



**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'



*Ἦθρονος Χριστός, Ζωοδότης.
(Φ. Κόντογλου, 1962).*

*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)*

NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

As the new academic year is now at its beginning, we would like to extend our warm welcome to new students who are entering Lancaster University full of hopes and expectations. We hope that they will find a spiritual home with us and pray that their journey to the North-west of England will be rewarding in knowledge as well as spiritual growth in our Lord Jesus Christ! Amen, so be it!



DO YOU HAVE A MOBILE ZONE?

I find, perhaps like you, that I take my mobile phone everywhere with me. It is the essential ubiquitous, global, portable device. It is estimated by the Ericsson Mobility Report that by 2020, 90% of the world's population will have a mobile phone.

People continually use their mobiles for calls, emails and texts. We feel lost without our mobile phone, we become anxious when we can't find it, we get frustrated when there is no signal and irritated when it needs recharging!

Now imagine if we felt the same about our prayer rope-komboskini-chotki!

Imagine if we felt lost without our "mobile zone" around our wrist! Imagine if we thought that our prayer rope was as essential to living in the world today as our mobile phone! Imagine if we

switched on our prayer rope for the purpose it was designed instead of wearing it for decoration! Imagine if we gave it as an expensive and precious gift to our friends and family! Imagine if we taught our children how to use it properly!

Imagine, no disconnections, no bills (those have all been paid by the Creator), no recharging, no top ups necessary - imagine it being free at the point of use to keep us in contact with our friends and family on earth and in heaven. Now that would be state of the art!

When we convert our creative imagination into belief and action, then we will find an amazing range of "apps" for our salvation. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; *Rejoice always, **pray without ceasing**, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

Fr Jonathan



HEAVEN: FROM PROTESTANTISM TO ORTHODOXY

Born in 1923 into a Church of England family I grew up in the 1930s in a firmly Protestant environment, in which there was sharp antipathy to anything which seemed to have even the slightest whiff of “catholic”, not excluding personal piety.

The main services in my local parish church, and many others, were strongly Book of Common Prayer, sung matins plus hymns and sermon at 10.30 am, and similarly evensong at 6.30 pm. There was a said Holy Communion at eight am, but this was quite outside my experience until I was prepared for confirmation in 1938 at the age of fourteen.

When I returned from the war in the mid 1940s changes were developing, as gradually the Parish Communion at nine am became the main service, and sacramental religion came into my life. I had grown up with an understanding of heaven as some strange, distant, ethereal and uncertain place somewhere beyond the outermost reaches of space. It was a long time before I saw a new understanding of “... in Remembrance of Me”, that remembrance was not the mental recalling of a past event but a present living reality, and God was not the superior, spiritual, moralistic (almost) “Father Christmas” figure I had imagined. Of course it was stated to be essential to believe in the Holy Trinity, but little insight into the supernatural was given and it remained remote, the preserve of the theologically educated...

My developing spirituality was driven on to the rocks with the publication of “Honest To God”, a book written by a bishop of the Church of England in 1963, the burden of which is “our image of God must go, God is dead and to go on worshipping and believing as our fore-

fathers is an obstacle to man’s progress and development”: naked humanism. As this spread throughout the church I lived the next thirty years struggling to remain faithful to what I had been taught, not least that the Church of England was one of three “branches” of the One, True, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, alongside Rome and Orthodoxy, neither of whom, of course, subscribe to the “branch” theory of the Church. I found many obstacles in my path, but here I mention just a few, very briefly.

Distressed, I approached my parish priest, not long returned to the diocese (Blackburn) after some years on the staff of Canterbury Cathedral. He said to me, “Well, perhaps we should give a bit more thought to Christ’s Divinity”, and walked away.

In 1986 the Durham Affair caused a storm of controversy, when Canon David Jenkins was named as the next Bishop of Durham. He was an academic theologian with a considerable reputation, and traditional believers were outraged. For this purpose I simply quote one of his publicised beliefs, “There is nothing certain in the New Testament which is of any importance”, in an attack on its historic events, particularly the Virgin Birth. All history is unreliable.

At a local deanery discussion group the clergyman taking part asserted, and not as devil’s advocate, “Ah! But you must remember (!) that Christ could have been mistaken about himself, about Who He was”. And so on and so on.

In 1993, six months after the vote in the General Synod in favour of ordaining women in the priesthood, following long years of strife in the Church, I encountered Fr Jonathan (Hemmings) and that is how I came to join the Pilgrimage to Orthodoxy, and two years later I was received into the Orthodox Church of Antioch. I learned Truth such as I had only glimpsed in the Church of England,

and especially that in the Divine Liturgy we are truly worshipping with the whole Body of Christ in the very courts of heaven. I was free of the individualism – my prayers, my communion, my life, my understanding of truth, every man his own theologian – rife in the Protestant religion, and I became much more at ease, no longer in a defensive state of mind and spirit, in my God given individuality. Heaven is not somewhere “out there”. I am persuaded that those who refuse to venerate the Mother of God (that truly would be a leap too far towards Rome!) are often found not to unshakably believe in the Incarnation and the real and actual bridge it gives between earth and heaven.

