

Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, Vicariate for Europe
British Antiochian Orthodox Deanery

NEWSLETTER 55

MAY 2000

"I am alive for evermore..."

These words, spoken by Christ in the book of the Apocalypse (Revelation), the last book of the Holy Bible, fill the Christian with joy and awe and wonder.

St John was in prayer on the sacred island of Patmos, when "One like unto a Son of Man" appeared to him. St John fell at his feet as one dead, but Christ said,

"Fear not, I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades."

So the One who had died, and had risen from the dead, was still alive, he said – and, by definition, he must be so NOW.

This means that the Holy and Glorious Resurrection of Christ, while a definite and precise happening on a precise historical day in a precise geographical place, is also something that is still true today. "I am the Resurrection and the Life," said Christ.

It is really no surprise that Christians have always been filled, are filled today, with joy and awe and wonder at that. We bow in worship and adoration and silence before the incomprehensible truth that Christ has really conquered Death and Hell, and that he is alive and known by us just as much as by those Holy Women and Apostles in the first forty days after the event.

This fact of the Holy Resurrection – its historicity and his contemporary nature – is clearly proclaimed constantly throughout the Orthodox Faith and Liturgy.

We know it in our everyday experience, we know it in our bones. It makes us firm in our hold on life, in our disdain for death. It gives us sure and certain hope for the future.

It gives us, you and me, life in Christ, eternal life in Christ our God. It gives us entrance into his holy Kingdom. Alleluia, Christ is risen! Alleluia, Christ has conquered! Alleluia, I too am risen with him!

Father Alexander

*Christ is risen from the dead,
trampling down Death by death,
and upon those in the tombs
bestowing life.*

Incredibly, five months after the Churches Conservation Trust decided that we could, in principle, have St Martin's, we still have no news on the proposed arrangements.

DIVINE AND HOLY LITURGY

ST FURSEY, SUTTON.....SATURDAY 6 MAY 10.00 AM
UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY CENTRE.....SATURDAY 13 MAY 10.00 AM
ST JAMES, CLACTON.....SATURDAY 20 MAY 10.00 AM



HOLY PASCHA: EASTER AT ST HELEN'S GOOD FRIDAY

7.30 pm Burial of Christ

HOLY PASCHA

11.30 pm – 2.00 am Easter Liturgy (no morning service)

1.00 pm Parish Lunch (telephone for details)

3.00 pm Paschal Vespers

CONFESSIONS before or after any service or by appointment

Reminder!

THERE WILL BE NO VESPERS AT COLCHESTER ON SATURDAY 6 MAY

Services in the Parish

At the Co-operative Chapel, Bourne Court, Mersea Rd

Saturday: Great Vespers usually 6.30 pm (check before coming)

Sunday: Mattins or Hours 9.45 am; Divine Liturgy 10.30 am

At St Fursey's Chapel, 111 Neville Rd, Sutton, Norfolk

Divine Liturgy usually first Saturday of month 10.00 am

At St James Anglican Church, Clacton-on-sea

Divine Liturgy usually third Saturday of month at 10.00 am

At the University of Essex, Colchester

Divine Liturgy one Saturday per term at 10.00 am

Confessions: Saturday after Vespers, or by arrangement

Holy Marriage, Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc: by arrangement

Parish Priest: *Father Alexander Haig*

66 Wimpole Rd, Colchester CO1 2DN Tel: 01206-795275

Email: orthodox.colchester@aspects.net

Reader: Stephen Weston, St Fursey's House, 111 Neville Rd, Sutton NR12 9RR

Parish Web Site: www.aspects.net/~orthodox/

HERE AND THERE

ST FURSEY'S have the last of their Spring Saturday talks on 6 May. We welcome FATHER CHRYSOSTOMOS, the Greek Priest at Great Yarmouth, to speak on *The Church in Cyprus*, after lunch, about 1.30 pm.

ST FURSEY'S VISIT THE MONASTERY: A group is coming on Thursday 11 May to visit the Monastery. If you would care to join us there - 11.00 am, staying for lunch - please let me know.

THE ENGLISH CONGREGATION at St George's Cathedral - our Antiochian church near London's Regent's Park - plan to visit the Monastery on Spring Bank Holiday, 29 May, and to come on here for a couple of hours afterwards. I hope that some of you will be able to welcome them here - details later.

GIFTS FROM GREECE: We are most grateful to ARCHIMANDRITE SOSIPATROS in Macedonia, Greece for his generous gift of a lovely, unneeded, censer (this means we can keep a censer at the University for use there), and of a very nice small standing cross from Mount Athos. The STELLAKIS family, his close friends, forwarded them, together with a large number of copies of the Parish Icon of St Helen of Colchester, generously provided by FATHER NEKTARIOS in Athens - who has shown us great kindness in the past also. The icons will be available shortly. This Parish now has so many happy and warm links with the clergy and people of Greece. - Via David Davies, we have on show at church a photo of the beautiful new Baby Stellakis.

FATHER GEOFFREY HARVEY: Some of you will remember the Anglican Priest who visited us from Australia in January 1999 with his wife Janet. We are delighted to hear that he and his wife and sons have now become Antiochian Orthodox, and he has been ordained Priest, to serve in Melbourne. Many Years!

FATHER PHILIP HALL, one of our Antiochian Priests - from the Parish at Louth, in Lincolnshire - honoured us with his presence the other Sunday, when staying with his friend ANDREW KELLY at Harlow. It was a pleasure to have him with us.

BISHOP GABRIEL met almost all the British clergy in London recently. Apart from an occasion the Patriarch passed through London in 1996, this was the first such meeting since my ordination. It was a useful. He gave a lot of instructions, and we all learnt a great deal, and hope that he will come to see us again before too long.

