

+++ Holy Orthodoxy: the ancient Faith for ever new +++

Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland
NEWSLETTER 183 FEBRUARY 2012



WEEKDAY LITURGIES AT ST HELEN'S
Thursday 2 February
MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE
9.30 am Holy Liturgy
Wednesday 29 February
FIRST WEDNESDAY OF LENT
6.00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified

It is time for us to fast....

There is a time to feast and a time to fast. The Holy Orthodox Church takes more seriously than many Christian bodies the need to go in for feasting - and for fasting.

But neither feasting nor fasting should be taken to excess. We do not deliberately eat far too much and drink too much on the feasts. Nor should we tax ourselves, or especially others, too extravagantly on the fasts. "All things in moderation."

Some Orthodox people are certainly very slack about keeping the fasts of the Church. Then there are also some who are over-zealous in keeping the fasts, sometimes in inflicting them overmuch on others.

You will find that for us Orthodox the fast rules have the nature of guides rather than rigid and inflexible chains.

We begin our approach before the actual start of the Great Fast (in the West called Lent, Spring).

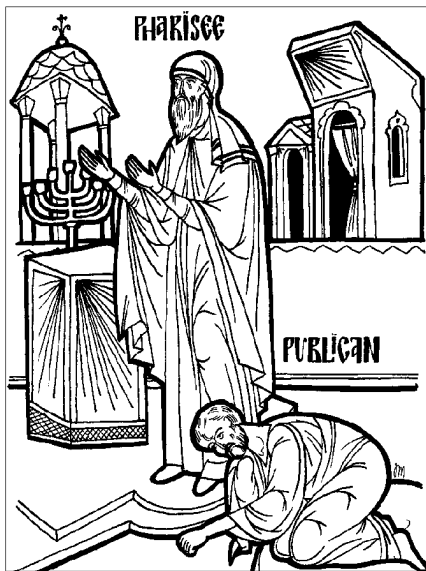
Holy Pascha this year is on 15 April, a week after western Easter. The last day we eat meat until Pascha is Meatfare Sunday, 19 Feb. Each day following we may have cheese, butter, milk, and may drink alcohol and use oil.

The last day we have those things is 26 Feb, Cheesefare Sunday. On that day we have Forgiveness Vespers, forgiving each other before we seek the forgiveness of God.

On Monday 27 Feb begins the full fast, the Great Fast of the year. The First Day of Lent is always a Monday, and the Greeks call it Clean Monday, and use it to spring-clean their house. People try to fast more seriously in the first week (and again in Holy Week).

A leaflet with a breakdown of how the weeks of the Great Fast work out will be available in church. Take one and read it.

Try to make the Great Fast a Good Fast. Talk about it at home in an Orthodox family. Don't talk about it so much



THE SUNDAY OF THE PHARISEE & PUBLICAN, 5 February, teaches me, "I must repent of my own sins, and leave others to the Lord."

in an non-Orthodox situation - in such a family do the best you can without inflicting our beliefs and customs on others. Or, in such a workplace, fast as you can without drawing attention to yourself: it is nothing to do with others.

Above all - with family, friends or colleagues - do not be terribly pious and self-righteous about it.

Come to that, do not be too serious about it within yourself. The Great Fast is a time of joy. So enjoy it.

When you fast, said the Lord (Matt. 6.17), anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in a secret place. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

God bless you: have a good Lent!

Father Alexander

The Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete

The well-known and much-loved Great Canon has never been served in this Parish (or almost never). But this year we will have it during the traditional First Week of Lent—on the Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday of the week at 7.00 pm. It is a very appropriate devotion leading us to a greater awareness of our sinfulness and of our need for true penitence for our sins. Do try to come, and learn of the beautiful and moving nature of penitence.

The programme for Cheesefare Sunday and the First Week is therefore as follows:

- Sun 26 Feb 10.30 am Holy Liturgy & Forgiveness Vespers
- Mon 27 Feb 7.00 pm Great Canon
- Tue 28 Feb 7.00 pm Great Canon
- Wed 29 Feb 6.00 pm Presanctified Liturgy
- Thu 1 Mar 7.00 pm Great Canon
- Fri 2 Mar 7.00 pm Akathist of the Holy Theotokos
- Sat 3 Mar 4.30 pm Great Vespers
- Sun 4 Mar 10.30 am Holy Liturgy

THE AKATHIST will be on the first five Fridays at 7.00 pm.

CONFESSIONS are heard after Vespers on Saturdays (about 5.00 pm) or by arrangement.

