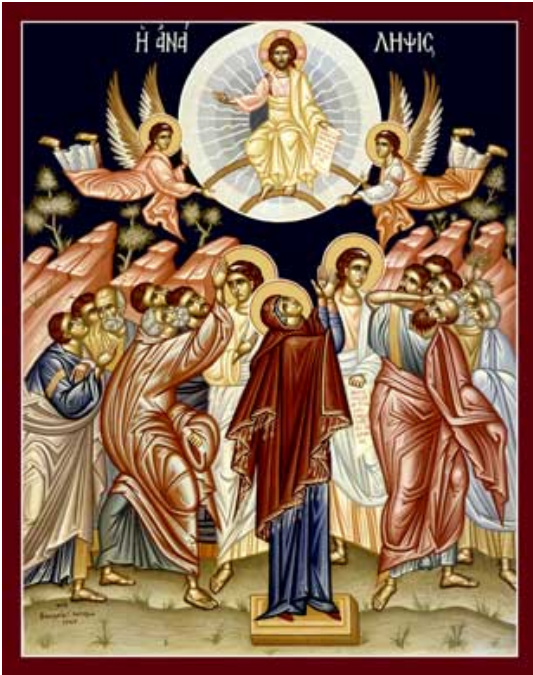


# The Orthodox Parish of St Martin and St Helen

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles & Ireland  
HE Metropolitan Silouan Oner



## Ascension

The Feast of the Ascension of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is celebrated each year on the fortieth day after the Great and Holy Feast of Pascha, this year on May 29. By it, the sacred and saving purpose of the Divine Incarnation and becoming man of the Word of God is completed. Through His incarnation, his passion death and third day resurrection, mankind's earthbound nature is released, and its deification, its rising to heaven is made possible. And it might be thought that the Ascension, as marvellous and wonderful an occurrence as it is, somehow marks the point at which Jesus takes leave of us; He has gone to be with His Father and we must get on with things as best we can. But the Ascension is not the end of a story; it is the beginning of a new one; for with His ascension into Heaven comes the promised Holy Spirit at Holy Pentecost (June 8th). During His time on earth Jesus, living as a man amongst us, committed to be limited as we are by the ordinary constraints of time and distance (Lord, Martha said to Jesus, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. John 11:21). But now we have unlimited access, as it were, if only we will humble ourselves, because Christ has ascended into heaven to sit on the right hand of the Father and sent the Holy Spirit into the world which is everywhere present and filling all things. Now, instead of having to send word by messenger over miles of desert, or oceans, we need simply to pray in heartfelt sincerity, to know that

our Lord has heard us! A blessed and Happy Feast to you all -The Lord bless you all! -**Fr Mark.**

## Holy Week Services

Holy Week and Paschal services this year were very well attended. The edification of the faithful was significantly enhanced by the availability of three high quality books produced by the parish for use by lay people during the services. The volumes encompassed the Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts, The Salutations/Akathist Hymn and the services of Great and Holy Week. At the moment they are for use only in the temple but they proved popular and we may make them available for general sale in future. And, heartfelt thanks go to Khouria Paula and the women and girls who helped decorate the bier this year. It looked absolutely lovely as always. The procession on Holy Friday was blessed with fine weather and a good showing of the faithful, helping to make this solemn and beautiful ceremony memorable and prayerful.



## Edifying Quote

*"Witnesses of the Resurrection were the Apostles, the Confessors, the Martyrs, the Venerable Ones, the Holy Fathers, men and women who bravely faced their problems in life with hope in the resurrection... All these shed their blood and sacrificed their lives, refusing biological joys and material pleasures. Therefore, the Resurrection of Christ is not an ideology, a world-view, a metaphysic or a mysticism, but it is true life that transforms the entire human existence and overcomes death, mortality and the corruption of nature, and creates a transformation of the person and a renewal of all creation."*

**Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos) of Nafpaktos**

## Iconostasis Update

We were delighted on Holy Monday, to be able to install the icons of the 12 Feasts into the top row of our iconostasis. Sophronia and Silviu spent the day carefully preparing the woodwork and installing each icon in its proper theological order. They will be a focus of prayer and veneration for generations to come, God willing. The only remaining icon, that of the Mystical Supper, will be ready later this year, perhaps in the late Autumn.

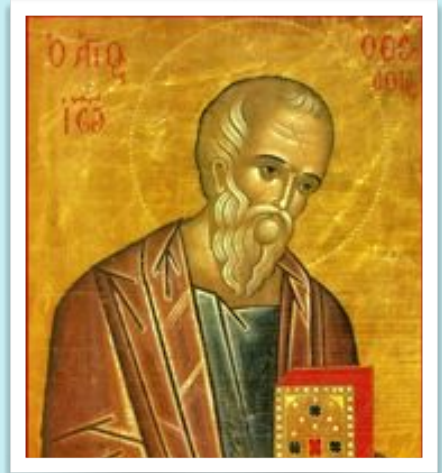


## ST JOHN THEOLOGIAN

St. John was the son of Salome the myrrh-bearer and Zebedee, a fisherman. His brother was St. James, another apostle. In his own Gospel account, he refers to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" rather than use his name. He was the youngest of the twelve apostles, and especially close to the Lord. This closeness is often portrayed in icons of the mystical supper, where St. John leans on Jesus. He was present for the Transfiguration of Christ with Peter and his brother James. St. John was exiled to the island of Patmos by Emperor Domitian around 90-95 A.D., and it was there that he received and wrote the Book of Revelation.

### Apolytikion Tone 2

Beloved apostle of Christ our God, hasten to deliver a defenceless people. He who allowed you to recline on His breast, receives you as you bow before Him. Implore Him, John the Theologian, to disperse the persistent threat from heathens, entreating for us peace and great mercy.



### Catechesis

The new catechism class starts after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday 25/05/2025. All are welcome to attend. Start time is not exact but will be sometime after Father Mark has managed to get a cup of coffee! Please ask Father Mark if you have any questions about the course.

### Gift of Wine

Our warm thanks go to Kyriacos and Alexandra Lingi for their generous gift to the parish of 12 bottles of wine for use in the preparation of Holy Communion. This kind of gift is very welcome and really assists the church in relation to one of our more costly needs.

### Paschal Eggs

Many thanks to Mary Morris who provided, as she has often done over the years, our beautiful Paschal eggs. They were up to her usual very high standards, a rich colour and plenteous.

### Regular Service Times

Saturdays: Great Vespers 4:30pm  
Sundays: Matins & Holy Liturgy from 9:30am

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.

### Planned Giving

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

### Additional Services

**Wednesday 30 April:** Holy Apostle James the Son of Zebedee. Hours & Holy Liturgy from 9:15am, St Helen's Chapel.  
**Thursday 8 May:** Holy Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian. Hours & Holy Liturgy from 9:15am, St Helen's Chapel.  
**Wednesday 14 May:** Mid Feast of Pentecost. Hours & Holy Liturgy from 9:15am, St Helen's Chapel.  
**Wednesday 21 May:** Leavetaking of the Mid Feat of Pentecost. St Constantine and St Helen. Hours & Holy Liturgy from 9:15am, St Helen's Chapel.  
**Thursday 29 May:** Ascension of Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ. Hours & Holy Liturgy from 9:15am, St Helen's Chapel.