

The Apostle

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

Blessed are the Peacemakers

"Blessed are the peacemakers
for they shall be called children of
God." (Matthew 5:9)

Peace making in this often violent
world is not easy. We may feel that
we can just about manage
making peace with those
whom we know personally but
as for international affairs
well, how possibly could be
influence that process. You
would be surprised!

Let me introduce you to
Bishop Grimketel, bishop of
Selsey. He died just before
the Great Schism in 1047.
He is not a saint, and little is
known about him save one
important fact ... he cared
about Norway!

By the end of the 11th

century England had wearied far
too long under the raids of Viking
warriors. Something had to be
done. Now Grimketel (love the
name!) seems to have been among



those English Christians who befriended the King of Norway, a warrior called Olaf. On one occasion Olaf made a stopover in England, staying for a year, forging a politically astute alliance with our King Aethelred (the Unready!), and helping us thereby to drive out the Danish King Cnut.

For the duration of his stay here, English Christians, including Grimketel, persuaded Olaf that he would achieve much more in his kingdom by peace rather than the sword. Olaf at some point accepted Christ and after he was baptised in Rouen Cathedral, he returned to England as the first Christian King of Norway. With his friend Grimketel at his side he then returned to Norway to consolidate his kingship and promote Christianity with the help of Grimketel and his other English missionaries.

Repenting of his violence Olaf clearly believed that true peace only came with embracing the Prince of Peace. Both he and Grimketel have remained controversial characters in the eyes of later historians but by

the time Grimketel returned to England and Selsey as his diocese, the international violence of Scandinavia had considerably abated. Olaf was made a saint by the Church in Norway and has been much loved by our Norwegian friends to this very day. His feast is on 29th July.

The point of this story is that you never know how a big peace can grow from a little peace. Two complex men, not obvious candidates for sanctity, forged a friendship in the gospel, the legacy of which has endured to this present day. The violence in Gaza and Ukraine cannot be solved by truces and treaties alone. It requires ordinary people to establish friendships across the bitter and entrenched hostilities of the past to forge a better future through repentance and forgiveness. Practice a little peace where you are, especially with your enemies, and you never know just how big that peace might grow.

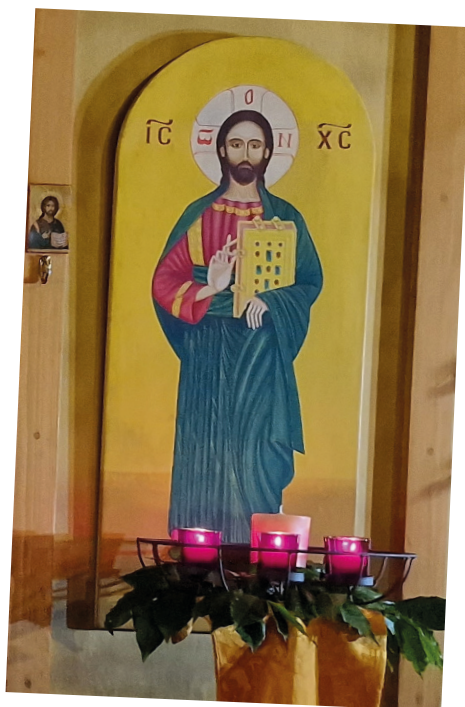
- Fr Gregory

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

Poetry from St Aidan's community

The Lovers

Each summer evening they appeared.

First one, then the other sidled up.

Apart from an occasional peck on the cheek,
there was no obvious communication between the two.
They just gazed, meditatively, towards the valley below,
participating in the mystery of a coupling
that no registry would ever document.

As dusk approached, they were off.

