

# Holy Orthodoxy: conveying the Truth of Christ in 2011 and unto ages of ages !

## Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland

NEWSLETTER 173

FEBRUARY 2011



### WEEKDAY HOLY LITURGY 9.30 AM

Wednesday 2 February

THE MEETING OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE

Tuesday 8 February

GREAT MARTYR THEODORE STRATELATES

Thursday 24 February

FIRST AND SECOND FINDING OF THE HEAD

OF ST JOHN THE FORERUNNER

## Let's get up and go to church!

For many of us, it's tricky, this getting out of bed, starting up again for the new day.

That's not true for all of course: many of us jump out of bed every morning with great joy and determination, and piously proclaim to all that, 'Morning is the best part of the day!'

Come Sunday morning, too, many like a lie-in. Pull the blankets back up, stretch out, catch up on a bit of shut-eye.

I know therefore that I am really 'on a loser', when I encourage you to come to Mattins before the Holy Liturgy. Some of you will not even bother to read this part of the Newsletter.

'I like my morning in! I need my morning in! Let him be content with getting me (even if late!) to Holy Liturgy.' I hear your very words - and sympathise!

So may I address myself to those of you who do get up more easily - and hope that some of you lie-a-beds may just cock an ear to this and give it a little thought; ask yourself whether it might even be worth pushing yourself spiritually just a little.

Why do I want so much to encourage you in this direction?

It's because I want you to understand that you are really missing out on a huge amount of profound spiritual experience by never attending Mattins.

The Holy Liturgy is certainly the heart of the Orthodox Way, of Orthodox life.

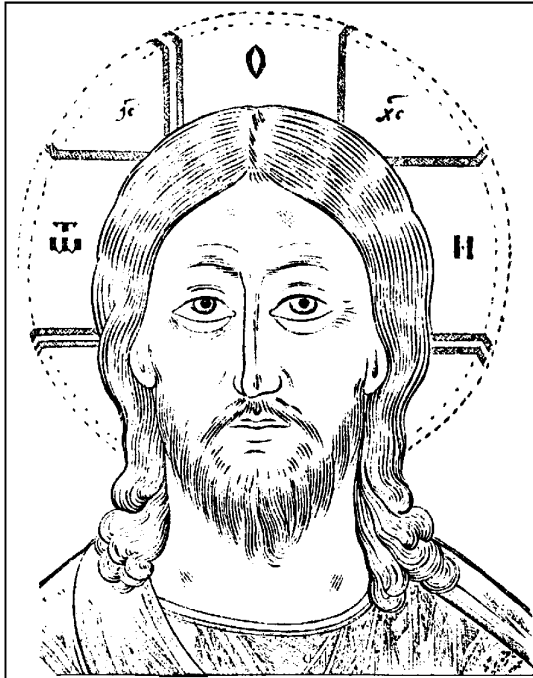
Yet there is a huge richness in the service of Mattins, sung in our tradition before the Liturgy on Sunday morning and supposed to be sung before Liturgy on feasts and even sung every day, though I think there are few parish churches where that is done.

(The Russian tradition, by the way, is to sing it on Saturday evening, combining it with Great Vespers into what they call the All-night Vigil, though it lasts only some 2½ hours in fact.)

Mattins of course means Morning. The Greeks call it *Orthros*, Dawn.

Because it is sung at that sort of time of day (exact time varying a great deal parish to parish) it links the Prayers very much to the rising of the sun.

But more importantly, it links them to that other Rising - the Glorious Rising of Christ after his triumphant Death. Listen carefully to the words of the service for this motif, occurring



again and again through the service, especially on Sundays.

It will help you to catch on to what Mattins is really about: the fact that Christ has met with Death, fought with it, and, by his divine Power, conquered it.

Fundamentally, all Orthodox worship is about that, and prayerful attendance at Mattins helps you to understand what the Christian life is all about. Where it is leading. Why it is going in that direction.

So why not dedicate some time, those who 'rise' more easily, to get to Mattins, the morning, dawn, prayer of the Church, and sample its rich beauty for yourself.

And those who rather like their lie in? - Yes, as you lie there, just cast a thought to what you may be missing while others enrich themselves through it. Perhaps, even, let the Spirit of God slide you off your couch?

Once in church, you will, I think, begin to appreciate the beauty and glory of Orthodox worship at a deeper level.

And God will reward you, and make you a richer person!

