

**Orthodox Parish of
St Helen of Colchester**
Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland
NEWSLETTER 190 **SEPTEMBER 2012**



O Cross of Christ, my Hope and my Salvation

The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is one of the great feasts of the Church. It falls on 14 September, and is highly unusual in having a 'Sunday before' and a 'Sunday after', to emphasise its importance.

On the 'Sunday after' - 16 September - we shall have the distinctive ceremony of the *Elevation of the Cross* at the end of the Holy Liturgy.

The Cross is five times slowly lowered and slowly lifted up. It displays in dramatic form that by his apparent degradation, in *humbly accepting* the disgrace, Christ was in fact *glorified*.

So God allows himself to be disgraced in order to be glorified.

What a reversal of the rules of this world! What lessons there are there in that ceremony for you and me! *By accepting our crosses, we ourselves can be glorified.*

Father Alexander



SERVICES IN ST HELEN'S CHAPEL

Sunday 2 September, Pentecost 13
10.30 am Holy Liturgy
Sunday 9 September, Sunday before Holy Cross
10.30 am Hours & Typica
Friday 14 September, Exaltation of the Holy Cross
9.30 am Holy Liturgy
Sunday 16 September, Sunday after Holy Cross
10.30 am Holy Liturgy & Elevation of the Cross
Wednesday 19 September, St Theodore of Tarsus,
Archbishop of Canterbury, Patron of our Deanery
9.30 am Holy Liturgy
Sunday 23 September, Pentecost 13,
Conception of St John the Forerunner & Baptist
10.30 am Holy Liturgy
Sunday 30 September, Pentecost 17
10.30 am Hours & Typica

UNDERSTANDING AND HELPING

The present tragic situation in the 'home' country of our Antiochian Church is worrying.

Few in the West seem to understand what is likely to happen if and when President Assad's regime falls. Extreme Islamists may well take control and then the plight of Christians could become very serious.

Some background papers to help understand the position of Christians there (and, indeed, throughout the Middle East) have been distributed in church.

Gifts to aid people in need have been sent to Damascus in the name of the Deanery in Britain and Ireland. £7,500 was given, including £100 from this Parish. The aid will be distributed without religious discrimination.

Sadly, few in our Parish made donations: a special thank-you to those who did. The other requirement at the present time is prayer, informed prayer, for peace.

Our 'hols' in the North

Khouria Hilary and I thought we were in the deepest North of England, but I suspect Caroline and Chris from Newcastle, with their two little lads, thought they were well into the South!

We had a real family holiday in Yorkshire to celebrate Hilary's 'special' birthday. Margaret was there, and Alex and Ela. We rented a well-appointed farm cottage right against the extraordinarily beautiful North York Moors.

I won't bore you with details, but must mention a number of mini-pilgrimages that we managed to fit in. We got on the splendid steam railway that chugs through the Moors to Whitby, home of one of the early English Monasteries. St Hilda the great Abbess held sway there, training men we revere as Saints. There was held one of the first English synods, which brought the English and the Celts together (it fixed the date of Easter for Britain).

Nearby we prayed at the grave of the newly-departed Orthodox Mother Thekla. She wrote books, inspired the composer Sir John Tavener, took a sustained interest in our parish, and was at the last generously cared for by the celebrated Anglican Whitby Sisters. She rests in their graveyard with her Sisters from the Monastery of the Assumption.

At remote Lassingham we prayed in the crypt where St Cedd, Apostle of Essex, was buried. ...York Cathedral, like many, sadly charges heavily to enter, so we did not really go in. But we were reminded of some of the Saints associated with it - St Constantine (first proclaimed Emperor of Rome there in 306), St Paulinus, St John of Beverley, St Chad, St Wilfred.... At York St John's University we had the joy of joining Father Aethelwine and his Antiochian parish of St Constantine for the Sunday Holy Liturgy.

Two other churches were special: Pickering (splendid mediaeval frescoes showing that our ancient English churches did not always look bare and empty); and Helmsley (19th century frescoes, not so Orthodox in feel but very fine).

I must also mention the Coptic Monastery, set in a remote valley. Alex and I were warmly received by the Bishop and Fathers and attended Vespers complete with triangle and cymbals.

It was, in *many* ways, a good holiday, full of memorable occasions.

International Anglican-Orthodox Dialogues resume

Official discussion between Orthodox and Anglicans takes place 3-10 Sept. I am again privileged to represent the Church of Antioch. This year it's in England, Chester, with continuing debate on *Christian Anthropology* - questions relating to *human nature*: it can involve many different matters. Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia is Orthodox Chairman, and there will be representatives of all or most of the Orthodox Churches.

