



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

The Stavronian

a monthly magazine & newsletter published by the 'Holy Cross Synodia Press'



*Ἐθρονος Χριστός Ζωωδότης.
(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)***

CHASING MEMORIALS

It is important that the Church remembers the departed in her prayers out of love and in and through the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Church is composed of the living and departed and we attest to this in the Nicene Creed. We are given opportunities throughout the Liturgical Year on Saturdays of Souls, and at anniversaries to do just this. Moreover, before every Holy Liturgy the priest is handed lists of names of those loved ones who the faithful wish to be remembered at the Proskomede, both living and departed.



Apart from our private prayers and Saturdays, the Church has set times to remember the departed, on the day of death, on the third day in remembrance of the Resurrection, on the ninth day so that the soul may be brought to memory with the nine orders of Angels, on the fortieth day as the period of mourning prescribed in the Old Testament and at the anniversary of their falling asleep as their birthday into Life Everlasting. This is why we celebrate the Saints on the days of their falling asleep in Christ.

So it was with this in mind, that I had the opportunity recently to visit the

German War Cemetery at Cannock Chase in my home County of Staffordshire. Set in beautiful wooded countryside nearly 5000 German soldiers, airman and sailors are buried here. It is only 10 miles or so from the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas where British Soldiers of recent conflicts are commemorated. It was a poignant moment when, returning to the car park, I went into a smaller graveyard on Cannock Chase where both British and German troops lay side by side.

Christ calls us to pray for all and so that is what we do.

I was moved to write a poem, to reflect on the sacrifice of war and the hope of Resurrection in Christ.

Isaiah 2:4 *He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.*

John 15:13 *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.*

It is said "Greater love has no man
Than to lay down his life for a friend."
Upright trees salute beneath the sun
Their branches in solemn homage bend.

Silently is heard the heart torn tears
Of an unexpected other,
Distant echoes of past greater fears
Of a son and a grieving mother.

Young they were, vigorous for the fight,
The weapons of politicians,
White stones mark their passing into night
And their military traditions.

Now laid in some distant foreign base
Assembled for muster on enemy soil.
Here in the verdure of Cannock Chase
Life's hope that memorials fail to foil.

Guardian angels circle the graves.
Underneath the shadow of the Cross
Lie heroes forged of conscripted braves
Whilst bird song in trees record their loss.

The air stands still to embrace our prayer.
Beyond quiet from the ordered rows
The beating of swords into ploughshares
As comrades lie at peace with former foes.

Fr. Jonathan
June 10, 2012

Kontakion:

With the Saints give rest, O Christ,
to the souls of Thy servants,
Where sickness and sorrow are no more,
neither sighing, But life everlasting.

For the Cannock Chase German war cemetery, click [here](#).

For the National Memorial Arboretum, click [here](#).

ADDING COLOUR TO THE TEXT

Whilst on one of my trips to the British Museum in London I went to have a look at the Assyrian section. It really does bring the Old Testament to life and paints in vivid colours the black and white texts that refer to Biblical incidents from a theological perspective. The fine carved stone and cuneiform frieze that caught my eye was one of the brutal King Ashurnasirpal 883-860 B.C. of Nimrud in Assyria. He is standing in front of a sacred tree symbolising the Tree of Life. He is

paying homage and making a gesture to a god in a winged disc-probably the sun-god Shamash (The word for sun in Hebrew and Arabic is almost the same). He holds a ring in one hand which is an ancient symbol of kingship. There are winged spirits on either side of the king. These spirits appear to be anointing the king with oil.

The Assyrian empire exercised considerable power over the Middle East in the 9th c. B.C. and had a great influence on her neighbours in terms of religion including that of the kingdom of Israel. It is no coincidence that Ashurnasirpal's brutal reign coincided with that of King Ahab whom the Bible describes as the worst king of Israel.

I Kings 16,30; *Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshipped him. Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.*

It is Ahab and his pagan wife Jezebel that the prophet Elijah challenges. The parallelism with Adam's disobedience in the book of Genesis where he is forbidden access to the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil seems clear. Archaeology gives us an added insight and dimension into the stories and symbols that we find in the living world of the Old Testament.

[Ashurnasirpal II on wikipedia](#)

Fr. Jonathan

GLOSSARY OF ORTHODOX TERMS: -J-

JEW Originally one of God's chosen people who followed the covenant given to Moses by God. In the Old Testament, the Jews are (1) citizens of Judah; (2) the postexilic people of Israel; or (3) the worshipers of Yahweh. God chose the Jews to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God. Through Christ the distinction between Jew and Gentile has been overcome, and all those who follow Him have become the true chosen people of God. See Acts 22:3; Rom. 1:16; 2:28, 29; Gal. 3:28; 1 Pet. 2:9.

JUDGMENT In the biblical sense, God's decision on the worthiness of one to enter heaven or to be condemned to hell. Following death, all will be judged, and Christ will return again to confirm that judgment. Because of sin, no one can earn a place in heaven by his own righteousness. However, through Christ, sin is forgiven and overcome, and those who have followed Him are granted a place in heaven. See Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:24; 16:8-11; Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20:11-15.

JUSTIFICATION The act whereby God forgives the sins of a believer and begins to transform him or her into a righteous person. No person can earn justification by works of righteousness, for justification is the gift of God given to those who respond to the gospel with faith. God also helps those who cooperate with His grace to become righteous. Saving faith is not mere belief but a commitment to Christ that is manifested by works of righteousness (see article, "Justification by Faith," at Rom. 5; Rom. 5:1, 2; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 2:12, 13; James 2:24).

Original text taken from [here](#).



Cosmas & Damian the Holy Unmercenaries

OLD STAVRONIAN CORNER

We would like express our thanks to Joanna Nassiopolou and her mother who have sent us some *komboskene* from Greece. May Christ our God give the blessing!

MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

1st July: **Cosmas and Damian the Holy Unmercenaries**

2nd July: **St. John Maximovitch, Bishop of Shanghai & Archbishop of San Francisco; St. Juvenal, Protomartyr of America and Alaska**

3rd July: **St Germanus Bishop of the Isle of Man**

4th July: St. Andrew of Crete, author of the Great Canon

7th July: Great-martyr Kyriake

11th July: Great Martyr Euphemia the All-
praised ; St. Olga, equal to the Apostles,
Princess of Kiev.

13th July: Synaxis of Archangel Gabriel

15th July: Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles
Great Prince Vladimir, in Baptism Basil,
Enlightener of the Russian Land

17th July: Great-Martyr Marina of Antioch
and Child-Martyr Prince Kenelm

20th July: Holy Glorious Prophet Elijah

25th July: Dormition of righteous Anna,
mother of the Most Holy Theotokos

26th July: Holy Martyr Paraskeve

27th July: Great Martyr and Healer
Panteleimon

31st July: St Joseph of Arimathea

For the lives of Saints please visit the
Calendar of the Greek Orthodox Archdi-
ocese of America: www.calendar.goarch.org

Services during July*

Sun. 8 th	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in Q.R.
Sun. 15 th	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in Q.R.
Sun. 22 nd	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in Q.R.
Sat. 28 th	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C. followed by Parish lunch

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

“God cares for everyone. Despair is in effect a lack of faith”
- St. George Karslides -



For further information please contact:

Father Jonathan Hemmings
67 Sibsey Str., Fairfield, Lancaster, LA1 5DQ
Tel: +44 1524 840759, +44 1524 580600

Email: frjah@yahoo.co.uk

www.antiochian-orthodox.co.uk

