



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

The Stavronian

a monthly magazine & newsletter publicised by the 'Holy Cross Synodia'



*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)*

FACE TO FACE

I have never been a great fan of the social media. Various people have tried to persuade and encourage me to have “this” account or to join “that” network. I have always been rather reluctant to comply, not simply because of my poor technical skills but my underlying reserve is based upon the following three basic principles.

Firstly, I prefer dialogue with a person face to face. To engage in conversation with someone, being able to look them in the eye, provides a true social interaction. It is the principle of personal engagement which Christ himself took with people- with Zacchaeus, Nicodemus, the man born blind, the woman at the well, etc. Such personal encounters avoid stereotypes, categories and generality and treat people as unique individuals.

Secondly, today it seems, people think it right to give vent to their private and personal matters through a public platform. This may include their prejudices, recriminations, insults and threats often “anonymously” expressed through cyber space. The written word and image is powerful and we should use them with discernment and care. We are made in the image of God and should take seriously the sanctity and responsibility of personhood.

Thirdly, the intrusion and access into personal “data” can be used by powerful organisations to coerce and steal ones identity. As one has seen recently, the “harvesting” of personal information is “Big Brother’s” “all seeing eye into the heart, soul, mind and body of a person should concern us.

The information highway and social media whilst having many merits and positive attributes have many potholes and traps. Technology has moved so quickly that we are given little time to digest the consequences, to question the

motives or to sift the good from the bad, the fake from the true. We have been hurriedly corralled to “agree “ and to conform willingly or unwillingly to this ever progressive on- line juggernaut which wishes to persuade us that public access to information is preferable to personal privacy where even the instant “click” is anticipated by the algorithm! Whereas once we may have left footprints on the sands of the beach which was washed away by the sea tides, now we leave digital footprints which cannot be erased but which are remorselessly tracked. The digital world offers us a freedom but at what a cost? There are many who for their own purposes want to build and store knowledge about us and use it for power and influence.

I am conscious that the sin of Adam was that he too desired knowledge; he wanted to know everything, he wanted to become like God. *Genesis 3:1-6; Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’” Then the serpent said to the woman, “**You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.*

So what are Christians to do? St Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians speaks about the contemporary problems that he faced in his day, particularly

drawing attention to and a distinction between the weakness of society and the Resurrection Life. He sets this tension under the overarching revelation of the Word of God who spoke at Creation, who became flesh and who shines in our hearts. We should therefore take care so that this light is not extinguished; we should test the spirits (1 John 4:1-6) and be prudent and keep silent (Amos 5:13) knowing that Christ is the True **Face** of God and believing that His Gospel is the True **Book**!

2 Corinthians 4:4-6; The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

Fr Jonathan

MISSING THE RESURRECTION

St. Thomas has been called doubting because he doubted Christ had risen. Yet it was not only St. Thomas who doubted. The message of the two Marys to the disciples “seemed to them an idle tale”; Luke 24:11. Even when Christ appeared in the middle of the disciples they too wanted physical proof and did not believe until He ate fish; Luke 24:43. It seems unfair to select St. Thomas alone to be called doubting!

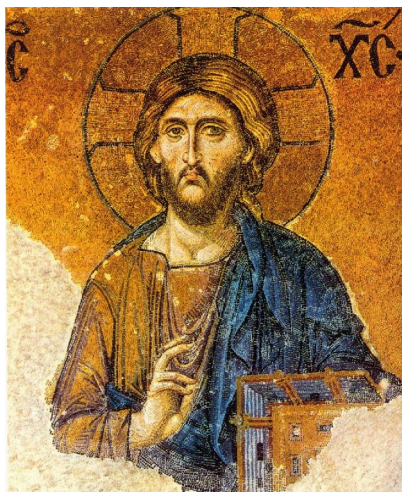
St. Thomas' problem arose because he was missing when Christ appeared to the other disciples; John 20:19-26. We

are not told why St. Thomas was missing but we are told he then remained with the disciples and so did not miss the next Resurrection appearance. The compassionate Christ came knowing St. Thomas would be present and gave him faith...

Alexander Schmemmann wrote “there was no physical imperative to recognise Him... to enter into the joy of His presence to be with Him, meant the conversion to another reality.” St. Thomas, the one who was earlier missing, now is not only present but enters into the reality of the Resurrection when he cries “My Lord and My God”.

The story has both warning and thankfully consolation for us now. We can miss the reality of the Resurrection for many reasons, perhaps by giving only an intellectual assent. Christ comes to us, if we have weak faith, with compassion, as He did to St. Thomas. He only needs our willingness to wait so He may restore what is missing in our experience, even speaking of a special blessing for us future believers: “blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.”

*Gladys Bland,
Cambridge*



SPIRITUAL HOME AWAY FROM HOME

My time in England would certainly have not been the same if I had not discovered the Orthodox Parish of the Holy and Live-Giving Cross in Lancaster. It seems like it was only yesterday when I first attended the Holy Liturgy at the University Chaplaincy. There was something truly special about the service as the Liturgy was served in English and Greek. I will always remember how touched I was when I heard the Lord's Prayer "Our Father" being spoken out loud by the faithful in several languages, including my native language. At the end of the Holy Liturgy, I was warmly welcomed by Father Jonathan with whom, as I was about to discover with such great joy, I had a glorious connection in Christ. As Father Jonathan said: "There is no coincidence - only Providence". I was also welcomed with great hospitality and generosity of spirit by the parishioners who immediately made me feel at home. From that moment, I knew I had found a spiritual home away from home.