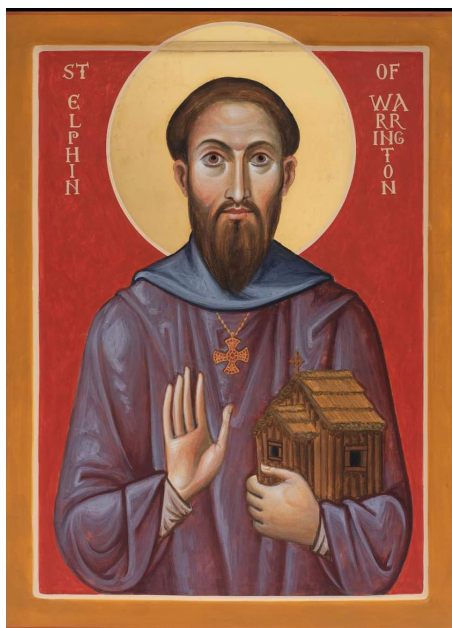
First one, then the other.

Leaving the roof-top ridge
to roost with the other jackdaws.

- Brian (in Baptism, Michael)

Warrington Prayer Group

A new prayer group has been established in Warrington, Cheshire, by a small group of Orthodox Christians from St Aidan's Parish, Manchester. We will meet for about an hour at 6:30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month. Everyone is welcome. If you would like to come, please let Daniel know by email at: stelphinandstoswalds.prayer@gmail.com, and he will give you the address.



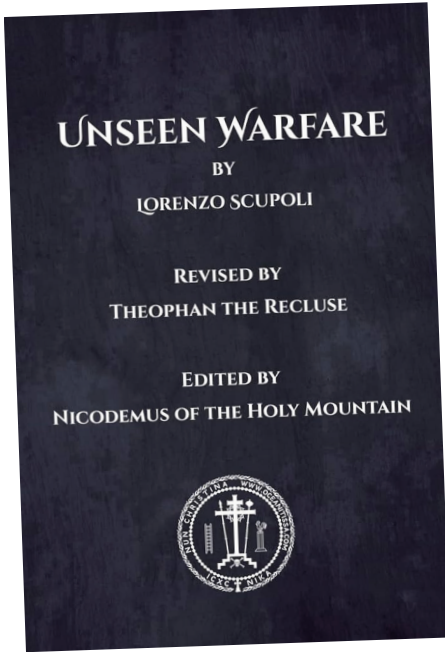
We will take the name of St Elphin and St Oswald's Prayer Group. St. Elphin (who died in 679) is the Patron Saint of Warrington and was a companion of St Oswald (who died in 642) and introduced Celtic Christianity to his kingdom and gained authority over most of what is now England. There has been Christian worship in Warrington for more than 2,800 years. Long may it continue!

- Father Emmanuel

Book Review - Unseen Warfare

by Lorenzo Scupoli, Nicodemus and Theophan the Recluse

(published by Virgin Mary of Australia and Oceania, 2025)



This book review considers only some key points from this remarkable book that confronts us with both the challenge of sin, as well as the power of the Lord, with support from our free will, to remove sin from our lives.

Chapter 1 urges that “you must cultivate in your heart the following four dispositions and spiritual activities...: (1) never rely on yourself in anything; (2) always

bear in your heart perfect and unwavering, trust in God alone; (3) strive without ceasing [to seek and discover God’s unique will for you]; and (4) remain constantly in prayer” [p. 13].

Chapter 2 warns that that: “God severely reprimands those afflicted with... vainglory and self-esteem, declaring through the prophet Isaiah: ‘Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight’ [Isaiah 5:21].”

The Apostle Paul similarly exhorts: “‘Be not wise in your own [fanciful ideas]’ (Romans 12:16)” [pp.12-13]. “If you fall into some [crime or sin], quickly turn to the realization of your weakness and be aware of it... The ... beginning of true humility ... is based on the realization, through experience, of your impotence and unreliability” [p. 15].

Chapter 9 reflects that: “Just as it is necessary to guard the mind from ignorance, it is equally necessary to protect it from the opposite—an excess of knowledge and curiosity. if we fill the mind

with an abundance of information, ideas and thoughts, including those that are vain, unsuitable or harmful, we weaken the ability of the mind to discern clearly what is useful for our true self-correction and perfection.... Consider the words of St Basil: 'Let listening to worldly news be bitter food for you and let the words of saintly men and women be as combs filled with honey.'... Love to hear only spiritual and heavenly things, study them, and desire to know nothing in the world except 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified' (1 Corinthians 2:2) along with His life, His death and what He requires of you. By acting in this way, you will please God who counts among His chosen and beloved those who love Him and strive to fulfil His will" [p 23].

