



The Tower

March 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/GreekOrthodoxCommunityofSaintBarbara)

Charity No: 114475

Dear brothers and sisters,

Great Lent is now upon us and so we omit certain foods from our table - meat and dairy products, wine and oil - as the Calendar reminds us.

But is this all there is to Lent? No! not by a long way. If we simply give up certain foodstuffs then we are merely practising a diet!

Our Lent is a preparation, an anticipation of the Paschal Feast of feasts. During this time we are called upon, as faithful Orthodox Christians, to follow the Tradition of the Church to the best of our ability.

- + So not just to fast from certain foodstuffs ...
- + but also to attend the many and varied church services offered at this time of year;
- + to spend more time in our own private prayer - for our own salvation, for our families and friends and for the whole world;
- + and also to consider the needs of the poor and needy; not only those camped on our doorstep, but those in far-off places for whom the Church is their sole lifeline.

This is our labour for Christ and for our Salvation not only at the present but during our whole lifetime - Please don't squander these God-given opportunities.

With much love for you all through Lent

Fr Pancratios & Presb. Anna,

Fr Dn John & Diaconisa Vera

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Board Meeting

A Board Meeting will be held on 10th March 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.

Wine and Oil for the Offering

It is good to give gifts to God in Thanksgiving for the many good things we receive from Him. We give of our bounty at the time of Artoklasia (Thanksgiving) with five loaves, wine and oil.

The loaves should be of pure ingredients: flour, water, salt and yeast, marked with a seal or cross.

The wine should be sweet and red; the two most easily accessible being *Mavrodaphni* or *Commandaria*. *Mavrodaphni* is readily available these days in supermarkets at reasonable cost. *Commandaria* is less readily available and rather more expensive but of the very best quality (we like to use that for the Great Feasts). *We should avoid offering ordinary table wines and sherry's as these are usually not sufficiently sweet for Communion use.*

The oil should always be Olive Oil and not vegetable oil (i.e. Sunflour or Rapeseed oils).

We offer these material things to God and His Church in thankfulness for the many gifts that He bestows on us and our families each and every day.

What happens to them? The loaves are distributed to our brothers and sisters in the Lord and especially to the poor and needy. One loaf may be retained, if sealed, for use in the Eucharist. The wine and oil is presented to the church, the wine for the Chalice in Communion and the oil for the lamps that light the church. Thanks be to God!

Principal Services for March

2nd Saturday	4.30pm	Memorial for the Saturday of Souls
	5.30pm	Vespers
3rd Sunday	10.00am	Matins
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy
6 th Wednesday	6.30pm	Sunday Meatfare, Sunday of the Last Judgement
9 th Saturday	5.30pm	Hieromartyrs of Cherson
10th Sunday	10.00am	Matins
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy
First Week of Great Lent beginning with Clean Monday:		
11 th Monday	6.30pm	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete (i)
12 th Tuesday	6.30pm	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete (ii)
13 th Wednesday	6.30pm	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete (iii)
14 th Thursday	6.30pm	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete (iv)
15 th Friday	6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
	7.30pm	Akathist to the Theotokos - The Salutations (i)
16 th Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers
17th Sunday	10.00am	Matins
	11.00am	Liturgy of St Basil 1st Sunday of Great Lent - Sunday of Orthodoxy
20 th Wednesday	6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
22 nd Friday	6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
	7.30pm	Akathist to the Theotokos - The Salutations (ii)
23 rd Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers
24th Sunday	10.00am	Matins
	11.00am	Liturgy of St Basil 2nd Sunday of Great Lent - St Gregory Palamas
25th Monday	11.00am	Divine Liturgy
		The Annunciation to the Most Holy Theotokos
27 th Wednesday	6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
29 th Friday	6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
	7.30pm	Akathist to the Theotokos - The Salutations (iii)
30 th Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers
31st Sunday	10.00am	Matins
	11.00am	Liturgy of St Basil 3rd Sunday of Great Lent - Veneration of the Cross

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'Sprout' Stew

no sprouts!

a measure-it-yourself recipe

Celery leaves - Leeks - Kale - Spinach - Parsley - Dock (or other green leaves)

A few fresh scallions

A few small heads of garlic (with their greens)

Tomato paste

Oil

Red pepper

Herbs of your choice

preparation:

Cut everything into thick pieces, boil and strain.

Heat oil with tomato paste and add into the cooker.

Stir and then add the red pepper.

Boil on medium heat and reduce the liquids to taste.

The vegetables may be sautéed first with onions for a richer taste.

