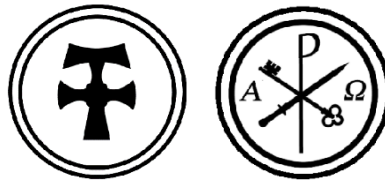


**Monastery of St. Antony and St. Cuthbert**  
**The Brotherhood of the Glorious Apostles Peter and Paul**



**September 2021**



**The Elevation of the Holy Cross**

**14th September**

From Fr. Philip:

## Happy new Church year!

*"I worship the Creator of matter who became matter for my sake, who willed to take His abode in matter, who worked out my salvation through matter. Never will I cease honouring the matter which wrought my salvation! I honour it, but not as God... [but] because God has filled it with His grace and power." (On the Divine Images 1.16)*  
St. John of Damascus

September comes and we dig out the Volume 1 of the Menaion and the Church Year begins all over again.

Each year starts with a series of prayers for the protection of the Environment.

Sitting where I am right now my eyes can wander from a beautiful blue sky to distant hills, to bright green hills and then the darker woodlands that surround and encase the Monastery and right close in I can see a spider spinning her web. It is a beautiful sight. Indeed, the view I have is of one of England's most beautiful. We nestle in a designated site of outstanding natural beauty; it is a nature reserve and a National Park and in each one of these ways it lives up to expectation. We are immensely fortunate. Our night sky is one of the darkest in England with the result that the Milky Way slashes across the heavens in radiant beauty. The trees are smothered in lichens which proclaim the unpolluted nature of the air here. The sounds are those of birds, grasshoppers, the sheep, cattle and deer that share the space with us. Only occasionally do we hear an engine.

And yet all is not well with the "Environment" (or the "Creation" as we Christians call it).

It is clear, from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recent report that the fires, high winds, flooding, and droughts which the world has experienced in the last few months, that climate change is something that all of us will have to consider, and act upon, and live with, from now on and probably for generations to come.

The Creed starts with these words: "I believe in One God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth..."

Creation is the handiwork of God the Holy Trinity. It is stunningly beautiful, stunningly complex, stunningly immense, stunningly mysterious and stunningly unknowable. As such the Creation reflects and becomes a Temple of the majesty and the glory of God, His endless creativity and His love.

We have got used to drying our hands or wiping our noses on paper towels and throwing them away. God's handiwork must not be treated in the same way. Creation is intended to be multiple use, self-healing, endlessly recyclable, a series of intricate systems that keep the whole biosphere alive and one that keeps us alive, and not just alive but prospering in a magnificent Garden of Eden, walking with God in the cool of the evening.

The Creation is God's gift to us.

Who would want to spoil a gift from God? Who would want to trash the Temple of God and who wishes to damage something which sustains us and nurtures us?

Some people think the situation is already hopeless. It is not. We believe in One God... Almighty ... able to do as He wishes... what He made He can repair... and He will repair it if we claim our "dominion" (caretaker role) over the whole of Creation. The Creator will use us as agents of that repair.

Don't despair: begin with prayer.

As with much prayer we come to realise that we, ourselves, are the answer to our own prayer. Strengthened by the Holy Spirit we can fight against the sins of greed, carelessness, unconcern for others, self-centredness, and so on that has allowed this to happen.

Replacing ourselves, at the centre of everything, with God, regaining our role as stewards and not ravishers of Creation, living in obedience to the Creator, and not in blind and frenzied hedonism, will help us to begin to cooperate with the Creator in repairing the damage successive generations have (largely innocently) wrought on His creation.

Repentance. Turning to Christ. When we return to Christ we are healed. When we return to Christ, the things that are around us also return to Christ and are healed. Just like our sanctification, our theosis, requires time, effort, guidance and prayers so does the sanctification of the Cosmos. In the scriptures the Lord says: "behold I make all things new" (*Revelation 21*) this renewal starts in your heart as you come to know Him as the Alpha and the Omega.

