



The Tower

September 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,

At the end of July, Father Pancratios had the blessing to join the gathering of the diocesan clergy in London on the occasion of a dinner hosted by Archbishop Niketas. The following day we were all gathered for his enthronement ceremony. Archbishop Niketas ascends the throne vacated by Archbishop Gregorios who now enjoys a well-earned retirement after an illustrious episcopate spanning 49 years.

Our mini pilgrimage to Saint Plegmund's Well at Plemstall was enjoyed by all who attended and the accompanying picnic in the meadow behind the church was very pleasant. After a number of years of wilderness, the meadow had been mown and the picnic was the more enjoyable for that, so that no one wanted to go home!

We look forward now to our major pilgrimage to Saint Winifride's Well next month (5th October). We hope that as many of you as can will be able to attend. This is always a joy-filled occasion when we can meet up with brethren from other parishes. Let's make it an even greater occasion by your presence at what is a most significant site for Orthodox Christians in this country. It is, after all, the only place of pilgrimage in Britain with a continuous history of pilgrimage from ancient times where many miracles of healing have been, and continue to be, recorded. Although Saint Winifride lived during the Seventh Century, we do not know when organised pilgrimage to her well began. Such visits were certainly known by the year 1115 and they never ceased even during the most extreme periods of persecution following the Reformation in the 17th Century.

Last month, we included a questionnaire in respect of our newsletter **The Tower**. Regrettably there has not been a single response to our request – nil, nix, nothing! Please do something about it this month, even if only to say you love it or hate it. If we hear nothing, then we will have to consider the future of **The Tower**, if there is any, for it. So, opposite, is the questionnaire again, it's in your hands.

With much love for you all this blessed Summer
Fr Pancratios & Presb. Anna, Fr Dn John & Diaconisa Vera

A Questionnaire

In our quest to make **The Tower** of more value to our parishioners and readers, we invite your comments on its contents (or lack thereof!).

1. How would you rate it as a Newsletter generally? **
2. Is the calendar useful to you, is it understandable? **
3. Do you refer to the Tower for times of services? **
4. Do you read the whole newsletter?
5. If not, which articles do you find useful?
6. Are there any sections that you don't bother with?
7. What would you like to see included each month?
8. Does each member of your family see **The Tower**?
9. Would you like to see more, or less, pages?
10. Do you miss the paper copy? **

**Rate answers as 1-10 (10 highest)

Please add any comments that will help improve **The Tower**

Please email Fr Pancratios with your ratings and comments, or jot them down and hand them in at church. Thank you.

The 33rd Pan-Orthodox Pilgrimage



to the Shrine and Well of
Saint Winifride, Holywell CH8 7LS
Saturday 5th October
in the Medieval Chapel and at her Well The
Pilgrimage begins at 10.30am
with the Prayers of Preparation and Divine Liturgy
followed by the Procession to the Well and
Aghiasmos.
Our Picnic Lunch concludes with Vespers.

Principal Services for September

The Church New Year

1st Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	11th after Pentecost; St Symeon Stylites the Elder
4th Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers	Prophet Zachariah & Righteous Elizabeth
7th Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
8th Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	The Nativity of the Theotokos <i>PARISH PICNIC</i>
11th Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers	Hieromartyr Autonomus
14th Saturday	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross
	5.30pm	Vespers	
15th Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	13th after Pentecost; Great Martyr Niketas the Goth
18th Wednesday		No Vespers	St Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury
21st Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	<i>21/22nd inclusive: Heritage Weekend</i>
22nd Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	14th after Pentecost; Hieromartyr Phokas of Sinope
25th Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers	Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian
28th Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
29th Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	15th after Pentecost; St Kyriakos the Hermit

Principal Services for October

2nd Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers	Hieromartyr Dionysios the Areopagite, Bishop of Athens
5th Saturday	10.30am	Hours/Liturgy	Pilgrimage to Saint Winifride's Well, Holywell
	3.00pm	Vespers	followed by Picnic and Procession to the Well for the Blessing of Waters
6th Sunday	10.00am	Matins	<i>(no Vespers at Saint Barbara's)</i>
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	Holy Apostle Thomas
8th Tuesday	6.30pm	Vespers	Holy Apostle James, son of Alphaeus
9th Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers	St Ambrose, Starets of Optina
12th Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
13th Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council
16th Wednesday		Vespers	Prophet Hosea
17th Thursday	6.30pm	Vespers	Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke
19th Saturday	4.00pm	Memorial	St Demetrius Day of the Dead
	5.30pm	Vespers	
20th Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	St Matrona of Chios
22nd Tuesday	6.30pm	Vespers	Holy Apostle James, Brother of the Lord
23rd Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers	St Elesbaan, King of Ethiopia
26th Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	<i>1am Sunday: Clocks change</i>
27th Sunday	10.00am	Matins	
	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	St Procla, wife of Pontius Pilate
31st Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers	Sts Spyridon & Nikodim, proshpora bakers at Kiev Caves

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The post Brexit EU resettlement scheme is now open.

