



# The Tower

May 2014

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](http://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: 1144751

*Dear brothers and sisters,*

What a wonderful encounter with the Risen Lord we all had at Pascha and in the days leading up to the Great Feast. I think we had more folk at practically all the services than ever and the church looked truly magnificent. Next year we really must rig up loudspeakers for all those who could not get into the church.

Although we now settle back into a more regular worshipping routine, we should not let go of blessings that we have received at Pascha, especially that we should not lose our spiritual gains through laziness and worldly concerns.

We should extend thanks to all those who worked so hard to prepare the church for the Feast: The flowers and decorations, the Epitaphios, the bay leaves, the cleaning, the Paschal feast and the many little tasks that contributed to the joy we all felt throughout Pascha.

Hard on the heels of Pascha was the "Wedding of the year!" Saint Thomas Sunday saw Michael Aristodemou and Rachel Whittam joined together in Holy Matrimony. A packed church and refectory supported the couple and for many, the highlight was two-year-old Ezekiel reciting the Lord's Prayer - more than a few tears were shed. Both families worked very hard to ensure the success of the day and, if you weren't there, there are plenty of photos on Facebook! May God bless Rachel and Michael as they travel through life together.

Congratulations also go to Dan and Nicoleta Mazalu on the birth of Teodora, sister to Ana-Maria just after Pascha.

*Wishing you a blessed Springtime*

*Fr Pancratios & Presbytera Anna*



## *Dates for your Diary!?*

The Parish Board welcomes suggestions for Events this Summer, whether for fund-raising purposes or as purely social gatherings (or both!). Please offer your suggestions to the Secretary or any member of the Board. All ideas will be taken on board to help build our community.

In September, we will be 'open house' for the annual Heritage Weekend and will now be able to offer refreshments to all our visitors. We will welcome all volunteers over the period 11-14 September.

## Some Miracles of Saint John the Russian

### The Saint Was Helping Me To Pray

Aikaterina M. from Athens related the following miracle of Saint John the Russian in 1995, about her first visit to the Church of Saint John the Russian in Evia: The first time I came here with my friends, I barely knew who Saint John was, nor did I know what to expect, as I had never seen incorrupt relics before.

At first I was shocked - the saint's body was certainly there, as it should not have been if it had been subject to the normal processes of nature, but his skin looked dark and a little withered, and I was fearful of coming any closer to the glass coffin. I finally gathered my courage and went up to look. His face was covered with a gold cloth, out of reverence, but I could clearly see his hands and wrists. I knelt down beside the coffin to pray, feeling that even if it seemed strange to me, I should still try to be respectful. I asked the saint to help me understand what I was seeing, and to know him.

When I finished praying, I went to sit in a chair off to the side while I waited for my friends. I thought that I should pray some more, but I didn't know any prayers to Saint John so I took out my Akathist Hymn to the Panagia, which I always carry with me, and told St. John that it was for him also. I begged him to forgive me for not having a special prayer for him alone. Probably like most people, I often don't pray very deeply unless someone I love is ill or in danger, and this time I began read the Akathist to the Panagia in my usual way, although I tried hard to concentrate on the words. Suddenly, I felt that someone had come up and was standing next to me. I looked around quickly, but the nearest person was kneeling at the relics with his back to me, about a dozen meters away. I went back to my prayers, and although I didn't actually hear anything spoken aloud, I had the distinct impression that someone was praying to the Panagia with me, with great strength and love. I suddenly found myself praying with a depth I have never felt before or since - as if I was somehow in the middle of the prayer, and it was alive. I could feel the prayer moving up to heaven, and I knew in my soul that it was Saint John himself, praying with me. I was filled with such awe and joy at the nearness of the saint who was helping me to pray even though I had been afraid of him. It felt like Pascha, and as if I had just received the Holy Mysteries. I come to him now as often as I can.

### An Escape From Bandits

In 1878, Fr. Andrew, a monk from the Russian Monastery of Saint Panteleimon on Mount Athos, made a pilgrimage to Prokopion to pray before the relics of Saint John. When he arrived he venerated the Saint with great joy, and remained in the village for some time. On his way to Constantinople he travelled with six coaches of Turkish merchants from Anatolia, also on their way to the capital. As they reached a rutted and desolate part of the road, the monk's coach and one other slowed down to avoid mishap, while the rest went on ahead. Suddenly, a young man on a red horse appeared on a low hill near Fr. Andrew's coach, waving his hand and shouting, "Turn back! Robbers have captured your companions!" As soon as he sounded the warning, he vanished from in front of their eyes.

