



*“As many as have been Baptised into Christ have put on Christ: Alleluia!”*

## **ORTHODOX FAMILIES' NEWSLETTER**



*Welcome to the newsletter for families of the  
Louth and Grimsby parishes. Issue No. 2: June 2012*



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We've started this newsletter to help us keep in touch with all our families,  
and give support when bringing up children in the warmth of the Orthodox Church family.  
We welcome your ideas and questions, either in person or by email to [orthodox@btinternet.com](mailto:orthodox@btinternet.com)

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**SAINTS ALIVE!** *On the Sunday after Pentecost we celebrate All Saints Sunday, and on the following Sundays, we remember those Saints especially revered in countries around the world. As Orthodox Christians, we believe that the Saints are with us here, now, always. When we go into the Church, we are surrounded by the Saints and all the angels. Even if there are only one or two people worshipping there, the Church is full to bursting with countless Saints – angels, apostles, martyrs, desert-dwellers, and monastics, and of course Saint John the Forerunner and the Most Holy Theotokos – and they are glorifying God with us: a truly wonderful congregation! In our worship and in our lives, we try to get to know them and follow their example of total love for God.*



### **OUR OWN SAINTS**

*It is the custom in Orthodoxy for every child to be dedicated to a saint, or to a family saint. So does your child know about his or her own Saint, their stories, and why they are special to God? Do you include a prayer to their Saint at bedtime? Is there an icon of their Saint in your icon corner?*

*Do your children know to pray to them in times of need? The Saints showed great courage, so the children can be sure that the Saints understand how to be brave and true and to love God, all day and every day. Telling children about their Saint can help make each child's Saint their Best Friend*

**IMPORTANT NEWS!** *It's time for another party! So you are invited to come with your children to Divine Liturgy at St Aethelheard's Church on Sunday June 17th, 2012 which this year is the day we celebrate the Saints of Great Britain . After the Liturgy we will have a feast and then we will all go down to the Meridian Leisure Centre where we have hired the activity room with bouncy castle and play equipment. We had great fun the last time we did this; the children all got on fine and the mums, dads and grandparents had a chance to have a good old natter. Do come!*



Here is a lovely idea from an Orthodox education blog\* for making an 'Icon Tree'. It's a way for children to get to know both their own Saint and everyone else's in the family too.

Following the design in the picture, draw a tree on a big piece of paper (the back of a piece of wallpaper is quite good) and colour it in. Then paste an icon of Christ in the centre. Below the tree, write Christ's words "I am the true vine + Ye are the branches".

Then you can have fun finding icons of everyone's saint by searching on the web for icons you can download and print out. Paste these on the tree to make up the family. Let the children be creative with lots of glue and glitter and cut-outs of leaves and flowers. At the top you could write "God Bless the ..... Family" All you need to do then is to strengthen the top edge, punch holes and thread some string through to hang it up. Where to put it? In the kitchen, perhaps, or wherever you eat together. Or at the top of the stairs so that everyone sees it as they go up to bed at the end of the day. \*<http://orthodoxeducation.blogspot.co.uk/search/label/Saint>.

Not sure about your child's Saint? Visit [oca.org/fs](http://oca.org/fs) and click on 'Lives of the Saints'. You will find icons of most of the Saints, their stories and the date we remember them.

### A PRAYER TO YOUR SAINT

Pray to God for me, O Holy Saint (Name), who is special to God: I turn to you, as you come quickly to help me and you pray for my soul.

From the Pocket Prayer Book a publication of the [Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America](http://www.orthodoxchristianity.org/).

### GETTING TO KNOW ABOUT ICONS

The subject of icons, and their visual 'language', is a huge one. But it is worth getting to know something about them so that we can understand better what they are telling us. The Icon of the Sunday of All Saints over the page shows our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ seated above the throne of heaven surrounded by the Saints. These include the Archangel Michael and other Angels, the Theotokos and St John the Forerunner (the Baptist), the Apostles, Bishops, Great Martyrs, Ascetics and Monastics. On each side of the throne are Adam and Eve, bowing in reverence to Christ. They are joined by the Saints, who are lifting their hands in worship to the King of Glory. At the lower left of the icon is the Patriarch Abraham who has a righteous soul in his bosom, as told in the story of Lazarus and the rich man in the Gospel. At the lower center is the Good Thief who was crucified with Christ. On the lower right is the Patriarch Jacob, who is holding the tribes of Israel of whom he is the ancestor. The more we look at icons, the better we understand them, as we learn to recognise familiar figures and features. The colours mean something: this icon is rich with gold, which is the colour for heaven, and red, which is the colour associated with Saints, and especially martyrs.