

# Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen, Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles & Ireland  
Metropolitan: His Eminence Archbishop Silouan

NEWSLETTER 286

JUNE 2021



Saturdays in June 4.30 pm Great Vespers  
Sundays in June 10.30 am Holy Liturgy  
Thursday 10 June ASCENSION DAY  
9.30 am Holy Liturgy  
Thursday 24 June NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST  
9.30 am Holy Liturgy  
Tuesday 29 June ST PETER & ST PAUL  
9.30 am Holy Liturgy



## Ascension and Pentecost - a pair of feasts....

**T**hese two feasts, Ascension and Pentecost, belong together. You need to understand them both to understand either, with anything like a complete view. They make a real pair.

Christ moved from earthly sight, in order that he might pour out his Holy Spirit not just upon the disciples in the upper room but also upon the generations of Christian people ever since, to our own time and into the future until the end of this world. So was fulfilled his return to the Father while he remained in the Spirit among his followers: "Lo, I am with you always."

You see, Christ had to be "made flesh and dwell among us" in order to save us, to be a real human being who experienced life in the flesh. But he also had to be capable of being totally united with us in the Spirit, in order to sanctify us, to make us what we were meant to be, not only "made in the image of God" but also "like" him—for such are the people of God. By his gift of the Holy Spirit we shall be transfigured into his likeness (in spite of our continuing sinfulness while in this world).

In the Ascension Christ is displayed as King of the Universe, Lord of all. He ascends *into*, but also *above* the heavens to the Father. And he retains his sacred Manhood to show to the Father how he has completely renewed it from

its sinful, sorrowful state into the glory of the true Manhood of Christ.

That was 40 days after Holy Pascha. Then, 10 days later, at Pentecost the great miracle happens. The disciples gather round the Holy Mother of God and the Holy Spirit descends upon them, sound and sight, and the disciples changed beyond all expectation. The fearful little group receives power, strength, beyond their wildest dreams, God's Spirit comes to them and they are suddenly changed to bold preachers and teachers.

**Ascension shows who Christ is. Pentecost shows that Man is to become who Christ is.**

We are to be deified. The process has already been started. Our sins are being removed as thorns from our sides—very often a painful business! It will be *worthwhile* business however, and ultimately *satisfying*. To receive the Holy Spirit as we do in the sacraments and in our prayer life is an empowering thing, keeping us in Christ, uniting us to him. God bless you.

**Father Alexander**

## Holy Pascha 2021

Pascha this month was certainly 'better' than last year.

In 2020 practically everything everywhere was cancelled throughout the world, and future generations will wonder whether all sanity had been lost—not knowing the impossible situation the world found itself in. Pascha should have been a renewing experience in the celebration of our faith but had to be put aside completely, an incredible occurrence.

But Pascha 2021 has proved very much 'better', though even then of course it was not a 'normal'. I think particularly of the thin number permitted to attend the midnight services in our parish. 57 attended here—we used St Martin's, which allowed far more than would have been possible in St Helen's. Outside there were another 20.

But it was a very happy occasion, and people unable to be admitted did understand that there had that to be limits.

The noise was limited as well, partially because of Covid rules, but people did respond to the *Christ is risen!* in different languages.

We had a pretty full number of services for Holy Week. The main one we

sadly had to omit was the Holy Thursday evening Twelve Gospels but this was due to my increased weakness and the unfortunate fact that I could not find another Priest to help.

It may take a time for church congregations here and everywhere to regain their size and strength.

I pray that the taking over of St Martin's may encourage Orthodox people in their Christian pilgrimage.

## 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

THE TOTAL GIVEN BY 18 APRIL WAS £170,657

Thank you, God bless you!

## St Martin's Church, West Stockwell Street CO1 1HN St Helen's Chapel, Maidenburgh 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 very close to St Martin's. Little street parking available.

### SERVICES IN ST MARTIN'S CHURCH

Saturday: Great Vespers usually 4.30 pm Sunday: Divine Liturgy 10.30 am

Confessions: Saturday 5 pm, after Vespers, or by arrangement

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

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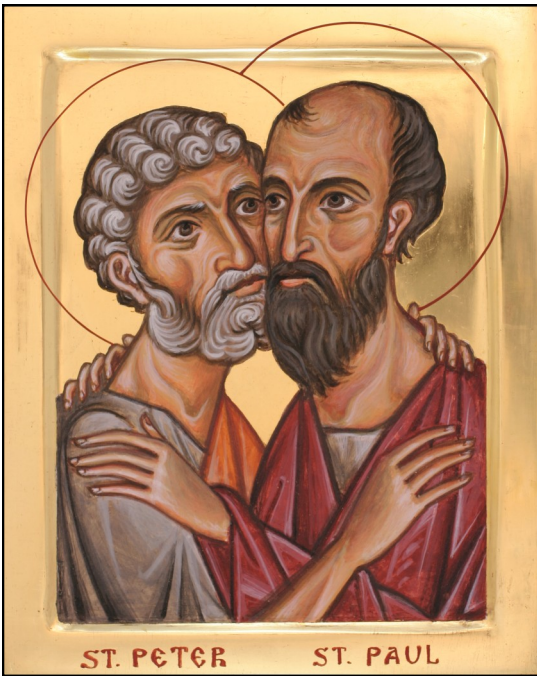
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Appeal Website: <http://orthodoxcolchesterappeal.org.uk>



**St Peter and St Paul** have a joint feast, 29 June (Holy Liturgy 9.30 am). They are supposed to have died on the same date in Rome, though most think that it was in different years. By tradition St Peter was crucified upside down. St Paul beheaded, since he was a Roman citizen. Many people think they were at odds with each other, but their icon shows the opposite: they embrace. They had their differences of opinion, and St Paul stood up bravely for the Gospel as he received it, widening it so that the emphasis in Christianity should be on the Gospel for all races of mankind against St Peter who thought of the Gospel more narrowly from a Jewish point of view. Thankfully St Paul won the point, so that we Gentiles could be brought in and receive the fullness of the Faith. The icon shows that they were recognised as *joint* Leaders of the Holy Apostles.