The two coaches immediately turned back, and although pursued by the robbers, they escaped unharmed. Fr. Andrew hastened to

the nearest village, where he continued his journey in the company of Turkish soldiers. At a country inn where they spent the night, he met his former merchant-companions, who told him that the thieves had not only taken their money, but even their clothes, and they were amazed that the last two coaches had escaped unharmed. Fr. Andrew related the appearance of the youth, and they all glorified God, understanding that it was the Saint himself who had saved the monk after his pilgrimage to Prokopion.

### The Cane

For many years, pilgrims to the shrine of Saint John the Russian saw a simple cane standing before the glass-enclosed sepulchre. It belonged to an old woman, Maria Spaik, who was bent over from osteoporosis and had been unable to stand upright for eighteen years. In August 1978, her relatives brought her to the Church of Saint John and lifted her in their arms so that she could venerate the relics. When Maria saw the incorrupt body of the Saint, she began to cry, asking Saint John to help her. As she prayed over the relics, she felt an invisible hand touch her back. The old woman drew herself up erect. Tears appeared in the eyes of all the onlookers. The bells were rung, and a Supplication Service was sung in thanksgiving. The cane was left at the shrine as a memorial of the miracle.



## The Shepherd

A very instructive book from the second century is called "The Shepherd", in which a man by the name of Hermas from Rome received revelations from an angel of God. Hermas was a wealthy man but because of his sins and the sins of his sons, he fell into extreme poverty. Once while in prayer, a man appeared to him in white raiment with a staff in his hand and told him that he is an angel of repentance who was sent to be with him until the end of his life. The angel gave him the following twelve mandates:

1. Believe in God;
2. To live in simplicity and innocence; do not speak evil and give alms to all who beg;
3. Love truth and avoid falsehood;
4. Preserve chastity in your thoughts;
5. Learn patience and generosity;
6. To know that with every man, there is a good and an evil spirit;
7. To fear God and not to fear the devil;
8. To do every good and to refrain from every evil deed;
9. To pray to God from the depth of the soul with faith that our prayer will be fulfilled;
10. To guard against melancholy as the sister of doubt and anger;
11. To question true and false prophecies;
12. To guard against every evil desire.

*Read "The Shepherd of Hermas" on the internet or perhaps from your local library.*

## On the Ascension of Christ

...Jesus did not live with his disciples after his Resurrection as he had before his death. Filled with the glory of his divinity, he appeared at different times and places to his people, assuring them that it was he, alive in his risen and glorified body.

To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3)

It should be noted that the time span of forty days is used many times in the Bible and signifies a temporal period of completeness and sufficiency. (Genesis 7:17; Exodus 16:35, 24:18; Judges 3:11; Samuel 17:16; 3(1) Kings 19:8; Jonah 3:4; Matthew 4:2)

On the fortieth day after his Resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven to be glorified on the right hand of God. (Acts 1:9-11; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51) The Ascension of Christ is his final physical departure from this world after the resurrection. It is the formal completion of his mission in this world as the Messianic Saviour. It is his glorious return to the Father who had sent him into the world to accomplish the work that he had given him to do. (John 17:4-5)

... and lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy ... (Luke 24:50b-52)

The Church's celebration of the Ascension, as all such festal celebrations, is not merely the remembrance of an event in Christ's life. Indeed, the Ascension itself is not to be understood as though it were simply the supernatural event of a man floating up and away into the skies. The holy scripture stresses Christ's physical departure and his glorification with God the Father, together with the great joy which his disciples had as they received

the promise of the Holy Spirit who was to come to assure the Lord's presence with them, enabling them to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. (Luke 24:48-53; Acts 1:8-11; Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:16-19)



In the Church the believers in Christ celebrate these very same realities with the conviction that it is for them and for all men that Christ's departure from this world has taken place. The Lord leaves to be glorified with God the Father and to glorify us with himself. He goes in order to "prepare a place" for us, and to take us also into the blessedness of God's presence. He goes to open the way for all flesh into the "heavenly sanctuary ... the Holy Place not made by hands" (see Hebrews 8) He goes in order to send the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father, to bear witness to him and his gospel in the world, by making him powerfully present in the lives of his disciples.

