

+ Orthodoxy—the faith that began with Christ and his Apostles and continues till the end of time +

## Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Archdiocese of the BI & Ireland  
NEWSLETTER 209 MAY 2014



### Honouring our local Saints—join the Barking Pilgrimage

Barking today is in Greater London, just this side of the centre.

We are joining the annual Pilgrimage to the Orthodox Saints associated with the ancient Monastery there, which was founded in the seventh century.

St Erkenwald (later Bishop of London) was the founder, and he put his sister St Ethelburga in as first Abbess, with St Hildelitha as her spiritual mother—she became second Abbess.

The pilgrimage is always on the second Saturday of May. This year we are privileged to have Metropolitan Kallistos addressing us on *What is a Saint?* He is a stimulating speaker, well-known throughout the Orthodox world.

Do join us. Barking Abbey ruins are attractive, and we can go in the lovely church next door if it is wet.

Here are some attractive English Saints who will lead us to Christ, and assist us with their prayers.

Father Alexander



### Pilgrimage in honour of the Saints of Barking Saturday 10 May

12.30-4.30

Bus from St Helen's 10.15 am, £15 per head,  
Families cheap rate, Students £10. Return  
by 6.00 pm. Names on list in Church or by  
phone/email.



### New Holy Doors for St Helen's

I am delighted with the new Holy Doors, and hope you like them. They have been made in oak by Mike Rouse of Clacton at a cost of £1,100.

The temporary Icons, showing the Four Evangelists, have been mounted by Fr Stephen Weston in Norfolk.

When we can, we will replace them with originals. I hope this will be soon, and would like to have the Annunciation in the top spaces. The picture shows the door above them shut, to secure the Altar.

I already have some gifts towards the cost, but need more to pay for both the Doors and Icons.

If anyone would like to contribute, please would they let me know.

*Sadly, by the way, we have had further thefts, so that at the time of writing the main church doors are locked unless someone responsible is present.*

HOLY LITURGY  
CLACTON  
Saturday  
17 May  
10.00 am

The Holy Doors  
symbolise the stone  
outside the Tomb of  
Christ, and the  
gateway to heaven.

### MAY WEEKDAYS AT ST HELEN'S

9.30 AM HOLY LITURGY

Thursday 8th

St John the Theologian

Wednesday 14th

Mid-Feast of Pentecost

Wednesday 21st

SS Constantine & Helen

Thursday 29th

Ascension of our Lord

### Feast of Saints Constantine and Helen

Tuesday 20 May

6.00 pm

Great Vespers  
and Refreshments

Just come along

Wednesday 21 May

9.30 am

Divine Liturgy  
and Lunch

For Lunch give in your name by Sunday before

### St Elizabeth Sisters from Minsk visit St Helen's on

Thursday 15 May, 2.00 pm

It has been several years since they last came here with their wares to support their excellent work with alcoholics and others in need. Do come along and look at their church vestments and furnishings and little items to buy as presents. We have not always found them cheap, but always good and attractive. (They like cash, by the way.)

### St Helen's Chapel, Maidenburgh St, High St

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 Balkeme Hill), to Northgate; go straight along St Peter Street to Castle Park; continue round, up into Maidenburgh Street. Nunns Road NCP is the nearest car park.

Saturday: Great Vespers usually 4.30 pm (check before coming)

Sunday: Hours 10.15 am, Divine Liturgy 10.30 am

Confessions: Saturday 5 pm, after Vespers, or by arrangement  
Holy Marriage, Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc: by arrangement

Parish Priest: Father Alexander (Alistair) Haig

17 Maidenburgh Street, Colchester CO1 1UB

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

Rdr Andreas Moran, 6 Woodlands, Welshwood Park CO4 3JA Tel: 01-206-865-697

Rdr Alexander Haig Jr, detached service in Winchester parish

Churchwardens: David Davies 01-473-745-167 Dusan Radunovic 01-206-710-073

The Parish of St Helen is Registered Charity No. 1134418

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

(At St James Anglican Church, Beatrice Rd, Clacton-on-sea CO15 1LE

Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday 10.00 am

## Christ ascended into heaven to take you there with him....

The Ascension of Christ is a beautiful event in its own right.

Forty days after he had risen from the dead, St Luke's Gospel tells us, Christ took the disciples to the Holy Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem—or in another tradition (St Matthew's Gospel) to a hill in Galilee.

There the Risen Lord told them to remain in expectation of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

But beautiful as it is, that is far from the only meaning of this sacred occasion.

One thing it is also intended to teach us is that we too are to go to the glory of eternity, and to be taken into the very life of God himself.

So, however miserable life can be, there is always the promise of perfect joy, perfect peace, in a life to come.

That can surely be an enormous reassurance for each of us individually when



life gets tough.

If we believe that Christ is indeed Lord and God - another theme of the Ascension - our life becomes plain-sailing. That is true for all who trust in him.

It does not remove the pain and trouble, but it does give us the peace to deal with it without fear. Alleluia! What a King!

## The People Column

**ROMAN GAVRILOV**, an Orthodox Russian from Latvia, was living on the streets of Colchester in a sad way for several years. In the cold weather he slept in St Helen's. He died in March 2013, and I and Karen (who had generously taken him in, just a few months before the end of his life) attended the inquest, which has only just happened. The Coroner ruled that his death was an accident, the medical cause being alcohol poisoning due to chronic alcohol abuse. Roman was a sad man of course, but actually well-loved by a surprising number of people. A collection is being made to buy his grave in Colchester Cemetery, and then to erect a headstone. Memory eternal!

