



The Tower

August 2019

The Tower is the Newsletter of the

Orthodox Christian Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr,
Overleigh Cemetery Chapel, Overleigh Road, Handbridge, Chester

Parish website: <http://www.stbarbara.org.uk/>

Diocesan website: www.thyateira.org.uk

Facebook: [Greek Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr in Chester](https://www.facebook.com/Greek-Orthodox-Community-of-Saint-Barbara-the-Great-Martyr-in-Chester)

Charity No: 114475

Dear brothers and sisters,

It is with great pleasure we learn of the elevation of Bishop Chrysostomos of Kyanea to the office and honour as Metropolitan of Ilinopolis and Theira. His Grace has served at the Cathedral of Saint Andrew for many years and has been a clergyman longer than many of us have been alive! He was ordained Deacon in 1952 and priest in 1954 and bishop since 1970. We wish him Many Years!

If you're reading this, it's nearly August! That means there's only two months before our annual Pan-Orthodox Pilgrimage to Saint Winifride at Holywell. Time to make sure it is in your diary: Saturday 5th August. Full details next month.

With much love for you all this blessed Summer

Fr Pancratios & Presb. Anna, Fr Dn John & Diaconisa Vera

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Words from Saint Cyprian of Carthage +258

Each generation is reminded by what it hears, that whatever has once been done may be done again. Crimes never die out by the lapse of ages; wickedness is never abolished by process of time; impiety is never buried in oblivion. Things which have now ceased to be actual deeds of vice become examples...Men are emasculated, and all the pride and vigour of their sex is effeminated in the disgrace of their enervated body; and he is most pleasing there who has most completely broken down the man into the woman. He grows into praise by virtue of his crime; and the more he is degraded, the more skilful he is considered to be. Such a one is looked upon— oh shame! And looked upon with pleasure. And what cannot such a creature suggest? He inflames the senses, he flatters the affections, he drives out the more vigorous conscience of a virtuous breast; nor is there wanting authority for the enticing abomination, that the mischief may creep upon people with a less perceptible approach.

Oh, if placed on that lofty watchtower you could gaze into the secret places— if you could open the closed doors of sleeping chambers, and recall their dark recesses to the perception of sight—you would behold things done by immodest persons which no chaste eye could look upon; you would see what even to see is a crime; you would see what people embruted with the madness of vice deny that they have done, and yet hasten to do—men with frenzied lusts rushing upon men, doing things which afford no gratification even to those who do them."

A Questionnaire

In our quest to make The Tower of more value to our parishioners and readers, we invite your comments on its contents (or lack thereof!).

1. How would you rate it as a Newsletter generally? **
2. Is the calendar useful to you, is it understandable? **
3. Do you refer to the Tower for times of services? **
4. Do you read the whole newsletter?
5. If not, which articles do you find useful?
6. Are there any sections that you don't bother with?
7. What would you like to see included each month?
8. Does each member of your family see The Tower?
9. Would you like to see more, or less, pages?
10. Do you miss the paper copy? **

**Rate answers as 1-10 (10 highest)

Please add any comments that will help improve The Tower

Please email Fr Pancratios with your ratings and comments, or jot them down and hand them in at church. Thank you.

The 33rd Pan-Orthodox Pilgrimage



to the Shrine and Well of
Saint Winifride, Holywell CH8 7LS

Saturday 5th October

in the Medieval Chapel and at her Well The
Pilgrimage begins at 10.30am
with the Prayers of Preparation and Divine Liturgy
followed by the Procession to the Well and
Aghiasmos.

Our Picnic Lunch concludes with Vespers.

