

Orthodox Parish of St Helen of Colchester

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of the British Isles and Ireland

Metropolitan: His Eminence Archbishop Silouan

NEWSLETTER 272

MARCH 2020



March Weekdays

Wednesday 25 March
HOLY ANNUNCIATION
9.30 am Liturgy of St John

Wednesdays 4, 11, 18 March
9.30 am Pre-sanctified Liturgy

Fridays 6, 13, 20, 27
6.00pm Akathist of the Theotokos

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday 8 March

following the Holy Liturgy.

Please arrange to stay for this meeting as we have to pass the accounts etc.
We get the meeting done in 1/2 hour!

“Lady Day” – the lovely English title for an all-important day...

The Annunciation is the feast of the conception of Christ in the womb of the Holy Virgin. God the Holy Spirit entered her womb and united God and Man.

25 March (this year a Wednesday), is of course exactly nine months before the Nativity of Christ at Christmas.

To be wholly Man, Christ went through all the stages of development in the womb, and then of being born. That way he is able truly to represent Man and to represent God by being one Person of the Holy Trinity.

After the encounter between the Holy Angel Gabriel and the Holy Virgin, she became as it were the Ark containing the Holy Word of God, like the Ark in the First Temple, which contained the Tablets of the Law.

On this feast we honour Blessed Mary his Mother, who accepted the Will of God and so brought about our redemption.

It was because she said “Yes! Be it unto me according to thy word,” to the Angel, that we can be saved.

God and Man (=Humanity) were combined in her womb, and then were fed and nurtured by her, grew through childhood to adult life, and continued all the way to suffering and death.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was able to do this because the Holy Virgin through all her life submitted herself to God’s Will.

This is what we celebrate on the feast of the Annunciation, 25 March. There will be Holy Liturgy at 9.30 am.

Many people find that in some way weekday Liturgies have a beauty about them that is deeper but lighter than Sunday Liturgy. If you are free to attend, come along.

On the other Wednesdays in Lent, “the Great Fast”, there will be the Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified, which also is very lovely. It also is at 9.30 am.

God bless you all in the services of the season.



Father Alexander

Raising funds for St Martin's

Even when we are able to hand over the money we have, and claim our new church, we shall still need a lot more money of course for the heating and all the furnishings etc. Paula Rothero (Shillaker) writes:

As a fundraising idea for the St Martins Appeal we are organising a book and craft sale and need help to make it happen.

Do you have experience of organising a book/craft stall?

Do you make something that you'd like to sell, e.g. jewellery, knitted or crochet items, framed photographs, artwork etc?

Would you be willing to help set up, staff a stall and/or clear up afterwards?

We haven't fixed a date yet but if you can offer any help at all please contact Paula by email,

paularothero@gmail.com and she will contact you with more information.

St Helen's Chapel, Maidenburgh St, High St co1 1UB

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 Balcerne Hill), to Northgate; go straight along St Peter's Street to Castle Park; continue round the bend, up into Maidenburgh Street.

Nearest car-park NCP Nunns Rd. Very little street parking available.

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, Holy Baptism, Funerals, Memorials etc: by arrangement
Children of St Helen (Pre-school & Primary): normally first Saturday 3.15 pm

Parish Priest: Father Alexander (Alistair) Haig

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Orthodox Parish of St Helen: Registered Charity No: 1134418

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

Appeal Website: <http://orthodoxcolchesterappeal.org.uk>

ST HELEN'S APPEAL FOR ST MARTIN'S

Thank you to all our Benefactors

£158,410 raised to date, towards the £200,000

We make mention of you in our prayers before Christ

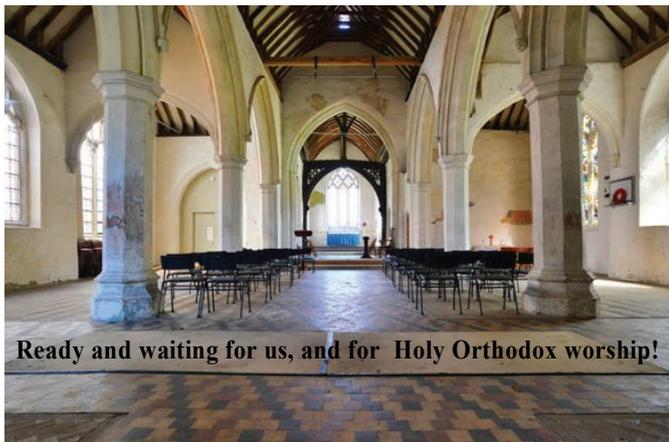
Here and There

CHILDREN OF ST HELEN: Saturday 7 March, 3.15 pm, for children of pre-school and primary age. They must be accompanied by a parent.