Chapter 15 begins: "If you want to gain a swift and easy victory over your enemies, brother [and sister], you must wage ceaseless and courageous war against all passions, especially and pre-eminently against self-love manifested in self-indulgence and self-pity.... Never be afraid if you feel overwhelmed by a flood of thoughts that the enemy is too strong, that his attacks are

unending, that the war will last your entire lifetime... Know that our enemies with all their cunning and malice are in the hands of our divine Commander, our Lord Jesus Christ, for whose honour and glory you wage this war. Since He Himself leads you into battle, He will never allow your enemies to overpower you unless you willingly surrender to them. He will fight for you and deliver your enemies into your hands in His time and in His way, as is written in Deuteronomy 23:14: 'The Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp to save you and to give up your enemies before you....'" [pp. 39-40].

Chapter 17 advises: "It would be very beneficial for you, my brother [and sister], to understand clearly the order in which you should fight your passions.... Enter with attention into your heart and carefully examine what thoughts, dispositions and passionate attachments occupy it most strongly. Identify the passion that is most predominant and tyrannically rules over you. Against this passion, first and foremost, take up arms and focus your struggle to overcome it. Direct all your attention and care toward this one passion, except

during those moments when another passion arises within you. Once this happens, you must deal with the newly arisen passion immediately and without delay, driving it away. Once it has been defeated, return your weapons and efforts to the chief passion, which continuously manifests its presence and power over you. For just as in any form of warfare, so too in our unseen spiritual battle [with our passions], we must first fight what is actually attacking us at the present moment” [pp. 44-45].

Chapter 18 urges: “If, my beloved, you are not yet accustomed to overcoming sudden impulses and the excitement of the passions—provoked, for example, by insults or other confrontations—I advise you to make the following practice a rule: Every morning, while still at home, review in your mind the various situations you may encounter during the day, both favourable and unfavourable. Visualise the passionate impulses, lusts and irritations these situations might provoke and prepare yourself in advance to stifle them at their very inception, preventing them from developing. By doing this you will never be caught off guard by

the stirrings of passion and will always be ready to reais them calmly without being troubled by anger or enticed by lust. This practice of preparation is especially important when you have to go out and visit places where you are likely to encounter people who may either attract or irritate you. By being prepared you can easily avoid being swayed in either direction. If a wave of passion arises, it will roll over your head like a wave hitting a rock, rather than carrying you along like a flimsy boat” [p.45].

“However, this preparation is not sufficient on its own, as passions can arise suddenly and unexpectedly. When this happens, act as follows: As soon as you feel a passionate impulse—whether of lust or irritation—immediately exert your will to curb it. Turn the attention of your mind inward, descend into your heart and make every effort to prevent the passion from entering. Do not let your heart be irritated by what provokes it or attracted by what entices it. If the passion has already found its way into your heart, strive to keep it from being expressed outwardly—do not let it show in your words, expressions or gestures” [p. 46].

“Next, direct your mind and heart toward God. Bring forth a clear awareness of His boundless love and impartial truth. Use this awareness to expel the passionate movement and replace it with an opposing virtue. If the situation involves meeting someone, it may be difficult to fully implement this process in the moment. Still, do not abandon your good intentions; do what you can. Even if you fail to succeed immediately, you will regain control after the encounter that aroused your passion has passed. However, take special care not to outwardly express the passion that has arisen within you. This restraint will help prevent it from developing further. As soon as you are free from the immediate situation, return to your heart and work to expel the ‘reptile’ that has slipped inside” [p.46].

Chapter 19 urges: “In struggling against bodily passions, my brother [or sister] ... know that you should do one thing before you are tempted by these passions, another during temptation and yet another when it is over.

[1] Before temptation, attention should be concentrated on the causes which habitually give birth

to temptation or which excite passion. The rule here is to use every means to avoid all occasions which may upset the calm of your body, especially meeting people of the opposite sex.... [p. 47].

