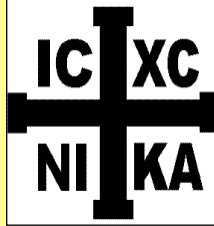


+ The meaning of Ascension: Iesous Christos Nika! Jesus Christ is conqueror! +

## Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
of the British Isles and Ireland  
Metropolitan: His Eminence Archbishop Silouan  
NEWSLETTER 274 MAY 2020



## The ascended Christ shows that in the end Christ wins out!

**H**oly Pascha taught us that Christ battled with sin and death on the Cross and came out on top. Ascension's teaching is that Christ is the Victor, Christ is the Conqueror, Christ is the Winner. In doing that, he who is God became Man, and utterly changed Man—renewed it, strengthened it, rebuilt it.

So Manhood as we know it since Christ came on earth is rather different from the corruption it experienced before. When Christ ascends to heaven (we sing in an ancient Orthodox western hymn),

*Yea, angels tremble when they see  
How changed is our humanity;  
That flesh hath purged what flesh had stained,  
And God, the Flesh of God, hath reigned.*

Yes, on his return to heaven Christ startles the inhabitants of eternity, with the beauty of human flesh renewed in Christ, so different from what it had become in Adam, the sin-soiled version, as it were.

Of course that is in Christ himself, and when our turn comes to follow him, the angels will catch a glimpse of humanity, fallen humanity, as it is in you and me.

But there we ourselves will have been changed *from glory to glory*. In particular we shall be washed from our sins and "hung out to dry" in the sun and light of Christ.

**W**e already have the taste of this eternity in our hearts, a taste given to us in the Holy Gifts at the Liturgy, the Wine of Heaven, the Bread of Life.

Be looking forward to the next time you are able to receive these Holy Mysteries, when today's sorrows, today's tragedies, are overcome, as overcome

in due course they shall be.

*Rejoice in the Lord, I say, rejoice!*  
There is so much to "get us down" in this world.

For us Orthodox, to be denied the Life in Christ, the sacramental life (as at this terrible time for the whole world) may be a terrible burden—no church services, not even access to our churches.

But it is all a part of this passing world, and in the end it is essential to our understanding to acknowledge that when really necessary Christ will satisfy our deepest needs and our basic desires without sacramental support and strength.

**The holy Sacraments or Mysteries as such will not be found in heaven. There we shall see directly face to face, not in a glass darkly.**

God keep us safely in these difficult times, our confidence in him alone.

May he give light in our darkness. Joy in our sorrow. Peace in the depths of our soul.

For Christ has already entered heaven, and brought us into eternity.

**Enjoy! as they say these days.**

*Father Alexander*

NO SERVICES AT ST HELEN'S  
UNTIL WE RECEIVE PERMISSION

If services are permitted by then.

Thursday, 21 May SS Helen & Constantine

9.30 am Holy Liturgy

Tuesday 26 May, St Bede the Venerable

4.30 pm Great Vespers

Wednesday 27 May, LEAVE-TAKING OF PASCHA

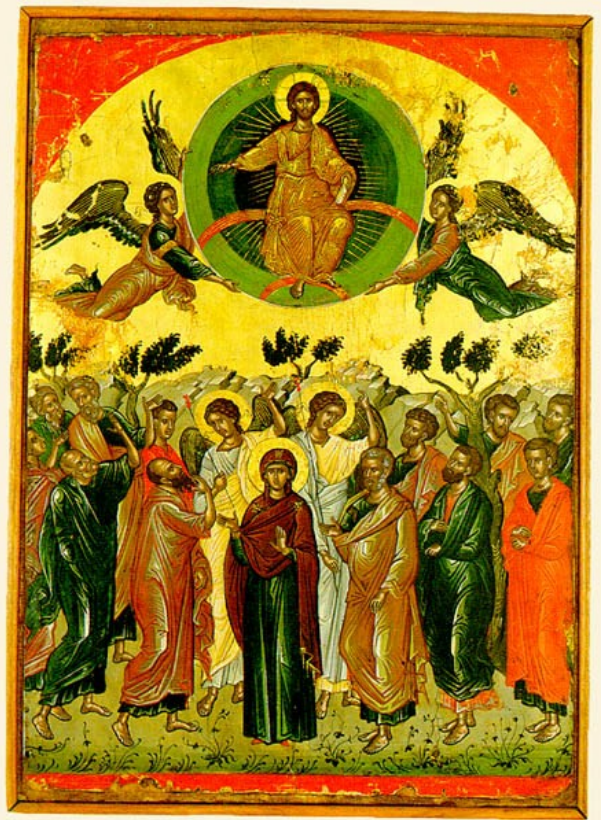
*The Holy Synod of Antioch has advised that, because we had to miss Holy Pascha, if we are free to do so, we should celebrate the Leave-taking particularly well*

9.30 am Holy Liturgy

4.30 pm Great Vespers

Thursday 28 May, ASCENSION OF CHRIST

9.30 am Holy Liturgy



### 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 Balkerne 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**

17 Maidenburgh 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**

**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>**

### APPEAL GIVING TOTAL TO DATE

**£160,118 (including Gift Aid)**

**St Martin's news overleaf.**

**St Martin's: Good news:  
Listed Building Consent granted!**



**Listed Building Consent has just been granted for our plans for St Martin's. Praise to God!**

This means, if I understand it correctly, that the Church Commissioners will now proceed with their advertising of our intended purchase. Unfortunately that cannot be done until lockdown is lifted, including a day for them to open St Martin's for people to inspect it.

