



The Tower

May 2015

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](#)

Charity No: 1144751

Dear brothers and sisters,

After many years of prayer and planning and obstructions to our plans we are moving! As many of you now know, Presbytera Anna has finally taken retirement from a very demanding post and this has now enabled our much delayed intentions to come to fruition.

With the help and support of the Trustees and Board we are, at long last, able to move to Chester. Indeed, we will be effectively within walking distance of our church. This will allow us to serve the church in a much more effective way: To give one simple example, we will now be able to serve Saturday evening Vespers in church and not 25 miles away!

Many other opportunities become possible and these will be fully revealed once we are properly settled in. Study classes and catechism will be able to be conducted in comfort at home in future!

For the next month or two Fr Pancratios might not be around quite as much as we struggle with the logistics of reducing the contents of a six bedroom house into one of 2½ bedrooms - merely disposing of a large part of our very substantial library is not to be relished!

Gardeners will be most welcome for advice etc., on how to convert a bed of dandelions into something pleasant - something neither of us has been used to!

Our new address is: **18 Shannon Close, Saltney. CH4 8PJ.** Father Pancratios can be contacted on mobile no. 07850 467675 and we will notify our landline once we have our new number.

Please pray especially for Presbytera Anna as she learns to cope with having me under her feet day-by-day!

With much love for you all,

Fr Pancratios and Presbytera Anna

Future Events

We are now putting together plans for social and fund raising events for the Summer and Autumn. If you have suggestions for these events please speak to Father Pancratios or a member of the Board or hand in a note of your suggestion / idea/ offer.

All your ideas are welcome.

Community Board & Trustees

Meetings

**will be held on Sunday 10th
May. All matters for discussion
should be with the Secretary by
the Sunday before.**

Principal Services for May / June

Divine Liturgy every Sunday: (Prayers of Preparation or Matins precedes)

May

Sunday 3rd	The Paralyse Man
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Wednesday 6th	Mid-Feast of Pentecost
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Sunday 10th	The Samaritan Woman
9.30am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Sunday 17th	The Blind Man
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Thursday 21st	Feast of the Ascension
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Sunday 24th	7th Sunday of Pascha
9.30am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Saturday 30th	Memorial Saturday
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Sunday 31st	Holy Pentecost
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
1.00pm	Vespers with the Kneeling Prayers

June

Sunday 7th	1st after Pentecost
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
	Beginning of the Apostles' Fast
Sunday 14th	All Saints of Russia / Romania
9.30am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Sunday 21st	All Saints of Britain / Bulgaria
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Wednesday 24th	Nativity of the Forerunner
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Sunday 28th	4th after Pentecost
9.30am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Monday 29th	Leaders of the Apostles, Peter & Paul
11.00am	Divine Liturgy



To all the volunteers

who helped prepare the church for Holy Pascha.

For those who provided and displayed the flowers for the Epitaphios, for those who cleaned and polished, for the servers and others who assisted at the services, and for all who helped in any way – a grateful thank you from all of us for your labours. Your contribution allowed us to offer a glorious Pascha truly fitting for the Lord's Resurrection.

Patriarch Bartholomew's Paschal Message

Brother concelebrants and beloved children in the Lord, Christ is Risen!

All Orthodox Christians once again this year joyously celebrate The Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and chant: “We celebrate the death of death, the destruction of Hades, and the beginning of another, eternal way of living. And so we jubilantly praise the Cause.” (*Troparion from the Paschal Canon*)

Yet, while we gladly celebrate the Lord's Resurrection as the reality of life and hope, all around us in the world, we can hear the cries and threats of death launched in many parts of the planet by those who believe that they can resolve human conflicts by destroying their enemies, which in itself constitutes the greatest proof of their weakness. For, by causing the death of another, by taking revenge on our neighbour, on whosoever differs from us, neither is the world improved nor are our problems solved. After all, as everyone - especially the intellectual people of all periods - admits and recognizes, evil is never overcome by evil, but always by good.

Problems are genuinely resolved when we acknowledge and acclaim the value of every human person and when we respect their rights. By contrast, all kinds of problems are created and exacerbated when we despise human beings and violate their rights, especially when it comes to the vulnerable, who must feel secure, while the powerful must be just in order for peace to exist.

Therefore, Christ arose from the dead and demonstrated in this way as well the inability of death to prevail and bring about any stable change in the world. The various situations caused by death can be reversed because, despite how things appear, they are always temporary, having no root or vitality,

whereas Christ, who has forever conquered death, is invisibly always present.