This recipe does include a small amount of oil so may not be felt suitable for all fast days.

Retain more water and omit the oil for a good 'Monastery Soup'!

Principal Services for April

3rd Wednesday 6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
5th Friday 6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
	7.30pm Akathist to the Theotokos - The Salutations (iv)
6th Saturday 4.30pm	Memorial Saturday of Souls
	5.30pm Vespers
7th Sunday 10.00am	Matins
	Divine Liturgy 4th Sunday of Great Lent; St John Climacus
10th Wednesday 6.30pm	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete (in full)
11th Thursday 6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
12th Friday 6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
	7.30pm Akathist to the Theotokos - The Salutations (in full)
13th Saturday 5.30pm	Vespers
14th Sunday 10.00am	Matins
	Divine Liturgy 5th Sunday of Great Lent; St Mary of Egypt
17th Wednesday 6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
19th Friday 6.30pm	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
20th Saturday 5.30pm	Vespers
21st Sunday 10.00am	Matins
	Divine Liturgy Palm Sunday; Feast of the Entry into Jerusalem
	Full details of the Great Week Services will be shown in the April Newsletter
27th Saturday 11.00am	Vesperal Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great
	9.00pm Reading of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles
	11.30pm Midnight Office
28th Sunday Midnight	Χρῖστος Ανέστη with the Matins of the Resurrection
	and the Divine Liturgy followed by Festal Feast
	4.00pm Paschal Vespers
	Refreshments at the Parish House

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When you approach your bed, say to it: "This very night, perchance, you will be my tomb, O bed; for I know not whether tonight, in place of a transient sleep, the eternal sleep of the future will be mine." And so, while you still have legs, follow the path of doing, before you are tied by bonds that can never be severed. While you still have hands, crucify yourself in prayer before death comes. While you still have eyes, fill them with tears, before they are covered by dust. As a rose wilts at a breath of the wind, so at a little puff on even one of the elements of which you are composed you will die. Establish, O man, in your heart the thought that instant departure confronts you, and constantly say to yourself: "There, already, at the door is the messenger come for me. Why am I idle? My removal is forever; there will be no return."

