



# The Tower

January 2020

The Christian Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr,  
Overleigh Cemetery, Overleigh Road, Chester CH4 7HW

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

Diocesan Website: [www.thyateira.org.uk](http://www.thyateira.org.uk)

Facebook: Greek Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr in Chester

Charity No: 1144751

*Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

## Christ is Born!

We wish you all a blessed Feast of the Nativity, a joyous New Year and a glorious Theophany. May the year 2020 be holy and God-centred. May your faith be firm and you and your families be blessed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

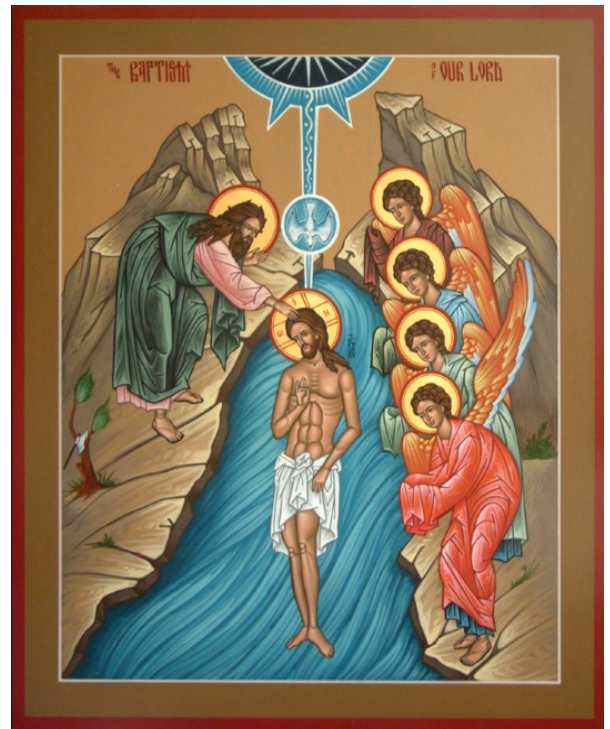
One of our children, Nicholas Pac, has recently been diagnosed with a nut allergy. It is important, therefore, that when we make Kollyva or bring other foods to church that we avoid using nuts or make quite clear (by notice) that there may be nuts in the food. Anyone who has experienced these conditions will know how frightening the effects can be. Please pray for little Nicholas and all his family.

Please remember Hayley Jane and her husband Jack who recently lost their baby in the sixth month of her pregnancy. The little one was to have been baptised as Elias George. May he rest with the Angels and may our prayers give much-needed comfort to his parents.

*With much love for you all*

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

Recent Baptisms include the following children: Aylin Nicolle Bilibau, Mark Prisceanu, Anastasia Maria Vultur, Kevin Stephan Cicu, Luka Kolokotroni, Theodore Kolokotroni and Nazar Filippovich. May the Lord bless them, their parents, sponsors and all their families and keep them always in His love and may they be faithful to Him all the days of their lives.



We shall celebrate the **Baptism of Our Lord** in the usual manner with the Great Blessing of Waters on the Eve (5<sup>th</sup>) and Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil on 6<sup>th</sup> with the Outdoor Blessing at the River Dee and lunch at a local popular restaurant to conclude the day. Father Pancratios will then be available to bless your homes over the following days. Please book your time as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Father Pancratios asks that you do not feed him – he is always in trouble with his doctors!

### Priest in Charge:

#### Very Rev'd Protopresbyter Pancratios Sanders

The Presbytery, 18 Shannon Close, Saltney, Chester. CH4 8PJ  
Telephone: 01244 659717; Mobile: 07850 467675  
email: [pancratios@btinternet.com](mailto:pancratios@btinternet.com)

### Parish Deacon:

#### Rev'd Father John Petkov

28 Greenfield Road, Waverton, Chester. CH3 7NF  
Telephone: 01244 335609; Mobile: 07588 560219  
email: [zvengi@abv.bg](mailto:zvengi@abv.bg)

Fr Pancratios is *normally* in church during the day on Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays. Please 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, Weddings, Baptisms, Receptions, Catechism Classes, etc., by arrangement with Father Pancratios.

