

**Orthodox Parish of  
St Helen of Colchester**

Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland  
NEWSLETTER 159 NOVEMBER 2009



**Weekday Holy Liturgy at St Helen's**

**Wednesday 11 November 9.30 am**  
St Martin the Merciful, Bishop of Tours

**Wednesday 25 November 9.30 am**  
Holy Great Martyr Katharine of Alexandria

Note: The Feast of St Andrew will be kept on  
SUNDAY 29 NOVEMBER

# Andrew - the Saint for Scotland, Russia, Greece - turns out to be a very good Saint *for us all!*

**S**t Andrew is claimed as Patron Saint for several countries. He is the Saint for Scotland, the Saint for Russia, the Saint for Greece, the Saint for Romania - or so the books tell me.

That is a good thing, and (don't worry!) he has plenty of room for praying not only for the those nations each as a whole, but also for myriads of men and women named after him in different forms in different languages.

He is a popular Saint, then, not only in Orthodox countries, but also in Scotland and in countries with Scottish immigration.

**Why is he so popular in Scotland? Well, that is because his relics, or a part of them, were in earlier days enshrined there.**

The shrine was in the well-known burgh or town known as St Andrews, on the east coast of Scotland in the ancient kingdom of Fife.

From the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries it was known for its ancient university. Today it is known for its golf course.

**Before the Reformation in the sixteenth century it was known for its shrine of St Andrew.**

Tradition says that he was crucified upside down in Patras on an X-shaped (really the Greek letter *chi*-shaped) Cross, to remind us of Christ. His relics have travelled a lot! - first in 357 to Constantinople, in 870 back to Patras, in 1460 to Rome, and in 1964 his head was returned by the Pope to Patras.

So how did a major part of his relics get to Scotland?

Tradition says that St Regulus, (or, in English, Rule), a native of Patras, had a vision that he should take some of the relics to the limits of the world.

So he sailing off happily, until his ship was wrecked off Scotland about 740. He decided that where he got ashore with his precious burden was the place God wanted him to take them.

So there he and the relics settled. Gradually the town grew up around his monastery and the shrine. St Andrew's became the seat of the Metropolitan and Archbishop of Scotland.

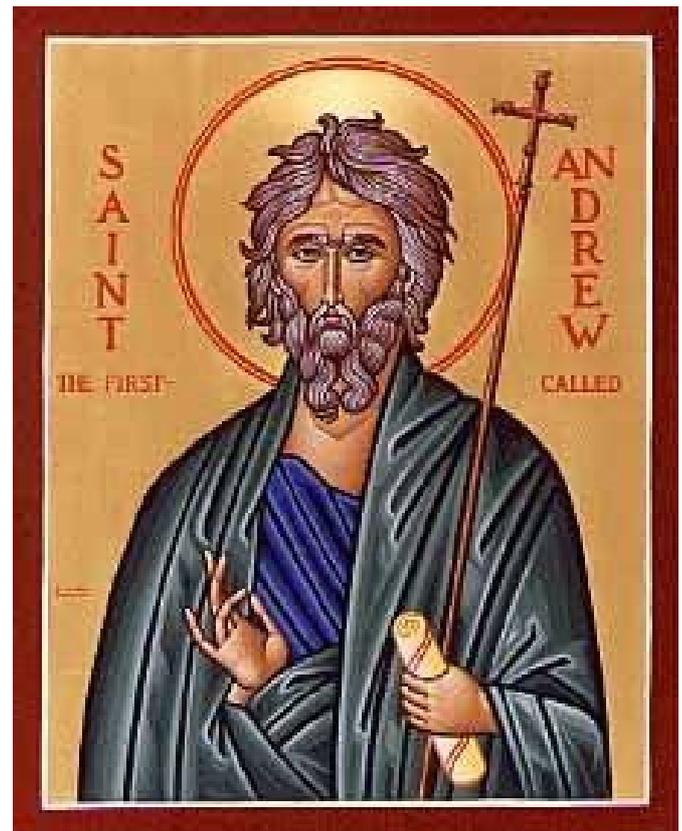
At the Reformation the relics were sadly destroyed by the protestants or lost.

