

# Holy Orthodoxy: What a glorious Faith, ever-old, ever-new!

## Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Christian  
Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland  
Metropolitan: His Eminence Archbishop Silouan  
NEWSLETTER 229 MARCH 2016



### WEEKDAY SERVICES AT ST HELEN'S

WEDNESDAY 9 MARCH, FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

9.30 AM HOLY LITURGY

WEDNESDAYS 16, 23, 30 MARCH

9.30 AM VESPERS & LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED

FRIDAY 18 MARCH

6.00 PM AKATHIST TO THE MOTHER OF GOD

FRIDAY 25 MARCH, ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

9.30 AM VESPERS & LITURGY OF ST JOHN

6.00 PM AKATHIST TO THE MOTHER OF GOD

## He's in! - First Antiochian Metropolitan of Britain enthroned in London



His Eminence, accompanied by Deacons Gerasimus (Damascus) & Alexander Haig (Poole)

All from the Parish who witnessed the Enthronement on 27 February of the first Antiochian Archbishop of the Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland will not only have enjoyed it as an impressive event, but also been aware of the historical significance of the occasion.

It was not just that there were numbers of dignitaries present, Orthodox and non-Orthodox—Greek Archbishop GREGORIOS, Russian Metropolitan ELISEY, Anglican Bishop JONATHAN GOODALL representing his Archbishop, RC Bishop PAUL HENDRICKS representing his Cardinal, and others too.

One felt it a momentous moment in the life of Orthodoxy in this country. The Antiochian Church in these Islands, perhaps a bit moribund these past few years, is receiving an injection of new life under a comparatively young Arch-pastor.

But you are right: we must not burden our already-loved Metropolitan SILOUAN with too many expectations. We must not pin our hopes on him personally to rebuild God's Church, to bring order into the chaos of the whole Orthodox Church here.

Our hope must be in Christ, not in any man. Our corporate

and individual life must be in the Holy Spirit, not in the shadow of any fallible man, however genuinely charismatic.

Now we await his first visit to his people in Colchester, which may be soon or maybe a while yet, with all his other parishes.

In the meantime we have to look very seriously at our Parish's financial support for the new Bishop the Church of Antioch has sent to us.

This year we shall likely need to boost our funds considerably to support him—and to take our own Parish into a new chapter of its history with a larger and more suitable building than beloved St Helen's, requiring more finance!

May the prayers of St Theodore, who came from Tarsus in the Church of Antioch to Canterbury in the 7th century inspire our new Bishop, our whole Diocese, and - yes! - our own dear Parish.

God bless us all.

Father Alexander

**20** This month the Parish celebrates its twentieth anniversary. After a preliminary meeting on 24 February, we celebrated our first services on 2 and 3 March 1996. In November 2000 we came to St Helen's Chapel. We thank God for all his goodness over the whole period, and look forward to the years ahead in the confidence of receiving his richest blessing, by the prayers of the Holy Mother of God and St Helen, Patron of our Parish and City and Church.

HOLY LITURGY  
CLACTON  
Saturday  
19 March  
Commemn of  
S Theodore  
the Recruit  
10.00 am

## Sunday 6 March: Feast of the DISCOVERY OF THE TRUE CROSS OF CHRIST BY ST HELEN

Reception of a relic of the True Cross into her Chapel

The holy relic of the True Cross we have been given has been kept in the house until now, bringing a blessing upon our household.

It will now be taken into St Helen's Chapel after the Holy Liturgy on 6 March, being the feast of the Discovery of the True Cross by St Helen, to be venerated by the faithful.

She went to search for the Cross, probably in AD 326, and found it in a cave. Over the years they cut it up into many pieces - some larger ones, but mostly tiny, tiny ones such as ours - and distributed it around the world. Our piece, seemingly authenticated in southern Italy, was generously presented to us by Dr John Ashdown-Hill MBE (see Newsletter for last December).

Come and join in the Procession to present it in her Chapel.

## Lent, properly called The Great Fast

This year Lent begins on 14 March—and, counting in Holy Week, the Fast ends on Holy Pascha, 1 May.

It is essentially a time of discipline, *ascesis*. We attempt to give ourselves to more fasting, more prayer, more worship in church. A leaflet will be available on the table to help you.

We avoid meat and dairy products, and in general fish and oil. We try to spend more time in prayer and meditation—you may find something good to read on our lending shelves.

We should also try to get to church more frequently. Wednesdays at 9.30 am is the Liturgy of the Presanctified. Fridays at 6.00 pm is the Akathist to the Mother of God.

