

**Orthodox Parish of
St Helen of Colchester**
Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland
NEWSLETTER 187



Holy Liturgy in Colchester, 9.30 am

Wednesday 9 May Mid-feast of Pentecost
Thursday 24 May ASCENSION DAY



**THIRD ANNUAL ORTHODOX
PILGRIMAGE TO THE
SAINTS OF BARKING**

In Barking Abbey ruins,
beside St Margaret's Parish Church IG11 8AS

SATURDAY 12 MAY

12.00 Service to the Saints & Sprinkling
1.00 Lunch (bring a Picnic)
2.00 Talk
3.00 Great Vespers & Anointing
3.30 Tea (provided) and depart

- Bus from **Colchester** 10.00 am, picking up at **Basildon** train station.
- A walking/River Thames boat/train group will leave **St Paul's Cathedral** at 8.00 am

Do sign up and come.

Barking is in East London, some 8 miles this side (east) of the City. Orthodox Saints there, mainly in the 7th century, included SS Erkenwald, Ethelburga, and Hildelitha.

Arranged by St Helen's and St Botolph's Orthodox Parishes
Details of the St Paul's group from Margaret Haig, at BarkingOrthodoxPilgrimage@yahoo.co.uk

His Eminence blesses Colchester

This Parish has certainly been blessed by the second official visit of our Father and Metropolitan His Eminence Archbishop John of Europe.

We had a beautiful Holy Week and Pascha in the wider, though bitterly cold, spaces of St Martin's Church. Then on Bright Wednesday the Archbishop came to preside at Mattins and to serve the Holy Liturgy in this wonderful church.

He was accompanied by Deacon Parthenios. A good number of our friends attended to help us along, and we much appreciated their presence. Among them were Fr Anthony Bardsley (Mettingham, Suffolk), Frs Michael Stokes and Michael Rear (RC), Adn Malcolm Lesiter, Cty Cllr Therese Higgins, and Srs Anastasia and Theodosia from the Monastery, the latter of whom translated into English the Arabic used by the Archbishop when English failed him.

Apologies received included Metropolitan Kallistos, Frs Andrew Phillips (St John's), Raphael Armour (Cambridge), and Alexander Tefft (St Botolph's), Dn Andrew Bond (Mettingham), and Cllr Henry Spyvee.

The Archbishop tonsured as Readers **Paul Brighton-Cross** (mainly for our Mission at Basildon) and **Alex Haig** (mainly for a parish at Winchester due to open shortly). Our congratulations to them: both are candidates for the Diaconate and Priesthood.

It was altogether a lovely occasion, and the fact that the service was in St Martin's seemed to speak of hope and blessing. It was sad that more of our own people could not be present, but it was understandably difficult being on a working day.

The food served in the north aisle afterwards was excellent and ample. Our thanks to Helen Lawrence and Sylvia Lefley, who had charge of it, and to all who contributed. There were several Paschal specialities from different countries and they all added to the joy of the occasion.

Margaret Haig was in charge of the music (as she was through Holy Week and Pascha), and it was all of a high standard.

I want to thank all who contributed in their various ways to the success of our fortnight at St Martin's, from removers and carpet-layers to cleaners, caterers and flower-arrangers, and including a number of students, who worked hard for us.

Now, God bless you all. May the light of our peace-creating festivals of the holy season and the strengthening visit of our beloved Archbishop bring us peace and joy.
Father Alexander
Christ is risen!



Our bid for St Martin's fails

To our enormous sorrow and surprise our recent visit to the Churches Conservation Trust opened with their refusing our offer for St Martin's Church.

Foolishly perhaps, we had assumed we were called

there because they would accept our bid or something near it.

That was far from the what happened. We quickly discovered they wanted a minimum of over three times the amount *Continued over page*

HOLY LITURGY
BASILDON
Saturday
5 May
11.00 am
CLACTON
Saturday
19 May
10.00 am

SS CONSTANTINE & HELEN, EQUALS TO THE APOSTLES

We shall keep our Parish Feast a day early, on
SUNDAY 20 MAY

9.45 am Mattins **10.30 am** Holy Liturgy
12.30 pm Parish Lunch (bring and share)

2.00 pm approximately

Veneration of Holy Relic of St Helen, Patron of our Parish

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

Rdr Alexander Haig Jnr, detached service in Winchester parish

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)
Rdr 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



The bier to contain the Epitaphion was as beautifully decorated this year as ever, at St Martin's. Here we see Helen, Joanna, and Ruth Lawrence and Khouria Hilary, after they had completed their morning's work with Margaret Haig.

St Martin's continued from page 1
we felt we could pay per year, £3,000.

In addition to the rent, we would have of course to pay for heating and lighting, cleaning etc, and the costs of running the Parish we already incur.

Plus we would have to pay for the installation of the heating and lighting systems, hearing aid system, and CCTV.

Plus the cost of fitting out the building for Orthodox worship.

Plus the cost of insurance.

Plus, plus, plus.....

We failed to understand how they could expect us to find the £10,000 minimum they were asking for annual rent.

Of course, we cannot say we have not been here before, but it was a great disappointment. We have certainly had the support of a large group of people.

The matter will now be debated at the Parish Council meeting early in May.

The Council may well decide that we had stated that this was our final bid, and that we must keep to it.

Certainly many of us are tired to the nth degree of aborted negotiations with the

Trust.

