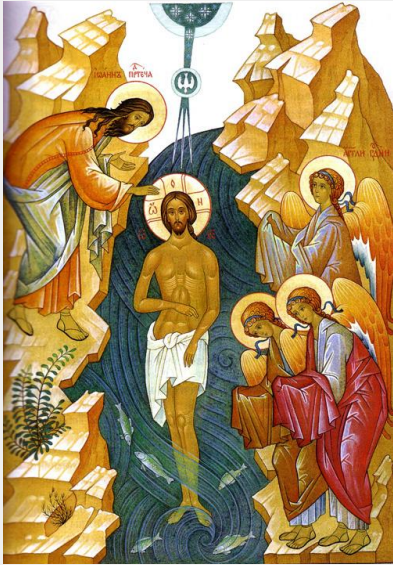


# The Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen Colchester

Newsletter | January 2024



The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles & Ireland | Metropolitan HE Silouan Oner



## *The Holy Theophany of Our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

The Feast of Theophany commemorates Christ's baptism by John the Forerunner in the River Jordan, and the beginning of Christ's ministry on earth and is the fulfillment of the Christmas Season, which starts on December 25 and ends on January 6. In mystic commemoration of this event, the Great Blessing of Water is performed on this day, and the holy water so blessed is used by the local priest to bless the homes of the faithful. At Theophany the Holy Trinity appears to humanity clearly for the first time and the Father's voice is heard from Heaven, the Son of God is incarnate and standing physically in the Jordan, and the Holy Spirit descends on Him in the form of a dove. This feast is also sometimes referred to as Epiphany by English-speaking Orthodox Christians, but that name more properly refers to the Western Christian feast falling on that same day and commemorating the visit of the Magi (wise men) to the infant Jesus. Originally, there was just one Christian feast of the shining forth of God to the world in the human form of Jesus of Nazareth. It included the celebration of Christ's birth, the adoration of the wise men, and all of the events of Christ's early life, such as his circumcision and presentation to the temple as well as his baptism by John in the Jordan. It seems highly likely that this feast, like Pascha and Pentecost, was understood as the fulfillment of a previous Jewish festival, in this case the Feast of Lights. ~ *Father Mark* ~

## NEWS AND VIEWS + NEWS AND VIEWS + NEWS AND VIEWS

**Iconostasis** - The arrival and setting up of the timber structure of our new iconostasis will be slightly delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. We anticipate installation will now take place sometime in the new year. *Progress on the icons themselves is continuing apace with much of the funding needed to pay for them now secured. Glory to God.*

**Father Mark** will be attending the Churches Higher Education Liaison Group (CHELG) residential conference in Derbyshire early in January. It is hoped that the conference will be very helpful to Father Mark in his role as Orthodox Chaplain at the University of Essex.

**PROSPHORA BAKERS NEEDED!** We urgently need volunteers to take on the important task of baking the prospora bread for the Divine Liturgy. The baking of bread is an absolutely essential task in the parish, for without the bread there can be no liturgy. At the moment we are struggling to meet the requirements of our growing community. If you feel you can commit to form part of a team of people to perform this important duty then please speak to Khouria Hilary. We have several people who can advise and give lessons.

*Today You have shown forth to the world, O Lord, / and the light of Your countenance has been marked on us. / Knowing You, we sing Your praises. / You have come and revealed Yourself, / O unapproachable Light. Kontakion of Theophany tone 4*

**On December 19th, His Eminence, Metropolitan Silouan, visited the Cathedral of Nativity of the Theotokos and Royal Martyrs of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR) in London on the invitation of His Grace,**



**Bishop Irenei of London and Western Europe.** The two hierarchs celebrated the Divine Liturgy on the occasion of the Feast of St Nicholas (according to the Russian calendar) and afterwards attended a lunch with many of the faithful in attendance. Warm words of friendship were exchanged and thanks were expressed for the close friendship between the two churches. Glory to God for our cooperative efforts to bring the True Orthodox Faith to the spiritually hungry people of these islands!

## Synaxis of the Ecumenical Teachers and Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom: January 30

Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom: During the eleventh century, disputes raged in Constantinople about which of the three hierarchs was the greatest. Some preferred Saint Basil (January 1), others honored Saint Gregory the Theologian (January 25), while a third group exalted Saint John Chrysostom (November 13).

*Dissension among Christians increased. Some called themselves Basilians, others referred to themselves as Gregorians, and others as Johnites.*

*By the will of God, the three hierarchs appeared to Saint John the Bishop of Euchaita (June 14) in the year 1084, and said that they were equal before God. "There are no divisions among us, and no opposition to one another."*

*They ordered that the disputes should stop, and that their common commemoration should be celebrated on a single day. Bishop John chose January 30 for their joint Feast, thus ending the controversy and restoring peace. **Kontakion Tone 2: O Lord, You have received the Holy and God-proclaiming heralds, the crown of Your Teachers, / for the enjoyment of Your good things and for repose; / for You have accepted their sufferings and labors above every sacrifice, / for You alone glorify Your Saints.***



**From the Fathers** ~ Food is not evil, but gluttony is. Childbearing is not evil, but fornication is. Money is not evil, but avarice is. Glory is not evil, but vainglory is. Indeed, there is no evil in existing things, but only in their misuse. **St Maximos the Confessor**

We are grateful to those continuing to support our church by regular or occasional gifts; may God bless you. Bank details: Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen: Registered Charity No: 1192469  
IBAN: GB05BUKB20226780219819 Sort  
Code: 20-22-67 Account No: 50349364  
Appeal Account No: 80219819

### Regular Service Times:

**Saturdays:** Great Vespers 4:30pm

**Sundays:** Matins & Holy Liturgy from 9:45am

Weekend services at St Martins. Additional (weekday) services usually at St Helen's Chapel unless otherwise stated.

St Helen's Chapel is open daily for prayer and pilgrimage.

### Additional Services: January 2024

**Saturday Jan 6: Feast of Theophany | Hours and Holy Liturgy | 9.30am St Martin's Church. (Procession & Great Blessing of Waters on Sunday Jan 7 after Holy Liturgy)**

**Friday 19 January: Hours & Holy Liturgy | St Makarios | 9.30am St Helen's Chapel**

**Thursday 25 Jan: Hours & Holy Liturgy | St Gregory the Theologian | 9.30am St Helen's Chapel**



### **St Martin's Church, West Stockwell Street, CO1 1HN**

### **St Helen's Chapel, Maidenburgh Street, CO1 1UB.**

Both temples are off the High Street, but accessible from there only on foot. Nearest car park NCP: Nunns Road, CO1 1EJ. **Confessions:** Saturdays 5pm, after Vespers or by arrangement. **Holy Marriage, Holy Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc: by arrangement.**

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