

October 2007



The Orthodox Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross, Lancaster

Meeting at the Chaplaincy Centre of Lancaster University

Newsletter



*Ἕνθρονος Χριστός, Ζωοδότης.
(Φ. Κάντογλου, 1962).*

*The parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,
belongs to the Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the United Kingdom and Ireland,
which is part of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Western and Central Europe.*

Our Metropolitan is His Eminence Archbishop Gabriel.

The Patriarchate of Antioch is third senior of the Orthodox Churches.

The Patriarch is His Beatitude Ignatius IV.

*The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch
(Acts 11:26)*

SAYING BY BLESSED SERAPHIM ROSE

The Departed

Saint Basil the Great († 379) writes in his Third Kneeling Prayer at Pentecost O Christ our God... (who) on this all-perfect and saving Feast, art graciously pleased to accept propitiatory prayers for those who are imprisoned in hades, promising unto us who are held in bondage great hope of release from the vilenes that doth hinder us and did hinder them ... send down Thy consolation... and establish their souls in the mansions of the Just; and graciously vouchsafe unto them peace and pardon; for not the dead shall praise thee, O Lord, neither shall they who are in Hell make bold to offer unto thee confession. But we who are living will bless thee, and will pray, and offer unto thee propitiatory prayers and sacrifices for their souls.

Saint Gregory Dialogus († 604) in his famous Dialogues (written in 593) teaches that, "The Holy Sacrifice (Eucharist) of Christ, our saving Victim, brings great benefits to souls even after death, provided their sins (are such as) can be pardoned in the life to come." However, St. Gregory goes on to say, the Church's practice of prayer for the dead must not be an excuse for not living a godly life on earth. "The safer course, naturally, is to do for ourselves during life what we hope others will do for us after death." Father Seraphim Rose († 1982) says, "the Church's prayer cannot save anyone who does not wish salvation, or who never offered any struggle (podvig) for it himself during his lifetime."

A passage in the New Testament which refers to a prayer for the depar-

ted is found in 2 Timothy 1:16-18, which reads as follows: "May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. 17 On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me. 18 May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus."

Please remember in your prayers our friends and relatives departed this life in peace during October:

Larissa
Garyfallos

POST-UNI ORTHODOX EXPERIENCE

It may be too often that people try to divide their lives into 'before' and 'after'. To be honest, I have attempted this, too. Well, is it possible at all for a human being to divide his life, given for man to enjoy and for Him to rule? Strange, at least. Sinful, by right.

How many times another event would tempt one to commit such a division! Then, what remains in the end? Scraps of life, which is no longer God's endowment.

For me, leaving the Orthodox community found in the UK, perhaps, seemed to be such an event, since I did not expect much of the future. It might have happened to me but for my Lancaster Orthodox experience. It simply taught me what other institutions had failed to. This is to treasure

life. To some it may well mean to keep it as one piece, neither broken nor divided, and which integrity we shall have to account for.

Years spent in the University are likely to prepare us for a new stage in life. This transit is as commonplace as others are, for example, from kindergarten to school or even from grade to grade. Beyond this dividing life into stages, living in the world, we easily forget what we were given our single life to live for.

Contrary to expectations, the University did become a link between all my “befores” and, hopefully, “afters”. Thanks to the Orthodox community and the word of fr. Jonathan, I came to understand that I do not need bother sorting out white and black stripes I have gone through. All the pieces of life, once contrasting and clashing and, thus, never bringing peace of mind, all of a sudden acquired sense. Indeed, they all have composed one long path. This is my path, which, if anything missing, would have not existed, and I would have not made what I am now.



If I left the University a second time, I would be careful to call it an end or a beginning. It might be another day, another place with other people and with other circumstances. All this would be another part of the path He paved for me, which I must

not disregard. Nor may I think this part more or less worthy than the others.



My post-Uni experience is not what I expected it would be. Deeply in my heart, I am sorry because my handsome dreams did not come true in my new habitat but I am happy, too, for my life is still full of surprises.

