



# THE NEWSLETTER



## ALL SAINTS CHURCH Upper Norwood

**\*\*August 2020 Online Version\*\***

### A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This is our fifth exclusively online version of the newsletter. I shall (probably) be away for a couple of weeks at the end of August but hope to issue a newsletter for September, which will, with luck, be on the church website by the start of the month. A limited number of printed copies may hopefully be available in church the following Sunday if we can agree the logistics of their distribution. This September edition may be quite basic unless, of course, someone in the congregation would like to write something and send it to me – anything would be very keenly appreciated.

As always, if you know anyone without internet access who would like to see a copy of this newsletter, please feel free to copy and print it out yourself. If you want to do this but find you cannot print it straight from the website, I shall be happy to email you a personal copy if you contact me. Keep well and keep positive.



### The Vicar's Monthly Letter

Dear friends,

Covid-19 has swept the world and none of us know what the future holds. Eventually, we hope, life will return to 'normal' but, for the foreseeable future we need to live a day at a time and try our best to be aware of the needs especially of the vulnerable.

At All Saints we are on a journey - hopefully moving to as near as possible to our usual pattern of services at the beginning of September. At the moment we are gathering for the Parish Mass on Sunday at 10.00 a.m. Please do join us if you are able to. I am glad so many have done so over recent weeks. We do however have to operate within the guidance for the conduct of public worship which have been laid down. I would like to thank again those who have helped us to make this possible.

A pandemic touches deep matters – matters of life and death, faith and hope, fear and compassion. We need to view what is occurring through the lens of our faith and, as in any crisis, discover the opportunities it presents. It reminds us that, far from being in control, we are subject to unseen forces; instead of life being all about fun we're reminded of the superficiality of that view. We're suddenly confronted by our mortality and by the fact that we live in a passing world and acknowledge the reality of

death. And, whilst we live, how we engage in that task of being remade in God's likeness. This pandemic invites us to consider deeper matters – not least of compassion

We need to recall the message of the Paschal Mystery at the heart of Christian faith, as we consider what is unfolding. Fear, that can be so destructive, needs to be set against love – God's love for us and the call for us to love one another. This pandemic – like every plague which has afflicted humanity – is, in some way, part of the created order which has crossed the divide keeping it in check. St. Paul reminded us that we are part of that order which 'was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.' (*Roms.8.20ff*). Just before that, he had written:

'the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us' and it's that we need to recall at this time. May that hope undergird you and may compassion inform you.'

I send my best wishes to you as we face the future with faith, hope and love.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Leonard



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The Church's Facebook page:  
**All Saints, Upper Norwood**

## Saints of the Month: August.

- 8<sup>th</sup> **St Dominic**, founder of the Friars Preachers (black friars).
- 11<sup>th</sup> **St Clare**, follower of St Francis and founder of the 'Poor Clares'.
- 14<sup>th</sup> **St Maximilian Kolbe**, Polish Franciscan, interned in Auschwitz where he died in 1941.
- 15<sup>th</sup> **The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**.
- 20<sup>th</sup> **St Bernard of Clairvaux**, (12<sup>th</sup> century) abbot and founder of the Cistercian order.
- 28<sup>th</sup> **St Augustine of Hippo**, doctor of the church and one of the greatest bishops in the church's history.

## Prayer for the Month

15<sup>th</sup> August is the principal feast day of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In the western church it is known as the Assumption (when Mary was "assumed into heaven"). The Eastern Orthodox know it as the Feast of the Dormition ("falling asleep"), referring to Mary as "Theotokos" – The God-Bearer.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.



## Ephesus – the Blessed Virgin Mary’s Last Home?

Christian tradition about the last part of Our Lady’s life after the Crucifixion is divided. One version has it that she was taken in by St John (*note John 19:26-27*) and remained in Jerusalem, dying on or near the site where the Orthodox Church of the Dormition now stands.

Another tradition, however, holds that St John took the Virgin to Ephesus where she lived for more than a decade before dying there. The age of this tradition is evidenced by the fact that, in 431 AD, the Third Ecumenical Council was held in Ephesus in the first church to be dedicated to the Virgin. This church was probably built in the middle of the fourth century on the site of a civic basilica from the time of Emperor Hadrian (117-138), close to the harbour. The church was destroyed at the time of the Arab invasions at the end of the seventh century; several other smaller churches were successively built on or near the site but the last had fallen into disrepair by the end of the thirteenth century.



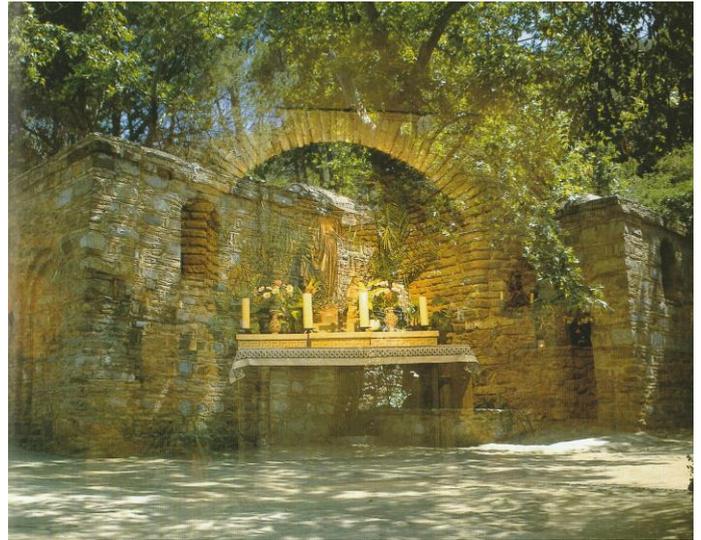
Ruins of the Church of the Virgin

Ephesus was an ancient city situated in what is now south-western Turkey (Anatolia) near the present towns of Selçuk and Kuşadası. It is thought that its original foundation dates back to the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC when the first Greek settlers arrived. The city of today’s spectacular ruins was founded by one of Alexander the Great’s generals in about 289 BC. It was renowned for its Temple of Artemis (Diana), features in St Paul’s Epistles and also in Acts where Paul’s visit in about 53 AD is described. (Acts 19). It is also mentioned several times in the book of Revelation (1:9-11, 2:1-7); in Rv 1:11 St John writes “*Write on a scroll what you see and send it the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyateira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea*”. Ephesus became the home (according to apocryphal stories) of St John from the time he arrived there with Our Lady until his death, with the exception of the time he spent in exile on the island of Patmos. At that time Ephesus was the greatest centre of trade and industry in Anatolia, and was probably home to the largest Jewish community in western Anatolia, perhaps almost 10,000 people out of a total population of some 200,000 – about the same size as London and Paris at the start of the sixteenth century!

The House of the Virgin is located on a mountain about seven Kilometres from the ruins of Ephesus; the history of this house is thought to date back to the fourth century, but no archaeological investigations have been made to find out if the foundations extend back to the first century. It is

thought that the site which originally served as a house was overbuilt in the sixth century as a chapel. Even before the modern rediscovery of the house in 1891, local Christians followed an old tradition of gathering at the ruins of this small chapel to celebrate the death of Our Lady.

The House of the Virgin near Ephesus



As in many other cases of ancient cities, Ephesus declined when its harbour silted up. By the ninth century it was effectively an inland city and the population started to drift away. It continued to be inhabited until it fell into complete oblivion with the Turkish occupation in the 1400s.



The Theatre of Ephesus