

**Orthodox Parish of
St Helen of Colchester**

Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland
NEWSLETTER 168 SEPTEMBER 2010



SEPTEMBER SERVICES

SUNDAY 5 SEPT PENTECOST 15
10.30 am Hours and Typika
WEDNESDAY 8 SEPT NATIVITY OF THE MOTHER OF GOD
9.30 am Holy Liturgy
TUESDAY 14 SEPT EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
9.30 am Holy Liturgy

There is a peace and joy available to those who can attend weekday services

**St Silouan
almost a 'local' Saint!**

St Silouan almost qualifies as an Essex Saint. Certainly the responsibility for the world's knowing all about him lies with Father Sophrony (who reposed 1993) and the community so happily near us at Tolleshunt Knights. And certainly a considerable relic of the Holy Man is enshrined there.

In past ages, as in ours, naturally there grew up a cult of the particular Saint in the areas where he came from, where he lived, where his relics lay, where people were taught about him.

In our own day, St Silouan is known throughout the world. He was born in Russia in 1866, went to the Holy Mountain in 1892, and died there in 1938. His was a seemingly uneventful life, at least after his earlier years. He certainly never came to Britain in his life-time.

But a holy relic of him, a bone of his, is now enshrined at 'the Essex Monastery', so that part of him does now indeed rest in our county, and has surely made him an important part of Essex life.

Like most Saints, he was not particularly known in his life-time, though he was a respected Elder or Staretz and spiritual father. He was the Monastery miller, not a learned man in the sense of being well-educated, rather the reverse, nor he did write spiritual books.

But how often in Christian history it has not been 'the wise and learned' who have led the Church to Christ, but those of simple faith who simply loved Christ. Certainly there is a really profound spiritual depth to his teaching. In some ways he articulates the very best and highest Christian teaching in response to the emptiness and despair of the public and private life of the twentieth century - and of our equally vain twenty-first century.

But God had provided Father Silouan with a disciple: in 1926 Father Sophrony also came as a young monk from Russia. Soon he was made assistant to the miller.

He faithfully served him until the Saint died - and providentially he wrote down the teachings of the Saint, thus preserving them for us and for future generations.

Later he wrote his life and published it and the teachings. Several books have resulted. The life and teachings of the Saint recorded by his disciple are now known everywhere across the Orthodox world, with versions in many languages.

This results in the fact that Father or Elder Sophrony himself and his work and teaching are also widely known, and wherever you go in Orthodox countries mention that you come from Essex and your host will immediately say with great respect and indeed awe, 'Ah, Father Sophrony of Essex....! Did you know him?'

Perhaps one day, in the course of history, Essex will be famed everywhere not for the idiosyncrasies of 'Essex Man' or 'Essex Girl' but for St Silouan and Father Sophrony, who himself may well be declared a Saint one day. He is buried in the crypt chapel.

Do read the work of both St Silouan and Father Sophrony - they are published by the Monastery and can be purchased there - or some may be borrowed from our own library shelves.

In them you will hear the simple message of salvation in Christ.

Father Alexander



St Silouan's feast-day is 24 September, this year a Friday. There will be a Holy Liturgy at the Monastery on the day itself, probably at 8.00 am. And on the preceding evening, probably at 5.00 pm, there will be a Vigil - Vespers and Mattins - with an outdoor Procession of the Relic and Icon. The Chapel was dedicated to him when his canonisation was newly proclaimed just as they completed its building in, I think, 1989. There is always a crowd present for the feast, and it is a very beautiful service.

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 Stephen Weston, 111 Neville Rd, Sutton, Stalham NR12 9RR Tel: 01-692-580-552

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

HOLY LITURGY

ST FURSEY'S
No Liturgy this month

CLACTON
Saturday 18 September
10.00 am

Receive this NEWSLETTER by EMAIL and save Parish funds a considerable sum of money. Send your email address to say you will have it that way.

The People Column

CONGRATULATIONS to our beloved friend Fr SAMIR GHOLAM, Pastor for many years at St George's Cathedral in London, and the only Arab Priest in Britain. He has been raised to the rank of Archpriest.

CHANGE OF PLAN: ALEX and MIHAELA HAIG have now moved away, as announced in the last *Newsletter*. However, the move has been a month later than planned - and not to Bristol after all: Ela was offered a post nearer to her aspirations, as Lecturer in the University of Portsmouth, where she will do both teaching and research.

GETTING MARRIED: Good wishes to ALEXANDROS STONE, son of ROBIN and LIA (LEE) MOUSTOXITHI -STONE, formerly of Colchester, but for several years living in Nea Makri in Greece. Alex marries CHRYSANTHI there on 18 September. God bless them in their new life together!

CONGRATULATIONS to ADAMOS ATHANASSIOU of Clacton on becoming an octogenarian in September. Many years!



THE UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS on (Tuesday) 14 September commemorates not only the Finding of the Holy Cross c. 328 by St Helena but also its return to Jerusalem in 614 by Emperor Heraclius after it had been stolen by the Persians. Holy Liturgy at 9.30 am.

Here and There

NATIONAL HERITAGE DAY falls this year on **Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 September**. As usual, we are taking part, and will be open all day on Saturday, and after the Liturgy on Sunday. Dozens and dozens of people are likely to come, giving an opportunity to present not just our history-filled and story-filled building itself, but to a certain degree our Holy Faith as well. If any of you can help me welcome visitors and tell them a little about things, I shall be grateful. Just left me know.

