

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

# VIRAL BULLETIN

15 August 2021

The Blessed Virgin Mary

*Please forward this to anyone you know who might not be in our Google group.*  
For links to information about us please visit: [www.northburychurches.org.uk](http://www.northburychurches.org.uk)



18th century Russian icon  
Virgin and (very grown-up) Child with two saints

St John's, Bury St Edmunds  
Photograph: Myke Clifford

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# The Blessed Virgin Mary

**Isaiah 61.10-end Galatians 4.4-7 Luke 1.46-55**

In many European countries, with others all over the world, the 15<sup>th</sup> August is a day of great celebration, even with carnival processions, to honour the Blessed Virgin. This feast has only lately been restored (by Common Worship) into our calendar, after its removal in the Protestant Reformation.

The Book of Common Prayer, that we still have, kept the dates of Mary's own conception and birth, together with the Annunciation, her Purification, and the Visitation (to Elizabeth). However, her Assumption was considered to have 'so many fabulous and superstitious stories devised about it', 'grounded only upon uncertain fables ... that the Church of England did by public authority abrogate this feast of the Blessed Virgin's Assumption'.

Other titles for this day are the 'Dormition' or 'Falling asleep of the Blessed Virgin Mary'. The various beliefs handed down never implied the absence of death. Most of us know the date of a mother's birthday and of her death, when that has happened. If we, the Church, are the Body of Christ, then Mary is our (spiritual) mother too. It is often said that when Christ on the cross gave his mother into the care of his beloved follower, that disciple represented the whole body of believers.

This country was once 'Mary's Dowry', but the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Protestant reformers, in sweeping away many undesirable practices (such as purchasing time off Purgatory) also rather threw out the baby with the bathwater. The old devotional ways became seen as acknowledging the superior authority of the Roman Church; this would constitute treason towards King Henry VIII and his successors, with the harshest reprisals.

Doctrinal disputes raged in the very early centuries of the Church, but reverence for the Blessed Virgin existed in worship well before the great Councils. In AD 431, at the Council of Ephesus, Mary was declared 'Theotokos' or 'God-Bearer', often rendered 'Mother of God'. E.L. Mascall has written:

'I do not think that we can understand either the full meaning of the Incarnation or the unique position held by Mary among all created beings, unless we reflect calmly and reverently upon the fact that for nine months Mary carried God incarnate within her as she went about her work.'

The fact of that is indeed historical. But the many proliferated unscriptural stories about Mary have fallen into the trap of trying to make theological concepts into historical fact. It's a matter of belief that Mary was totally pure, as would be

fitting. Even John Calvin said she ‘not only gave birth to our Lord, but bore him in her heart and whole mind and spirit’, she being ‘filled with many virtues’. The extended belief in Mary’s perpetual virginity simply expresses a belief in unchanged purity – ‘unsullied’ is a word used. So a development of this is that her flesh should never be subject to corruption after death. This also parallels her Son; after all, his earthly body had been formed from hers, making her humanly unique. So the legends illustrate this.

Much has been written of the Incarnation, including theories that Christ’s divinity became reduced or limited during his time on earth, as it were sinking only to a human level. Had this been so, he could surely not have done what he did. It is preferred theology to say his purpose was to lift humanity to a divine level. From his Crucifixion/Resurrection/Ascension the way was opened for all of us, but it has seemed appropriate that his Mother, who had received particular divine favour, should be brought to particular honour in the Kingdom. To affirm this, belief in her Assumption (and for some Coronation) has solidified into apparent historical fact. For many centuries it has been a pious belief; it did not need to be made dogma by Rome in 1951.

The simple devotion accorded to Mary is ‘the outcome of practical spiritual experience of thousands, or rather millions, of faithful servants of God and lovers of Christ’. It has been said too that the greatest difference between Protestant and Eastern Orthodox Christianity is the Protestant lack of devotion to Our Lady. In all the denominations actual worship is for God alone in Trinity. But for the Orthodox and Catholic there is singular reverence (‘hyperdulia’) offered to Mary, above the ‘dulia’ offered to the saints. She has, sadly, been the cause of past division. In 1957 Pope John XXIII said: ‘Alas, through the ages the seamless garment of Our Lord has often been torn, and it is still torn now.’ Yet it is thankfully true that in our day there is more rapprochement, with Mary as one of the points of agreement.

It has often been noted that suppression of devotion to Mary reduces also that given to Jesus. His divinity is safeguarded by devotion to her, from men and women alike who have asked for her prayers and patronage. More of our churches are dedicated in her name than any other (two in this diocese to the Assumption). Most churches have a Lady Chapel, while pilgrimages at Walsingham attract thousands.

