by Fr John Musther, is due to be published on 27 March. We are intending to order copies for stock.

JORDANVILLE COLLECTION

At the request of Vladyka Irenei, a plate appeal was held for the ROCOR seminary at Jordanville and raised £80.00. Given that we are a small community, this is a significant amount of money and we are grateful to all those who contributed. The money has now been sent to the Diocesan Chancellor Archpriest Paul Elliott in order to be transferred to Jordanville.

LAZARUS SATURDAY & DIOCESAN UNCTION SERVICE

Please note that Vladyka Irenei, Administrator of the Diocese of Great Britain & Ireland, will be briefly back in the UK in order to serve Hierarchical Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday & Unction Service at 12 Noon in our Cathedral of the Dormition of the Mother of God at Harvard Road in Chiswick, London. In order to receive the sacrament of Unction, a confession should have been made during the Great Fast.

NAMEDAYS

We send our congratulations to everyone who is celebrating a nameday at this time & wish them:

MANY YEARS!

18 March - **St Mark the Faster** - Archbishop Mark (Arndt)



COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF THE MOTHER OF GOD
JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW

MARCH 2018

Saturday 10 March

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 11 March

10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (3rd Sunday of the Holy Cross)

Saturday 17 March

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 18 March

10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (4th Sunday St John Climacus)

Approx. 2pm ~

Wednesday 21 March

7.30pm ~ Small Compline with Great Canon & Life of St Mary of Egypt

Saturday 24 March

7.30pm ~ Vigil

Sunday 25 March

10.10am ~ Hours and Divine Liturgy (5th Sunday St Mary of Egypt)

Saturday 31 March

At our Cathedral of the Dormition at Harvard Road in Chiswick London

9.00am ~ Hierarchical Liturgy (Lazarus Saturday)

12 Noon ~ Soborovanie (Unction Service)



Do you not see that when a bee stings, it dies? Through this insect, God teaches us that we should not offend our neighbours, because in that case we ourselves die...

St. John Chrysostom

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