Please be aware and act NOW!

Don't think "Oh Brexit isn't going to happen. Should we even bother?" It's free and simple to apply and nothing is gained by putting it off.

Check this web page

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

All of you who are EU, EEA or Swiss citizens will have to apply to stay after Brexit. See here for eligibility criteria.

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families/eligibility>

Dressing for Church

Proper attire in the House of God
Abbot Tryphon

The Church is our home, a place where we should feel comfortable, and at ease. It is also God's house and is a temple set aside for worship of the Holy Trinity. Although times have changed and we have become a very casual society, this attitude can not be allowed to influence how we dress to worship God. Our way of dressing for church should reflect our desire to offer our very best to Christ. Just as we want to act in ways that demonstrate the centrality of Christ in our lives, our dress should show forth the modesty that is befitting a Christian.

Just as we take special care to dress for formal social occasions, or job interviews, how much more important it is to show our respect for God's house. If we were invited to the wedding of our boss's daughter, we'd make sure to show respect to our employer by dressing our best. Does God deserve anything less?

We should wear clothes that are modest and befitting a Christian, especially when worshipping in God's house. In our monastery's temple, we keep the ancient practice of removing our shoes before entering, recalling God's direction to Moses " ... take off your shoes from your feet, for the place where you are is holy ground". We ask that no one wear shorts or tee shirts when entering the holy grounds of the monastery, and, as is proper in all Orthodox churches, ask visitors to avoid the distractions that come with slogans on clothing, or "showy" clothing that is best reserved for elegant events.

Both men and women should avoid wearing clothing that can be distracting to other worshippers. Just as we want to keep our focus on the divine services, so too we must not be the cause of the distraction for our fellow Christians. Christ should be the focus of our worship, not our personal outfits. Church is not the place to show off the latest fashion, nor the results of the fitness centre.

Just as it is Orthodox custom that men remove their hats upon entering the Church, women, throughout the history of the Church, have worn head coverings. The idea that this pious, biblical custom be seen as an antiquated or sexist practice, should be foreign to our Orthodox mindset. This tradition is not intended as an insult to women but as a great compliment. The scriptures refer to a woman's hair as her "crowning glory", and the covering of her head as an act of humility. Throughout Christian history, modest believing women chose not to allow their beauty to distract others from the glory of God and the beauty of His house.

These Timid Men ...

from a Homily by Saint John Chrysostom

It became clear through unlearned men that the cross was persuasive; in fact, it persuaded the whole world. Their discourse was not of unimportant matters but of God and true religion, of the Gospel way of life and future judgement, and yet it turned ordinary, uneducated men into philosophers. See how the foolishness of God is wiser than people, and his weakness stronger than people!

In what way is it stronger? It made its way throughout the world and overcame everyone; countless people sought to eradicate the very name of Christ, but that name flourished and grew ever mightier. Its enemies lost and perished; the living, who waged a war on a dead man, were shown to be helpless. Therefore, when a Greek tells me I am dead, he shows only that he is really the foolish one, for I, whom he thinks a fool, prove to be wiser than those reputed to be wise. So, also, in calling me weak, he merely shows that he is even weaker. For the good deeds which tax-collectors and fishermen were able to accomplish by God's grace, are beyond the imagination of philosophers, rulers, and the countless multitudes.

Paul had this in mind when he said: The weakness of God is stronger than people. That the preaching of these men was indeed divine is brought home to us in the same way. For how otherwise could twelve uneducated men, who lived on lakes and rivers and wastelands, conceive the idea for such an immense enterprise? How could men who perhaps had never been in a city or a public square think of setting out to do battle with the whole world? That they were fearful, timid men, the evangelist makes clear; he did not reject the fact or try to hide their weaknesses. Indeed he turned these into a proof of the truth. What did he say of them? That when Christ was arrested, the others fled, despite all the miracles they had seen, while Peter, who was leader of the others, denied him.