Principal Services for August

1st Thursday		Beginning of the Dormition Fast
3rd Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers
4th Sunday	10.00am	Matins
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy
	1.00pm	7th after Pentecost; Seven Sleepers of Ephesus
6th Tuesday	11.00am	Pilgrimage to Saint Plegmund's Well, Plemstall and picnic lunch
7th Wednesday	6.30pm	Divine Liturgy
10th Saturday	5.30pm	Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord
11th Sunday	10.00am	St Myron, Bishop of Crete
	11.00am	Vespers
14th Wednesday	6.30pm	Matins
	7.30pm	Divine Liturgy
17th Saturday	5.30pm	8th after Pentecost; Virgin-Martyr Susanna
18th Sunday	10.00am	Vespers
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy
21st Wednesday	6.30pm	Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos
24th Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers
25th Sunday	10.00am	Matins
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy
28th Wednesday	6.30pm	9th after Pentecost; Martyrs Florus & Laurus of Illyria
31st Saturday	5.30pm	Martyr Agathonikos of Nicomedia
		Vespers
		Vespers
		Matins
		Divine Liturgy
		10th after Pentecost; St John of Karpathos
		Behheading of the Forerunner, John the Baptist
		Vespers & Prayers for the Environment

Principal Services for September

The Church New Year

1st Sunday	10.00am	Matins
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy
4th Wednesday	6.30pm	11th after Pentecost; St Symeon Stylites the Elder
7th Saturday	5.30pm	Prophet Zachariah & Righteous Elizabeth
8th Sunday	10.00am	Vespers
	11.00am	Matins
11th Wednesday	6.30pm	Divine Liturgy
14th Saturday	11.00am	The Nativity of the Theotokos & Ever-Virgin Mary
	5.30pm	Hieromartyr Autonomus
15th Sunday	10.00am	Divine Liturgy
	11.00am	Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross
18th Wednesday		Vespers
21st Saturday	5.30pm	Matins
22nd Sunday	10.00am	Divine Liturgy
	11.00am	13th after Pentecost; Great Martyr Niketas the Goth
25th Wednesday	6.30pm	St Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury
28th Saturday	5.30pm	No Vespers
29th Sunday	10.00am	Vespers
	11.00am	Matins
		Divine Liturgy
		14th after Pentecost; Hieromartyr Phokas of Sinope
		Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian
		Matins
		Divine Liturgy
		15th after Pentecost; St Kyriakos the Hermit

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The Service of the Paraklesis

The Supplicatory Canon to the Mother of God will be served in Church each day during the Dormition Fast (1st-15th August) at 3pm as follows: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th & 13th.

Please ensure that you bring, or hand in, the names of those in need of the divine help of the Theotokos. These services are a great aid to those who suffer from physical or spiritual illness or other personal difficulties.

Parish Pilgrimage to Saint Plegmund's Well for the Blessing of Waters and fasting picnic

This will take place on Sunday 4th August, two days after his Feast Day following the Dismissal from the Divine Liturgy
If needed, a folding chair or stool will be useful for the picnic

An Interview with H.E. Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain

How did you feel when you were informed that the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate elected you to be the next Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain?

I was called in the middle of the night and was told that I was elected Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain. At first, I thought I was dreaming. As reality set in, I called my brother and slowly made a few other phone calls. After the initial shock wore off, I called the Fathers of Mount Athos and asked for their prayers. I asked one of them to go to the icon of the “Axion Estin” and to ask the Theotokos to guide my steps on the path of truth and love.

As I sat thinking, I began to understand the enormous task that was being offered me. I thought about my unworthiness and wondered how to begin. Of course, I also was moved by the fact that I was selected by the Ecumenical Patriarch for this great honour. It is, indeed, a great honour but also brings great challenges.

As you prepare for your next ministry in the service of the Church, what are your top priorities and points of importance that you plan on addressing following your enthronement?

I think the top priority is education – on many levels. First, we need to help the clergy and better prepare them to serve the people. We need to offer them the proper resources to meet the growing and pressing needs of the community. We face so many new and developing issues these days – we need to be able to respond to them and offer an Orthodox answer – an answer grounded in the tradition of our faith.

We also need to educate our people, so they know what we actually believe. Too often people think they know what we believe, but they do not have a clear understanding of our doctrines. I have already spoken to the clergy on beginning a program of “adult religious education”.

