

Colchester Orthodox Parish Ten Years of old! Thanks be to God!

Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Deanery

NEWSLETTER 119

MARCH 2006



The Great Fast - Weekday Services

Lent begins Monday 6 March

THE PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY

Wednesdays at 9.30 am
8, 15, 22, 29 March, all in St Helen's

THE AKATHIST TO THE MOTHER OF GOD

Fridays at 7.00 pm

10, 24, 31 March in St Helen's

17 March in the University Chaplaincy Centre

ANNUNCIATION: No Liturgy here on 25 March.
We will keep it on the day following, the Sunday.

Listen to the Lady!

Time and time again my darling wife scolds me, *You don't listen!* - And though I protest, I dare say that, honestly, she is right. Partially, it has to be said, increasing years do make one a little "hard of hearing", but that is probably no excuse. But it is also true that one does ask questions without really listening to the answers. Or one gets told things without concentrating on listening to what the other is saying.

Nor is it at all a new thing. We did it with our parents when we were children, and did it with our children when we were young parents. *We hear, but do not listen*, you might say. And we may do it with many people, children and family and friends.

It is partly that we have divided minds, divided into thinking about too many different things and problems at once. We need to learn to concentrate on the person speaking to us, and the message they are giving. One of the great things about real spiritual fathers and mothers is the way that they *concentrate* on listening to you, give you their *undivided* attention for the time you are with them.

I suppose that is part at least of the meaning of the Annunciation (*Evangelismos* in Greek).

The Angel comes to Mary, as she draws water at the Holy Well (you can still visit that

Well in the Orthodox church in Nazareth). She is scared stiff at the appearance. She runs off to her home.

Suddenly the Angel is there again. She has been pursued by the Hound of Heaven, with a total, relentless, unrelenting Love.

And she has the grace to listen with all her undivided attention.

The message she hears is not an easy one. The Angel says she is to have a Child, and the Child is to be Holy indeed. God himself is to become Man in and through her.

She hears and she *listens*. She understands.

And then she answers with that extraordinary spontaneous outpouring of obedience and trust in God that really does echo down the ages: *Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy Word.*

Mary *listens* to the message of the will of God, and *responds* with all her heart.

And that is what we must do. We must listen to that inner word of the Lord that comes to us in the reading of the Holy Gospel in church. We also hear that Word in many, many other ways. In our private reading of Holy Scripture. In the prayers of the Church. In private prayer. In the beauty of nature. In the ferocity of wind and weather. In the speech of kind friend or bitter foe. In the hidden beating of the heart.

God is trying to speak to us so often, to reveal his Divine Will to and for us. Of course it is not usually some great world-shaking thing he tells us, but it could be, though never the *totally* world-renewing message of the Annunciation. But he does speak.

Are we ready to listen? - This Lent listen to the Lady who listens to the voice of God
God bless you always.

Father Alexander



GET TO CHURCH EARLIER

Too many of you who come much too late to church. At the Holy Liturgy you should be present at least by the time the Gospel is read.

And why should you not be present from its very beginning?

Actually, you should try to be present for Mattins (Orthros, 9.45) or Hours (10.15). Mattins particularly is full of teaching and meaning which will speak to you (if you are listening!) of God.

If you do sometimes have to come late, enter quietly. St Helen's is so small that *any* movement is disturbing for all present. If you enter during the sermon, please stand *absolutely still* until its end.

Holy Liturgy

ST FURSEY'S
Saturday
4 March
9.30 am

CLACTON
Saturday
18 March
10.00 am

Sunday 5 March
Forgiveness
Sunday
(Cheesefare Sunday)

The day before Lent is marked by short Forgiveness Vespers at the end of the Holy Liturgy, and the ceremony of mutual forgiveness.

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 Balmerne 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

