



The Tower

Saint Barbara the Great Martyr Orthodox Church

Sunday 25th October 2026

6th Sunday of Saint Luke

Issue 040



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We've arrived at the last Sunday of October and soon the Liturgical Calendar will lead us to the blessed time of the Nativity Fast. It is a great joy to announce that our new church website is functioning and is a great website. It is filled with information and it is very easy to navigate and use. To create and design this website, a few people worked very hard. First of all I would like to say a huge thank you to Mina who took a lot of time to make this look so good. I'd also like to say a huge thank you to Sergiu, who made this website run smoothly and work without fault. May God bless you! You did a very good job!

Last week presbytera Vera, Ioana and I went to Bulgaria for the celebration of the Feast of St. John of Rila in the Monastery dedicated to Him. This was a very big event because our Parthiarch, His All Holiness Bartholomew was there as well. On Sunday both Patriarchs attended the Divine Liturgy in the Patriasrchal Cathedral. The church was filled with Bishops, priests and people. At the end, both Patriarchs took time and personally went around the people and gave a blessing to every single hand that approached them.

Patriarch Bartholomew paid special attention to the children present at the Cathedral and during the speech he made them all sit down on the steps before the Holy Doors. At the end he gave a small present to all the children. After the Liturgy we travelled for a couple of hours to Rila Monastery. At 8pm we started the All-Night Vigil. I was with many Bishops and

priests in the Holy Altar. This vigil was an amazing service that finished at 2.30am.

The Service comprised of Vespers with the veneration of the relics of St. John of Rila, Litia with Arthoiclasia and Matins. Two big choirs were present, speaking Bulgarian and Greek and the chanting was amazing. Some chants were sang by the whole church. After a short sleep in a very nice villa, generously given to us by the monks, at 9am the next morning we had a Patriarchal Liturgy. Both Patriarchs arrived and with the chants and procession, the church was filled with people.

It was very nice to see that the clergy, priests and Bishops were Bulgarians, Greeks and Romanians and there were also a few people from Canada and America. It was a beautiful service that confirmed the oneness and the unity of the Orthodox Church, as St Paul's letter to the Galatians 3:28 states: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus".

Fr. John



Upcoming Services

25 Oct Sunday	9.00am 10.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	6 th Sunday of Luke
26 Oct Monday	8.00am 9.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	Great Martyr Demetrios The Myrrhstreamer
28 Oct Wednesday	6.30pm 7.15pm	Vespers Catechesis	
1 Nov Sunday	9.00am 10.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	



Announcement

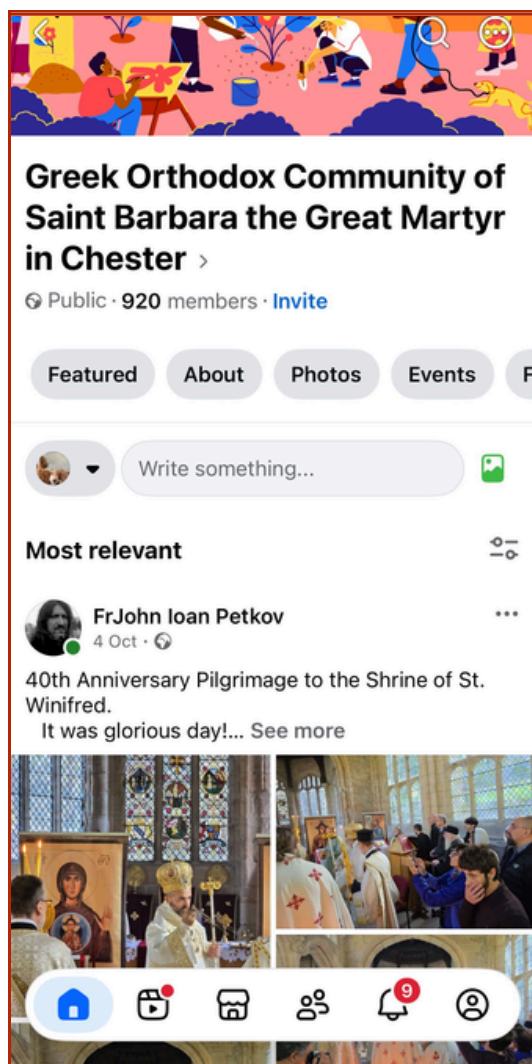
Help needed with our parish social media accounts

Dear all,

We're looking for someone to take over the management of our Church social media pages.

We have a Facebook community group and an Instagram page, which we're hoping to make more active and interesting with your help.

If you'd like to help, please speak to Fr John for more information.



Why go to church?

The simple answer to this question is "To meet God and share in His Life". But how does this happen?

