



**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 Ζωοδότης.  
(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.  
The Patriarchate of Antioch is third senior of the Orthodox Churches.  
The Patriarch is His Beatitude John X.*

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

## DISCORD AND HARMONY

We may not be simply the sum of our experiences but we are certainly shaped by them. The composer Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943) was taken to Church by his devout Orthodox maternal grandmother in order to bring spiritual succour to his rather tragic childhood and youth, in which two of his sisters died and his father left home. At the tender age of 22 years after attending St. Petersburg Conservatoire he composed his First Symphony. The premier was a disaster, the conductor was drunk and the music itself received severe and brutal reviews from the critics. This sent him spiralling into a deep and prolonged bout of depression in which he wrote almost nothing for three years. The trauma of failure paralysed his creative energies and stultified his musical confidence. Perhaps this effect was accumulative rather than sudden? So what was the “inspiration” for the First Symphony? It was dedicated to a certain Anna Lodyzhensky, a woman who was married to his best friend; the score had a biblical quote as title: “Vengeance is mine, I will repay!”, Romans 12:19 .

The concatenation of these two facets of the story may be accidental. Whatever the emotional or spiritual motivation, this first symphony was never performed again or published in his lifetime. Sadness and sorrow are often followed by silence.

Lord Byron in his poem “*When we two parted*” wrote:

*In secret we met—  
In silence I grieve  
That thy heart could forget,  
Thy spirit deceive.  
If I should meet thee  
After long years,  
How should I greet thee?—  
With silence and tears.*

Many of the greatest poems, plays, art works and pieces of music are born of the suffering soul. Throughout the first symphony there is the shadow of vengeance and theme of divine retribution - the Dies Irae (Day of Wrath) which may have been transposed to serve his own crisis of doom-filled days.

There is an eisegetical employment of scripture which serves to furnish or justify our own feelings, whether that takes the form of righteous indignation, unfulfilled love or thwarted ambition.

The fact that Rachmaninov returned to composition is testimony to the irrepressible demand of the human soul to express itself. His music is labelled *romantic*, but it is more than a *cri de couer*. It is the soul's need for God such as found in the words of the Psalmist who, being honest before his maker, runs the whole gamut of human emotion from anger to exuberance, from bitterness to ecstasy. Psalm 22:1 and 2;

*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?  
Why are You so far from helping Me,  
And from the words of My groaning?  
O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear;  
And in the night season, and am not silent.*

There is no doubt that hosting such passions as remorse, jealousy and bitterness is destructive and induces torpor, enslaves the mind and inhibits creativity. Vengeance does indeed belong to God but no more than His mercy and love!

Rachmaninov's experience of life, thanks be to God, included those liturgical chants and the church bells, which he heard as a small boy when he was taken to Church by his grandmother. These would pervade and penetrate deeply many of his later compositions: In Psalm 45 we hear the opening words;

*My heart is overflowing with a good theme;  
I recite my composition concerning the King;  
My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.*

*My tongue is the pen of a ready writer... as is my heart... as is my mind... as is my soul!*

*Fr Jonathan*

## **PHOTOS FROM FR. JONATHAN'S TRIP TO ROMANIA**



*Answering questions after the talk to the Orthodox Youth League at Mizil*



*With Fr. Bogdan in Blejoi Church*



*Meal with Staretz Cleopa, Fr. Petru, Fr. Bogdan and others at the Vineyard in the Prahova Valley*



*At Bustein Monastery with Fr. Bogdan and his daughter Anna Maria; the Carpathians are visible in the Background*



*A Pilgrimage to Krasna Monastery*



*Addressing the Orthodox Youth League at Mizil*



*Memorial service for Fr. Constantin in the Parish Church at Blejoi*



*With Singers from the Patriarchal Choir after the Holy Liturgy on the Feast of St. Constantine and St. Helen*



*At the Cave of St Andrew the Apostle at the Monastery of St Andrew with Fr. Bogdan and Mitu*



*Presentation to the Mayor of Blejoi of the Lancaster Coat of Arms from the Mayor of Lancaster and receiving a medal of Blejoi from the Mayor of Blejoi*

## LYRA RUSSIAN VOCAL ENSEMBLE CONCERT

The Orthodox Parish of Holy Cross is happy to announce that Lyra will be performing at Lancaster on June 17, from 19:00 to 21:00.