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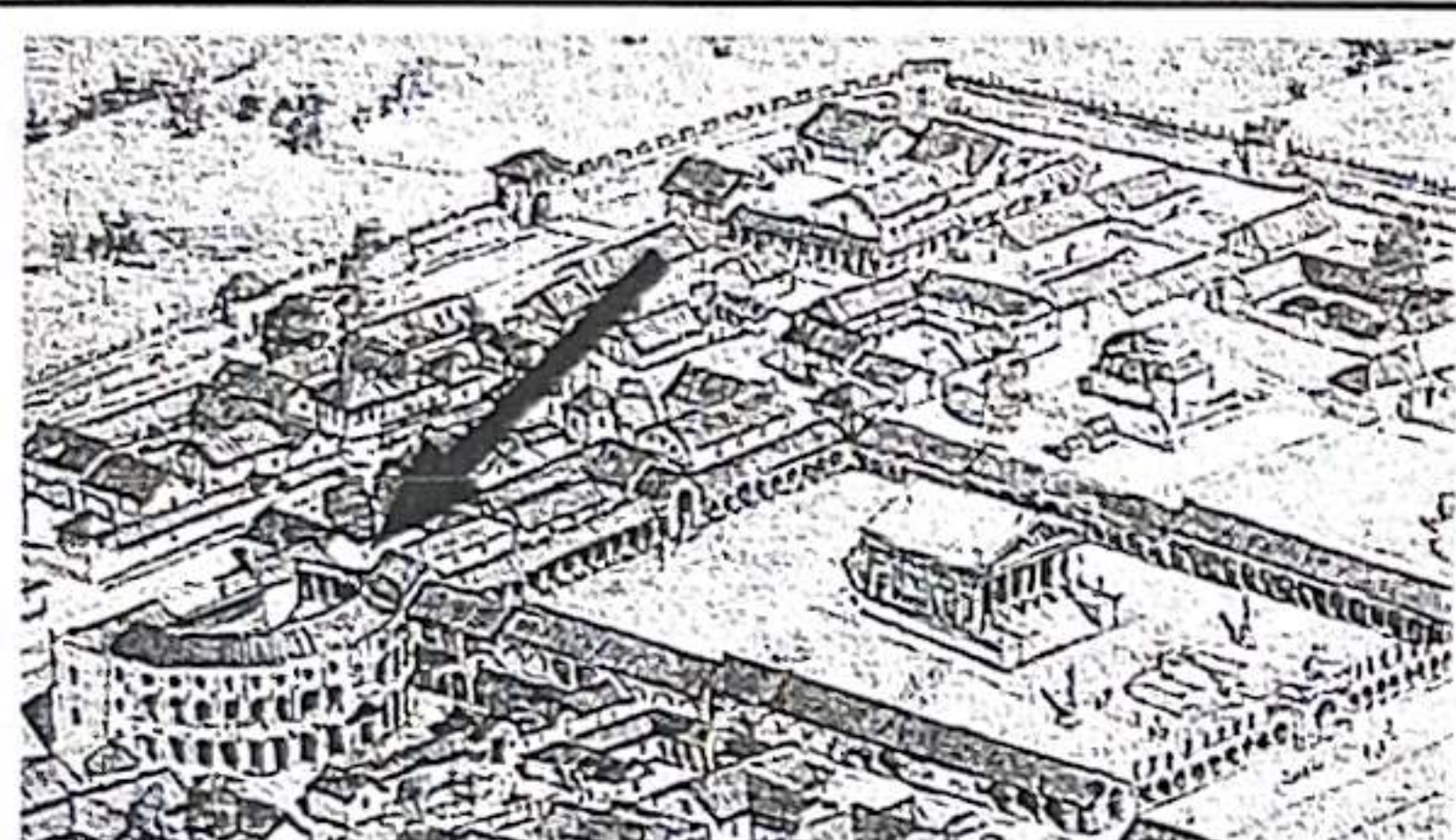
ORTHODOX YOUTH FESTIVAL

There will again this year be a festival week-end for Orthodox young adults 18-35 years old. It is run under the auspices of the Orthodox Fellowship of St John the Baptist, whose chairman is His Grace Bishop KALLISTOS.

It will be held over western Easter weekend, 14-17 April, in Derbyshire.

Young Orthodox people in this country are usually rather isolated. This is a great occasion for them to learn about some aspect of the Faith, worship together in a relaxed manner, and just be together to enjoy themselves in a truly Orthodox setting.

Anyone interested in attending should apply quickly. I know that last year it was full to capacity. Details are in the porch.



This is Peter Froste's pretty accurate and impressive reconstruction of the area of Colchester Castle and St Helen's Chapel in Roman times. The Castle is now where the Temple of Claudius is shown. The position of the Chapel is marked with an arrow, on the site of the north-east corner of the Theatre. I will try to show the same view in Norman times, next month.

Sunday of Orthodoxy, 12 March Pan-Orthodox Vespers in London

Meet at Colchester station 3.30 pm

Every year the various Orthodox parishes of all jurisdictions in London get together to serve Great Vespers on the first Sunday of Lent. Several Bishops attend with numerous clergy.

It is the one joint service in the year, with singing by all the different liturgical national traditions.

This year's Vespers will probably be at the Russian Cathedral, Ennismore Gardens at 6.30 pm. I attend this inspiring occasion every year if I can, and will again take a group of students and others to London for it. Everyone will buy their own train ticket. All are welcome to come.

Check up with me for details shortly before, as there may have to be changes if the railway is not working properly.

Here and there

CONGRATULATIONS to EVGENY and MILA SELENSKY on the birth of their son IVAN, brother for NICHOLAS and FEODOR. Mother and baby are doing well. Praise to God!

OUR THANKS to both ALEXIA LANSLEY and ATHENOULA ANTONIOU for gifts of wine for the Altar, and to NIKOS DIMOGLIOU for his gift of a huge bag of incense which he brought all the way from Greece.