This is ordinary Orthodox Christianity. It is nothing new. Our specific role, as Christians, is to pray, to receive the sacraments (themselves spiritual-material things) to unite ourselves with Christ. In the Divine Liturgy we find the means of sanctifying the whole of creation. In our prayers we make intercession for those who have the learning and skills to begin to repair. Some of us will be those people, the rest have other tasks we can take on and make our own. The Orthodox teaching of universal asceticism helps us realise that our true treasures are spiritual not material. We don't look to regress to a pre-industrial world but to progress to one in which people are holy, healthy, joyful, honoured and filled with love.

### **Guests:**

The Monastery is now open to guests.

Please email Br Paul (Guestmaster) to book your stay:

[brother.paul@orthodoxmonastery.co.uk](mailto:brother.paul@orthodoxmonastery.co.uk)

### **Prayer List Names:**

You are always welcome to send us names for the Proskimide, for memorials and for general prayers. The monks commemorate a weekly prayer list in their cells and the names are read out during the Paraklesis service. The best way is to email/ Text or write:

[brother.paul@orthodoxmonastery.co.uk](mailto:brother.paul@orthodoxmonastery.co.uk)

We make no charge of course! However, we do welcome your prayers for us.

### **LIVE STREAM:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfWMAefJYqFEZkYiK2WmeEw/videos>

Or look for “Archimandrite Philip” on YouTube

### **Donations**

Thank you to everybody who has supported us with your prayers, financially and with your help here at the monastery. We have a way to go yet before we reach our target on Just Giving:

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/monastery-fundraiser-august-2021>



## **Environment:**

We are very much at the end of summer now; the trees are rapidly changing colour already and the bracken is falling into piles of biomass! The bees have done very well at increasing their colony and they are clearly getting ready for the winter. The honey stores are already very bountiful although we are leaving the honey with the bees for the first year.







Animals: we now have two cockerels (awaiting some hens!), 12 quails and three turkeys.



## Other News:



We have been busy with visitors the past month which is our busiest time. We were blessed to receive brothers and sisters from Luton (who shared a mission parish with Brother Paul). We were also blessed to receive Fr Michael Cerghit and his family from our parish in Doncaster.

Between 27th-30th of September we held our 'monastic experience weekend'. Five men attended as well as some visiting speakers and friends. A blessed and fruitful time was had by all involved and we hope to offer the same event next year.

Some of us made an appearance this year at the Minsterley show. It was a very positive visit with lots of local connections made and it was a blessing to meet and be with our neighbours.







## From the Saints

The soul cannot know peace unless she prays for her enemies. The soul that has learned of God's grace to pray, feels love and compassion for every created thing, and in particular for mankind, for whom the Lord suffered on the Cross, and His soul was heavy for every one of us.

The Lord taught me to love my enemies. Without the grace of God we cannot love our enemies. Only the Holy Spirit teaches love, and then even devils arouse our pity because they have fallen from good, and lost humility in God.

I beseech you, put this to the test. When a man affronts you or brings dishonor on your head, or takes what is yours, or persecutes the Church, pray to the Lord, saying: "O Lord, we are all Thy creatures. Have pity on Thy servants and turn their hearts to repentance," and you will be aware of grace in your soul. To begin with, constrain your heart to love enemies, and the Lord, seeing your good will, will help you in all things, and experience itself will show you the way. But the man who thinks with malice of his enemies has not God's love within him, and does not know God.

If you will pray for your enemies, peace will come to you; but when you can love your enemies - know that a great measure of the grace of God dwells in you, though I do not say perfect grace as yet, but sufficient for salvation. Whereas if you revile your enemies, it means there is an evil spirit living in you and bringing evil thoughts into your heart, for, in the words of the Lord, out of the heart proceed evil thoughts - or good thoughts.

The good man thinks to himself in this wise: Every one who has strayed from the truth brings destruction on himself and is therefore to be pitied. But of course the man who has not learned the love of the Holy Spirit will not pray for his enemies. The man who has learned love from the Holy Spirit sorrows all his life over those who are not saved, and sheds abundant tears for the people, and the grace of God gives him strength to love his enemies.

