



The Tower

September 2018

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/Greek-Orthodox-Community-of-Saint-Barbara-the-Great-Martyr-in-Chester)

Charity No: 114475

Dear brothers and sisters,

What a wonderful day we enjoyed when Archbishop Gregorios arrived in our midst to lead the con-celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Saturday 11th August. Clergy and friends came from far and near to be with us and to support Tsvetan Petkov on his ordination to the Diaconate. His Eminence conferred the name of John [Ioan, Ivan] upon him, being a great blessing for us all. In these pages we have included a life of Saint John of Rila, the pre-eminent saint of Bulgaria. We all wish Father John and his family, the Diaconisa Vera, Choir-leader Zoiya, Nadezdha and Jordan many years and great blessings upon their ministry.

We were also blessed when our archbishop called out two of our young servers, Oliver Kremer and Jordan Petkov and conferred upon them the Office of Reader. Well done both of you! There will be plenty of excitements to come for you both.

Thank you, everyone who contributed to the Fund for the victims of the Greek fire tragedy. We have been able to forward the handsome sum of £252.64 to the archdiocese for which an amount in excess of £20k has been collected.

Help is needed for two forthcoming events, please. First, for the annual Heritage Weekend 6th-9th September, mostly to provide refreshments and to chat with our visitors, (see the list of times elsewhere). On Saturday 6th October, we hold our Pan-Orthodox Pilgrimage to which you are all encouraged to come. Help is requested on Friday 5th to take all that is needed to Holywell to set the chapel up and on Saturday afternoon to help bring everything back to church

With much love for you all this Autumn

Fr Pancratios & Presb. Anna

Fr John & Diaconisa Vera



The Most Holy Mother of God prays for us ceaselessly. She is always visiting us. Whenever we turn to her in our heart, she is there. After the Lord, she is the greatest protection for mankind. How many churches there are in the world that are dedicated to the Most Holy Mother of God! How many healing springs where people are cured of their ailments have sprung up in places where the Most Holy Theotokos appeared and blessed those springs to heal both the sick and the healthy! She is constantly, by our side, and all too often we forget her.”

+ *Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica*

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A family afternoon picnic walk

Sunday September 16th (note date change)

following the Divine Liturgy it is proposed that we should all take a picnic and visit Loggerheads for a (hopefully) sunny family afternoon on the Leete Path. Loggerheads is about 2½ miles south of Mold on the road to Ruthin. It's a fascinating place whether we are 2 or 82 years and has the advantage of a completely level path, easy for pushchairs or wheelchairs.

Interested? please speak with Fr Pancratios.

Principal Services for September

1st	Saturday	5.30pm	Day of Prayer for the Environment followed by Vespers
2nd	Sunday	10.00am	Matins
		11.00am	Divine Liturgy
4th	Tuesday	6.30pm	Vespers
8th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers
9th	Sunday	10.00am	Matins
		11.00am	Divine Liturgy
14th	Friday	6.30pm	Vigil
15th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers
16th	Sunday	10.00am	Matins
		11.00am	Divine Liturgy
22nd	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers
23rd	Sunday	10.00am	Matins
		11.00am	Divine Liturgy
24th	Monday	6.30pm	Vespers
25th	Tuesday	6.30pm	Vespers
29th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers
30th	Sunday	10.00am	Matins
		11.00am	Divine Liturgy

			Prophet Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth <i>subject to confirmation</i>
			Nativity of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and the Synaxis of the Ancestors, Joachim and Anna
			Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross
			Hieromartyr Ciprian, Bishop of Carthage (Leete Walk in afternoon)
			Conception of the Forerunner and Baptist, John
			St Sergios, Wonderworker of Radonezh
			Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian
			Hieromartyr Gregory, the Illuminator of Greater Armenia

Principal Services for October

5th	Friday	6.30pm	Vespers	Holy Apostle Thomas (The Doubter)
6th	Saturday	10.30am	Pan-Orthodox Pilgrimage to Saint Winifride's Well, Holywell	
		11.00am	Prayers of Preparation	
			Divine Liturgy followed by picnic lunch	
			Procession to the Well with the Relic of Saint Winifride with the Molieben and Aghiasmos	
		3.00pm	Vespers <i>(note there is no Vespers at Saint Barbara's that Saturday)</i>	
7th	Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
		11.00am	Divine Liturgy	Martyrs Sergius and Bacchus in Syria
8th	Monday	6.30pm	Vespers	Holy Apostle James, son of Alphaeus
13th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
14th	Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
		11.00am	Divine Liturgy	Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council
17th	Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers	Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke
	MemorialSaint Demetrius Commemoration of the Dead			20th Saturday 4.30pm
		5.30pm	Vespers	
21st	Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
		11.00am	Divine Liturgy	St Hilarion the Great
22nd	Monday	6.30pm	Vespers	Holy Apostle James, Brother of the Lord
25th	Thursday	6.30pm	Vespers	Great Martyr Demetrius the Myrrh-gusher of Thessaloniki
27th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
28th	Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
		11.00am	Divine Liturgy	The Protection of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos



