

Celebrating the First Ten Years of revived Colchester Orthodoxy

Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Deanery

NEWSLETTER 124 SEPTEMBER 2006



Sign of our Salvation...

The Cross of Christ is of course a most sacred sign - odd, isn't it (when you think about it) that it is in fact a gallows! But that's the truth of it. Christ died on the Cross and it becomes the way of salvation for us Christians.

14 September is the glorious feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. It is easier to venerate it then than in Great Week, when we are so concerned with Christ's sufferings (the Passion), and the Resurrection, that we are not able really to glory in it.

But now on this feast we do just that. St Paul teaches us to do that: *I glory in the Cross of Christ.*

On the Sunday after the feast, at the end of the Holy Liturgy, the Cross will be carried from the Altar, raised and lowered four times to the accompaniment of 500 Lord, have mercys.

Then we will venerate and kiss this sign to show our trust in him who died on it.

It is an awesome and moving ceremony.

The Cross comes into every part of our life as Orthodox Christians. The Cross round our Orthodox neck. The Cross made on our body so frequently in our prayers. The Cross with which we are anointed with water or oil. The Cross made in the air over us. The Cross made over us in blessing. The Cross set up on our churches and homes.

All these help us to enter into the very life and heart of Christ. To absorb the meaning of our Faith in Christ Crucified. To share the Passion of Christ - so that we may also share his Resurrection.

We have to be living out both the Cross and the Resurrection in our daily lives. That will give us hope, peace, and salvation. May that be your own true experience.

God bless you always.

Father Alexander



Weekday Holy Liturgy

FRIDAY 8 SEPTEMBER

NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS 9.30 am

THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER

EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS 9.30 am
(Elevation Ceremony on Sunday 17 Sept)

THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER (actual feast-day 19 September)

ST THEODORE OF TARSUS & CANTERBURY 9.30 am

THURSDAY 28 SEPTEMBER commemorating

10th ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION 9.30 am

St Helen's Parish Tenth Anniversary Weekend Saturday 14 - Sunday 15 October

We hope to arrange something of a feast for worshippers, former worshippers, and friends, including a Reunion Meal, Great Vespers and Holy Liturgy.

Watch out for details

Write a short piece for our planned bumper...

...October NEWSLETTER

Can you - *many of you* - please write something for us? A little story about our past? A short anecdote? A word about one of the buildings we have been in? A memory of a funny occasion? Something you would like to say about your own path to Holy Orthodoxy or to our Parish? Something about what Orthodoxy means to you personally?

Tell us briefly about your feelings as our Parish has formed, about laying foundations for the future - or something about the Faith. This also applies to former members who have moved away, to students, to new members.

I would like lots of tit-bits from many of you for publication. I must have them by **Friday 15 September**, please.

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 Balkerne 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 (Alistair) Haig

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

Holy Liturgy

ST FURSEY'S
Saturday
9 Sept 9.30 am
(Fr Simeon Piers)

CLACTON
Saturday
16 Sept 10 am

Fr Maximos Lavriotes

will serve the Holy Liturgy here on Sunday 3 September. He lives at Saffron Walden, and was here recently. I am very grateful to him, and know how much you like his occasional visits - and he seems to like coming too!

The Lebanon Appeal:

The recent suffering of many people in Lebanon, including Christians, has of course been appalling. The Antiochian Orthodox church in Tyre has been bombed. An Appeal Fund was opened for distribution through our Church authorities. The total to date from the Deanery is £6,000. This Parish has sent £125, which is not a great deal. If anyone else would like to contribute, please send it in. Cheques should be made out to *St Helen's Parish*.



St Ninian of Whithorn

I mentioned this early British Saint, in the June Newsletter. His feast is 19 September. He built the famous "white house" church in Galloway, South-west Scotland and dedicated it to St Martin of Tours. He is the earliest known missionary in Scotland. Left is his window in the Presbyterian church and right is Khouria Hilary at the site of the church built by the Northumbrian English, marked by wood blocks. There are also larger remains of a mediaeval monastery church.



The CD of the excellent BBC Radio 4 programme which mentioned St Helen's Chapel has been popular. Copies are still available @ cost price, 40p.

St Martin's Church

IAIN GOLDSMITH reports that he met the Chief Executive of the Churches Conservation Trust in London on our behalf.

They will now accept a lower price (£2,000) per year for a ten year lease. Our costs for installing heating and lighting can also count against that. All that is excellent.

But the Trust remains insistent on continuing secular use as well. They are not bending at all.

It is amazingly clear they really prefer secular use to our religious use, and will find any excuse to keep us out!

They are also willing to sell, but at an impossible price. We remain in God's hands. St Martin, pray to God for us!

Here and There

NEW ANTIOCHIAN PRIEST: Our best wishes to ROBERT WAGGENER in Florida, USA who will be ordained deacon and priest for his formerly Anglican congregation on 23/24 September. He was here last year with his wife NANCY. He will become Father ALBAN.

ICONOGRAPHER CHRYSOULA PSOMAS in Corinth painted our lovely icon of St Martin dividing his cloak. She is aunt to LAMBROS PSOMAS who did an MA here a couple of years ago. She has been seriously injured in a road accident: we are praying for her, and she is making progress, I am glad to hear. But our deepest sympathy also at the tragic loss of her sister and another close friend in the accident.