We, who have our hope in Him, believe that the right of life belongs to all people. Life and Resurrection are only offered by Jesus Christ, who has trodden on death and on its power over people; this is why we should only hope in Him and His teaching. Faith in Christ leads to Resurrection, to the Resurrection of all of us, while our faith and application of His teaching lead to the salvation of all, as well as to the confrontation of every challenge in our world.

Beloved brothers and children, the message of the Resurrection, this transcendence of human weakness, is the message of life over the world's corruption and humanity's adventure. It is to this message that we invite all people - from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, where by God's mercy we serve as Primate of Orthodox love in truth - so that they may come to knowledge and experience, convinced that only in this way will they also rediscover our true hope, and the hope of the whole world, which was stolen from us in the turmoil of confusion.

May the light of the Resurrection illumine the hearts of all of you so that you may rejoice with all people in love, peace and concord through the Son and Word of God, who is the Light of the world, the Truth and the Life.

To Him alone, who arose from the dead, the Lord of glory, “who lords over life and rules over death,” who lives to the ages and “grants life to those in the tombs,” belong glory, honour and thanksgiving. Amen.

Phanar, Holy Pascha 2015

+Bartholomew of Constantinople
Your fervent supplicant before the Risen Christ



Archbishop Gregorios' Paschal Letter

Dearly Beloved,

On the occasion of the Holy Feasts of the Passion and Resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ, I warmly greet the Christian Flock of this Holy Eparchy of the Ecumenical Throne of Constantinople that sojourns in the United Kingdom and Ireland with love and honour.

Holy Week begins with the familiar and symbolic hymn "Behold the Bridegroom comes in the middle of the night, and blessed is that servant, whom he finds watching, but unworthy is the one whom he finds slothful." The God-man Christ "is coming to accept the cross, afflictions and scourges, as he is judged by Pilate, and to endure everything in order to save mankind" (Hymn of Great Monday).

These Holy and unique days remind us of the divine love, which is sacrificed to save the human race, in order that the whole world may learn of the Gospel of God's love. The Resurrection of Christ is a global, universal fact which becomes a reality only by Christ and with Christ, as Redeemer and Benefactor and Saviour of the World. The death by crucifixion of the God-man on the hill of Calvary and His Resurrection from the dead are the "beginning of a new way of life", a society which has as its Great High Priest Him *who is able to empathise with our weaknesses; let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace* (Heb 4.14-16). (Resurrection Hymn).

We Christians become partakers and participants in the Passion and Resurrection, through our faith in Christ and our union with the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is the reference point of the mystical and existential relationship of the Christian with the Risen Christ. Participation in the sacramental life of the Church and the spreading of the Gospel of the Resurrection, are the components of the heavenly Kingdom, which Christ promises to all those who will follow him, as did the thief on the cross who pleaded, *Remember me, o Lord, when You come into your kingdom* (Luke 23.44).

The Resurrection is the sacred foundation on which virtue is built, and on which the character of a Christian is formed in order to lift up his own cross. The sad things of life such as poverty, persecution, pain, death and everything that Christ and the countless myriads of martyrs went through, giving witness to His name are part of our Christian identity. Today, Christians in many parts of the world are suffering greatly. They are expelled from their family homes, they are dishonoured, held captive. Their torments remind us of the great persecutions of the early Christian years.

We, Brethren and Fathers, live in a country with security and freedom. Our Churches are open, services are held, and the Gospel of divine love and peace, that the Risen Christ proclaimed, is taught. And so we with piety and devotion should take refuge to our churches to pray, to worship the Holy Passion and celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord in a dignified fashion. We should forgive our friends and enemies, and with humility and fear of God we should partake of the body and blood of Christ for the remission of sins and unto eternal life. We should proclaim that *we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body* (2 Corinthians 4.11). "The death of the first human is dissolved by the blameless sacrifice undertaken on our behalf. The first human is saved by being brought to life by the Resurrection of the Lord"? (Chrysostom Vol.8, p. 937).

From the depths of our hearts let us ask the Risen Christ to give us a spirit of love, sacrifice and fear of God, in order to preserve the Message of the Resurrection. Emulating the example of the Holy Apostles, and of Christians throughout the ages, let us say: *I believed; therefore I have spoken. Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us* (2 Corinthians 4.13-14).

Wishing you the peace and blessing of the Risen Christ, in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, throughout the world in the United Kingdom and Ireland, in Greece and Cyprus and especially to those at war, I remain with warm wishes and love and honour in Christ risen from the dead.