The Annual nationwide Heritage Weekend

takes place between Thursday 6th and Sunday 9th September this year.

This is an opportunity for the public to see places of interest that may not normally be open to view.

We take the opportunity to join with this organisation so visitors may see our beautiful church and learn something about the Orthodox Faith. This year, we plan to open on all four days and ask that you, as parishioners, help by meeting the visiting members of the public. We will provide refreshments and answer any questions they may put.

Don't worry if you don't know the answers, Father John or myself will help out!

Thursday 6th 11am-4pm Friday 7th 11am-7pm Saturday 8th 11am-4pm Sunday 9th 2pm-4pm

The Orthodox Christian Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr, Chester



**The Thirty-second
Pan-Orthodox Pilgrimage
to the
Shrine of Saint Winifride**

***Holywell, Flintshire, North Wales. CH8 7LS
Saturday 6th October, 2018
in the Mediaeval Chapel and at her Well***

Programme:

Hours and Divine Liturgy	10.30am
Picnic Lunch	
The Procession to the Well with the Relic of Saint Winifride, the Molieben and Agiasmos and the day concludes with Great Vespers	3.00pm

Please bring your own picnic lunch and liquid refreshments

**Holywell has easy access from all parts of the country via M56 and A55 expressway or
by bus/coach via Chester or train - nearest station Flint with bus to Holywell**

For further details please phone
Father Pancratios:
01244 659717 or 07850 467675

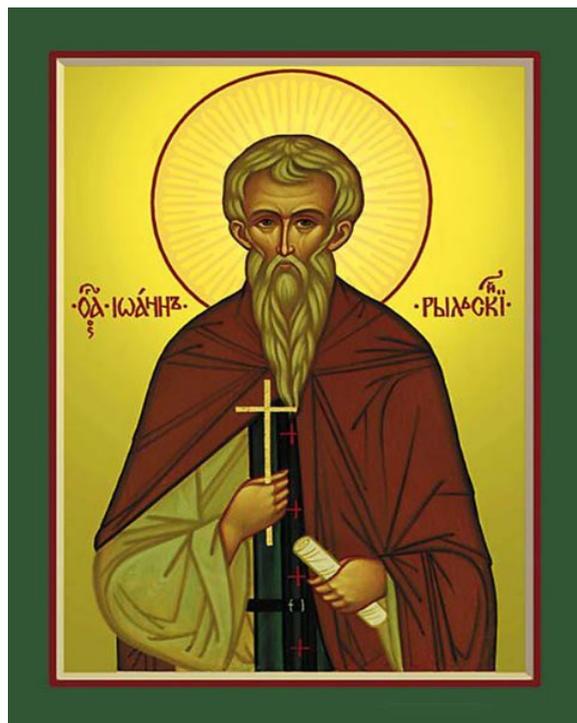
Saint John of Rila

The Monk John of Ryl'sk -- a great spiritual ascetic of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and Heavenly Protector of the Bulgarian nation, was born in the year 876 in the village of Skrino in the Sredets district.

Having been left orphaned, the boy became a cowherd in the avoidance of people. Once his master beat him for losing a cow with its calf. The boy cried and prayed for God's help. When he found the cow with the calf, at the River Struma, the young cowherd prayed, placed on the water his own tattered shirt, made the sign of the cross over it, took up in his arms the calf and went with it, as though on dry land, -- to the other bank of the river where the cow was situated. The rich man, hidden in the forest, was frightened seeing this miracle and, generously having rewarded the youth, sent him away from his home.

Giving away his things, the boy left his native village. Where and when the saint took monastic vows remains unknown. At the very first he pursued asceticism on an high and barren hill, eating but wild plants. His hut was of brushwood. After a short while robbers fell upon him by night and, having beaten him, drove him off from there. Then he found a deep cave and settled in a quite unpopulated place. Twelve years the monk spent in the desolate cave, and then he went into the Ryl'sk wilderness and settled into the hollow of a tree.