Understand me. It is so simple. People who do not know God, or who go against Him, are to be pitied; the heart sorrows for them and the eye weeps. Both paradise and torment are clearly visible to us: We know this through the Holy Spirit. And did not the Lord Himself say, "The kingdom of God is within you"? Thus eternal life has its beginning here in this life; and it is here that we sow the seeds of eternal torment.

Where there is pride there cannot be grace, and if we lose grace we also lose both love of God and assurance in prayer. The soul is then tormented by evil thoughts and does not understand that she must humble herself and love her enemies, for there is no other way to please God.

What shall I render unto Thee, O Lord, for that Thou hast poured such great mercy on my soul? Grant, I beg Thee, that I may see my iniquities, and ever weep before Thee, for Thou art filled with love for humble souls, and dost give them the grace of the Holy Spirit.

O merciful God, forgive me. Thou seest how my soul is drawn to Thee, her Creator. Thou hast

wounded my soul with Thy love, and she thirsts for Thee, and wearies without end, and day and night, insatiable, reaches toward Thee, and has no wish to look upon this world, though I do love it, but above all I love Thee, my Creator, and my soul longs after Thee.

O my Creator, why have I, Thy little creature, grieved Thee so often? Yet Thou hast not remembered my sins.

Glory be to the Lord God that He gave us His Only-begotten Son for the sake of our salvation. Glory be to the Only-begotten Son that He deigned to be born of the Most Holy Virgin, and suffered for our salvation, and gave us His Most Pure Body and Blood to eternal life, and sent His Holy Spirit on the earth.

O Lord, grant me tears to shed for myself, and for the whole universe, that the nations may know Thee and live eternally with Thee, O Lord, vouchsafe us the gift of Thy humble Holy Spirit, that we may apprehend Thy glory.

### **St Silouan the Athonite**

### **From the Services**

Thou didst stretch out Thy hands upon the Cross, staining Thy Divine fingers with blood, and delivering Adam, the work of Thy hands, O Master, from the hands of the slayer, in that Thou alone art good and lovest mankind.

O all-good Christ our God, Who wast beaten with a reed, Thou signest a manumission for me who have been enslaved to deception.

When Thou wast crucified, Thou didst shake creation; and when Thou didst die, Thou didst slay the serpent. Blessed art Thou, O Christ, God of our fathers.

### **From the canon to the Holy Cross, Tone I (Friday)**



# **Thyatira Midland Ecclesiastical Seminary**

## **2021/22 CERTIFICATE COURSE**

### **in Orthodox Studies**



#### **A one-year introductory course covering:**

- Church history
- Worship
- Doctrine and practice of the Church
- Introduction to Holy Scripture.

#### **10 Sessions:**

Beginning 9th October 2021, continuing on the second Saturday each month to 9th July 2022.

#### **Venue:**

##### **The Estia**

Magnet Centre, Park Approach,  
Birmingham, B23 7SJ, UK.

#### **Contact:**

The Registrar at [melangell.tmes@gmail.com](mailto:melangell.tmes@gmail.com)









## **Support:**

### Us supporting you:

Send us requests for prayer.

1. We are happy to remember people in our prayers, in the proskimide, artoklasias (lytias) and so on.
2. Come and stay to join us in prayer and our life for a few days.

### You supporting us:

There are several ways to support the Monastery:

1. Please pray for us.
2. Through giving us good ideas!
3. Through direct giving. See below. You can find details on the website but also by making donations to our charity: THE STIPERSTONES TRUST Registered charity number: 1077603.

## **Making donations:**

We understand that times are hard and may well become much harder. If you can support what we are doing financially that would be very welcome – but please do not feel that you “must”. We DO need money and we will need to expand the monastery as more people are asking to stay and space is limited: realistically we are full.

We also need to build new paths, cells, a larger church (the current one gets very cramped), heating that works, we also need to eat, and we will need to feed our guests once we reopen.

