

Ascension and Pentecost: two parts, one feast



....Well, that is not quite accurate: what I mean is that the two feasts hang closely together in meaning and significance. You can't have one without the other.

Ascension, forty days after Holy Pascha, marks the end of the period when Christ, having died on the Cross, showed himself bodily returned to life, risen again.

Now he returns to his Father in Heaven, so that he might seal a new bond between earth and heaven, between God and Man. It allows him to send his Holy Spirit ten days later at Pentecost, fifty days after Pascha.

Thus a "revamped" world takes the place of the old. The Holy Spirit descends upon the Mother of God



MAYOR'S VISIT ON TAKING OFFICE

Each new Mayor for over twenty years has visited St Helen's Chapel to pay his or her respects to the Patron Saint of our Borough on taking office.

The new Mayor TIM YOUNG continues this tradition, coming with the Mayor's to St Helen's Chapel on **Wednesday 1 June at 11.00 am**. Short prayers are said for the Mayor and Council, and there will be a little refreshment to follow.

and the Holy Apostles in the Upper Room and through them upon all the Christian people. This community is bound together in the People of God, the One Body of Christ.

This "People" or "Body" includes all of us even to this generation—to you and me, and even on to the end of the world, whenever that shall be.

We are to make sure we live closely in this community. Our prayers, our ascetic works, are all to be accomplished not on our own, but together in the life of Christ's Church.

So I encourage all of you—including those who have felt forced to live lives as separated as possible in the lockdown period—to return to the full life of the Church. Because this will bring salvation to your soul!

The life in Christ is one lived in holy communion with all the other members of the Church. We need each other, brothers and sisters in Christ—their strength in the Spirit, their love in Christ.

Father Alexander

SERVICES THIS MONTH (in St Martin's Church unless otherwise stated)

- Saturdays: Great Vespers 4.30 pm,
- Sundays: Matins 9.45 am, Holy Liturgy 10.30 am
- Thu 2 Jun **Ascension Day**: Holy Liturgy 9.30 am
- Thu 9 Jun St Columba of Iona:
Holy Liturgy 9.30 am *St Helen's*
- Tue 14 Jun 3rd Day of the Trinity:
Holy Liturgy 9.30am *St Helen's*
- Mon 20 Jun *Beginning of the Apostles Fast*
(till 28 Jun)
- Fri 24 Jun **Nativity of St John**:
Holy Liturgy *St Helen's*
- Wed 29 Jun **SS Peter & Paul**: Holy Liturgy 9.30 am

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 department store, and very close to St Martin's. Little street parking available.

SERVICES IN ST MARTIN'S CHURCH

Saturday: usually Great Vespers 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

Parish Priest: Father Alexander (Alistair) Haig

17 Maidenburgh Street, Colchester CO1 1UB

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

Deacon: **Father Mark Shillaker** 07-917-161-295 Eml: markshillaker@gmail.com

Readers: **George Harrison** 07-869-488-842, **Catalin Fliscu** 07-815-682-820

Churchwardens: **Dusan Radunovic** 07-880-778-385, **Jon Kanaar** 07-596-221-079

Orthodox Parish of St Martin & 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 Alban is regarded as the Protomartyr (First Martyr) of Britain. He is variously dated to the early third century or the early fourth—the third being the most likely. He hid a Christian priest to protect against the persecuting powers, but was discovered and himself condemned to death on the hill in what is now the city of St Albans just north of Greater London near the modern M25. The beautiful cathedral there became a great pilgrimage centre. Most of his holy Relics were destroyed, but a few survived the 16th century Reformation, and one was given back to the cathedral a few years ago and can be venerated. The mediaeval tomb has also been restored. I grew up not many miles from St Albans and my Anglican childhood parish church was dedicated to him, so I have great love for him. His feast day is 22 June. The icon here shows him as a young Roman soldier, though some historians say he was not a soldier - but he was anyway a real Soldier for Christ. It was painted for me many



years ago by a former Anglican parishioner of mine. May the example and prayers of St Alban encourage us to follow him in the way of Christ. He is also co-patron of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius (of which I am a long-standing member) which brings mainly Anglicans and Orthodox together. It publishes the fine and useful theological journal *Sobornost*.