INTERNATIONAL ANGLICAN-ORTHODOX DIALOGUE: I shall be at Christ Church, Oxford for a week's Dialogue with Anglicans 31 August-7 September. Our subject is the Christian understanding of what it is to be human, with all the teaching flowing from that. The Orthodox Chairman is Metropolitan KALLISTOS. The Archbishop of Canterbury will be addressing us. A couple of days later we will be at dinner at Lambeth Palace. **[The 10.30 service in St Helen's on 5 September will be Hours & Typica.]**

BOOKS MISSING: Have you borrowed any of the *Orthodox Saints* volumes by Fr George Poulos and forgotten to return them? - Others are wanting to borrow them: please return them quickly.

DEVELOPMENT OF OUR MISSION IN SOUTH ESSEX: We are hoping that there can be a development of the Parish into South Essex. At the moment there is of course the esteemed Greek Parish in Southend-on-sea under our dear friend Father CHRYSOSTOMOS, but otherwise there is no Orthodox church until you get to Upton Park in East London, though the Russians are now having an occasional Liturgy in Romford. The hope is that we might start something in **Basildon**, and we had planned to begin in September. That will not now be possible, but if you live in that area please watch out for more news. PAUL BRIGHTON-CROSS is the person to ask for: he lives in Southend, and will be in charge of the project. We think we have found suitable accommodation, but await permission of the relevant authorities—and will need the blessing of our own Archbishop also.

Bringing together the Orthodox of Britain and Ireland

The new regional **Episcopal Assembly** met in June, with eleven Bishops present, two absent, the first official joint meeting ever. They set up three *Committees*:

- ◆ *Theological* (including liturgical, canonical, and ecumenical matters), under Metropolitan KALLISTOS;
- ◆ *Pastoral*, under Archbishop ELISEY;
- ◆ *Educational*, under Archbishop GREGORIOS.

Each Orthodox diocese will now appoint a representative, priest or lay, to each committee.

This is very hopeful for future co-operation, and for the future unified Orthodox Church here. The report notes that,

In the course of the discussion, the bishops mentioned in particular the need to keep children and young people within the Church. They spoke of pastoral problems arising in connection with marriage, and canonical issues involving the transfer of clergy from one diocese to another. They noted that there was a need to discuss current issues in bio-ethics and questions connected with the theology of the

human person.

The Assembly meets again in December.

The **Orthodox Fellowship of St John the Baptist** met at Swanwick in July, Brought together priests and laity from all jurisdictions. It was a happy and stimulating occasion. Our Archbishop JOHN served the Holy Liturgy with Metropolitan KALLISTOS.

Regrettably there were not as many present as usual, though there were five in the HAIG party, serving in various capacities.

I spent one night at the August conference of the **Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius**, which brings together mainly Orthodox and Anglicans, and to which I have belonged for nearly 50 years.

While it is true that we have grown apart in recent years, there are still some Anglicans who do think in a manner close to Orthodoxy's, and a larger number who are interested in and attracted to our Faith.

They all seem to have loved their time at the Orthodox Youth Camp....!

Yes, the five youngsters from Colchester Parish who attended the Camp in Shropshire seem to have had a good time. Individual donors, and the Parish corporately, subsidised the visit to a considerable extent, for it is wonderful way of deepening their love of Christ and their understanding of what it is to be Orthodox, and preparing them for adult life, when they will have to take responsibility for the life of the Church in their generation. RUTH and JOANNA LAWRENCE talked to us in church the Sunday after Camp, and with JOHN prepared 'cookies' for us all a week later. STEFAN TODD also attended, and LUCY BRIGHTON-CROSS sent the following nice little letter:

Dear Father,

Thank you for sending me to Orthodox Youth Camp. Thank you to Alex for driving us. I loved the whole experience especially quad biking and the visit to Wenlock Priory. Please thank everyone who donated some money towards the cost. I made lots of new Orthodox friends who I will keep in touch with. Love, Lucy.

SEPTEMBER DAYS

Wed 1	Church New Year , Day of Prayer for the Environment, S Simon Stylites, Righteous Joshua, the Son of Nun
Sat 4	H Prophet & God-seer Moses, Martyr Hermione
Sun 5	Pentecost 15, Prophet Zacharias & Righteous Elizabeth, Parents of S John
Mon 6	Commemoration to the Miracle of Archangel Michael at Colossae
Wed 8	Nativity of Mother of God , S Ina King of Wessex, Kursk Root Icon of the Theotokos
Thu 9	Righteous Forbearers of God Joachim & Anna
Sun 12	Pentecost 16, Sunday before Holy Cross
Mon 13	Commemoration of the Dedication of the Church of the Resurrection
Tue 14	Universal Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Thu 16	Gt Martyr Euphemia the All-praised, Hieromartyr Cyprian of Carthage, S Ninian Bishop of Whithorn
Fri 17	Martyr Sophia, & her children Faith, Hope & Love
Sun 19	Pentecost 17, Sunday after Holy Cross, S Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury
Wed 22	Martyr Phocas the Gardener
Thu 23	Conception of S John the Forerunner
Fri 24	S Silouan of Mount Athos, Protomartyr Thecla, S Stephen, King of Serbia
Sat 25	S Sergius of Radonezh, S Coelfrid of Jarrow
Sun 26	Pentecost 18, S John the Theologian

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