Saint Isaac the Syrian +c700

A good reminder as Great Lent approaches

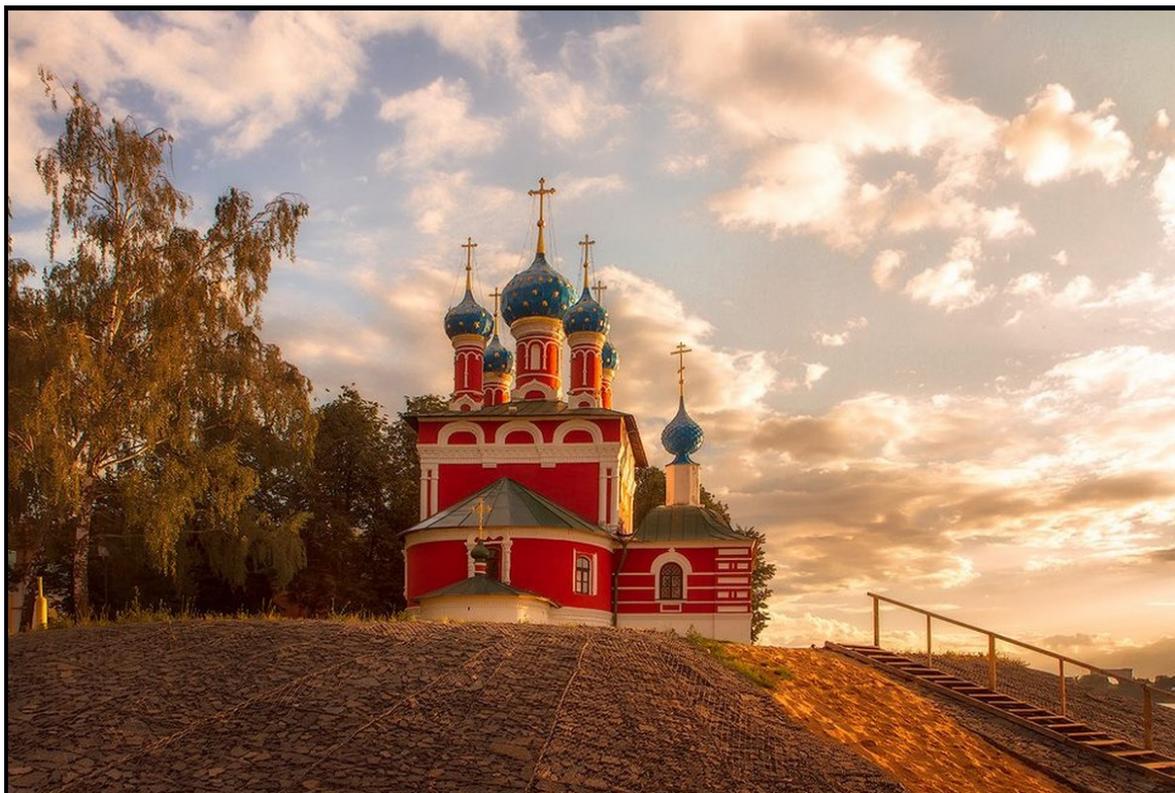
+Saint Ignatius Brianchaninov

"God, be merciful to me a sinner! Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me!" Many pronounce these brief prayers with great haste, caring only to say the required number of them. By this manner of praying, they do not allow the prayers to penetrate the heart and produce their inherent effect, which is tender feeling.

The holy Fathers justly note that whoever prays thus prays to the wind, and not to God. Why do we get bored in church? Because we have not felt the effect of prayer. Why do we rush to a lavish table? Because we know the meaning of material food from experience. Why do we not rush to church, but try to come a little later, when a significant portion of the Divine services are already over? Because we do not know from experience the meaning of prayer, which is food for the soul, and which imparts spiritual strength to the soul. We do not know from experience the meaning of prayer because we pray hastily, superficially, and without attention. The effect on the soul of long but inattentive prayer is like the effect of copious rain upon a metal roof, from which all the water runs off, no matter how much it pours, without having any effect at all upon the roof. In contrast, attentive prayer can be likened to a beneficial rain that waters a planted field, giving nourishment to the growth there, and preparing a rich harvest.

The disciples of prayer who lean upon its breast—the holy Fathers—correct a major mistake that deprives the praying ascetic of all the fruits of his ascetic labour. They instruct us to pronounce the words of short prayers and of all kinds of prayer without haste, observing scrupulous attention to the words of the prayers. When the prayers are read unhurriedly, it is possible to have such attention, while hurried reading leaves no place for attention. Prayer without attention is like a body which the soul has left: it has no fragrance of humility, it does not ascend to God. Stricken and deadened by dispersed thoughts, it crawls along the earth of corruption and foul smell, imparting this corruption to those who pray carelessly and coldly. Mental attention at prayer is reflected in the heart by blessed grief over sins, which is that very repentance that God commands us to have. When the heart is filled with a feeling of repentance, it in turn draws the mind to increased attention. Once there is attention and tender feeling, all the gifts of the Holy Spirit enter into the soul, making it a temple of God.

Let us provide our prayer with two qualities: attention and repentance. Let it fly up to the heavens with them as upon two wings, then appear before the face of God, and intercede for us to gain His mercy. The blessed publican's prayer had these two qualities



The church at Uglich, W. Russia dedicated to the sainted Prince Dimitri 'on the Blood'

Some Further Thoughts on the Life and Traditions of our Faith *Approaching the Chalice*

What do we expect when we attend the Eucharist?
What do we hope for when we approach the Chalice?

Do we approach merely out of a sense of duty or as an interlude before Sunday lunch? Surely our hearts must speak to us that there is more to it than this!

At the core of our relationship with the Chalice and its contents is LOVE -- the love we are called to have for Christ and the whole of His Creation in response to His love for us -- a love such that God became incarnate, that endured the Cross and three-days burial, so that He might open wide the gates of Paradise to all of us who respond to that love.

The Eucharist, once offered at the Last Supper, is, as He tells us then, His Body and Blood; the most precious gift ever given to mankind. It is the key to everlasting life. If then, this gift is so precious, then we should, as the priest says when he offers the Chalice to the people: "With the fear of God, and with faith and love, draw near."

Yes, with Fear, for the pre-Communion prayers remind us that the Precious Gifts will burn us if we receive them unworthily, that is without proper preparation by prayer and with true repentance (confession) for our sins.

With Faith, believing without doubt that what we receive is truly the Body and Blood of Christ changed mystically (that is: in a way beyond our understanding) from the offered bread and wine through the action of the Holy Spirit in response to our heartfelt prayer.

And with Love, in the light of Christ's promise that He has opened the way to paradise and desires us all to be with Him in that blessed place.

The Eucharist is then a most Precious Gift to be received with the greatest care and attention. Thus we should, as the church instructs us, contemplate our sins and confess them honestly and fully in the proper manner frequently so as to approach the Gifts with a pure and untroubled heart.

