



The Tower

May 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/>

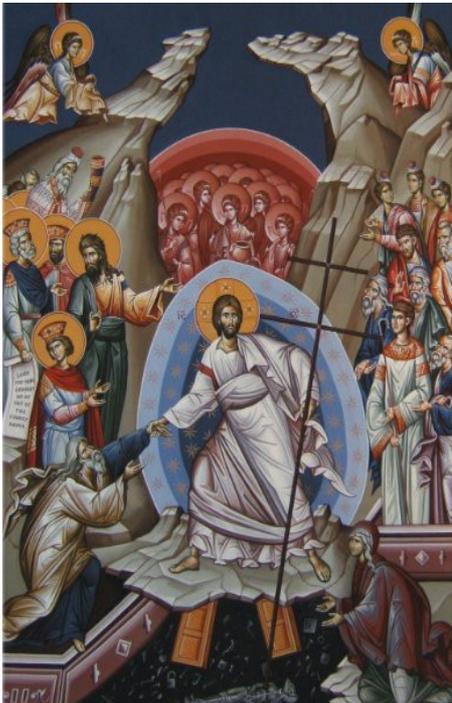
Diocesan website: www.thyateira.org.uk

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

Charity No: 114475

Dear brothers and sisters,

Christ is Risen!



He is Risen indeed!

With much love for you all on these holy days

Fr Pancratios & Presb. Anna,

Fr Dn John & Diaconisa Vera

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He who has no love cannot be called a Christian. The whole Gospel is summarized in compassion. And this secures immortality and eternal life to man.

Saint Justin Popovic +1979

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Χριστὸς ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη!

Hristos a înviat! Adevărat a înviat!

Христосъ воскресе! Воистину воскресе!

Χριστος възкресе! Наистина възкресе!

Christus resurrexit! Resurrexit vere!

Kristus prisikélé! Tikrai prisikélé!

Atgyfododd Crist! Yn wir atgyfododd!

المسيح قام! حقا قام!

Christos tensiou! Bahake tensiou!

ΠΙΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΨΤΩΝΨ! ΗΕΝ ΟΥΜΕΘΗΗ ΑΨΤΩΝΨ!

ქრისტე აღსდგა! ჭეშმარიტად აღსდგა!

Kristo Amefufuka! Amefufuka kweli kweli!

基督復活了！他確實復活了！

Kristus nousi kuolleista! Totisesti nousi!

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Speak more to God about your children than to your children about God... The soul of the teenager is in a state of an explosion of freedom. For this reason he has a hard time accepting various counsels. So, rather than counselling him continuously and reproaching him now and again, leave the situation to Christ, to the Panagia and to the saints, asking them to bring your child to reason.

Elder Epiphanius of Athens +1989

Principal Services for May

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1st Wednesday 6.30pm | Vespers | St Boris, Prince of Bulgaria |
| 4th Saturday 5.30pm | Vespers | |
| 5th Sunday 10.00am | Matins | |
| 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | 2nd of Pascha; St Thomas Sunday |
| 8th Wednesday 6.30pm | Vespers | Prophet Isaiah |
| 9th Thursday 6.30pm | Vespers | Apostle Simon Zelotes |
| 11th Saturday 5.30pm | Vespers | |
| 12th Sunday 10.00am | Matins | |
| 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | 3rd of Pascha; The Myrrh-Bearing Women |
| 15th Wednesday 6.30pm | Vespers | St Theodore the Sanctified |
| 18th Saturday 5.30pm | Vespers | |
| 19th Sunday 10.00am | Matins | |
| 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | 4th of Pascha; The Paralysed Man |
| 22nd Wednesday 6.30pm | Vespers | St Michael the Confessor, Bishop of Synada |
| 25th Saturday 5.30pm | Vespers | |
| 26th Sunday 10.00am | Matins | |
| 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | 5th of Pascha; The Samaritan Woman |
| 29th Wednesday 6.30pm | Vespers | St Isaakos, founder of the Dalmatian Monastery |