The liturgical hymns of the feast of the Ascension sing of all of these things. The antiphonal verses of the Divine Liturgy are taken from Psalms 46, 47, 48 (47,48,49 BCP). The troparion of the feast which is sung at

the little entrance is also used as the post-communion hymn:

**You have ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened your disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit; they were assured by the blessing that you are the Son of God and Redeemer of the world. (Troparion)**

**When you had fulfilled your dispensation for our sakes, uniting things on earth with the Heavens, you did ascend in glory, O Christ our God, departing not hence, but remaining inseparable from us and crying unto those that love you: I am with you, and no one can be against you. (Kontakion)**



**If we take Saint Paul literally, then we are not allowed to cling to our anger for even a day (cf. Eph 4.26). I would like to make a comment, however, that many people are so embittered and furious when they are in a state of anger, that they not only cling to their anger for a day, but drag it on for weeks. I am at a loss for words to explain those who do not even vent their anger in speech but erect a barrier of sullen silence around them and distil the bitter poison of their hearts until it finally destroys them. They could not have understood how important it is to avoid anger, not merely externally, but even in our thoughts, because it darkens our intellect with bitterness and cuts it off from the radiance of spiritual understanding and discernment by depriving it of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.**

**Saint John Cassian + 435**



# Principal Services for May / June

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

## *Feast Day and other Services during May*

Sunday 4th	Third Sunday of Pascha - The Myrrh-bearing Women	Liturgy 11am
Sunday 11th	Fourth Sunday of Pascha - The Paralyed Man	Matins 9.30, Liturgy 11am
Sunday 18th	Fifth Sunday of Pascha - The Samaritan Woman	Liturgy 11am
Sunday 25th	Sixth Sunday of Pascha - The Blind Man	Liturgy or Lay Matins 11am

## *Feast Day and Other Services during June*

Sunday 1st	Seventh Sunday of Pascha - Fathers of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Ecumenical Council	Liturgy or Lay Matins 11am
Sunday 8th	Feast of Holy Pentecost - Descent of the Holy Spirit	Matins 9.30am, Liturgy 11am Vespers 1pm
Sunday 15th	First Sunday after Pentecost - All Saints	Liturgy 11am
	<i>16<sup>th</sup> - Beginning of the Apostles' Fast</i>	
Sunday 22nd	Second Sunday after Pentecost - All the Saints of Britain	Matins 9.30am, Liturgy 11am
Monday 23rd	Feast of the Nativity of the Forerunner & Baptist, John	Vespers 6.30pm
Sunday 29th	Feast of the Leaders of the Apostles, Peter and Paul	Liturgy 11am



## How should I Pray?

*It seems like a simple thing, yet one of the most frequent questions raised by Orthodox Christians is the basic question, how should I pray?*

Every Orthodox Christian should have a daily rule of prayer, which should be established with the advice of a priest or spiritual father. This is the basis of daily prayers – morning and evening, the very minimum to keep us in some degree of communion with Christ.

But what about other, everyday needs? What about the crises and opportunities that arise in our lives? How do we turn these events into opportunities for prayer, and gain God's help in everyday life?

- We can find great help in calling out to God, "Lord, help me!", or "Lord, have mercy on me!", at any time of need;
- We can (and should) ask the friends of God – the saints – to pray for us by reading an Akathist to a saint who sympathizes with our situation. These are read at church, and can also be read at home (There are books of Akathists and they can also be found on several good internet sites;
- We should use the prayer rope (Komboskini, Chotki, Metanii) not just for the Jesus Prayer, but also to repeat 50-100 times "Lord, have mercy on (Name)", whenever we know of someone in sickness or need: a simple prayer that goes straight to God;
- For special needs, travel, and projects, we should ask the priest to pray or to serve a Supplicatory Service (Moleben or prayer service) dedicated to our specific need.

As we pass through life, let us not make the assumption that prayer is too hard and too remote for everyday life. Without it, we're alone.



## Random Jottings

One's cross is made exactly according to one's measure; it is only our impatience, recalcitrance, and passions that make it heavy.