We also might reflect on the great care with which the priest celebrates the Eucharist and brings out the Gifts to the people. In turn, we must take great care to

approach the Chalice and avoid any risk of upsetting the Chalice or spilling the Gifts.

So, dear brothers and sisters, let us present ourselves, frequently, properly prepared; and with fear, faith and love to receive Christ into our hearts. At the due time, stand quietly in line with our arms crossed over each other (X-wise) ready to open our mouths wide when our turn comes. We close our mouths completely over the spoon so that the Gifts are drawn into our mouths safely. Once we have received, we should dab our lips with the *kalima* (red cloth) and step aside to take our portion of the Antidoron. We have no need to venerate icons - this should have been done on our arrival in church - and we should not make the Sign of the Cross either, for fear we might upset the Chalice. There are some who like to kiss the chalice after receiving the Gifts, again, it is preferable that this should be avoided for obvious reasons!

Babies and little children should not be forced to receive Communion. I have seen grandmothers try to pull a child's jaw off -- this will not do! A child so treated will come to view the Holy Gifts as something painful, to be endured. Our children will come when they are ready, may be next week or month; perhaps they will come when they are put down to be able to walk up by themselves. When they are ready they will accept Communion as something very, very, special.

In many places those who receive the Eucharist will stand together at one side of the church until all have received the Gifts and are dismissed with the words: "O God, save your people, and bless your inheritance."

The *Antidoron*, and the cup of wine and warm water into which the *Anti-hero* should be dipped, are a simple means of ensuring that the precious Gifts are completely consumed. We should avoid spitting (a filthy habit!) and neither should we seek a priest's blessing for the rest of the day since we have just received the greatest Gift of all!

There's more to come, Fr Pancratios



Twenty Practical Suggestions for Humility

In our Orthodox Tradition, humility has often been called the “Mother of all virtues” and pride has been named the “cause of all sin”.

The wise and honest person is the one who is humble. As King Solomon wrote: “*A man's pride will bring humiliation, but one who is lowly in spirit (i.e. humble) will obtain honour*” [Proverbs 29:23]. Those who are humble have cast out from their souls all vanity and conceit and are able to consider no good act as beneath their dignity and honour, being filled with the Grace of God.

We are all sinners in one way or another but humility allows us to recognise the depth of our sins, for as Saint Andrew of Crete reminds us, “like no other man”. The truly humble person is the one who, confessing his sins, will enter into the joy of his Lord.

The following texts by Father Stephanos Anagnostopoulos are practical reminders how we may acquire that humility that will lead to our Salvation.

Did they forget you? They don't even pick up the phone? It doesn't matter.

Were they unjust to you? Forget about it.

Do they despise you? Rejoice.

Do they condemn you? Don't fight back.

Do they ridicule you? Don't respond.

Do they curse you? Be silent and pray.

Do they not let you speak? Do they cut you off? Don't be sad.

Do they speak evil of you? Don't fight back.

Do your children, your relatives and your own people take away your rights? Don't complain.

Do they get angry with you? Remain peaceful.

Do they rob you openly? Be blind to it.

Do they mock you? Forbear it.

Do they not listen to your advice, especially your children? Fall to your knees and pray.

Are you upset with your spouse? You are to blame, not the other.

Were you to blame? Ask forgiveness.

You weren't to blame? Again ask forgiveness.

Do you have health? Glorify God.

Do you have sickness? Do you have cancer, depression? Are you suffering, tortured, in pain? Glorify God.

Complaining, unemployment, poverty in the house? Fasting. Vigil. Prayer.

For everyone and for everything, prayer. Much prayer. Much prayer. Fasting and prayer, for “these kinds of passions and demons do not come out but with fasting and prayer.”

May we all, my brethren, and first of all myself, follow these humble suggestions, that we may be sure that we will be saved.

Note: These succinct, practical examples of the Beatitudes or the Lives of the Saints, are wonderful reminders of the love, humility and repentance that Christ calls us to. However, please always make sure that you are under the guidance of your spiritual father to prevent any delusion or damage to yourself or your family.

