

Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland
NEWSLETTER 166

JUNE 2010



Thursday 24 June
NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE FORERUNNER & BAPTIST
9.30 am Divine Liturgy

Tuesday 29 June
HOLY GLORIOUS APOSTLES PETER & PAUL
9.30 am Divine Liturgy

It's a joy to worship in the quiet of a weekday

'St Martin's suddenly more possible than ever before!'

Yes, it's true! - However, those among our readers with memories may recall similar headlines here more than once over the last fifteen years or so!

But it certainly is a fact that in May we have had a meeting when we felt that officers of the Churches Conservation Trust, owners of the building, for the very first time understood *and sympathised* with our view.

We have always wanted to use the beautiful building for worship and to have it exclusively. We have not been prepared to share it with attractions like the clog dancing or 'candlelit cabarets' which have taken place there: we feel they desecrate a very holy place.

Entirely acceptable in a secular context, such activities would fit in happily in The Townhouse, the public hall right next door. There is no need for these secular events to take place in this holy, consecrated place.

All this we explained at a meeting with the Trust, a Government/Anglican body. 'We' were Khouria HILARY, and HELEN and PETER LAWRENCE, as neither Churchwarden was able to attend.

We were accompanied by ROGER ENNALS, a leading local Anglican, a Solicitor whose office actually overlooks St Martin's Church - and a long-standing supporter of our case. We were very grateful he came to speak, clearly and coherently, from outside our membership.

We went armed with kind notes of support from the Rectors of St Peter's and St James's, but omitted to remind the Trust that just two years ago they received a petition signed by 446 people supporting our request.

We also emphasised that we felt we were the best answer to the needs of St Martin's itself. That the building would really respond to our use.

The two officers of the Trust, with representatives of the Church Commissioners and the Anglican Diocese, were open and helpful, and took in what we were saying.

It is a complex business, and no quick response is likely. Our Church Council asked a year ago whether, since they could not then accept our sole use, they would agree to *sell* us the building and what they would charge.

Neither question has been answered, but we did suggest again that they might *lease* St Martin's to us now, with a view to arranging a possible *purchase* only in the longer term. If they did agree, it might be possible to go there much sooner.

The officers will now speak with their Trustees, and with others including the local Anglican Archdeacon.

Over the years so many people have felt it obviously right for us to use the wonderful building.

Please pray that this may now be brought about by the holy will of God.

Father Alexander



Beautiful St Martin's Church is a mere couple of hundred metres from St Helen's, towards the Town Hall. The archaeologists say it is probably originally Romano-British. The present building contains features from Saxon times, but mostly from the mediaeval period.

Unused for Anglican worship for 50 years, it is hardly used for anything at all. We did rent it very happily for Holy Week and Pascha in 2008, but have been trying without success to obtain it for our sole use for fifteen years!

Perhaps now, if it please God ...?

His Eminence our Archbishop
METROPOLITAN JOHN OF WESTERN & CENTRAL EUROPE
will give a lecture on
"THE SITUATION OF CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST"

SATURDAY 12 JUNE 2.00 pm
St Botolph's Church, Bishopsgate,
close to Liverpool Street Station

Organised by the Cambridge Orthodox Institute

You are invited to this occasion, and to lunch at 1.00 pm, but must notify the Principal aneste@aol.com (or tell me and I will let him know).

**Receive this NEWSLETTER by EMAIL and you will save our Parish funds a considerable sum of money.
Our thanks to those who have already agreed to do so.**

Study our Holy Orthodox Faith at home...

It is very difficult for many people to get away to study—cost and personal commitments play their part. The Orthodox Institute at Cambridge has therefore devised home study courses that may interest you if you wish to deepen your knowledge and understanding of the Orthodox way of life.

They are very much of the digital age, providing down-loadable material via the Internet, but also providing personal tutoring and access.

You can do organised work and gain academic qualifications if you wish. But if you just want to enjoy the learning, you can do that too.

Some of the subjects I notice offered as modules are: Prayer, Scripture, Theology, Icons, and Asceticism. A leaflet is available in church.

HOLY LITURGY

ST FURSEY'S
Saturday 5 June
9.30 am

CLACTON
Saturday 26 June
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 Balkeine 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*

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The Parish of St Helen is Registered Charity No. 1134418

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

PAUL BRIGHTON-CROSS sends in a

FAVOURITE SAYING

When we think of the height of God's infinity we should not despair of His compassion reaching us from such a height; and when we recall the infinite depth of our fall through sin we should not refuse to believe that the virtue which has been killed in us will rise again. For God can accomplish both these things: He can come down and illumine our intellect with spiritual knowledge, and He can raise up the virtue within us and exalt it with Himself through works of righteousness.

St. Maximos the Confessor

The People Column

ANTHONY BRYSON was a lovely man, who had been a member of the Clacton congregation almost since we started there. But he suffered from depression, and had considerable difficulties in mobility, so was not able to get there always, especially latterly. Then a year or more ago he suffered another stroke and had to go into The Haven. He died in Colchester Hospital, with his son (also ANTHONY, a teacher at Clacton High School) at his side. I had given him Holy Communion a few days before, and anointed him again just hours before he left us. His funeral was in St Helen's where he had worshipped when he was still driving. I went to bury him in Coleshill near Birmingham with his wife, to whom he was devoted. Anthony had been Orthodox a good number of years. His wife, a Quaker, had not joined him but had been sympathetic enough to Orthodoxy to do secretarial work for Bishop IRENAEOS in Birmingham, whom Anthony greatly admired - the Bishop died in Greece not many months ago. I shall miss Anthony: I felt close to him mostly for his Orthodoxy of course, but also for his great love of his fellow-Northumbrian St Bede the Venerable - and for the fact that as soon as we first met we discovered that at Coleshill he had been postman to my late sister and had known her family! I shall miss him and his generous spirit. Memory eternal! Our sympathy to his son, who has made a generous gift to St Helen's in his memory, and NICKY.

