

+ Our Tenth Anniversary Year continues - Glory to the Holy Trinity! +

## Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Deanery

NEWSLETTER 122

JUNE 2006



# In the footsteps of the Saints....

**W**e have just had a lovely - though very short - holiday in Scotland, our first visit north of the border for sixteen years. It was great to visit at least a few relatives in my mother's homeland. You need to keep up with your family. A sense of 'family' gives us roots, stability, in the ever-changing scenery of early 21st-century life.

In just five days we managed to meet two families of cousins, catch up on the news, and see ourselves all sixteen years older. All in addition to the happy wedding of a nephew of Khouria HILARY.

And we even made some pilgrimages (actually, I wonder how we fitted everything in!), including a family one to my grandparents' grave in Gourrock on the lovely River Clyde - it sadly had been vandalised, but I think it can be repaired comparatively easily.

For pilgrimages proper we visited Whithorn in the extreme southwest of Scotland. This is where **St Ninian** went at the end of the fourth century. A disciple of St Martin at Tours in France, he was the first Christian missionary in Scotland, converting the southern Picts. He built his church - *Candida Casa*, the White House - in white stone or in stone plastered in white, and dedicated it to St Martin as early as 397.

It was wonderful to be in or near the spot where he lived and where he built the church in memory of his hero. We also visited the austere cave on an isolated sea-shore where he would go alone.

Our second pilgrimage was a brief one to **St Winning** at Kilwinning, where I still have cousins and where there are mediaeval monastery ruins. But very little is known of the Saint.

Next we prayed to **St Kentigern**, or **Mungo** ('dear one') as he is often known. Considered founder of Glasgow at the turn of the 6th/7th centuries, he is much honoured in the city, though in a generally protestant way of course. We visited the site of his shrine in Glasgow Cathedral.

While at the Cathedral we visited an acclaimed 'Museum of Religion'. However, expecting much, we were much disappointed, since it dealt rather more with other faiths, recently present in Scotland (Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, etc), rather than with the fascinating church history of a basically Christian country - a history almost set aside, sadly discounted.

Also in Glasgow we attended Sunday Liturgy at the **Greek Cathedral**. Father **CONSTANTINOS PAPAGEORGHIU** welcomed us, and we met some of his people.

We also attempted a short pilgrimage to **St Fillan**, in the countryside near Kilmacolm but too late found we had driven right past the holy well of this 8th century saint, and sadly did not have time to go back!

So a certain holiness was introduced into our rushed tour of the really beautiful and generally unknown south-west of Scotland. Certainly I prayed for you.

May this little letter help to introduce you to those many **Saints of the land of Britain**, who lived before the separation of East and West, whose love for Christ and the Holy Trinity, devotion to the Saints, and adherence to Holy Tradition was truly Orthodox.

May the prayers of all the British Saints inspire us to a closer following of Christ our God. It aids the stability of Orthodoxy here today to have a family sense of these Orthodox Saints, who give us roots in West as well as East. God bless you always.

**Father Alexander**

Coming to church in good time allows us to enter more deeply into the mysteries of our Holy Faith, on which we meditate in the first part of the Holy Liturgy. Come earlier to church.

### Weekday Holy Liturgy at St Helen's all at 9.30 am

- + THURSDAY 1 JUNE  
ASCENSION OF CHRIST
- + THURSDAY 22 JUNE  
ST ALBAN PROTOMARTYR OF BRITAIN
- + THURSDAY 29 JUNE  
SS PETER AND PAUL



#### ST CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

It was wonderful to see this head of the Saint in the current, fascinating exhibition in York (if you are going north before October, go to see it).

Did you know that St Constantine was first proclaimed (western) Emperor of Rome here in Britain, in York? It took place when his father Constantius died in York, on 25 July 306: Constantine was with him, and was immediately proclaimed Emperor by the troops. The 1700th anniversary of this event will be celebrated next month. The head, carved very soon after the proclamation, was originally set on a pillar, and was found in .....

