



The Tower

August 2016

The Tower is the Newsletter of the

Orthodox Christian Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr,
Overleigh Cemetery Chapel, Overleigh Road, Handbridge, Chester

Parish website: <http://www.stbarbara.org.uk/>

Diocesan website: www.thyateira.org.uk

Facebook: [Greek Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr in Chester](https://www.facebook.com/Greek-Orthodox-Community-of-Saint-Barbara-the-Great-Martyr-in-Chester)

Charity No: 114475

Dear brothers and sisters,

Last month I wrote about gifts we had recently received for the church and now, even more have been showered upon us. Just before I went on holiday, a large case arrived from Greece - a veritable cornucopia; the gifts of a mother (Mrs I) and her son (Mr P.V) who was a member of this community some years ago. We now have two beautiful oil lamps for the Holy Table, a proper chanter's lamp for the singers, a fine set of white veils for the Holy Vessels; an embroidered Epitaphios for the Dormition of the Theotokos and a pair of Wedding Crowns - who will be first to use them, I wonder? And very soon the Twelve large icons of the Apostles will arrive in our midst through the good offices of Mrs M.K and Mr P.A at Saint Anthony & Saint John's Church in London. May God grant them every blessing for their generosity and kindness. We number them among the Benefactors of our Community.

Please note the several requests on page 4 and below asking for your support at our various forthcoming special days. Yes, a little bit of work but it's an opportunity to socialise over a 'cuppa'!

With much love for you all this Autumn,

Fr Pancratios and Presbytera Anna

The Orthodox Christian Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr, Chester



The Thirtieth Pan-Orthodox Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Saint Winifride

Holywell, Flintshire, North Wales. CH8 7LS
Saturday 1st October, 2016
in the Mediaeval Chapel and at her Well

Programme:
Hours and Divine Liturgy 10.30am
Picnic Lunch
Procession to the Well with the Relic of
Saint Winifride, Molieben and Agiasmos follows the lunch
The day concludes with Great Vespers 3.00pm

Please bring your own picnic lunch and liquid refreshments

Holywell has easy access from all parts of the country via M56 and A55 expressway or by bus/coach via Chester or train - nearest station Flint with bus to Holywell

For further details please phone

Father Pancratios:
01244 659717 or 07850 467675

The Annual Heritage Weekend

In September, we will be 'open house' for the annual Heritage Weekend and will now be able to offer refreshments to all our visitors. We will welcome any volunteers over the period 10-11 September. This year, we plan only to cover Saturday and Sunday afternoon. So, please check your diaries and put your names down. It's not an arduous task, mostly a matter of offering tea and coffee and generally greeting our visitors. Father Pancratios will be around to field the difficult questions! Come for an hour - come for the day!

Principal Services for September

Thursday 1st	<i>The Church New Year</i>
11.00am	Matins followed by the Blessing of Waters
Saturday 3rd	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 4th	<i>11th Sunday after Pentecost - Prophet Moses</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Wednesday 7th	Nativity of the Theotokos
6.30pm	Vespers
Saturday 10th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 11th	<i>12th Sunday after Pentecost - St Theodora</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Tuesday 13th	<i>Exaltation of the Life-giving Cross</i>
6.30pm	Vigil and elevation of the Cross
Saturday 17th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 18th	<i>13th Sunday after Pentecost - St Eumenios</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Saturday 24th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 25th	<i>14th Sunday after Pentecost - St Sergios of Radonezh</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy

