

**Orthodox Parish of
St Helen of Colchester**

Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland
NEWSLETTER 179 SEPTEMBER 2011



WEEKDAY LITURGIES AT ST HELEN'S, 9.30 AM

Thursday 8 September
NATIVITY OF THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD AND VIRGIN MARY
Wednesday 14 September
UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS & LIFE-GIVING CROSS

Our Parish loses a friend

Archimandrite Athanasius, who has lived in this area for about ten years and has been a good friend of this parish, sadly died - but appropriately on the feast of St Elias, 20 July. He had had cancer for some three years, but accepted it, and never seemed to be overcome by it. I was struck by his inner peace and continuing joy.

Born William Ledwich to a Church of Ireland clergyman and his wife, after studies at St Chad's College, Durham and Trinity College Dublin, he was ordained in the Anglican Church, serving in parishes in Lancashire and Northumberland and at Hereford Cathedral.

By the early 1980s he had become disenchanted with the Anglican way, which seemed to him to be increasingly parting from its own traditions and its earlier commitment to the Fathers. In 1984 it came to a head: the new Bishop of Durham proclaimed heretical views about our basic beliefs about Christ, and was not disciplined. William wrote a little book, *The Durham Affair*, very critical of the Anglican position, left under that 'cloud' of plain-speaking, and was received into the Orthodox Church.

Soon he was ordained and founded the parish at Rugby, and then an Orthodox school at Edgbaston, Birmingham.

A member of a religious order even as an Anglican, the monastic life beckoned him and after a period on the Holy Mountain he was tonsured. But he felt he was called to found a monastery in England, and returned home.

So he came to Colchester, where he could be near the Monastery of St John the Baptist and worship there. Nobody came to join him, so he founded a *Hermitage* on the Shotley Peninsula, caring also (rather unwillingly, it must be said) for Ipswich Greek parish.

Some two years ago he moved to Lawford near Manningtree, but sadly that coincided with the onset of cancer. With this he battled without any capitulation, and became an example to all. His faith in Christ and his contentment were impressive. A number of people kept their eye on him, and this was evidence of the love he inspired. Occasionally he could be a rather hard man, and he did manage to upset some people. Yet his love for Christ and his care for people was evident. His foundation of *Orthodox Outlook*, and two periods as its editor, were part of that care, educating the faithful, encouraging them to holiness.

In his weakness he became unable to serve, but continued to attend the Liturgy at the Monastery until within a fortnight or so of his repose. And I and then Fr John Garnett had served in the Hermitage chapel. His last visit to St Helen's was on Holy Thursday, when he was able to read two of the Gospels.

His funeral, attended by four Bishops, was at the Monastery, and he was buried close to his Hermitage at Lawford. He will be much missed by many of us. Eternal memory! He surely continues to remember us as we do him.

[Photograph over page]

The Saint from Antioch who came as Pastor to the English

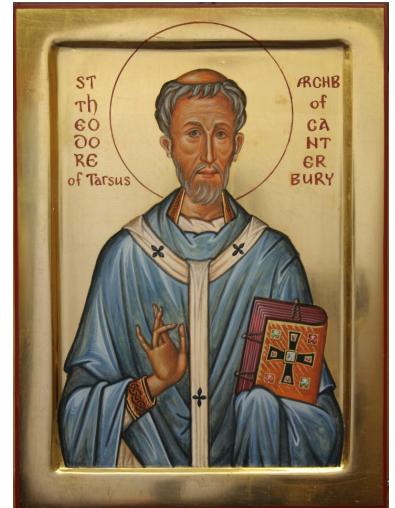
St Theodore was born in Tarsus in Cilicia, south-east Turkey or Asia Minor, in the Church of Antioch. Over the years, via Antioch itself, Edessa, Constantinople, Athens, Rome, he migrated westwards, till becoming Archbishop of Canterbury in AD 669.

He was already 66 years old, but remained in post until his death in 690, having thoroughly organised the Church of the English.

He increased the number of bishops, organised synods on doctrinal and canonical matters, showed authority where necessary, taught the Faith to the people, organised the training of the clergy, negotiated peace between kings, was loved by all.

He is numbered to this day among the great Archbishops to lead the nation and to guide its rulers. His influence can still be seen in the organisation of the Anglican Church.

Knowledge of the Saint had been lost in his home area, but when Archbishop John arrived here in 2009 we told him about the Saint, and he chose St Theodore to be Patron of our Deanery. His feast



is 19 September, and we should remember this great man of Antioch with thanksgiving. We must ask his prayers for this Deanery of his Church, here in the land he made his home.