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

St Helen's is 200m. down behind the George Hotel in the High Street. It is accessible from there only on foot. By car: leave Middleborough Roundabout (between dual carriageways Westway and Balkeine Hill), to Northgate; go straight along St Peter Street to Castle Park; continue round, up into Maidenburgh Street. Car Park, out of office hours: Oyster Court, close by in St Helen's Lane.

**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 after Vespers, or by arrangement  
Holy Marriage, Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc: by arrangement

#### St Fursey's Chapel, 111 Neville Rd, Sutton, near Stalham, Norfolk

Divine Liturgy: usually first Saturday of month 9.30 am

#### At St James Anglican Church, Clacton-on-sea

Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday of month 10.00 am

#### At the Chaplaincy Centre, University of Essex

Divine Liturgy: one Saturday per term 10.00 am

#### Parish Priest: Father Alexander Haig

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<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/orthodox.colchester>

#### Holy Liturgy ST FURSEY'S

Saturday  
10 June  
9.30 am

CLACTON  
Saturday  
17 June  
10.00 am



## Here and there

**CAROLINE HAIG:** Caroline is to be married on Friday 2 June to CHRISTOPHER LANE, a computer engineer in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. To my great regret, since Chris is not baptised, they are to be married in a registry office, in Greenwich. You will however wish them well, and no doubt say a prayer for them.

**ANDREAS XIDHAS** lived in a Jaywick home for the last few years of his life, near his daughter EROULA PHILBY. His family were able to get him to our Liturgy on one occasion, but he will not be known to many of you. However, with five children, twelve grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren, he leaves a considerable legacy - in Clacton, north London, Romford, Southampton, and even Canada. Our sympathy to them all. The funeral was in Clacton Cemetery Chapel, and burial there.

**MOTHER THEKLA** is the well-known Orthodox Nun at Whitby. In poor health, she has been in the care of the Anglican nuns there for a good while, and I understand that her companion nun has moved away, so I have ceased to send our Newsletter there. I did send it at their request for a couple of years, and we still remember Mother Thekla in our prayers.

**ST SERAPHIM'S CHURCH** at Walsingham is as you know very much in need of funds to buy it. We have already sent gifts from here, and are glad and grateful to hear that the Anglican Vicar of Great Bardfield (Fr ROBERT BEAKEN, formerly here in Colchester) is having a Coffee Morning in his Vicarage on Saturday 24 June, 10.30-12, for the appeal fund. If any of our people over that way can go, I am sure they will be very welcome.

**ST FURSEY'S** has been able to acquire a small set of Holy Doors which had originally been in the

## Our Parish Feast: "A good time was had by all"

I think this year's feast of SS Constantine and Helen was as good and enjoyable as any.