Principal Services for October

<i>Saturday 1st</i>	<i>Annual Pan-Orthodox Pilgrimage to Holywell</i>
10.30am	Prayers of Preparation and Divine Liturgy followed by lunch and procession to the Well
	Vespers (<i>no Vespers at Saint Barbara's</i>)
3.00pm	
Sunday 2nd	<i>15th Sunday after Pentecost - Hieromartyr Cyprian</i>
10.00am	Matins followed at 11.00am by the Divine Liturgy
Saturday 8th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 9th	<i>16th Sunday after Pentecost - Holy Apostle James</i>
10.00am	Matins followed at 11.00am by the Divine Liturgy
Saturday 15th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 16th	<i>Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council - Martyr Longinus</i>
10.00am	Matins followed at 11.00am by the Divine Liturgy
Saturday 22nd	
4.30pm	St Demetrios Commemoration of the Dead
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 23rd	<i>18th Sunday after Pentecost - Holy Apostle James</i>
10.00am	Matins followed at 11.00am by the Divine Liturgy
Thursday 27th	Protection of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos
6.30pm	Vespers
Saturday 29th	
11.00am	Cleaning Day at Saint Barbara's
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 30th	<i>19th Sunday after Pentecost - Apostles of the 70</i>
10.00am	Matins followed at 11.00am by the Divine Liturgy



The Joy of Remembering God

Selected Sayings of Saint Anthony of Optina

Thoughts

Do not be confused because dark thoughts often trouble you, for dark thoughts, like autumn clouds, come one after another and darken everything. But then they pass and the sky remains clear and pleasant. And so our thoughts wander, they wander around the wide world, but the mind remains planted in its place, and then it is quiet, and the soul becomes joyful. But our mind, from wandering here and there, becomes accustomed to the brief but often repeated prayer of Jesus, which may God grant you the habit of saying, and then your days will be bright.

Obedience

When Christ the Saviour Himself was obedient, it was not for a brief period of time, but unto death. Therefore, if we are always obedient we will always be happy. But to our sorrow, the cruel passion of self-love has made our will iron, i.e., unbending to obedience: often it seems to us that we are smart, and that we can see things better than others can, etc.

Irritability

You must make every effort to restrain yourself, so as not to acquire the unfortunate habit of losing your temper. This unbearable vice is not as noticeable in oneself as it is in others, and those who become angry over nothing are deserving of the fire of Gehenna.

Religious Feast Days

The continuation of our life is the continuation of God's mercy to man, and therefore birthdays and name days should be conducted not so much with noise and dissipated celebrations as much as with piety.

Communion

It is very salutary to nourish your soul with the Eternal and Holy Bread. If a person should die on the very day when he has communed of the Holy Mysteries, the Holy Angels will receive his soul into their hands, for the sake of communion, and he will pass safely through the heavenly toll-gates.

Self-will

It is impossible, in a short time, to acquire the habit of cutting off our will in word alone without the shedding of blood, i.e., without labours, since our previous life until now has passed in self-will.

If you sincerely desire to have freedom from the passions and from all spiritual ailments and blasphemous thoughts,

and learn humility, you must spit out all your rebellious pride and trample it with your own feet. Through this your youth will be renewed as an eagle, and from a self-willed and sinful man you will be made an Angel of God, or at least smaller than the smallest of the angels, i.e., without wings.

The World

The affairs of the world are so numerous that they could hardly be completed in a hundred years, and so important that they will not allow any kind of delay. To our misfortune, only God-pleasing works can be set aside without fear, some until morning, some until next year, and some even until old age, for which reason it often happens that they remain unfulfilled. I sincerely sympathize but cannot help in any way.

Can you place your hope in the world? Whom has it not deceived? To whom has it not lied? It promises much, but gives very little. Only those who hope in the Lord, according to the words of the Prophet David, do not sin, i.e., they are not deceived in their hope!

Prayer

I ask you to pray for those who have offended you, saying: "Lord, Who lovest mankind, forgive those who hate us and offend us, Thy servants (their names), for they know not what they do, and warm their heart to love us unworthy ones."

Blessing

That which is done with a blessing is greatly pleasing to God, so let us live that every small step of our lives is blessed.

God's Reward

In the depths of His unfathomable wisdom, the Lord does not always fulfil our petitions immediately, but puts them off for some time. However, He does not leave unrewarded anything good done in His name. If He does not reward the mother and father, then He generously rewards their children and descendants, for the Lord is righteous, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Spiritual Welfare

Whoever overcomes one passion conquers one demon, and whoever overcomes two passions conquers two demons, and whoever forsakes ten or more passions defeats a whole regiment of demons and from then on will enjoy spiritual peace.

