

**Orthodox Parish of
St Helen of Colchester**
Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the UK & Ireland
NEWSLETTER 197



APRIL 2013

The Call to Holiness - a call to you and me

Christ calls us to holiness, we all know that. This is especially true during the period of the Great Fast, in English often called Lent (which really means Spring).

Lent is a good time to try again to practise holiness. It is a permanent call to us, yet we slip away from it so easily. Lent gives the chance to tighten up again, to renew our prayers, to renew our church-going, to renew our whole life in Christ.

One thing to do in Lent is to read more of the lives of the Saints. *Saint* and *holy* mean the same thing—the Greek word *hagios*. The *Saint* is the one who is *holy*. The *Saints* inspire us to follow the same path to *holiness*.

In a sense Saints follow the one path to holiness in Christ. But in another sense they all follow their own individual path to holiness. Every Christian, every human being is unique. Saints come in many different sizes and packages.

Recently we visited our Caroline in Newcastle and her family - as many of you know, grandchildren are a blessing and pleasure.

We made little pilgrimages in honour of two Saints, Bede the Venerable and Oswald the King and Martyr.

St Paul's, Jarrow was Bede's Monastery at the end of the seventh century and the beginning of the eighth. I have written of that before. It is a powerful place, for you worship between the very walls within which Bede himself worshipped. He is now buried in the great Durham Cathedral—sadly the Anglicans don't let you get to the actual relics, but it is wonderful to be close.

St Oswald, whose head is said to be buried with St Bede in Durham, is different from Bede. Bede was a devout monk who hardly strayed from his Monastery. Oswald was a devout king and warrior. We did not get to Durham but we did get to the place where St Oswald had his victory over the British at the lonely spot called Heavenfield, around the famous Roman wall built by Emperor Hadrian.

in a warm car - where pilgrimages in the past required much effort.

We parked on the road beside a large Cross erected to remind pilgrims that St Oswald had there erected a Cross and prayed to the Christian God with his men, rather like St Constantine outside Rome centuries before, then going successfully into battle.

We climbed the path to the bleak brow of the hill, crossing the line of the Wall (it has disappeared at that point) through the wet and dirty field, to the mediaeval church there.

On a fine day we might have looked around and admired the views around the lovely Northumberland countryside, but it was too cold to stay long with the children. So we looked at the little exhibition, said some brief prayers, and soon returned to the car to look for some lunch. Oswald is rightly admired for his devotion to our Holy Faith. He was a new convert, early on in the conversion of the English people. With all the enthusiasm of a convert he led his people to Christ, interpreting for his people the words of the Bishop St Aidan.

But here is a remarkable thing. Cadwallon, leader of Oswald's British enemies at Heavenfield, also was a Christian. These Christian British were the ancestors of the people we call Welshmen, and they were fighting to defend their own country, then being overrun by the Saxon or English invaders.

Do you see that Christians and Saints can be quite different from each other? All follow Christ, but they also follow their own personal calling.

Both King Oswald and King Cadwallon felt they were doing their duty - following Christ, defending the rights of their peoples, respectively the English and the British (Welsh).

So I encourage you to seek holiness, in Christ,



St Oswald King & Martyr

WEEKDAYS AT ST HELEN'S THIS MONTH

PRE-SANCTIFIED HOLY LITURGY
Wednesdays 3, 10, 17, 24 April 9.30 am
AKATHIST OF THE MOTHER OF GOD
Fridays 5, 12, 19 April 6.00 pm

GREAT AND HOLY WEEK

All services in St Helen's Chapel

Note time of weekday evening services: 6.00 pm

Lazarus Saturday, 27 April	
Holy Liturgy of St John	9.30 am
Great Vespers	4.30 pm
Palm Sunday, Entry of Christ into Jerusalem, 28 April	
Mattins, with Blessing of Palms	9.45 am
Holy Liturgy of St John	10.30 am
Great & Holy Monday, 29 April	
Bridegroom Mattins	6.00 pm
Great & Holy Tuesday, 30 April	
Bridegroom Mattins	6.00 pm
Great & Holy Wednesday, 1 May	
Holy Anointing	6.00 pm
Great & Holy Thursday, 2 May	
Vespers & Holy Liturgy of St Basil	9.30 am
Mattins of the Twelve Gospels	6.00 pm
Great & Holy Friday, 3 May	
Royal Hours	9.00 am
Vespers & Deposition	3.00 pm
Mattins & Burial Procession	6.00 pm
Great & Holy Saturday, 4 May	
Vespers & Holy Liturgy of St Basil	9.30 am
Reading of Acts	10.30 pm
Midnight Office	11.30 pm
HOLY PASCHA, 5 May	
Resurrection Procession & Mattins	12 midnight
Holy Liturgy of St John	1.00 am (till 2.15)
<i>No late morning Liturgy</i>	
Parish Lunch ("Bring & Share")	1.00 pm
Paschal Vespers	approx. 3.00 pm
CONFESSIONS: After any service or by arrangement	
GIFTS FOR FLOWERS: To Simona Filon or Khouria Hilary	
EPITAPHION FLOWERS: Women & girls invited to prepare the Epitaphion 9.30 am Holy Friday	

and to find your own personal Way to Christ. It is a rich and beautiful Way. God will bless you in your pilgrimage of life.