LENTEN VISITOR: With the blessing of Metropolitan SILOUAN Hieromonk BARTHOLOMEW from the Monastery of St John the Baptist is coming to serve here on **Sunday 15 March** to give me a Sunday off, which is very kind. Please give him a warm welcome. Hours 10.15 am, Holy Liturgy 10.30 am. I am very grateful, and I am sure you will be glad to meet him and to lead your worship..

PILGRIMS TO JERUSALEM: My apologies to the author that I did not head last month's feature with his name, though you could pick it out: it was of course CATALIN FLISCU who took his wife and child to the Holy City.

OUR KITCHEN: We are having a new kitchen, with some decoration done, 9-27 March. We will not therefore be living there for much of the time: but from Mondays to Fridays we shall be close by, at Baye House, opposite St Martin's church in West Stockwell Street. If you need me by phone, it will be best to try on my mobile number. You could still leave a message on the house phone of course, and I will expect to pick up messages every day,



Ready and waiting for us, and for Holy Orthodox worship!

A little progress on St Martin's...

It is good to hear from our Project Manager MARK SHILLAKER that the Listed Building Consent application should be going in from the architect on 2 March. The process from then will probably take about eight weeks, it is thought.

However, it could be longer still. One thing that could delay us is the advertising procedure that has to be gone through for 28 days. For example, people have the right to object to our proposed use of St Martin's for worship, believe it or not!

Assuming that objections, if any, are small, we could be in St Martin's in the middle of May - "but don't hold your breath," as they say.

However, we will certainly not be there for Holy Week or Pascha.

A Word from the Fathers: St Theodore the Studite (+759-826)

How precious is the gift of the cross! See how beautiful it is to behold!

It shows no sign of evil mixed with good like the tree of old in Eden; it is all beautiful and comely to see and to taste. For it is a tree which brings forth life, not death. It is the source of light, not darkness.

It offers you a home in Eden. It does not cast you out. It is

the tree which Christ mounted as a king his chariot, and so destroyed the devil, the lord of death, and rescued the human race from slavery to the tyrant.

It is the tree on which the Lord, like a great warrior with his hands and feet and his divine side pierced in battle healed the wounds of our sins, healed our nature that had been wounded by the evil serpent....

Anglican Archbishop visits St Helen's, and approves what we wish to do with St Martin's

Recently we were honoured to receive His Grace Michael Lewis, Anglican Archbishop Primate of Jerusalem & the Middle East and Bishop of Cyprus & the Gulf on a private visit. He has much experience of course of the Orthodox world, and was interested in viewing both St Helen's and (externally) St Martin's.

Archbishop Silouan was not present, but sent a warm welcoming message:



I am Archbishop Silouan, the metropolitan of the British Isles and Ireland. I heard from father Alexander about your lovely visit to his house. I want to say you are welcome in our archdiocese. Maybe the time will come to know you by face. In this challenging time, we need your prayers to our archdiocese and especially to father Alexander to continue having the church of Saint Martin. Your prayers are much appreciated.



The Archbishop examines the plans for St Martin's

The Archbishop was in Colchester to give a little speech at the annual so-called "Thieves Dinner", attended by the great and good of the town. In his speech he neatly linked together the stories of St Helen from Colchester, Cyprus and Jerusalem. It was good to hear.

Helps to understanding how to observe Lent

There are various free papers on the table or bookstall that can help you follow the Lent rules (which are really *guides to spiritual living*, not infallible laws that must be obeyed in every details). They also provide help on the meaning of the days of Lent, the wonderful Prayer of St Ephraim, and the fasting pattern. If you want to understand at a really deeper level, a book to buy (though expensive) is *The Lenten Triodion* by Bishop Kallistos and Mother Mary, available at the Monastery or on line at about £60.00.

MARCH DAYS

Sun	1	Cheesefare or Forgiveness Sunday, S David of Wales
Mon	2	S Chad, Bishop of Lichfield, First Day of the Great Fast (Lent) Martyr Conon of Pamphylia
Fri	6	Discovery of the Cross & Nails by S Helen
Sat	7	Commemoration of S Theodore the Recruit
Sun	8	Lent 1, Sunday of Orthodoxy
Mon	8	Forty Martyrs of Sebaste
Thu	12	S Gregory the Dialogist, Pope of Rome
Sat	14	S Benedict of Nursia
Sun	15	Lent 2, S Gregory Palamas
Mon	16	S Christodoulos of Patmos
Tue	17	S Patrick of Ireland
Wed	18	S Cyril of Jerusalem, S Edward the Martyr
Fri	20	S Cuthbert of Lindisfarne
Sun	22	Lent 3, Veneration to the Cross
Wed	25	ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS
Sun	29	Lent 4, S John Climacus, of the Ladder
Tue	31	New Martyr Maria (Skobtsova) of Paris