Fellowship of St Alban & St Sergius

Tuesday 7 February 7.30 pm,

at St Cedd's RC Hall, Frinton-on-sea

Rev Dr John Turner: A Glimpse of Georgia

The meeting is open to all: non-members welcome

The subsequent meeting will be on Tuesday 6 March in St Helen's Chapel, with the speaker Fr Michael Rear, a Catholic Priest, formerly Anglican Vicar of Walsingham.

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: parishpriest@orthodoxcolchester.org.uk
Rdr Andreas Moran, 6 Woodlands, Welshwood Park CO4 3JA Tel: 01-206-865-697

The Parish of St Helen is Registered Charity No. 1134418

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

Churchwardens: David Davies 01-473-745-167 Dusan Radunovic 01-206-710-073

At St James Anglican Church, Beatrice Rd, Clacton-on-sea CC15 1LE

Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday 10.00 am (Clacton Community)

At St Agnes Chapel, 18 St Agnes Road, Noak Hill, Billericay, CM12 9UR

Divine Liturgy: usually first Saturday 10.30 am (Basildon Community)

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

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

HOLY LITURGY

BASILDON
Sat 4 Feb
11.00 am

UNIVERSITY
Sat 11 Feb
10.00 am

CLACTON
Sat 18 Feb
10.00 am

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday 5 February
after Holy Liturgy

The Holy Liturgy will start in good time and finish a little early. The Meeting will follow immediately and be no more than 1/2 hour.

Please arrange to stay for the meeting

Here and There

GREEK LANGUAGE SCHOOL: You and your children can learn Greek at classes at St Barbara's Greek Church in Southend. This may be useful to our Basildon area people. For details:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Barbaras-Greek-School-Westcliff-on-Sea-on-Sea-Essex/263450027053105>

BASILDON: All services in 2012 are planned to take place in St Agnes' Chapel, situated in the tranquil garden behind the HARRISON home, 18 St Agnes Drive, a turning off the bottom of Noak Hill, the big road running from Laindon up towards Billericay. PAUL BRIGHTON-CROSS will continue to look for a permanent home, but this will be a nice spot for the moment. A much fuller round of services will be possible, around the monthly Holy Liturgy on the first Saturday of the month. Ask Paul for details (see front page).

BISHOP'S VISIT: We expect there to be a visit soon to the Parish, not by HE the Archbishop, but by newly-consecrated HG Bishop EPHRAIM. But we do not yet know when it may be, so please watch out for notice of that occasion and be present in church. On that occasion I will ask him to tonsure **two Readers for the Parish**, though I'm afraid neither candidate will serve at St Helen's very much: PAUL BRIGHTON-CROSS will serve mostly at Basildon, and ALEX HAIG will serve mostly at a new parish in Winchester.

BARKING: The Third Annual Orthodox Pilgrimage in honour of the Saints of Barking in East London will take place on Saturday 12 May. We hope that we may have a Bishop to lead us, and other plans are in hand. Put it in your diary, please.



The Meeting in the Temple...

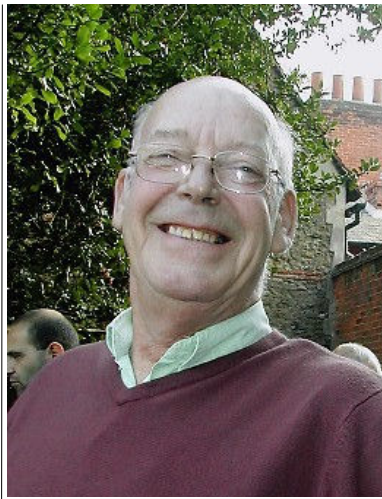
...recalls when the Theotokos and Joseph bring the 40 day-old Jesus to Priest Simeon 'the God-receiver', who recognises the Child as the Christ of God, the fulfilment of the hopes and desires of the Israelite people. He recites the Song of Simeon, the hymn we often call by the Latin name *Nunc Dimittis*.

Righteous Anna comes along and also realises who the Child is. She goes off and tells anyone who will listen what she has seen and understood deep in her heart.

Outwardly, the reason for their coming to the Temple is to keep the Law of Moses by offering a sacrifice to redeem the Child. But Christ of course needs no redemption, being the Son of God and sinless.

From the point of view of the Church, he is coming as God to the Temple of God to claim what is his own.

Among all the hundreds of people who must have been milling around, only these two old and frail people recognise the Truth of God in Jesus Christ.