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## *The 100 Club*

*We welcome subscribers to the 2016/7 annual 100 club. A £10.00 annual donation enters you into the monthly draw at which the winner receives half the available 'pot' and the church receives the other half. Please speak to Michael or Rachel Aristodemou to support this valuable contribution to our church funds.*

## Some thoughts on Reading the Bible

Just a few passing thoughts on the Bible and its place in our lives as Christian Orthodox.

First, do we read the Bible or does it merely gather dust at the back of a bookshelf somewhere? Indeed do we actually have a copy of "The Greatest Book ever Written"? Well, we can hardly call ourselves Christians if we never open its pages any more than we can if we never go to church.

So, should we treat it like a novel - read it from end to end and then take it to the local charity shop?

Or should we treat it like a sort of horoscope - flick it open and see what verse our finger lands on?

Worse, should we think it has magically floated down from Heaven like some Protestants and cultists seem to believe?

Well, I hope none of us, if we take our faith anything like seriously, will act and think like the above.

The Bible is the work of human hands, guided by the Holy Spirit, and it may teach us many things if we open our eyes to its contents: A history of Creation and God's often rocky relationship with His chosen people; the Incarnation of His Son, Jesus Christ and His call for us to imitate Him so that we might find salvation; the story of the infant church and the missionary activities of the Apostles; and finally a foretaste of the end of all things.

Having got the Bible in our hands and blown off the dust, we can begin to read it - but how? Well, a good start is to follow the church calendar which offers us a bite-sized daily pair of readings from the New Testament (*see page 7*). These are taken from the various letters to the Early Christians (*e.g*

*Galatians*) or the account of the growing church (*Acts*) together with a small portion of one of the Gospels (*Life of Jesus*).

These texts take but a few minutes to read and if we read them in the morning (how often I have been told there isn't enough time then) we can reflect on what we have read throughout the day. What might they teach us? To become more like Christ, to learn that our lives are not as 'good' as we think they are and to find ways to improve. To change our attitudes to our family and our neighbours - to see Christ in every one of them. There is simply not enough space here to tell of all the discoveries we might make in the pages of the Bible - it can and should become a daily journey of exploration as important as our regular attendance at Worship.

Once we develop the habit of 'opening the pages' we can become a bit more adventurous: Try the following: Read the Gospel of St Luke from end to end or dip into the Prophets; perhaps we might look at the beauty of the Psalms of King David. We will find great joy in memorising portions of scripture as we similarly memorise prayers that are special to us.

Our faith becomes real to us as we unlock the pages of our Bibles; as we worship in the church and receive the Sacraments; as we pray day-by-day in our icon corners (you have got one, haven't you?); and as we live our lives filled with the grace bestowed by the Holy Spirit, we are transfigured! Blessed be God.

*Fr. Pancratios*



### Friday 30th September

is an important day for us at St Barbara's for we carry the church to Holywell for the Pilgrimage on the following day. Your help is needed to carry the necessary items to Holywell and to clean and set up for the day.

Please see Fr. Pancratios if you are able to help from 11.00 am to about 2.30pm - bring a sandwich and socialise!

### A Date for your Diary

*(Yes, another one!)*

We are planning a grand cleaning day on **Saturday 29th October** in preparation for the visit of Archbishop Gregorios. Spiders to chase, brass to polish - there'll be plenty to do. Bring a sandwich and make a day of it and we'll end with Vespers for all who stay the course!

### Church School

*Church School resumes in the Refectory at the end of the Divine Liturgy from the Second Sunday of September. It is our duty as parents and godparents to bring up our children in the Christian Faith. They will not learn their faith unless we bring them to Divine Liturgy and church school regularly. For your souls' sakes and theirs, do not fail any of your little ones.*



## From the Patericon

*(An edifying story from the Desert Fathers of old)*



Abba Agathon once walked to town to sell his modest handicrafts and saw a leper lying by the road. The leper saw him passing by and asked him: “Where are you going?”