How then do we account for the fact that these men, who in Christ's lifetime did not stand up to the attacks by the Jews, set forth to do battle with the whole world once Christ was dead – if, as you claim, Christ did not rise and speak to them and rouse their courage? Did they perhaps say to themselves: "What is this? He could not save himself but he will protect us? He did not help himself when he was alive, but now that he is dead he will extend a helping hand to us? In his lifetime he brought no nation under his banner, but by uttering his name we will win over the whole world?" Would it not be wholly irrational even to think such thoughts, much less to act upon them?

It is evident, then, that if they had not seen him risen and had proof of his power, they would not have risked so much.

Some Further Thoughts on the Life and Traditions of our Faith

On Developing a Spiritual Life part 3

What is the primary purpose of attending our church and temple, our place of worship? Surely it is to Worship the Risen Lord Jesus Christ and to receive His Body and Blood which He offers us from the holy Chalice.

Then why is it that priests, the world over, see parishioners, Sunday by Sunday, attend the church yet not commune the Holy Gifts?

It is, as we have considered previously, because our spiritual life is out of order. We have been called to follow Christ through the waters of Holy Baptism which washed away our sins and brought us into His holy Church. Oh, but how the Evil One, the Devil, so hates this call, that he will do anything he can to weaken our resolve to be truly Christian and cause us to take up our life of sin once more.

As Fr Andrey Tkachev comments (see last month): *The biggest lie of this world is idea that we have plenty of time. With it the devil keeps us in the state of spiritual idleness and relaxation.... Woe to us if we do not fight for our salvation every minute.* His is a stark reminder that we cannot relax our guard even for one moment least we be cast away with the goats at the Judgement (Matt.25:31ff).

To put our spiritual life in order, that is to follow Christ truly, is a life-long labour. It begins with stamping out pride, the Devil's number one tool, and endeavouring to acquire a spirit of humility. Easier said than done! Humility begins with putting Christ first, others second, and ourselves last. It continues with observing God's Commandments and the Rules of the Church, with almsgiving and fasting and above all through filling our hearts with love for Him Above All and for all of His Creation.

To recap – Elder Cleopa describes pride in this way: *The pride of the mind is a demonic disease, for the person affected by it believes that he is great, that he is smarter than the others and no longer needs advice and help from anyone. May God preserve us from this passion and demonic disease!*

When we abandon the spirit of pride and start to manage our lives in accordance with Christ's teaching we soon to realise that the 'things of this world' are not as important as we once imagined them to be, and that all our money and possessions will not gain us the Kingdom of Heaven. One thing only will bring us to the Kingdom – love for God and neighbour.

When we begin to live in this way, we will recognise that we are not as perfect as we imagine ourselves to be. We discover that we have been ground down by the pressures of the world around us that try to force us to conform to a way of life that is, in fact, anti-Christian, wholly Godless. Then we begin to see the imperfections within us and we can do something to cast them out from us. Now we are beginning to get somewhere!

Thus we see that attending church becomes not just a mere 'routine' but something to be anticipated with joy; that Sunday is approaching and that the 'First day of the Week' is so special to us that it will be a pain more than we can bear not to be present in the Temple, His House. It is then that we become like the 'little children' who will be the inheritors of the Kingdom (Matt.18:3).

Each week then becomes a preparation for the Sunday or Feast to come and we will fly to the church to confess our sins and with a clean heart receive the Holy Mysteries of His Body and Blood.

What joy, what blessing it is to receive the sacred Sacrament to be filled with Christ and His Holy Spirit. Now we have, as the prayer puts it, a 'wall and bulwark' against the efforts of the Evil One and his fallen angels to draw us away from the Lord Most High.

Our daily life becomes meaningful, no matter what trial and tribulations may come our way. Prayer and fasting is made real, the saints and their lives become our daily guides and we can call upon our Guardian Angel and above all the Theotokos for their aid in all that we do each day.

There's more on the Spiritual Life to come, Fr. Pancratios

Passions burn and the Passion of Pride is the hottest and most cruel fire of all. It is totally unforgiving and will lead us inevitably to hell. Pride points to self and in 'self' there is no room for God or neighbour.

