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**Holy Orthodoxy: ever-old, ever-new**

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# Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
of the British Isles and Ireland

Metropolitan: *HE Archbishop Silouan (Oner)*

NEWSLETTER 224

OCTOBER 2015



## WEEKDAYS AT ST HELEN'S

*Holy Liturgy at 9.30 am as follows*

Wednesday 7 October

Holy Martyr Osyth, Queen of Essex

Wednesday 14 October

St Paraskeva the Younger, of Iasi

Friday 23 October

St James the Lord's Brother

*Vespers is now being served on most days at 4.30 pm:  
consult the weekly notices. All of course are welcome.*

## First time in the New World ...

**W**e returned from North America yesterday (Wednesday) at lunch-time, and I must get this out by the weekend, in spite of jet-lag, in spite of idleness, in spite of procrastination. Even then, this October edition will be out a week late, and my apologies for that.

It really was a fabulous fortnight. We went first to **TORONTO, CANADA** - in order that we could say we had been to that country, so 'loyal to Her Majesty' - our Queen is also Queen of Canada. There we had a wonderful room above Toronto Harbour, looking gloriously south over the Islands to the other side of Lake Ontario.

We had a good look round both the Harbour and the town itself. My Anglican friend Canon Philip Hobson drove us round the city, visiting the large University area, his lovely church 'St Martin's-in-fields', the fine Anglican Cathedral, and fascinating Fort York built for the 1812 war against the US.

After three nights there, Fr Philip drove us two hours across the border to **BUFFALO NY**, along with another Anglican Priest I know, Fr John Gibaut. They are both deeply involved in ecumenical relations, so there was plenty to talk about.

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All three of us clergy were there for the meeting of the **International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue**. Delegates were all in a hotel together, generously hosted by the Greek parish of the Annunciation, where our meetings were held. The parish generosity was outstanding. We all came away with numerous gifts.

Hilary was not involved in the Dialogue, but joined us for meals, and was entertained by kind parishioners, with expeditions to an art gallery and the shops!

Our host was Fr Chris Christakis and he was aided by his assistant Fr John, Presbyteria Lisa, and Mary and numbers of others. They were hospitable, friendly and welcoming! Fr Chris used to be a priest at St

Demetrios, Edmonton, so knows the English scene well.

On the Sunday our Orthodox Chairman, Metropolitan Kallistos from Oxford, served Hierarchical Liturgy with Metropolitan Chrysostomos (Cyprus) and Nifon (Romania), and Bishop Ilia (US, Albanian). Frs Chris, John, Valentin (Moscow) and I concelebrated.

Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit, the local Greek Bishop, came to welcome us on our trip to the nearby, magnificent, Niagara Falls.

The Dialogues went well, completing our Report - it is briefly reported below. They were friendly, and though there were differences of balance we generally managed to achieve agreement.

Buffalo does not enjoy a great reputation as a city, but the authorities are working hard to make it a vibrant and pleasing place. It was beautiful weather (uncharacteristically, we were told), and we thoroughly enjoyed a bus tour round many lovely spots.

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On the Friday we bade each other farewell and returned to our various parts of the planet - except that Hilary and I flew to **NEW YORK CITY**, staying four nights just off Wall Street in Lower Manhattan. This meant we were close to the centre of the city and to views of the Statue of Liberty.

We had a water tour round the Statue and Ellis Island (where immigrants formerly arrived), and a bus tour of the centre, which gave a good idea of the 'feel' of the city. We were moved by the 9/11 site and prayed at



the site of the Greek church being rebuilt there.

On our second Sunday away we attended St Nicholas Antiochian Cathedral in Brooklyn. We met Fr Thomas Zain, Dean and Vicar-General, who received our gift of

an icon of St Helen, and presented us with one of St Raphael of Brooklyn - we venerated a relic of him. We were blessed to find Metropolitan Joseph of North America there, and had a warm welcome from him and everyone else; we had a chance for a chat at lunch in a Lebanese restaurant.

We then went off to find the house in Brooklyn where my great-uncle lived and died in 1929. The next day we met a cousin of Hilary's for the first time, which meant a lot to both of them.

On our last day we were able to ride the famous subway to look round the magnificent Frick Collection of pictures and *objets d'art*, before going to JFK Airport for the night-flight home.

Altogether it was a very worthwhile visit - for both 'Church' affairs and personal and cultural ones. It was our first and probably last visit 'across the pond'.

**We are really grateful for the financial help for this visit given by a parishioner, which made it all possible.**

God bless you all, and all our friends in the New World.

**Father Alexander**

## International Dialogue Report completed

The Pan-Orthodox Dialogue with the whole Anglican Communion has finished its work on the basic understanding of what it means to be human, and the Commission hopes it will help clarify the thinking of Christians on the matter.

The report will be published under the title *In the Image and Likeness of God: a hope-filled anthropology*. It tells of our agreement that Humanity, from conception to death, is of a unique value before God, and that we have a special responsibility for all human beings, and indeed for all creation. All humans have within them the image of God, and the restoration of his likeness in us all should be the aim in dealing with all problems. *Theosis* is to be our aim.

The second part of this work (in which I do not expect to take part) will be studying, from the basis outlined in the report, some of the burning issues before society and what should be the Christian response.

**HOLY LITURGY**  
CLACTON  
Holy Liturgy  
17 October  
10.00 am

## 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 Balkerne Hill), to Northgate; go straight along St Peter's Street to Castle Park; continue round the bend, up into Maidenburgh Street. The nearest car park is Nunns Road NCP, off St Peter's Street.