Universal Exaltation of the Precious & Life-giving Cross

The Elevation of the Cross
on 11 September, the Sunday before Holy Cross, after the Liturgy 10.30 am

Wednesday 14 September
Holy Cross Day
9.30 am Divine Liturgy



The supposed shield of St Helen was adopted as the shield of Colchester, which is under her patronage. It shows the Precious and Life-giving Cross, which is green and budding.

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 Balcerne 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: Mattins 9.45 am (or Hours 10.15 am), Divine Liturgy 10.30 am

Confessions: Saturday 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: orthodox.colchester@ntlworld.com
Rdr Andreas Moran, 6 Woodlands, Welshwood Park CO4 3JA Tel: 01-206-865-697

The Parish of St Helen is Registered Charity No. 1134418

Parish Website: <http://www.orthodoxcolchester.org.uk>

Churchwardens: David Davies 01-473-745-167 Dusan Radunovic 01-206-710-073

At St James Anglican Church, Beatrice Rd, Clacton-on-sea

Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday 10.00 am

At St Basil's Catholic Church, Luncies Rd, Timberlog Lane, Basildon

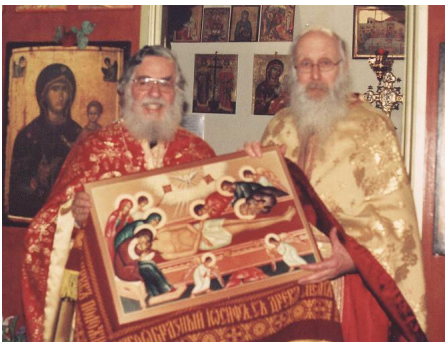
Divine Liturgy: usually first Saturday

Contact: Paul Brighton-Cross 01-702-305-527 orthodox.basildon@hotmail.co.uk

At University of Essex Chaplaincy Centre: Divine Liturgy: one Saturday per term 10.00 am

HOLY LITURGY
BASILDON
3 September
11.00 am
CLACTON
10 September
(NB date)
10.00 am

Father Alexander



FATHER ATHANASIOS (right) receiving our Epitaphion (we had obtained a new one) for his Ipswich church. He always remained interested in the life and work of this parish, however, and last attended St Helen's on Holy Thursday this year.

Here and There

CHURCHWARDENS: You heard in the June Newsletter, that at the first meeting of the Church Council DAVID DAVIES was reappointed Warden, but that since PAUL LANSLEY wished to retire, DUSAN RADUNOVIC was appointed in his place. Paul however continued until Dusan was free to take over, and this in fact happened on 3 July. Our Wardens are now David and Dusan.

FELLOWSHIP PILGRIMAGE: The local branch of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius will make a pilgrimage to the Monastery of St John the Baptist on **Saturday 3 September**, joining as usual with the branch from St Albans. All are invited to join it - assemble between 10.30 and 11 am, and take a picnic. One of the Fathers or Sisters will give a talk. People usually remain for Vespers at 5 pm, but you can leave whenever desired.

IRELAND has many, many pre-Schism Saints, not least of course St Patrick. Reader ANDREAS MORAN, with his wife LYDIA, has recently had a week's holiday there, partially to rediscover his Irish roots. But it clearly turned into a great and moving pilgrimage to several Irish Saints. I am hoping to find them an occasion to pass on to us their experiences in the Emerald Isle.

Meditation on a Mountain

20th July, St Elias' Day.

The Prophet Elias (Elijah) prayed on mountains. That is why in Greece you will often see a little white Church high up on mountain-tops.

We decided to go up to the Liturgy on top of the hill, some 1150 metres above sea level. It was an adventurous ascent, with many hairpin bends. And it was wonderful to be up there.

Meanwhile, about 20 miles away, across the Bay of Actium, in Preveza Metropolitan Meletios was preaching a sermon about the miracles of St Elias.

Our little Church has one white dome shining in the sun, visible from miles away.

The view from there is unbelievable. You look down on the Ionian Sea, full of islands large and small.

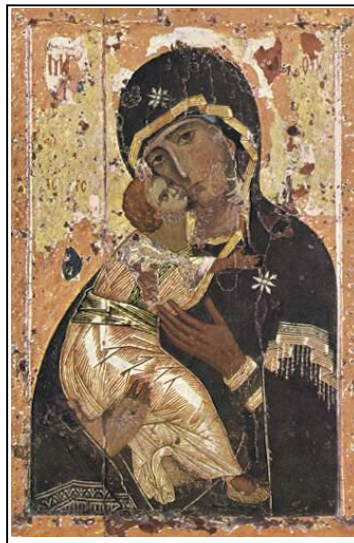
The congregation, packed inside and standing outside, included uniformed officers and men of the Greek Army and Air Force.

