



**The Orthodox Parish  
of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,  
Lancaster, U.K.**

***The Stavronian***

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*Ἐθρονος Χριστοῦ Ζωοδότου.  
(Φ. Κόντογλου, 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 Europe.*

*Our Metropolitan is His Eminence Archbishop John.*

*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)***

## TREASURES OF HEAVEN

Last month I visited an Exhibition at the British Museum "Treasures of Heaven." The exhibition which was on until 9<sup>th</sup> October was impressive. One can only wonder at the beauty of fine craftsmanship, but this collection of precious reliquaries drawn from around the world was a display of ornate but empty vessels.

Later, I felt a similar disquiet visiting the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington at the amount of Church artefacts in the museum. It seemed that people were visiting and viewing holy things as if they were no longer to be found today within a living community but were things of the past. I was reminded of an old pop protest song by Joni Mitchell "Big Yellow Taxi". The lyrics contain the words...

*They paved paradise and put up a parking lot  
and  
Don't it always seem to go  
That you don't know what you've got  
Till it's gone  
They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot  
They took all the trees  
Put 'em in a tree museum  
And they charged the people  
A dollar and a half just to see 'em*

One gallery had the semblance and form of a Church but empty of prayer and worshippers; there were interested onlookers inspecting past glories with an audio guide and there was a man sketching a statue of the Madonna and Child. A short walk from the V&A Museum is the Russian Orthodox Cathedral. As soon as I went in to the Church - the lingering fragrance of incense charged the air. Stepping into this Temple of living tradition one felt immediately the peace and presence of Christ, His Mother and the Saints. I was no longer in the dry desert

of history but was drinking from spiritual and living waters. God is glorified in His saints!

## EUGE EUGE AGIOI (WELL DONE SAINTS!)

*Acts 5:15; so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them.*

*Ephesians 5:30; For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.*

Treasures of Heaven  
A soul's chest unlocks  
Bones yet transfigured  
In a fragrant box.

Fragments of saints  
To strengthen a prayer  
Their earthly remains  
For the faithful to share.

A bridge filled with motion  
From heaven to nave  
A grace filled devotion  
From beyond the grave.

Members of Christ  
Invested with Divinity!  
Bone of his bone  
Euge oi Agioi!

— Fr. Jonathan

## The Translation of the Relics of St John Chrysostom

*The memory of this illuminary of the Church is celebrated on **November 13** and **January 30** but, on this date, the Church*

celebrates the translation of his honourable relics from the Armenian village of Comana, where he died in exile, to Constantinople, where earlier he had governed the Church. Thirty years after his death, Patriarch Proculus delivered a homily in memory of his spiritual father and teacher. He so enflamed the love of the people and Emperor Theodosius the Younger toward this great Saint that all of them desired that Chrysostom's relics be translated to Constantinople. It was said that the sarcophagus, containing the relics of St. John Chrysostom, did not allow itself to be moved from its resting place until the emperor wrote a letter to Chrysostom begging him for forgiveness (for Theodosius' mother, Eudoxia, was the culprit responsible for the banishment of the Saint) and appealing to him to come to Constantinople, his former residence. When this letter of repentance was placed on the sarcophagus, its weight became extremely light. At the time of the translation of his relics, many who were ill and who touched the sarcophagus were healed. When the relics arrived in the capital, then the emperor in the name of his mother as though she herself was speaking over the relics, again, prayed to the Saint for forgiveness. "While I lived in this transient life, I did you malice and, now, when you live the immortal life, be beneficial to my soul. My glory passed away and it helped nothing. Help me, father; in your glory, help me before I am condemned at the Judgment of Christ!" When the Saint was brought into the Church of the Twelve Apostles and placed on the patriarchal throne, the masses of people heard the words from St. Chrysostom's mouth saying: "Peace be to you all." The translation of the relics of St. John Chrysostom was accomplished in the year 438 A.D.

Taken from the next [blog](#).

## FASTING

Soon the Orthodox Church will enter the one of the four major fasts in the calendar, the Nativity fast. One of the main aims of fasting in general, is to make us conscious of our dependence upon God, to bring us to the point where we appreciate the full force of Christ's statement, "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). If we always take our fill of food and drink, we easily grow over-confident in our own abilities, and that in turn gives us a false sense of autonomy and self-sufficiency. The observance of a physical fast undermines this sinful complacency. Such is the function of the hunger and the tiredness: to make us "poor in spirit", aware of our helplessness and of our dependence on God's aid.

The inner significance of fasting is best summed up in the triad: prayer, fasting, almsgiving. If we separate our fasting from prayer and from the reception of the holy sacraments, it becomes pharisaical. It leads, not to contrition and joyfulness, but to pride, inward tension and irritability. The link between prayer and fasting is rightly indicated by Father Alexander Elchaninov, "If it [fasting] is not accompanied by prayer and an increased spiritual life, it merely leads to a heightened state of irritability." Fasting, then, is valueless or even harmful when not combined with prayer. In the Gospels the devil is cast out, not by fasting alone, but by "prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21; Mark 9:29); and of the early Christians it is said, not simply that they fasted, but that they "fasted and prayed" (Acts 13:3; compare 14:23). In both the Old and the New Testament fasting is seen, not as an end in itself, but as an aid to more intense and living prayer, as a preparation for decisive action or for direct encounter with God. Thus our Lord's forty-day fast in the wilderness was the immediate

preparation for His public ministry (Matt. 4:1-11). When Moses fasted on Mount Sinai (Exod. 34:28) and Elijah on Mount Horeb (3[1] Kgs. 19:8-12), the fast was in both cases linked with a theophany. The same connection between fasting and the vision of God is evident in the case of St. Peter (Acts 10:9-17). He “went up on the housetop to pray about the sixth hour, and he became very hungry and wanted to eat; and it was in this state that he fell into a trance and heard the divine voice”. Such is always the purpose of ascetic fasting - to enable us, as the Triodion puts it, to “draw near to the mountain of prayer”.