London, Easter 2015
Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain

Kolliva

From ancient times, kolliva, has been connected with celebrating the memory of saints and all the departed, were brought to church and blessed by the priest during memorial prayers known today as Memorial Services.

Today's kolliva consist of boiled wheat mixed with seeds of pomegranate (in warm climates) and decorated in a platter with sugar covering, raisins, and perhaps

The Kolliva are symbolic of the resurrection of the dead on the day of the Second Coming of the Lord. Saint Paul said, *what you sow does not come to life unless it dies*, (1 Cor. 15:34), and Saint John, *unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit*, (John 12:24). Thus, as the wheat is buried in the soil and disintegrates without really dying but is later regenerated into a new plant that bears much more fruit than itself. so the Christian's body will



herbs. A cross is traced on top, and on its sides are the initials of the departed for whom the memorial is held. The size and decoration of the platter varies according to the time elapsed from the date of death.

The fortieth day memorial service is the most important which practically no Orthodox neglects to hold for the repose of the soul of his/her beloved. (The other Memorial Days are the third and ninth days, the third, sixth, and ninth months and on each anniversary of the repose of the departed.) The kolliva are distributed to the congregation after the service, who in return say, 'may God forgive his/her soul!'

be raised again from the very corruptible matter from which it is now made; however, it will be raised not in its previous fleshy substance but in an incorruptible essence which *will clad the mortal body with an immortal garment*, in the words of Saint Paul (1 Cor. 15:53).

The Kolliva, then, symbolise the Apostolically rooted hope in the resurrection of the dead as the only eventuality that gives meaning and attains the longed perfection on the part of the individual who takes his life to be a divinely ordained meaningful living for ever.



If at some time you show mercy to someone, mercy will be shown to you. If you show compassion to one who is suffering (and of course, this is not a great deed) you will be numbered among the martyrs. If you forgive one who has insulted you, then not only will all your sins be forgiven, but you will be a child of the Heavenly Father. If you pray from all your heart for salvation – even a little – you will be saved.

Saint Moses of Optina +1862

Lest we judge others!

Once on Mount Athos there was a monk who lived in Karyes. He drank and got drunk every day and was the cause of scandal to the pilgrims. Eventually he died and this relieved some of the faithful who went on to tell Elder Paisios that they were delighted that this huge problem was finally solved.

Father Paisios answered them that he knew about the death of the monk, after seeing the entire battalion of angels who came to collect his soul. The pilgrims were amazed and some protested and tried to explain to the Elder of whom they were talking about, thinking that the Elder did not understand.

Elder Paisios explained to them: "This particular monk was born in Asia Minor, shortly before the destruction by the Turks when they gathered all the boys. So as not to take him from their parents, they would take him with them to the reaping, and so he wouldn't cry, they just put raki into his milk in order for him to sleep. Therefore he grew up as an alcoholic. There he found an elder and said to him that he was an alcoholic. The elder told him to do prostrations and prayers every night and beg the Panagia to help him to reduce by one the glasses he drank."

"After a year he managed with struggle and repentance to make the 20 glasses he drank into 19 glasses. The struggle continued over the years and he reached 2-3 glasses, with which he would still get drunk."

The world for years saw an alcoholic monk who scandalized the pilgrims, but God saw a fighter who fought a long struggle to reduce his passion.



If you do not find Christ in the beggar at the church door, neither will you find Him in the chalice.
Saint John Chrysostom +407

As long as we look to legislation to cure poverty or to abolish special privilege we are going to see poverty spread and special privilege grow.
Henry Ford



Let your light so shine *from the Kneeling Prayers at Pentecost Vespers*

Blessed are you, Almighty Master, who illumines the day with the light of the sun and brightens the night with the glow of fire; who has made us worthy to spend the whole day and draw near to the beginning of the night; hear our petitions and those of all the people. Forgive us all our sins, both voluntary and involuntary, and accept our evening prayers. Send down the multitude of your mercies and compassion and your inheritance. Encompass us with your holy angels. Arm us with the armour of your justice. Surround us with your truth. Keep us by your power and deliver us from every assault and every plot of the adversary. Grant us that this evening and the approaching night and all the days of our life may be perfect, holy, peaceful, sinless, without doubt and vain imaginings, by the intercessions of the holy Theotokos and all the saints who have done your will from the beginning of time. Amen.