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

17 Maidenburgh Street, Colchester CO1 1UB

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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 CV15 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

HOLY LITURGY

BASILDON
Saturday
1 September
10.30 am

CLACTON
15 Saturday
September
10.00 am

ST THEODORE OF TARSUS

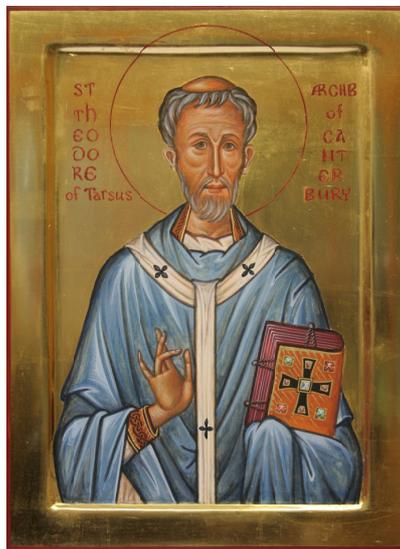
I have known a little about St Theodore since I was a boy—that he was one of the great Archbishops of Canterbury in the early (Orthodox) days of that Metropolitan see, that he came from Tarsus where St Paul had originated centuries before. But I did not know much more than that—but then nobody knew much more than that. He is still unknown in his home country and Church. The first historian of the English, St Bede, did tell us more, but actually nobody knew *very* much more.

Until recent years when there has been a flowering of studies of the Anglo-Saxon Church (7th-11th centuries) and of St Theodore. Much more is now known about him, and all adds to his honour.

It shows he studied at Antioch and Edessa. Either at the conquest of Syria by the Persians (613) or more likely at the conquest by the Arabs (637), he left for Constantinople. Later he moved to Athens, then to Rome, where he became a monk of the Monastery of the then-new Martyr Anastasius the Persian, whose Life he translated into Latin.

Consecrated for Canterbury at the age of 66, he served 22 years, inspiring and reforming the Church in England, teaching in many fields, bringing it together, instilling a sense of unity among all English people, so building this nation.

Much loved and admired, he died 19 September 690 and was buried in St Augustine's Abbey. Like most British Saints his holy relics were tragically destroyed at the Reformation.



A Son of Antioch, who served faithfully here in Britain, the seventh and greatest Archbishop of Saxon times at least until St Dunstan, he is a fitting Patron for our Antiochian Deanery. May he pray to God for us.

The People Column

ROBIN MOUSTAKI-STONE dropped in for coffee in the summer. An early member of this Parish, he and LIA moved some years ago to Nea Makri in Greece, on the coast not far from Athens. It was good to catch up on the news. Their son **ALEXANDROS** lives near them.

MICHAEL and **NICOLLE-SHUNING KAMPOURIDIS** have been at the University in Colchester for a long time - Michael for eight years, Nicole for six. Now, sadly, we are to lose them. Michael PhD has obtained a lectureship at the "Universities of Medway" campus in Chatham, and Nicolle will seek work in that area after completing her PhD here very shortly. We congratulate them, thank them for their contribution to the life of the Parish, wish them well for the future, and hope to see them from time to time.

ATHENA SUMMER CHRISTOU was born on 5 Aug, second daughter to **DANIELLE** and **CHRIS**. Everything is well, we hear. Congratulations to all!

CATALIN and **MARIANA FLOREA** had a civil marriage last year, but wanted the blessing of God and his Church. Having first met in this very church, they were crowned here at St Helen's in July. Many years to them! It was good to have Fr **MIHAI NOVACOVSCI** from the Romanian parish in Birmingham taking part.

DOROTHY TANNER, a member since the very beginning of this Parish, has had to move from Parsley House, sheltered housing in Balcerne Gardens, to Colonia Court, where she can receive the care she now requires. We hope she settles quickly and happily there.

ANTONIA-ALEXANDRA IOANNIDES sadly died the very day of her birth, but in the interval I was able to baptise her, and later buried her wee, wee body in the Cemetery. Our sincere sympathy to her parents **KYRIAKOS** and **MARGO** of Parsons Heath.

TRIANAPHYLIO KING (known as **PHYLLIS**) had been a resident of Clacton for years. She was from Cyprus, and I have known her for some years. Her English husband **LEN** died in 2004. I was glad to be able to take her funeral at Clacton Cemetery in July. Our condolences to her daughter **LILLIE DIGGINS** of Elmstead Market. Memory eternal!