Mark 9:29, “But this kind [of demon] can be cast out in no other way except by prayer and fasting. But fasting is not always acceptable to God, according to Isaiah 58:3, “Why have we fasted and Thou hast not regarded?” Abba Isidore said, “If you fast regularly, do not be inflated with pride; if you think highly of yourself because of it, then you had better eat meat. It is better for a man to eat meat than to be inflated with pride and glorify himself” (The Desert Fathers).

Saint Basil the Great, (330-379) says “Beware of limiting the good of fasting to mere abstinence from meats. Real fasting is alienation from evil. Loose the bands of wickedness. Forgive your neighbour the mischief he has done you. Forgive him his trespasses against you. Do not fast for strife and debate. You do not devour flesh, but you devour your brother. You abstain from wine, but you indulge in outrages. You wait for evening before you take food, but you spend the day in the law courts.”

So let us now, at the beginning of this fast remind ourselves that for a true fast, we cannot fast only with our mouth. We must fast with our eye, our ear, our feet, our hands, and all parts of our body. (St. John Chrysostom).

*Katerina Tisdall*

## GLOSSARY OF ORTHODOX TERMS: -B-

**Blessing** (eulogia-ευλογία) Besides its usual meaning, a “blessing” can also mean the permission given by one’s spiritual father for a particular action.

**Bow** (metania-μετάνοια) a bending of the body from the waist to touch the ground in an act of reverence and humility.

**Byzantine rite** Celebrating an Orthodox service following the old Christian tradition which was developed in Constantinople from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. It originates from the old Christian rite of Antioch and ascribes its two oldest main Divine Liturgies to St. Basil the Great (\*379), Metropolitan of Caesarea in Cappadocia and St. John Chrysostom (\*407), Patriarch of Constantinople. The vast majority of Orthodox Christians follow the Byzantine Rite in its various forms.

## PARISH NEWS

On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> of October Kathryn Anne and James Anthony were received into the Orthodox Church. The Chrismation service was celebrated at the Quiet Room of the University Chaplaincy Centre and was followed by a shared Parish meal (Photos follow below). May God guide you through your spiritual struggles and we pray that you may grow in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and mankind.

Our Community has finally completed the translation of the book of the life of St. Joachim of Vatopaei and Ithaca from Greek to English. We are currently looking for a publisher that would be willing to publish this holy work; please

pray for us so that this effort could become a reality in God's will.



## OLD STAVRONIAN CORNER

Dear Fr. Jonathan and brothers and sisters,

It is five years ago this October that I arrived in Lancaster, to spend my university year abroad. That first day Fr. Jonathan took several of us to St. Patrick's

chapel at Heysham, so that our "first day would be a holy day." Truly it was, and the year was full of blessings. I remember Lancaster and the parish of Holy Cross with great love and fondness, and treasure all that God gave to me and taught me in that year. I treasure also the prayers of St. Patrick, who I have felt a special love for since that day at Heysham, and who has continued to play a role in my life. One year ago on the third of October I married Wesley Patrick Pulley, my best friend and dear companion on the journey of salvation. The life and missionary work of St. Patrick were part of what drew Wes to the Orthodox Church. I believe St. Patrick's prayers have been with us both for some time - Glory to God!

Thank you for your faithfulness and prayers. I was strengthened and nourished by my time in the Holy Cross community, and I pray for God's blessings on you all.

With love in Christ,

*Lauren Macrina (Rucker) Pulley*

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We would like to congratulate Christina Leptidi on the birth of her son. May Christ guide your steps as a new mother!

We would also like to thank Sophocles, Angeliki and little Panagiotis Ioulianos for their kindness in sending candles for the Church. You never forget us and it is always good to hear from you. May God bless you for this!

Our thanks, love and prayers also go to Andrei, Alla and Masha Ganshyn who have donated LED flexible book lights to our community; they will be very useful for the choir when we have evening services. Whilst candles are more traditional and atmospheric, these lights will be indeed more practical. May Christ our Lord reward you for this kind gift.

## MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

1<sup>st</sup> Nov: Sts Cosmas and Damian, the Holy Unmercenaries

8<sup>th</sup> Nov: Synaxis of Archangel Michael & Gabriel and the other Bodiless Powers

9<sup>th</sup> Nov: St. Nectarios the wonderworker, Metropolitan of Pentapolis

10<sup>th</sup> Nov: St. Arsenius of Cappadocia

13<sup>th</sup> Nov: St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople

14<sup>th</sup> Nov: St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica

15<sup>th</sup> Nov: Beginning of the Nativity fast

16<sup>th</sup> Nov: Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew

17<sup>th</sup> Nov: St. Hilda, Abbess of Whitby

21<sup>st</sup> Nov: The Entry of our Most-Holy Lady the Theotokos into the Temple

23<sup>rd</sup> Nov: St. Alexander Nevsky

25<sup>th</sup> Nov: Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria

30<sup>th</sup> Nov: Holy Apostle Andrew the first called

For the lives of Saints please visit the Calendar of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: [www.calendar.goarch.org](http://www.calendar.goarch.org)

### Services during November\*

Sat. 5 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 12 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 19 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sun. 27 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in Q.R. followed by Parish lunch

\*Help setting up the church is greatly appreciated and starts from 9.15 a.m.

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“We have been called to become unknown heroes,  
visible only to the unsleeping eye of God”  
- Elder Ephraem -



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