But also try to get to church every Sunday for Mattins at 9.45 am and the Liturgy of St Basil at 10.30.

On the day before Lent begins, on Cheesefare Sunday, we have a short form of Forgiveness Vespers immediately after Liturgy. During Lent we should do to Confession.

It all makes a rich spiritual diet, preparing us carefully and joyfully for Holy Pascha.

## St Helen's Chapel, Maidenburgh St, High St

St Helen's is 200m down behind the George Hotel in the High Street, but accessible from there only on foot. By car: leave Middleborough Roundabout (between dual carriageways Westway and Balkierne Hill), to Northgate, go straight along St Peter's Street to Castle Park; continue round the bend, up into Maidenburgh Street. The nearest car park is Nunns Road NCP, off St Peter's Street.

Saturday: Great Vespers usually 4.30 pm (check before coming)  
Sunday: Mattins 9.45 am (or Hours 10.15 am), Divine Liturgy 10.30 am

Confessions: Saturday 5 pm, after Vespers, or by arrangement  
Holy Marriage, Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc: by arrangement

Parish Priest: Father Alexander (Alistair) Haig

17 Maidenburgh Street, Colchester CO1 1UB

Tel: 01-206-530-530 Mob: 07-947-047-201 Eml: parishpriest@orthodoxcolchester.org.uk  
Rdr Andreas Moran, 6 Woodlands, Welshwood Park CO4 3JA Tel: 01-206-865-697  
Churchwardens: David Davies 01-473-745-167 Dusan Radunovic 01-206-762-553

The Parish of St Helen is Registered Charity No. 1134418

Bank account: Sort Code 20-22-67 Account No. 50349364

Parish Website: <http://www.orthodoxcolchester.org.uk>

At St James Anglican Church, Beatrice Rd, Clacton-on-sea CO15 1LE  
Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday of month 10.00 am

## The People Column

CONGRATULATIONS to the following children who have been baptised recently:

- SOFIA CAIAN of Maldon, daughter of GHEOR-GHE and DANIELA, in December.
  - SOPHIA IORDACHE of Highwoods, daughter of GABRIEL and LAURA, in December.
  - DAVID CAJVAN of Abbots Road, son of COSTEL and DIANA, in February
- God bless them all and their families.

ALEXANDER STAMATIADIS of East Hill was baptised in January and married to ELENA DRAGALESCU in February, both ceremonies in St Helen's. God's blessing upon them both.

READER ANDREAS MORAN has retired from his University teaching-post in Law, and we pray for him a future of joy and fulfilment. We wish him and LYDIA every good wish and Many Years!

THE CHURCH IS ALWAYS OPEN DURING THE DAY: on Sundays normally from about 8.30 am and on weekdays from before 10.00 am - 9.00 am if there is a Holy Liturgy. It is worth saying this because it transpires that on the Sunday of the Annual Meeting we had the sad experience of a number of people trying but - inexplicably - *not being able to open the door of the church* at 10.30 am for the Holy Liturgy, leaving them thinking everything had been cancelled - when *the church was really open with many others definitely inside, praying and worshipping!* And it seems they sadly had to turn around and return home! Demons at work?

## A Word from the Fathers

**H**ow precious is the gift of the Cross! See how beautiful it is to behold! It shows no sign of evil mixed with good, like the tree of old in Eden. It is all beautiful and comely to see and to taste.

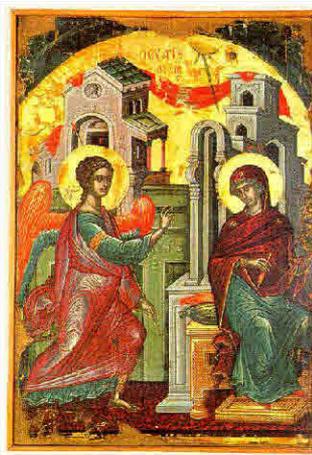
For it is a tree which brings forth life, not death. It is the source of light not darkness. It offers you a home in Eden. It does not cast you out. It is the tree which Christ mounted as a king his chariot, and so destroyed the devil, the lord of death, and rescued the human race from slavery to the tyrant....

Of old we were poisoned by a tree; now we have found immortality through a tree. Of old we were led astray by a tree; now we have repelled the treacherous snake by means of a tree. Indeed an unheard-of exchange! We are given life instead of death, incorruptibility instead of corruption, glory instead of dishonour.