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

Memorials may be celebrated on Saturday evenings before Vespers

## Principal Services for January

1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Wednesday 11.00am</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil – Feast of the Circumcision Cutting of the Vasilopitta</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Friday 11.00am	Royal Hours
4 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday 11.00am 5.30pm	Divine Liturgy Sobor of the Seventy Disciples Vespers
5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Sunday 10.00am 11.00am</b>	<b>Matins Divine Liturgy Hieromartyr Theopemptus of Nicomedia followed by the Great Blessing of Waters</b>
6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Monday 11.00am</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil, followed by the Outdoor Blessing of Waters when we visit the river Dee at Eccleston</b>
8 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 6.30pm	Vespers Monk-Martyr Polyeuktos of Meletina
9 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 6.30pm	Vespers Saint Gregory of Nyssa
11 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday 5.30pm	Vespers
12 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Sunday 10.00am 11.00am</b>	<b>Matins Divine Liturgy Virgin-Martyr Tatiana of Rome: Annual General Meeting</b>
15 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 6.30pm	Vespers Chains of the Apostle Peter
16 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 6.30pm	Vespers Saint Anthony the Great
18 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday 5.30pm	Vespers
19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Sunday 10.00am 11.00am</b>	<b>Matins Divine Liturgy St Mark, Archbishop of Ephesus, Defender of the Faith</b>
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Wednesday 6.30pm	Vespers Hieromartyr Clement, Bishop of Ancyra
24 <sup>th</sup>	Friday 6.30pm	Vespers Saint Gregory Nazianzus, Archbishop of Constantinople
25 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday 5.30pm	Vespers
26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Sunday 10.00am 11.00am</b>	<b>Matins Divine Liturgy St Xenophon and family</b>
29 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 6.30pm	Vespers Sobor of the Ecumenical Teachers

## Principal Services for February

1 <sup>st</sup>	Saturday 5.30pm	Vespers
2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Sunday 10.00am 11.00am</b>	<b>Matins Divine Liturgy The Meeting of the Lord in the Temple</b>
5 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 6.30pm	Vespers St Photios, Patriarch of Constantinople
8 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday 5.30pm	Vespers
9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Sunday 10.00am 11.00am</b>	<b>Matins Divine Liturgy Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee <i>Beginning of the Triodion</i></b>
12 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 6.30pm	Vespers Apostles Aquila and Priscilla
15 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday 5.30pm	Vespers
16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Sunday 10.00am 11.00am</b>	<b>Matins Divine Liturgy Sunday of the Prodigal Son</b>
19 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 6.30pm	Vespers St Leo, Bishop of Catania
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Saturday 4.30pm 5.30pm	Memorial Soul Saturday Vespers
23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Sunday 10.00am 11.00am</b>	<b>Matins Divine Liturgy Sunday of the Last Judgement, Sunday of Meatfare <i>Meat-Fast Week</i></b>
26 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 6.30pm	Vespers St Prokopios, Confessor of Decapolis
29 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday 5.30pm	Vespers (Saturday of Cheesefare)  <b><i>Month of March</i></b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Sunday 10.00am 11.00am</b>	<b>Matins Divine Liturgy Forgiveness Sunday, Sunday of Cheesefare <i>Great Lent begins</i></b>

The Annual General Meeting will take place on **12<sup>th</sup> January**. Please ensure your attendance at this important meeting and submit your nominations for the Board in good time.

# A Scripture Reading Calendar for January

with Irish Saints (where known)