**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, 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

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

Churchwardens: David Davies 01-473-745-167 Dusan Radunovic 01-206-762-553

The Parish of St Helen is Registered Charity No. 1134418

Bank account: Sort Code 20-22-67 Account No. 50349364

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



# St Osyth : local Orthodox Nun and Martyr

St Osyth is a local Orthodox Saint who lived in the seventh century. Much of her story is conjecture, but it appears to have been as follows. But she is a definite historical person.

She seems to have been born into a devout family, probably the daughter of Frithwald, a nobleman who gave land for a monastery at Chertsey to St Erkenwald.

(Erkenwald also started the women's monastery at Barking, Essex, and then became Bishop of London.)

In those days England was a collection of some seven Saxon kingdoms and she married Sighere, a King of Essex. The kingdom covered not only the modern county but also Middlesex and parts of Hertfordshire and Surrey, but he probably reigned over the eastern section of the kingdom, with his uncle King St Sigbert ruling the western part, probably from the river Lee westwards.

This was the early days of Christian England and while Sighere was baptised he was not deeply converted, it seems. When a famine struck he returned to paganism. Because of his apostasy she left him to become a Nun. He gave her a piece of land at the mouth of Colchester's River Colne at Chich, which is now called St Osyth, near what we now call Clacton.

Osyth lived the life of prayer there for years with her sister nuns. Then, probably about 700 AD, Danish pirates sailed up the creek and raided her Monastery. The nuns ran off inland, but at the well Osyth was captured and beheaded, and the story was that, when the pirates had gone, she carried her head back to the Monastery - possibly in fact she



was severely wounded at the neck before collapsing and dying at the church door. The holy place was deserted for hundreds of years, until, after the Great Schism, Augustinian canons were inspired by her story to found St Osyth's Priory. This of course was closed by King Henry VIII, but parts can still be seen in the beautiful mansion beyond the magnificent gatehouse.

However, the original Monastery buildings were where the parish church of SS Peter and Paul lies, close-by in the village outside the gates. There are other stories told of her, some clearly fictional, such as that she rushed away from her wedding-feast to be a nun - for we know she had a son Offa King of Essex, who also became a Saint.

St Osyth is an Orthodox Saint and a Holy Martyr, a local person whom we should honour greatly. May her prayers assist this latter-day parish, and her story inspire us to a closer following of our Saviour.

Her feast is 7 October and we shall have a Holy Liturgy here that day in her honour.

A chance to get to know our new Archbishop and Priests and people from other parishes....

## Come with us to the Diocesan Conference in the lovely county of Derbyshire in May

Here is a chance for you to get to know our new Bishop, and other clergy and lay people from around the Diocese, and no doubt in the formation and building up of the structures of British Antiochian Orthodoxy.

You are invited to the Swanwick Conference Centre, in beautiful grounds not far from the M1 in Derbyshire. It is thought there will be about a hundred people taking part.

It runs for two nights, **Monday 23-Wednesday 25 May**, details available at church. Book soon for a discount.



I hope a number of our people will be able to attend, and will be pleased to provide finance for anyone needing it: please ask.



**Enthronement of His Eminence Archbishop Silouan as Metropolitan of the British Isles & Ireland Saturday 28 November 4.30 pm in St George's Cathedral near Regents Park His Beatitude John X, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, will serve A coach will run from Colchester. Contact MARTIN GROB for details.**

## The People Column

**BAPTISED AND MARRIED:** MICHAEL (ELLIOTT) ROSS was baptised in St Helen's in June. Having previously been married in a civil ceremony, he and MIHAELA CIMPEAN were united in a Church Marriage in Romania in July. They live in Ipswich and have a little boy MATTHEW. Our congratulations to them both.

**BAPTISED:** Congratulations also to ELENA IOANNIDOU, known as LENA, who was baptised here in August - aged not yet quite two, but absolutely perfectly behaved!

**PEOPLE IN PLENTY:** My thanks to READER ANDREAS and MARTIN GROB for their help at receiving visitors on the two days of National Heritage Day. There was a large number of visitors, and many were clearly impressed!

### OCTOBER DAYS

Thu	1	Protection of the Mother of God
Fri	2	S Andrew, Fool-for-Christ, at Constantinople
Sat	3	Hieromartyr Dionysius the Areopagite, Bishop of Athens
Sun	4	Pentecost 16, Hieromartyr Hierotheus, Bishop of Athens
Tue	6	Holy Apostle Thomas
Wed	7	Nun Martyr Osyth, Queen of Essex Virgin Martyr Pelagia of Tarsus
Fri	9	Holy Apostle James, son of Alphaeus
Sun	11	Pentecost 19, Commemoration of Fathers of 7th Council, Holy Apostle Philip of the Seventy, Deacon S Ethelburga, Abbess of Barking (Essex)
Wed	14	S Paraskeva the Younger, whose relics are at Iasi
Fri	16	Martyr Longinus the Centurion, who stood at the Cross Appearance of Archangel Michael at Mont S Michel
Sat	17	Trsl'n of Relics of S Lazarus of the 4 days, Bp of Kition
Sun	18	Pentecost 20, Holy Apostle & Evangelist Luke
Mon	19	S John of Kronstadt, S Frideswide, Abbess of Oxford
Tue	20	S Gerasimus the New Ascetic, of Cephalonia
Wed	21	S Christodoulos of Patmos
Fri	23	Holy Apostle James, the Brother of the Lord
Sat	24	S Demetrius Commemoration of the Dead
Sun	25	Pentecost 21
Mon	26	Great Martyr Demetrius the Myrrh-flowing

*A Saying from a Desert Father. Abba Poemen*

**If you are silent, you will have peace wherever you live.**

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