Through the existing schools for the children (both the Catechetical and Greek-language schools), we can also share the truths entrusted to us. We must look to raise the level of education of our community, so they understand who they are as Orthodox Christians.

I also believe it is necessary, if not critical, to educate the general public about the Orthodox Church. Many people have heard of us, but they know nothing about us. We need to open the doors and share what we have.

You have previously served in Asia and in the United States; how have those experiences prepared you for serving the needs of the Orthodox faithful in Europe?

Asia was a very special opportunity for me, as I was able to serve as a missionary clergyman. This was a clear reminder to me that the Church must always have a missionary vision. Too often, we sit in the comfort of our communities and parishes and do not come into contact with or remember the challenges of a missionary church. At times, one has to develop a new and different “language” to communicate the faith. It must be done in a means for people to understand and accept its truths. The experience of being in Asia, along with what I lived in the United States (as a clergyman and as an educator), has made me see the world and life in a different manner. When you live outside your own “comfort zone,” you learn many things, especially respect for the other and his/her ways and patterns of life.

As some know, I have a good ear for language and am able to serve in several languages. This has been a great resource for me over the years, not only in Asia but also in the United States. At times, this allows for creating a sense

of belonging and draws people closer to us. After all, the Church is our family.

Society is experiencing many changes and challenges, some would say upheavals; what do you see the role of an Orthodox hierarch to be in the twenty-first century?

Society is, indeed, changing and the Church must take a leading role in helping society heal. It is necessary that I, as a hierarch and representative of Christ, stress the importance of family and community. I think that young people and society, in general, focus on individualism — me, mine, and the self. The Church is a community and we have to remind people of that. And, that there is a place for everyone in the Church, for it is in the Church that we are healed, restored and sanctified. The Church must be the ballast in the storms of life. I believe that my time in Berkeley and my conversations with the young people there have helped prepare me for the challenges ahead of me. Our young people, like others, are looking for answers to their questions and problems. Some want hope, while others need comfort. It is through loving and comforting words that we can guide people and slowly change the path the world is taking. I often say – look at our political leaders – they all promise us answers and solutions to all the problems of life. And yet, their promises never become realities. The only real hope and solution is Christ. If we live according to His word, many of the problems would disappear. My role is to try to live this message.

Together with your election, the recent enthronements of Archbishops Elpidophoros (United States) and Makarios (Australia) have breathed new life into the Church and especially the Ecumenical Patriarchate. How do you see these hierarchal changes affecting the Church, intra-Orthodox relations, and the future of the Phanar?

It is interesting to note that the three elections were for English-speaking eparchies. While we may each have our own challenges, we share many things in common, especially on issues surrounding the younger generations, the use of language, translations, and much more. Hopefully, we can address their needs in a language they understand. By this I do not mean English, I mean that we must use the tools of language – expressions, idioms, means of communication, social media, and much more to which they relate and use every day.

I come from a land where we are familiar with intra-Orthodox relations, ecumenical activities, even inter-faith dialogue. I believe my familiarity with these will serve as a great resource for me in my new ministry. I can use my experience and these resources to embrace and work with other Orthodox Christians and people of other traditions. The United Kingdom is a society of various peoples, identities and traditions – they need to learn about us and we need to learn about them. I have done some things on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, especially in the area of human trafficking and modern slavery, with the Anglican Church and know the Archbishop of Canterbury. This is an outreach on our part and a sign that we have something to offer in this ministry. We have established and built a partnership – we all plan to build more.

I believe that the Ecumenical Patriarchate selected us (the new Archbishops), hoping that we can expand our ministries and bring a message of hope to the world. We are the voice of the Phanar outside of Turkey.

Some Further Thoughts on the Life and Traditions of our Faith

On Developing a Spiritual Life part 2

The longer we go on without confessing, the worse it is for us, the more entangled we become in the bonds of sin, and therefore the more difficult it is to give account. We ought to confess our sins more frequently, in order to strike and scourge the sins by the open avowal of them, and in order to feel a greater loathing of them. +St. John of Kronstadt

Confess and Commune regularly. These things ought to be a given for every Orthodox Christian, whoever and wherever they are.

