

**Orthodox Parish of
St Helen of Colchester**
Antiochian Archdiocese of the BI & Ireland
NEWSLETTER 211 SEPTEMBER 2014



MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER

NATIVITY OF THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD
9.30 am HOLY LITURGY

SUNDAY 14 SEPTEMBER

**UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS
AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS**
**10.30 am HOLY LITURGY &
ELEVATION OF THE CROSS**

WEDNESDAY 1 OCTOBER

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD
9.30 am HOLY LITURGY

Iona: island of holiness

Our main reason for going north at the end of July was to make a pilgrimage to Iona, a lovely tiny island set off the west coast of a lovely big island, Mull, off the lovely west coast of Scotland.

It is where St Columba settled in the sixth century, his base for spreading our holy Faith throughout that land. He is called *The Apostle of Scotland*. Iona is referred to as *a thin place*, a place where the gap between heaven and earth is very narrow.

The Orthodox pilgrimage was led by His Eminence Metropolitan Kallistos, whose eightieth birthday falls this month (Many years, Master!): he retains his powers to a remarkable degree.

There were some 35 pilgrims, with a group from Mainz in Germany, and others we knew, not least our Margaret. We, with a friend Maria and her small boy Damian, had a cottage just across the sound on Mull. Others were in a hall or guest houses. In the evening we ate, prayed and talked together.

It was a privilege to concelebrate with the other priests in the hall chapel, and again with the Bishop in an ancient chapel on Iona.

Lovely photos can be seen on the Orthodox Peace Fellowship website by author Jim Forrest, and likely in other places.

One visit we made was to Kilninian in north Mull, where Romanian Priest-monk Seraphim is bravely attempting to start an Orthodox monastery.

Many went on tours in or around Mull - seeing golden eagles and deer on hillsides, or by sea visiting Fingal's Cave on the isle of Staffa or the ancient hermitage of Inch Kenneth - and of course the lovely hills and bays on Iona itself, where St Columba lived and prayed for many years.

Iona attracts many pilgrims - Protestants, Catholics and some Orthodox. Many secular visitors too.

It is 'way out' - you have a long drive to Oban on the west coast of Scotland, a big ferry, a good drive across Mull, a wee ferry over to Iona itself.

But, oh, most think the journey very well worthwhile.

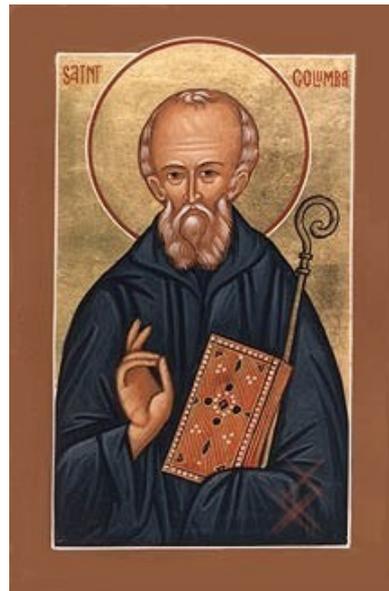
The peace and spiritual calm is palpable. The lingering influence of St Columba (so human yet so holy) is strong. The prayers of

the pious monks and nuns who inhabited the island for 900 years still move you. They link up with the whole of Scotland and much of England, including Essex.

St Columba, pray to God for us.

Father Alexander

Hilary and I also made a pilgrimage to Melrose for St Aidan and St Cuthbert, and to Balquhider for St Angus—and visited relatives in Scotland and England.



Yanoulla Nicolaou

It is sad to report the repose of Yanoulla. Ill for over a year, she was lovingly cared for by her husband Stelios as well as by Nick, Angela and others. She last received the Holy Mysteries two days before dying at home. The whole Clacton community will miss her, for she was something of a Mother amongst us. Our sincere sympathy to Stelios, and their sons Doros and Nicolas and all the family. We mourn our loss deeply. Eternal memory!

Archbishop's appointment

We are all a little frustrated about not yet having a Bishop. The latest news is that the Patriarch has asked a small party from Britain to meet him in Lebanon in September, and the hope is that the Holy Synod will elect our Archbishop in October. Such an appointment will certainly give us some stability.

ANGLICAN-ORTHODOX DIALOGUE: I shall be in Jerusalem for the latest talks 16-25 September. Khouria Hilary will be at home in my absence. The Liturgy on Sunday 21 September will be served by Fr Patrick Ramsey—see page 2.

EBOLA: I have sent a £25 donation from this Parish to the Kings College London Sierra Leone partnership.

HOLY LITURGY
CLACTON
Saturday
27 September
10.00 am
Note date

New Holy Doors and Icons

I am grateful for numbers of large and small donations for the new doors, and for the icons that are being painted by Mihai Morosan in Romania. So far more than £1000 has been given. We expect the icons in time for next Pascha.

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

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 Jr, 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 EC15 1LE
Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday 10.00 am

On becoming Orthodox...

Tamas-Martin Gröb was received into the Holy Orthodox Church in June, as reported in our last issue. We asked for his thoughts. He writes:

Again the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. (Matt 13:44)

There is probably no more accurate and relevant verse in the gospels describing my feelings towards the Orthodox Church, of which - by the grace of God - I am fully part now. Like stumbling upon a hidden treasure, I accidentally came upon the Orthodox faith after years of lapsing from protestantism.

I came to this holy chapel for the first time almost a year ago and I felt immediately captivated by the simple beauty of worship and devotion of the faithful. I dare say that this ancient beauty is the impression of many who are new to the Church.

