



THE NEWSLETTER



ALL SAINTS CHURCH Upper Norwood

****April 2021 ****



The Vicar's Monthly Letter

Dear friends,

We read the Passion every year to remind ourselves of Jesus' betrayal, of the Passover meal, his arrest, torture, trial, and death and we remember that it's God who is our only hope for salvation.

Jesus came not as God pretending to be one of us, or as one of us with affectations of being God. Jesus Christ was as human as we are and as God is the Father and the Holy Spirit. Having come among us, Christ, as Paul writes in the Letter to the Philippians, "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

In Matthew's account of the passion of Christ, Jesus shows us how to embody God's love as a human being: to live and die not for ourselves, but for others; to be faithful and true; to trust in God even when all seems futile; to never give up on love. Jesus Christ, obediently embracing all that is human, became flesh and blood and dwelt among us, eating with tax collectors and sinners, healing the sick and the blind, arguing with his opponents, and, at the end, experiencing the betrayal of his friends, being scourged and sentenced to death.

On the Cross, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" From this, we must learn that nothing human is foreign to Christ. We all know the feeling of being forsaken. Who among us has never felt so low that we haven't wondered if God has deserted us? But if we look at Christ, and ponder the Passion, Christians have found a way to accept the most profound struggles in our own lives, to accept pain and death, as well as the suffering and death of those we love most.

During Holy Week and Easter our pondering and our prayer over Christ's passion and death can be a powerful way to learn more about Jesus and what it means to follow Christ. We can take the failed discipleship of Judas, who, unwilling or unable to see that the way of the Cross leads back to life in the triumph of the resurrection, gives in to despair and takes his own life. We see the unexpected discipleship of the centurion who testifies, "Truly, this was the Son of God."

Closer to us, I imagine, we witness the weak but growing discipleship of Peter who, having denied Jesus three times, weeps in remorse and turns again to faith in Christ. And finally, the faithful discipleship of the women who, having served Jesus during the years of public ministry, now stay close to make the way of the cross and stand in faithful support of him at the crucifixion.

In the Passion account, we hear how Jesus told his disciples to renew their relationship with him in the breaking of the bread, the Eucharist, that we may be in him, and he in us.. As we celebrate Easter let us ask God to help us become stronger and more faithful disciples.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Leonard



CLERGY

Vicar

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SERVICES

All Sundays

10.00 am Parish Mass

6.00 pm Holy Communion
(Book of Common Prayer)

Tuesdays

7.30 pm Said Eucharist

1st Saturday of month

10.00 am Said Eucharist

CONTACT DETAILS

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

FORTHCOMING EVENT

25th April (Sunday) after the 10.00 am Eucharist: **Annual Parochial Meeting** at **11.00** to elect two churchwardens for the following church year; followed by **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** at **11.05**. This will be to review the church business of the preceding year. There are two places available on the Parochial Church Council – if you are interested in joining the PCC please speak to Fr Leonard.

Prayer for the Month:

God is love; and who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.
We love him because he first loved us
And this commandment we have from him,
that he who loves God loves his brother also.
Love is patient and kind.
Love is not jealous or boastful.
Love is not arrogant or rude.
Love does not insist on its own way.
Love is not irritable or resentful.
Love does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right.
Love bears all things.
Love hopes and endures all things.
Love is of God. Everyone who loves is begotten of God and knows God, for God is love.

Saints of the Month: April.