Sadly, this is all too-often not the case. We stay away from Communion of the precious gifts of the Body and Blood of Christ because we neglect the spiritual life; because we are tangled up in the ways of the world and, frankly, our life is a mess.

It's time to do something about it for we do not know when the Lord will call us to judgement: It may be many years – or it might be tomorrow! As the Scouts say “Be prepared!”.

Do we stay away from the glorious Sacrament of the Eucharist because we are ashamed of the state of our life. Then let's fix it. The Holy Gifts should be like a magnet, drawing us towards this great Mystery at every possible moment but we need to make ourselves ready through the Sacrament of Repentance – Confession. And that's the stumbling block, isn't it?

I find it sad that someone will come to me in their middle years having at last plucked up the courage to confess, to learn that they made their confession once – when they were fifteen years of age. So, since then they have not received Communion even though they may have attended church many times, even weekly.

How can we face Christ at the Judgement if we have failed so miserably to receive Him into our hearts through His Body and Blood? To follow Him requires no little effort on our part and we have already discussed some of the basics of prayer in the last edition of *The Tower*. We shall look at other aspects of growth in the spiritual life in future editions.

As I noted last month we ought to reflect each day on what has held our attention, good and ill, throughout each day and to note where we have fallen short: pride, envy, lust, greed, anger, lying, theft and so the list goes on. Examine your hearts and you will spot those things that cause us fall short. In this way we will come to realise that we are not so perfect after all!

At the heart of the Sacrament is the concept of repentance – sincere regret or remorse for the things done or said (or not), as the case may be. If we do not feel sorrow for what we have said or done, there is no point in

approaching the Sacrament because we are still filled with pride – a stiff neck as some say! Much prayer and determination is needed to turn one's life around. Often help will be needed from your priest: talk to him.

If we are honest with ourselves and determine to follow Christ's call we will make the effort and pour out our hearts before the Saviour in the Sacrament, determined not to repeat the sins we have confessed. Remember that if you haven't confessed in a long time (or ever!) there will be issues that will take a lot of digging out; those acts or thoughts that the Evil One convinces us are 'not really sinful'. So often, these will be on the lines of lying or swearing, though there are many other sins that attach themselves to us even without our noticing. Only when we sit down in self-examination do we find them glaring at us. Then is the time to root them out.

What benefits we gain from a pure confession; we feel two inches taller when that burden of our sins is laid before the feet of Christ (see Matt.11:28) and we can walk away rejoicing and with a heart that no-longer feels like a stone – hard and bloodless.

It must be remembered that, on the other hand, a dishonest or insincere confession, not only does no good but can be utterly harmful and our burden is redoubled.

Rejoice, for when we have made a good and honest confession our heart is filled with joy and we can stand before the holy Chalice and receive the Mystery of the Eucharist and we are made one with Christ the One who forgives, and forgives, and forgives.

Christ Jesus calls us to receive Him in our hearts as often as we are able, not once in a blue moon, or two or three times a year but regularly, even weekly, making our confession just as frequently. With the power of Christ and His Holy Spirit dwelling within us we have a defence against the Devil and all his minions. Add to the Sacraments our acts of daily prayer and reading and above all making the sign of the cross over all we do, and the Evil One is banished from our lives.

Never forget that without Christ in our lives in every waking moment we are empty of Life; we are, as Saint Nikolai Velimirovic reminds us that *The human soul without Him becomes hell; a people without Him becomes a pack of famished and ravening wolves.*

The biggest lie of this world is idea that we have plenty of time. With it the devil keeps us in the state of spiritual idleness and relaxation. Actually we may die every second, like many of our friends and relatives have done. Woe to us if we do not fight for our salvation every minute. - Archpriest Andrey Tkachev

