

The Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen

Colchester

Newsletter | May 2024



The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles & Ireland | Metropolitan HE Silouan (Oner)



Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed!

The long days of the Great Fast draw to a close, and we travel together through the solemnity and spiritual grandeur of Holy Week, with its many long and beautiful services. Perhaps we have grumbled our way through it all with minimal effort, resenting the impact on our regular routines, comforts and pleasures or perhaps we have exerted ourselves with joyful determination, seeing within ourselves the deep need for spiritual renewal and repentance. However the last few weeks have been for each of us, we are reminded of the Paschal Homily of St John Chrysostom, read during the Divine Liturgy on the morning of Holy Pascha: *“Enter all of you, therefore into the joy of your Lord, whether first or last, receive your reward. O rich and poor, one with another, dance for joy! O you ascetics and you who are negligent, celebrate the day! You that have fasted and you that have disregarded the fast, rejoice today!”* This is a reminder that as Orthodox Christians we are not to excuse our lack of faithfulness or zeal and expect that we can simply rest on our laurels; by no means! **We are to work tirelessly to love God and our neighbour, to struggle with our passions, to cultivate the virtues and actively cooperate with God’s saving energies. The meaning of this passage is that Christ’s defeat of our ancient enemy, death, is true for all mankind, saint and sinner; it is the Good News, the only news worth paying attention to. When the feasting and celebrations are at last a memory we must look into our hearts and see ourselves as we really are. We must admit that we have done nothing good in our lives and ask God to yet grant us a good beginning. Happy Feast!**



Father Mark

NEWS AND VIEWS + NEWS AND VIEWS + NEWS AND VIEWS



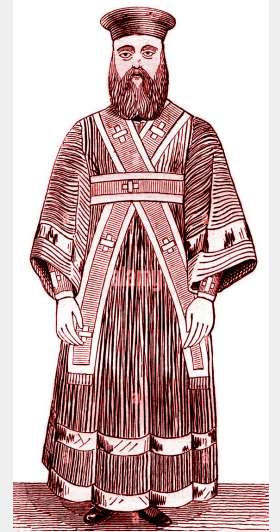
Iconostasis - It was with great delight that we have now installed the six large icons in our new iconostasis. This is a wonderful milestone and our heartfelt thanks go out to Silviu, Sophronia and Athanasios who worked hard to ensure the installation went smoothly. Work is now continuing to create the icons for the holy doors and the various crosses and fittings. The twelve icons for the top row have all received funding pledges except for three (Presentation of Our Lord, Pentecost and the Crucifixion), but the cost of these can now be covered by the Gift Aid claimed on the donations received so far. However, if you are interested in pledging the money to pay for one of these remaining three, please speak to Father Mark, Father Alexander or Nick Taylor our treasurer.



Barking Pilgrimage May 11 sees the return of the annual pilgrimage to Barking Abbey commemorating the Saints of Barking. The Monastery at Barking was founded in the 7th Century by St Erkenwald Bishop of London and dedicated to The Mother of God. His sister Ethelburga was one of the first nuns to rule as abbess, a post held by many women saints over the 900 years of the monastery’s existence. It was a great centre of spirituality in Anglo-Saxon times and was sacked by the Vikings in 870. Eventually it was closed by Henry VIII in his senseless destruction of the monasteries of England. Details of the day’s events can be obtained from Fr Mark or Fr Alexander. There is a Divine Liturgy at 10:30 in St Margaret’s Church in the abbey grounds, lunch (bring your own), a talk by Fr Boniface Carroll (of our archdiocese) and Vespers in the afternoon. It would be good to see more interest in commemorating these great Orthodox English saints!



Reader George nominated for ordination as Subdeacon - Reader George Harrison who has served faithfully and very ably as reader in the parish for several years, has been nominated by Father Alexander for ordination to the Subdiaconate. The order of subdeacon is not part of the Holy Priesthood but is the highest of the so-called 'minor orders' of clergy (which includes readers). The main duties of a subdeacon are ensuring that the altar servers are properly organised and trained and that the altar area is kept well maintained and tidy. **Subdeacons are responsible for attending to the Bishop when he visits the parish, helping him to put on his vestments, making sure he has his service books and handing him the special dikiri and trikiri candles. They may also take on any of the duties of the reader as may be required.** Father Alexander has put George's name forward to Metropolitan Silouan, who we hope will visit soon to ordain him. (The illustration (right) is a 19th Century engraving, showing the type of distinctive crossed orarion worn by subdeacons)



From the Fathers 'It is patience that reveals every grace to you, and it is through patience the saints received all that was promised to them..'

St Pachomius the Great - Commemorated 15 May

We are grateful to those continuing to support our church by regular or occasional gifts; may God bless you. Bank details: Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen: Registered Charity No: 1192469 IBAN: GB05BUKB20226780219819 Sort Code: 20-22-67 Account No: 50349364 Appeal Account No: 80219819



Regular Service Times:

Saturdays: Great Vespers 4:30pm

Sundays: Matins & Holy Liturgy from 9:45am

Weekend services ALL at St Martins. Additional (weekday) services usually at St Helen's Chapel unless otherwise stated.

St Helen's Chapel is open daily for prayer and pilgrimage.

Services: Holy Week, Pascha and May 2024

Great & Holy Wednesday 1 May

Service of Holy Anointing, 6pm

Great & Holy Thursday 2 May

The Twelve Gospels, 6pm

Great & Holy Friday 3 May

Vespers & Deposition 12pm | Matins & Procession 6pm

Great and Holy Saturday 4 May

Liturgy of St Basil 9:30am, Acts of the Apostles & Midnight Office from 10pm,

+Great & Holy Pascha 5 May

The Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Holy Liturgy 1am, Agape Vespers 3pm,

Wed 15 May Hours & Holy Liturgy - St Pachomius the Great, 9:30 St Helen's Chapel.

Wed 29 May Hours & Holy Liturgy - Mid-Feast Pentecost, 9:30 St Helen's Chapel.

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. Nearest car park NCP: Nunns Road, CO1 1EJ.

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

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