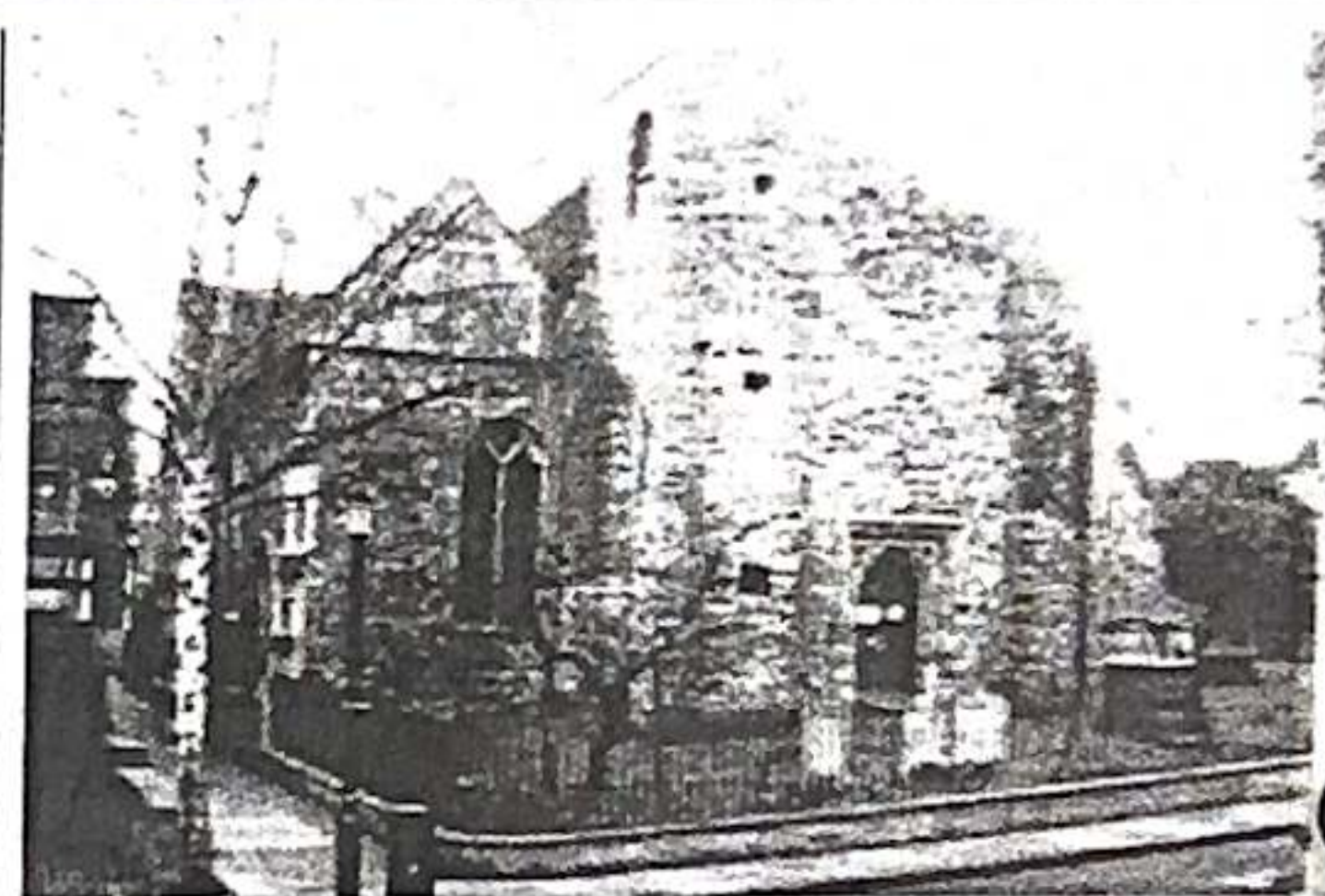
- The new Mayor, Councillor RICHARD GOWER, was not able to attend on the day itself, but came just before, on the day immediately after his inauguration, with his Mayoress. This was a lovely quiet service of blessing of them in presence of St Helen, Patron of our Borough, and was followed by a glass of Commandaria.
- On the day itself we had 53 in church for the Holy Liturgy, and that was a happy occasion, with all age-groups present.
- Then we had an excellent Parish Lunch, with 33 present, probably as large a number as we have ever had. Thanks to all who made it a success.
- It was delightful to receive greetings from Father SAMUEL CARTER at St Michaels, Audley, Stoke-on-Trent, and from several former students: NEKTARIOS STELLAKIS, ELENA SILVESTROVA ('Russian Elena'), EVDOCHIA SALAPATA, MANYA PAGIAVLA, and LAMBROS PSOMAS. It was lovely to hear from them and to know they think of us.

Orthodox Monastery where the late Father DAVID lived latterly just outside Walsingham. They were never completed but he himself had painted the icon of the Annunciation. Reader STEPHEN has temporarily added icon prints of the Four Evangelists, and the doors will be installed and blessed on my visit to St Fursey's on 10 June. It is a real privilege to have something of Father David's in our care.