A Scripture Reading Calendar for March

1	Fast	2 John 1-13	Mark 15:20,22,25,33-41	Martyr Eudoxia of Heliopolis (107)
2		1 Corinthians 10:23-28	Luke 21:8-9,25-27,33-36	Hieromartyr Nestor, at Perge in Pamphylia (c250)
3	Meatfast	1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2	Matthew 25:31-46	Martyr Hemetherius slain in Calahorra, Spain (c298)
4	Meatfast	3 John 1:1-15	Luke 19:29-40, 22:7-39	St Julian, Bishop of Alexandria (189)
5	Meatfast	Jude 1-10	Luke 22:39-42,45-71, 23:1	Martyr Conon of Isauria (1stC)
6	Meatfast	Joel 2:12-26	Joel 3:12-21	St Marcian of Tortona (120)
7	Meatfast	Jude 11-25	Luke 23:1-31,33a,44-56	Martyr Perpetua of Carthage and those with her (202-3)
8	Meatfast	Zechariah 8:7-17	Zechariah 8:19-23	Apostle Hermas of the 70, Bp of Philipopolis (1stC)
9	Meatfast	Rom. 14:19-23,16:25-27	Matthew 6:1-13	Martyr Urpasianus, burned alive at Nicomedia (c305)
10	Meatfast	Romans 13:11b-14:4	Matthew 6:14-21	Martyr Codratus and those with him at Corinth (C251)
11	Fast	Isaiah 1:1-20	Proverbs 1:1-20	Hieromartyr Pionius, priest of Smyrna (250)
12	Fast	Isaiah 1:19-2:3	Proverbs 1:20-33	Martyr Maximilian in Thebeste, Numidia (295)
13	Fast	Isaiah 2:3-11	Proverbs 2:1.22	Hieromartyr Publius, Bishop of Athens (3rdC)
14	Fast	Isaiah 2:11-21	Proverbs 3:1-18	47 Martyrs of Rome, Baptised & Martyred on one day (67)
15	Fast	Isaiah 3:1-14	Proverbs 3:19-34	Apostle Aristobulus of the 70, first bishop of Britain (1stC)
16	Fast**	Hebrews 1:1-12	Mark 2:23-3:5	Hieromartyr Alexander, bishop of Rome (2ndC)
17	Fast**	Hebr. 11:24-26,32-40	John 20:19-31	St Lazarus the Just, Friend of Christ (1stC)
18	Fast	Isaiah 4:2-5:7	Proverbs 3:24-4:22	St Narcissus, Bishop of Girona, Spain (c307)
19	Fast	Isaiah 5:7-16	Proverbs 5:1-15	Martyr Chrysanthus & those with him in Rome (283)
20	Fast	Isaiah 5:16-25	Proverbs 5:15-6:3	Martyr Photini the Samaritan woman & those with her (66)
21	Fast	Isaiah 6:1-12	Proverbs 6:3-20	St Beryllus, Bishop of Catania, Spain (c90)
22	Fast	Isaiah 7:1-14	Proverbs 6:20-7:1	Virgin- Confessor Drosida of Antioch (104)
23	Fast**	Hebrews 3:12-16	Mark 35:1-44	Martyr Philetas & family and those with them (125)
24	Fast**	Hebrews 1:10-2:3	Mark 2:1-12	St Artemon, Bp of Selucia in Pisidia (1stC)
25	Fast***	Hebrews 2:11-18	Luke 1:24-38	St Dismas, the Good Thief crucified with Christ (1stC)
26	Fast	Isaiah 9:9-10:4	Proverbs 8:32-9:11	Martyr Castulus, buried alive for helping others (288)
27	Fast	Isaiah 10:12-20	Proverbs 9:12-18	St Augusta, martyred by her father, near Treviso (5thC)
28	Fast	Isaiah 11:10-12:2	Proverbs 10:1-22	Apostle Herodias of Patras of the Seventy (1stC)
29	Fast	Isaiah 13:2-13	Proverbs 10:31-11:12	Martyr Secundus of Asti, Italy (119)
30	Fast**	Hebrews 10:32-38a	Mark 2:14-17	Apostle Sosthenes and others of the 70 (1stC)
31	Fast**	Hebrews 4:14-5:6	Mark 8:34-9:1	St Balbina of Rome (c130)

* 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

A Parable

One person lived in the wild, poor, alone, in cold and hunger. And every morning he enthusiastically pronounced a prayer in which he earnestly thanked God. A neighbour came to him and said: Listen, how can you be so deceitful? After all, you neither deceive yourself, nor us, nor God: we all know that God leaves you destitute to the end - and you know it; so why do you thank him for what? And he replied: - You do not understand the essence of the matter! God looked at me and thought: what does he need for him to grow to his full extent? He needs hunger, cold, loneliness ... And these things He bestowed upon me so abundantly that I thank Him day after day.



Priest in Charge: Very Rev'd Protopresbyter Pancratios Sanders

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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 (3/19)
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 sent 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.