



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

The Stavronian

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*Ἰσθρονος 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)*

Christ is Born!
Născut Christis
Χριστός εγεννήθη
Христис родился
الْمَسِيحُ ولد
ul Messia hualde

WELCOME TO 2016 A.D.

God Knows

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: *"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."* And he replied: *"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."* So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night. And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.

--- *"The Gate of the Year"* by Minnie Louise Haskins.

As we enter into another year of Grace, we pray that the Holy Spirit who is the Comforter and guide will lead us to do the will of God. The term **anno Domini** is Medieval Latin, which means "in the year of the Lord" but is often translated as in the year of our Lord. It is not our year but the year belongs to God- we just live in it.

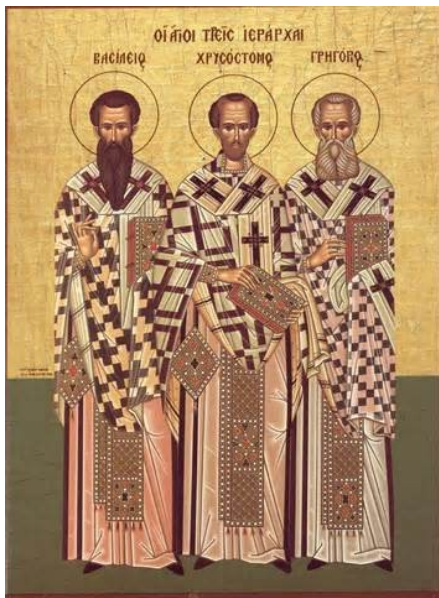
In God's Will our Orthodox Community may be moving soon to new premises - St Martin's Church Westgate. It is remarkable that our Community has survived for more than 20 years without a Temple. It is even more remarkable that our Community, thanks to the ministry which God gave us, is not restricted or limited to Lancaster but through our strong Stavro-nian network is to be found throughout the world; our extended family is to be found in Russia, Romania, Greece, Cyprus, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Canada and the USA. We are bound together in love for

Christ - it is this communion which leads us to being perfected through the acquisition of the Holy Spirit.

We pray that as we enter into a new year and a new chapter of a life as an Orthodox Parish, we may witness to the Love of God wherever He sends us and whatever we find ourselves commissioned to do.

We go forward with faith, in hope and love, putting our hand into the Hand of God, who meets us, greets us and welcomes us into His New Year of Grace 2016. Colossians 3:14; *But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.*

Fr Jonathan



COMPLACENCY

Writes C. S. Lewis: *"It is hard; but the sort of compromise we're hankering after is harder — in fact, it is impossible. We are like eggs at present. And we cannot go on*

indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad."

Complacency is the catalyst for frustration, it fools the mind into a state of dull acceptance. The first symptom is being satisfied with things as they are. The second is rejecting possibilities, of things as they might be. 'Good enough' becomes the motto and the standard. Complacency leads to fear and mistrust of the new. Complacency cherishes sentiment rather than love, nostalgia rather than the dynamic of tradition, stubbornness rather than boldness. Complacency draws false strength from looking back. Complacency is the father of indifference.

In C.S. Lewis' *Screwtape Letters*, the Devil says to his nephew Wormwood whom he is training for effective service in the world. *"I, the devil, will always see to it that there are bad people. Your job, my dear Wormwood, is to provide me with people who do not care."*

Christians must be like the two headed eagle of Byzantium looking forward and back, looking to the past and to the future, looking to the east and to the west.

What if St Paul had said "I don't think I will go on this missionary journey Lord, it a bit too arduous - I mean just look at the distance to travel, look at the dangers, opposition, shipwrecks, beatings, imprisonment, martyrdom! Antioch is a good place, lots of nice people here from all over the world in this city becoming Christians - even prophets. I will stay here".

Acts 13; *Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the*

work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, **they sent them away.**

What if St Paul had chosen to stay in Antioch - then no Church in Cyprus, no Church in Greece, no Church in Russia-actually no Church. The church would have become a cosy little exclusive sect in an enclave in Palestine. When we confess in the Creed the Church as One, Holy, Catholic and **Apostolic** - we testify to indissoluble link between tradition and mission. The Holy Spirit sent Paul and Barnabas away from Antioch to plant new churches, so that the Gospel could reach people of all races and backgrounds. The Good news was revolutionary in the Roman world of military domination and slavery. Two premises of the Christian faith as preached by the Apostle Paul resonated and undermined the whole fabric of a corrupt empire. (1) In Christ, God has made all people equal and free. (2) The Hope of the Resurrection is a reality for all who believe. However, there is a third premise for the Church. It is the command and commission that Christ Himself gave to His disciples and apostles. It is this: **Go - Go** and preach the Gospel to all nations - **Go** and Baptise everyone everywhere in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Apostleship is about being sent and going-not standing still. When we dare in faith to step outside our comfort zone-we fulfil the Apostolic nature of the Church.

Fr Jonathan



LIVING WATERS

Isaiah 43:19

*Behold, I will do a new thing,
Now it shall spring forth;
Shall you not know it?
I will even make a road in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert.*

John 4:10

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

John 7:38

He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

John 19:34

But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

Listen!

A person's response to God's offer of salvation is a matter of engaging the will, faith and action.

Without the will there is no movement,
Without faith there is no direction,
Without action there is no reward.

To discover Living Water requires us knowing:

Whose open Hand provides this blessing and treasure

What is it's measure
and

Where to find it flowing?

