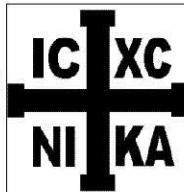


Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Archdiocese of the BI & Ireland
NEWSLETTER 214 NOVEMBER 2014



WEEKDAYS IN NOVEMBER
9.30 am HOLY LITURGY

THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER
ST WILLIBROD, APOSTLE OF FRISIA

FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER
ENTRY OF THE THEOTOKOS

TUESDAY 25 NOVEMBER
GT MARTYR CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA

Two personal matters to think over

Every now and again I ask you to reconsider two points which many good and faithful Orthodox people forget.

The first is:

When should I get to church?
We all know that as Orthodox Christians we should make going to church, to public worship, a primary aim particularly for Sunday, the Lord's Day, and also for high feasts.

But many do not make the effort to get there on time—before the service begins, or very soon after.

Yet the first part of the Holy Liturgy contains very important parts, and we should be there for them, from the start of the service.

If we miss the first part of the Liturgy we miss a great deal of powerful teaching that helps to transform our lives.



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The second point you need to ask yourself is:

When should I receive the Holy Gifts?
Now, nobody is ever obliged to come to Communion.

So you can receive as often as you

care to—but agree it with your spiritual father.

You should always receive in a proper state of preparation—fasting from midnight, having prayed carefully, and confessed if there is serious sin on your conscience.

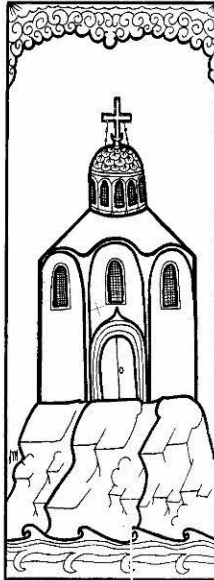
Unless you receive only very occasionally, there is no rule of fasting for several days beforehand—but you should indeed then fast longer, and prepare more carefully.

If you are forbidden Holy Communion because of irregularity in your life, you should consult your Priest.

I would encourage most to go to Holy Communion once or twice in a month.

Talk with me if you have questions.

God bless you in your following of Jesus Christ



Father Alexander

Britain and Ireland's plight

The Holy Synod of the Church of Antioch met early in October at Balamand Monastery in Lebanon.

It did not elect any Metropolitan or Bishop for the British Isles, nor (apparently) consider it.

Why this should be so, one can only speculate (though obviously the terrible political and social situation in the Antiochian homelands will have been a huge, time-consuming, concern).

The Archdiocese was established a year ago - to the surprise and great joy of the clergy and laity here in Britain and Ireland.

Until then, for several years there had been one Archdiocese for the whole of Europe, under our well-loved Metropolitan John. He, late in 2012, was elected Patriarch John X of Antioch and All the East, succeeding the greatly-lamented Patriarch Ignatius IV.

So, in October 2013, Europe was divided into three Metropolises: Germany and Central Europe; France and Western Europe; the British Isles and Ireland. A fourth, smaller, area was a Vicariate established for Scandinavia.

This was all excellent. But while the framework was put in place, no Bishop has yet been appointed for Britain or Scandinavia.

Some clergy might be glad not to have a Bishop 'breathing down their necks'. So why worry about it? - Because no Church will flourish and take root without a Bishop to lead, guide, and pastor her.

We must continue to hope and pray that we shall soon get what we so desperately need—a Bishop amongst us.

But that is now unlikely before June 2015.

Fellowship of St Alban & St Sergius

Two interesting subjects coming up:

Tuesday 4 Nov 7.30 pm
St Helen's Chapel

DAVID GILCHRIST
Russians at the Tomb of Christ

Tuesday 2 Dec 7.30 pm
St Cedd's Hall, Frinton

ANGELA LIVINGSTONE
Pasternak: the 'Zhivago' poems

Meetings are open to all. Details in the leaflet on the Porch table.

Holy Archangel Michael is generally considered the leader of the Angels of God. He appears in both Old and New Testaments as the fighter of God's battles. He is much loved and honoured in Holy Orthodoxy, and his feast is kept on 8 November. He is usually depicted on the north or left door to the Holy Altar.



