



Great Lent and Holy Week

At the end of April we will be in Holy Week and once again on the threshold of Great and Holy Pascha, the Feast of Feasts! Beginning on the evening of Palm Sunday and continuing through the evening of Holy Tuesday, the Orthodox Church observes a special service known as the Service of the Bridegroom. Each evening service is the Matins or Orthros service of the following day (e.g. the service held on Monday evening is the Orthros service for Holy Tuesday). The service is named after the figure of the Bridegroom in the parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13.) The term Bridegroom calls to mind the intimate closeness of love. It is significant that the Kingdom of God is compared to a bridal feast and a bridal chamber. **The Christ of the Passion is the divine Bridegroom of the Church.** The imagery suggests the final union of the Lover and the beloved. The title Bridegroom also suggests the second coming, the Parousia. In Holy Tradition, the parable is a symbol of the Second Coming; and speaks to the need for constant spiritual vigilance, watchfulness and preparedness. Armed with these practices, developed in our Christian life of fasting, prayer and almsgiving, we are enabled to keep the divine commandments and receive the blessings of the age to come. The apolytikion "Behold the Bridegroom comes at midnight...", which is sung at the beginning of the Orthros of Great Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, reminds the faithful of that essential command; to watch and wait for the Lord, who will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. **May your fast be blessed and fruitful!**

Father Mark

NEWS AND VIEWS + NEWS AND VIEWS + NEWS AND VIEWS



FUNERAL - On March 7, at Clacton cemetery chapel, Father Mark served the funeral for long time friend of the parish ADAMOS ATHANASSIOU, who reposed in the Lord at the end of February, aged 93, after a long struggle with dementia and failing health. He was lovingly and faithfully cared for at home throughout these long, often difficult years by his daughter Dawn and son Chris, with help from health and social care professionals. We were very pleased to welcome his family recently at St Martin's for the memorial on the 40th day after his repose. Eternal Memory! Αιώνια η μνήμη!

Project Committee - The Project Committee has agreed a contract with well known heritage builders Bakers of Danbury to carry out a survey and repairs to the roof and to restore the Victorian parquet and tile floor inside the church. Various other repairs, such as to internal areas of plaster will also be made. We expect the roof survey to commence soon and the other more disruptive work after Holy Pascha. This phase will be followed by more electrical work, including a security (CCTV) system, porch lighting and power outlets around the church.



CHRISTIAN GIVING ~ It takes a great deal of money to maintain, run and develop our fast growing parish. There are all sorts of costs involved: heating, lighting, building maintenance, candles, wine, clergy expenses, insurance, books - the list is very long indeed! All of this needs to come from our own community and people are often surprised to discover that the parish receives no money from the archdiocese. Please consider making a regular contribution by monthly direct debit alongside your Sunday collection giving. If you have questions, speak to Nick Taylor, our treasurer.



Iconostasis - The process of staining and oiling our iconostasis is pretty well finished. The stains and oils used bring out the beautiful grain and carved details in the oak structure. The six large icons (Christ, Theotokos, the Archangels Gabriel and Michael, St Martin and The Forerunner) are nearly complete and we hope may be installed early in April. We ask for your continued prayers for a successful conclusion as the final details are completed. Please pray for Silviu our carpenter and for Sophronia our iconographer, and their families. Holy Saint Martin, pray to God for us!

From the Fathers: *"Now all things have been filled with light, both heaven and earth and those beneath the earth; so let all creation sing Christ's rising, by which it is established."*

St. John of Damascus - Paschal Canon

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 ALL 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.

Services: April and Holy Week 2024

Every Wednesday until April 24 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts - 6pm at St Martin's Church. To continue until the week before Holy Week

Every Friday evening until Friday April 19 (Fifth Friday) Salutations of the Akathist Hymn to the Mother of God - 6pm at St Helen's Chapel.

+HOLY WEEK & PASCHA

Great & Holy Monday, 29 April

Bridegroom Matins, 6pm

Great & Holy Tuesday, 30 April

Bridegroom Matins, 6pm

Great & Holy Wednesday 1 May

Service of Holy Anointing, 6pm

Great & Holy Thursday 2 May

The Twelve Gospels, 6pm

Great & Holy Friday 3 May

Vespers & Deposition 12pm | Matins & Procession 6pm

Great and Holy Saturday 4 May

Liturgy of St Basil 9:30am, Acts of the Apostles & Midnight Office from 10pm,

+Great & Holy Pascha 5 May

The Resurrection of Our Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ, Holy Liturgy

1am, Agape Vespers 3pm,

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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