We must start by digging for water in the caverns of the heart.

If the ground is rocky, we must dig in silence with the sharp adze of patience.

Listen carefully!

Do you hear something?

If our ground is hard, we must soften it with mercy and repentance:
For the soil of pride can only be removed through meek dependence
On God.

Listen!

Do you hear the drip of water on stone?

We must not simply remove the weeds which are the fruits of the passions, we must excavate each day with persistence since familiar habits possess a stubborn resistance; whereas the *humus* of humility is the place to locate compassion.

In this way, we may even lead in order to serve.

Leading the way to build a *viaduct* for the King of Glory

Order our service to others by constructing a conduit for Christ.

Dig therefore with wisdom,

Dig with discernment,

Dig with love,

Whilst guarding the heart at all times with diligence.

Listen!

Do you hear water flowing?

Because at the time appointed,

At the opportune moment,

We who are disjointed
are healed and

Sealed with the Holy Spirit.

God opens the flood gates of our hearts

With His own master key of humility,

To become a channel of His grace.

Just listen to that sound!

The sound of Living waters;
an ocean wave, a mighty river in flood, a
cascading waterfall
a fountain of benediction;
heard by earth's sons and daughters
To become for all a Life- Giving spring,
welling up to Eternity.

Work hard then each day and dig!
Listen, work, dig deep
head bowed with sweat and tears,
extinguishing fears of death, awakening
life from sleep,
exchanging salt waters for sweet
to greet Living waters.

*Many rich and powerful men would pay
dearly to see the Lord or His Most Pure
Mother, but God does not appear in riches,
but in the humble heart... Every one of the
poorest men can be humbled and come to
know God. It needs neither money nor
reputation to come to know God, but only
humility. ---St. Silouan the Athonite,
Writings, I.11,21*

Fr Jonathan



*Fr Jonathan's orchid which bloomed on
Christmas Day!*

BOOK ON THE BIOGRAPHY OF METROPOLITAN AUGOUSTINOS KANTIOTES

Fr. Augoustinos Kantiotes was born in 1907 on the island of Paros, Greece. As a priest-monk he travelled throughout Greece, where his fiery preaching stirred people to a greater love for Christ and their suffering nation. But it was the war years and the messages he preached were not popular with the German and Italian Occupants, and later in the Civil War, with the Communists. Fr. Augoustinos' adventure-filled life included many trials and tribulations, and he miraculously escaped death many times. Loved and revered by the populace, Divine Providence saw him elected bishop of Florina in 1967, where he energetically continued to care for his flock's spiritual and material needs. But his immense popularity and his battles against corruption often disgruntled those in positions of power, and Fr. Augoustinos was subject to many persecutions, including a (failed) attempt by the government to medically diagnose him as officially insane. However none of these persecutions deterred him in his quest to uphold the Truth, and inspired by a self-sacrificing love for God and his neighbour, he influenced myriads of people and changed countless lives, up until his passing into eternal life in 2010, at the grand age of 103. Even today, his bold example, the numerous books he authored, and the publications of his sermons in print and audio form, continue to influence people to a higher standard of living.

Fr. Augoustinos is well known throughout Greece and to Greeks abroad, but this is the first time his Life is presented in English. It is a short summary of a life that, if everything were to be written in detail, would fill encyclopaedia volumes.

We invite you to join Fr. Augoustinos in his journeys...

You could order the book by contacting the Holy Monastery of Agios Augoustinos, Florina, Greece:

e-mail: imaaflo@yahoo.gr

Fax: +30 23850 24042

Phone: +30 23850 28610 and 28868



NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH

Jan. 6: Fr. Michael Harper

Jan. 16: Fr. Jacob Myers

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

Fr Jonathan's book "*Fountains in the desert*" was published in Greek by the publishing company En Plo (Ev Plw), based in Thessaloniki, Greece. Please

have a look at the link [here](#) for further information.

Our Parish have received bountiful gifts from our Stavronian brothers and sisters: candles from Thomas Tziortiotis; candles (large & small), wine, charcoal, incense from Nikolaos Georgopoulos, and candles, wine, charcoal, incense, myrrhon, books and icon cards from Fr Augoustinos Myrou from the Monastery of St Nektarios, Palaeogratsano, Kozani, Greece and Kleio Kehagia, who sent all these by post from Thessaloniki!

We are indeed truly blessed to have such generous-spirited donors and benefactors who are treasured members of our Orthodox family and Community. May God see and reward according to His mercy and goodness!

MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

1st Jan: St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Ceasarea in Cappadocia

6th Jan: The Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

9th Jan: St. Adrian and St. Brithwald, Archbishops of Canterbury (†710 and †731 A.D.)

17th Jan: St. Anthony the Great

18th Jan: St. Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria

20th Jan: Righteous Euthymius the Great

24th Jan: St. Xenia, the Fool-for-Christ of St. Petersburg (†1803)

25th Jan: St. Gregory the Theologian

28th Jan: St. Ephraim the Syrian

30th Jan: Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian & John Chrysostom

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



Home blessing at Theophany! Please contact Fr. Jonathan

Services during January*

Sun. 3rd	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sun. 10th	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sun. 17th	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sun. 24th	10:00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sun. 31st	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.

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



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The following blogs of Old Stavronians are available in Romanian, [Constiinta Ortodoxa](#), in English, [Orthodox city hermit](#), and in Greek, [Orthodoxy rainbow](#).