He fasted and prayed much, incessantly wept, and ate only grass. Seeing such endurance, God had beans grow up, which he ate for a long time. This sort of beans and his exploits made him known to people. One time a flock of sheep from sudden fright ran along the hilly steep paths, and did not stop until the place where the monk lived. The shepherds, following after the flock, with astonishment saw the hermit, who amicably greeted them: "Ye arrive here hungry -- pluck yourself my beans and eat". All ate and were satisfied. One gathered many beans in reserve. Along the way home he offered them to his comrades, but in the pilfered pods



Saint John of Rila 876-946

there remained no beans. The shepherds turned back penitent, and the staretz (elder) stood there, saying with a smile: "See, children, these fruits are appointed by God for subsistence in the wilderness".

From that time they began to bring to the monk the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, which he healed by prayer. Fleeing celebrity, the monk went from his beloved tree-hollow and settled on an high and difficult of access rock crag, where he dwelt for seven years under the open sky. Later on the Monk John accepted under him the nourishing of monks, who built a monastery with a church in the cave, where the Monk John formerly lived.

He wisely tended his flock and died on 18 August 946 at 70 years of life. Five years before his end he wrote by his own hand *A Testament to Disciples*, one of the finest creation of Old-Bulgarian literature. The holy life of the ascetic and the remarkable mercies of God through his prayers were a very fine preaching of the Christian faith in the newly-baptised Bulgarian land.

The transfer of his relics to Sredets (Sofia), took place around the year 980. Somewhat later the right hand of the Monk John of Ryl'sk was transferred to Russia. According to the Russian Menaion for August is preserved data about the death of the monk. In the year 1183 the Hungarian king Bela II (1174-1196), during the time of a campaign against the Greeks seized with other booty in Sredets the chest with the relics of the Monk John and took it to the city of Esztergom. In the year 1187, having embellished the reliquary, he sent back the holy relics with great honour. On 19 October 1238 the relics of the Monk John were solemnly transferred to the new capital -- Tirnovo, and put in a church in the name of the saint. On 1 July 1469 the holy relics of the Monk John of Ryl'sk were returned to the Ryl'sk monastery, where they repose to the present day, granting graced help to all the believing.

News from Down Under

More than a few of us will remember John and Kate Simons though it is quite a few years since they left our shores for Australia. Perhaps this letter from them will help us understand what Orthodox life is like at the 'ends of the earth'. Thank you, both of you, for this little insight. John was our parish president for quite a few years back then!

We are both very well thank you. I retired about 18 months ago and greatly enjoy a different regime. I do various things - writing, weaving, cooking (I even churn our own butter) - and I've revived my boyhood hobby of small scale military modelling. Kate has moved most of her artistic endeavours to silver smithing and is making some lovely jewellery. She feels she is almost at the point where she can start selling. She still has paintings in various touring shows in Australia but she is concentrating on bashing metal.

After 41 years in universities and a great deal of travel it's good to drop anchor in an old whaling town on the edge of the Antarctic. Nowhere else to go! I thank God everyday for the wonderful opportunities He afforded me in my career and although I have done some consultancy projects since I retired and some other bits and pieces I am quite content to let other people have a go. I made it to acting Vice Chancellor of one of the top 200 universities in the world which isn't bad for a boy who started life in a council prefab and I am all too aware that all this was due to God and the blessing to work that He gave me.

We live in a white Art Deco house, Very cubist, overlooking the Dentrecaesteaux Channel which is the sea lane into Hobart. We get a constantly changing view of liners, yachts, freighters, Antarctic research vessels, Russian icebreakers and the odd RAN submarine. We also get whales and seals and are in a grandstand position for the Aurora Australis although so far we have missed it (you can join a watching group that phones you in the dead of night when the sky lights up). It is very dark here so the starscape is such that you rarely see in England nowadays and we can even see satellites trundling about. The garden is full of wild life - possums, quolls, echidnas, bandicoots, pademelons and wallabies all visit as well as parrots, black and white cockatoos and all sorts of other birds including blackbirds and thrushes from Colonial times (they do well in our cooler climate of course). This is all

wonderful although most of what we plant gets eaten. We have fruit trees - apples, quince, cherry, plums and greengages - and I make our own jam but leave a third on the trees for the birds and animals. We have a marvellous dog called Teddy who is a German Spitz.

