

**Orthodox Parish of  
St Helen of Colchester**  
*Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland*  
**NEWSLETTER 196**



**MARCH 2013**

**WEEKDAYS AT ST HELEN'S THIS MONTH**

The Great Fast, commonly called Lent, begins Monday 18 March  
**PRE-SANCTIFIED HOLY LITURGY**  
Wednesdays 20, 27 March 9.30 am  
**AKATHIST OF THE MOTHER OF GOD**  
Fridays 22, 29 March 6.00 pm

# Petitioning the Patriarch: a call for a Bishop in Britain



But I could not but be a little sad that we had lost our Archbishop. He is a good, lovely man of prayer, and we have known him for over ten years, four and a half as Metropolitan.

We shall miss him then, but know that he still carries us in his heart. And our loss is the gain of the whole Church of Antioch.

Our Dean was there representing us in Beirut. While there he was also presenting to the new Patriarch and the Holy Synod a request from the clergy to have a Bishop actually living in Britain.

We even petitioned that Fr Philip Hall, Parish Priest in Lincoln, be consecrated to that office - under the new Metropolitan of Europe, whoever that might be.

With some trepidation we await hearing how this was received. But we do believe that is what is needed here.

Please pray that God's will be done.  
**Father Alexander**

**I** watched the (second) enthronement in Beirut of our Archbishop as Patriarch John X of Antioch and All the East on the internet.

Of course, I was proud that this Bishop, now third in the whole Orthodox Church, had served here in our church in Colchester and we had entertained him in our home.

As All Saints, North Benfleet prepares for its inauguration as an Orthodox church, Paul Brighton-Cross sends his last up-date as Reader of this Parish

## Hard-Work and Many Blessings as Basildon gets ready to go

We have been very busy and particularly blessed these past few weeks. Things are moving fast. All Saints is being transformed - through prayer and hard-work - from a cold, unloved, former-Anglican meeting-house, into a genuine Orthodox Temple, a transformation which will be completed and crowned with the blessing and the first Divine Liturgy served here on 2nd March.

The faithful have gathered (often in sub-zero temperatures) on several work-days. All Saints is being tidied and cleaned, cracks filled, churchyard tilled, protestant pews and choir-stalls have been removed. And, most dramatically, Vladut Maiaron has installed our Iconostasis. Our new Holy Table and its altar-cloth are being readied as I type.

Our new Priest, Fr. Alexander Tefft, has visited and is delighted with our new home.

By the Grace of God, our (financially poor) community has been enriched by substantial monetary gifts, from individuals, of £500 and £1250, plus £1000 from St Helen's. And the Lyon family continue to

act as our benefactors and patrons.

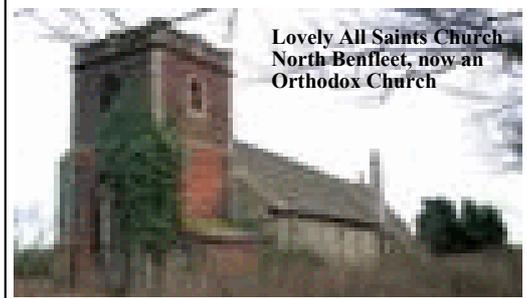
On Sunday 17th February some of us attended the Holy Matrimony of Ioannis and Elena Brydges at St Botolph's. After lunch, in the midst of the celebrations, the newly-weds presented us with a beautiful altar-set - Holy Chalice, Diskos, Spear, Star, Spoon, and a censer complete with supply of incense and carbonaki. This most unexpected gift was a blessing from God and real proof of Christian love and fraternity.

Our prayers are being answered, and we have witnessed with our own eyes God's unchanging love and mercy.

And, very soon, it seems, we may even have Sunday Liturgy! (Watch this space!)

For all these outpourings of love, together with your messages of support and most invaluable prayers, we remain truly grateful.

Glory to God!



Lovely All Saints Church North Benfleet, now an Orthodox Church

## BASILDON ORTHODOX COMMUNITY

*You are cordially invited to the inaugural  
DIVINE LITURGY*

*at*  
**ALL SAINTS ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
North Benfleet Hall Lane (Off Pound Lane)  
Essex SS12 9JR

**Saturday 2nd MARCH 2013 10:30 am**  
*Light refreshments served after the service*  
*Plenty of free car parking*

*Please let Fr Alexander know if you  
plan to attend from Colchester*

*From 1 March Basildon is separated from Colchester  
parish and attached to St Botolph's, City of London*