BAPTISED: Our congratulations to ANN TAYLOR of Halstead, baptised at St Cassian's in Nicosia in July along with her five year-old daughter, who has taken the name Helen. They worship here. Ann's mother SUSAN ASHTON, who comes with them, was a primary teacher to the HAIG children at Bocking.

BAPTISED: Our congratulations too to MARIANNE JAKES of Wivenhoe who was baptised here in June. Her parents are ROBERT and OLGA, who is Russian.

BAPTISED: Yet another Baptism: congratulations to OLIVIA-CATALINA HEATH of Sible Hedingham. Her parents are PETER and MADALINA, who is Rumanian.

ST ALBANS is a lovely place to go on pilgrimage - the great Abbey, now an Anglican cathedral, on the green hill up which the Saint walked through the flowers (we are told) to his death. This was probably early in the third century. The Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius have a pilgrimage there yearly, near his martyrdom

on 21 June. It was lovely to be invited (at short notice) to concelebrate. But it was also my great privilege to carry the relic of the Saint that the Abbey was given recently, for the veneration of our faithful at the end, beside his restored shrine. I am not sure how many Anglicans are particularly moved (as Orthodox are) at having this wonderful relic in their midst! Others present from here were Khouria HILARY and ALEX, and the Revd Dr JOHN TURNER from Frinton.

NEW CAREER: I am sure you would like me to wish ALEX HAIG a happy time in his first teaching post (maths) at the Fort Hill Community College in Basingstoke. He qualified this summer.

FUNERAL: It was a privilege to minister to GEORGE EMBIRICOS before he died, aged 91, in Nayland House. His home was in St Martin's Lane in central London. I was called in by his cousin-goddaughter CAROL LINDSAY-SMITH of Stoke-by-Nayland. The funeral was in St Helen's, and his ashes will be buried with his family on the island of Andros, near Evia.

HOSPITAL: RACHEL HALES of Earls Colne is in hospital, recovering from a stroke. She is a long-standing friend of this Parish, though worshipping at the Monastery. At over eighty she was able to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land only this past February. We wish her a speedy recovery.

CYPRUS: The elderly and sick Archbishop of Cyprus has been confined to bed for a long while now. Obviously a sick Archbishop cannot lead his people adequately. It is good to hear that a new one is to be elected by the Holy Synod on 24 September. Pray that they may elect a man of holiness and ability.

Father Athanasius in his new Hermitage

FATHER ATHANASIOS has moved into his new home on the Shotley Peninsula:

The Hermitage of the Mother of God,
1 Butterfly Cottages, Harkstead IP9 1DB.
Telephone: 01-473-788-288.

Please phone before visits.

Orthodox Pilgrimage to St Theodore of Canterbury on his feast day Tuesday 19 September

Minster Abbey
Minster-in-Thanet
near Ramsgate

Service to St Theodore
11.30 am

All are invited, especially Orthodox people
Bring a packed lunch: there will be somewhere to eat inside if necessary.

St Theodore was a Greek, from Tarsus in the Church of Antioch. He became Orthodox Archbishop of Canterbury. He witnessed the foundation charter for Minster Abbey in AD 670, and later consecrated the first nuns. I am at a conference at this delightful Roman Catholic women's monastery on the previous day. The Reverend Mother is kindly allowing us to celebrate a short service in his honour.

Fr Alexander Haig, St Helen's, Colchester

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A Word from the Fathers

What shall we call you,
O Lady? With what
words shall we salute you?
With what praises shall we
crown your holy and
glorious head, you who are
the provider of all good
things, the giver of riches,
the ornament of the human
race, the pride of all
creation, though whom
creation was made happy?

St John of Damascus (+165)



Saturday 9 September Essex Churches Bike Ride

Saturday/Sunday 9/10 September
National Heritage Day

Along with other public and private buildings, St Helen's will be open on these two days.

Every year we get a good chance to welcome many who might not otherwise come into our church.

It is a chance for people to see this ancient and lovely building. It also provides a chance for them to glimpse the Holy Orthodox Faith.

If you can help by being here to welcome visitors (and usually there are many), please come along. Give in your name, and say when you would like to be here.

SEPTEMBER DAYS

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| Fri | 1 | Beginning of Church Year, Day of Prayer for the protection of the environment |
| Sun | 3 | Pentecost 12 |
| Tue | 5 | Prophet Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth |
| Wed | 6 | Miracle of Archangel Gabriel at Colossae |
| Fri | 8 | Nativity of the Holy Theotokos |
| Sat | 9 | H Righteous Ancestors Joachim and Anna |
| Sun | 10 | Pentecost 13 |
| Wed | 13 | Dedication of Church of Resurrection |
| Thu | 14 | Universal Exaltation of the Holy Cross |
| Sat | 16 | S Ninian Bishop of Whithorn |
| Sun | 17 | Pentecost 14 |
| Tue | 19 | S Theodore of Tarsus and Canterbury |
| Sat | 23 | Conception of the Holy Forerunner John |
| Sun | 24 | Pentecost 15, S Thekla, S Silouan |
| Mon | 25 | S Sergius the Wonderworker |
| Tue | 26 | Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian |

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