We are about a 15 minute drive from our Church. It is an impressive and important building and was the first Anglican cathedral for Hobart. Convict built for the Colony it has the oldest bells and the oldest organ in the Southern Hemisphere. It was given to us by the Anglicans a few years ago and needs about A\$5 million for restoration. Father Timothy is looking to set up a fabric and funding committee and I will serve on that if he wants me. It's a vibrant and friendly community - Greeks of various ages, a smattering of Anglo-Australian converts, oddments from Eastern Europe and most remarkably a big Ethiopian contingent and they often make up a near majority of the congregation. Perhaps 80-100 people on a Sunday. They wear wonderful prayer shawls and all the young women carry the most picturesque babies which of course the Greek ladies love. Our services are in Greek and English - Father Timothy is a former Anglican priest of Australian-Greek heritage.

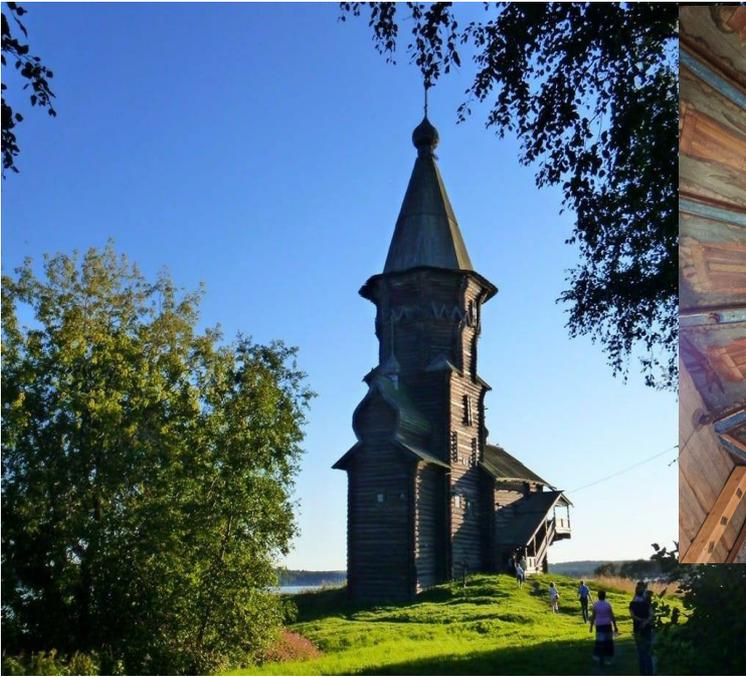
Father Timothy serves the whole island and there is also a church at Launceston. Tasmania is about the size of Sri Lanka but only 500,000 people live here (half of them in Hobart and most of the rest in Launceston and Devonport - Sri Lanka has about 24,000,000) so mostly it is pretty wild and mountainous country.

There is another Greek parish in Hobart which is wholly Greek and a small Russian parish which has reader services although I believe a priest comes over from Melbourne once a month.

We were blessed with a grandchild a couple of years ago and he thrives. I have seen him twice and Katie once and we have to consider how to be part of his life at a distance now but as he gets older I'm hoping we can have regular Skype sessions.

It is lovely to hear from you Father and to see Saint Barbara's thriving. I remember you all and, of course, Spyridon, every day and I hope that next time we are in England we will visit. With much love

John and Kate (Simons)



Many folk around the world will have been shocked by the wilful destruction of the Church of the Dormition in Kondopoga, Russian Karelia, by a 15-year old self-confessed 'satanist'. The church, dating from 1774 is considered a monument of folk wooden architecture of the late eighteenth century, which historically completes the evolution of the temples of the Prionezhsky school. It was one of the tallest wooden churches in the Russian North.

Having had the opportunity to visit wooden churches in Russia and Finland, I never ceased to be amazed at the complexity and beauty of their construction using the simplest of tools.

Why be interested in the fate of a church so far away? There is in fact a connection between our city and Kondopoga, for in Chester Cathedral there are two beautiful icons (in the Lady Chapel) painted at the Kondopoga Icon-painting Workshop – a very well known workshop producing icons in the finest tradition, and a number of examples are to be found within these shores.

A fund has now been established to undertake the complete rebuilding of this important and well-visited church, one of only two in the immediate area. Support has already come from far and wide to raise the estimated £1.15 million costs.