This year we can keep Mary’s feast on the Lord’s Day. The legends of his arriving at her deathbed surely hold a recognisable truth about that ineffable bond between them. Bishop Thomas Ken’s hymn ends:

Heaven with transcendent joys her entrance graced,  
near to his throne her Son his Mother placed;  
and here below, now she’s of heaven possest,  
all generations are to call her blest.

*Marianne Atkinson*

### 11th Sunday after Trinity 15th August THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Lackford
8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Parish Communion (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Parish Communion (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Morning Prayer (BCP)	Timworth
10.00am	worship@weststow	West Stow
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham All Saints
11.00am	Parish Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
6.00pm	Evening Prayer (BCP)	Culford

### Tuesday 17th August

8.30am	Morning Prayer	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham St Martin
6.00pm	Meditation	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

### Wednesday 18th August

8.30am	Morning Prayer	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

### Thursday 19th August

9.30am	Eucharist (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
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### Friday 20th August Bernard of Clairvaux

7.30am	Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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### 12th Sunday after Trinity 22nd August

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Parish Communion (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Parish Communion (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Culford
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham St Martin
11.00am	Parish Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
12noon	Holy Communion (BCP)	Flempton

## CHURCH on ZOOM

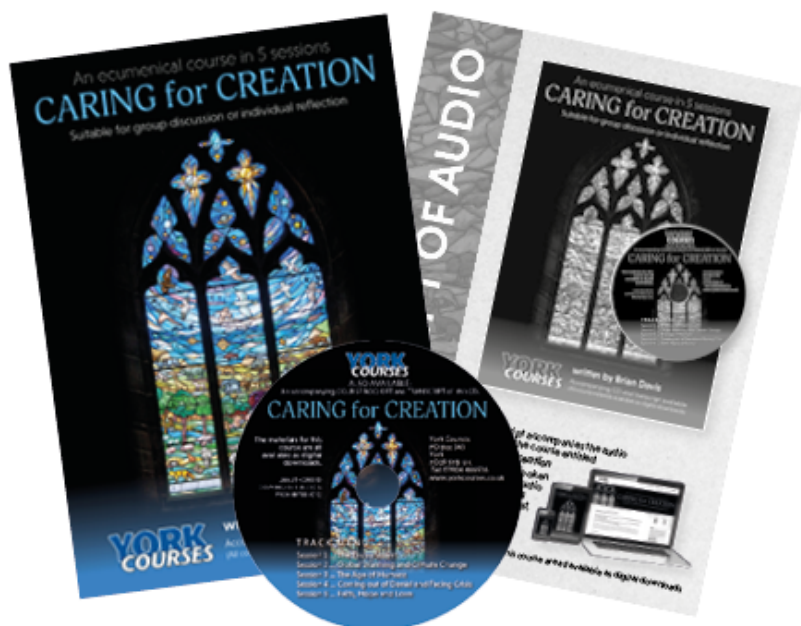
Everyone is welcome to join our **Church Zoom Gathering** at 11am on Sundays

Please email Claire for the link at [clairerose1953@gmail.com](mailto:clairerose1953@gmail.com)

## LIVE-STREAMED WORSHIP

The **Parish Eucharist** is live-streamed from St John's every Sunday at 11am on Facebook and is later posted onto our website

[@StJohnsBSE](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsBSE)  
[www.northburychurches.org.uk](http://www.northburychurches.org.uk)



*As COP26 approaches, our course  
for the Season of Creation  
September 2021 is*

# **Caring for Creation**

“an informative course... **Caring for Creation** digs deeper into issues, and is particularly good at calling out misplaced Christian attitudes”  
(*Church Times* review)

**Written by Brian Davis**

The human race is facing its greatest challenge:  
the threat to the environment and climate change.  
Faith in our Creator God should enable us to see what is actually happening.

*At Fornham St Martin on Tuesdays at 10am*

*At St John's, Bury St Edmunds on Wednesdays at 7pm*

*At All Saints', Bury St Edmunds on Thursdays at 2.30pm*

*At St George's, Bury St Edmunds on Saturdays at 10am*





# Mosaic Middle East

"I worry for the future of the Christians in Iraq. I pray that God will save us from what could happen in the future."

Rev'd Canon Faez Jirjees, St George's Church, Baghdad



*Rev'd Canon Faez Jirjees of St George's Church: an Oasis of God's grace*

These are sobering words from Rev'd Canon Faez Jirjees, the only Anglican priest in Baghdad. According to Faez, Christians are the minority amongst the minorities in Baghdad. Stripped of the many rights of other citizens, and unable to return home to northern Iraq, Christians are some of the most vulnerable populations in a city torn apart by sectarian violence and bloody government protests.

Enter the Coronavirus pandemic ...

"The situation for Christians in Baghdad was bad," says Faez, "then the Coronavirus made it worse. We were working hard at St George's Medical Clinic to improve the situation, but the virus restricted our work."

