+ Orthodoxy—the faith that began with Christ and his Apostles and continues till the end of time +

Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Archdiocese of the BI & Ireland

NEWSLETTER 211 JULY-AUGUST 2014

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WEEKDAYS

9.30 am HOLY LITURGY

TUESDAY 22 JULY
Holy Myrrh-bearer Mary Magdalene

FRIDAY 15 AUGUST
Dormition of the Holy Mother of God

May I die in the holy faith in Christ, and be received like Mary Theotokos into the gates of heaven.....

The feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God falls on 15 August, and is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church. It commemorates her death or repose or falling asleep.

It is a lovely scene, where the Blessed Lady lies down to sleep in the Lord, and her Son and Lord comes to claim her soul for heaven. Surrounded by the holy Apostles, gathered from the ends of the earth - all their places of mission-work - she quietly gives up her soul to Christ, and he takes it, just as she had taken him and held him in her arms as a new Baby.

What is not shown in the icon is that her body was then taken to the Garden of Gethsemane, where she was buried in a cave deep down into the rock - you can visit the place to this day.

Nor is it shown that a week later St Thomas visited her grave and found it empty: her body as well as her soul had been taken to heaven!

These ancient traditions can seem strange, but they simply promise what will happen to *all* who believe in Christ, have faith in him.

You and I, simple believers in him, have the promise that when we die our souls will be taken to the glory of Heaven, and then at the end of time, our soul will be reunited with our body - a transfigured and glorified body. Mary's experience will be ours too.

What a wonderful future you and I can anticipate!

Father Alexander

Repose of St Helen
The summer feast of our Patron
Sunday 17 August

10.30 am Holy Liturgy
12.30 pm Parish Picnic
2.00 pm approx. Veneration of the Relic

Picnic on the green if fine. Bring your own food and some to share with others. Drinks and cake provided.

The summer feast is properly on 18 August, the date St Helen died, aged over 80, probably in the year 329. It was in either 'Old Rome' or 'New Rome', i.e. Constantinople. Western tradition was that she was born in Colchester about 250, and built our Chapel! She appears to have been buried in Old Rome.

The Icon here is the original sketch for the first Parish Icon by Eleni Stellaki of Athens, which will be on display for veneration again on the feast. It is a small, *portable* icon because in those days (1996-2000) we worshipped in the Co-operative Funeral Chapel and had to move our items in and out of the church every week.

Paul Brighton-Cross becoming "Deacon Jacob" at Doncaster in May 2014, at the hand of Metropolitan Ignatius of France, to serve in Basildon. He was received into the Church in St Helen's Chapel in 2008. Many Years to Fr Jacob, Diakonissa Susanna and Lucy!

First Archdiocesan Conference—with no sign of any Archbishop!

Well, there may not have been a new Bishop present for our meeting—but I think that most people present probably enjoyed it. I and Khouria Hilary attended, with Margaret and Alex, and George and Theodora Harrison.

It took place at the Christian Conference Centre at Swanwick in Derbyshire, a lovely site with a chapel very agreeable for Orthodox worship. They also have good 'en suite' rooms and serve excellent food.

There were talks by various of the clergy on what is needed in the Diocese and lots of discussion in groups, which seems an inevitable part of such gatherings these days.

Of course they were all a bit in the air, for no *decisions* could be made since the new Bishop could come in and change everything again!

We now hope our new Bishop will be appointed at the very beginning of July, just after this Newsletter appears. If that happens I will announce it in church and by email.

HOLY LITURGY
CLACTON
Saturday
19 July
10.00 am

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: Hours 10.15 am, Divine Liturgy 10.30 am

Confessions: Saturday 5 pm, after Vespers, or by arrangement
Holy Marriage, Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc: by arrangement

Parish Priest: Father Alexander (Alistair) Haig
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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 CO15 1LE
Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday 10.00 am