Here and there

GREENHOUSE AVAILABLE FREE! We have a small disused greenhouse to give away to anyone who would like it. Though dirty, the glass is complete and unbroken. You must dismantle and take it away yourself. Give us a ring if interested.

MONASTERY REOPENING VERY SLOWLY: It is good to hear that the Monastery of St John the Baptist at Tolleshunt Knights is opening up again after Covid, but in a very guarded way, and visiting is by invitation only, and with strict conditions. We pray for that community which means so much to vast numbers of people locally and throughout the world.

PENTECOST AND THE SUNDAYS AFTER: Pentecost is the Feast of the Holy Trinity, where the truth of the *Three Persons in One God* is revealed. The next day, Monday and Tuesday extend the feast by two days, the day of the Spirit and the third day of the Trinity.

The Sunday after emphasises the fact that—based on all that has gone before, especially Christ's death and Resurrection - the Church is established with All Saints, all the Holy People of God before us who inspire us with his grace.

The next Sunday is the feast of the "local" Church and its own local Saints, in our case All the Saints of the British Isles. In some of the immigrant church communities on this Sunday they naturally remember the Saints of their home Churches, and then keep the British Saints on the Sunday after that.

It is all one happy celebration of God's People.

A Word from the Fathers:

St Adamnan, wrote the life of St Columba or Colum Cille (died 9 June AD 597), his predecessor as Abbot of Iona, A small island off the west coast of Scotland

From his boyhood Colum Cille devoted himself to the Christian combat and to the search for wisdom. By God's grace he preserved integrity of body and purity of soul, so that he seemed like one ready for the life of heaven though still on earth.; for in appearance he was like an angel, refined in his speech.

Holy in his works, pre-eminent in character, great in counsel. In the forty-second year of his age he sailed away from Ireland to Britain, wishing to be a pilgrim for Christ. During his life of thirty-four years as a soldier of Christ on the island of Iona, he could not let even one hour pass that was not given to prayer or reading or writing or some other good work.

Night and day he so unwearingly gave himself to fasts and vigils that the burden of each single work seemed beyond the strength of man. Yet through all he was loving to everyone, his holy face was always cheerful and in his inmost heart he was happy with the joy of the Holy Spirit.

When the end of his years was at hand, he gave his last commands to his brothers, saying, 'I commend to you, my children, these last words of mine, that you keep among you unfeigned love with peace.'

Then when the bell was rung for the midnight office he rose quickly and went to the church, where he went in alone before the others and knelt down in prayer before the altar. Diormuit his attendant followed, and the whole community of monks

ran in with lights; when they saw that their father was dying they began to lament.

Then Diormuit raised the saint's holy right hand, to bless the monastic community. At the same time the venerable father himself moved his hand, as well as he was able, and immediately after he had expressed his holy blessing he breathed his last.

JUNE DAYS

Thu	2	ASCENSION OF OUR LORD
Sun	5	Pascha 7, Fathers of the 1st Council, Hieromartyr Boniface of Crediton, Apostle of Germany
Thu	9	S Columba of Iona, Enlightener of Scotland
Sat	11	H Apostles Bartholomew & Barnabas
Sun	12	HOLY PENTECOST
Mon	13	FEAST OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
Tue	14	THIRD DAY OF THE HOLY TRINITY
Sun	19	Pentecost 1, ALL SAINTS
Mon	20	Beginning of Apostles Fast
Wed	22	S Alban, Protomartyr of Britain
Fri	24	Nativity of Holy Forerunner John
Sun	26	Pentecost 2, All Saints of the British Isles
Wed	29	H Chiefs of the Apostles Peter & Paul
Thu	30	Synaxis of the H Twelve Apostles