## Here and There

**BAPTISED:** Congratulations to LUCA ANTONIS, son of DANIEL and REBECCA ANDREWS of Little Clacton, who has been baptised in St Helen's Chapel. His godparents are SOTIRIOS (Nick) and ANGELA NICOLAOU. He is a little brother for THEODOROS and ALEXANDROS. *Many years* to all the family!

**THE MICHAEL FAMILY** of Shrub End is to have a busy few weeks in June/July. LUKE SUTTON will be received into the Church by Holy Chrismation in St Martin's on Holy Pentecost, 20 June, and then will marry ANASTASIA (Ana) MICHAEL in St Martin's on 3 July. As Luke and Dr Ana live in Nottingham, things may be a little tight! We wish them *Many years* of happiness in marriage and the Holy Orthodox faith.

## St Martin's Church comes to life as an Orthodox place of worship

Gradually things are improving at St Martin's. We bought some pieces of furniture recently—two icon stands, a cabinet of shelves and drawers for keeping sanctuary pieces, a filing cabinet for parish papers. I hope that very soon, now having room to accommodate it, we shall get our new printing machine, to save on the costs of printing this Newsletter and other occasional notices, and of producing other posters, etc.

**CHURCH OPENING:** The plan is to have, when permitted, **St Helen's Chapel** open daily all day for private prayer. **St Martin's Church**, I hope, will be open whenever we can get someone to be present on duty, to keep general oversight.

**HEATING:** It has certainly been cold in St Martin's, though I think that we are getting a bit more used to it. I hope we shall soon be able to deal with that. It will help preserve us and furnishings etc.

**AT THE SAME TIME** I hope we shall quickly be able to install the iconostasis. The temporary set-up is very temporary, and the steps at that place need adjustment, as you will have noticed

from the help I need there going up or down in vestments and carrying the Holy Gifts etc.

**REFRESHMENTS AFTER THE HOLY LITURGY:** With the easing of Covid restrictions, after Holy Liturgy we are to serve tea and coffee, and cold drinks. This will give a chance for people to get to know each other and enjoy each other's company.

*It would be good to get a rota of people to share the job.* **Reader GEORGE HARRISON is compiling a list: please tell him if you would like to help.**

**WEEKDAY SERVICES:** I hope that we shall soon be able to restore the serving of the Liturgy on one weekday every week. As we have had it in the past, we vary the day so as to celebrate a special feast if possible, and it also gives the hope that as many as possible will be able to attend, if not every week, at least from time to time. [In Lent we have the Liturgy of the Presanctified every Wednesday of course, and the Akathist every Friday.]

**OUR SOLICITORS** are working on the searches, which have to be carried out. Things are now moving forward, praise to God!

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

*John marks the frontier between the Old and the New Testaments. The Lord speaks of him as a boundary line: 'The law and the prophets are valid until John the Baptist.' He represents the Old Testament and at the same time introduces the New. His parents were old, in keeping with his first role: while yet in his mother's womb he was saluted as a prophet, in recognition of his second [role]. Although he was not yet born at the time of Mary's visitation, he leaped in his mother's womb. His mission was made clear, even before he was born. He was revealed as Christ's forerunner, before he so much as saw him.*

*These divine mysteries transcend man's feeble understanding. When at last he was born and received his name, his father's tongue was loosened. Consider the symbolic significance of what happened. Zachary's tongue was loosened because a voice was born... John was a 'voice', but in the beginning the Lord was the Word. John was a voice for a time: but Christ, who in the beginning was the Word, is the Word in eternity.*

### JUNE DAYS

Tue	1	Martyr Justin the Philosopher Nun-Martyr Wite of Dorset
Thu	3	S Kevin, Abbot of Glendough
Fri	4	SS Mary & Martha, sisters of Lazarus
Sat	5	Hieromartyr Boniface of Crediton (Devon), Apostle of Germany
Sun	6	<b>Pascha 6, The Blind Man, Fathers of the 2nd Ecumenical Council</b>
Wed	9	S Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, S Columba of Iona, Enlightener of Scotland
Thu	10	<b>ASCENSION OF OUR LORD</b>
Fri	11	H Apostles Bartholomew & Barnabas
Sun	13	<b>Pascha 7, Fathers of the 1st Council</b>
Sat	19	H Apostle Jude, Brother of the Lord
Sun	20	<b>HOLY PENTECOST</b>
Mon	21	<b>DAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>
Tue	22	<b>THIRD DAY OF THE TRINITY</b> S Alban, Protomartyr of Britain
Wed	23	S Etheldreda of Ely
Thu	24	<b>NATIVITY OF S JOHN THE BAPTIST</b>
Sun	27	<b>Pentecost 1, ALL SAINTS</b>
Mon	28	<i>Apostles' Fast</i>
Tue	29	<b>H GLORIOUS LEADERS OF THE APOSTLES, PETER &amp; PAUL</b>
Wed	30	Synaxis of the Twelve Apostles