If no objection is then raised by the public, they will continue with making arrangements to hand over the building .

Of course, as we have said before, while we will be freehold owners, we will continue to need approval of individual items of work, as with any listed building. This we can only accept as the price of having a special building like St Martin's, which is Listed Grade 2\*.

Similar rules would be cover altering your house - to a greater or lesser degree - especially if it is listed.

Congratulations to Project Manager Mark and the whole Project Committee.

\* \* \* \* \*

**The Appeal Total** continues to rise, though of course slowly, for the moment, since we are waiting for the right moment to "push" it again. **Recently we passed the £160,000 marker, and we are most grateful to all who have contributed.**

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

*Today Jesus Christ our Lord went up to heaven: let our hearts go 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 did not leave heaven*

*when he came down to us from heaven: and he did not leave us when he ascended to heaven again....*

*He came down from heaven, then, in mercy; and it is he alone who has ascended, since we are in him though grace.*

*This is why no one has ascended, since we are in him through grace. That is why no one has ascended but Christ, and no one but Christ has ascended.*

**Here and There**

**ST SOPHRONY:** Our really local Saint, from our own day, is going to remain an important figure in the life of this community. He founded the Holy Monastery of St John the Baptist, only ten miles or so away from us, and we know that he visited St Martin's Church—and very likely at least the outside of St Helen's Chapel. Very newly glorified—only late last year—he was well-known to Orthodox people in this area and throughout the world, and to local non-Orthodox people too, for that matter. He died in 1993. We have now been generously presented with an icon of him by Sister Gabriela. At the moment the icon is in our house, but soon will move to St Helen's for a while, and then in due course to St Martin's. We are very grateful to the iconographer and the community for this gracious gift.

**MY HEALTH:** Thank you for your interest and help and prayers. The doctors and nurses seem to be pretty pleased with my

progress, which continues.

**FEASTS AND FASTS:** We have published this monthly list since very early on in the history of the Parish, produced from the St Helen's Calendar for computers. But latterly most parishioners do not seem to have found it useful and very few have been taking copies (though we do know that certain folk have indeed used it). It has taken some effort each month, usually in a hurry. I have therefore decided, with a certain amount of regret, to cease production with immediate effect. This can partly be done because the Diocese now produces an annual calendar which can take its place. My apologies to those who will miss it.

**FASTING RULES:** Please note that the Holy Synod of Antioch follows the ancient rule that we do not fast at all during Paschal-tide, not on any Wednesdays or Fridays in the season. **We start fasting again on the day before Holy Ascension, this year 27 May.**

**St Constantine and St Helen**

These two great Saints are of course mother and son, normally commemorated together in the Orthodox Church. But in the West, the son is not generally venerated as a Saint, so that churches in Britain will be normally dedicated to Helen on her own. In Colchester you will find that she is referred to as St Helen or Helena, but he only as Constantine the Great, though both in ancient days were honoured as natives of this city. Their joint feast in Orthodoxy is the date of his repose in the Lord, 21 May, but in the West St Helen is traditionally kept on 18 August, the date of her repose. Because of our world's present troubles, we are sadly unlikely to be able to observe 21 May this year as our Parish Feast. But, **St Helen, pray to God for us!**



**MAY DAYS**

Sat	2	Translation of Relics of S Athanasius the Great of Alexandria
Sun	3	<b>Pascha 3, Myrrh-bearing Women</b>
Tue	5	Great Martyr Irene of Thessalonica
Fri	8	S John the Theologian
Sun	10	<b>Pascha 4, The Paralysed Man,</b> H Apostle Simon Zelotes, Apostle of Britain
Mon	11	SS Cyril & Methodius, Teachers of the Slavs
Wed	13	<b>Mid-feast of Pentecost</b>
Fri	15	S Pachomius the Great
Sun	17	<b>Pascha 5, The Samaritan Woman</b>
Tue	19	S Alcuin of York, S Dunstan of Canterbury
Thu	21	<b>SS Constantine &amp; Helen</b>
Sun	24	<b>Pascha 6, The Blind Man,</b> Fathers of the Second Ecumenical Council
Wed	27	<b>Leave-taking of Pascha</b> S Bede the Venerable
Thu	28	<b>Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ</b>
Sun	31	<b>Pascha 7,</b> Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council