Let us start by asking some fundamental questions. What is the Church here for? What is the distinctive and unique function of the Church, that which the Church does, and which nobody and nothing else can do? What task does the Church perform, which cannot be carried out equally well by a youth group, a musical society, an old people's home, or an ethnic club? What role does the priest fulfil, which cannot be fulfilled by a social worker, a psychotherapist, or a marriage counselor? What holds the Church together and makes it one?

To questions such as these we may respond: the Church is here to preach salvation in Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead. Such an answer is true, but it is incomplete. For the Church is here not only to proclaim salvation in words, but also to render that salvation accessible to us through action. What then is the primary action of the church community? To answer that, let us remember what happened immediately after the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, when three thousand converts were baptized. 'They devoted themselves', St Luke tells us, 'to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayers' (Acts 2:42). Here, then, is the distinctive and unique function of the Church: to 'break bread', to offer the mystical Sacrifice (the Divine Liturgy) that is without shedding of blood, to celebrate the Lord's Supper 'until He comes again' (1 Cor. 11:2). It is this that the Church alone can do, that distinguishes the Church from every other kind of social unit. Of course, the Church does many other things as well as celebrate the Divine Liturgy, (Eucharist). But it is the Eucharist that forms the life-giving source from which all these other things proceed.

This, then, should be our 'icon' of the Church: a table; on the table, a plate with bread and a cup with wine; and round the table, the bishop and the priests, the deacons, the subdeacons, the readers and the acolytes, along with the holy people, the laos or laity: all of them together celebrating the Eucharistic

mystery. The Church's very name in Greek, ecclesia has a Eucharistic reference: it means 'assembly', yet not simply any kind of assembly, but specifically the worshipping assembly, the People of God 'called out' and gathered for the offering of the Divine Liturgy. It is no coincidence that the phrase 'Body of Christ' has a double meaning, signifying both the community and the sacrament. It is equally no coincidence that the Latin words *communio sanctorum* (communion of the holy) – denote both the communion of saints and communion in the consecrated Gifts. The Church is essentially a Eucharistic organism, and when she celebrates the Divine Liturgy, then and only then does she become what she truly is. The Church makes the Eucharist, and the Eucharist makes the Church.

'If asked to point when asked: Where is God? We would point to the person of Jesus Christ; if asked to point when asked: Where is the Church? it is difficult to think how anyone could point to anything but the Eucharist.' In one of the Gospels we read at Matins on a Sunday morning we read about the two disciples on their way to Emmaus. Christ appeared (although they did not recognise him) and discussed with them about what had happened in Jerusalem and how it was necessary that the Christ should die. "And he opened to them in all the scriptures concerning himself" i.e. The Old Testament. However when they arrived at Emmaus the two disciples persuaded Christ to stay with them and they then recognised him "In the breaking of the Bread". This was the first Liturgy and the first time after the resurrection that anyone had received communion. From that day to this there has never been a Sunday when somewhere in the World people have not partaken of the Liturgy and received Communion. It is therefore true to say that Communion is of enormous importance and central to our Faith. As Christ says in St John's Gospel Chapter 6: "unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood there shall be no life in you". And the Greek word that he uses is *fagete* which means to munch or chew – it is intensely physical.

So if you want to meet God, to share in His life you must come to church and share in the Liturgy!

Fr Stephen



St Demetrios the Myrrh-streamer & Great Martyr of Thessaloniki

Saint Demetrius was a Thessalonian, a most pious son of pious and noble parents, and a teacher of the Faith of Christ. When Maximian first came to Thessalonica in 290, he raised the Saint to the rank of Duke of Thessaly. But when it was discovered that the Saint was a Christian, he was arrested and kept bound in a bath-house. While the games were under way in the city, Maximian was a spectator there. A certain friend of his, a barbarian who was a notable wrestler, Lyaeus by name, waxing haughty because of the height and strength of his body, boasted in the stadium and challenged the citizens to a contest with him. All that fought with him were defeated. Seeing this, a certain youth named Nestor, acquaintance of Demetrius', came to the Saint in the bath-house and asked his blessing

and sealing himself with the sign of the precious Cross, he presented himself in the stadium, and said, "O God of Demetrius, help me!" and straightway he engaged Lyaeus in combat and smote him with a mortal blow to the heart, leaving the former boaster lifeless upon the earth. Maximian was sorely grieved over this, and when he learned who was the cause of this defeat, he commanded straightway and Demetrius was pierced with lances while he was yet in the bath-house, As for Nestor, Maximian commanded that he be slain with his own sword.

Apolytikion of Demetrius the Myrrh-streamer *Third Tone*

The world has found in you a great champion in time of peril, as you emerged the victor in routing the barbarians. For as you brought to naught the boasts of Lyaaios, imparting courage to Nestor in the stadium, in like manner, holy one, great Martyr Dimitrios, invoke Christ God for us, that He may grant us His great mercy.

