

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

***The Stavronian***

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*The Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,  
belongs to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland.  
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)***

## **ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR SEPTEMBER 1<sup>st</sup>**

Christ our God, Your kingdom is an everlasting one and Your lordship is over all. You have made all things with wisdom and have established proper times and seasons for our lives. We give thanks to You in all circumstances and for all things. Lord, bless the beginning of our Church year with Your goodness. Grant that this liturgical year be for all of us a year of grace. Make us worthy with purity of heart always to praise you. Lord, glory to You!

Bless, O Lord, the crown of the year with Your goodness!



### **PIONEER, PRIEST AND PROPHET**

I have been blessed to meet two great signposts of the faith who were both British converts and Archimandrites, one English one Welsh. Each in their own way and in their own corner of God's Vineyard on this Island of Britain were Pioneers of Orthodoxy in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century when it was extremely difficult to even find an Orthodox Church let alone become Orthodox. But both through perseverance found their way into the Ark of Salvation. At this time in the middle of the 20th century Orthodoxy was certainly unknown and misunderstood by many as some exotic form of foreign religion. It was also seen as an ethnic enclave for those fleeing persecution and a refuge for

those escaping political turmoil. This latter perspective holds truth and in itself is good but the Church as she re-rooted herself into British Society held strongly to cultural, national and language identity and neglected in part her evangelistic commission from Christ and her universal character.

It must have taken great faith, patience, persistence and fortitude on the part of these two British men to seek entry into the Church- yet when they were received and indeed ordained, they did not keep this discovery of the great Pearl of Great price to themselves. They were keen to open the rather dusty Treasure Chest of Orthodoxy in order to impart eternal life saving truths to those who were seeking spiritual food and who thirsted to drink deeply from the well of salvation. The other significant fact that one should take into account is that both of these men lived in remote, inaccessible places which, though in accord with Monastic tradition was strange to those in Britain for whom most had a Parish Church within walking distance. These remote places became lighthouses and powerhouses of prayer for those near to the rocks for the storm tossed and magnets for those without a spiritual map or compass.

The first of these remarkable men was Archimandrite Barnabas of New Mills. The first time I met him was when he was based in a small monastery in the middle of Wales near Newtown. I was reading for a Master of Theology degree at the time in Aberystwyth. I was determined to meet this person of whom I had heard. Indeed, I narrowly missed him when I was teaching in East Devon where he had a small monastery at Willand near Cullompton. He had moved to Wales but his successor, who took over the monastery Fr. Benedict came to speak to my sixth form students where he made a great impression.

I decided with some friends to go and see Fr. Barnabas. I had read his book "A Strange Pilgrimage" in which he outlined his own spiritual journey from Anglican Priest then becoming a Roman Catholic Priest and eventually finding his home as a Priest within the Orthodox Church. He once quipped with typical British humour "*I have been baptised three times, I have been ordained three times - I hope they don't bury me three times.*"

We arrived on a rather hot summer day. I seem to recall we had written to him and he had kindly invited us to the Monastery- none of us really new exactly what to expect.

There were three of us in my little car myself an Anglican layman at the time, a protestant who had a senior position in the Baptist Church in Wales and another student who was Greek Orthodox.

We were met by Fr. Barnabas with a warm, hearty greeting in Welsh and English. Without delay, he set two of us an obedience to dig potatoes in his garden plot. The other student a Greek Orthodox young woman he sent to the kitchen to prepare food. The potatoes we were digging proved to be the greater part of the vegetarian soup which we enjoyed later. I have to say here that other visitors to the Monastery whom I met subsequently always smiled at Fr. Barnabas' hospitality and at the "interesting" food they too were given!

After we finished the first task, he set us another duty to paint the outside of the Monastery. Eventually we were called into the refectory to eat the soup which we had earned. The bread which accompanied our initial labour had seen fresher days- yet we were happy to sit at table with a holy monk and listen to his wisdom.

After the meal, Fr. Barnabas took us on a guided tour of the Church pointing features of the Temple to the uninitiated. His talk was interrupted by the visit of the

postman who came with a parcel. On opening it, it happened to be an antimemorial from the newly appointed Archbishop. "*Ah another antimemorial!*" he said in a rather matter-of-fact manner, as if it was a phone bill or bank statement! Explaining its significance he then put it aside saying: "*Let us say the Hours.*"

So, without very much explanation on his part and assuming that we were conversant with the service, we set about intoning the Psalms. The result was a stuttering, rather nervous variable quality of worship but we offered it with love. True, we did it without much knowledge or experience but this gave it a rustic authenticity which left a deep impression on me – that worship for all its rough edges was an everyday event not a once a week special occasion. This combined with the conscious dedication of this monk showed me that worship is not something that has to be perfect, is not simply a Sunday event but a regular constant response to the presence of God, like breathing or eating (whatever the menu) it is life and nourishment!

Archimandrite Barnabas was instrumental in many people's pilgrimage to Orthodoxy and people who knew him speak of him with great affection.

I went on several occasions to meet with Fr. Barnabas but it was through correspondence that we mainly kept in touch. Each month he would send teachings of the fathers and tracts together with some of his reflections on a news-sheet which he produced which proved nourishing for my soul.

