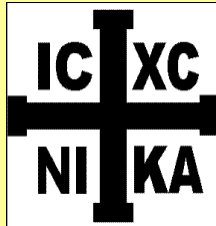


25

years of Holy Orthodoxy in the heart of Colchester, March 1996 - March 2021 — Praise to God !

Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of the British Isles and Ireland
Metropolitan: His Eminence Archbishop Silouan
NEWSLETTER 281 JANUARY 2021



Services in January

Sunday 3 January No Liturgy
Normally as follows, but with present
circumstances you need to check:
Saturdays Vespers 4.30 pm
Sundays Holy Liturgy 10.30 am

WEDNESDAY 6 JANUARY

HOLY THEOPHANY

Holy Liturgy 9.30 am

SUNDAY 10 JANUARY

SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY

BLESSING OF RIVER after Liturgy

All arrangements subject to alteration
if new rules apply

Theophany: God revealed to us

The feast of the Holy Theophany is one of the greatest feasts of the Orthodox year. It commemorates not only the outward Baptism of Christ. It also displays the inner meaning of the coming of Christ, sent by the Heavenly Father into this world. Theophany indeed means exactly the *revealing, unveiling* of God.

It is the first showing of the truth that Christ, the Man who was baptised in the Jordan, is in fact God.

Christ is shown to be True God, one of the Persons of the Holy Trinity: Christ standing in the water, the Voice of the Father heard, the likeness of the dove alighting on him as the Holy Spirit.

But it is just as important to understand that in going down to the River Jordan to be baptised by his cousin John the Forerunner, Christ is also displaying his Manhood, he is showing that he has taken on *sinful* Manhood.

Christ is in fact *sinless*, but identifies himself with us as *sinners*. If he had not done it, his coming into the world would have been useless, he would not have identified absolutely with us as sinful men. He would have identified himself only with a *sinless* humanity which does not really exist.

Now he identifies himself with us who are—all, each one of us—sinners, but who also have all the possibilities of being brought back from evil, from the sins of body and soul, from the corruption in which we are bound. We have the possibilities of redemption, allowing us the hope of heaven, the joy of the Saints.

And Christ coming to the Jordan shows us all this.

What a transformation we now see is possible for us! What a transfiguration is possible! What a change in our state!

The One who comes to the River and accepts Baptism from one, John, who is lesser than he, shows his humility. When Christ comes as God-among-Men he does not come in state and glory but in weakness, the weakness he shows on the Holy Cross.

That is the sort of God we worship, not one with a whip or as an executioner. To those who recognise him, Jesus Christ, as true God and true Man, he comes as Giver of life-giving water to my life, of eternal life. He comes as my Lord and my Saviour.

Father Alexander

St Helen's Appeal for St Martin's THE APPEAL REMAINS OPEN

We are grateful to those continuing to support our restoring
St Martin's as a Temple suitable for Orthodox worship

Thank you, God bless you!



Holy Theophany 2014



St Martin's Church, West Stockwell Street CO1 1HN

St Helen's Chapel, Maldenburgh Street CO1 1UB

Both temples are off the High Street, but accessible from there only on foot. St Martin's is 100m down behind the Town Hall. St Helen's is 200m down behind the George Hotel. Nearest car-park NCP Nunns Rd, behind Fenwicks, and close to St Martin's. Little street parking available.

Services in St Martin's

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

Parish Priest: **Father Alexander (Alistair) Haig**

17 Maldenburgh Street, Colchester CO1 1UB

Tel: 01-206-530-530 Mob: 07-947-047-201 Eml: parishpriest@orthodoxcolchester.org.uk

Reader: **George Harrison** 07-869-488-842

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

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>

The Parish Church of St Martin and The Shrine Chapel of St Helen

Opening our holy places for you to pray quietly in difficult times

St Helen's: The Chapel can now be used for private prayer: it is open most days whenever possible, from about 10.00 am to dusk. [When St Martin's is open St Helen's may well be closed, for security reasons.]

St Martin's: We will try to open the Church for private prayer whenever someone can be there for an hour or two. [The churchyard should normally be open.]