## Thomas Aquinas: divider or unifier?

The modern Orthodox perception is that thirteenth-century Aquinas, greatly revered in the West, is un-Orthodox. Dr Marcus Plested of the Cambridge Orthodox Institute challenges this view. We have a great chance to hear him and his views here in St Helen's on **Tuesday 5 March** (7.30 pm), when he speaks to the local branch of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. *The meeting is 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: 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*  
*Churchwardens: David Davies 01-473-745-167 Dusan Radunovic 01-206-710-073*

*The Parish of St Helen is Registered Charity No. 1134418*

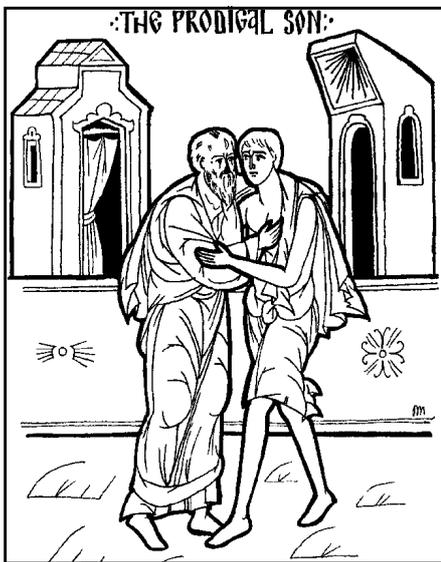
*Parish Website: <http://www.orthodoxcolchester.org.uk>*

*At St James Anglican Church, Beatrice Rd, Clacton-on-sea CV15 1LE*  
Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday 10.00 am (Clacton Community)

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

**HOLY LITURGY**  
**CLACTON**  
**Saturday**  
**16 March**  
**10.00 am**

**+ Holy Pascha (Easter) this year is on 5 May +**



The story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15.11-32) is read three Sundays before the Great Fast begins (3 Mar). It teaches us to repent of our sins and return to God our Father, for we shall be forgiven. On Cheesefare Sunday (17 Mar), the day before the Fast, Forgiveness Vespers teaches us that if we want to be forgiven by God we must also forgive others their sins against us.

## The People Column

**FATHER DON & KHOURIA MAGGIE HOCK** from Omaha, Nebraska, USA, visited us briefly in February. They had heard tell of St Helen's Chapel and came to venerate the Saint's Relic. Maggie has a high-powered position in therapy in the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America, and is presently on loan to the USAF in Britain, Fr Don is in the Diocese of HG Bishop Basil of Wichita—who originally gave us the Relic, and whom we in return remember in our prayers.

**COSTA & MARIA GEORGIADES** with John (Jonathan), now in college, turned up one Sunday recently. It was good to see them. With their other children Tony, Alex, and Christina (Stephanie), they were members of our parish in our early days, but now live in Lincolnshire.

**PETER ACTON** arrived the same day and it was great to see him too. He also was with us in the early days, with his children Simon and Emily. He and Annie now live in Ireland.

**CHARALAMBOS SALATAS** of Clacton received the Holy Gifts at home several times, the last a few days before he died. Sadly he did not receive an Orthodox funeral. We will serve a Trisagion for him on his 40th day Memorial at Clacton, 16 March. A charming old man, he was so glad to have found the Church again. Stelios Nicolaou and Adamos Athanassiou visited him.

## A Word from the Spiritual Fathers: St John of Kronstadt (1829-1908)

I thank my all-holy, all-merciful, and most wise Mother, the Church of God, for solitarily guiding me during this temporal life, and for educating me for heavenly citizenship.

I thank her for all the offices of prayers, for the Divine services, for the sacraments and rites.

I thank her for the fasts so beneficial to me both in spiritual and bodily respects. Through them I am healthy both in spirit and body, calm, vigilant,

and light. Without the fasts I should feel extreme heaviness, which I indeed experienced when not fasting.

I thank my spotless Mother the Church of God for enrapturing me with her heavenly services, transporting my spirit to heaven, enlightening my intellect with heavenly truth, showing me the way to eternal life; for delivering me from the violence and ignominy of the passions, and making my life blessed.

## Here and There

**CALLING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:** Orthodox Youth Camp is a great way to make friends, to learn a lot, and to be an Orthodox believer in a natural way. Every summer there is a highly-enjoyable camp in Shropshire for youngsters aged 9-17—young people over that age are welcome as leaders. This year it is 18-26 August. Parents: please encourage your children to come. They learn so much about the Orthodox faith in an invigorating atmosphere. We help with costs if necessary: please ask. Nobody is prevented from going just because they can't afford it!

Look at [www.govgbcamp.org.uk](http://www.govgbcamp.org.uk).