Kontakion of Demetrius the Myrrh-streamer *Second Tone*

God, who gave you invincible power and with care kept your city invulnerable, royally clothed the Church in purple with the streams of your blood, for you are her strength, O Dimitrios.



Congratulations to HAH Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on 35 Years of Patriarchal Ministry

Warmest congratulations to our Patriarch,

HAH Bartholomew,

Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch, on completing 35 years of service as our shepherd in Jesus Christ.

Είς πολλά ἔτη, Δέσποτα!

<https://www.thyateira.org.uk/news/announcements/35-years-of-patriarchal-ministry/>

The following readings and sermon have been extracted from the Archdiocese of Thyateira & Great Britain news bulletin.

To access the full bulletin, please visit: www.thyateira.org.uk.

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Γαλ. β', 16-20

Ἀδελφοί, εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεῦσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου· διότι οὐ δικαιωθήσεται ἐξ ἔργων νόμου πᾶσα σὰρξ. Εἰ δέ, ζητοῦντες δικαιωθῆναι ἐν Χριστῷ, εὐρέθημεν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἁμαρτωλοί, ἄρα Χριστὸς ἁμαρτίας διάκονος; Μὴ γένοιτο. Εἰ γὰρ ἃ κατέλυσα, ταῦτα πάλιν οἰκοδομῶ, παραβά- την ἑμαυτὸν συνίστημι. Ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον, ἵνα Θεῷ ζήσω. Χριστῷ συνε- σταύρωμαι· ζῶ δέ, οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῇ δέ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός· ὁ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ.

EPISTLE READING

Gal. 2: 16-20

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.



Christian Orthodox Thyateira Youth (COTY)
COTY is the official youth ministry of the Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain, for ages 16-35.
To learn more visit: www.coty.org.uk.
Instagram: COTY_org



ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Λουκ. η', 26-39

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἐλθόντι τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν, ἣτις ἐστὶν ἀντίπερα τῆς Γαλιλαίας. ἐξελθόντι δὲ αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ἀνὴρ τις ἐκ τῆς πόλεως, ὃς εἶχε δαιμόνια ἐκ χρόνων ἱκανῶν, καὶ ἱμάτιον οὐκ ἐνεδιδύσκετο καὶ ἐν οἰκίᾳ οὐκ ἔμενεν, ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν. Ἰδὼν δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἀνακράξας προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ καὶ φωνῇ μεγάλῃ εἶπε· τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ Ὑψίστου; δέομαί σου, μὴ με βασανίσῃς. παρήγγειλε γὰρ τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἀκαθάρτῳ ἐξελθεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. πολλοῖς γὰρ χρόνοις συνηρπάκει αὐτόν, καὶ ἐδεσμεῖτο ἀλύσει καὶ πέδαις φυλασσόμενος, καὶ διαρρήσων τὰ δεσμὰ ἠλαύνετο ὑπὸ τοῦ δαίμονος εἰς τὰς ἐρήμους. ἐπηρώτησε δὲ αὐτόν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· τί σοὶ ἐστὶν ὄνομα; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· λεγεὼν· ὅτι δαιμόνια πολλὰ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς αὐτόν· καὶ παρεκάλει αὐτόν ἵνα μὴ ἐπιτάξῃ αὐτοῖς εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον ἀπελθεῖν. Ἦν δὲ ἐκεῖ ἀγέλη χοίρων ἱκανῶν βοσκομένων ἐν τῷ ὄρει· καὶ παρεκάλουν αὐτόν ἵνα ἐπιτρέψῃ αὐτοῖς εἰς ἐκείνους εἰσελθεῖν· καὶ ἐπέτρεψεν αὐτοῖς. ἐξελθόντα δὲ τὰ δαιμόνια ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰσῆλθον εἰς τοὺς χοίρους, καὶ ὥρμησεν ἡ ἀγέλη κατὰ τοῦ κρημοῦ εἰς τὴν λίμνην καὶ ἀπεπνίγη. Ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ βόσκοντες τὸ γεγενημένον ἔφυγον, καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν καὶ εἰς τοὺς ἀγρούς. ἐξῆλθον δὲ ἰδεῖν τὸ γεγονός, καὶ ἦλθον πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ εὗρον καθήμενον τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀφ' οὗ τὰ δαιμόνια ἐξεληλύθει, ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν. Ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ αὐτοῖς οἱ ἰδόντες πῶς ἐσώθη ὁ δαιμονισθείς. καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτόν ἅπαν τὸ πλῆθος τῆς περιχώρου τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν ἀπελθεῖν ἀπ' αὐτῶν, ὅτι φόβῳ μεγάλῳ συνείχοντο. αὐτὸς δὲ ἐμβὰς εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ὑπέστρεψεν. Ἐδέετο δὲ αὐτοῦ ὁ ἀνὴρ, ἀφ' οὗ ἐξεληλύθει τὰ δαιμόνια, εἶναι σὺν αὐτῷ· ἀπέλυσε δὲ αὐτόν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· ὑπόστρεφε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου καὶ διηγοῦ ὅσα ἐποίησέ σοι ὁ Θεός. καὶ ἀπῆλθε καθ' ὅλην τὴν πόλιν κηρύσσων ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 8: 26-39