Principal Services for June

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| 1st Saturday 5.30pm | Vespers | |
| 2nd Sunday 10.00am | Matins | |
| 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | 6th of Pascha; The Blind Man |
| 5th Wednesday 6.30pm | Vigil | for the Feast: |
| 6th Thursday 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ |
| 8th Saturday 5.30pm | Vespers | |
| 9th Sunday 10.00am | Matins | |
| 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | 7th of Pascha; Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council |
| 12th Wednesday 6.30pm | Vespers | Martyr Aquilina of Byblos |
| 15th Saturday 5.30pm | Vespers | |
| 16th Sunday 10.00am | Matins | |
| 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | Holy Pentecost - Descent of the Holy Spirit |
| 1.00pm | Vespers and the Kneeling Prayers | |
| 19th Wednesday 6.30pm | Vespers | Hieromartyr Methodios, Bishop of Patara |
| 22nd Saturday 5.30pm | Vespers | |
| 23rd Sunday 10.00am | Matins | |
| 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | 1st after Pentecost; All Saints |
| | <i>Beginning of the Apostles' Fast (24th)</i> | |
| 29th Saturday 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | Feast of the All-praised Apostles, Peter & Paul |
| 5.30pm | Vespers | |
| 30th Sunday 10.00am | Matins | |
| 11.00am | Divine Liturgy | 1st after Pentecost; All Saints of Britain |

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Take pride in the title of "woman," take pride in the fact that you were born not a man, but a woman, for the Lord has given you a heart much better than that of men, a heart receptive to all that is holy, a heart soft as wax, feeling the truth of Christ. You live not by a cold mind, as do men, but you live by the sense of the heart, for the human heart, together with the mind, is an organ of perception. And the perception of the heart is higher than that of the mind.

Saint Luke of Simferopol, the blessed Surgeon +1961

For our Children (and their parents)!



Over the last six months we have had the blessing of a Deacon to assist at our worship. You will all have noticed that some things are now done differently at the Liturgy. Deacon John does some things that were once done by Fr Pancratios. We smile because we see the deacon do these things because the priest is old and can't hold things very well so the deacon has to do them for him! Children: your task is to watch the liturgy very carefully to see what the deacon now does specially to help Fr Pancratios. The picture above shows one task to start you off - see how many more you can spot. You will be tested!

p.s. We don't think they look like us at all. Fr P & Dn J.

Some Further Thoughts on the Life and Traditions of our Faith

The Pentecostarion

With Great Lent and the Paschal Feast behind us, we open a new book in the yearly cycle of our church calendar. This book, the Pentecostarion, covers the 50 days between Easter and Pentecost (this year 16th June).

A special period, so a special service book. In this period, the Sundays bear specific titles from 'Thomas Sunday' to 'The Man born blind' and the Scriptural readings at Liturgy are drawn from the Gospel of Saint John and the Book of Acts.

From early times, this period was considered as a time of rejoicing; rejoicing in the Resurrection of Christ culminating in the celebration of the Feast of Pentecost itself. Only then at the Vespers of Pentecost would we start kneeling again to show this special period was over.

Both feasts of Passover (Pascha) and Pentecost have their origins in Jewish harvest festivals: Passover for the beginning of the barley harvest and Pentecost for the completion of the wheat harvest.

In New Testament times Passover (Pascha) became inextricably linked with the events of the Crucifixion and Resurrection thus linking these events with an absolute moment in world history. In the days and weeks that followed His Resurrection, Jesus prepared His disciples for the great task ahead of them; that of taking the Good News (The Gospel) and teaching it throughout the world, planting churches wherever they would go.

Forty days on from the Resurrection, the church celebrates the Feast of the Ascension, Christ's

passing out of human sight to take His place at the right hand of the Father. One of the twelve great feasts, Ascension has been celebrated from early times.

Christ has primed his disciples for their future task and we wait with them the ten days until Pentecost —the descent of the Holy Spirit— granting the brethren the power and authority needed to preach Christ to all the world.