Father Alexander

### THE PARISH ANNUAL MEETING

SUNDAY 6 FEBRUARY

immediately after the Holy Liturgy and lasting only about 30 minutes

The accounts for 2010 have to be passed & Church Councillors elected

- PLEASE BE PRESENT -  
IF AT ALL POSSIBLE

### ORTHODOX HOLY LITURGY IN BASILDON

Saturday 5 February  
11.00 am

in Holy Trinity RC Church,  
Wickhay, off Great Knightleys,  
Laindon Link,  
near the Town Centre  
Please advertise this  
as widely as possible

Contact: Paul Brighton-Tross 01-702-305-527  
orthodox.basildon@hotmail.co.uk

### Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius

Tuesday 1 February in St Cedd's RC Hall, Frinton 7.30 pm

PAUL AND ALEXIA LANSLEY:

'Orthodoxy in a Greek village'

- how ordinary Greeks live out their Orthodox faith day-to-day

Tuesday 1 March in St Helen's Chapel 7.30 pm

ARCHDEACON MALCOLM LESTER:

'Learning from the East: an Anglican experience of Orthodoxy'

- drawing on Orthodoxy, remaining a faithful Anglican

Local branch meetings open to all

### 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 Balkerne 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  
CLACTON  
Saturday  
19 February  
10.00 am

## A whole army of new Children of Christ!

In the space of seven days recently I had the privilege of baptising no less than five new members of the Church of God - two adults, two children, and one new-born baby.

**First** - appropriately very close to the celebration of the Baptism of Christ which takes place on the feast of Theophany, 6 January - the KENINGALE family arrived. They live at Bocking near Braintree, close to where I was once Anglican parish priest. We have been getting to know them for a few months, and I was delighted to baptise the father PHILIP, and the children ELIZABETH (Destiny), and RICHARD (River).

They have joined the mother of the family CHRISTINE and the older daughter NICOLE (Paige) in the Orthodox faith. Thus they now form a family united not only in their natural bond and love for each other, but also in their holy faith. Philip and Christine had a civil marriage many years ago, but now, on Bright Saturday, they will have a Church marriage here in St Helen's. What a blessing for them!

The **second** Baptism service is rather complicated. JONATHAN HAXELL married his Greek wife CHRISTINA last year in a civil ceremony. They are in a university in Saudi Arabia, but their base here is in Frinton where Jonathan's parents live - his father, a retired Baptist minister, generously supported him in his request for Baptism. It all had to be done while the couple were on a short holiday in Britain.

After necessarily only a few days of preparation, but conscious of his upbringing in a Christian family, I baptised Jonathan, by his second name MARK, on the Thursday, with his wife and parents and some friends present,

and gave him his first Communion the following Sunday. Mark and Christina have since returned to Saudi, and will have a Church marriage in Athens in the summer. We hope to see them here from time to time.

The **third** Baptism service was at once more urgent and less spectacular. I was called to baptise LUKA, the three-week-old son of GIORGI (Jordan) and NINO NYE in Ipswich Hospital, where in fact Giorgi is a doctor. There were fears of meningitis, but, we thank God, this has been discounted. The Baptism of course was given in an extremely simplified, basic, form lasting just a few minutes. Luka will go to Georgia for the completion of the prayers and ceremonies of Baptism in the summer.

So it was a busy week, but, oh! so worthwhile, welcoming into the Holy Church of God these new Sons of Christ, our Brothers and Sisters in the Faith.

God bless them all, each one! Forward, Soldiers of Christ! Enter into the Kingdom! Enter into the joy of your Lord!



## The Meeting of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Temple

This feast falls on 2 February, exactly forty days after the feast of the Nativity. On this day (as we read in St Luke's Gospel 2.22-38) Joseph and Mary brought Jesus Christ into the Temple, to be met by the old priest *Simeon the God-receiver* and old *Anna the Prophetess*.

Simeon and Anna both realised in their hearts with huge joy that this new-born Child was the One they had been awaiting as the answer to the problems of a sad world.

They had been praying and praying, and now - not with flourish and trumpets, as you might expect, but in the humility and quiet joy of a young wife and an elderly husband with their little Child, with the humility of God - the hopes of those in the Temple are fulfilled.

It was not obvious to the world around that here in the Child was the Lord God himself, entering the Temple dedicated to him. But he was claiming it as his own. He was staking out his own.

May Christ enter again our soul and body and claim it as his own, where he enters in our Baptism and in every Holy Communion.