I regret my goings to the Church are far less regular than they used to be in Lancaster. My work is not that fulfilling I hoped it might be on returning home. But the good news is that I accept it as a good, well-thought continuation of my path. And, this cannot be regrettable.

I am so grateful for the truth I seem to have started revealing. I am grateful to the Lancaster Orthodox community who helped me do that. I am so happy I had my past and, with this in place, my future is promising only.

Pavel Zlobin

I ASKED

I asked God for strength that I might achieve. I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey. I asked for health that I might do greater things. I

was given infirmity that I might do better things.

I asked for riches that I might be happy. I was given poverty that I might be wise. I asked for power that I might have the praise of men. I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life. I was given life that I might enjoy all things. I got nothing that I asked for, but everything I hoped for. Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered. I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

Anonymous

TRUE PILGRIMAGE TO ORTHODOXY

Dear friends in Christ,

I was born in Greece, a purely Orthodox country, and brought up with love and care in a purely Orthodox family. I have been Orthodox from my very first steps, to be honest, even before that, without realizing it. I did not choose it, I did not seek for it, I just accepted it and tried to find my way living with it. I rebelled and protested, not because of the deepest meaning of our faith, but because of the ways that people, priests and church hold this life giving Truth. I attended Sunday school from the age of 8, I went to church camps for more than 10 years and I even was an executive member of them trying to pass along the Orthodox seed to children and pray to our Lord to make it flourish.

I never thought that I was a good Orthodox, and to be honest, I will never be. However, for a reason that only He knows, God pushed me to come to Lancaster for studies this year. As I now look back on this year, I think that I can realize that He did not do it to help me increase my degrees' collection, but to help me find and see a tiny part of this wonderful Orthodox Truth.

During this truly amazing year, along with my humanly stressful studies, God gave me a divine blessing to meet true Orthodox faithful, Orthodox not in their identifications, but in their hearts and minds. Mainly converts, but not just them, who managed to find their way through Orthodoxy and find the real meaning of it. Such persons are not just Orthodox in name only, as those coming to Lancaster from Greece and Cyprus, but who live as Orthodox. Persons who know what the Church fathers say and try to make it a personal every-day lesson. Persons who may drink milk the last day before they commune, but have big loving hearts, endless true smiles and really caring eyebeams. Persons who approach the Holy Liturgy in a true and meaningful way, in a way that stands still as real Orthodox way as it was delivered to us by our Lord. A beloved father who, in his own words, wants to celebrate the Holy Liturgy and leaves the rest to the Holy Spirit. Persons who pray for the parishioners, people who are not afraid to show their weaknesses, true Orthodox who already live their true pilgrimage to Orthodoxy.

My lovely, big family here at Lancaster, if you -for any reason- felt that born Orthodox would be able to bring you part of the Orthodox truth, you

were simply wrong. I thank you with all my heart, for all the things that you silently taught me. I thank you for all the joy that you, with your true pilgrimage to Orthodoxy, brought in my heart. I thank you, and glorify God for this truly amazing blessing that I never thought I could live.

With Love in Christ,
Panagiotis



CHANCE ENCOUNTER

On holiday in Ithaca last week I was in a shop that sold icons, incense etc. I explained to the priest selling the items that I was a member of the Antiochian Orthodox Church (worshipping at St. Botolph's) and he exclaimed, "Ah - you know Father Jonathan?". I asked if he meant Fr. Jonathan Hemmings and he said he did. He remembered you fondly and I'm therefore passing on Fr. Theodosios Dendrinou's best wishes to you.

In Christ,
Tim Murphy

MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

9th Oct: **Apostle James**

12th Oct: **Simeon the New Theologian**

18th Oct: **St. Luke the Evangelist**

20th Oct: **St. Gerasimos of Cephalonia**

26th Oct: **St. Demetrios the Myrrh-streamer**

For the lives of Saints please visit the Prologue of Ohrid:

www.westsrbdio.org/prolog/prolog.htm

or the Calendar of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America:

www.calendar.goarch.org



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