Unsurprisingly, the church proclaims the Sunday after Pascha as 'Thomas Sunday' to dispel any doubts *we might have* about the reality of the Resurrection. Thomas acts for all of us when he puts his finger in the prints of the nails in Christ's hands and cries 'My Lord and my God!' (John 20:28) — it is true, Thomas might have thought, indeed, He *is* Risen!

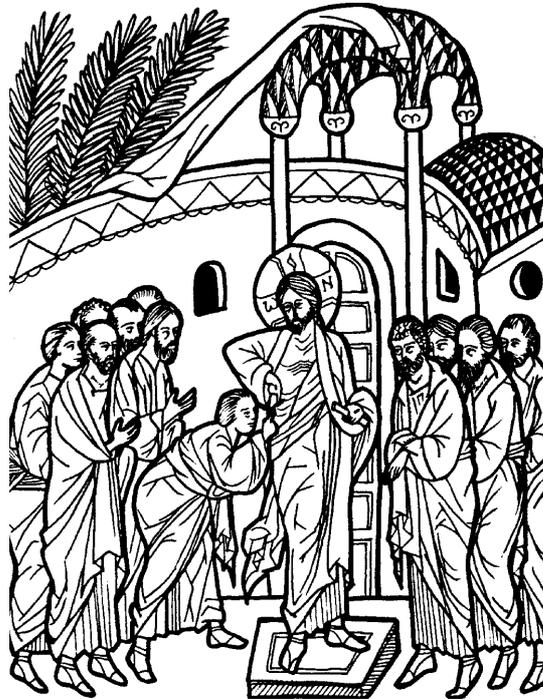
In apostolic times, as Jesus' death and resurrection were seen as inseparable, so too the Paschal events, His Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit were seen as aspects of one indivisible reality. The fifty days of these unique events were recognised as a suitable time for celebration of these world-changing moments.

Bright week, that first week of Pascha, soon became specially marked out as a time of continuous

celebration of Easter; the services are shorter and always sung. No fasting takes place for the whole week and the Holy Doors remain open all the time reminding us of the opening of Paradise through Christ's Death and Resurrection.

With the subsequent Sundays we return to a more simple form of celebration, recognising seminal events of the Gospels:

On the Third Sunday of Pascha, we meet the Myrrh-bearing Women, the first to discover the



empty tomb, and if any event in history can praise the strength and fortitude of women-folk, this must be it! Where are their men, the disciples? They are hiding behind locked doors 'for fear of the Jews'. It is these women who cast aside their concerns and fears to minister, as they thought, to the body of their Lord. Incidentally, the Gospel reading is the only one in the month that disturbs the narration from Saint John as it is drawn from Saint Mark (15:43-16:8)

The following Sunday (the Fourth), we encounter the Paralysed Man (Jn 5:1-15). At



first sight this seems a strange inclusion at a time of celebration until we remember that, in early times, Baptism normally took place at the Paschal Vigil and the celebrations continued into Eastertide. Here the sick man awaits patiently for someone to immerse him in the waters. Christ Himself relieves him of his disability with the direction to 'sin no more' lest worse happen to him.

Like the previous Sunday, the Fifth, the Samaritan Woman, brings to our attention the central role of water in our Christian life. This Living Water, again

associated with Baptism and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit reveals its source in Christ Himself.

The following Sunday: the Blind Man, continues the theme of Baptism as Christ makes clay with His spittle and then directs the man to wash his eyes in the water of Siloam - He sees: he is illumined as we all are through the Baptismal font.

For the Sunday between Ascension and Pentecost we turn to a different theme, that of the 318 Fathers

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN



of the First Ecumenical Council held in Nicaea in 325. Gathered to combat heresy the Fathers begin to assemble what we call the Nicene Creed; a defence for us all against error in the belief we hold in our Orthodox Christian faith. Both readings contain warnings against false teaching. These are a great aid to our Salvation.

There's more to come, Fr Pancratios

Return to What You Already Know

Sometimes in the spiritual life we are oblivious to what makes us grow, and sometimes it is quite evident. Sometimes we have that experience of “ah that was good for my soul”. Such experiences are not unlike taking a deep drink of cold water on a hot day.

