

A holy and happy Christmas to all our people, and all our readers

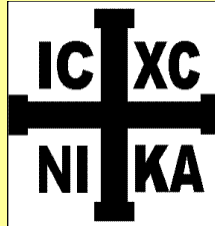
Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland

Metropolitan: His Eminence Archbishop Silouan

NEWSLETTER 269

DECEMBER 2019



Archbishop comes for Holy Liturgy on Christmas Eve

We are privileged to have Metropolitan SILOUAN, with us on Tuesday 24 Dec at 9.30 am for Holy Liturgy.

Do come yourself; and bring the children.

His Eminence will arrive on the Monday afternoon and wishes to meet with the Church Council at 5 pm, probably for one hour.

He wants to hear what we are doing or plan to do at and with St Martin's - and no doubt about other things of importance.

We may of course hope to have some sort of news for him about the Project!

Fr ALEXANDER Junior and his family, and MARGARET will also arrive on the Monday, and they will be with us throughout the week.

St Sophrony of Essex

It is good to hear that the Holy Synod of Constantinople has now officially numbered among the Saints "our own" Father Sophrony. He founded the Holy Monastery in 1959: it grew from a small number of monks and nuns to the thriving community today. He was a very holy man with a strong message based on that of his spiritual father later glorified as St Silouan of Athos. No doubt services in his honour are being written already, particularly his Troparion and Kontakion. In due course we will be obtaining a copy of his icon from the Monastery he founded.



Frustratingly little progress about St Martin's as yet

In December 1994 I was suddenly asked by the delightful Anglican Archdeacon Ernie Stroud whether we would like St Martin's as our Orthodox place of worship and though I jumped at the suggestion, we are still not in there - **exactly 25 years later!**

But though things still go slowly, people are continuing to send gifts—for which we are most grateful—knowing that sooner or later we shall need a great deal more funding to set up the building fully.

There is one development of procedure I must report which will affect our future:

I and the Church Council have appointed MARK SHILLAKER as Project Manager, working always with my blessing as Parish Priest. His Eminence has given his blessing for this move.

Qualified in Project Management, Mark removes a lot of the worry I have had, particularly recently.

December Days	
Sats: 4.30 pm Gt Vespers,	
Suns: Mattins 9.45 am, H Liturgy 10.30 am	
Fri 6 Dec	<i>St Nicholas of Myra</i>
9.30 am	Holy Liturgy
Thu 12 Dec	<i>St Spyridon</i>
9.30 am	Holy Liturgy
Fri 20 Dec	<i>St Ignatius of Antioch</i>
9.30 am	Holy Liturgy
Tue 24 Dec	EVE OF NATIVITY
9.15 am	Ninth Royal Hour
9.30 am	Vespers & Liturgy of St Basil (HE Metropolitan SILOUAN)
4.30 pm	Vigil (Gt Compline & Mattins)
Wed 25 Dec	NATIVITY OF CHRIST
10.15 am	Hours
10.30 am	Holy Liturgy
Thu 26 Dec	<i>Synaxis of the holy Theotokos</i>
9.15 am	Hours
9.30 am	Holy Liturgy
Sat 28 Dec	<i>Saturday after Nativity</i>
4.30 pm	Great Vespers
Sun 29 Dec	<i>Sun after Nativity, Holy Innocents</i>
9.45 am	Mattins
10.30 am	Holy Liturgy
Wed 1 Jan	<i>Circumcision, St Basil the Gt</i>
9.30 am	Liturgy of St Basil
<i>Confessions: Saturdays after Vespers, or after any service, or by appointment</i>	

We are very grateful, and assure him of our backing as he provides leadership for this work of God in our Parish. The Project Committee under JON KANAAR will be his immediate backers, but he needs the support of all. Many matters to do with St Martin's will be channelled through Mark's hands.

Almost a whole generation has passed since the foundation of the Parish in 1996, and the new one takes on more of the responsibility for our affairs.