1	Fastfree	Colossians 2:8-12	Luke 2:20-21,40-52	St Cúan, Abbot, founder of many churches and monasteries (752)
2	Fastfree	Hebrews 5:4-10	John 3:1-15	St Mainchin the Wise, first Bishop of Limerick (late 6thC)
3	Fastfree	Acta 13:25-33a	Luke 3:1-18	St Fintan of Doon, disciple of St Comgall of Bangor (6thC)
4	Fastfree	1 Timothy 3:14-4:5	Matthew 3:1-6	<i>St Linus, first Bishop (Pope) of Rome (c76)</i>
5	Fast**	2 Timothy 4:5-8	Mark 1:1-8	St Cheir, daughter of St Fintan Munnu at Kilkeary (c680)
6		Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7	Matthew 3:13-17	St Scarthin, hermit on Mt Mairge in Leix, disciple of St David (6thC)
7		Acts 19:1-8	John 1:29-34	St Cronan Beg, Bishop of Aendrum in Co. Down (7thC)
8	Fast	Hebrews 10:1-18	Luke 20:1-8	St Ercnacta, made nun by St Patrick in Ulster (5thC)
9		Hebrews 10:35-11:7	Luke 20:9-18	St Foellen, monk, born in Eire, laboured in Scotland (8thC)
10	Fast	Hebrews 11:8-16	Luke 20:19-26	St Diarmis the Just, founder of a monastery on Innis-Clotran (6thC)
11		Ephesians 5:1-8b	Luke 12:32-40	Sts Ethenia & Fidelmia, nuns, daughters of King Laoghaire (433)
12		Ephesians 4:7-13	Matthew 4:12-17	<i>St Eilian of Anglesey (6thC)</i>
13		Hebrews 11:17-31	Luke 20:27-44	<i>St Erbyn of Dumnonia &amp; Wales, King (c480)</i>
14		Hebrews 12:25-27; 13:22-25	Luke 21:12-19	<i>St Kentigern Mungo, first Bishop of Strathclyde (614)</i>
15	Fast	James 1:1-18	Luke 21:5-11,30-24	St Íte of Killeely, Hermitess & foster-mother of St Brendan (570)
16		James 1:19-27	Luke 21:28-33b	St Dúnachad ua Bráein, Abbot of Clonmacnoise (988)
17	Fast**	James 2:1-13	Luke 21:37-22:8	St Ninnidh, disciple of St Finian, one of the 12 Apostles of Eire (6thC)
18		Colossians 1:1-6	Luke 13:19-29	St Ninnidh of Innismacsaint (6thC)
19		Colossians 3:4-11	Luke 17:12-19	<i>St Brevard of Cornwall, Bishop in Jersey (6thC)</i>
20		Hebrews 3:5-11,17-19	Mark 9:42-10:1	St Laicin, founded a Monastery in Fulachmhín (655)
21		Hebrews 4:1-13	Mark 10:2-12	St Briga of Kilbride, Abbess at Lismore (6thC)
22	Fast**	Hebrews 5:11-6:8	Mark 10:11-16	<i>St Wendreda, Virgin of March (7thC)</i>
23		Hebrews 7:1-6	Mark 10:17-27	St Colman, Abbot of Lismore & Bishop (702)
24	Fast	Hebrews 7:18-25	Mark 10:24b-32b	St Guasacht, Bishop of Granard (5thC)
25		Ephesians 2:11-13	Luke 16:10-15	<i>St Eochod, Apostle of the Picts of Galloway (597)</i>
26		1 Timothy 4:9-15	Luke 19:1-10	<i>St Conon, Bishop and monastic founder on the Isle of Man (648)</i>
27		James 2:14-26	Mark 10:46-52	St Natalis of Ulster, monastic founder under St Columba (564)
28		James 3:1-10	Mark 11:11-23	St Kinnera, Virgin on the Isle of Inniscathy, Bantry Bay (c530)
29	Fast	James 3:10-4:6	Mark 11:22-26	St Blath, holy cook at St Brigid's Convent in Kildare (523)
30		James 4:7-5:9	Mark 11:27-33	<i>St Tudelyd, virgin in Wales (5thC)</i>
31	Fast	1 Peter 1;1-2,10	Mark 12:1-12	St Maedoc, first Bishop of Ferns, Wexford, Abbot (626)

\* 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.

## Some Further Thoughts on the Life and Traditions of our Church – The Monastery

A country that has monasteries is spiritually well-blessed though as yet there are only a few in the United Kingdom. There are, however, several in the planning stage and we may hope they will begin to function soon.

It is most important that we should remember that a monastery is not a parish or parish church and we should not treat it as such. It has a completely different function and that is principally prayer – prayer for the world and all that is within it. Of course other things may take place in the monastery; the monks or nuns may produce handicrafts; prayer ropes, crosses, icons, candles, incense and similar items, by the sale of which they sustain themselves.