“I’m going to the city” answered Abba Agathon, “to sell my handicrafts”

Then the leper said: “Show mercy, carry me there.”

The elder then lifted him up and carried him to the city on his back. When they got to the city, the leper said: “Lay me down where you’ll be selling your handicrafts,” and the elder did so.

When the elder sold one of his crafts, the leper asked: “How much did you sell that for?”

“For such and such an amount,” answered the elder.

Then the leper said: “Buy me some bread,” and the elder bought him some.

When the elder sold another item, the leper asked again:

“How much did you sell that for?”

“For such and such an amount,” answered the elder.

Then the leper said: “Buy me some more bread,” and the elder bought him some more.

When Abba Agathon at last barely sold the rest of his handicrafts and wanted to leave, the leper asked: “Are you leaving?”

“I am,” answered the abba. Then the leper said: “Show mercy, take me back to where you brought me from,” and the elder did so.

Then the leper said: “Blessed are you of the Lord, Agathon, in Heaven and on Earth.”

The abba turned back to look at the leper, but no one was there. This was an angel of the Lord that came to test him.

## How Will I Know?

### *Words of Wisdom from Saint John the Goldenmouthed +407*

How do I know, you will ask me, that if I confess my sin I will erase it?

I will respond: In the Holy Scriptures you will find both him who confessed and erased his sin, as well as him who did not confess it and was condemned.

Cain murdered his brother due to jealousy. At some point later, God asked him: “Where is your brother Abel?” (Gen. 4:9). He asked him not because the all-knowing God was unaware, but because He wanted to lead the murderer to repentance.

However, Cain answered: “I don’t know. Am I perhaps my brother’s keeper?” (Gen. 4:9). Fine! You were not his guardian; but why did you become his murderer? You were not looking after him; but why did you kill him? How do you dare respond in this manner?

This is why God said to him: “The blood of your brother cries out to Me from the earth” (Gen. 4:10).

God punished him immediately; not so much on account of the murder, but more so on account of his insolence.

Because God does not abhor the person who sins as much as the person who is shameless. And so, even though Cain was filled with remorse later, he was not forgiven because he did not confess his sin first. He was punished because of his shamelessness. He was condemned because he did not confess his sin. Had he confessed it, he would have erased it.

Now look at how another person confessed his sin and erased it. The prophet and king David fell into two

sins: adultery and murder. A prophet fell into adultery; a pearl ended up in the mud.

What did God do? He sent the prophet Nathan to him, who said: “My king, I want to ask your opinion on a certain matter. There was a rich man and a poor man. The rich man had many sheep and calves. The poor man had nothing other than a small lamb. Some day, a visitor came to the rich man; but instead of

slaughtering one of his own animals, he slaughtered the poor man’s lamb in order to provide hospitality to his guest” (2nd Kings 12:1-4).

What was the king’s reaction? Assuming that it was someone else, he became enraged and said to Nathan: “This person must be put to death!” (2nd Kings 12:5-6).

What a harsh ruling! This is how people are.

They easily condemn others exceedingly strictly and harshly.

“You are the person who did this,” responded Nathan. And David at once admitted: “I have sinned before the Lord” (2nd Kings 12:13).

He did not say, “Who are you to criticize me? Who told you to speak to me with such impudence? How dare you accuse me?” Rather, he senses his sin, and he admits: “I have sinned before the Lord.”

This is why Nathan assured him: “And the Lord has forgiven your sin.” God forgave him because he blamed himself. He erased his sin because he confessed it valiantly.

Confession, therefore, is the first road leading to repentance.