BISHOP NEKTARIOS IN MADAGASCAR: We have sent a small amount of money to the good Bishop for his wonderful work, as a response to the dreadful weather conditions and troubles in the island. This resulted from a special collection in church. There was also a special collection for the people of Mozambique in their more publicised troubles.

BISHOP GABRIEL'S MILLENNIUM LITURGY: The Bishop has announced that he is to serve the Holy Liturgy on 27 May in Paris for the Millennium, with Vespers the previous evening, at which leaders of other Orthodox Churches, and of other Churches and of the French state will be present. Ask for details if you would like to go.

CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION: This is a great annual get-together of Christian shops and organisations at Epsom race-course - no gee-gees running at the time unfortunately. Thousands of (mainly, but not only, Evangelical) Christians, clergy and laity, attend to see the resources that are available - books and videos and this and that and more. This year there will be an Orthodox presence for (I think) the first time. NICHOLAS CHAPMAN of Orthodox Christian Books Ltd has asked me to help on his stall, and I will be there Monday 15 - Friday 19 May.

CALLING YOUNG ORTHODOX PEOPLE TO ORTHODOX YOUTH CAMP 2000 !

Orthodox young people can feel very much on their own in Britain today. Inevitably, by being Orthodox - convert or from the cradle - youngsters are different from their friends at school. That is part of the reason the Orthodox Youth Camp, for 9 - 17 year-olds, is so important for those who attend. They can relax in their Faith, and be at home.

But they also have a good time. Games and walks and activities occupy every moment of their time - they have an "Olympic Games" towards the end. And of course, there are also lots of opportunities for learning more of their Holy Faith, and of worshipping in the Orthodox manner. They have prayers daily, and the Holy Liturgy once or twice in their home-made Chapel. And they go out to visit a local Orthodox church for the Sunday Liturgy.

For some years the Camp has been in East Anglia. This year it moves to Ratlinghope, in Shropshire, and will be from Monday 24 July to Saturday 5 August. The cost is £125, plus the coach from London.

Our MARGARET and ALEX will tell you how thoroughly they always enjoy the Youth Camp - this

will be their fifth year, and Margaret will be among the leaders for the first time.

Here is a marvellous opportunity for your youngsters to relax and be Orthodox, without a song and dance being made about it - or (in another sense) precisely with a song and dance! They will mix not only with English youngsters, but also with Greeks and Russians and others - a real picture of the multi-tongued Orthodox Church.

Send your young people! They will really enjoy this first-rate camp - and learn to practise our Holy Faith in a natural environment.

Details from me: ask to see the very neat brochure for this year's Camp, with lots of photos of the fun and excitement of the Camp.

A WORD FROM THE FATHERS

How can those who believe in God as the Creator doubt his ability to raise the dead? - Look at it this way. In the beginning God took the dust of the earth, and from it created man. Just think what was involved in that act of creation - to make a living, rational creature, with bones, muscles, veins and all the other organs, out of a handful of dust!

Surely that act of creation was far harder, far more incredible, than the re-creation of the same being after it has

returned to dust again? If God could give personal existence, at the moment of his own choice, to someone who a moment before did not exist at all, surely he can restore to that same person the life he originally gave him, if he so wishes?

In fact, the body God first created by his art - our own mortal flesh - will one day be found capable of being re-made by God's power. What will be restored to life will not be something other than that which died, but its former physical life will be transformed by the Spirit of God into spiritual life for ever.

SUNDAY 21 MAY
FEAST OF ST CONSTANTINE & ST HELEN
 Parish Feast
 9.45 am Mattins
 10.30 am DIVINE LITURGY
The people from St Fursey's are coming to Colchester for the Feast
 Parish Lunch to follow

WEDNESDAY GROUP
 This informal group will meet on Wednesdays except 3 and 17 May at 7.30 pm at 66 Wimpole Road, for discussion and prayer.

MAY DAYS

Mon	1 Bright Monday
Tue	2 St Athanasius the Great
Fri	5 Life-giving Spring of the Holy Theotokos Great Martyr Irene of Thessalonica
Sun	7 Easter 2, St Thomas Sunday St John of Beverley
Mon	8 H Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian
Wed	10 H Apostle Simon Zelotes, Martyr in Britain
Thu	11 SS Cyril & Methodius, Apostles of the Slavs
Fri	12 St Aethelheard, Archbishop of Canterbury
Sun	14 Easter 3, Holy Myrrh-Bearing Women, SS Joseph of Arimathea & Nicodemus
Mon	15 St Pachomius the Great
Tue	16 St Brendan the Voyager
Sun	21 Easter 4 SS Constantine & Helen, Parish Feast
Wed	24 Mid-Feast of Pentecost
Thu	25 3rd Finding of Head of St John the Baptist
Fri	26 St Augustine, Apostle of the English
Sat	27 St Bede the Venerable
Sun	28 Easter 5, Samaritan Woman

A full list of the month's feasts and fasts is available on request

ST HELEN ORTHODOX
CALENDAR FOR COMPUTERS
VERSION 4 NOW AVAILABLE
 - the same splendid features PLUS
REFERENCES FOR READINGS
for Holy Liturgy, Vespers etc
for AD 2000

For existing users £3.00

£10.00 inc p&p

Orthodox Millennium Festival
 Saturday 1 July, Shrewsbury
 Book the date-Watch for details-Plan to go!

UNIVERSITY ORTHODOX HOUR
 Every Wednesday except 10 and 17 May a time for chat, tea and prayer in the Chaplaincy Centre at 3.00 pm.

