



The Tower

November 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,

Summer is past and the barbecue season is over! Nevertheless we had a wonderful afternoon recently with John and Janet Gale at their home at which they provided the most sumptuous spread blessed by a most glorious sunny afternoon. Thank you both, and the other members of your family, for hosting this event which also brought in a welcome boost to parish funds.

Thanks be to God for the recent Baptism of Antonio Nicholas Neagu and we pray for him and his family and his sponsors. May they be ever blessed and watched over by the angelic hosts.

We mark the passing of Julie Galagher and Fedor Litman, both still young in years, with funerals served at Saint Nicholas, Liverpool. May they rest in peace in the company of the angels and saints.

*With much love for you all this autumn,
Fr Pancratios and Presbyteria Anna*

Parish Membership

Elsewhere in the Newsletter is the announcement of the Annual General Meeting of the Parish. We are to be reminded that only those who are paid up subscribers (members) of the parish community are allowed to vote at the AGM or to be elected to the Parish Board or to be appointed as Trustees.

Please check with the treasurer, Robert Gale, to confirm either that you have paid your dues for 2015/6 or otherwise to subscribe. Standing Order forms (available at church) for a recommended amount of £5.00 or £10.00 per month is the simplest method of ensuring your regular contribution is not forgotten.

Our concern for the financial stability of our community will ensure its future as a thriving Christian Orthodox parish.

We sometimes forget that Christianity is the only religion in the world where God seeks mankind. Other people seek God, seek nirvana, seek enlightenment, but in Christianity it is God Who searches for us. In the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve had fallen what does God do? He goes to the garden and He calls to them and He says Where are you? And they are hiding, and God still searches for mankind. He still searches for us and invites us to be his friends and to walk with Him in the cool of the day.

Archbishop Benjamin

Principal Services for November / December

Matins followed by Divine Liturgy every Sunday:

November

Sunday 1st	<i>Ss Cosmas & Damian</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Saturday 7th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 8th	<i>Synaxis of the Bodiless Powers</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Thursday 12th	St John Chrysostom
5.30pm	Vespers
Saturday 14th	
5.30pm	Vespers
	<i>Beginning of the Nativity Fast</i>
Sunday 15th	<i>St Paisius Velichkovsky</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Saturday 21st	
11.00am	Entry of the Theotokos to the Temple
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 22nd	<i>Afterfeast of the Entry</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Saturday 28th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 29th	<i>Martyr Paramon</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy

December

Thursday 3rd	<i>St Barbara the Great Martyr</i>
5.30pm	Vespers
6.30pm	Divine Liturgy
Saturday 5th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 6th	<i>St Nicholas the Wonderworker</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
	<i>Fasting Parish Feast in honour of Saint Barbara</i>
Tuesday 8th	<i>Conception of the Most Holy Theotokos</i>
5.30pm	Vespers
Saturday 12th	<i>St Spyridon the Wonderworker</i>
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 13th	<i>Sunday of the Forefathers</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Saturday 19th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 20th	<i>Sunday before the Nativity of Christ</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Thursday 24th	<i>Eve of the Nativity of Christ</i>
2.00pm	Vesperal Liturgy of Saint Basil
Friday 25th	<i>The Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy
Saturday 26th	
5.30pm	Vespers
Sunday 27th	<i>Third Day of the Feast of the Nativity</i>
10.00am	Matins
11.00am	Divine Liturgy



The 100 Club

This is a project recently established by the Parish Board to raise funds for the church. There is a £10.00 annual donation to join the club and a monthly draw at which the winner receives half the available 'pot' and the church receives the other half.

If you wish to join the club please speak to Michael or Rachel Aristodemou.

The Banquet of the Lord



That the Church requires us to prepare to receive the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ, prior to the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, by saying the Pre-Communion Prayers, is a given. The Church also requires us to fast from midnight on, abstaining from either food or drink, until after we have received the Body and Blood of our Saviour. The only exception is when we must, because of health issues, eat or drink something, and this must be blessed by our confessor or priest.

Although not required, if we read the appointed Epistle and Gospel readings prior to entering into the Liturgy, the Word can better enter the heart, for when hearing God's Word for the second time, we are more receptive, and the Word penetrates deeply.