[2] At the time of actual temptation ... hasten to discover the cause which provoked the attack and remove it immediately.... To combat shameful thoughts, regardless of their origin, engage in spiritual exercises suited to your current state. These include reading of holy books, especially those by St Ephrem the Syrian, St John of the Ladder, the Philokalia and similar works, as well as meditating devoutly and engaging in prayer”

[p. 50]. [3] “When ... the temptation has ceased, take great care to avoid all occasions that previously stirred your passions. Even if you are convinced that you are now free from these attacks and feel confident of your self-control, do not allow yourself to be drawn to the people or things that once caused you to stumble, even under the pretext of familial ties....” [p. 51].

- Father Emmanuel

November: foretasting Paradise; or its absence



You may have noticed it, you may have not: from late September (between 22nd and 28th) and until mid-December (between 11th and 17th), Sundays are called “of Luke”; “of Luke” are also Sundays after the Sunday-after-Epiphany (mid-January) until Meatfare Sunday (early February to early March, depending on Easter date). Similarly, Sundays after All Saints Sunday (early June to mid-July, again depending on Easter date) until Sunday before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (between September 7th and 13th) are called “of Matthew”. The reason plain and simple: we read/hear excerpts from these two evangelists’ gospels’ respectively.

Matthew’s Sundays follow a

linear pattern and chiefly deal with miracles: healings, multiplication of five loaves and two fish, Jesus walking on the waves (check table). Matthew’s only parable to be heard is that of the two debtors, mid- to late-August. And his 12th and 14th Sundays’ excerpts (usually ordered on weekdays for there are not enough Sundays to fit in) are ceremoniously read in Luke’s counterparts of the 13th and the Forefathers’ Sundays respectively.

I have already bored you, and you may think, that is priests’ job. But, please, explain to me: why Luke’s 13th Sunday’s passage is read on the actual 10th Sunday, and the 10th’s right after that Sunday, first Sunday of December? Why is that the 5th Sunday’s gospel is always read on the 6th, usually first November Sunday? And why is the 7th Sunday’s counterpart often transferred in October’s last Sunday? In general, what is the purpose of the selection of passages? Why do we hear them at approximately the same time?

In September’s Apostle I pointed out that the vast majority of the late antiquity and medieval listeners of the Gospel in Greek were Balkan and Near East serfs/farmers. By

late October, they had finished with most of the year's jobs: harvesting of cereals (June), harvesting and pressing of grapes (early September) and olives (October) for the daily staples of bread, wine and olive oil respectively; cleaning arable lands and sowing cereals (October); fixing whatever needed to be fixed at home, lands, animals, the landlord's properties: in a word, getting prepared to survive the incoming winter on the hope spring would arrive with optimism and find them in good health and spirits.

So, November heralded the beginning of a prolonged six-months period during which, mainly because of the lack of daylight, farming jobs withered to be replaced by home-centredness and patience. Harvests needed to be carefully stowed in underground cellars, "where moth and rust [did not] corrupt, and where thieves [did not] break through and steal" (Matthew, 6, 19), and rationed in smaller and larger sacks and jars to sustain family until next year's new harvest. Must was kept fermenting at least until late-November before tasted as new wine on St Catherine's feast (25/11), "coincidentally" a month before Christmas. And newly pressed olive oil was kept in meticulously cleaned large clay jars. In a nutshell, the

products of six months' spring and summer hard work were becoming tangible and calculable. Every house and hut were full to the rim of them, making families proud. Households were literally "sitting upon" their products, to secure them and feel secure with them.

November also marked the beginning of a prolonged period of nearly 100 days rife of important feasts, until February 10th (St Charalambis's feast) and the beginning of Lent a bit before, a bit after. October's dearth of feasts, surely intentional to help harvesting and sowing, was followed by a November celebrating the Holy Unmercenaries (1st), the translation of St George's relics (3rd), the Heavenly Bodiless Powers (8th), John the Merciful of Alexandria (12th), John the Chrysostom (13th), Philip the Apostle (14th), Matthew the Evangelist (16th), the Theotokos's entrance into the Temple (21st), Catherine the great martyr (25th), and Andrew the Apostle (30th). So, once work in the lands was not needed, people were given ample opportunities to throng the local church, "farm" their hearts, communicate with God and each other, and entertain themselves spiritually and intellectually.