**THE LINCOLN SHOW** is, I imagine, a typical 'county show'. It is good to hear that Father PHILIP HALL, our Priest in Lincoln, has asked Reader STEPHEN to take one of his icon and pamphlet stalls to the show this year, as a witness to the Orthodox Faith.

**ST PHILOMENA'S** is a small Catholic school in Frinton. It has had several of our Orthodox children as pupils. I have been invited for a second visit to take their assembly on 20 June.

**CLACTON PEOPLE:** It has been good to have seen more of our Clacton folk in St Helen's over Easter. I hope they will always feel welcome here and part of the wider Parish. Clacton is so near that it is easy, at least for anyone with a car, to get here.



## St Martin's back on the agenda

St Martin's Church will just not go away! We decided late last year to withdraw from negotiations to obtain St Martin's in West Stockwell Street, a couple of hundred yards from St Helen's.

We had been after it for over eleven years, but though it has several times been almost within our grasp, the devil has snatched it away from us each time.

Now, through the generous intervention of the local Anglican Rural Dean, the matter has been raised again. Everyone local who knows anything about it considers that we are the obvious people to have St Martin's, to use it for God's glory.

IAIN GOLDSMITH is therefore going this month to consult with the Churches Conservation Trust in London on our behalf.

There is now also an American interest in our having the beautiful church.

May God's will be done! St Helen and St Martin pray to God for us!

## Amazing coincidence and two near miracles

**I recently had two Orthodox men to minister to in Intensive Care at the General Hospital at the same time.**

I was called to the first, and found the second already there:

- KYRIAKOS CHRYSANTHOU (known as 'Kris') was unconscious, but I was able to anoint him. Some of you with us in the early days may remember Kris, who is in a wheel chair, being brought to Bourne Court on several

occasions. In our family we always remember how he enthusiastically called out (it was Eastertide) 'Christos anesti!' Some weeks ago his cousin ANDROULA, who worships at the Monastery, was able to arrange for him to come to St Helen's. Now he has amazingly recovered, and returned to his care home at Bradfield, and I have been able to take him Holy Communion.

- GEORGE PRODRIMOU also was unconscious, and I was able to anoint him too. George, a young man, lives with MANDY and their two little ones in Clacton. He also has amazingly recovered and returned to his home.

**The likelihood of having two Orthodox men together in our Intensive Care Unit at the same time (and there was only one other patient) must be very small indeed. Our thanks to the NHS and to God for their care and recovery!**

## A Word from the Fathers: The Holy Spirit

**W**hen the sun's rays fall on bright and transparent objects, they themselves become radiant and from themselves shed a further shining beam: so the souls inhabited by the Spirit, and illuminated by the Spirit, themselves are rendered wholly spiritual and send out their grace to others.

From the source comes foreknowledge of

the future, the understanding of mysteries, the apprehension of things hidden, the partaking of spiritual gifts, the heavenly citizenship, a place in the choir of angels, unending joy, the power to abide in God, to become like God, and, highest of all ends to which we can aspire, to become divine.

*St Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (330-379)*

## JUNE DAYS

Thu 1	Ascension of Christ
Sun 4	Pascha 7, Fathers of the 1st & 2nd Councils
Mon 5	Hieromartyr Boniface of Crediton
Fri 9	S Columba of Iona, S Cyril of Alexandria
Sat 10	S John (Maximovitch)
Sun 11	Holy Pentecost
Mon 12	Day of the Holy Spirit
Tue 13	Third Day of the Trinity
Sat 17	S Botolph of Iken
Sun 18	Pentecost 1, All Saints
19-28	Apostles Fast Holy Apostle Jude
Thu 22	S Alban Protomartyr of Britain
Fri 23	S Etheldreda of Ely
Sat 24	Nativity of S John the Forerunner
Sun 25	Pentecost 2, All Saints of Britain
Thu 29	Holy Apostles Peter and Paul
Fri 30	Synaxis of the Twelve Apostles

A full list of the month's Feasts and Fasts available on request