I had such an experience many years ago while staying at a monastery. I spoke with the Abbot about my prayer rule and he wisely sensed that I was feeling constantly guilty because I had a prayer rule that was too rigorous and demanding. He advised me to simplify things; read the Gospel, say the Jesus Prayer, use simple prayers from memory, etc. But he added something that struck me as very strange. He said “don’t be afraid of prostrations. They are not just for monks!” From that point on I added bowing and kneeling in front of the cross to my daily routine. It instantly felt spiritually nutritious.

This old story is fresh in my mind because I recently injured my knee. As a result I had to abandon praying on my knees for a month because of the extreme pain it caused. But recently I have returned to my old habit and

it struck me as fresh and life-giving once again. I liken it to having a good conversation with an old friend. When everything just feels right and natural and good.

Our spiritual struggles in the Christian life are often the result of forgetfulness. We are fully armed with the right knowledge but we fail to apply it. If we slow down and take a survey of our lives, we often can say “I always felt close to God when I did this”. Spiritual disciplines are tools to open us up to God’s grace, and much like an athlete assesses the response of his or her body, we can assess the response of our soul.

Whatever struggles we face, let us be encouraged to slow down and pay attention to what we already know. Some of the most powerful and foundational elements of the spiritual life are quite simple and familiar. If there is something healthy and good that is missing, re-embrace it as precious. Not as an idol, but as something God has given us for our help. And as always, let us be patient and malleable as we experience God’s guiding hand on our lives.

With Love, Seraphim

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Saint Porphyrios Speaks

One day in Athens, Saint Porphyrios was with a nun and needed to take a taxi. The first taxi driver they found was an uncouth, blasphemous character.

So the nun said to Saint Porphyrios: “Maybe we should find another taxi?” But he replied: “No, let’s go with this one, but let me do all the talking.”

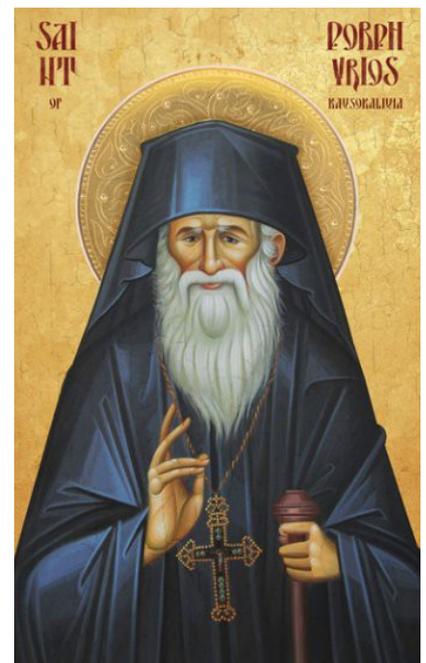
When they got in the taxi, the taxi driver started saying all kinds of things to them about how selfish priests are, how corrupt bishops are, etc. Saint Porphyrios didn’t say a word, and so neither did the nun.

After going on and on for quite some time, the taxi driver started wondering why the priest and nun weren’t responding. So he looked back

at them and said: “So, priest, what do you have to say about all this I’ve said?”

Saint Porphyrios replied: “Well, let me tell you a story. There was once a very good priest in Crete whose wife had died and was living alone with his young son. But then the Nazis came and killed this priest. His son couldn’t understand how God would let this happen to such a good person, and so he became very embittered and angry with God.”

At this point, the taxi driver stopped the car and in tears said to Saint Porphyrios: “But, Father, that is my story.” After this, the taxi driver confessed to Saint Porphyrios and began to live a spiritual life.