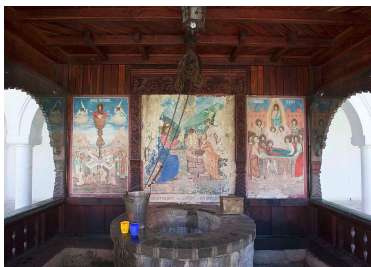
He never wrote a letter to me, but would send Post cards with warm greetings and news. He produced a little booklet on the Jesus Prayer which was very helpful and established a yearly Pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Winefred in Holywell which is continued to this day. He possessed a discernment and a

prophetic spirit about the future of Orthodoxy in Britain.

He was able to perceive things in other people. In December 1987 when I had taken up a teaching appointment in Lancaster he wrote a post card telling me that I would be Orthodox in the place where I now lived. Eight years later, this prophecy came true and I was chrismated Orthodox and was ordained a priest to serve in the place where he had said I would be. He said something else in this card that "Every person who becomes Orthodox must work extremely hard in order to establish again the Orthodox Church in these Islands." His example as a humble ascetic and monastic drew many people to the faith and I am grateful to God that I was one.

May his memory be eternal!

*Fr Jonathan*



*The Brâncoveanu Monastery at Sâmbăta de Sus, Romania, dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God. Photos taken from [wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brâncoveanu_Monastery).*

## **SAMBATA DE SUS** ***A Monastery in Romania***

Matthew 3:3,4; *"For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; Make his paths straight." Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey."*

Gliding silently, the procession made its way out of the darkened church.

The monks' Rassas were flowing and glowing with the uncreated light.

Particles of the divine energy gently graced and traced their path,

These little shields of love, a gift from the Almighty

For the Cavalry of Calvary in their earthly fight.

The faithful pilgrims knelt and bowed their heads in reverence.

Turning inwards these lay foot-soldiers parted like the Red Sea

Allowing these replacement angels, God's reserve, to pass through

On their journey to the Promised Land,

The royal vanguard, preparing the way for others.

Lit only by God's presence as tangible and as silent as the Universe.

The formal cycle of praise was over and had returned to the Source as glory.

Now in this quiet retreating, the beating  
prayer of the heart stood guard,

The pulse of prayer that never ends and  
that finds its interior dwelling

Hidden in the soul.

In this exodus the pillar of the Light of  
the World led the way

And the night shone as bright as the day.

### To the Glory of God

*The right view of the CHURCH is that the CHURCH is distinguished into the Militant and the Triumphant; and that it is Militant so long as it struggles against wickedness for the prevalence of the good, the Triumphant in the heavens, where there dwells the choir of the Righteous, who struggled and were made perfect in the faith in God and in virtue.*

--- St. Nektarios of Aegina

### POEM TO ST WALSTAN OF TAVERHAM

The shining silver, the glorious gold could  
not touch your humble and pious soul.

From childhood the power of the throne  
seemed to you like a source of pain.

You could clearly see how all the riches  
were full of vanity.

Kingly authority was in your taking, but  
the power you renounced and your rich  
clothes you tossed away.

A humble servant you became and called  
a fool, but you proved to the people what  
it meant to follow Christ in true goodness.

An example of forgiveness and of saintly  
life, with miracles you help all people and  
you vanish the demons' evil fire.

Saint Walstan inspire us with your holy  
life and pray for us to keep the words of  
our Lord forever in our hearts.

*Christos Vasilopoulos  
Kozani, Greece*

### NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH

Sept. 29: Georgios

#### MEMORY ETERNAL!

Please send us the names of your departed loved ones and date of their departure in order for them to be remembered.



### MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

1<sup>st</sup> Sept: **The Ecclesiastical New Year**

8<sup>th</sup> Sept: **The Nativity of our Most-Holy  
Lady the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary**

9<sup>th</sup> Sept: **The Holy & Righteous Ancestors  
of God, Joachim and Anna**

11<sup>th</sup> Sept: **St. Euphrosynus the Cook**

14<sup>th</sup> Sept: **The Exaltation of the Precious  
and Life-Giving Cross**

16<sup>th</sup> Sept: **The Great Martyr Euphemia the  
All-praised**

17<sup>th</sup> Sept: Martyr Sophia and her three daughters, Faith (Pistis, Vera), Hope (Elpis, Nadezhda) and Love (Agape, Lyubov)

19<sup>th</sup> Sept: St. Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury

23<sup>rd</sup> Sept: The Conception of the Holy, Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John

24<sup>th</sup> Sept: St. Silouan the Athonite

25<sup>th</sup> Sept: St. Sergius, Abbot and Wonderworker of Radonezh

26<sup>th</sup> Sept: The Falling Asleep of St. John the Evangelist and Theologian

28<sup>th</sup> Sept: St. Lioba of Wimborne, Abbess of Bischofsheim (†782)

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)

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### Services during September\*

Sat. 5 <sup>th</sup>	-	No Liturgy this week as Chaplaincy is not available.
Sat. 12 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 19 <sup>th</sup>	-	No Liturgy this week as Chaplaincy is not available.
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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“God cares for everyone. Despair is in effect a lack of faith”

- St. George Karslides -



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