What a disappointment for us and all our Parish, which would have so benefitted from St Martin's Church!

But also, what a disappointment for St Martin's Church, which would have so benefitted from the constant worship and atmosphere of the life of the Orthodox Parish!

Alas for us!

Alas for St Martin's!

We know how it felt to use it for its proper consecrated purpose of worship over this Holy Week and Pascha, how we 'fitted' that beautiful and holy temple. We experienced the great crowd of about 240 people who came to worship at at our Easter night service.

It remains to be seen what the Council will decide to do, but it will not be an easy decision. It will be a sad, and soul-stretching occasion if we decide that we cannot proceed with the matter, but it may well be a necessary heart-break.

May whatever is decided be to the greater glory of God and the good of his Holy Church and people.

God help us. St Martin the Merciful, Bishop of Tours, and St Helen, Equal-to-the-Apostles, pray to God for us!

Here and There

PHOTOS TO VIEW: The Archbishop's visits to Colchester and the other parishes he has been in Britain are splendidly recorded on the website of the Antiochian Archdiocese of Europe, and I encourage you to have a look, if you have access to the internet:

<http://www.antiocheurope.org/en/news/details/512/His-Eminence-the-metropolitan-John-Yazigi-visits-our-Parish-in-Colchester%2C-UK> Others also have helped with photos.

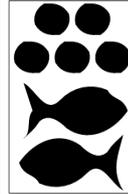
GREETINGS FROM THE ANGLICAN BISHOP: It was good to hear from the Bishop of Colchester, apologising for not to having been able to attend. He writes: *I trust that the celebration on Bright Wednesday in the presence of your Archbishop was a blessed and inspiring occasion for you all. Please if appropriate pass on my warm (if belated!) greetings to members of your parish and an assurance of my prayers that God will continue to bless your life together.*

THE COST OF POSTAGE: It will be a considerable help to the Parish if you can receive the *Newsletter* each month by email. We realise some people much prefer to have 'hard copy' in their hands and need it by post. However, if you are willing to view it on line, please tell us: parishpriest@orthodoxcolchester.org.uk.

JUNE PILGRIMAGE: On Saturday 30 June there will be a Pilgrimage to Iken, where the great St Botolph founded his Monastery in the seventh century. The village is near the A12 in mid-Suffolk, and the isolated church is delightful, set apart on a promontory above the river. The pilgrimage is being organised by the Mettingham parish. Do come.

The People Column

FR RAYMOND SMITH is an Antiochian Priest in Queensland, Australia. We have been in contact with him since the beginning of our Parish's history, and it was a pleasure at last to meet him and Khouria Alison when they popped in recently, on a whirlwind tour of Britain. We just had time to give them a bite to eat, walk past the Castle, view the High Street and St Helen on the Town Hall, and visit the Chapel. Then they sped off to Jean Burland at St Fursey's in Norfolk (she had visited them in Australia) and the remainder of their two-month non-stop visit to Britain, Paris and St Petersburg. Fr Raymond has a parish dedicated to St Barnabas in the Gold Coast, north of Brisbane, and converted to Orthodoxy from Anglicanism a year or two before we did. He, aged over 80, leaves me breathless! Many years, Father!



MAY DAYS

Wed 2	S Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria S Boris, Prince of Bulgaria
Fri 4	Virgin-Martyr Pelagia of Tarsus, S Monica, mother of Bd Augustine of Hippo
Sat 5	Gt Martyr Irene of Thessalonica, New Martyr Ephraim the Newly-Revealed
Sun 6	Pascha 4, the Paralyse Man, S Edbert, Bishop of Lindisfame
Mon 7	S John of Beverley, Bishop of York
Tue 8	H Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian
Wed 9	Mid-feast of Pentecost H Martyr Christopher of Lycia
Thu 10	H Apostle Simon Zelotes, Apostle of Britain
Fri 11	H Apostles to the Slavs Cyril & Methodius
Sat 12	S Aethelheard of Louth, Archbishop of Canterbury
Sun 13	Pascha 5, the Samaritan Woman
Tue 15	S Pachomius the Great
Sat 19	S Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, S Alcuin of York
Sun 20	Pascha 6, SS CONSTANTINE & HELEN, EQUALS TO THE APOSTLES (transferred from tomorrow)
Thu 24	ASCENSION OF OUR LORD & SAVIOUR CHRIST
Fri 25	Third Finding of Head of S John the Baptist, S Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne
Sat 26	S Augustine, Archbishop of Canterbury
Sun 27	Pascha 7, Fathers of the First Council, S Bede the Venerable

A fuller list of the month's Feasts and Fasts is available in church

A Word from the Fathers: The Ascension of Christ into heaven

Today Jesus Christ our Lord went up to heaven: let our hearts go with him. ...Christ is now raised above the heavens; but he still experiences on earth whatever sufferings we his members feel. ...

Why then do we not exert ourselves on earth so as to be happy with him already in heaven, through the faith, hope, and charity which unite us with him?

Christ, while in heaven, is also with us; and we, while on earth, are also with him. He is with us in his Godhead and his power and his

love; and we, though we cannot be with him in Godhead as he is with us, can be with him in our love, our love for him.

He did not leave heaven when he came down to us from heaven; and he did not leave us when he ascended to heaven again.

His own words show that he was in heaven while he was here: 'No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven.'

*Blessed Augustine,
Bishop of Hippo, North Africa (+430)*