Paschal Encyclical of Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain

Dearly Beloved in the Lord,

It is with particular joy that I am sending to each and every one of you my heartfelt and fatherly greetings of love and honour on the occasion of the Sacred Passion and of Easter, events that are unique and soul-saving, which we Christians are blessed to celebrate this year and, together with the Merciful Christ who loves Mankind, participate spiritually and in a devout and reverent manner in the Passion and joy of His Resurrection from the dead. All Christians celebrate and honour these Holy Days, and we reverently participate in the prayerful and moving Divine Services, which take place every day, both morning and evening, in our Churches.

It has been justly said that the Orthodox Church is the Church of the Resurrection: and truly it is; and this great truth is proclaimed daily, because the Events of the Passion and the Resurrection remind us of the great truths of the Gospel, namely that Christ came in to this world 'to save sinners'. By means of his sacrifice on the cross, he paid the price for the purchase of the sins of all Mankind. The hymn-writer of the Church justifiably chants: 'By your precious blood you have redeemed us from the curse of the law; nailed to the Cross and pierced by the lance, you have become a source of immortality for humankind. Lord, glory to you'.

The Holy Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, have devoted many pages of their sacred texts to lay emphasis on the Passion, the Sacrifice and the boundless philanthropy of God for humankind; while the poets and hymn-writers of the Church remain astonished at the extent of the philanthropy and love by which the Father imparted the mystery of our salvation, which was concealed, revealed and realised during the days of Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator, and the High Priests of the Israelite People.

During these Holy Days of the Sacred and Great Lent, all Christians – and, in particular, we Orthodox Christians who reside in the hospitable countries of the United Kingdom and Ireland – are called upon to prepare ourselves to receive Christ who is both God and Man, who comes to suffer and be sacrificed for our salvation as well as for that of the whole world. Let us hasten therefore to our Churches to re-baptise ourselves in the spirit and the true meaning

of these days. 'Come, let us accompany him, and be crucified with him along with our passions,' as the hymn-writer so very vividly advises us, so that we may, like the prudent virgins, partake in the marriage of Christ the Bridegroom and become participants in and partakers of the mystery of our personal salvation - for as Paul the Apostle writes: 'All of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ, Hallelujah'. The values of Christianity retain their significance and relevance throughout time. This is particularly true in our own days when many men and entire nations and governments have lost their true bearings, since they have distanced themselves from the message of the Gospel, of which the Great Lent reminds us through the sacrifice of Christ for the benefit of others, with the message of freedom and respect for others and the spirit of sacrifice and unselfishness that should at all times predominate in the actions and thoughts of human beings. Let us not forget that Christ preached love, forgiveness, immortality and eternity to stress the value of human existence, which would show respect for all human beings and would build civilisation on the foundation of peace, security and happiness for everyone. Since, without each other and without the sacred command to 'love your neighbour as yourself', the Kingdom of God for which Christ took on flesh and sacrificed himself on the Cross for the salvation of the World cannot be established.

Let us not forget also that we cannot participate in the Passion and the Resurrection of our Lord, if we do not humble ourselves and if we do not forgive our enemies. For this reason, the hymn-writer cries out: 'Let us forgive all things on the Resurrection, and so let us cry: Christ has risen from the dead, by death he has trampled on death and to those in the graves he has given life'. For this reason, with our souls cleansed and in a determined, humble and modest spirit, let us confess our sins, receive communion of the Immaculate Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ, share our goods with the poor, with strangers, those imprisoned, those who are infirm or are needy, in order to receive the mercy and pardon of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave his blood as a ransom for many and for the eternal life of the human race. To Him belong the glory, the kingdom and the might unto the ages of ages. Amen.

*Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain
Easter Sunday, 28th April 2019*