*Hieroconfessor Basil of Kineshma +1947*

It is easy indeed to confess that I have not fasted on prescribed days, or missed my prayers, or become angry. It is quite a different thing, however, to realize suddenly that I have defiled and lost my spiritual beauty, that I am far away from my real home, my real life, and that something precious and pure and beautiful has been hopelessly broken in the very texture of my existence.

*Fr Alexander Schmemmann*

We still have much to learn, and especially how to listen to one another. Someone who trusts only himself, his own will and judgements, is very often mistaken.

*Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia of Georgia*



## Archbishop Gregorios' letter to the Faithful on Holy Pascha

Dearly Beloved in the Lord,

Once again, our God who is worshipped and glorified in Trinity, has accounted us worthy to celebrate the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Once more our church bells will ring joyfully to call the faithful to glorify the source of our joy and gladness, which rightly fills our very being during these holy days. As we hear at the beginning of Holy Week: *“The present day is resplendent with the first fruits of the Lord’s sufferings. Come then, lovers of feasts, let us meet it with songs”* (Great Monday Matins)

Great and Holy Week is a radiant and spiritual feast; a divine, mystical celebration in which we proclaim the greatness of God and His divine condescension and love as the sacrificial lamb offered for the human race, for which He *“in His goodness presses on to His sufferings... He deigns to be hung on the Cross to save mankind.”* (Great Monday Matins). And we see him, *“having no form or comeliness... There is no beauty that we should desire Him.”* (Isaiah 52:2-3). Christ entered history as a human being and *“He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross”* (Philipp.2:8), becoming by His own will *“a ransom for many”* (Mark 10:45). Thus *“He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.”* (Isaiah 53:7).

It has been rightly said that Christ was born and raised within Judaism, and is part of its enduring and rich tradition. *“The messianic role that Jesus fitted was not constructed by Christians, it was an existing expectation that Jesus sought to fulfil”* (Jesus and the Jews, Edward Kessler, The Tablet, 29 March 2014, p.6). It is time for Jewish and Christian thinkers and intellectuals to examine in a new light the relations between Judaism and Christianity, and to discover new ways of approaching one another for the glory of God, who *“has in these last days spoken to us by His Son... through whom also He made the worlds”* (Heb.1:2).

We Christians perpetuate the story of Christ and follow this apostolic faith. As members of His Church we mystically live His Passion and Resurrection. We humbly carry out the duty of the Myrrh-bearers and Witnesses of divine love, as did our forefathers with profound faith, patience and self-sacrifice. We relive our Lord’s entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, His betrayal and arrest, His trial by Pontius Pilate and the sentence of the crowd to be crucified. We become witnesses of the God-man’s Crucifixion and share in the confession of the grateful thief. We participate spiritually in His death and burial *“in a new tomb”*, and with the hymn-writers, we sing, *“When Joseph with Nikodemus took you, who are clothed with light as a garment, down from the Tree, and saw you a dead body, naked, unburied, he was filled with compassion, and raising a lament he grieved and said, ‘Alas, sweetest Jesus, when a little while*

*ago the sun saw you hanging on the Cross, it wrapped itself in gloom, and the earth quaked with fear, and the veil of the temple was rent in two; but see, I now look on you, who for me have willingly undergone death; how shall I bury you, my God? Or how shall I wrap you in shrouds; with what hands shall I touch your immaculate body? Or what songs shall I sing at your departure?”* (Great Friday Vespers)