**FR MICHAEL STOKES**, the RC Parish Priest at Frinton, is a good friend of this Parish. He has always been very interested in Orthodoxy, being a member of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius for many years. He celebrates his Golden Jubilee as a Priest in St Teresa's Church at Lexden on Friday 2 May. We have been friends for almost all those years, and I expect to be present to congratulate him. Many years!



### Holy Week and Pascha

The services of Holy Week have been as lovely as ever, due to the hard work of a number of people, for which I am most grateful, and am sure the whole Parish is grateful too.

In the picture left are the arrangers of flowers for the Epitaphion, which they accomplished in excellent time on Holy Friday morning. Of course the frustrating thing about it for them is that the flowers all get pulled apart within a very few hours!

Nevertheless, it did look very beautiful again this year.

Then the Choir worked very hard too. And the servers.

All contributed to what in itself is an act of worship of the Holy Crucified and Risen One, Jesus Christ our Lord and God.

Thank you to them all!

#### Attendances

Holy Thu: 9.30 am 8, 6 pm 40  
 Holy Fri: 3 pm 23, 6 pm 54  
 Holy Sat: 9.30 am 45  
 Midnight 200 (Liturgy 45)  
 Holy Pascha: 3 pm 13.

### A Word from the Fathers: Blessed Augustine of Hippo

**T**oday Jesus Christ our Lord went up to heaven: let our hearts go up with him... Just as he ascended without leaving us, so too we are already with him in Heaven, although his promises have not yet been fulfilled in our bodies.

Christ is now raised above the heavens; but he still experiences on earth whatever sufferings we his members feel. He showed this was true when he called out from heaven: 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' And: 'I was thirsty and you gave me drink.'

Why then do we not exert ourselves on earth so as to be happy with him already in heaven through the faith, hope and charity which unite us with him? Christ, while in heaven, is also with us and we, while on earth, are also with him. He is with us in his godhead and his power and his love; and we, though we cannot be with him in his godhead as he is with us, can be with him in our love, our love for him.

He did not leave heaven when he came down to us from heaven, and he did not leave us when he ascended to heaven again.

## Here and There

### FASTING IN PASCHALTIDE:

**Swanwick in Derbyshire 26 -28 May.** In the first week of Holy Pascha no fasting is permitted. After that, most Orthodox Churches return to fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays. The Church of Antioch, however, says we do not need to fast until the eve of Ascension (this year 28 May).

**NEW BISHOP:** Still, alas! there is no news of the appointment of a **Bishop for Great Britain and Ireland.** I hear that the next Holy Synod will be on 1 July, and we hope to hear that they have elected our new Archbishop. Whether that will be Father Philip Hall of Lincoln (as the clergy here and lay representatives of the Cathedral in London requested) remains to be seen. In the meanwhile we will be able to meet His Eminence Metropolitan Ignatius of France at the **Diocesan Conference at**

**Swanwick in Derbyshire 26 -28 May.** If any others would like to attend it, by the way, **there are still a few places.** You are warmly invited: I will find some of the cost. Please speak with me as soon as possible. I think you will enjoy it.

**CHURCH BREAD:** We do need more bread-makers. If you can help, please volunteer: training can be given. We are in great debt to those who do make our bread, but it does require some commitment and willingness to learn. And the people who do it, consider it a great privilege to make the bread, from which the 'Lamb' is cut that becomes for us the Body of Christ. The Priest prays for the person who has made the bread before it is consecrated. Men and women can volunteer for this sacred duty, which brings its own blessings.

**Paul Brighton-Cross**, received into the Church here, and formerly our Reader, will be ordained Deacon on Sunday 1 June at St George's Cathedral. He will serve at All Saints' Church, Basildon, which we founded with him. His Parish Priest is Fr Alexander Tefft. We have given him his vestments.

### MAY DAYS

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Fri 2  | S Athanasius the Great, Abp of Alexandria<br>S Boris, Prince of Bulgaria   |
| Sun 4  | Pascha 3, H Myrrh-bearers<br>Virgin-Martyr Pelagia of Tarsus               |
| Mon 5  | New Martyr Ephraim the Newly-revealed                                      |
| Wed 7  | S John of Beverley, Bp of York   |
| Thu 8  | H Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian                                 |
| Fri 9  | Translation of Relics of S Nicholas to Bari                                |
| Sat 10 | Apostle Simon Zelotes, Apostle of Britain                                  |
| Sun 11 | Pascha 4, the Paralysed Man<br>SS Cyril & Methodius, Teachers of the Slavs |
| Mon 12 | S Epiphanius, Bishop of Constantia in Cyprus                               |
| Wed 14 | Mid-Feast of Pentecost   |
| Thu 15 | S Pachomius the Great  |
| Fri 16 | S Brendan the Voyager, Abbot of Clonfert, Ireland                          |
| Sun 18 | Pascha 5, the Samaritan Woman  |
| Mon 19 | S Dunstan, Abp of Canterbury, S Alcuin of York                             |
| Wed 21 | SS Constantine & Helen   |
| Sat 24 | S Vincent of Lerins  |
| Sun 25 | Pascha 6, the Blind Man<br>Third Finding of Head of S John the Baptist     |
| Mon 26 | S Augustine of Canterbury, Evangeliser of England                          |
| Tue 27 | S John the Russian whose relics are on Evia<br>S Bede the Venerable        |
| Thu 29 | ASCENSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST   |

A fuller list of the month's Feasts and Fasts is available in