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

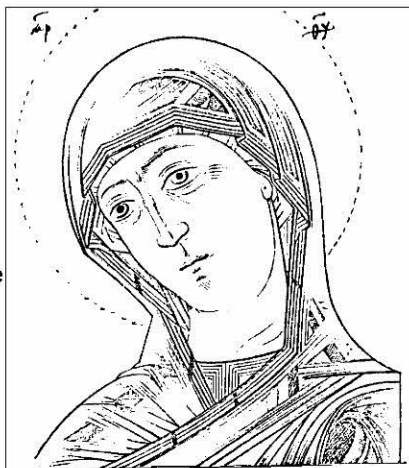
The teaching about the Mother of God (*Theotokos* in Greek) is central to Orthodox belief.

It guards the belief that Jesus Christ is not only Man but also God (the doctrine we call the Incarnation).

The feast of her Entry into the Temple on 21 November tells of her being taken aged three to the Temple.

HOLY LITURGY
CLACTON
Saturday
15 November
10.00 am

There she was looked after by the Priests and learnt to serve God in every path of holiness.



Talks turn into blessings

Lydia and I went to Moscow on 12 September since she had an academic conference to attend, but our visit was blessed in spiritual ways.

First, whilst Lydia was at her conference, I went with her brother to Pokrov Monastery in central Moscow to venerate St Matrona of Moscow (+1952). The queues to venerate St Matrona are long and many hundreds of faithful are there every day of the year, but our queue moved quickly and we waited for only about half an hour.

Lydia and I have produced an English translation of the Akathist to St Matrona and it was a great joy to place a few copies on her relics for a blessing on them.

Secondly, we were invited by friends in Moscow to stay with them at their family house in the small town of Zvenigorod which is 65 kms west of Moscow.

Zvenigorod is famous for its beautiful scenery and the great Monastery of St Savva Storozhevsky (+1407) just outside the town. From the banks of the Moskva River, a hill (called Storozhi) rises and is



Zvenigorod

crowned by the monastery so that the cupolas and crosses can be seen for miles around.

A short distance away is a skete built over the cave where St Savva laboured in the ascetic life. On the Saturday (20 September), we went to a 14th century church nearby for the Divine Liturgy, and met the priest-in-charge, Archimandrite Ieronim who greeted us very warmly and gave us Holy Communion.

He invited us to come again the following day, being the Feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God. That afternoon, we visited the monastery and skete of St Savva.

The hegoumen of the skete is Fr Feodosii who is considered to be an elder. He greeted us and took us into a small orchard and gave us apples.

Fr Feodosii is a close friend of Archbishop Anatoly of Kerch [who lives in London—Ed.] who was due to visit the skete soon after our visit. We then entered the cave of St Savva and prayed there.

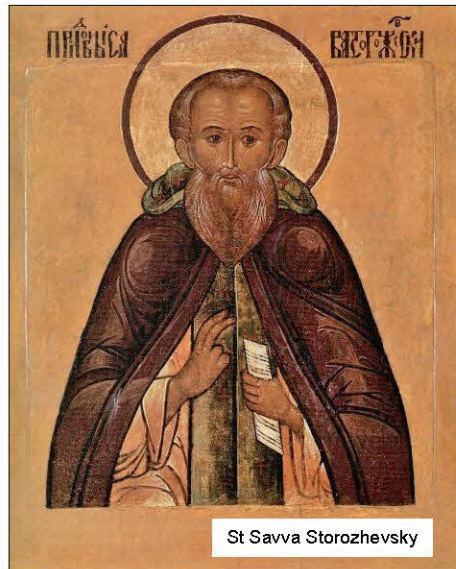
On the Sunday (8/21 September), we went again to Fr Ieronim's church which was packed with faithful celebrating the feast.

After the Divine Liturgy, the people set up stalls in a field at the back to sell tea and hot food and also local craft goods.

Members of the church choir sang traditional songs, one man played the gusli (an ancient stringed instrument) and sang spiritual songs.

Then children re-enacted the Battle of Kulikovo which took place on this feast day in 1380, the army of Dmitri Donskoi defeating the army of the Golden Horde.

There was then singing and dancing to balalaika and accordion music. We all



St Savva Storozhevsky

returned to the house and then to Moscow in the evening.

