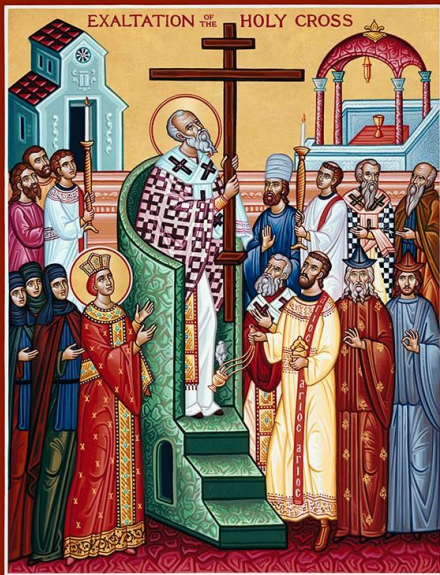


# THE ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST MARTIN & ST HELEN

Newsletter: September 2024 | Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles & Ireland | HE Metropolitan Silouan Oner



Icon of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

## HOLY BAPTISM

On Sunday 4th August (6th Sunday after Pentecost) two young catechumens Max (Maximos) Roberts and Theo (Theodore) Stylianou were received into the Holy Orthodox Church through the Rites of Holy Baptism and Chrismation. Both have faithfully attended worship and instruction classes for many months and have embraced the life and faith of the Church and our God protected community with great diligence and joy. We joyfully welcome them as newly illumined Orthodox Christians and wish them and their sponsors many fruitful years!



**Happy New (Liturgical) Year! September brings once again, the start of a new church or liturgical year, in the ancient Byzantine tradition.** How should we think about the liturgical year, this epic cycle of feasts and fasts, leading us through the whole life of Christ, His Most Holy Mother and His glorious saints? Is it simply a sort of calendar; a way of marking time and checking off our dutiful observance? It is so much more than this. It obviously has the function of a calendar in a basic way, to help us keep track of time, but that only goes so far. Does it also have a teaching element, helping us learn about the Gospel, the key points in Christian history, the example of the saints? *Again, this is only one facet of the liturgical year. Is it designed to orient our spiritual life, to help us pray in the right way and for the right reasons? Once again, a true but limited definition. In fact the liturgical year, this beautiful, challenging and mystical journey exists to actually form Christ in us, to make real and imminent the events commemorated in the feasts, the lives of His saints and the deaths of His martyrs. We are given a mystical framework for our journey to the Kingdom of God, which is within us. And we must remember this: that outward journeys and observances, if they are not matched by a faithful and challenging inward journey, can avail us nothing. Let us embrace the inner and the outward journey. Let us allow Christ to create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us as we faithfully and with joy enter this new year which God in His mercy has deigned to grant us.*

**Father Mark**

## The Feast of the Repose of St Helen. Equal to the Apostles

On Sunday 18 August, we celebrated the Feast of the Repose of St Helen. This date is not usually to be found in the Eastern calendar but is well known in the West, including Orthodox Western Rite communities. Of course we also celebrate the Feast of Ss Constantine & Helen on 21 May, but this additional opportunity to venerate our patron in particular (as she is known in the Orthodox Church; Equal to the Apostles) brings an added dimension to our devotion and honouring of this wonderful and important saint. We all enjoyed a delicious 'bring and share' lunch after the Liturgy. Heartfelt thanks to all who attended and contributed.

## National Heritage Open Days: Sept 14th and 15th

We will again open both our temples to the public as we have in previous years as part of the National Heritage Open Days scheme. Opening times are Saturday 14th 10am till 4pm and Sunday 15th 1pm till 4pm. Please consider helping by volunteering to attend a morning or afternoon slot on each day (we won't 'open' St Martin's on Sunday morning obviously, as we will serve the Liturgy). The main task is to greet visitors, tourists and others and show them around, make them welcome etc. Father Alexander and I will be on hand to help and advise. Please see Subdeacon George Harrison if you would like to help out.

## Church Roof Survey and Report

We have now received the report from the recent roof survey. The roof is basically sound but there are quite a number of repairs needed to different areas. We hope this will start soon!

**Cleaning St Martin's** - We aim to clean St Martin's ahead of the Open Days (above). Please volunteer if you can, to help out on Saturday 7th September and clean icons, wipe down paintwork and clear cobwebs. See **Theadora Ford** for details.



**ST SILOUAN OF MOUNT  
ATHOS - 24TH  
SEPTEMBER**

*"We have such a law: if you forgive, it means that God has forgiven you; but if you do not forgive your brother, it means that your sin remains with you."*



**Born in Russia in 1866 to devout Orthodox parents**, he left for Mount Athos where he became a monk at the Monastery of St Panteleimon. An ardent ascetic, he received the grace of unceasing prayer and saw Christ in a vision. After long years of spiritual trial, he acquired great humility and inner stillness. He prayed and wept for the whole world as for himself, and he put the highest value on love for enemies. There is of course a local connection as his disciple and pupil Father, now Saint Sophrony (Sakharov), wrote and taught about the holy elder's life and teachings and founded the Monastery of St John the Baptist at Tolleshunt Knights, just a few miles from our church in Colchester. St Silouan is of course venerated there and we are continually blessed and protected by the prayers of that holy community.

*On the path of humility, by your prayers you received Christ as your Master.  
In your heart the Holy Spirit witnessed to your salvation.*

*Therefore all people called to live in hope, rejoice and celebrate your memory!  
Holy Father Silouan, pray to Christ God to save our souls. Troparion Tone 4*

### **St Helen's Chapel - the Future**

St Helen's Chapel has for many years now been open during the day for pilgrims and those seeking a peaceful, spiritual place to sit quietly and pray or simply find some perspective on their lives. *St Helen's was certainly pivotal in my journey to Orthodoxy, after I 'discovered' this beautiful and holy place whilst walking around town on my lunch break twenty years ago! It amazes me to this day that I now regularly serve the Divine Liturgy there myself, as a priest.* Father Alexander and I often find touching hand written notes left by visitors of all kinds, asking us to pray for loved ones, telling us how the chapel has personally helped them through difficult times and opening their hearts to tell us their troubles and to ask for our prayers. *With St Martin's now taking up so much of our resources and providing the much needed, larger space for our worship, we should bear all of this in our minds as we consider and pray about the chapel's future use. **More on this next month***

### +Additional Services for September 2024+

Thursday 5 September

Prophet Zechariah & Righteous Elizabeth | Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30, St Helen's Chapel

Wednesday 11 September

Feast of St Deiniol, Abbot of Bangor and Bishop in Clwyd | Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30, St Helen's Chapel

Thursday 19 September

St Theodore of Tarsus (Patron of Our God Protected Archdiocese) Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30, St Helen's Chapel

Tuesday 24 September

St Silouan of Mount Athos | Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30, St Helen's Chapel

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.

**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.**

**CLERGY:** **Father Alexander Haig**, 17 Maidenburgh Street, CO1 1UB. Phone: 01206 530 530 \ Mobile: 07947 047 201 Email:

parishpriest@orthodoxcolchester.org.uk **Father Mark Shillaker** 24 Orchard Gardens, Ipswich Rd, CO4 0BX Mobile: 07917 161 295 | Email: markshillaker@gmail.com - **parish website: orthodoxcolchester.org.uk**