God be praised for his care and love: he promises a glorious future also! **Father Alexander**

St Helen's Chapel, Maidenburgh St, High St co1 1UB

St Helen's is 200m down behind the George Hotel in the High Street, but 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's Street to Castle Park; continue round the bend, up into Maidenburgh Street. Nearest car-park NCP Nunns Rd. Very little street parking available.

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 5 pm, after Vespers, or by arrangement
Holy Marriage, Holy Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc: by arrangement
Children of St Helen (Pre-school & Primary): normally first Saturday 3.15 pm

Parish Priest: Father Alexander (Alistair) Haig

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Churchwardens: Dusan Radunovic 01-206-762-553, Jon Kanaar 01-255-431-975

Children of St Helen: Sanja Radunovic 01-206-762-553, Silvia Lefley 01-206-835-715

Orthodox Parish of St Helen: Registered Charity No: 1134418

IBAN: GB05BUKB20226780219819 Bank Account Sort Code: 20-22-67

Bank Account No: 50349364 Appeal Account No: 80219819

Parish Website: <http://www.orthodoxcolchester.org.uk>

Appeal Website: <http://orthodoxcolchesterappeal.org.uk>

ST HELEN'S APPEAL FOR ST MARTIN'S

17 Maidenburgh Street, Colchester CO1 1UB, UK

Raised so far: some **£153,788** (towards the £200,000)

The Appeal remains open, but is somewhat on hold, until various costings are agreed. Please consult:

APPEAL WEBSITE: orthodoxcolchesterappeal.org.uk

FACEBOOK: St Martin's Appeal

Join Archbishop Silouan and clergy and laypeople from all over Britain and Ireland

DIOCESAN CONFERENCE 2020

Practical Orthodoxy: Living as Orthodox Christians in Secular Britain
Yarnfield Conference Centre, close to M6
25-27 May

Crèche arranged to encourage you to come with your family

The full cost is £180 per person, £170 if booked & paid through the Parish before Christmas, but further considerable discounts are available. So many more should be able to attend.

Please speak to us well before Christmas to secure one or more places at a discounted fee.

Here and There

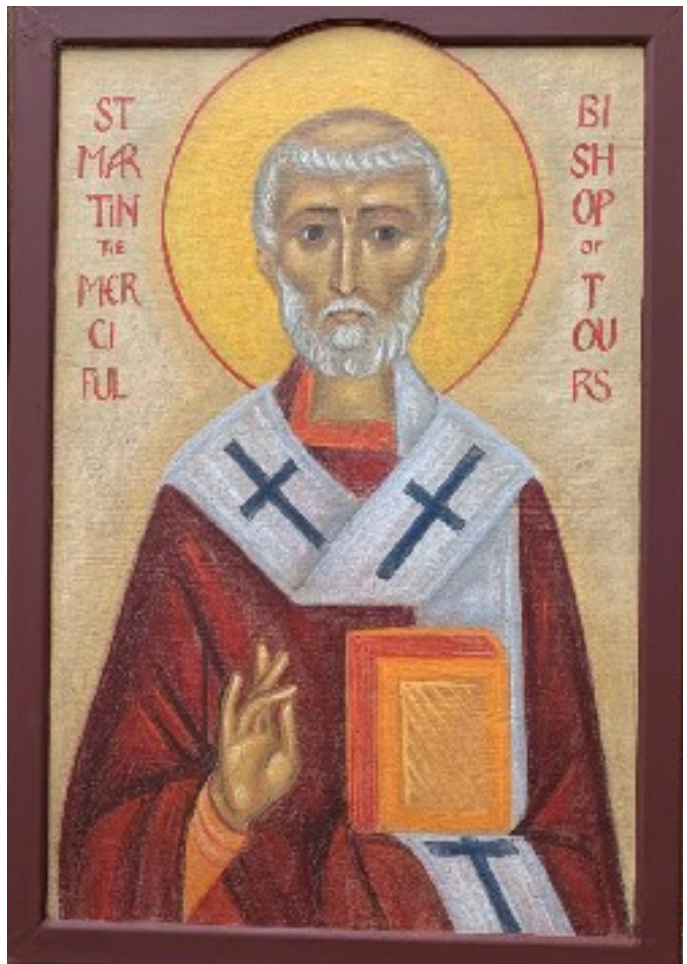
A GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH on Sunday 24 November gave its legal official approval to the purchase of St Martin's. Then the Church Council approved a constitutional amendment to make all Council members Trustees (instead of the three until now) and that makes all responsible for the new building and parish, but excludes them from personal financial responsibility.