A Scripture Reading Calendar for September

1	1 Corinthians 4:1-5	Matthew 23:1-12	Icon of the Theotokos 'Pamakarista' (11thC)
2	2 Cor. 1:21-24; 2:1-4	Matthew 16:9-20	Icon of the Theotokos 'Kaluga' (1771)
3	Galatians 2:11-16	Mark 5:24-34	Icon of the Theotokos of Pisidia Sozopolis (608)
4	Galatians 2:21-3:7	Mark 6:1-7	Icon of the Theotokos 'The Unburned Bush' (1680)
5	fast** Galatians 3:15-22	Mark 6:7-13	Icon of the Theotokos of Orsha (1681)
6	Galatians 3:23-4:5	Mark 6:30-45	Icon of the Theotokos of Kiev-Bratsk (1654)
7	fast Galatians 4:8-21	Mark 6:45-53	Repose of Archbishop Anatole of Irkutsk (1925)
8	Philippians 2:5-11	Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28	Icon of the Theotokos 'Kathariotissa' on Ithaca (1696)
9	Galatians 6:11-18	John 3:13-17	Repose of Elder Joachim of St Anne's Skete (Athos, 1950)
10	Galatians 4:28-5:10	Mark 6:54-56; 7:1-8	Synaxis of the Icon of the Theotokos 'Trikeriotissas' (1825)
11	Galatians 5:11-21	Mark 7:5-16	Weeping Icon of the Theotokos 'of Kaplunovka' (1689)
12	fast Galatians 6:2-10	Mark 7:14-24	New Martyr Alexis Voroshin, Fool-for-Christ (1937)
13	Ephesians 1:1-9	Mark 7:24-30	Icon of the Theotokos 'Dubovich'
14	fast 1 Corinthians 1:18-24	Jn 19:6-11,13-20,25-30b	Icon of the Theotokos 'Lesna' (1683)
15	1 Corinthians 1:26-2:5	John 8:21-30	Icon of the Theotokos 'Novonikita' (372)
16	Galatians 3:16-20	Mark 8:34-9:1	Icon of the Theotokos 'Support of the Humble' (Pskov, 1420)
17	Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:1-3	Luke 3:19-22	Icon of the Theotokos 'Tsaregrad' (Constantinople, 1071)
18	Ephesians 2:19-3:7	Luke 3:23-4:1	Icon of the Theotokos 'Molchensk' (1405)
19	fast Ephesians 3:8-21	Luke 4:1-15	Virgin-Martyr Mary at Bamlag (Labour Camp, 1938)
20	Ephesians 4:14-17	Luke 4:16-22a	Icon of the Theotokos 'Panaghia Voulkaniotissa' (Messina, 1755)
21	fast Ephesians 4:17-25a	Luke 4:22-30	Repose of Priest Dumitru Staniloae of Romania (1993)
22	1 Corinthians 14:20-25	Luke 4:31-36	Icon of the Theotokos 'She who is Quick to Hear' (14thC)
23	2 Corinthians 6:16b-7:1	Luke 5:1-11	Icon of the Theotokos 'Slovenskaya' (of Slovenka, 1635)
24	Ephesians 4:25-32	Luke 4:38-44	Icon of the Theotokos 'Filerimos' (in Rhodes, 10thC)
25	Ephesians 5:20-26	Luke 5:12-16	Commemoration of the Earthquake in Constantinople (447)
26	fast** Ephesians 5:25-33	Luke 5:23-39	Arrival of the Iveron Icon of the Theotokos in Georgia (1989)
27	Ephesians 5:33-6:9	Luke 6:12-19	New Hieromartyr Peter, Metropolitan of Krutitsy (1937)
28	fast Ephesians 6:18-24	Luke 6:17-23a	Synaxis of the Holy Fathers of Kiev (Near Caves of St Anthony)
29	1 Corinthians 15:39-45	Luke 5:17-26	Virgin-Martyr Tatiana Chekmazovoy (1942)
30	2 Corinthians 9:6-11	Luke 6:31-36	Repose of Archimandrite Gerasim of Alaska (1969)

* 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 2nd September after the Divine Liturgy.

All matters to the Secretary as soon as possible, please

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Concerning prayer in church, know that it is higher than prayers at home, for it is raised by a whole group of people, among which many are most pure prayers, offering to God from humble hearts, which He accepts as fragrant incense. Along with these our prayers are also accepted, even though they are feeble and worthless.

+ St. Macarius of Optina

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.

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ - ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΓΑΛΗΣ ΒΡΕΤΑΝΙΑΣ

Membership Subscription 2018/19 (9/18)
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.