# A Scripture Reading Calendar for September

|           |                                  |                         |                                                             |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1         | 2 Corinthians 4:1-12             | Matthew 24:13-28        | St Drithelm, Hermit of Melrose (c700)                       |
| 2 Fast    | 2 Corinthians 4:13-18            | Matthew 24:27-33,42-51  | St Hieu, Abbess of Tadcaster (c657)                         |
| 3         | 1 Corinthians 1:3-9              | Matthew 19:3-12         | St Cuthburga of Wimbourne, Abbess (c725)                    |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>1 Corinthians 9:2b-12</b>     | <b>Matthew 18:23-35</b> | St Rhuddlad, Virgin of Llanrhyddlad, Anglesey (7thC)        |
| 5         | 2 Corinthians 5:10-15            | Mark 1:9-15             | St Bertin, Monk of Luxeuil (698)                            |
| 6         | 2 Corinthians 5:15-21            | Mark 1:16-22            | St Bega of St Bee's Head (7thC)                             |
| 7 Fast    | 2 Corinthians 6:11-16b           | Mark 1:23-28            | St Alemund, Bishop of Hexham (781)                          |
| 8         | Philippians 2:5-11               | Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 | St Cynfarch, Missionary in Wales (5thC)                     |
| 9 Fast**  | 2 Corinthians 7:10-16            | Mark 2:18-22            | St Bettelin, Hermit of Croyland (8thC)                      |
| 10        | 1 Corinthians 2:6-9              | Matthew 10:37-11:1      | St Frithestan, Bishop of Winchester (932)                   |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Galatians 6:11-18</b>         | <b>John 3:13-17</b>     | St Deiniol, Bishop of Bangor (Wales, 6thC)                  |
| 12        | 2 Corinthians 8:7-15             | Mark 3:6-12             | St Eanswythe of Folkestone (c640)                           |
| 13        | 2 Corinthians 8:16-9:5           | Mark 3:13-21            | St Wilfrida of Wilton, Abbess (c988)                        |
| 14 Fast   | 1 Corinthians 1:18-24            | John 19:6-20,25-35      | St Cormac of Cashel, King and Bishop (908)                  |
| 15        | 2 Corinthians 10:7b-18           | Mark 3:28-35            | St Mirin of Bangor and Strathclyde, Bishop (620)            |
| 16 Fast   | 2 Corinthians 11:5-21a           | Mark 4:1-9              | St Ninian, Abbot of Candida Casa, Bishop of Whithorn (c432) |
| 17        | 1 Corinthians 1:26-2:5           | John 8:21-30            | Ss Stephen and Socrates, Martyrs at Monmouth (4thC)         |
| <b>18</b> | <b>Galatians 2:16-20</b>         | <b>Mark 8:34-9:1</b>    | St Higbald, Abbot & Hermit in Lincolnshire (690)            |
| 19        | 2 Corinthians 12:10-19           | Mark 4:10-23            | St Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury (690)                 |
| 20        | 2 Corinthians 12:20-13:2         | Mark 4:24-34            | Martyr Eusebia of St Cyr, Abbess (c731)                     |
| 21 Fast   | 2 Corinthians 13:3-14            | Mark 4:35-41            | St Mabenna, Daughter of St Brychan of Brecknock (6thC)      |
| 22        | Galatians 1:1-3,20-2:5           | Mark 5:1-20             | Sr Dinooth of Bangor-is-Coed, Abbot (c542)                  |
| 23 Fast** | Galatians 2:6-10                 | Mark 5:22-24,35-6:1     | St Adamnan of Iona, Abbot (704)                             |
| 24        | 1 Corinthians 4:1-5              | Matthew 23:1-12         | St Berchtun, Abbot of Beverley (8thC)                       |
| <b>25</b> | <b>2 Corinth. 1:21-24; 2:1-4</b> | <b>Luke 5:1-11</b>      | St Cadoc, Abbot of Llanancarfan (c575)                      |
| 26        | Galatians 2:11-16                | Luke 4:38-44            | St Meugat of Cornwall, Founder of Churches (6thC)           |
| 27        | Galatians 2:21-3:7               | Luke 5:12-16            | St Sigebert of East Anglia, King & Martyr (635)             |
| 28 Fast   | Galatians 3:15-22                | Luke 5:33-39            | St Cornwall of Scotland Priest (c630)                       |
| 29        | Galatians 3:23-4:5               | Luke 6:12-19            | St Kyriakos of Palestine, Hermit (556)                      |
| 30 Fast   | Galatians 4:8-21                 | Luke 6:17-23a           | St Nidan of Anglesey (c610)                                 |