This social mixing, even under the auspices of True God, was not

always faultless. People who had prospered more than their fellow-villagers might have sought to make it apparent in showing off a new shirt or shawl and (a new pair of) shoes, some old or new jewellery, some generous offerings in the offertory plate, also boasting on the quantities they had amassed in their cellars, and scorning the less fortunate. This way, any sense of social cohesion (let alone Christian brotherhood) was quickly evaporating. It was therefore important for the Church to step in and, through its November Sunday Gospel readings, to try and fix the carried away hearts by setting up earthly and eternal examples. To paraphrase Matthew, 6, 21, to transpose the hearts of its faithful from the perishable to the eternal treasure.

Unsurprisingly, November Sundays began and still begin with the parable of the rich and Lazarus. A week earlier, October concluded (and still concludes) with St Demetrius's feast – the one and only feast of the month, marking the passing from summer to winter, from earth's life and abundance to its barrenness and seeming death. So, former pagans-newly converted Christians, needed to know/be boldly reminded what really happens to a soul after

physical death, and why. The parable chastises those who live from, by and for themselves only, without loosening their purse's and heart's strings so that Lazaruses of any kind, thrown at their mansions' gates, may lead a more bearable life. The parable is a thorn to those who have amassed their riches (even justly), however, they cannot see and act beyond them. It could mainly point at the wealthy landlords, the farming populace's masters; nonetheless, it too includes those "poor" who can share a bit of their "own", but they do not.

If November has five Sundays, the second is dedicated to Jairus's daughter's rising from the dead, an excerpt read on the final October Sunday, if November has four Sundays. Assuming that a four Sundays November is the norm, the second Sunday's Gospel reading deals with the parable of the Good Samaritan. In a way, the Church seeks to make things plain and simple. Supposing some missed the previous Sunday's reading, or misunderstood it, or did not "have the ears to hear", or, even better, want to take it further, here is another parable about the practical ways of showing love and mercy to anyone, even an "enemy". You do not have to be rich by earthly

standards for your philanthropy to matter. It is not a matter of quantity but quality. Stop the haemorrhage so that the stranger survives. Use some of your olive oil and wine to cauterise and heal their wounds. Put them on your own beast, even if this means you need to tire yourself walking. Open your heart if there is no coin left in your purse. Open your house and make it a hospital for the wounded, ailing stranger. Improvise ways beyond money to show mercy, so that you do not join the previous Sunday's rich in the eternal Gehenna.

Third November Sunday, and the Gospel reading points clearly to landlords – not serfs. Again a parable on a rich man, a fool one this time. Again, a teaching on the departing-from-the-body soul's crossroads when charity has never been even contemplated. Again, a castigation against those who live from, by and for themselves and their material belongings. Again, an implication of how better it could have been if the fool rich had invested his riches into the poor – not simply stowing them in bigger barns. Because, and here is the seeming oxymoron, the more you keep for yourself, the poorer you become in the eyes of God: you simply empty yourself from what and who God is. And the more

you empty your purses and barns from your belongings, the richer you become by what and who God is: merciful and loving mankind. In Jesus's own words "So is he that lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Luke, 12, 21)

And November Sunday Gospel readings conclude with an event – not another parable: Jesus's discussion with a rich ruler. He had been an exemplary observant of the Mosaic Law from his childhood, however, lover of his riches more than God and any image of His. The ruler felt there was something missing, hence asking Jesus what to do to inherit eternal life, yet he clung to his riches for answers. He might have been giving a tenth of them to the poor, to the Temple etc, not because he enjoyed it, but because he ought to by the Law. Hence, the incompleteness feeling, a heart like "a thirsty land" (Psalm 143, 6). But when Jesus looked at the depths of his heart and empathised with him (see Mark, 10, 21 on the same event) and showed him the root for this thirst and how he could have it satiated, the ruler turned his back and sorrowfully departed. Thus, he remained incomplete. Again, the excerpt points out to the rich landowners of the time, but also to the poor serfs. You may stay forever attached to

your riches, be them millions or a handful of pennies. It's not the quantity to make the difference, but your approach. "If you want to be perfect" (see Matthew 19, 21 on the same event), if you want to become truly rich, then get detached from the "hope" of your material riches and invest all your "hope" to the One Who entrusted them to you – for the time being, at least. Because Jesus did not tell the ruler he would become poor; He simply urged him to follow a certain path to become truly rich and forever ("you shall have treasure in heaven"). But this exhortation was for the ruler a bitter pill to swallow, a path he did not have ears for. He wanted everything, but by parting ways with the Saviour, lost everything. His heart remained where "his" treasure had been. And sadly, this treasure was not Jesus, Love personified.