There's more on the Spiritual Life to come, Fr Pankratios

A Scripture Reading Calendar for August

1	Fast	1 Corinthians 7:24-35	Matthew 15:12-21	Virgin-Martyr Sidwell of Exeter (6thC)
2	Fast	1 Corinthians 7:35-8:7	Matthew 15:29-31	St Plegmund, Hermit of Cheshire (914)
3	Fast**	Romans 12:1-3	Matthew 10:37-11:1	St Trea, Hermitess of Ardtree, Northern Ireland (5thC)
4	Fast**	Romans 15:1-7	Matthew 9:27-35	St Sithney, patron of Sithney, Cornwall (c529)
5	Fast	1 Corinthians 9:13-18	Matthew 16:1-6	Martyr Oswald, King of Northumbria (642)
6	Fast***	2 Peter 1:10-19	Matthew 17:1-9	St Hardulf, Hermit at Breedon, Leicestershire (7thC)
7	Fast	1 Corinthians 10:12-22	Matthew 16:20-24	St Donat of Llandunwyd, Glamorgan (6thC)
8	Fast	1 Corinthians 10:28-11:8	Matthew 16:24-28	St Ultan, hieromonk of the Monastery of St Peter, Crayke (8thC)
9	Fast	1 Corinthians 11:8-23a	Matthew 17:10-18	St Phelim, disciple of St Columba (6thC)
10	Fast**	Romans 13:1-10	Matthew 12:30-37	St Bertram of Ilam, Staffordshire (8thC)
11	Fast**	1 Corinthians 1:10-17	Matthew 14:14-22	St Blane, Bishop of Bute (Scotland c590)
12	Fast	1 Corinthians 11:31-12:6	Matthew 18:1-11	St Jambert, 14 th Archbishop of Canterbury (792)
13	Fast	1 Corinthians 12:12-26	Matthew 18:18-22; 19:1-2,13-15	St Muredach, first Bishop of Killala (6thC)
14	Fast	1 Corinthians 13:4-14:5	Matthew 20:1-16	St Werenfrid of England, laboured amongst the Frisians (c760)
15		Philippians 2:5-11	Luke 10:38-41; 11:27-28	St Altfrid of Hildesheim (874)
16	Fast	1 Corinthians 14:26-40	Matthew 21:12-14,17-20	St Armagillus, founder of monasteries, in Brittany (c550)
17		Romans 14:6-9	Matthew 15:32-39	St James the Deacon, missionary to Northumbria (after 671)
18		1 Corinthians 3:9-17	Matthew 14:22-34	St Inan, hermit of Ayrshire, Scotland (9thC)
19		1 Corinthians 15:12-19	Matthew 21:18-22	St Credan, 8 th Abbot of Evesham (780)
20		1 Corinthians 15:29-38	Matthew 21:23-27	St Eadberht, King of Northumbria who became a monastic (768)
21	Fast	1 Corinthians 16:4-12	Matthew 21:28-32	St Eardwulf of Breedon-on-the-Hill (Northumbria, c808)
22		2 Corinthians 1:1-7	Matthew 21:43-46	St Arnulf of Eynesbury, hermit (Cambridgeshire, 9thC)
23	Fast	2 Corinthians 1:12-20	Matthew 22:23-33	St Tydfil, daughter of King Brychan (Merthyr Tydfil c480)
24		Romans 15:30-33	Matthew 17:24-18:4	St Bregwyn, 12 th Archbishop of Canterbury (764)
25		1 Corinthians 4:9-16	Matthew 17:14b-23b	St Ebba the Elder, Abbess of Coldingham (Northumbria, 683)
26		2 Corinthians 2:3c-15	Matthew 23:13-22	St Ninian, Apostle to the Southern Picts (Scotland, 432)
27		2 Corinthians 2:14-3:3	Matthew 23:23-28	St Decuman of Watchet (Somerset, 706)
28	Fast	2 Corinthians 3:4-11	Matthew 23:29-39	St Pelagius, child-martyr of Constance under Numerian (c283)
29	Fast	Acts 13:25-33a	Mark 6:14-30	St Eadwold, hermit at Cerne in Dorset (9thC)
30	Fast	2 Corinthians 4:13-18	Matthew 24:27-33,42-51	St Rumon, bishop and patron of Tavistock (6thC)
31		1 Corinthians 1:3-9	Matthew 19:3-12	Sts Cuthburgh & Cwneburgh, Abbesses of Wimbourne (c725)