- 16th St Bernadette of Lourdes 1844-79. As a girl of 14 she saw a series of visions of the Virgin Mary, as a result of which Lourdes became an international centre of pilgrimage and healing.
- 21st St Anselm. Archbishop of Canterbury 1093-1109, and Doctor of the Church.
- 23rd St George. Patron of England, Greece and Catalonia, also of soldiers and boy scouts.
- 25th St Mark. Evangelist and helper of St Paul. Died around the year 75. His remains were taken to Venice in the ninth century, since when he has been patron of that city.
- 29th St Catherine of Siena. Mystic and Dominican sister; Patron of nurses; 1347-80

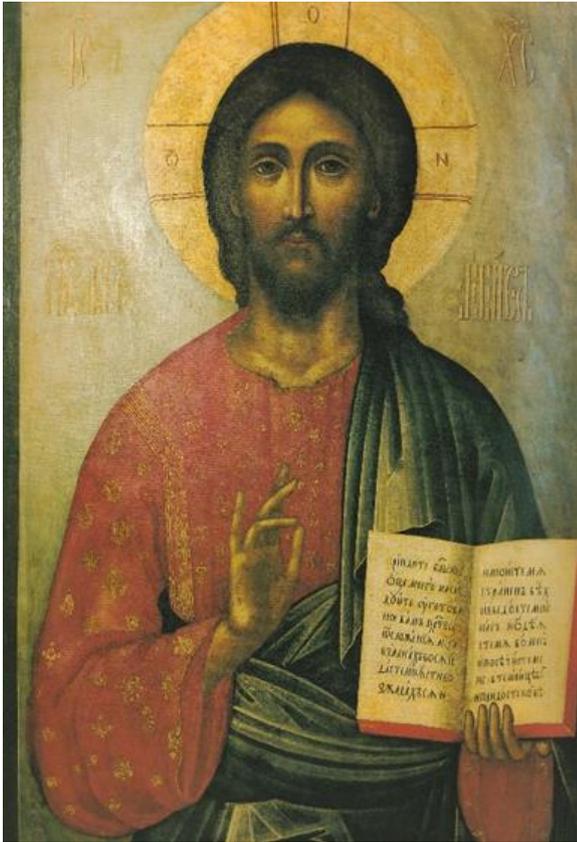
St George

One of the most famous, and elusive, of the early martyrs, still much venerated especially in what was the eastern Roman Empire; George was probably martyred in Palestine at the turn of the third and fourth centuries. Nothing else seems to be known of him, but as early as the 6th century he was referred to as a good man “whose deeds are known only to God”. The popular story, first found in a medieval book, is of him as a knight, rescuing a maiden from a dragon, leading to the baptism of thousands.

After many rather crude and dubious miraculous events, George became a victim of the Emperor Diocletian’s persecutions and was beheaded. How George became adopted as protector of England is unknown; he had been recognized long before the Norman conquest, and returning crusaders in the 12th century probably established his popularity - this would also account for his patronage of Catalonia (then a rich and powerful crusader nation) and Greece (where many minor kingdoms were established by crusaders) He may have been officially named as National Patron when Edward III founded the Order of the Garter under George’s patronage in about 1348.

As well as England, Catalonia and Greece, George is also Patron of Malta, Portugal, Romania and Georgia, the current national flag of which is a St George’s cross with smaller similar crosses in each of the four fields.





Christ Pantokrator ('Ruler of All')

An icon from the Moscow school painted around 1670.

Christ is shown wearing a red tunic with gold motifs, with a deep blue cloak over the left shoulder.

In his left hand is a Gospel, open to show the words of Matthew 25:34-36: "Come, you whom my father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world ..."

The painting is, as is so often the case, full of symbolism. The right hand, held in blessing, shows the index finger straight and the middle finger a little curved, forming IC; the thumb and third finger are crossed with the little finger again slightly curved, forming XC. These four letters make up the abbreviation of Jesus Christ.

The colours of Christ's clothing always have a symbolic meaning: the red of the tunic, embellished in gold, points to the regality of the divine nature (the colour gold, not found in nature, always refers to divinity); the blue of the cloak indicates the humanity which Christ assumed in the Incarnation. Mary, the Mother of the Lord, is often (in Greek and Russian orthodox art) clothed in the opposite colours – a blue tunic symbolising her created humanity, with a purple-red cloak as a symbol of the divine dignity to which humanity rises through the redemption. As the Greek fathers said: "God became human so that humans could become God".