

THE ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST MARTIN & ST HELEN

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



The Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple

The birth and early life of the Virgin Mary is not recorded in the Gospels or other books of the New Testament, the story is part of Holy Tradition and can be found in a work dating from the second century known as the Book of James or Protevangelion. Her parents, the Holy and Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna fulfilled their promise to God and brought the child Mary to the temple; she was received with Joy by the High Priest Zacharias, who lifting her in his arms cried out: ***"It is in you that He has glorified your name in every generation. It is in you that He will reveal the Redemption that He has prepared for His people in the last days."*** Then, Zacharias brought Mary into the Holy of Holies—a place where only the High Priest was permitted to enter once a year on the Day of Atonement. He stood her on the steps of the altar, and the Grace of the Lord descended upon her. She arose and expressed her joy in a dance as wonder seized all who saw this happen. *The Virgin Mary lived in the Temple for nine years until, reaching an age for marriage, she was taken from the Temple by the priests and elders and entrusted to Joseph as the guardian of her virginity. The story of Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple shows us her total dedication to God and her readiness for her future vocation as the Mother of the Incarnate Lord, the God Man Jesus. In the honor shown to Mary, we the faithful are summoned to look forward to the Incarnation of Christ, celebrated in just a few weeks by the Feast of the Nativity on December 25. Most Holy Theotokos save us!*

Fr Mark

News & Views

CATECHESIS NEW CLASSES

New catechesis classes started on 27 October. The classes are intended to provide instruction in the holy Orthodox Faith and Life, primarily to newcomers and those who wish to become catechumens. All are welcome however. Please see Father Mark if you are interested in attending

www.orthodoxcolchester.org.uk

BAPTISM: On Sunday September 29, after the Holy Liturgy, baby Paul Kish, son of Volodymyr and Anna was baptised in St Martin's Church. **Glory to God!**

CLEANING THE CHURCH

It is a very necessary job to ensure that the church is kept clean and free from biscuit crumbs, dust and dirt and that the kitchen area and toilet are clean. We are grateful to Olga and Cristina who volunteer their time and energy when they can (around their work and family commitments) to clean St Martin's. However it is clear that one or two additional people are needed. The time commitment would not be very high, if enough people are involved to share the load. Please see our facilities manager, Theadora if you feel you can help.

ICONS RESTORED

The icons of St John the Baptist and St Martin are now restored and back in their places in the iconostasis. The damage has been beautifully made good and both icons completely revarnished. They look very good and it is wonderful to have them back in their rightful positions.

FATHER MARK'S HEALTH

Khouria Paula and I would like to thank everyone who helped and supported me when I was taken ill in church before the Liturgy last on Sunday 13th October. I want to reassure everyone that it was only a virus, very unpleasant but over quite quickly. I was thoroughly checked over by doctors and no serious health problems were detected. God bless all of you for your kindness and prayers.

University Chaplaincy

Father Mark attended Arrivals Week and Freshers Fair at the University of Essex in October in his role as Orthodox Chaplain, and met many students, Orthodox and non-Orthodox. The University Faith Centre hosts chaplains from many different faiths and Fr Mark is a standing member of the Faith Centre committee.. If you work or study at the university, please contact Father Mark for details of any activities or events planned for this academic year (2024/25). Details are also available on the notice board in the Faith Centre corridor.



"Pray without ceasing on behalf of other men...For cannot he that falls rise again?"
Ignatius of Antioch

ST MARTIN THE MERCIFUL BISHOP OF TOURS: NOVEMBER 11

In signs and in miracles, thou wast renowned throughout the land of Gaul, by grace thou art a light for the world. O Martin, bishop blessed of God; deeds of mercy and compassion filled thy life with their splendours - from the Troparion in Tone Four



St Martin was born in what is now modern day Hungary in around 316 but grew up in Italy. He was a soldier; after his father, in the Roman army. One night, near Amiens in France (then Gaul) as a yet to be baptised Christian catechumen he encountered a half naked beggar by the side of the road. Taking his sword, he cut his cloak in two and gave half to the poor man. Later that night Martin had a vision of Christ Himself who said to him: "Martin, while still a catechumen, has clothed me with this garment". Eventually, he was able to fulfill his long cherished hope of entering the monastic life and became a disciple of the great theologian and pastor St Hilary of Poitiers. He was, rather against his will, made bishop of Tour on the Loire river but continued to live a simple monastic life attracting many new monks and inspiring a great monastic movement throughout France (of which he is patron) and Western Europe, including the British Isles; many churches throughout these lands were, and still are, dedicated to him. His steadfast preaching and guardianship of the Orthodox Faith during his life is an inspiration for us Orthodox Christians living in the West today. **In our beloved temple of St Martin, in the heart of ancient Colchester, re-established as a place of Orthodox worship after so many centuries, we venerate this wonderful saint with joy and gratitude. We recall his deeds of mercy and compassion as we seek to grow our thanksgiving community, welcoming newcomers and strangers with love and hospitality and faithfully preserving and sharing our Orthodox Faith.**

Holy Father Martin, pray to God for us!

Growth in our Community

Regular worshippers attending St Martin's will have noticed that we regularly have around a hundred people at the Divine Liturgy each Sunday and sometimes more. We have experienced rapid growth in a fairly short time, which is a great blessing but which brings inevitable challenges. For communities like ours to survive, its members need to be prepared to give their time, resources and energy to the many projects, duties and tasks which are necessary. Please all of you ask God in your prayers what He would have you do to help build his Holy Church so that when Fr Mark and Fr Alexander and Khourias Paula and Hilary ask for help you are prepared to step up if you can.

+Additional Services for November 2024+

Friday 8 November: Synaxis of the Archangel Michael and the Other Bodiless Powers | Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30am St Helen's Chapel.

Monday 11 November: St Martin the Merciful, Bishop of Tours | Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30am St Martin's Church

Thursday 21 November: The Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple | Hours & Holy Liturgy 9:30am 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:

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markshillaker@gmail.com - **parish website: orthodoxcolchester.org.uk**