The beauty of the Liturgy and the singing filled the small Church and echoed from the windows around the hilltops.

Praying up there, so high up, you feel that you are nearer heaven.

What spoiled our magical moment somewhat was the twisting torture of the descent - back to ground level again.

Alexia Zangli.



The Holy Theotokos (literally, 'Bearer of God') is at the centre of our Orthodox Faith. A widely loved icon of her is that of Vladimir - still in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. Said to be originally by St Luke himself, it is very fine. Unusually, Christ is on her right arm. It was a gift from Constantinople to the Russians in the 12th century. We reproduce it here in honour of her Nativity or Birth, which we celebrate on 8 September, at the beginning of the Church year.

A Word from the Fathers

St Andrew of Crete (born in Damascus 660, a son of the Church of Antioch, who became Archbishop of Crete, and died 740) on the Holy Cross

The Cross is called the glory of Christ, and his exaltation.

It is the chalice for which he longed, the consummation of his sufferings on our behalf.

It is the glory of Christ - listen to his words: Now is the Son Man glorified, and God is glorified in him, and God will glorify him at once.

And again: Glorify me, Father, with the glory which I had with you before the world was made. And

again: Father, glorify your name.

So there came a voice from the heavens: I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again. By this he means the glory which Christ received on the Cross.

The Cross is also Christ's exaltation. Listen again to his own words: When I am lifted up, I will draw all men to myself.

You see then that the Cross is the glory and the exaltation of Christ.

The People Column

HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN JOHN unfortunately fell over in Cyprus and broke his leg in three places. They got him back to Beirut and he had a successful operation, but he is unlikely to be able to walk normally for three months. I emailed him with the prayers and good wishes of St Helen's just before his operation, and was amazed to hear back by return: *Thank you very much dearest Father and please pray. In Christ. +John.* Indeed we do, Master!

JONATHAN (JOHN) CLARK, one of our most distant young parishioners (he lives in Rutland!) has had a necessary operation on his knee, and expects to have the other knee done at some time.

ALEX CLARK, his older brother, who is in the RAF, has had to have an operation on his shoulder. We wish them both a speedy recovery.

MARGARET HAIG was one of the organisers of the 2011 conference of the Orthodox Fellowship of St John the Baptist, which brings together Orthodox of all jurisdictions. She has now been elected to the Fellowship committee, where she joins her brother ALEX.

MARRIED: Congratulations to FLORIN and LAVINIA PINTILIE, both Romanians in Ipswich, whom I had the pleasure of marrying at the end of July. And also in August I have had the pleasure of marrying KARIM and MIHAELA GUIRGUIS, the groom from Egypt and his bride from Romania. To both couples: Many Years!

BAPTISED: SOPHIA-PAULINE, daughter to PAUL and ALEXANDRA CRETU of Abbey Green, was baptised at the end of June. ALEXANDER-STEFAN, son to ILIE and EMILIA MIHALI of Ipswich, was baptised at the end of July. To them both we say, *God bless you.*

BRENDA AMOR is a good friend both to us at 17 Maidenburgh Street and to St Helen's, which she locks and unlocks when the Haigs are out. Congratulations to her on winning *First Prize in the Front Garden Competition* for the whole of the town. She always has a delightful display, which we enjoy from both the church and the house, as well as passers-by.

SEPTEMBER DAYS

Thu 1	Church New Year, Day of Prayer for Environment, Righteous Joshua, Son of Nun
Sun 4	Pentecost 12, Prophet & God-Seer Moses
Mon 5	Prophet Zacharias & Righteous Elizabeth
Tue 6	Commemoration of Miracle of Archangel Michael
Thu 8	Nativity of Holy Theotokos S Ina King of Wessex & Queen Ethelburga
Fri 9	Righteous Forebears of God Joachim & Anna
Sun 11	Sunday before Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Tue 13	Commemoration of Holy Resurrection Church
Wed 14	Exaltation of the Precious & Life-giving Cross
Fri 16	S Ninian, Bishop of Whithorn in Scotland
Sat 17	Martyr Sophia & her 3 daughters: Faith, Hope, Love
Sun 18	Sunday after Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Mon 19	S Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury, Patron of the Antiochian Deanery
Fri 23	Conception of S John the Forerunner & Baptist
Sat 24	S Silouan of Mt Athos, Protomartyr Thekla
Sun 25	Pentecost 15, S Sergius Wonderworker of Radonezh, S Coelfrid, Abbot of Jarrow
Mon 26	Holy Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian

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