The monastery will also offer hospitality – to the traveller, the pilgrim, the one seeking spiritual sustenance. For

whatever reason we make our pilgrimage, it is important not to overstay our welcome or behave or dress inappropriately. Some monasteries will only allow a single night stay, others a longer period so long as arrangements have been made in advance. Whether we seek a brief visit or a longer stay we should 'pay our way' and offer a gift that is appropriate to the use we have made of the monastery.

We should also follow the monastic daily cycle and join with the monks at all their worship, remembering that the monastic clock works differently to what we are used to.

The opportunity may also be taken to raise our spiritual concerns with the abbot or Abbess or other spiritual father. Do remember that some monasteries or convents will not receive persons of the opposite sex for obvious reasons.

# Angels unawares

*Abbot Tryphon*

Although this encounter is recorded in America, it can easily apply to any part of the world where there is poverty and homelessness. At this blessed season of the Nativity, we should not forget those for whom Christmas is a time of cold comfort and loneliness. For our souls' sakes, let us not be found willing to judge in ignorance of the circumstances facing others.

While sitting in a pavement cafe with my friend, Archpriest Basil Rhodes, having a cup of coffee and a bite to eat, we noticed a homeless man stop behind me. The man was staring at our food, so Father Basil asked him if he was hungry. He answered with an enthusiastic "yes", and when Father asked what he'd like to eat, he said "eggs and sausage". Father Basil told him they didn't have such a breakfast here, but gave him five dollars to buy it somewhere else.

The whole time this conversation was taking place with this homeless man, another man, around thirty years of age, was standing nearby, listening to every word. As the homeless man walked away, the younger man walked up and confronted us with the question, "how could you give money to a junky? You are not doing him any good by giving him money. Aren't you men of God?"

I responded by saying that it was not our place to judge anyone, to which he replied, in a confrontational manner, "he's just going to buy drugs with that money. You don't seem to be very intuitive". I told him I'd worked with the homeless before, and that the man was hungry and deserving of our charity. The man said "cheers" and dismissively walked away.

A woman seated at a nearby table called over with the words, "good response". She then came over to our table, knelt down beside me, and with tears in her eyes, identified herself as a social worker, and told us she'd been going through a particularly difficult time, and that the interaction she'd just witnessed had helped her immensely.

I then told this woman the story of the time I was walking with an elderly bishop of the Russian Church, and how I had spotted a filthy homeless man walking

towards us. This man's hair was dishevelled, filthy with years of dirt, and was wearing torn clothing. He had no soles on his shoes, so with each step we could see the bottom of his feet. Instinctively, I took the elbow of the bishop, and attempted to get him to cross in the middle of the street. The bishop asked why, and I said, "Look at the crazy man coming towards us". The bishop told me we were not crossing, but would continue.

When directly in front of the the man, the bishop stopped, reached out, taking the man's filthy right hand into his own, and placed a twenty dollar bill into the man's hand, covering the bill with the man's left hand. At that moment the man looked up into our eyes, saying nothing. But looking back were the bluest, clearest eyes I had ever seen. They were not the eyes of a homeless man, nor the eyes of a deranged man, eyes filled with wisdom and holiness.

As we walked away, I remarked about the man's eyes, to which the bishop responded by saying, "We just encountered an angel unaware, and we were being tested," recalling the words of Scripture, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Hebrews 13:2).

After the social worker left, a man seated at a nearby table remarked, "that was a remarkable story, and you made my wife cry". This other couple had witnessed the whole of these encounters.

A moment later, the young man who'd judged us so harshly after the original encounter, returned. He came up, asked forgiveness for having judged us, and said he'd "just seen the homeless man buying yogurt and fruit" with the money we'd given him. I stood up, gave the young man a hug, and we all parted ways.

## What is Christmas all about?

Are we celebrating the birth of a baby boy? No! We are celebrating the beginning of the way to our salvation. God becomes man, a human being who is also God! Christmas is about the Incarnation of our Lord, our Saviour, our Creator. God becomes man to show us our true potential created in His image and likeness. After His birth He lives with humility, heals, teaches and then unjustly suffers, is beaten, humiliated, and hung naked, nailed to the Cross, voluntarily killed by the Crucifixion. His birth, life and death was to show us our path to paradise – no less!