Perhaps the most important preparation we must make before attending the Divine Liturgy, is to be sure we are at peace with all our brothers and sisters. We dare not approach the chalice with malice or hatred towards anyone, nor can we receive the Holy Gifts with a heart that has refused to forgive those who have hurt or offended us. An important part of forgiving others, is for us to seek forgiveness. Thus, frequent confession is an imperative.

Participating in the Divine Liturgy is a great privilege, for in this service we are entering into a place where there is neither time nor space, and where we are worshipping the Holy Trinity, together with the hosts of heaven.

In the Liturgy, we encounter God in a way that is beyond human comprehension, for we are invited to commune with our Creator in the most intimate way. To approach the Holy Mysteries (Communion) without thought, as though we were simply going to the cinema, is beyond foolishness. To receive the "hot coals" that is meant to transform us, and make us whole, without proper preparation, is a very dangerous thing to do.

Love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon



On Fasting

Father Moses of the Athonite Monastery of Koutloumousion writes on the subject of fasting: "Not all meat throughout the year, many vegetables and fruits. Strictly obey fasting. It is a simple healthy food without fat. This is the secret which protects (Athonite) monks from cancers and other diseases and offers longevity. We eat with moderation, as we should. The kitchen on Mount Athos is remarkable, simple, tasty and at the same time beneficial to health.

The Athonite cuisine is based on vegetables, legumes and it offers the sea around Mount Athos."



The Nativity (Advent) Fast is soon upon us and we might take note of Father Moses comments on this subject.

We should at the same time remind ourselves that the periods of the year we call 'Fasts' are not merely about going without certain foods for a time though that is both important and sensible. Our fasts are a spiritual (and physical) preparation for the feast that follows - in this case, the Feast of the Nativity - Christmas. It is a time of anticipation, a looking forward to the joyful celebration which is to come.

Therefore, we have a lot more to do properly to rejoice at the Feast when we should be ready and prepared to receive the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of the Saviour, Christ. During this period, we try to settle ourselves into a quiet period looking inward into ourselves (introspection) by turning off the TV and internet, and avoiding secular social events; instead, reading some useful spiritual writing, perhaps the life of a saint. It is also a time for serious alms-giving, choosing perhaps a suitable charity or helping someone more unfortunate than oneself. Especially it is a time to look at the sinful aspect of our life and endeavour to put it aside through a truly repentant confession. Additional private prayer enables us to put before God both "those who love us and those who hate us." In helping us to prepare for the coming feast, the Church offers additional services as an aid to drawing near to Christ.

Put together, we can be transformed through a well lived fast: Food-fasting, spiritual reading, alms-giving, confession, prayer and communion come together to celebrate the Feast with joy and lay up that untarnishable store in heaven *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also* (Matt 7:21).

Fr Pancratios



Sayings of Elder Arsenie (Papacioc)



Elder Arsenie was one of the great Romanian Elders of the latter part of the last century. Born in the south of the country in the village of Misleanu in 1913. He entered the Cozia Monastery after the Second World War and latterly settled at Sibastria Monastery, later becoming abbot of Slatina. Fleeing the Communist authorities he settled, as a hermit, with Father Ilie (Cleopa). He was imprisoned between 1958 and 1964 and lived his final years as spiritual father of the women's monastery of Techirghiol where he reposed in 2011 in his 98th year.

On Charity and Mercy

With God there is no past evil, where there is a good present. When God forgave you, it means He forgave you for eternity. God keeps us not that we are worthy, but because He is very merciful.

My brothers do not ignore a begging hand, or one that offers help. Charity is not only to give something. It means to accept the man sitting next to you, without casting him out in your mind. In having pity on others – it shows our likeness to Christ.

The beggar stretches out his hand not to ask, but to give you the kingdom of heaven, and you do not notice!

Let's remember my brothers: beggars are biblical characters! Do you want to get rich? Give everything you have! And you'll receive a hundredfold! Man doesn't account much when he receives, yet he remembers when he gives.

Learn to live not only in you, but to live in [for] all who are with you.

On Love

We need to love much! For Christ is commanding us!

Lets be attentive, love is the criteria of [the last] judgement! When Christ asked us to love, He also gave us the strength to do it.

We should love our pain [sorrow] and those that caused it. You are free and have the possibility to climb [grow], if you do not hate. Our hearts must always be free for Christ.

