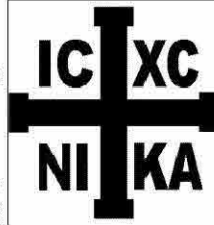


Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland
Metropolitan: His Eminence Archbishop Silouan
NEWSLETTER 226 DECEMBER 2015



WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER, Conception of the Theotokos
FRIDAY 1 JANUARY, Circumcision of Christ, St Basil
Holy Liturgy both days at 9.30 am

A holy and happy Christmas to all our members and friends

Our world is in a bit of a mess, to say the least! In the homeland of the Church of Antioch - Syria and Lebanon and other parts of the Middle East, we know that there is no external peace, much fear, uncertainty, and hatred, much evil-thinking.

This lack of external peace now seems to be passing into all parts of the world, not least Europe, as terrorism spreads its web ever further. Paris, Brussels, Mali, are all suffering as I write, and authorities warn of trouble to come in other European capitals, and cities and around the world.

How are we to deal with this, as Christians, as Orthodox?

Well, the first thing is that we must not panic. Nor must we lose faith. The Roman world at that first Christmas did not have all that stability. In Palestine there were problems of non-compliance by the under-dogs, oppressed, taxed and taken advantage of. *Pax Romana* was not really strong, at least to any depth.

Yet into this dark world came Christ our God. He who made all in harmony, peace and joy came to share the sicknesses, the troubles of our human existence. God shared all that it means to be human—the joys, yes! but also the heart-aches and the pains, the sorrows. God became Man. He took human flesh.

Try in this holy season to catch a glimpse of the Love of God that is shown to us in the Birth at Bethlehem. Even a tiny glimpse will bring light into your soul.

The Priest says so often in the services of the Church, *Christ our God loves mankind*. He shows it at Bethlehem, and will still today give peace in our souls, peace inside, *internal* peace whatever the external circumstances.

Let not external destruction and debasement, wherever found - in Syria, France, Belgium, even London - affect you and your inner peace. Prayer will give you confidence in God, that his peace will reign in your heart.

The peace of God be always with you. Peace be unto all.

Happy Christmas!

Father Alexander

Precious donation to St Helen's: a Piece of the True Cross!

The Parish has been given a relic of the Holy Cross of Christ, found in the fourth century in Jerusalem by our own dear Patron St Helen!

This overwhelming gift comes from Dr John Ashdown Hill, a Colchester resident and historian who decided that his precious possession would appropriately and honourably be guarded by the parish dedicated to the Saint. Recently he knocked on my door, came in, and simply handed over a lovely glass-fronted casket containing a smaller similar casket containing a tiny sliver of wood in cross-shape.

Dr Ashdown Hill is now well-known, for [Continued on page 2]

HOLY LITURGY
CLACTON
Saturday
before
Nativity
19 December
10.00 am

Enthronement delayed

Most of you will have heard that unfortunately PATRIARCH JOHN had a fall in Athens, his spectacles broke, and glass got in his eye. As a result, the Enthronement of our new Archbishop in London, due at the end of November, is postponed.

We understand that His Beatitude is recovering after operations, but is not yet allowed to fly.

It is now hoped to have the Enthronement in the New Year, but no date has been fixed.

In the last Newsletter I expressed greetings to METROPOITAN SILOUAN, and His Eminence has replied:

God be with you. Thank you very much for the warm words you have written in the Newsletter... In Christ

M. Silouan

Christmas at St Helen's

Thursday 24 December

EVE OF THE NATIVITY

4.30-6.00 pm Vigil of Christmas

Friday 25 December

NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH OF
OUR LORD & SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

10.15 am Third & Sixth Hours

10.30 am Divine Liturgy & Carols

Saturday 26 December

SECOND DAY OF THE NATIVITY,
SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS

4.30 pm Great Vespers

Sunday 27 December

THIRD DAY OF THE NATIVITY,
PROTOMARTYR & ARCHDEACON STEPHEN

9.45 am Mattins

10.30 am Divine Liturgy

Confessions before Christmas

Sat 19 Dec 5.00 pm, Thu 24 Dec 6.00 pm,

or at any time by appointment

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 Balkierne Hill), to Northgate, go straight along St Peter's Street to Castle Park; continue round the bend, up into Maidenburgh Street. The nearest car park is Nunns Road NCP, off St Peter's Street.

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 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
Churchwardens: David Davies 01-473-745-167 Dusan Radunovic 01-206-762-553

The Parish of St Helen is Registered Charity No. 1134418

Bank account: Sort Code 20-22-67 Account No. 50349364

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

At St James Anglican Church, Beatrice Rd, Clacton-on-sea CO15 1LE

Divine Liturgy: usually third Saturday of month 10.00 am