A Scripture Reading Calendar for May

| | | | | |
|-----------|----------|----------------------|------------------------|---|
| 1 | fastfree | Acts 2:22-38a | John 1:35-51 | St Asaph, Bishop in North Wales (c600) |
| 2 | fastfree | Acts 2:38-43 | John 3:1-15 | St Ultan, monk at Burgh Castle (in France 686) |
| 3 | fastfree | Acts 3:1-8 | John 2:12-22 | St Glywys of Cornwall (5thC) |
| 4 | fastfree | Acts 3:11-16 | John 3:22-33 | St Aethelred, King of Mercia and monk (716) |
| 5 | | Acts 5:12-20 | John 20:19-31 | St Hydroc of Cornwall (5thC) |
| 6 | | Acts 3:19-26 | John 2:1-11 | St Edbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne (698) |
| 7 | | Acts 4:1-10 | John 3:15-21 | St John of Beverley, Bishop of York (721) |
| 8 | fast** | Acts 4:13-22 | John 5:17-24 | Hieromartyr Indract of Glastonbury & others at Shapwick (7th-8thC) |
| 9 | | Acts 4:23-31 | John 5:24-30 | St Sanctan, Bishop of Kill-da-Les & Kill-na-Sanctan (6thC) |
| 10 | fast** | Acts 5:1-11 | John 5:30-6:2 | St Comgall, founder & abbot of Bangor (602) |
| 11 | | Acts 5:21-32 | John 6:14-27 | St Fremund of Dunstable, hermit, martyred by Oswy (866) |
| 12 | | Acts 6:1-7 | Mark 15:43-16:8 | St Aethelhard, Archbishop of Canterbury (805) |
| 13 | | Acts 6:8-7:5,47-60 | John 4:46b-54 | St Mael, Ascetic on the Isle of Bardsey (6thC) |
| 14 | | Acts 8:5-17 | John 6:27-33 | St Carthage the younger, founder & Abbot of Lismore (637) |
| 15 | fast** | Acts 8:18-25 | John 6:35-39 | St Bercthun, first Abbot of Beverley (733) |
| 16 | | Acts 8:26-39 | John 6:40-44 | St Carantoc, founder of the church of Llangrannog, Wales (6thC) |
| 17 | fast** | Acts 8:40-9:19a | John 6:48-54 | St Mailduf, founder of Malmesbury Abbey (673) |
| 18 | | Acts 9:19b-31 | John 15:17-16:2 | St Elgiva, widow of King Edmund, Abbess of Shaftesbury (944) |
| 19 | | Acts 9:32-42 | John 5:1b-15 | St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury (988) |
| 20 | | Acts 10:1-16 | John 6:56-69 | St Ethelbert, King of East Anglia, martyr (794) |
| 21 | | Acts 10:21-33 | John 7:1-13 | St Gollen of Denbighshire, who gave his name to Llangollen (7thC) |
| 22 | fast*** | Acts 14:6-18 | John 7:14-30 | St Helen of Caernarfon, Welsh Princess and founder of churches (4thC) |
| 23 | | Acts 10:34-43 | John 8:12-20 | St Gobhna, Abbot of the monastery of Old Leighlin (6th-7thC) |
| 24 | fast** | Acts 10:44-11:10 | John 8:21-30 | St Symeon Stylites the Younger of the Wonderful Mountain (c592) |
| 25 | | Acts 12:1-11 | John 8:31-42b | St Dunchadh, Abbot of Iona (717) |
| 26 | | Acts 11:19-30 | John 4:5-42 | Sts Fugatius & Deruvian, sent to England to preach the Gospel (2ndC) |
| 27 | | Acts 12:12-17 | John 8:42-51 | Hieromonk Bede the Confessor of Wearmouth-Jarrow (735) |
| 28 | | Acts 12:25-13:12 | John 8:51-59 | St Germanus of Paris, Bishop (576) |
| 29 | fast** | Acts 13:13-24 | John 6:5-14 | St Buryan, founded an Oratory in Cornwall (5th-6thC) |
| 30 | | Acts 14:20b-15:4 | John 9:39-10:9 | St Walstan, farm labourer in Taverham, known for his charity (1016) |
| 31 | fast** | Acts 15:5-12 | John 10:17-28a | Sts Winnow, Mancus & Myrbad founders of churches in Cornwall (6thC) |

* 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 19th May 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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Priest in Charge: Very Rev'd Protopresbyter Pancratios Sanders

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1 Willow Lea, Mollington, Chester. CH1 6LW

Treasurer: Robert Gale
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 (5/19)
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.