The clinic provides up to 2,000 patient treatments per month. These treatments are FREE to all who need it, regardless of ethnicity or religion. The Coronavirus pandemic restricted the work of the clinic, yet, at great risk to themselves, the medical team pressed on.

“Iraqi Christians are finding it tough living in Baghdad and want to leave. In coming years, many more may leave. I worry about the future of the Christian people in Iraq. I pray that God will save us from what could happen in the future.”

### Praying for a brighter future

*"I hope fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters can come home to Iraq one day and reunite."*



Luna is an Assyrian Christian woman living in Baghdad.

She tells us with hurt in her eyes: “We were living in peace until 2003. There was brotherhood between different ethnic and religious groups.”

Refusing to give up their faith, Luna and her husband fled their home and found refuge at St George’s Church. Here they receive food, financial support and medical care. Luna hopes for peace in Iraq so that those living as refugees can return home.

As for herself, she says: “I am of Assyrian background. My family has been here thousands of years. We do not want to leave.”

Mosaic Middle East receives support from more than one parish in the Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry. It is the main funder of St George’s Medical Clinic in Baghdad. Thanks to generous donations from supporters, Mosaic Middle East has been able to provide £60,000 so far to fund the clinic for the first 6 months of this year.

All the activities at St George’s come under the auspices of the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf.

# *Coming up ...*

## **AUGUST**

*Thursday 19*    ALL SAINTS', BURY ST EDMUNDS  
**A Service of Love and Thanksgiving for Robin Osborne**  
2.00pm

*Monday 23*    ST JOHN'S, BURY ST EDMUNDS  
**Funeral Eucharist for Sally Pettitt**  
11.30am

*Thursday 26*    ALL SAINTS', BURY ST EDMUNDS  
**Induction of the Revd Andy Miller** as Team Rector and  
**Licensing of the Revd Ali Miller** as Team Vicar  
7.30pm  
~ with Bishop Graeme and Archdeacon David

## **SEPTEMBER**

*Monday 20*    ST EDMUND'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH CRYPT  
**Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District**  
Annual General Meeting, 7.30pm

## **NOVEMBER**

*Saturday 13*    ST GEORGE'S, BURY ST EDMUNDS  
**Grand Christmas Fayre**  
11.30am - 2.30pm

refreshments *including* hot food and drink ~ a grand raffle ~ terrific tombola ~ win a bottle of wine game ~ 'new and unwanted' gift stall ~ homemade cakes and preserves and much more ...

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*Don't forget to let the 'Viral Bulletin' have details of forthcoming events at your church in the Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry.*



# A message of thanks

from Heather Corbell

chair of Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District

A general thanks to everyone for presence and support on Sunday at the Churches Together Summer Celebration. Thanks to Marcus and co for the staging & sound. It was good to have so many churches not just represented, but others actually there! Thanks for showing your presence with banners etc.

Thanks to all who participated in any particular way. It's important that the public, (the mayor, council etc) including churches, know about the practical, and emotional work, and the reasons for, the Bury Drop-In, and Fair Trade. Thanks to Richard & Kathy for their interviews.

It was good to have a very well pitched piece of drama and puppetry on the Armour of God. It was suitable for everyone and, though not as many children were about as last time (when we had schools involved and settled hot weather) it 'show-cased' great all-age input. All of us can enjoy something light-hearted and visual. Thanks to Ali & Kelvin, & Hannah for that.

Thanks to Fr David, and to Robert Green for comment and prayers. It was good to have the actual place mentioned, with 'Abbey 1,000' representatives present.

It was great to be able to all worship together. A very special thanks must go to Will, who played piano through most of the afternoon, and to his side-kicks, Paul & Steve, and also Paul D. from the Salvation Army. Thanks to those who introduced hymns /and songs, and to the Quakers for their group with the 'Peace...' song.

Thanks to stewards, First Aid + Prayer gazebo(Andrew C), and 'red badge wearers' also to 'Good News for Everyone' - (used to be 'Gideons') for the New Testaments, I think 55 were taken. I was relieved that, when it rained briefly, umbrellas went up almost in unison, but there was no mass exodus! Most of all we did proclaim the centrality of Jesus Christ ... in history ... for eternity ... and in our own personal lives today. He's the King!

*Heather*

# Colourful wildlife-friendly borders ...



## ... at St George's Church

*With thanks to Val Gagen for the photographs*

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### **DO YOU HAVE ANY PHOTOS ... ?**

*... of your church and people  
which you can submit  
(with permission from anyone depicted)  
as an email attachment?*

Items for the VIRAL BULLETIN are very welcome  
and can include photographs and illustrations.

Please send them to Adrian Mann:  
[adrian.mann@btinternet.com](mailto:adrian.mann@btinternet.com)