## Here and There

**ALEX HAIG** returned to Colchester for Christmas and was presented with tokens to the value of £70, in thanks for his service of our Parish over the last fifteen years. He writes:

*Thank you to all who donated towards a gift to me: I was able to add two volumes of Fr Zacharius' books as well as a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans and a Greek-English New Testament to our library.*

*Whilst we were both sad to leave the Parish, we look forward to being able to join you on occasion. I ask your prayers for Mihaela and me.*

**TWO PEOPLE** not in church recently are DOROTHY TANNER and JEWELS JOHNSON. Unfortunately, both are unwell and unable to attend, but they are clearly looking forward to being back with us before long. Dorothy, partly defeated by the bad weather, received Holy Communion at home recently. Jewels is keen for us to know she is still asking to be received into

the Church by Holy Baptism. That wonderful occasion will take place, we hope, in the not too distant future.

**HOLY CHALICE:** We are grateful to ANDREAS and LYDIA MORAN for the generous gift of a new Chalice, which Lydia brought with her from Moscow after Christmas. They have given it in memory of her Grandmother, ALEXANDRA STEPANOVA. We have long needed a Chalice, as that used at St Helen's is now rather old and worn—it was old and redundant in another parish before it was passed on to us, soon after we started in 1996. The new one is nicely marked with the icons of Christ, the Mother of God, St John, and the four Evangelists. The wording in Slavonic is *Receive ye the Body of Christ*.

**JOHN (IAN) LAWRENCE** has qualified as an Army Cadet, passing out at the Camp weekend marking the end of his basic training period. RUTH, his sister, has joined the Air Cadets and we look forward to her qualifying shortly. Both Cadet forces meet in the Garrison area on Abbey Field.



## With the help of God

There is no doubt whatever that an Orthodox Christian must believe in God's power, and in His miracles. Such phraseology as "Who knows?" is completely inappropriate in our Faith, because God's power is unlimited and unending. It is the free will of a devoted Orthodox, like the Fathers and the Saints, never to doubt the event of a true miracle. Anyone choosing to disbelieve in miracles is denying the almighty power of the Lord - even weakening it. (See St Mark 6.5-6.)

This little event happened to my Grandfather: One year, 'experts' proclaimed that the *dakos*, a deadly plant disease, would penetrate the vineyards and destroy them. My Grandfather Constantine went with his helpers on St Tryphon's Day, 1 February, and spent all the morning sprinkling Holy Water over his thousands of vines. It was an

enormous vineyard.

The neighbouring farmers said to him "What on earth are you doing, Constantine, with your men?" "We are simply sprinkling Holy Water, to stop the destruction with the help of God." By this time a crowd had gathered, and as he repeated his statement their loud laughter echoed round the mountainside, so much that the birds took flight. "You don't think that is going to stop the *dakos* destroying your vines, do you?" More laughter.

The weeks went by, and leaves appeared on the grapevines. Then the day of destruction arrived. All the neighbours' vineyards were destroyed, completely rotted. My Grandfather's were blossoming fully. All the farmers went to his home and apologised. They swore that in future they too would sprinkle Holy Water.

Alexia Zangli Lansley

## FEBRUARY DAYS

Tue 1	S Bridget, Abbess of Kildare
Wed 2	<b>Meeting of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple</b>
Thu 3	Righteous Simeon the God-receiver and Anna the Prophetess, S Nicholas, Archbishop of Japan
Sun 6	<b>Sunday of the Canaanite Woman, S Photios, Patriarch of Constantinople</b>
Mon 7	S Richard of the West Saxons
Tue 8	Great Martyr Theodore Stratelates
Thu 10	Hieromartyr Charalambos, Bishop of Magnesia
Fri 11	S Caedmon of Whitby
Sat 12	New Martyr Kristo the Gardener
Sun 13	<b>Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia</b>
Tue 15	S Oswy, King of Northumbria
Thu 17	S Finan, Bishop and Abbot of Lindisfame
Fri 18	S Leo the Great, Pope of Rome, S Colman, Bishop of Lindisfame
Sun 20	<b>Sunday of the Prodigal Son</b>
Mon 21	S Eustathius, Archbishop of Antioch
Wed 23	Hieromartyr Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna
Thu 24	First and Second Finding of the Head of S John S Cumein, Abbot of Iona
Fri 25	S Ethelbert, King of Kent
Sat 26	Memorial Saturday
Sun 27	<b>Sunday of Meatfare, Sunday of the Last Judgment, S Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn</b>
Mon 28	S John Cassian the Roman, S Oswald, Archbishop of York

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