Thirdly, on Monday 22 September, we went to the Donskoi Monastery in Moscow, established in the 1590s to house the famous Donskoi Mother of God icon which Dmitri Donskoi brought to Moscow after it had been carried before his army at the Battle of Kulikovo.

Now, the monastery is a place of pilgrimage for the veneration of St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow (+1925), whose relics were found in 1992 and are now in a casket in the main cathedral church of the monastery on the solea just south of the Royal Doors.

We venerated the relics and bought an icon of St Tikhon, a CD of the Akathist to him, and a phial of holy oil. It was a fitting end to our visit to Russia.

Reader Andreas

The People Column

THOMAS-MARTIN GRÖB: The Parish Council has accepted Martin as a possible candidate for ordination to the Diaconate, and allocated a sum towards the cost of a two-year on-line certificate course at the Orthodox Institute at Cambridge. He is now preparing to get down to the discipline of that course, but already has started learning the art of a Reader, under the expert tuition of Reader ANDREAS. He will go forward to the relevant Diocesan authority in due course.

Here and There

ICON OF ST PARASKEVA OF IASI in Romania: Very sadly, we have to report that this holy icon appears to have been stolen from the church. It is an original icon, given to us by ELA, wife of ALEX HAIG, and joins a little list of disappeared items. The Council is to install CCTV quickly.

CHILDAID is a charity helping children in the Donetsk area of Eastern Ukraine (as well as in Moldova, Belarus, etc). I have sent a gift of £50 from the Parish for their Eureka project in the present traumatic period there.

EBOLA: Recently I sent £25 from the Parish to the Kings College London appeal—they are sending considerable help to West Africa.

A Word from the Fathers

St Matthew (feast: 16 Nov) was called by Christ to follow him. The Lord went into the house to eat with his companion tax-collectors. The famous English theologian St Bede the Venerable (673-735) gave a homily on the Saint:

The conversion of one tax collector provided an example of penance and forgiveness to many tax collectors and sinners. In a wonderful and true sign of the future, he who was to become the apostle and teacher of the gentiles brought with him to salvation a multitude of sinners in the first moments of his own conversion. He began, even in the earliest period of his belief, his duties as a preacher, which he was to fulfil as he made progress in virtue. Furthermore, ... not only did he

prepare a banquet for the Lord in his home on earth, but—what was much more welcome to the Lord—he made a feast in the house of his soul by faith and love... We open the door at the sound of his voice to receive him, when we freely assent to his promptings, whether secret or open, and when we do what we know we should do. He enters, then, to eat with us and we with him, since he lives in the hearts of his elect by the gift of his love. He rejoices their hearts by the light of his presence inasmuch as they make more and more progress in their longing for heaven, and it is as though he himself delighted in the banquet of virtues which they spread for him.

NOVEMBER DAYS

Sat 1	SS Cosmas & Damian of Mesopotamia
Sun 2	Pentecost 21
Mon 3	S Winifred of Holywell, Wales
Thu 6	S Iltyd, Abbot of Llantwit Major
Fri 7	S Willibrord, Abp of Utrecht, Apostle of Frisia
Sat 8	Synaxis of Archangel Michael etc
Sun 9	Pentecost 22, S Nektarios Kephala, Metropolitan of Pentapolis
Mon 10	S Justus, Archbishop of Canterbury, S Arsenius of Cappadocia
Tue 11	S Martin the Merciful, Bishop of Tours, Martyr Menas of Egypt
Wed 12	S John the Merciful, Abp of Alexandria
Thu 13	S John Chrysostom, Abp of Constantinople
Fri 14	Holy Apostle Philip
Sat 15	<i>Beginning of the Nativity Fast</i>
Sun 16	Pentecost 23, Holy Apostle & Evangelist Matthew
Mon 17	S Hilda, Abbess of Whitby
Thu 20	S Edmund, King and Martyr
Fri 21	Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple
Sun 23	Pentecost 24, S Alexander Nevsky
Mon 24	Hieromartyr Clement, Pope of Rome
Tue 25	Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria
Wed 26	S Stylianos of Paphlagonia, Protector of Children
Thu 27	Great Martyr James the Persian
Sat 29	Hieromartyr Philoumenos of Jacob's Well
Sun 30	Pentecost 25, Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called

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