Father Alexander

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
20 April
10.00 am

It was a cold and nasty day, but perhaps a pilgrimage is best in those conditions. Pilgrimage is so easy for us today - we popped along



Above: Barking 2011, Frs Alexander Haig & Alexander Tefft (St Botolph's) at Vespers

BARKING PILGRIMAGE Bright Saturday, 11 May

12.00 Service & Sprinkling 1.00 Picnic Lunch
2.00 Talk 3.00 Vespers, Artoclasia, Anointing

Barking is in East London, some 8 miles this side of the City. There will be transport from Colchester. Do sign up and come.

The Saints of Barking are from the Orthodox period of British history, before the Schism between East and West. Most lived in the 7th century.



Our Roman goes to God....

Roman Gavrilov lived rough on the streets of Colchester for several years, occasionally going elsewhere for a short while.

Aged 42, he was a Latvian, ethnically Russian, had been married, and had two sons growing up, but had not seen them for some years. He was alone in many ways, though his dear mother did what she could for him from home.



We had known him since he first came to Colchester. He was a devout Orthodox Christian — though when he got excessively devout you knew he had been excessively drinking!

He became something of a son to me, and it grieved me (as many others) that there was so little we could do for him. Demon drink had him in its power: he could or would not break away.

But, drunk or sober, he would hug me and say, "You are my father, my only father." He would venerate the icons in church, especially St Helen, and always asked my prayers and blessing, often several times! I always assured him I did indeed pray for him, every night. He very much needed to feel cared for and loved. For three winters I let him sleep in St Helen's for the months of the bad weather.

We always hoped that something miraculous would intervene, but alas! it did not. Theodora Ford nobly took him in at one point. Recently Karen Laboutotiller did the same and I sincerely praise her for what she accomplished with him: things had looked a little more hopeful recently. Thankfully, he did not die alone, but at her home in Stock, near Chelmsford, with her at his side.

The funeral is not arranged at the time of writing: I hope it will be at St Helen's in mid-April. He will have a "Council" burial. Please contact us for more information.

Memory eternal, beloved Roman!

The People Column

DAVID POPESCU: Welcome into the Church of God little David Nicholas, son to Marian and Cristina of Canterbury Rd in Colchester. He was baptised in March. Many years!

ALEXIA AHMET: Amy Louise Ahmet of Clacton became Alexia on her baptism in March, aged eight. We were delighted to welcome her into the Church, and wish her Many Years!

MARIA (LESLIE) CARTER of Frinton had to have a few days in a home at Thorrington recently, but is now safely returned to her home, where she manages magnificently on her own, with some care, at the age of 93. While at the home she had Holy Communion with her old friend and god-mother Alexia Lansley and Paul present.

DOROTHY (DOREEN) TANNER has been living at Colonia Court for some months, but is now moving to another BUPA home in Clacton, in the same road she lived in as a child. She will now be part of our Clacton congregation. We wish her well there and hope she settles quickly and happily in her home town.

A Word from the Fathers

The royal banners forward go;
The Cross shines forth in mystic glow;
Where he in flesh, our flesh who made,
Our sentence bore, our ransom paid.

O Tree of beauty, Tree of light!
O Tree with royal purple dight!
Elect on whose triumphal breast
Those holy limbs should find their rest.

On whose dear arms, so widely flung,
The weight of this world's ransom hung:
The price of humankind to pay,
And spoil the spoiler of his prey.

O Cross, our one reliance, hail!
So may thy power with us avail
To give new virtue to the saint,
And pardon to the penitent.

St Venantius Fortunatus, 530-609

Here and There

PARISH COUNCIL: The Council meets on Sunday 14 April at 1.00 pm. The members are Fr Alexander *Chairman* (ex-officio), Khouria Hilary, David Davies *Churchwarden & Treasurer*, Mary Morris, Dushan Radunovic *Churchwarden*, Teodor Petica, Theodora Ford *Secretary*, Reader Andreas Moran.

BAKERS, SINGERS, SERVERS, SEWERS, SACRISTAN are still needed. Volunteers are invited to offer themselves to serve the Lord and this Parish in any of these ways.

LENT SERVICES: We mark Lent at St Helen's by two services:

- the **Liturgy of the Presanctified** on Wednesday mornings at 9.30 am, and,
- the **Akathist of the Mother of God** on Friday evenings at 6.00 pm.

Both are very beautiful occasions, and you are strongly encouraged to put them into your weekly programme of preparation for Holy Pascha if you are free.



HOLY GREAT MARTYR GEORGE, Patron of England, has always been a favourite Saint in Orthodoxy. We honour him as Victory-bearer and Wonder-worker. He gave his life for Christ in the Great Persecution at the beginning of the fourth century. Within fifty years of his death a great church had been built over his tomb in Lydda, Palestine. He was known in Orthodox times in Britain but came to wider veneration in the fourteenth century when the king built a fine and great temple to him in Windsor Castle itself. The Chapel remains today in the Queen's home, and is open to the public. The fine twentieth-century icon above is by the celebrated Greek iconographer Kontaglou. *Feast: 23 April.*

APRIL DAYS

Mon 1	S Agilbert of Dorchester & Paris
Thu 4	S Zosimas of Palestine
Sat 6	S Methodius, Enlightener of the Slavs
Sun 7	Lent 3, Veneration of the Cross
Thu 11	S Guthlac, Hermit of Crowland
Sun 14	Lent 4, S John Climacus
Fri 19	Hieromartyr Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury
Sun 21	Lent 5, S Mary of Egypt
Tue 23	Great Martyr George, Patron of England
Thu 25	Holy Apostle & Evangelist Mark
Sat 27	Lazarus Saturday
Sun 28	Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem, Palm Sunday
Mon 29	Great & Holy Monday
Tue 30	Great & Holy Tuesday

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