How right Paul is to exclaim,

*"Far be it from me to glory except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

*St Theodore the Studite (+826)*



### The Annunciation

(25 March) is the first day of the Incarnation of Christ and one of the Great Feasts of the Church.

The Angel came to Mary with God's will, to which she humbly agreed. Our cooperation is used in our relations with God.

*Vespers & Liturgy of St John at 9.30 am.*

### PRAYER FOR HELP

#### REGARDING OUR CHURCH BUILDING

Lord Jesus Christ, Thou didst say,  
 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing,  
 ye shall receive' and  
 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name,  
 that will I do'.

Wherefore we dare to invoke Thee  
 and humbly beseech Thee:

hear our unworthy prayer  
 for the Chapel of St Helen  
 that we may continue to hold the same as now  
 for our worship of Thee  
 together with Thy Father  
 and the Holy Spirit.

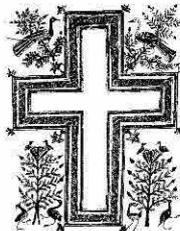
And if it seemeth good to Thee O God  
 that we establish another holy house  
 for the worship of Thy majesty,  
 guide us to fulfil Thy holy will

Reader ANDREAS

*Please use this prayer frequently at the present time.  
 Copies printed on card are available on request.*

### GIVING TO THE CHURCH

Archimandrite Philip Hall (Lincoln) will visit us 9/10 April to explain his parish's Thanksgiving Project, and to explain how regular Giving helps not only the parish and Diocese but also ourselves spiritually. Note: he has a winning way!



### 'Lights from Antioch'

The conference with our Archbishop, 23-25 May at Swanwick (Derby-shire) has just a few places left. Do come if you can: I am sure it will be well worthwhile. Details on the church table. The full cost for adults is £150, but I will find £50 per head of that. Let me know quickly.

## Reports for 2015 and looking forward to 2016

The Annual Meeting took place on Sunday 21 February. The Parish Priest recorded his thanks to Reader ANDREAS and Reader-in-training MARTIN, to the Churchwardens DAVID and DUSAN and all the Councillors, to HELEN and her Choir, to OANA and COLIN the cleaners, and to Khouria HILARY.

Secretary THEODORA reported three meetings in 2015-16. Treasurer DAVID presented the accounts for 2015, already audited and examined by the Church Council: these were approved by the meeting.

He also reported on the question of "stewardship" by the people of the parish, and Fr Alexander reported that Archimandrite PHILIP HALL of Lincoln will visit the parish for the weekend of 9/10 April to present the ideas that underlie the concept to the Council and people, including the idea of committed and regular giving, especially important now that we had to contribute more to the Diocese to support our new Bishop.

JON, Chairman of the Buildings Committee, told of their hopes for the future and explained that matters were still very much developing, but that there would likely have to be an Appeal to buy a property. A prayer was circulated, *printed left*, and worshippers were asked to use it at home.

Elections took place. Existing members were re-elected and MARTIN was added to the membership.

### MARCH DAYS

Mar	1	S David of Wales, Bishop
Wed	2	S Chad, Bishop of Lichfield S Nicolas Planas, Parish Priest in Athens
Fri	4	S Gerasimus of the Jordan
Sat	5	Saturday of Souls
Sun	6	Sunday of Meatfare, Sunday of the Last Judgment Discovery of the Precious Cross by S Helen
Tue	8	S Felix, Enlightener of East Anglia
Wed	9	Forty Martyrs of Sebaste
Fri	11	S Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem
Sat	12	Commemoration of All Monks & Nuns S Gregory the Dialogist, Pope of Rome
Sun	13	Sunday of Cheesefare, Expulsion of Adam from Paradise
Mon	14	First Day of the Great Fast (Lent) S Benedict of Nursia, Father of Monks in the West
Tue	15	Apostle Aristobulus, First Bishop in Britain
Thu	17	S Patrick, Apostle of Ireland S Withburga, Solitary at Holkham & East Dereham
Fri	18	S Edward the Martyr, King of England
Sat	19	Commemoration of S Theodore the Recruit
Sun	20	Lent 1, Sunday of Orthodoxy S Cuthbert of Lindisfarne, Fathers slain at Mar Saba
Fri	25	ANNUNCIATION TO THE MOTHER OF GOD
Sat	26	Synaxis of Archangel Gabriel, Saturday of Souls
Sun	27	Lent 2, S Gregory Palamas
Thu	31	S Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow, Apostle of America New Martyr Nun Maria Skobtsova of Paris

A fuller list of the month's Feasts and Fasts is available