This world is not evil; we are at fault for we do not know to love. The hate of your neighbour is the most devilish work.

If you would try to love people as you love Christ, then you'll no longer see the wrongs of your neighbour. Know that the love for enemies is a commandment. We ought to boast them in our heart.

One question is justified, let us all ask ourselves: "Do I love or do I not...?" – for it's a commandment, my brother! Do not think that our Saviour spoke only to the people of His time or to His apostles. No... He spoke for all men and for eternity.



AGM and Elections

On 13th December we will hold our Annual General Meeting at which elections to the Community Board (last held in 2013) will take place. It is clear there will be vacancies on the Board (and for the Trustees) and we invite any who may have an interest in serving to put their names forward. Please speak to our Chairman, Marc Greenwood or Secretary, Presbyteria Anna, if you are willing to serve on the Board for the next two years.

Anniversaries

Anniversaries are important milestones in our lives - there are so many of them: Of course we always mark birthdays and wedding anniversaries or, at least, our spouses remind us of them! But there are so many more ...

Here are few: Namedays, Saints Days, Feast Days, Memorials, and so on - but do we keep them as well as we recall and celebrate our loved ones' birthdays?

We should, because, as Christians, they are all significant events in our passage through life and ought to be celebrated with at least the same fervour as we celebrate our birthdays.

Yet, how many of us offer an Artoklasia (Thanksgiving) for our nameday or any other significant moment in our life? How many of us make the effort to attend sacred worship on our saint's day or the other major feast-days of the Church? Do we offer a Kolliva on the anniversary of the death of a loved one? Moreover, do we present ourselves before the altar at the Sunday Eucharist as often as we know we should - for the Eucharist itself is an anniversary, the greatest of all.

All these moments are part of our Christian inheritance and each one helps us to focus on Christ. He is the One who is, or should be, at the heart of all that we are and all that we do each and every day.

With Christ at the centre of life, then everything else falls into place. Harmony prevails, our lives become ordered and our relationships with others blossom. Peace enters our souls

All this takes effort on our part and our Saviour makes it clear that to follow Him is not easy as He says: *Whoever would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow Me* (Matt 16:24).

Let us with gladness give Glory to the Lord in the way we live out our lives every minute of every day celebrating all our anniversaries with joy.

Fr Pancratios



Food for Thought

We can't partake the joy of the Resurrection without knowing the pain of the crucifixion. When Christ invites us to come after her, Christ told us to take up our cross (Mk 8, 34). And on the eve of His Passion, when He prayed in Gethsemane: *Not my will, but Thine, be done.* (Lk 22, 42), He gives us an example and model for the rejection of our own will and the fulfilment of the will of God as Saint Maximus the Confessor has said. In this way, Christianity does not seek to adopt a doleful attitude, nor to justify the suffering in the world, but reminds us that it is *by the cross that joy has come into the world.*

Archbishop Job of Telmessos

Life has taught me that love is stronger than hate. I know that evil is a powerful force, but I firmly believe that goodness will triumph even though at times it is long in coming and puts human patience and faith to hard tests.

Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna, sister of Tsar Nicholas II +1960

Putting yourself in the place of other people is a great aid in acquiring internal kindness, because then love comes naturally, as do pain, humility, and gratitude to God through continuous hymns of praise and prayer of the heart for our neighbour. Then our prayer is both well-pleasing to God and helps our fellow human beings.

Saint Paisios the Athonite +1994

The 4th Prayer offered at the Matins Service

Master and God, holy and beyond understanding, who said: Let light shine out of darkness, who have given us rest by the sleep of the night and raised us up to glorify and implore your loving kindness; entreated by your own compassion, accept us who now worship you and give you thanks in the measure of our power, and grant us all our requests that are for salvation. Declare us to be children of light and of the day, and heirs of your eternal blessings. Remember also, Lord, in the greatness of your compassion all your people, those present with us and who pray with us, and all our brethren by land and sea and in every place of your dominion who ask for your love for humankind and your help; and give to all your great mercy. So that, always kept safe in soul and body, we may glorify with boldness your wondrous and blessed name, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.