So once again let us celebrate *“the feast of feasts and the festival of festivals”*, and as we do every year, let us sing, *“It is the day of the Resurrection. Let us be radiant for the festival, and let us embrace one another. Let us say, brethren, even to those that hate us: Let us forgive all things on the Resurrection”* (Hymn of Pascha). From the depths of our hearts, let us devoutly remember and pray for all those who are suffering, who are at war and in prison, and who are in mourning. Let us remember the poor, the unemployed, those who are deprived of basic needs due to the economic crisis that is plaguing Greece and Cyprus and other countries of the world. Let us pray for those who for various reasons are unable to come to church to worship and to receive Holy Communion, and to sing with us during these holy days. Let us ask the risen Christ to visit both poor and rich, leaders and nations, orphans and widows, the elderly, the infirm, the captives, for all sinners and those who are marginalised and homeless and like the Son of Man have *“nowhere to lay their head”* (Matt. 8:20). Let us pray also for all people who patiently entrust their lives and families to our loving and merciful Christ, who *“in the flesh was enclosed in a tomb, and by His divinity, unlocked the storehouses of Hell and emptied all his palaces. By His Resurrection He bestowed His divine blessing and glory and His own splendour, and made us worthy of His Kingdom”* (Great Friday Vespers). With this zeal and vision of our Lord’s Resurrection, the Twelve Apostles, the Seventy Apostles, and other servants of the Gospel – known and unknown – carried the message of the Resurrection to the corners of the earth and sanctified the world, sowed the seed of God’s word, proclaimed the teaching of sacrifice, offering, repentance, forgiveness, divine humility, faith, hope, love and the joy of Christ’s Resurrection. Throughout the ages, the commission of the risen Lord to His disciples has been realised: *“And you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”* (Acts 1:8).

I wish you all health during these holy days. Like the Apostles and Myrrh-bearing Women, may we meet the risen Christ that He may bless and sanctify us, and free us from sin and evil, purging us by the light which sprang forth from our Lord’s life-giving tomb. Praying that we may all experience His divine presence in our souls and in our homes, I remain with love in the Lord and esteem.

Pascha 2014

Gregorios, Archbishop of Thyateira & Great Britain

## The Easter Message from Patriarch Bartholomew

Christ is Risen!

*Come, brethren and children in the Lord, receive the light from the unwaning Light of the Phanar, the Holy Centre of the Orthodox, and let us all together and jointly glorify “Christ, Who is risen from the dead.”*

The emotional state of the Lord’s disciples was grim after His Crucifixion, because by the Lord’s death on the Cross the hopes of His disciples were dispersed that He and they would one day prevail as political power. They had perceived the triumphant entrance of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, following the resurrection of Lazarus and the miraculous feeding of five thousand men, with additional women and children, by five loaves of bread and two fish, as a prelude of their conquering of secular authority. The mother of two of them moreover requested that her two sons sit by each side of the Lord, when He came to power. All these, however, dissipated as **childish imaginations** on account of the awful execution of Jesus Christ.

But, one Saturday morning, the Myrrh Bearers found the tomb empty and heard from an Angel that Jesus **was risen from the dead**. Shortly after, they saw Him in a different state not allowing the Myrrh Bearers to touch Him. This unexpected **development** of the situation caused the people close to Jesus to **wonder** about what was to happen next. They did not receive the answer right away. They were told to wait with patience and endurance until they received **strength from above**. Obeying the command, they waited until Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came down and revealed to them, in fullness, their new **mission**. This mission did not call for the liberation of one nation from its slavery bondages by another nation; instead it called for the **liberation** of all humanity from its enslavement by the master of evil and evil itself. This was another great mission and different from the one they had dreamed about.

The inconceivable commandment calling for the preaching of the message of man’s deliverance from the slavery of death took them by surprise; nevertheless they undertook it with zeal and preached the message everywhere and saved and continue to save many from death. There is the first among the dead, the risen Jesus, Who offers to all the gift of **resurrection** and **eternal life**, a life that is not subjected any longer to corruptibility, because man in the resurrected state is like an angel of God in heaven who no longer has a fleshly body but a spiritual one.

We experience already the foretaste of this blessed resurrected state when we carry our fleshly garment in a way by which we do not taste the substance of death, that is the distancing from God’s love, but feel that we transition from

the natural death of our fleshly body to the higher life of our spiritual body through the loving knowledge of the **Person of the Lord**, a knowledge which equals towards **eternal life**.

Therefore, we are not simply in anticipation of the resurrection of the dead as an event that will take place in the distant future, but we partake in it now, and are jubilant and cry out along with Saint John Chrysostom: *Death, where is your sting? Hades, where is your victory?* We were resurrected alongside Jesus Christ and experience the end of times as present reality and present reality as the end of times. The resurrection permeates our being and fills us with joy. Exactly like the joy the disciples felt when they were saying that the Lord was risen.

We continue the work of the Apostles. We convey to the world the message of the resurrection. We preach knowingly that death must not have a place in our life for it offers no benefit to humanity. The ones who seek to improve social life by killing fellow humans do not offer good service to the living. They rather serve the proliferation of death and prepare their own devouring by death.