Although my interest at first was more political than spiritual, I am ashamed to admit, upon returning week after week I could not help but marvel at the wonderful miracle being slowly revealed before me, which is the Orthodox Faith.

Like a blossoming flower, its beauty, hopefulness and spirit took hold in me, sinful and unworthy as I am, and it was not

long before I asked Father about being received into the Church.

It is still very overwhelming to this day, and I find it very hard to come to terms with the fact that I am a full member of the Church now.

After all, it happened within a year, how could I comprehend this honour and grace of Christ in my life? I felt the same way upon my pilgrimage to the Holy Land: how can I take this all in? I felt like standing before God himself, accepted into something so big, important and glorious, but still unable to understand.

No wisdom of man can measure up to the wisdom of God, but still I am happily and eagerly giving myself to Christ and His Holy Church, like the man who sells it all to buy the treasure field: by praying, repenting, fasting, studying, learning, and most importantly, by giving thanks to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for this enormous mercy and grace!



Mary's birth marks the dawn of a new era

The celebration of *Our Lady's Birthday* comes right at the beginning of the new Church year, which starts on 1 September. But the giving of birth of blessed Mary by St Anna her mother, and her father St Joachim, also marked a new beginning for the human race.

This couple, older parents, of God that secured his entry in the humble and devout, produced the wonderful person Mary turned out to be. They can be role-models for all parents.

Mary's birth is the start of the historical sequence of events that leads to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Had it not been for Mary there would have been no Christ. It was her acceptance of, or obedience to, the will

of God that secured his entry in the flesh into the world.

That is why we honour Mary, and if we honour her we should also honour Anna and Joachim, who as her parents were first to direct Mary in the ways of God.

We shall celebrate her birthday on Monday 8 September with a Holy Liturgy at 9.30 am, and remember her parents on 9 September.

Many visitors will flood into St Helen's on 13/14 September for National Heritage Day.

Here and There

TWO FEASTS I shall unfortunately miss while in the Holy Land: *St Theodore of Tarsus & Canterbury* (19 September), Patron of our Archdiocese; and *St Silouan of Athos* (24 September), the Monastery's special Saint as Elder Sophrony's spiritual father—they will doubtless have the usual large attendance both for the Vespers & procession the evening before, and for the Liturgy on the day.

A Word from the Fathers

This is the summary of the benefits of Christ for us. This is the unveiling of the mystery, this is nature made new, God and man, and the deification of the human nature assumed by God. But so radiant, so glorious a visitation of God to men needed some prelude of joy to introduce to us the great gift of salvation. The present feast is such: the prelude is the birth of the Mother of God, and the concluding act is the union which is destined between the Word and human nature. A virgin is now born and suckled and moulded, and is made ready to be Mother of God, the King of all for ever.

St Andrew of Crete

The People Column

SANJA BAHUN (RADUNOVIC): Our warm congratulations to Sanja on her appointment as Professor of Literature and Film in the University of Essex. It is a sign of the University's confidence in her, and we are delighted.

Recent Visitors we have been glad to welcome to St Helen's have included:

FR RAPHAEL VERESHACK, from Winnipeg, Canada, who was staying with Reader Andreas and Lydia - he is connected to the Monachos Orthodox computer website;

FR JOSHUA FRIGERIO, a parish priest from Marshall, Michigan, with his daughter Anastasia;

RUSSELL and JUDITH KOMLINE from Gladstone, New Jersey, who were pilgrims with us on Iona;

FR IVAN MOODY, with his wife and daughters, who is parish priest in Estoril, Portugal and Professor of Music and a well-established composer: Fr Ivan comes from Bradwell-on-sea;

FR PATRICK RAMSEY is a New Zealander well-known to the Basildon people, as he serves there regularly. He has moved to Colchester, to teach maths at Philip Morant school, while doing a PhD at Winchester. We welcome him to the town and Parish.

SEPTEMBER DAYS

Tue 1	<i>Church New Year</i> Day of Prayer for Protection of the Environment Righteous Joshua the Son of Nun
Wed 3	S Phoebe, Deaconess at Cenchreae
Thu 4	Holy Prophet & God-seer Moses Martyr Hermione, daughter of S Philip the Deacon
Fri 5	Prophet Zachariah & Righteous Elizabeth
Sat 6	Commenn of Miracle of S Michael at Colossae S Bega, first Abbess of Copeland, Cumbria
Sun 7	Pentecost 13, Sunday before Holy Cross
Mon 8	Nativity of Holy Theotokos, S Ina, King of Wessex, & S Ethelburga, his Queen
Tue 9	Righteous Forbears Joachim & Anna
Thu 11	S Euphrosynus the Cook of Alexandria S Deiniol, Abbot of Bangor, Bishop in Clwyd
Sat 13	Dedication of Resurrection in Jerusalem Hieromartyr Cornelius the Centurion
Sun 14	Pentecost 14, Universal Exaltation of the Life-giving Cross
Tue 16	S Ninian, Bishop of Whithorn in Galloway
Wed 17	Martyr Sophia & daughters Faith, Hope, & Love
Fri 19	S Theodore of Tarsus & Canterbury, Patron of our Archdiocese
Sun 21	Pentecost 15, Sunday after Holy Cross
Tue 23	Conception of S John the Forerunner
Wed 24	S Silouan the Athonite Protomartyr & Equal to the Apostles Thecla
Thu 25	S Sergius, Abbot & Wonderworker of Radonezh S Coelfrid, Abbot of Jarrow
Fri 26	H Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian
Sun 28	Pentecost 16 Martyr Wenceslaus, Prince of the Czechs
Tue 30	S Honorius, Archbishop of Canterbury
Wed 1 Oct	Protection of the Holy Theotokos

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