* Wine is allowed on this day

** Wine & Oil are allowed on this day

*** Fish, Wine & Oil are allowed on this day

Sundays are shown in Bold

† Note there are more readings on certain days - If you have no other Calendar, the Diocesan Hemerologion serves as a guide. Alternatively search the internet and download **Menologion 3.0** - a useful perpetual calendar

Board Meeting

A Board Meeting will be held on 29th September after the Divine Liturgy. All matters to the Secretary by 14 days earlier.

Board meetings will continue to be held in the Refectory and are open to all who wish to attend. Trustees meetings will, in future, generally be held via video Conferencing due to the difficulty for the Trustees to meet together in person.

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Summer Walk

Will take place on Sunday 8th September following the Divine Liturgy

We agreed our destination would be Wepre Park near Connah's Quay

The park contains a ruined castle (Ewloe), playground and visitor centre.

where we will enjoy picnic and walk and room for the children to run around!

Some of you may be familiar with park already, others surely won't.

Priest in Charge: Very Rev'd Protopresbyter Pancratios Sanders

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40 Ffordd Parc, Bodnant, Prestatyn. LL19 9LJ

Secretary: Presbyteria Anna Sanders

18 Shannon Close, Saltney, Chester. CH4 8PJ

The Divine Liturgy is served at the Church of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr each Sunday at 11.00am and on all the major Feasts.

Fr Pancratios is normally in church during the day on Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays. Check before setting out to avoid a wasted journey.

Church (Sunday) School is held after the time of Communion every Sunday of each month during school term times (except on major feasts).

Pastoral Visits should be arranged by contacting Fr Pancratios.

Weddings, Baptisms, Receptions etc., by arrangement with Father Pancratios.

Confessions before the Divine Liturgy or after Vespers and at other times by arrangement.

Catechism Classes by arrangement with Fr Pancratios.

Membership Subscription 2019 (8/19)

**Greek Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr
Overleigh Cemetery, Overleigh Road, Chester. CH4 7HW**

Title: _____ Initials: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Date: _____

Membership is £10.00 per person, per month. Membership applies to those of 18 years of age and over. Fees may be waived for the unwaged.

It is preferable for memberships to be paid by Standing Order on a monthly basis on the First Day of each month. St Barbara's Bank details: Barclays Bank: Sort Code 20-20-46, Account number 33974146. Further details can be found on www.stbarbara.org.uk/membership

Alternatively, membership can be paid using the envelopes available at church at £10.00 per month or £120.00 annual subscription.

I am a UK taxpayer intending tax to be reclaimed on the enclosed donation made under the Gift Aid scheme (please delete if not applicable)

Signature: _____

Please return to the Treasurer with your gift::

John Gale, 40 Ffordd Parc, Bodnant, Prestatyn. LL19 9LJ

Please note that only Orthodox Christians in good standing may hold full membership and be permitted to vote at general meetings. Non-Orthodox Christians are most welcome to subscribe as friends and supporters of the Greek Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr, Chester.

Please print, cut out, and send with your donation to the Treasurer. The community is grateful for every contribution received so that the work of the church may continue. In the present difficult economic climate such gifts are a true sacrifice. Please remember that there is a reduction for those not in work and that it is also possible to make your giving quarterly.

Please remember, if you are a UK taxpayer we can recover the tax that you have paid on your contribution to the work of the church – but only if you fill in an envelope (to be found at the church door) and place your gift in it. Especially in these difficult times, the church needs your financial support. As I'm sure you understand, work on our church building is ongoing and expensive, besides our ordinary day-to-day expenses. May God bless you all for your support in these matters and may you seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in forming a regular and responsible habit of giving for the work of His Church.