In our times, the drums of death and darkness beat frantically. Some fellow men believe that the eradication of other fellow men is a praiseworthy and beneficial act, but they are seriously mistaken. Unfortunately, the annihilation and suppression of the weakest by the strongest dominates in the secular pyramid of today’s reality. Often we are shocked by the cruelty and lack of compassion exhibited by the powerful that hold the reins of the world, believing that they are actually the ones ruling it.

However, Christ, by His death on the Cross, reversed this secular pyramid and placed on top of it His Cross. He sits atop, because He suffered most than any man. There was no man in the world who suffered as much as God-Man Christ did: *And being founding appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the Cross. Therefore God, the Father, also has given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth* (Philippians 2:8-11).

Oft-times in the history of humanity we see as prevailing forces the darkness of death, injustice over justice, hatred and envy over love, and we see that man chooses the infernal hatred over the light of the Resurrection. Despite the apparent technological progress of human societies, despite the declarations of human rights and religious freedom, racial and religious hatred swells universally and causes dangerous tensions, which exacerbate the dominion of the kingdom of death, Hades, and evil. Unfortunately, people can not

tolerate diversity in their fellow human beings. They can not tolerate the different racial origin of other men, the different perceptions and beliefs of them, be it political, religious or social.

History, though, has proven that real progress can not exist without God. Not one society can be truly progressive and happy if there is no freedom. True freedom though is acquired only with our staying close to God. The history of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century tragically confirms this truth. Humanity experienced a horror that originated from Central Europe and produced millions of victims during WWII and racial persecutions. At the same time, it also experienced the horror that was sown by these so called progressive forces, which committed crimes of equal magnitude and cruelty in Eastern Europe in the name of freedom. Therefore, totalitarianism as an offspring of a humanity without Christ, does not recognise political parties and its natural conclusion becomes destruction and death. All of the above confirm that every attempt to reach freedom without God shall be doomed to tragedy.

To this dominance of the forces of darkness, the Church responds with the grace and power of the Risen Christ. He, Who took upon Himself the afflictions and infirmities of each man, offers to the world through His Resurrection also the certainty that *death is vexed*.

Resurrection and life are **the gifts and the light** of Jesus Christ, which “**shines upon all.**” Let us all honour this **gift**. Let us all thank the **Giver** Who by His flesh shone in the world like in a mirror, and has presented the light of the resurrection to the world. Let us then receive the light from the unwaning Light of Life. Let us receive and welcome the **gift** of the resurrection and cry out from the bottom of our hearts:

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling over death by death, and to those in the grave bestowing Life! Rejoice nations and be happy!

Holy Pascha 2014

Bartholomew of Constantinople  
Your fervent supplicant before God

†



## A Prayer for Travellers



O Lord Jesus Christ our God, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, who did journey into Egypt with Joseph, your foster-father, and Mary, your most pure Virgin Mother, and did accompany Luke and Cleopas on the road to Emmaeus. We humbly beg you, all-holy Master, send your grace upon your servant(s) who is (*are*) about to travel. As you did send the Archangel Raphael to accompany Tobias, send now your angel of peace to be a faithful guide and guardian for your servant(s) preserving and delivering me (*him, her, them, us*) from every assault of visible and invisible enemies. Direct my (*his, her, their, our*) feet to walk in the way of your commandments. Bless me (*him, her, them, us*) with peace, health and happiness. Bring me (*him, her, them, us*) back again in safety and tranquillity. Grant that I (*he, she, they, we*) may do your will all the days of my (*his, her, their, our*) life, and give glory to your name.