Fr Pancratios

A Scripture Reading Calendar for September

1	1 Corinthians 9:2b-12	Matthew 18:23-35	St Priscus, first bishop of Capua, martyr (Italy, c66)
2	2 Corinthians 5:10-15	Mark 1:5-15	St Justus, Bishop of Lyon (France, 390)
3	2 Corinthians 9:15-21	Mark 1:16-22	St Manseutus, Bishop of Toul, confessor (France, c360)
4 Fast	2 Corinthians 6:11-16b	Mark 1:23-28	St Salvinus, third bishop of Verdun (France, c 420)
5	2 Corinthians 7:1b-10a	Mark 1:29-35	St Gennebald, Bishop of Laon (France, c555)
6 Fast**	2 Corinthians 7:10-16	Mark 2:18-22	St Petronius, Bishop of Verona, confessor (Italy, c450)
7	1 Corinthians 1:26-3:5	Matthew 20:29-34	St Euvert, Bishop of Orleans (France, c340)
8	Philippians 2:5-11	Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28	St Anastasius II, Bishop of Rome, Pope (Italy, 498)
9	2 Corinthians 8:7-15	Mark 3:6-12	St Omer, Bishop of Therouanne (France, 670)
10	2 Corinthians 8:16-9:5	Mark 3:13-21	St Agapius, Bishop of Novara (Italy, 447)
11 Fast	2 Corinthians 9:12-10:7	Mark 3:19b-27	St Emilian, Bishop of Vercelli (Italy, 520)
12	2 Corinthians 10:7b-18	Mark 3:28-35	St Juventius, first bishop of Pavia (Italy, 1stC)
13 Fast**	2 Corinthians 1:5-21a	Mark 4:1-9	St Litorus, Bishop of Tours (France, 370)
14	1 Corinthians 1:18-24	John 19:6-11,13-20,25-28a,30b	St Maternus II, Bishop of Cologne (Germany, c325)
15	1 Corinthians 16:13-24	Matthew 21:33-42	St Mamilian, Bishop of Palermo (Sicily, 460)
16	2 Corinthians 12:10-19	Mark 4:10-23	St Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, Pope and martyr (Italy, 253)
17	2 Corinthians 12:20-13:2	Mark 4:24-34	St Lambert, Bishop of Maastricht, martyr (704)
18 Fast	2 Corinthians 13:3-14	Mark 4:35-42	St Eustorgius, Bishop of Milan (Italy, c331)
19	Galatians 1:1-3,20-2:5	Mark :1-20	St Eustocheus, Bishop of Tours (France, 461)
20 Fast	Galatians 2:6-10	Mark 5:22-24,35-6:1	St Glycerius, Bishop of Milan, confessor (Italy, 438)
21	1 Corinthians 4:1-5	Matthew 23:1-12	St Alexander, Bishop near Rome (Italy, 2ndC)
22	2 Corinthians 1:21-24; 2:1-4	Luke 5:1-11	St Sanctinus, first bishop of Meaux (France, c300)
23	Galatians 2:11-16	Luke 4:38-44	St Linus, first bishop of Rome, Pope (Italy, c79)
24	Galatians 2:21-3:7	Luke 5:12-16	St Anatolius, first bishop of Milan (Italy, 1stC)
25 Fast**	Galatians 3:15-22	Luke 5:33-39	St Firminius, first bishop of Amiens (France, 4thC)
26	Galatians 2:23-4:5	Luke 6:12-19	St Eusebius, Bishop of Bologna, confessor (Italy, c400)
27 Fast	Galatians 4:8-21	Luke 6:17-23a	St Caius, Bishop of Milan (Italy, 3rdC)
28	1 Corinthians 4:17-21; 5:1-5	Luke 5:17-26	St Paternus, Bishop of Auch (France, 2ndC)
29	2 Corinthians 4:6-15	Luke 6:31-36	St Fraternus, Bishop of Auxerre, martyr (France, 450)
30	Galatians 4:28-5:1	Luke 6:24-30	St Honorius, Bishop of Canterbury, confessor (England, 653)

* 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 29th September 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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Summer Walk

Will take place on Sunday 8th September following the Divine Liturgy

We agreed our destination would be Wepre Park near Connah's Quay

The park contains a ruined castle (Ewloe), playground and visitor centre.

where we will enjoy picnic and walk and room for the children to run around!

Some of you may be familiar with park already, others surely won't.

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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 (9/19)

**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 send 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.