ALEX CLARK was, with his brothers, an altar server here at the time when the Parish moved into St Helen's Chapel in 2000. It was good to have him back among us one Sunday recently - now a man, with his wife and little one. In the RAF, he expects to be posted to Afghanistan again late in the year—though by then he will have a second child too! As he left us, Alex said of his brief visit, **it was like coming home.**

FRANCES-KYRANNA ISACKE, a member here in the early days, now living in Cambridge, returned for the feast of SS Constantine and Helen. She is secretary of the Board of Cambridge Orthodox Institute, and also of the Russian parish.

A Word from a Modern Spiritual Father

Preserve the grace of God: with grace life is easy. With God all is well, all is pleasant and joyous, the soul is at peace in God and walks, as it were, in a fair garden where dwell the Lord and the Mother of God.

Without grace man is but sinful clay, but with the grace of God the spirit of man is like unto an angel.

The angels serve God and love Him in spirit. In this wise is man in spirit like unto an angel.

St Silouan the Athonite (1866-1938)

Mary, on holiday in Rome, finds what she did not expect: Holy Orthodoxy !

We stayed in a small hotel on the square where the Trevi fountain is. On one of the corners was a 'small' church which we decided to visit. You can imagine my surprise at seeing what looked remarkably like an Iconostasis with icons among the Catholic surroundings. We asked a priest who was by the door and understood him to say that there were regular Orthodox services there. He gave us the time of the Sunday liturgy and we attended. It was in a Slavonic language but very beautiful and made me feel rather more at home than I would otherwise have been.



We visited The Vatican City and St Peter's Basilica. As we were approaching the tomb of St Peter, amongst hundreds of people, my husband, Nigel pointed out that close beside me was what looked like an Orthodox priest/monk. I quickly realised that I was surrounded by an Orthodox group and as we stood before the tomb the priest/monk prayed to St Peter!

The following day we were wandering around the streets of Rome visiting many churches and fountains and enjoying all the beautiful paintings, when I was drawn to enter yet another church. On entering we found it huge, as many had been, and drifted around looking. For some strange reason I was drawn to the 'shop' within this church only to find it's shelves covered in icons. When I looked more closely I discovered that they were mostly of St Helen & St Constantine. I decided I had to purchase one for our own St Helen's. As I was paying the sales person offered the information that St Helen was actually buried in the church! I was shocked and amazed and rushed off to see if I could find the evidence. Sadly I could not and the shop had closed as soon as I had left.

Three coincidences? I don't believe so.

MARY MORRIS

Here and There

THE FLAG OF ST GEORGE is a fine and simple flag. It is flown in England of course as the country is under his patronage – and has been for many hundreds of years. On St George's Day, 23 April, PAM BOULDEN turned up with a large flag and we were able to hang it up in a temporary position. Pam has presented it to the Parish, and one day we will find a way to display it properly on a pole out of reach of vandals and thieves. The last flags we had were both stolen—though it was indeed at the time of an England football match and that is probably the answer....Anyway, thank you, Pam!

CHURCH WINDOWS CLEANED:

I asked two young window-cleaners to clean the small church windows inside and out, and it turned out that they were Romanian brothers and Orthodox: not only that, but they refused money and cleaned them for free, as a gift for the Church! It also turned out that I baptised their little niece recently, NADIA GHEBEA. Our sincere thanks to J&A Cleaning Services, i.e. JOHN (Ionut) and ALAN (Alin) LUPESCU for doing an excellent job. I recommend them to anyone looking for carpet, gutter, house or window cleaners (they seem to clean *anything!*): 07-871-409-286.



ST ALBAN is honoured as First Martyr of Britain. Some say he died 304 AD, but more likely in the 250s or even in 209. Converted by a persecuted Priest, he gave himself in his place, and died on the site of St Alban's Cathedral (just outside the M25 north-west of London). A few years ago a relic of the Saint was returned there. It is well worth a visit. Feast: 22 June.

JUNE DAYS

Mon 31	May	Beginning of Apostles' Fast
Tue 1		S Justin Martyr the Philosopher
Thu 3		S Kevin, Abbot of Glendalough, Ireland
Fri 4		S Petroc, Abbot of Padstow, Cornwall
Sat 5		Hieromartyr Boniface of Crediton, Abp of Mainz
Sun 6		Pentecost 2, All Saints of Russia, Romania, Athos, Fathers of the 2nd Ecumenical Council
Tue 8		S Ephraim, Patriarch of Antioch
Wed 9		S Cyril of Alexandria, S Columba of Iona
Fri 11		Holy Apostles Bartholomew & Barnabas
Sun 13		Pentecost 3, All Saints of Britain, New Martyrs of Turkish Yoke, of Bulgaria
Mon 14		Prophet Eliseus (Elisha)
Tue 15		Prophet Amos, S Lazarus, Prince of Serbia & New Martyrs of Serbia
Thu 17		S Botolph, Abbot of Icanho, Suffolk
Sat 19		Holy Apostle Jude the Lord's Brother
Sun 20		Pentecost 4
Mon 21		Martyr Julian of Tarsus in Cilicia
Tue 22		S Alban, Protomartyr of Britain
Wed 23		S Etheldreda of Ely, S Mark of Ephesus
Thu 24		Nativity of S John the Forerunner & Baptist
Sat 26		S David of Thessalonica
Sun 27		Pentecost 5, S Joanna the Myrrh-bearer
Mon 28		S Austell of Cornwall
Tue 29		Holy Apostles Peter & Paul
Wed 30		Synaxis of Holy Twelve Apostles

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