For yours it is to show mercy and to save us, O Christ our God, and to you we send up glory, together with your Father who is without beginning, and your All-holy, and good, and life giving Spirit, now and for ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

## Troparion for the Feast of the Ascension

You are ascended up into glory, O Christ our God, having made your disciples joyful by the promise of the Holy Spirit, the blessing which was announced unto them, for you are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

## Scripture Reading Calendar for May

1	Acts 4:23-31	John 5:24-30	New Martyrs Euthymius, Ignatius & Acacius of Mount Athos (1814/6)
2	Fast** Acts 5:1-11	John 5:30-6:2	St Matrona of Moscow (1952)
3	Acts 5:21-32	John 6:14-27	New Martyr Ahmet the Calligrapher (1682)
<b>4</b>	<b>Acts 6:1-7</b>	<b>Mark 15:43-16:8</b>	St Nicephorus the Hesychast (13 <sup>th</sup> C)
5	Acts 6:8-7:5,47-60	John 4:46b-54	New Martyr Ephraim the Newly Revealed (1426)
6	Acts 8:5-17	John 6:27-33	St Job, Wonderworker of Pochaev (1651)
7	Fast** Acts 8:18-25	John 6:35-39	Monk Martyr Pachomius of Mount Athos (1730)
8	Acts 8:26-39	John 6:40-44	St Arseny, the Lover-of-labour (14 <sup>th</sup> C)
9	Fast** Acts 8:40-9:19a	John 6:48-54	Martyr Nicholas the New of Vouneni (901)
10	Acts 9:19b-31	John 15:17-16:2	St Symeon, Bishop of Vladimir and Suzdal (1226)
<b>11</b>	<b>Acts 9:32-42</b>	<b>John 5:1b-15</b>	St Joseph, Metropolitan of Astrakhan (1671)
12	Acts 10:1-16	John 6:56-69	Martyr John the Wallachian (1662)
13	Acts 10:21-33	John 7:1-13	Venerable Euphrosynius of Iveron (18 <sup>th</sup> C)
14	Fast*** Acts 14:6-18	John 7:14-30	Venerable Hieromonk and Confessor Matthew of Yaransk (1927)
15	Acts 10:34-43	John 8:12-20	Tsarevich Dimitri of Moscow, the Wonderworker (1591)
16	Fast** Acts 10:44-11:10	John 8:21-30	New Martyr Nicholas of Metsovo (1617)
17	Acts 12:1-11	John 8:31-42b	Archpriest Jonah of Odessa (1924)
<b>18</b>	<b>Acts 11:19-30</b>	<b>John 4:5-42</b>	Archpriest John of Korma, the Wonderworker (1917)
19	Acts 12:12-17	John 8:42-51	St Sergius of Shukhtom (1609)
20	Acts 12:25-13:12	John 8:51-59	St Stephen of Piperi (1697)
21	Fast** Acts 13:13-24	John 6:5-14	St Cassian the Greek, of Uglich (1504)
22	Acts 14:20b-15:4	John 9:39-10:9	New Martyr Paul of the Peloponnese (1818)
23	Fast** Acts 15:5-12	John 10:17-28a	St Paisius of Galich (1460)
24	Acts 15:35-41	John 10:27-38	St Nicetas the Stylite of Pereyaslavl (1186)
<b>25</b>	<b>Acts 16:16-34</b>	<b>John 9:1-38</b>	Holy Martyr Celestine (?)
26	Acts 17:1-9	John 11:47-54	Great Martyr George the New at Sofia (1515)
27	Acts 17:19-28a	John 12:19-36	St John the Russian whose relics are at Evia (1730)
28	Fast*** Acts 18:22-28a	John 12:36-47	St Helena, nun of Diveyevo (1832)
29	Acts 1:1-12	Luke 24:36-53	St John of Ustiug, Fool-for-Christ (1494)
30	Fast** Acts 19:1-8	John 14:1-11a	St James of Galich (15 <sup>th</sup> C)
31	Acts 20:7-12	John 14:10b-21	St Philotheus, Bishop of Tobolsk & Metropolitan of Siberia (1727)

\* 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**

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**  
42 Withens Lane, Wallasey, Wirral. CH45 7NN  
Telephone: 0151 639 6509; Mobile: 07850 467675  
email: pancratios@btinternet.com

**President: Marc Greenwood,**  
6 Meadow Close, Cuddington, Northwich. CW8 2LZ

**Treasurer: Robert Gale**  
40 Ffordd Parc, Bodnant, Prestatyn. LL19 9LJ

**Secretary: Presbytera Anna Sanders**  
42 Withens Lane, Wallasey, Wirral. CH45 7NN  
(Telephone & email as above.)

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.

The Vespers Service is normally served each Saturday at Fr. Pancratios' home (please check time before travelling any distance).

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**

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

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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](http://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.