Lyra is an *a capella* vocal ensemble from St. Petersburg, Russia. It consists of singers from St. Petersburg Conservatory. Their repertoire includes sacred music of the Russian Orthodox Church, and of Russian and Ukrainian folk music.

You may buy tickets or make donations to attend by clicking [here](#).

The concert will consist of two parts. In the first part, sacred music of Russian Orthodox Church will be played. It will contain pieces of both famous Russian composers, like Bortnianski, Tchaikovsky, Tchesnokov, Rachmaninov, Grechaninov, and less famous or not well-known composers out of Russia, but all great masters of choir music. Also examples of more ancient church music will be performed. In the second part of the concert there will be Russian folk songs in all their variety: comic, lyric, dancing, love songs. Announcements will be made in English throughout the concert program telling the audience about the Russian Orthodox tradition, church and folk music as well as the story behind every piece being performed.

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Lyra are currently on tour in the U.K. so if you are interested to host a concert for Lyra please contact:

Andrei Sysoev

Tel: 07729720461

E-mail: [aasya@gmail.com](mailto:aasya@gmail.com)

Web: [www.lyra5.narod.ru](http://www.lyra5.narod.ru)

[www.lyra-online.org](http://www.lyra-online.org)

Facebook: [LyraRussianVocalEnsemble](https://www.facebook.com/LyraRussianVocalEnsemble)

## GLOSSARY OF ORTHODOX TERMS: -V-

**VESPERS** The evening prayer service in the Orthodox Church.

**VICE** A particular immoral, depraved, or degrading habit, as contrasted with virtue. Christians are called to flee from the vices and preserve their purity (Rom. 13:13; Eph. 4:17-24). See also **VIRTUE**.

**VIRTUE** A righteous characteristic such as self-control, patience, or humility; the opposite of vice or passion. As a person grows spiritually, he or she grows in virtue while the passions are conquered by the grace of God. See Phil. 4:8; 2 Pet. 1:2-7. See also **PASSION**.

For the original text please click [here](#).

## OLD STAVRONIAN CORNER

We would like to thank [Kostas Voutzoulidis](#) from Patmos island, Greece, for sending a parcel of candles, incense and charcoal as well as a cheque of a kind donation. He learned about our Parish from an Orthodox [blog](#)! May our Risen Lord bless him and his wife Maria richly for their kindness and generosity!

We also thank [Maria Verra](#) from Athens, Greece, for sending us a lovely book on Mt. Athos, incense and lovely fridge magnets! [Vera Neophytou and her daughter Loukia](#) for the almond sweet spreads and the diptych from the Herakleidos Monastery in Cyprus, as well as [Christina Krasakopoulou and her daughter Maria](#) for the Olive Oil! It is always good to hear from them and we keep them in our prayers as we give along our sincere thanks for their generosity and care.



## MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

2<sup>nd</sup> June: The Samaritan Woman, St. Photene

5<sup>th</sup> June: Hieromartyr Boniface of Crediton, Archbishop of Mainz (†754)

9<sup>th</sup> June: St. Columba of Iona, Enlightener of Scotland (†597)

12<sup>th</sup> June: Apodosis of Pascha

13<sup>th</sup> June: The Holy Ascension

16<sup>th</sup> June: St Tychon the Wonderworker

17<sup>th</sup> June: St. Botolph, Abbot of the Monastery of Ikanhoe

22<sup>nd</sup> June: St. Alban, Protomartyr of Britain (†304)

23<sup>rd</sup> June: The Holy Pentecost

24<sup>th</sup> June: Monday of the Holy Spirit, Nativity of the Forerunner and Baptist John

26<sup>th</sup> June: Appearance of the Icon of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos of Tikhvin

29<sup>th</sup> June: Peter and Paul, the Holy Apostles

**30<sup>th</sup> June: All Saints, Synaxis of the  
Twelve Holy Apostles**

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



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**Services during June\***

Sat. 1 <sup>st</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 8 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 15 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sun. 30 <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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“God cares for everyone. Despair is in effect a lack of faith”  
- St. George Karslides -



*For further information please contact:*

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