November Sunday Gospel readings do not castigate wealth per se but the wrong, pagan and devilish, approach to it. It is a commonplace of many a saint "Life and Times" that before beginning their ministry, they sold everything they owned, distributed the money to the poor, and free as birds flew away from the chains that material possessions and the need for their maintenance gird most of

the humankind. Truly, this is the way of the few. Nevertheless, for the 99.9% of the rest, us that is, November readings set up for a wonderful mindset to adhere to and practice. The Holy Unmercenaries, celebrated on the very first day of the month, show us ways. Here is how a vesperal hymn of their feast puts it: "When the saints deposited their every hope in the heavens, they accumulated great treasure that cannot be lost, dwelling yet on earth. They received free of charge; and free of charge they offer cures to those afflicted with disease. And evangelically neither gold nor silver did they possess. To people and to animals likewise they imparted the benefits, so that by becoming obedient to Christ in every way, they might unceasingly intercede for our souls with confidence". No wonder, besides, that the day's apostolic reading is the so called "Hymn to Love" (1st Corinthians, 13, 1-8)

Let us all then shift our hearts to the true Treasure, seeking "first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [necessary for our material sustenance] shall be added unto [us]" (Matthew, 6, 33). A happy, spiritually prosperous, and unmercenary November!

- Father Stavros

November Gospels: Matthew and Luke, The Order of the Sunday Gospel Readings

MATTHEW	SUBJECT	LUKE	SUBJECT
10, 32-33, 37-38; 19, 27-30	Witness Christ as God; Christ superior to spouses, children, parents; Promise to those who will follow to judge Israel	5, 1-11	First disciples after the miraculous catch
4, 18-23	First disciples; Jesus criss-crosses Galilee teaching and healing	6, 31-36	Sermon on the mountain: how grace/forgiveness is given by God
6, 22-33	Sermon on the mountain: the eye as the oil lamp of the body; the two masters; against anxiety; the need to ask first for the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness	7, 11-16	The rising from the dead of the widow's son in Nain
8, 5-13	The healing of the child/ servant of the Centurion	8, 4-15	The parable of the Sower
8, 28 - 9, 1	Healing of two demoniacs in Gergesa	16, 19-31	The parable of the rich and Lazarus
9, 1-8	Healing of the paralytic in Capernaum	8, 26-39	Healing of one demoniac in Gadara
9, 27-35	Healing of two blind men and a deaf demoniac; Jesus criss-crosses [Galilee] teaching and healing	8, 41-56	Healing of the woman with a blood issue in Capernaum; he rising from the dead of Jairus's daughter in Capernaum
14, 14-22	The multiplication of five loaves and two fish	10, 25-37	The parable of the Good Samaritan

14, 22-34	Jesus walks on the waves; Peter does too, sinks and is saved by Jesus; tempest calms after Jesus embarks on the boat	12, 16-21	The parable of the fool rich
17, 14-23	Healing of a lunatic young man	13, 10-17	Healing of a hunchback woman
18, 23-35	The parable of the two debtors [forgiveness]	14, 16-24	The parable of the royal banquet (without an invited not wearing the appropriate attire)
19, 16-26	Jesus speaks with a rich young man [attachment to riches]	17, 12-19	Healing of ten lepers
21, 33-42	The parable of the wicked vineyard labourers	18, 18-27	Jesus speaks with a rich young man [attachment to riches]
22, 1-14	The parable of the royal banquet (with an invited not wearing the appropriate attire)	18, 35-43	Healing of the blind man in Jericho
22, 35-46	The lawyer and the biggest commandment in Mosaic Law; Jesus asks Pharisees on the “oxymoron” of Christ being David’s son, yet David calling Him his Lord	19, 1-10	Jesus and Zacchaeus
25, 14-30	The parable of the talents		
15, 21-28	The healing of the Canaanite woman’s possessed daughter		