Today there are the fine ruins of the mediaeval monastery, an important tourist venue, but not (alas, one fears!) of much prayerful pilgrimage.

**Dear St Andrew the First-called, much loved by so many: intercede for the home countries of many of our people, and for all who bear your name or love you.**

**May your devotion to Christ, shown in the Gospel itself, and in the stories of your faithful discipleship to the day of your holy Martyrdom, inspire us to a closer following of your Master and ours!**

*Father Alexander*



## **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 St, Colchester CO1 1UB

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Reader: *Stephen Weston*

St Fursey's House, 111 Neville Rd, Sutton, Stalham NR12 9RR Tel: 01-692-580-552

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

St Fursey's Chapel, 111 Neville Rd,  
Sutton, near Stalham, Norfolk

Divine Liturgy: usually first Saturday 9.30 am

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

Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday 10.00 am

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

### **HOLY LITURGY**

ST FURSEY'S  
Sat 7 Nov 9.30 am

UNIVERSITY  
Sat 14 Nov 10.00 am

CLACTON  
Sat 21 Nov 10.00 am

FELLOWSHIP OF ST ALBAN & ST SERGIUS  
Local branch meeting at St Helen's Chapel, on  
WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER, 7.30 for 7.45 pm  
ROSEMARY CARTER (from St Albans)

will speak on *ORTHODOX CHURCH MUSIC*  
She will teach basic things about the subject and  
illustrate it from recordings. It will be a good introduction  
by someone who knows what she is talking about!  
Come along and learn!

# St Theodore Icon Calendar for 2010

£11.99

- ◆ An icon a month by Aidan Hart, many of British Orthodox Saints.
- ◆ British Saints prominent in daily entries.
- ◆ Probably the first wall Calendar produced in Britain for the Orthodox community.
- ◆ Published by the Antiochian Deanery, edited and printed in Colchester.
- ◆ Have a copy in your home. Treat a friend.
- ◆ Collect it at church - or 75 p by post in UK .



## ST SIMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN

(949-1022) is an important teacher in the Church, widely venerated for his teaching on the hesychastic life and his personal asceticism. Fr JOHN TURNER, our Anglican friend from Frinton, who was awarded his PhD on St Simeon, has now produced the first scholarly translation of St Simeon's four *Epistles*, published by OUP. I was delighted to be invited to the St Botolph's, Bishopsgate launch of the book. Though costing a hefty £70, the book does make interesting reading, a considerable contribution to study of the Saint. I will put the copy, generously presented to me, on the lending library shelves.



The earliest seal of Colchester, dating to 1190. It shows St Helen seated in a chair. The circle reads: *Colchester gives birth to Helen, whom the Cross makes glorious.*

## It's a privilege to make the Church Breads - Why not offer to have a go?

We always need bakers of the Bread for the Holy Liturgy. The Bread is sometimes called the *Leitourgia* or the *Proskhmedi*.

The bread needs to have the right consistency, the crust needs to be right, the seal needs to be clear.

It requires a little bit of skill, but the skill can be an acquired skill!

**People who make the Breads are taught to make them with humble prayer. So the Breads are sanctified from the start.**

The markings are made with the seal, pressed into the Bread before baking.

When the Priest prepares the Bread for the Liturgy, he cuts out a cube from the centre. This part is impressed with the Holy Cross and "IC XC NIKA" - meaning *Iesous Christos Nika* - *Jesus Christ Conqueror*.

The cube is the *Lamb*. At the Epiclesis in the Anaphora (the central consecratory prayer of the

Liturgy) the Priest will call down the Spirit of God and the Lamb will become the living Body of Christ.

He also cuts a triangle for the Mother of God, and nine little triangles for the orders of Saints. These are placed beside the Lamb on the paten, the plate or disks.