A Scripture Reading Calendar for November

1	Galatians 6:11-18	Luke 16:19-31	New Martyr Helen of Sinope (Pontus, 18thC)
2	1 Thessalonians 1:1-5	Luke 11:29-33	Hieromartyrs Ananias & Constantine of Perm (Russia, 1918)
3	1 Thessalonians 1:6-10	Luke 11:33-41	Hieromartyr George of Neapolis (Asia Minor, 1797)
4 Fast	1 Thessalonians 2:1-8	Luke 11:42-46	St Simon of Yurievets, Fool-for-Christ (Ivanovo, 1584)
5	1 Thessalonians 2:9-14a	Luke 11:47-12:1	St Jonah, Metropolitan of Novgorod (1470)
6 Fast	1 Thessalonians 2:14-20	Luke 12:2-12	New Martyr Gregory the Cross Bearer (Obdorsk? 1936)
7	2 Corinthians 8:1-5	Luke 9:1-6	New Hieromartyr Joseph (Kazakhstan, 1937)
8	Ephesians 2:4-10	Luke 8:41-56	St Martha, Princess of Pskov (1300)
9	1 Thessalonians 2:20-3:8	Luke 12:13-15,22-31	St Nectarios, Bishop of Pentapolis (Aegina, 1920)
10	1 Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 12:42-48	St Arsenius of Cappadocia, the Wonderworker (Kerkyra, 1924)
11 Fast	1 Thessalonians 4:1-12	Luke 12:48b-59	St Maximus, Fool-for-Christ & Wonderworker (Moscow, 1547)
12	1 Thessalonians 4:18-5:10	Luke 13:1-9	St Nilus, Outpourer of Myrrh (Athos, 1651)
13 Fast**	1 Thess. 5:9-13,24-28	Luke 13:31-35	Monk & New Martyr Damascene (Constantinople, 1681)
14	2 Corinthians 11:1-6	Luke 9:37-43a	New Martyr Constantine of Hydra (1800)
15 Fast***	Ephesians 2:14-22	Luke 10:25-37	New Hieromartyrs Nicholas & Peter and others (Russia, 1937)
16 Fast***	2 Thessalonians 1:1-10	Luke 14:1,12-15	New Hieromartyr Theodore Kolierov (Russia, 1928)
17 Fast**	2 Thessalonians 1:10-2:2	Luke 14:25-35	Archimandrite Sebastian, Apostle to America (San Francisco, 1940)
18 Fast	2 Thessalonians 2:1-12	Luke 15:1-10	New Martyr Anastasius (Epirus, 1750)
19 Fast**	2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5	Luke 16:1-9	Elder Cleopa of Sihastria (Romania, 1998)
20 Fast	2 Thessalonians 3:6-18	Luke 16:15-18; 17:1-4	New Hieromartyrs Ioannikia (Hegumenia) & Tatiana (Russia, 1937?)
21 Fast***	Hebrews 9:1-7	Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28	New Hieromartyr Alexander (Hotovitsky) of New York (Russia, 1937)
22 Fast***	Ephesians 4:1-7	Luke 12:16-21	St Paraskeva the Confessor (1952)
23 Fast	1 Timothy 1:1-7	Luke 17:20-25	St Dionysios, Patriarch of Constantinople (1492)
24 Fast**	1 Timothy 1:8-14	Luke 17:25-37; 18:8b	Virgin New Martyr Anysia (Russia, 1937)
25 Fast**	1 Timothy 1:18-20; 2:8-15	Luke 18:15-17,26-30	New Hieromartyr Seraphim of Smolensk and others (1937)
26 Fast**	1 Timothy 3:1-13	Luke 18:31-34	Martyr George of Chios (1837)
27 Fast	1 Timothy 4:4-8,16	Luke 19:12-28	St Diodorus of the Mountain of Saint George (Kargopol, 1633)
28 Fast***	Galatians 3:8-12	Luke 10:19-21	St Theodore of Rostov (1395)
29 Fast***	Ephesians 5:8b-19	Luke 18:18-27	New Hieromartyr Philoumenos of Jacob's Well (W. Bank, 1979)
30 Fast***	1 Timothy 5:1-10	Luke 19:37-44	St Andrew, Metropolitan of Transylvania (1873)

* 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

Priest in Charge: Very Rev'd Protopresbyter Pancratios Sanders

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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 2015/16 (11/15)

**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.

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.