

**Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the
British Isles and Ireland
Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East**

Charity number: 1192469

Sunday 26 July 2026. Issue 39.

Tone 7

**Saint Paraskevi the Venerable Martyr; Saints Hermolaus,
Hermippus and Hermocrates; Saint Oraiozili; Venerable Ignatius of
Steiron; Saint Appion; Saint Jerusalem; Venerable Gerontios of
Mount Athos; Venerable Jacob of Alaska; Venerable Symeon the
Archimandrite and Stylite**

**Epistle Reading
Galatians (3:23-4:5)**

Prokeimenon in Tone VI

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

Verse: Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry; O my God, be not silent unto me.

Brethren, before faith came, we were preserved under the Law, enclosed within, until the faith would afterward be revealed. The Law then was our tutor leading us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is no male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise. Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ much from the bond-servant, though he is lord of all; but he is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world: But when the

fullness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order to redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Alleluia.

Verse 1: Of Thy mercies, O Lord, will I sing for ever; from generation to generation shall I proclaim Thy truth with my mouth.

Verse 2: For Thou hast said, “Mercy shall be built up forever.” Thy truth shall be established in the heavens.

Gospel Reading Matthew (14:14-22)

At that time, Jesus went out and saw that there was a great crowd. He had compassion on them and healed their sick. When evening came, his disciples came to him and said, “This place is deserted, and the hour is already late. Send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” But Jesus said to them, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” They replied, “We only have here five loaves and two fish!” Jesus said, “Bring them to me.” Having instructed the crowds to sit down on the grass, he took the five loaves and the two fish. Looking up to heaven, he blessed, broke and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples distributed it to the multitudes. And so, everyone ate and was satisfied. His disciples gathered up twelve baskets full of what remained left over from the broken pieces. Those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Immediately after this, Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and told them to go ahead of him to the other side, while he would send the crowds away.

Troparion of the Resurrection. Tone 7.

By Thy Cross, thou didst destroy death! To the thief, Thou didst open paradise! For the myrrh-bearers, Thou didst change weeping in to joy! And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy.

St Paraskevi
Troparion

Your diligence corresponded to your name, Paraskevi, which denotes preparedness. Through faith you inherited the promised dwelling that was prepared for you, O prize-winning Martyr. Therefore you pour out cures and healings, and you intercede on behalf of our souls.

St Martin the Merciful
Troparion

In signs and in miracles thou wast renowned throughout the land of Gaul. By grace thou art a light for the world, O Martin, Bishop blessed of God. Deeds of mercy and compassion filled thy life with their splendours, teaching and wise counsel were thy riches and treasures, which still thou dost dispense freely to those who honour thee.

St Helen
Troparion

We behold thee, glorious Helen, with thy God-inspired son, in the joys of the kingdom of Heaven, and we magnify Christ, for he hath revealed to us thine honoured festival, giving light more brilliant than the sun. Therefore we cry in faith: O People, exalt Christ above all forever!

Theotokos Kontakion

O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the Creator most constant; O despise not the suppliant voices of those who have sinned, but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee. Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

St Paraskevi of Rome

Saint Paraskevi, the Parthenomartyr (July 26th), was born near Rome during the reign of Hadrian (117–138 AD) to the pious Christians Agathonikos and Politea. After praying earnestly for a child, they named her Paraskevi (“Friday”), honouring the day of Christ’s Passion.

She received an excellent secular and Scriptural education and became well versed in philosophy. Inspired by her Christian upbringing, she strengthened the faith of other women through her teaching. Although many noble families sought her hand in marriage, Paraskevi chose instead to dedicate her life to God.

After her parents died when she was 20, she inherited their wealth but sold her possessions to help the poor and support a community of devout women devoted to prayer, fasting, charity and preaching. At the age of 30 she left Rome to begin her missionary work, preaching throughout cities and villages despite growing persecution of Christians.

During the reign of Antoninus Pius (138–161), Paraskevi was brought before the emperor after complaints were made against her. Refusing his offers of wealth and marriage in exchange for renouncing her faith, she endured severe tortures, including a nail-lined helmet, burning torches and immersion in a boiling cauldron of oil and tar, from which she emerged unharmed. When Antoninus was blinded after approaching the cauldron, Paraskevi prayed and he was miraculously healed. In gratitude, he released her and temporarily ended the persecution of Christians. This miracle established her as an intercessor for those suffering from eye ailments.

After Antoninus’ death, persecution resumed under Marcus Aurelius (161–180). Paraskevi continued preaching and was arrested by the governors Asclepius and Tarasios. She survived being thrown into a snake pit, leading Asclepius and his court to embrace Christianity. Tarasios, however, imprisoned and tortured her before taking her to the Temple of Apollo, where she made the sign of the Cross and the idols were destroyed. She was condemned to death and, after offering a final prayer, was beheaded.

Many miracles were attributed to St Paraskevi after her martyrdom, including healings of the blind, the crippled, the demon-possessed and the infertile. Her relics were eventually transferred to Constantinople, where they continue to be venerated by the faithful.

Source: Orthodox Wiki

Holy Liturgy this week

Wednesday 22 July, 8:10am

Holy Myrrh Bearer Mary Magdalene, St Helen’s Chapel.