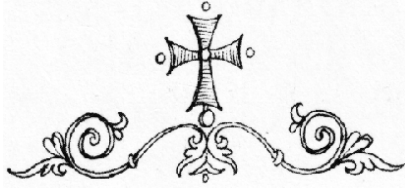


June 2008



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

Meeting at the Chaplaincy Centre of Lancaster University

Newsletter



*Ἐθελγονος Χριστοῦ Ζωοδότου.
(fr. Κωνσταντινου, 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.*

*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)***

VISIT OF FATHER BOGDAN GEORGESCU

Psalm 133: *How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!*

It was a great joy and blessing for our community to receive the visit of Father Bogdan Costin Georgescu in May. His all too brief visit was essentially to plan and co-ordinate this year's Summer Camp in Pisculesti with those members of staff who take students from Lancaster Royal Grammar School. He was accompanied by Mrs Aura Iordachescu who is the Head teacher of the primary school in Pisculesti.

We are thankful to Alexandra Petrescu who accommodated Mrs Iordachescu and it was a joy to have Father Bogdan staying with me. Years roll away when you are with someone you have not seen for some time.

We all enjoyed the barbecue that was so generously hosted by Bart and Iryna in their garden. When all had eaten an excellent sufficiency it started to rain and so we went inside to talk, sing and to eat a little more!



The highlight of his visit was the Concelebrated Holy Liturgies which took place on Saturday and Sunday in the Quiet Room of the Chaplaincy. Indeed, how good it is for brothers to live in the unity of faith and to share in

the Holy Mysteries. As one of the bretheren said at the meal-“Our little community is like the early church holding and sharing all things in common.”



May God continue to pour out his blessings upon His Church and give fruitful growth to this part of His Vineyard.

Fr. Jonathan



A LETTER FROM CHEBARKUL, RUSSIA

Dear Batiushka,

I am very happy to tell you that I keep singing in the church choir which includes both services - Liturgies and Vespers. Slavonic seems more difficult than English. Little by little, the choir team is most helpful and I hope they'll help me cope. More important, to have

strength enough to reach the church in the future. But one thing is for sure: I contribute to the church choir singing now, which is the greatest thing to share outside the church parish.

Another news about me is that I am travelling to Reykjavik the day after tomorrow for a consequent conference, to which my All-Russian MS voluntary organisation has been again invited to.

Hopefully, this visit will be a cornerstone one for us and bring positive results only.

Please, remember me in your prayers, as your spiritual support and prayer has always helped.

Love in Christ,
Pavel

THE NEW BIRTH

Reflection on a pilgrimage to Tismana monastery in Oltania, Romania

John 3:3 *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

The dawning mist, warmed by the red glowing charcoal of the solar orb
Infused the morning’s breath with pine tree, herb and scented smells.
Creation’s glorious incense clouds ascended to the heavenly altar above
To greet and meet before the throne, the vigorous calling of the Temple bells.

Beginners in life’s marathon we too climbed to make our prayerful progress in the faith
Joining streams of gliding nuns to Church, those angelic shadows of their Master’s way.
A fresh, cold, sparkling spring gushed from a rock next to the monastery’s holy gates
Quickening our spirits within as living water to refresh this beautiful new born day.

Some standing ready for the fight, others prostrate stilling the struggles of the night
Curled, we knelt within the nave as pre-born babies within their mothers’ wombs.
In the dark stillness of that marbled sepulchre burst forth Christ in resplendent light
With resurrection hands outstretched to deliver us in new birth from our earthly tombs.

In Heaven’s panoply of the bright, host-filled company the embers of our spirits glowed
From sparks to flames, we shone as satellite moons orbit and reflect the glory of the Sun.
Whilst shafts of gold and arks of rainbow-promises fulfilled, through windows blazed
Blessing the bescreened holy ones whose crowns after life’s hard labour had been won.

To the glory of God



Souls that love truth and God, that long with much hope and faith to put on Christ completely, do not need so much to be put in remembrance by others, nor do they endure, even for a while, to be deprived of the heavenly desire and of passionate affection to the Lord; but being wholly and entirely nailed to the cross of Christ, they perceive in themselves day by day a sense of spiritual advance towards the spiritual Bridegroom.

St. Macarius the Great

SAYINGS FROM THE FATHERS

“Wherein is it possible for us, wicked and impious creatures, to be justified, except in the only Son of God? O sweet reconciliation! O untraceable ministry! O unlooked-for blessing! that the wickedness of many should be hidden in one godly and righteous man, and the righteousness of one justify a host of sinners!”

St. Justin Martyr 103-165

IN BLOOM

If April is the cruellest month, May is the most beautiful. If the rest of the time we're too busy to notice the subtle beauty around us, in May we can't help noticing it all the time: it's loud, it's bold, it screams with colour and fragrance and light and buzzing insects. Everything is new, fresh, the leaves on the trees unfold fuzzy, like newly-hatched birds, the trees are a pink parade full of cherry promises, and the flowers, from the humble but-tercups to the proud tulips, state we're here, spring has arrived, even here, in this northern part of the world, and it is impossible not to feel hope stirring inside your heart, you're reminded that, despite the cold, the grey, the frost, the bare brunches,

there was something else to come, and it's here, now. Death, stillness and darkness were bound to be followed by life and light and they have been. What a fitting backdrop for the Feast of Feasts that we are still celebra-ting!



Elder Porphyrios referred to nature as a secret, mystical gospel, awaiting to be deciphered by those who want to learn how to read it. All the beauty that is embracing us is God's creation, so it can't be but full of His Presence, Grace and Wisdom.





MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

3rd Jun: St. Athanasios the Wonderworker

5th Jun: The Holy Ascension

6th Jun: Bessarion the Wonderworker of Egypt

15th Jun: Pentecost – Trinity Sunday

16th Jun: Tychon the Wonderworker

22nd Jun: All Saints

26th Jun: Appearance of the Icon of Our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos of Tikhvin

29th Jun: Peter and Paul, the Holy Apostles

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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