The best way you can help us with these things is by setting up a small monthly Standing Order. This is extremely easy. If you have Internet Banking it is five minutes work. Otherwise you could complete the attached form and send it to your Bank Manager. We will spend your money VERY carefully and be delighted to show you what we are doing in person.

To make this easy I have included a Standing Order Form at the end of the Newsletter.

You may also consider completing a Gift Aid form too. This increases your gift by 25% (so £1 becomes £1.25)

## Address and Contacts:

The Monastery  
Pontesbury  
Shropshire  
SY5 0SJ

07847 866978  
www.orthodoxmonastery.co.uk  
info@orthodoxmonastery.co.uk

### Standing Order Form.

To the Manager

Bank Address:


I/we hereby authorise and request you to debit my/our

Account Name*	
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### Account Details

Sort Code	Account Number	Amount	Frequency
			Monthly

Beginning date	End date:
/ /	/ /

And credit

The Stiperstones Trust, Lloyds Bank, Pride Hill, Shrewsbury. SY1 1DG

Sort Code: 30-97-62	Account: 02291524
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Quoting reference: The Stiperstones Trust

Signed:	Date:

Name in Block Capitals:	
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\* Please ensure that the actual name on/of the account is included in this box so that we can accurately match your payment to our records.

**Please print this page off and send it to your Bank Manager.**

**Gift Aid:**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel/ mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

2. If you are a UK taxpayer, please tick the box below to join the Gift Aid

scheme. Doing so will mean that we can claim up to 25p extra for every £1 you give, at no additional cost to you!

☐

Yes, I am a UK taxpayer. Please treat all donations I make to The Stiperstones Trust as Gift Aid donations until further notice. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations to charities and Community amateur sports clubs (CASCs) in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference. The Stiperstones Trust will claim 25p on every £1 donated. Please let us know if you want to cancel the declaration, change your name and/ or address or no longer pay enough tax on your income and/or capital gains.

Signed:

Date:

**Please print off this page and send it to: Br. Deiniol, The Stiperstones Trust, Gift Aid, The Monastery, Pontesbury, SY5 0SJ**

**Gift Aid Information** When the Stiperstones Trust receives a donation from a UK taxpayer, we are entitled to claim an amount of tax (calculated at the basic rate of income tax in that year) paid on that donation. Once you have given your permission for us to do this on your behalf (by filling in this Gift Aid form), there is no need for you to do anything else. All that is required is that you must be a taxpayer and that you would have paid or will pay enough Income and/or Capital Gains Tax to cover all the Gift Aid claimed on all your donations to all charities and Community amateur sports clubs in that tax year. Please note that it is your responsibility to pay any difference. The amount of tax we claim will be 25% of the total value of your donations in that tax year. Furthermore, if you are a higher taxpayer, you are also entitled to claim the difference between the basic rate which we will claim and the amount of tax you have actually paid. For further details on how you can do this, please contact your tax office. If your tax situation changes and your gifts will no longer be eligible for the Gift Aid scheme, please contact us and we will amend your record accordingly.



## **What else do we need?**

### **You might have just what we are looking for!**

- Orthodox Theological Books (we are hoping to extend the Library) in English
- Service Books
- Incense making equipment
- Charcoal making equipment
- Trailer for the 4x4
- Building materials and tools
- Fencing materials (Fence posts, pig wire, chicken wire etc.)
- Timber (treated and untreated) for building both inside and out.
- Paint (White emulsion and whitewash)
- Electric wire (both outside and inside wire)
- Wellington boots
- Cement Mixer
- Unwanted garden equipment
- Bricks, paving slabs and other masonry

**In most cases we won't be able to collect these things (unless you live nearby ...) but it may give you an excuse to come and visit!**

### **We also need your expertise once the lock down ends:**

#### **Can you:**

- Catalogue books
- Build paths,
- Lay concrete,
- Put up walls (the lean-to needs to be weatherproofed).
- Put up internal walls and plaster,
- Unblock locked doors,
- Put up fences,
- Do carpentry,
- Build new buildings