*Barnabas Dickinson
Chorley*

PILGRIMAGE TO ST. ETHELDREDA OF ELY

Dear Fr. Jonathan,

Belated congratulations to you and our community of the Holy Cross on the feast of the Holy Cross.

I wanted to share with you my joy of having the opportunity to venerate the relics of a remarkable British saint of the 7th century, [St Etheldreda](#) Abbess of Ely.

St. Etheldreda was a princess and could have anything a person could dream of in this life but chose to keep her virginity even being married twice. She negotiated that matter before her political marriages. Later she became a nun, an abbess and a founder of the Monastery of Ely on which she spent all her inheritance. 16 years after St Etheldreda's death her body was found uncorrupted. Very sadly, during Cromwell's attack on relics most of her body was destroyed. When it

happened, a Catholic man managed to hide only one of her hands. This hand is now exposed for veneration in a Roman Catholic church of St Etheldreda. Both Catholic and Orthodox Christians recognize her as a saint. The church that has the relics of St Etheldreda is a smaller church in Ely, not the famous large Cathedral (it was already built later during the Norman invasion) and is within a walking distance from the railway station in Ely. It makes sense to have a look at the website of this church, by clicking [here](#), to check the opening times before the pilgrimage.

We are so privileged to have relics of a local saint within easy reach from Cambridge. It is only about 30 minutes by car or 15 minutes by train from us and there are regular trains to Ely from London. Such a comfort in our times! A bus to Ely even passes next to our house! I am attaching a photo taken during my pilgrimage.

*Iryna Minakova
Cambridge*



NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH

Oct. 17: *Garyfalos*

Oct. 20: *Fr. Stephen Hatherly*

MEMORY ETERNAL!

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



PARISH NEWS

It was good to see on 10th September one of our Old Stavronians Costas Papaconstantinou (2006-2009) and to host him for dinner and to talk over old times; he sends his greetings to the Parish. I also extend the greetings of Pater Theodosios Dendrinos his family and Louiza from Ithaca, from Nikos, Panos, Eleanna and Aggelos Georgopoulos as well as Gianna Nassiopoulou and Anastasia Stamatalatou who kindly hosted me during my stay in Patras and Kefalonia. I would dearly like the Parish to go to Kefalonia together next year after Pascha and before the Archdiocesan Conference to visit our friends and to see the beautiful Monasteries there.

Our Synodia have been given the blessing to translate the book of the Life of Saint Panagis Mpasias of Lixouri into English -God is glorified in His saints-may the Holy Spirit guide our hearts and minds.

Fr Jonathan

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We were pleased to welcome Pater Eustathios Savides from the Church of St Arsenios the Cappadocian in Nicosia, Cyprus, in September. We thank him for his kind gift of Commandaria and Nama Communion wine for our Community. We also thank Konstantinos Arfanis and his family for the gift of Communion wine. Our Parish has also received a donation of money from a benefactor who wishes to remain anonymous. We give thanks to God for all things!



Fr Jonathan and Fr Eustathios at St Patrick's chapel at Heysham on Sept. 17th

~+~

Fr Jonathan went to Cephalonia and Ithaca in Greece this summer, where he visited a number of old Monasteries like the Atros Monastery in Cephalonia for the Vesperal Feast of the Birth of the Mother of God and the Monastery of Agia Paraskevi for the celebration of St Anthimos the Blind in Lixouri. Fr Jonathan met with Old Stavronians Ioanna Nassiopoulou and Anastasia Stamatalatou.



The Atros Monastery in Cephalonia, Greece, built in the 8th century.



*The Monastery of Agia Paraskevi,
Cephalonia, Greece.*



*Fr Jonathan with Fr Panagis (on the right)
and his brother priest and faithful at the
Palaiohermo Monastery, Cephalonia Greece.
Fr Panagis has been a priest for 63 years!*

~+~

Little George Eric was baptised on Sept. 12th. We welcome the newly illumined George Eric and his parents Daniela and Andrei Ardelean to our Parish and pray for a spiritually fruitful journey in the Orthodox faith in our Lord Jesus Christ!



*George Eric, his Godparents and Fr
Jonathan during the baptism*

OLD STAVRONIAN CORNER

We thank God for the generous donation of €200 to our Community from a beloved Stavronian.

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Fr Jonathan attended the wedding of Panagiotis Georgopoulos and Eleanna Symeonidou in Patras, Greece, from which a few photos of this joyful event follow below. The text of the homily that Fr Jonathan gave during the wedding can be downloaded from the following links in [English](#) and [Greek](#).



MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

6th Oct: Holy Apostle Thomas

7th Oct: Sts Sergius & Bacchus the Great Martyrs of Syria

10th Oct: The 14 Holy Elders of Optina Monastery in Russia

12th Oct: St. Wilfrid, Bishop of York
(+ 709)

18th Oct: Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke

19th Oct: St. John of Kronstadt

26th Oct: The Glorious Great Martyr Demetrius the Myrrh-bearer of Thessalonica

28th Oct: The Holy Protection of the Theotokos

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

Services during October*

Sat. 3 rd	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 10 th	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 17 th	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sun. 25 th	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in Q.R. followed by Parish lunch
Sat. 31 st	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.

*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.orthodox-lancaster.org.uk
www.antiochian-orthodox.co.uk