The People Column

PHILIPPOS BOUMBOUROU - from Cyprus, but a long-term resident in Britain - moved with his wife to Clacton a few years ago to be near two of his daughters. He died in Clacton hospital just before Christmas, and his funeral was as the old year ended. I will remember him in particular for his last word before he died: before I gave him the Holy Gifts and anointed him, I read the Creed, and at the end he said, in a very firm voice, *Pistevo (I believe)*, a real acclamation! I found it very moving. Apparently he said little or nothing afterwards, but there on his dying lips was a word of pure faith in Christ our God. Our sympathy to his wife and family. Eternal memory!

DR JOHN TURNER: Fr John, the Frinton Anglican priest well-known to us, has been awarded the degree of Bachelor of Divinity by the University of Cambridge for his work on the ordination of women and on the Letters of St Simeon the New Theologian. Our congratulations to him! His translation of the Letters with scholarly notes can be borrowed from our Lending Library.

KYRANNA ISACKE, a former member of our community, and her husband STEPHEN have lived in Cambridge for several years, but are moving back to Essex. They are returning to Great Bardfield, between Braintree and Saffron Walden. They tell us they have enjoyed living in the city, but yearn for the greater peace of the country. Many years!

A Word from the Fathers

This food is called by us the Eucharist, and it is not lawful for any man to partake of it but he who believes our teaching to be true, and has been washed with the washing which is for the forgiveness of sins and unto a new birth, and is so living as Christ commanded.

St. Justin Martyr (c.100-165)

Memorial to Dennis Hindle

Dennis came to love Christ and his Church, and its services (in spite of being very deaf): I baptised him in 2000. He was our senior Altar Server, and our handyman - to the extent that, with some help, he prepared everything in St Helen's when we moved in (2000), notably the woodwork. He was much loved by all our members.

Nearly three years ago sadly he died, and I have long wanted some gift in the church that we could say we all bought in his memory.

Now the opportunity occurs in a set of purple Priest's vestments for Lent - ANDREAS and LYDIA MORAN kindly brought them from Moscow after Christmas. They cost £250.

I will bless them on Sunday 5 February, so that brother-in-law CHRIS DE CARLO from Australia can be present, with BERTHA and the rest of the family.

Would you like to make a contribution in his memory? Gifts should be given to Khouria HILARY or me as soon as possible.

Also in memory of Dennis, Bertha has paid for our neighbour CALVIN BUTTOW to paint the interior of the Porch. We are very grateful indeed.

Read your St Helen's Newsletter on line?

If you prefer to receive this *Newsletter* by post, 'hard copy' as they say, please just ignore this: I prefer it that way myself, I must admit. Picking it up and reading it gently appeals to me much more than reading it on the screen. Perhaps there is an element of age beginning to determine my preferences!

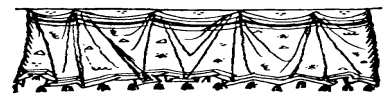
But if you are happy to receive it by email, to read it on line or to print off your own copy to read, then you can save the Parish a great deal of money. That will be especially true when the postage goes up in April, for the present 36p to, I think, 58p!

Just email me parishpriest@orthodoxcolchester.org.uk: Send Newsletter by post. I will put you on that list and you will be told every month how to get the Newsletter on line at one click of the mouse.

I am very grateful to those who already have it by email. Of course we are always grateful for stamps towards postage, for those who want it that way.

But please do not worry about the matter. Above all we wish to reach out to as many people as possible.

We regard this *Newsletter* as part of our mission, and are glad to send it to you.



FEBRUARY DAYS

Wed 1	S Bridget of Kildare
Thu 2	Meeting of Our Lord in the Temple
Fri 3	S Simeon the God-receiver & S Anna, Prophetess S Nicholas of Japan
Sun 5	Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee, S Agatha
Mon 6	S Photios, Patriarch of Constantinople
Tue 7	S Richard, King of the West Saxons
Wed 8	Great Martyr Theodore Stratelates
Fri 10	Hieromartyr Charalambos, Bishop of Magnesia
Sun 12	Sunday of the Prodigal Son, New Martyrs & Confessors of Russia
Fri 17	S Finan, Bishop of Lindisfarne
Sat 18	Memorial Saturday
Sun 19	Sunday of Meatfare, of the Last Judgment
Thu 23	Hieromartyr Polycarp of Smyrna, S Milburga
Fri 24	First & 2nd Finding of the Head of S John
Sat 25	Commemoration of All Monks & Nuns
Sun 26	Sunday of Cheesefare
Mon 27	First Day of Lent, S Raphael Hawaweeny
Wed 29	S John Cassian the Roman, S Oswald of York

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