Then he puts on crumbs to represent the living and the departed - the names he wishes to remember *and the ones you send up for remembrance.*

**People consider it a great privilege and honour to prepare and bake the Bread for the Holy Liturgy.**

**It is their workmanship and skill that become the Bread of life, the Body of Christ, to feed the faithful. The baker is particularly remembered by the Priest when he prepares the offering: he prays for those who prepared this offering.**

Anyone who would like to learn to do this please have a word with Khouria HILARY.

GHISSEH SARKO has returned home with a PhD to a post in the University of Lattakia, Syria, as was noted last month. She spent five years in Colchester, and has sent a charming note:

*Dear Father Alexander and Khouria Hilary,  
I would like to say thank you very much for everything you did. Saint Helen was the spiritual source that gave me a spiritual strength and support through my study years at Essex.*

*I was lucky that the church is close to the university and the parishioners were always friendly and nice.*

*Thank you for everyone in the parish, I hope to keep in contact in the future and you are most welcome in Syria.*

GHISSEH

## Here and There

**SCHOOL VISITS:** St Benedict's College, the RC comprehensive, has long been bringing all its Year 8

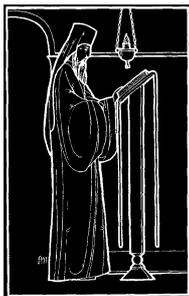
children to visit St Helen's (for both its historical and local interest and to discover about Orthodoxy). They will be here again over several sessions in November. This year **Stanway School** have asked to bring their Year 7 children, over a couple of days. All very good!

**CHURCH COUNCIL:** The Council meets on Sunday 8 November at 1pm.

**UNIVERSITY:** There will be a Holy

Liturgy at the University on **Saturday 14 November** at 10.00 am. All are welcome: Orthodox students and staff are invited; so are friends, including people not from the University.

**THE NATIVITY FAST:** The Fast in preparation for the feast of the Holy Nativity of Christ always begins on 15 November. The fast is easier than most of the year's fasts: fish, wine, and oil are permitted on almost every Saturday and Sunday. Keep an eye on the monthly *Feasts and Fasts* for details - it is available from church.



## NOVEMBER DAYS

Sun	1	Pentecost 21, Unmercenary Cosmas & Damian of Mesopotamia
Tue	3	S Winifred of Holywell
Sat	7	S Willibrord, Apostle of Frisia (Holland)
Sun	8	Pentecost 22, Archangel Michael & all the Bodiless Powers
Mon	9	S Nektarios of Pentapolis
Tue	10	S Arsenios of Cappadocia
Wed	11	S Martin the Merciful, Bishop of Tours, S Menas
Fri	13	S John Chrysostom
Sat	14	Holy Apostle Philip
Sun	15	Pentecost 23, Beginning of the Nativity Fast
Mon	16	Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew
Tue	17	S Hilda of Whitby
Fri	20	S Edmund, King & Martyr
Sat	21	Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple
Sun	22	Pentecost 24
Mon	23	S Alexander Nevsky
Tue	24	Hieromartyr Clement, Pope of Rome
Wed	25	Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria
Sun	29	Pentecost 25
Mon	30	Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called

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

## A Word from the Fathers

There is something else which you must know if you really want to attain virtue and avoid sin.

Just as the soul is incomparably better than the body, and in many major respects altogether more excellent and precious, so the virtues of the soul are infinitely superior to the virtues of the body.

This is especially true of those virtues which imitate God and bear his Name.

Conversely, the vices of the soul are much worse than the passions of the body, both in the actions they produce and in the punishments they incur.

I do not know why, but most people

overlook this fact.

They treat drunkenness, unchastity, adultery, theft and all such vices with great concern, avoiding them or punishing them as something whose very appearance is loathsome to most men.

But the passions of the soul are much worse and much more serious than bodily passions.

These passions of the soul are envy, anger, hatred, insensitivity, greed - which, according to the Apostle, is the root of all evil - and all vices of a similar nature.

*St John of Damascus (no 645-749)*