MANY YEARS to Archpriest MICHAEL HARPER, Dean of the British Antiochian community, celebrating his 75th birthday on 12 March. I had hoped that he would be able to be present with us that day to celebrate the tenth anniversary of his first Liturgy here, but it was not possible to arrange this.

OUR SYMPATHY to several who have lost dear ones recently.

- DANY DEVON's mother OURANIA PATOUNAS, brought up her children in France, and later came to live in Colchester. She died at Colonia Court, and was taken for burial at home in Greece.
- IAIN GOLDSMITH's father JACK died in Glasgow and the funeral was there.
- MYKOLA ZACHWATAJLO, who lived in Wivenhoe, died a few months ago.
- CHARALAMBOS LEFKONIKIATIS, (Charles), of Clacton, died in January.

To all their families we extend our sympathy, and pray for their souls. Memory eternal!

ALEXANDRIAN GREEKS: Last month I asked if we still had any people from Alexandria, and was thrilled to hear from EVANGELIA BAKER in Holland-on-sea that she also was born and brought up there. Anybody else?

HOLY LAND: CHRISTODOULI COBBOLD has just been on Pilgrimage to the Holy Places of Jerusalem and Galilee. What a blessing for her, but I hope we will all draw

some strength from that visit. Now we shall have to call her Mrs HADJICOBOLD! (Let him who reads understand.)

WALSINGHAM: We have recently sent a **Parish gift of £100** to the St Seraphim Church Appeal. You have probably heard that they are forced to buy the building or lose it, which would be a terrible shame for the Orthodox cause, and for the memory of Father DAVID who converted it out of the disused railway station. I hope that some of you may wish to **send your own private gifts also**. Details in church.

ST EDWARD'S MONASTERY also has an appeal going to build a new building for this small but important community at Brookwood near Woking, Surrey, where they uniquely guard the relics of an English King and Saint, Edward the Martyr. (He reigned AD 975-979, and was killed - seemingly on the orders of his stepmother, who wanted her own son to be king). The Parish has sent a **£100 gift**, and it would be marvellous if some could **support this project privately also**. Again, there are details in church.

PARISH WEBSITE: Our thanks again to DAVID DAVIES for his work on the renewed website. Do have a look at it:

<http://homepage.nflworld.com/orthodox.colchester>
David also runs the *Orthodox England* (Fr ANDREW PHILLIPS') site, which contains a great deal of interesting material.

THE CHURCH BREAD: The Church Bread (which Greeks call the *Leitourgia*) is made on the spot in both St Furseys and now Clacton, which is marvellous. It would be very good if more of our worshippers at St Helen's also could learn to make it, to relieve the pressure on Khouria HILARY. One or two do occasionally help: it would be good to have more. A recipe is available at the back of church. You need to consult with Hilary on how and when to do it. She will assist anyone wishing to learn the technique.

Ecumenical Services

You are invited to.....

Women's World Day of Prayer

Friday 3 March, 10.15 am

Eld Lane Baptist Church

Lent Addresses

Tuesdays 7 March - 11 April, 1.10 pm

Eld Lane Baptist Church

Simple lunch available 12.15 pm

Arranged by Churches Together in Central Colchester, of which we are an observer member.

MARCH DAYS

Wed 1	S David of Wales
Thu 2	S Chad of Lichfield, S Nicholas Planas
Sat 4	Commemoration of All Monks & Nuns
Sun 5	Cheesefare Sun, Sun of Forgiveness
Mon 6	First Day of the Great Fast, Discovery of Precious Cross & Nails by S Helen
Wed 8	S Felix, Enlightener of East Anglia
Thu 9	Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste
Sat 11	Commemn of S Theodore the Recruit
Sun 12	Lent 1: Sunday of Orthodoxy
Tue 14	S Benedict of Nursia
Wed 15	S Aristobulus, Apostle of Britain
Thu 16	S Christodoulos of Patmos
Sat 18	Memorial Saturday
Sun 19	Lent 2: S Gregory Palamas
Mon 20	Holy Fathers slain at S Saba's Monastery, whose relics we have
Sat 25	Annunciation of the Theotokos
Sun 26	Lent 3: Veneration of the Cross and celebration of Annunciation
Fri 31	New Martyr Nun Maria Skobtsova

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

A Word from the Fathers: The Great Fast

Because there are two periods of time - the one that is now, beset with the trials and troubles of life, and the other yet to come, a life of everlasting serenity and joy - we are given two liturgical seasons, one before Pascha and the other after. The season before Pascha signifies the troubles in which we live here and now...

What we commemorate before Pascha points to

something we do not yet possess. This is why we keep the first season with fasting and prayer...

Both these periods are represented and demonstrated for us in Christ our Head. The Lord's Passion depicts for us our present life of trial - shows how we must suffer and be afflicted and finally die...

St Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, AD 350-430