Here and There

THIS NEWSLETTER: I mentioned in the last issue that it was sometimes a bit of a slog to produce this each month (well, yes, *Newsletter* does take a holiday in August!). A non-Orthodox reader has written to encourage us. He says:

Dear Father, Please keep slogging; it is a great, simple and interesting news letter, with just a good blend of news, theology, observance and people.

Do not lose heart, even from a "traditionalist" Roman Catholic like me (a friend of mine, a traddy RC for twenty years is approaching ROCOR for Chrismation).

Thanks for that! This Newsletter is aimed at Orthodox believers, but we are delighted that we have several readers of other denominations or of none, and that they enjoy it too.

NATIONAL HERITAGE DAYS: Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 Sept are National Heritage Days, and Saturday is also Ride & Stride Day (people raise funds by cycling/walking to as many churches as possible). We will certainly be visited by several hundred people going the rounds of interesting Colchester buildings. Unfortunately I shall be away, so will be grateful if any can volunteer to welcome visitors on those two days.

VISITORS FROM "DOWN UNDER": It was good to have Antiochian Priest Fr **RAYMOND SMITH** and Kh **ALLISON** visit from Southport in Queensland, Australia. We have been in touch over the years, and were delighted to

meet for the first time. • A few weeks later we entertained Fr **STANLEY NIELD** and Kh **MARIE** from Wellington Antiochian parish in New Zealand, where he assists his son, Archpriest **IAN**. They were able to come to a Sunday Liturgy, and Father told us a little about Orthodoxy in NZ, which with Australia is under Archbishop Paul, so we are well-known in that Diocese now! It was good to meet all of them and we send greetings to their parishes.

VISITORS FROM "ACROSS THE POND": We were also glad to welcome back to Colchester on a flying visit **KEITH** and **MAXINE WALKER**, who are not Orthodox, but always show keen interest in Orthodoxy. They were both professors in San Diego, California and Keith used to work in collaboration with our University here. Maxine teaches theology. Now they have both retired, and live in Ohio.

A CLERGY MEETING was held in July in the Manchester church. It was interesting to have to go there and return on a Saturday. I discovered it was possible to do it in a day, starting very early and getting back late. It was fun to travel on a leaning train for the first time.

PARISH COUNCIL: There will be a meeting on Sunday 23 September at 1.00 pm. One of the topics to be discussed is the question of St Martin's: the position currently, by the way, is not encouraging (has it ever been? - Yes, there have been several occasions over the years when we have all but got it!).

FELLOWSHIP: The next local St Alban & St Sergius meeting is scheduled for 9 October.

A Word from the Fathers: from an ancient Desert Father

A young abbot was counselled in this way by a holy man:

Today many people wishing for an excuse not to do what God asks of them, find fault with the teaching of the Holy Church, and reject correct Christian belief.

Instead they choose to believe what they wish.

This is akin to a man not wishing to believe that he will die, simply because the notion does not comfort him.

Not only will he fail to prepare for death, as one ought to do, but he will inevitably find himself in the snare of death.

Correct belief is not based on what we wish were true, but on truth itself.

SEPTEMBER DAYS

Sat 1	Church New Year, Day of Prayer for Environment
Sun 2	Pentecost 13
Tue 4	Prophet Moses, Martyr Hermione, daughter of S Philip
Wed 5	Prophet Zacharias & Righteous Elizabeth
Thu 6	Miracle of Archangel Michael at Cenchræ
Sat 8	Nativity of the Theotokos , S Ina King of Wessex
Sun 9	Pentecost 14 , Righteous Joachim & Anna
Tue 11	S Euphrosynus the Cook
Thu 13	Dedication of H Resurrection (Sepulchre) Church
Fri 14	Universal Exaltation of the Precious Cross
Sun 16	Sunday after the Exaltation , Hieromartyr Cyprian S Ninian, Bishop of Whithorn
Mon 17	Martyrs Sophia & her children, Faith, Hope, & Love
Wed 19	S Theodore of Tarsus, Patron of our Deanery
Sun 23	Pentecost 16 , Conception of S John the Forerunner
Mon 24	S Silouan of Athos, Protomartyr Thecla
Tue 25	S Sergius, Abbot & Wonderworker of Radonezh S Coelfrid, Abbot Jarro
Wed 26	H Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian
Fri 28	S Chariton the Hermit, of Palestine
Sun 30	Pentecost 17

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