A Theotokion at Mid-Pentecost

O Bride of God and pure Virgin Mother, who did contain God in your womb while he yet remained uncircumscribed: Cease not to intercede on our behalf, that through you we may be delivered from adversaries, for to you do we ever flee for refuge.



Scripture Reading Calendar for May

1	Fast**	Acts 8:40-9:19a	John 6:48-54	St Paphnutius of Borovsk (1478)
2		Acts 9:19b-31	John 15:17-16:2	St Boris, Prince of Bulgaria (906)
3		Acts 9:32-42	John 5:11-15	Nun Evpraxia of Moscow (1394)
4		Acts 10:1-16	John 6:56-69	St Nikephorus of Mount Athos (c1300)
5		Acts 10:21-33	John 7:1-13	New Martyr Ephraim the Newly-revealed (1426)
6	Fast***	Acts 14:6-18	John 7:14-30	St Micah of Radonezh (1385)
7		Acts 10:34-43	John 8:12-20	St Alexis Toth, Confessor of America (1909)
8	Fast***	Acts 10:44-11:10	John 8:21-30	All the Saints of Thessalonika
9		Acts 12:1-11	John 8:31-42b	St Shio of Georgia (6thC)
10		Acts 11:19-30	John 4:5-42	St Isidora the fool of Tabennesi (4thC)
11		Acts 12:12-17	John 8:42-51	St Joseph, Metropolitan of Astrakhan (1671)
12		Acts 12:25-13:12	John 8:51-59	The Lazian Martyrs slain in Dudikvati and Patapi, Georgia (c1820)
13	Fast**	Acts 13:13-24	John 6:5-14	St Euthymius the New (1028)
14		Acts 14:20b-15:4	John 9:39-10:9	St Leontius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (1175)
15	Fast**	Acts 15:5-12	John 10:17-28a	St Dimitri, Crown Prince of Uglich and Moscow (1591)
16		Acts 15:35-41	John 10:27-38	Child Musa of Rome (5thC)
17		Acts 16:16-34	John 9:1-38	St Stephen, Archbishop of Constantinople (893)
18		Acts 17:1-9	John 11:47-54	St Macarius, Missionary in Russia (1847)
19		Acts 17:19-28a	John 12:19-36	St Cornelius of Komel (1537)
20	Fast***	Acts 18:22-28a	John 12:36-47	Martyr Ascalas of Egypt (c287)
21		Acts 1:1-12	Luke 24:36-43	St Cassian the Greek, of Uglich (1504)
22	Fast**	Acts 19:1-8	John 14:1-11	Monk Martyr Paul of the Lavra, Athos (1818)
23		Acts 20:7-12	John 14:10b-21	Martyr Michael the "Black-Robed" of St Sabas' Monastery (9thC)
24		Acts 20:16-18,28-36	John 17:1-13	St Niketa Stylites, Wonderworker of Pereyaslavl (1186)
25		Acts 21:8-14	John 14:27c-15:7	Hieromartyr Therapon of Cyprus (14thC)
26		Acts 21:26-32	John 16:2b-13a	Great Martyr George the New at Sofia (1515)
27	Fast**	Acts 23:1-11	John 16:15-23	St John the Russian whose relics are on Euboea (1730)
28		Acts 25:13-19	John 16:23-33a	Nun Elena of Diveyevo (1832)
29	Fast**	Acts 27:1-28:1	John 17:18-26	St John of Ustiug, Fool-for-Christ (1494)
30		Acts 28:1-31	John 21:15-25	St Hubertus, First Bishop of Liege (727)
31		Acts 2:1-11	John 7:37-52; 8:12	Martyr Hermias at Comana (2ndC)

* 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 for 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

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.

Priest in Charge: Very Rev'd Protopresbyter Pancratios Sanders

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6 Meadow Close, Cuddington, Northwich. CW8 2LZ

Treasurer: Robert Gale

40 Ffordd Parc, Bodnant, Prestatyn. LL19 9LJ

Secretary: Presbytera Anna Sanders

18 Shannon Close, Saltney, Chester. CH4 8PJ

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

Fr Pancratios is *normally* in church during the day on Tuesdays & Thursdays. Please phone him 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. In Lent on Wednesdays and Fridays 5.30 - 6.30pm and at other times by arrangement.

Catechism Classes by arrangement with Fr Pancratios.

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ - ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΓΑΛΗΣ ΒΡΕΤΑΝΙΑΣ

Membership Subscription 2014/15 (5/15)

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

Title: _____ Initials: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Date: _____

Membership is £5.00 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 £5.00 per month or £60.00 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.