Here and There

2021 DIOCESAN CALENDAR:

The attractive wall calendar is available at £6.00 per copy. It gives some of the saints' days and the fasting rules, and is illustrated with lovely photos of the Diocesan Monastery of SS Anthony and Cuthbert, Shropshire.

DATES in 2021: Clean Monday, the first day of Lent is 15 March. [Western Easter is 4 April.]

HOLY PASCHA is 2 May. The Pilgrimage in honour of the Saints of Barking in East London is 8 May, Bright Saturday. Put the dates in your diary now.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS: Our thanks to **Anne Dew**, **Dimitrios Murray**, and **Mark Shillaker** for putting up the lights on the tree by the west door of St Martin's, a job which Anne and Dimi have done for some years. The sight always adds a little joy to the church and street.

CHRISTMAS ATTENDANCE: There were 75 present at the Holy Liturgy on Christmas morn-

ing, all suitably "distanced". It was a very happy occasion, even if a little overshadowed of course by the stringencies of coronavirus and all its tiers.

ANDREAS YIANNI: Andreas had been in Britain and Clacton for many years, coming here from Cyprus. I had met him two or three times, though he did not come to church regularly. We were glad to give his Orthodox funeral in St James' church in Clacton and grateful to **Fr Justin** for allowing it. Our sympathy to his wife **Hazel**, son **John**, daughter **Caterina**, and all the family. Eternal memory!

CHRISTMAS GIFTS AND CARDS: We thank those who gave greetings so generously and kindly. The Lord reward you according to his great kindness.



New Mayor honours our town's Patron Saint

Every Mayor of Colchester for the last 20 years has been to our Shrine Chapel on taking office, to pay respects to St Helen and her relic, and to the tradition that she was born here and built this temple as her place of worship. This year the new leader of our Borough is **Councillor Robert Davidson** and though taking office rather late he will in fact serve for some 18 months, as his predecessor has done. It has always been a low-key occasion—a little talk about the traditions of S Helen, a short, rather private, Orthodox service of prayer, and a little chat about this and that, including this time the unsurprising discovery that he, being a farmer, knows a number of my relatives who farm in this area and shares Scottish origins. In the picture above he wears St Helen on his chain of office.



Icon of the Three Hierarchs and Ecumenical Teachers

St Basil the Great, St John Chrysostom, and St Gregory the Theologian are honoured on three different days in January, but together on 30 January. They are three of the greatest, most perceptive Fathers of the Church, and constantly taught the Faith not only with strength, but also with love and gentleness.

A Word from the Fathers: St Peter Chrysologus (+450)

Today the Holy Spirit floats upon the waters in the form of a dove, so that by this sign it might be known that the world's universal shipwreck has ceased, as the dove had announced to Noah that the world's flood had subsided.

Nor does this dove carry a branch of the old olive, but it pours

the whole riches of the olive on the head of the author of the new anointing, in order to fulfil what the prophet foretold; 'Therefore God your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above other kings.'

Today Christ gives the beginnings of the signs from heaven, when he changes water into wine...

JANUARY DAYS

Fri	1	CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST , S Basil the Gt
Sun	3	Pentecost 3, Sunday before Theophany
Wed	6	THEOPHANY OF CHRIST
Thu	7	Synaxis of S John the Forerunner
Sun	10	Pentecost 31, Sunday after Theophany
Mon	11	S Theodosius the Gt, the Cenobiarch
Tue	12	S Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Weremouth
Wed	13	S Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers
Sat	16	Veneration of Precious Chains of S Peter S Fursey, Enlightener of East Anglia
Sun	17	Pentecost 32, Sun of Ten Lepers , S Antony
Mon	18	SS Athanasius & Cyril, Abps of Alexandria
Wed	20	S Euthymius the Gt
Thu	21	S Maximus the Confessor, Virgin-Martyr Agnes
Fri	22	Apostle Timothy of the Seventy
Sun	24	Pentecost 33, Sun of Blind Man , S Xenia
Thu	28	S Ephraim the Syrian, S Isaac the Syrian
Sat	30	Three Ecumenical Teachers & Hierarchs
Sun	31	Pentecost 34, Sunday of Zacchaeus , SS Cyrus & John the Wonderworkers