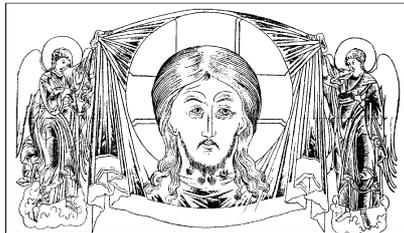
**WANT TO GIVE SOMETHING BACK?** Do you have some spare time and want to give something back to help people affected by cancer? Macmillan in Essex are always looking for new volunteers to help raise more funds for people affected by cancer. We greatly need more volunteers: 0300 1000 200.

- Contributed by Macmillan Cancer Support,

**CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CENTRAL COLCHESTER** has served the town centre well for some years, but is now deemed to have served its purpose: other groups such as 'Seeking God's Blessing' have taken its place. *Churches Together* has now decided to close completely, though I would not be surprised to hear that it is found necessary to resurrect it in a year or two's time! Our thanks to Mary Morris, who has served as our lay representative for some years.

**WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER:** This long-standing institution, on the first Friday in March (1 Mar), will hold its Colchester service in the Castle Methodist Church, just above St Helen's, at 10.15 am. All invited.

**TELEVISION CAMERAS** were at St Helen's recently, filming for a programme on our Saint in the autumn. No doubt it will then be for a few seconds only, but we hope to hear when it will be and to let you know in advance.



## A Look at Lent

The Great Fast is often called Lent in English, meaning Spring. It starts on Monday 18 March - it's always a Monday.

On the previous day, Sunday after Liturgy, we have Forgiveness Vespers, where we ask each other's forgiveness for our sins against each other. This is so we are in right state before, in Lent, we ask God's forgiveness.

There are two distinctive services during the Fast:

- **The Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified.** It consists of Vespers and Communion from the Holy Gifts consecrated the previous Sunday. It is a very beautiful service, with a number of special features. This year we have it on **Wednesdays at 9.30 am.**
- The Akathist. This is a lovely hymn to the Mother of God in four parts, one each week, with the full hymn on the fifth Friday. It will be on **Fridays at 6.00 pm** (not 7.00).

Of course the main feature of Lent is fasting itself and stricter attendance at church. Do your best not to eat dairy products throughout, and no meat or fish (though we may have fish on Annunciation, 25 March).

A separate sheet to guide you on fasting will be available in church. If you have problems of one sort or another about fasting, you should ask your spiritual father for guidance.

*Attend services more frequently if possible. Arrive on time.*

Also available is the Prayer of St Ephraim, an excellent prayer for daily use at home and in church. It helps us in our search for humility before God and others.

It is also good, though no obligation, to do extra spiritual reading. There are numbers of suitable books in the Lending Library in church.

**Have a good Lent!**

## MARCH DAYS

Fri 1	S David, Patron of Wales
Sat 2	S Chad of Lichfield, S Nicholas Planas of Athens
Sun 3	<b>Sunday of the Prodigal Son</b>
Mon 4	S Gerasimus of the Jordan
Wed 6	<b>Discovery of the Precious Cross &amp; Nails by S Helen in Jerusalem</b>
Thu 7	S Paul the Simple, disciple of S Anthony the Great
Fri 8	S Felix, Enlightener of the East Angles
Sat 9	Memorial Saturday, Forty Martyrs of Sebaste
Sun 10	<b>Sunday of Meatfare, Sunday of the Last Judgment</b>
Tue 12	S Gregory the Dialogist (the Great), Pope of Rome S Simeon the New Theologian
Thu 14	S Benedict of Nursia
Fri 15	<b>Apostle Aristobulus, first Bishop in Britain</b>
Sat 16	Commemoration of All Monks & Nuns
Sun 17	<b>Sunday of Cheesefare, Forgiveness Sunday, S Patrick of Armagh, Patron of Ireland</b>
Mon 18	First Day of the Great Fast (Lent), S Edward the Martyr, the King, S Nicholas Velimirovich
Wed 20	S Cuthbert of Lindisfarne, Fathers slain at the Monastery of Mar Saba
Sat 23	Commemoration of S Theodore the Recruit
Sun 24	<b>Lent 1, Sunday of Orthodoxy, Forefast of Annunciation</b>
Mon 25	<b>ANNUNCIATION OF THE HOLY THEOTOKOS</b>
Tue 26	Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel
Sat 30	Memorial Saturday, S Sophronius of Irkutsk
Sun 31	<b>Lent 2, S Gregory Palamas, S Innocent of Moscow, Apostle of America, New Martyr Maria Skobtsova</b>

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