Borek pie with roasted aubergine Feta on a baking tray

Ingredients

1 pack of yufka filo
125 grms of unsalted butter, or margarine, plus more for pan
1 cup milk and 2 eggs (we mix them to place on top)
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or white pepper
250gr Feta cheese or cheese of your preference crumbled
680 gr of roasted aubergine
4 tablespoons chopped parsley
1 large yufka sheet
Sesame seeds, for garnish if you would like

Steps to Make It

In a bowl you melt the butter set aside.

Mix the aubergine with the cheese parsley and pepper

Place the baking pan and drizzle with butter take the 1st sheet of yufka and place it in make sure all the corners has fylo and then drizzle with some butter.

Place the 2nd fylo yufka on the tray uneven with wrinkles to cover the top, drizzle with some butter, then place the mixtured with aubergine feta and parsley evenly on the tray .

Place 3rd fylo yufka unevenly on the top and close the edges and b doing this drizzle with butter.

Place 4th fylo yufka on top and drizzle with the rest of the butter
On a bowl mix the milk with the eggs and run into all the yufka on top
And after sprinkle sesame seeds.

Bake 180 C for 45 minutes around and serve after 20 minutes and enjoy



Apple and Raisin Bread Pudding

Ingredients

300 g day-old bread, cubed (brioche, challah, white or brown bread or even croissants)
2 medium apples (about 250 g total), peeled, cored, and thinly sliced
60 g raisins
50 g unsalted butter, melted (plus extra for greasing)
50 g granulated sugar
50 g brown sugar
2 large eggs
350 ml milk
2 tsp ground cinnamon (about 4 g)
1 tsp vanilla extract (about 5 ml)
Pinch of salt (about 1 g)
2–3 tbsp extra sugar (for sprinkling on top before finishing — demerara or white sugar works best)



Instructions

Preheat the oven to 175°C (350°F). Butter a 20 × 20 cm (8 × 8-inch) baking dish.



Prepare the base:

Arrange the bread cubes, thin apple slices, and raisins in the baking dish, layering or mixing them evenly so the apple slices are spread throughout. Make the custard:

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, granulated sugar, brown sugar, cinnamon, vanilla, melted butter, and salt until smooth.

Assemble:

Pour the custard evenly over the bread and apple mixture. Gently press everything down so the bread soaks up the liquid. Let it sit for 10–15 minutes to absorb.

Bake:

Place in the oven and bake for 40–50 minutes total.

→ 10 minutes before the end of baking, sprinkle 2–3 tablespoons of sugar evenly over the top. Continue baking until the top is golden, crisp, and caramelized, and the custard is just set.

Serve:

Cool for 10 minutes before serving. Enjoy warm with custard, cream, or a drizzle of caramel sauce.



A Cause for Concern



As your parish priest, my current cause for concern is the explosive growth of our parish. Of course, this growth is a great blessing, and we all need to welcome our new disciples of the Lord with open arms. However, this comes with its own challenges. I don't think that we are doing very well in meeting those challenges. Suddenly we have a full church, and things just seem to happen without much effort. Truly, there is a lot of effort going on in the background, but with a shrinking number of overstretched workers.

It is too soon to expect newly received catechumens to jump into the pool of workers, unless they want to, of course! They need to settle into church life and discern what the Lord's will is for their eventual service. Other parishioners, however, may have been coming to St Aidan's for some time and it is in this group that we would expect to see, frankly, a greater willingness to embrace roles in the community.

Attendance at church for teaching and the sacraments is vitally necessary and the first call on any Christian's time. However, this is not enough. We need more people at St Aidan's to step forward and offer themselves for active service. I intend, therefore, to start putting together working groups right across the parish with newly appointed capable persons in charge of each one. They will recruit! We have already started this process but there will be lots more of these initiatives to come. Consider please what you can offer!

- Fr. Gregory