At that time, as Jesus arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, there met him a man from the city who had demons; for a long time he had worn no clothes and he lived not in a house but among the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, do not torment me. For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For many a time it had seized him; he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters, but he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the desert. Jesus then asked him, What is your name? And he said, Legion; for many demons had entered him. And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them leave. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. When the herdsmen saw what happened, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. And those who had seen it told them how he who had been possessed with demons was healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked him to depart from them; for they were seized with great fear; so he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but he sent him away, saying, Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you. And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

SERMON ON THE GOSPEL READING

In today's Gospel reading we hear of Christ's encounter with a man who is possessed by demons. It is a dramatic story, but also a deeply personal one, because it speaks about identity, freedom and the restoration of the human person.

Our Lord first asks the man for his name. This is significant. Christ calls the man back to identify with his true self. All of us have an identity given by God, an identity rooted in the image and likeness of God. Yet that identity can become obscured. We can allow ourselves to be defined by fear, by sin, by the expectations of others, or by the false names that the world gives us. Christ calls each of us to recognise our true identity as children of God and to reject everything that seeks to separate us from that truth. Saint Luke tells us that the demons identified themselves as "Legion", because they were many. The man's simple identity had become confused and broken. Evil destroys the wholeness within us. It fragments us, creates confusion and leaves us unable to recognise clearly who we are. In freeing the man from this legion, Christ restores him to the simplicity and dignity of his true self.

There is also something very striking in the description of the man after he has been healed. Saint Luke tells us that the people found him sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. The man who had been restless, tormented and isolated is now calm, restored and able once again to be in relationship with others. Christ does not simply remove the demons. He restores the whole person. Then comes the strange episode in which Christ permits the demons to enter a herd of swine, which rush into the lake and drown. The Fathers of the Church remind us that this points to the destructive character of evil. When we engage with evil, it never leads to life. It may promise freedom, pleasure or power, but in the end it brings some form of death or destruction. The drowning of the pigs becomes a sign of where evil ultimately leads.

Yet the reaction of the people is also worth noticing. Instead of rejoicing at the man's healing, they become afraid and ask Christ to leave their region. Sometimes the work of God unsettles us because it challenges what has become familiar. We may become accustomed even to unhealthy habits or patterns of life, and real change can be frightening. Christ, however, does not leave us where we are. He calls us towards freedom. Finally, the man begs Jesus to allow him to become one of His disciples and to remain with Him. But Christ tells him to return to his home and to tell the people what God has done for him.

There is an important lesson here for all of us. Not everyone is called to become a preacher, missionary or monk, but every Christian is called to bear witness. We are given the responsibility of sharing, through both our words and our lives, what God has done for us. We witness through the way we forgive, the way we treat others, the way we resist evil and the way we allow Christ continually to restore us.

Today's Gospel reminds us that Christ calls us back to our true identity. He frees us from what divides and enslaves us and restores us to the person we were created to be. May we learn to recognise His voice above all others, and may our lives proclaim with gratitude what great things God has done for us.

For your prayers

25 October	Melpomene Coe John Gallagher	Laid to rest this time in 2011 Laid to rest this time in 2013
26 October	Aris Soterios Manolopoulos	Baptised this day in 2008
28 October	Gina Maria Paunovici Yianni Andreas Livanos Maria Butler	Baptised this day in 2012 Baptised this day in 2017 Laid to rest this time in 2020



Please consider donating!

Our parish is a self-supporting charitable community, relying solely on the generosity of our faithful, with no supplementary funding from external bodies. We rely on your donations for everything you see in the church including a small salary for the priest, all charitable work of the church, and all the fundraisings organised by the Archdiocese. All our finances are in your hands. You are the owners of everything in the church including the building and all the bills.

Please consider supporting your Parish by donating monthly via standing order:
<https://www.stbarbara.org.uk/church-membership>

If you are a UK taxpayer, please complete the Gift Aid Form alongside each donation as this allows the church to receive an additional 25p for every £1 you donate, at no extra cost to you. Please use the envelopes located at the entrance of the church. If you use card payment for your donations, and you'd like to Gift aid your payment, please select this option on the card machine once your payment is complete.

Thank you for your continuous support !



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