HIS EMINENCE GREGORIOS, Greek Archbishop in Britain for over 30 years, was always very gracious to me and our Parish. Sadly he has died and his funeral will be at Wood Green on 5 December. He was well loved: our prayers for the Greeks in our congregation. Our MARGARET received his blessing at his bedside having sung with her choir in his bedroom not long ago. Memory eternal! He was recently succeeded by Archbishop NIKITAS.

CHILDREN OF ST HELEN: The (primary and pre-school) Children meet on Saturday 7 September at 3.15 pm.

St Saba - a saint whose influence lives on

St Saba (or Sava) died in 532 at the age of 94 in the Mar Saba Monastery he had founded on the face of a cliff above the river Cedron, near Jerusalem. Originally from Cappadocia he came to live the monastic life under early monastic leaders and then branched out on his own, with disciples gathering around him. He became a monk of great influence and his monastery still survives. I had the privilege of visiting it some forty years ago. The Mar Saba *typikon* (arranging the order and rhythms of services of the church) still has its place in world-wide Orthodoxy. It has produced a number of Saints, particularly St John of Damascus, the great composer of prayers and hymns used universally, whose cave I prayed in, and St Andrew of Crete. Mar Saba has a hypnotic beauty. Long may it last in the barren Judean desert and the desert of this world.



This icon of St Martin was painted for us by Sister Gabriela, and the Monastery of St John the Baptist made a gift of it to us for St Martin's Church. After a blessing in St Helen's it was carried to its new home, where an Akathist was offered for the feast of St Martin, 11 November. We are most grateful for this act of goodwill and friendship by the Fathers and Sisters of the Monastery, who have been good friends from the very start of the Parish. St Martin's icon will surely bring a blessing on our new temple and community.

A Word from the Fathers: St Augustine of Hippo (+430)

Wake up, O man—it was for you that God was made man! Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. For you, I say, was God made man. Eternal death would have awaited you had he not been born in time. Never would you be freed from your sinful flesh, had he not taken to himself the likeness of sinful flesh. Everlasting would be your misery, had he not performed this act of mercy. You would not have come to life again, had he not come to die your death. You would have been broken down, had he not come to help you. You would have perished, had he not come. Let us joyfully celebrate the coming of our salvation and redemption. Let us celebrate the hallowed day on which the great eternal Day came from the great eternal Day into this, our short and temporal day.

DECEMBER DAYS

Sun	1	Pentecost 24
Wed	4	Gt Martyr Barbara
Thu	5	S Saba the Sanctified
Fri	6	S Nicolas the Wonderworker
Sun	8	Pentecost 25
Mon	9	Conception by R Anna of Theotokos
Thu	12	S Spyridon the Wonderworker
Fri	13	S Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker
Sun	15	Sunday of the H Forefathers, S Eleftherios
Fri	20	Hieromartyr Ignatius the Godbearer
Sun	22	Sunday before Nativity
Tue	24	EVE OF NATIVITY OF CHRIST
Wed	25	NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH OF CHRIST OUR GOD
Thu	26	SECOND DAY OF NATIVITY: SYNAXIS OF THE MOTHER OF GOD
Fri	27	THIRD DAY OF NATIVITY, S STEPHEN
Sun	29	Sunday after Nativity, Holy Innocents
Wed	1 Jan	Circumcision of Christ, S Basil the Great