\* Wine is allowed on this day

\*\* Wine & Oil are allowed on this day

\*\*\* Fish, Wine & Oil are allowed on this day

**Sundays are shown in Bold**

† Note there are more readings on certain days - If you have no other Calendar, the Diocesan Hemerologion serves as a guide. Alternatively search the internet and download **Menologion 3.0** - a useful perpetual calendar

## Board Meeting (& Trustees) Meeting

Members of the Parish Board and Parishioners are called to attend at the Parish Room on  
**September 11th**

**This meeting will deal with our Pilgrimage to Holywell and our Archbishop's visit in November.**

Items for inclusion on the Agenda should be with the Secretary 14 days before the meeting.

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**Priest in Charge: Very Rev'd Protopresbyter Pancratios Sanders**

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**President: Anthony Knox,**  
1 Willow Lea, Mollington, Chester. CH1 6LW

**Treasurer: Robert Gale**  
40 Ffordd Parc, Bodnant, Prestatyn. LL19 9LJ

**Secretary: Presbytera Anna Sanders**  
18 Shannon Close, Saltney, Chester. CH4 8PJ

The Divine Liturgy is served at the Church of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr each Sunday at 11.00am and on all the major Feasts.  
Fr Pancratios is *normally* in church during the day on Tuesdays & Thursdays. Please phone him before setting out to avoid a wasted journey.  
Church (Sunday) School is held after the time of Communion every Sunday of each month during school term times (except on major feasts).

Pastoral Visits should be arranged by contacting Fr Pancratios.

Weddings, Baptisms, Receptions etc., by arrangement with Father Pancratios.

Confessions before the Divine Liturgy or after Vespers and at other times by arrangement.

Catechism Classes by arrangement with Fr Pancratios.

**ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ - ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΓΑΛΗΣ ΒΡΕΤΑΝΙΑΣ**

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Membership Subscription 2016 (7/16)</b><br/><b>Greek Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr</b><br/><b>Overleigh Cemetery, Overleigh Road, Chester. CH4 7HW</b></p> <p>Title: _____ Initials: _____ Surname: _____</p> <p>Address: _____<br/>_____</p> <p>Postcode: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Membership is £5.00 per person, per month. Membership applies to those of 18 years of age and over. Fees may be waived for the unwaged.</p> <p><b>It is preferable for memberships to be paid by Standing Order on a monthly basis on the First Day of each month. St Barbara's Bank details: Barclays Bank: Sort Code 20-20-46, Account number 33974146. Further details can be found on <a href="http://www.stbarbara.org.uk/membership">www.stbarbara.org.uk/membership</a></b></p> <p>Alternatively, membership can be paid using the envelopes available at church at £5.00 per month or £60.00 annual subscription.</p> <p><i>I am a UK taxpayer intending tax to be reclaimed on the enclosed donation made under the Gift Aid scheme (please delete if not applicable)</i></p> <p>Signature: _____</p> <p><i>Please return to the Treasurer with your gift::</i></p> <p><b>John Gale, 40 Ffordd Parc, Bodnant, Prestatyn. LL19 9LJ</b></p> <p>Please note that only Orthodox Christians in good standing may hold full membership and be permitted to vote at general meetings. Non-Orthodox Christians are most welcome to subscribe as friends and supporters of the Greek Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr, Chester.</p> |
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Please print, cut out, and sent with your donation to the Treasurer. The community is grateful for every contribution received so that the work of the church may continue. In the present difficult economic climate such gifts are a true sacrifice. Please remember that there is a reduction for those not in work and that it is also possible to make your giving quarterly.

Please remember, if you are a UK taxpayer we can recover the tax that you have paid on your contribution to the work of the church – but only if you fill in an envelope (to be found at the church door) and place your gift in it. Especially in these difficult times, the church needs your financial support. As I'm sure you understand, work on our church building is ongoing and expensive, besides our ordinary day-to-day expenses. May God bless you all for your support in these matters and may you seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in forming a regular and responsible habit of giving for the work of His Church.