Studying and living abroad whilst being away from your family and loved ones can be particularly challenging at times for various reasons. In addition to this, University life can be a very busy time and for some, perhaps even overwhelming, especially at the beginning. As one tries to balance their studies, exams, extra-curricular activities, work commitments and social interactions, I believe it is important to set aside time for reflection and prayer. So to me, becoming part of the Holy Cross Parish was a major turning point of my life in England. Indeed, being able to go to Church and attending the services helped me find spiritual nourishment and peace. The homily that Father Jonathan gave every time after the Gospel and his words were al-

ways moving, giving me strength and courage. At the end of the Holy Liturgy, I used to spend some time chatting with the faithful - these were wonderful moments that strengthened our bonds and made me appreciate even more the need of belonging to a Christian Orthodox community.

I feel very blessed to have found a spiritual home with the Holy Cross Parish during my time in Lancaster and I will always be grateful to Father Jonathan and the parishioners for their prayers, invaluable support and for everything that they have done for me - Glory to God for all things! As we approach the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I would encourage students at Lancaster University to attend the Holy Cross Parish (whose services are held, as some of you may already know, at St Martin's Church in Westgate, Morecambe). You will be welcomed with open arms and love and the time dedicated to God will bring you much joy, peace, and spiritual reward.

*Patricia Chiracu,
Romania*

Romanian Version

Parohia "Sfanta Cruce", Lancaster – Un "acasa" duhovnicesc departe de casa

Timpul petrecut in Anglia ar fi fost cu siguranta diferit daca nu as fi intalnit Parohia Ortodoxa "Sfanta si de-viata-datatoare Cruce" din Lancaster. Ma simt ca si cum ieri am participat pentru prima data la Sfanta Liturghie la capela universitatii. Pentru mine a fost o slujba cu totul deosebita, fiindca era oficiata in limbile engleza si greaca. Mereu imi voi aminti cat de emotionata am fost sa aud rostindu-se rugaciunea "Tatal nostru" in mai multe limbi, inclusiv in limba mea materna. La sfarsitul Sfintei Liturghii am fost intampinata cu multa caldura de catre parintele Jonathan, cu care, asa cum aveam sa aflu, aveam o legatura deosebita, slava bunului Dumnezeu. Asa cum mi-a spus parintele Jonathan: "nu exista coincid-

enta, ci doar Providenta”. Am fost primita cu bucurie de catre membrii parohiei care m-au facut sa ma simt ca acasa. Din acel moment, mi-am dat seama ca gasisem un “acasa” duhovnicesc desi eram departe de casa.

A studia si a locui in strainatate, departe de familie si de cei dragi, poate fi deosebit de dificil din multe motive. Ca student ai mult de lucru, iar pentru unii cerintele academice pot parea coplesitoare, mai ales la inceput. Intrucat fiecare incearca sa isi gaseasca un echilibru intre studii, examene, activitati extra-curiculare si viata sociala, consider ca este necesar un ragaz pentru introspectie si rugaciune. Astfel, pentru mine faptul ca am devenit parte a parohiei ortodoxe din Lancaster a avut un rol decisiv pentru perioada petrecuta in Anglia. Mersul la biserica si participarea la slujbe insemnau pentru mine hrana sufleteasca si liniste. Eram mereu miscata de predica pe care parintele Jonathan o rostea dupa Sfanta Liturghie si de cuvintele sale care imi dadeau putere si nadejde. Dupa slujba ramaneam la agape alaturi de membrii parohiei – erau clipe minunate care ne intureau legaturile si care m-au facut sa apreciez si mai mult nevoia apartenentei la familia crestin-ortodoxa.

Ma simt binecuvantata ca am gasit o ancora spirituala in parohia “Sfanta Cruce” in anii petrecuti in Lancaster si voi fi mereu recunoscatoare parintelui Jonathan si enoriasilor pentru rugaciunile lor, ajutorul si pentru tot ceea ce au facut pentru mine – slava Domnului pentru toate! Cum ne apropiem de Invierea Domnului nostru Iisus Hristos, ii incurajez pe studentii de la Universitatea din Lancaster sa se alature parohiei “Sfanta Cruce”, ale carei slujbe sunt oficiate, asa cum poate unii dintre ei stiu, la Biserica Sfantul Martin din Westgate, Morecambe. Vetii fi intampinati cu bratele deschise si dragoste, iar timpul dedicat Domnului va va aduce multa bucurie, pace si roade sufletesti.

OLD STAVRONIAN CORNER

We are so very grateful to those who remember us in their prayers and show their love as generous benefactors of our Parish. We would like to thank Tatiani

Rapatzikou from Thessaloniki, Greece, for the beautiful large Resurrection rosettes, which will adorn our Iconostasis next to the Icons of our Saviour Jesus Christ and the Theotokos during the Liturgy of the Resurrection. May our Lord give the reward!

NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH

Apr. 8: *Evangelos*

Apr. 14: *Jeanne*

Apr. 16: *Aristides*

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

1st Apr: **Palm Sunday**

6th Apr: **Great Friday**

7th Apr: **Great Saturday**

8th Apr: **Great and Holy Pascha**

13th Apr: **Theotokos of the Life-Giving Font**

23rd Apr: **St. George the Great Martyr**

25th Apr: **Mark the Apostle & Evangelist**

30th Apr: **James the Apostle & brother of St. John the Theologian**

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

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2018

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS		THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week JANUARY 28th		<i>TRIODION WEEKS</i> Publican and the Pharisee Reading: 2 Timothy 3: 10-15 Gospel: Luke 18: 10-14	Trust in God, not yourself! Ask for His help before every task this week!
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 4th		The Prodigal Son Returns! Reading: 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20 Gospel: Luke 15: 11-32	Schedule a Confession. Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare FEBRUARY 11th FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY		The Last Judgment Reading: 1 Corinthians 8: 8-9; 2 Gospel: Matthew 25: 31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare FEBRUARY 18th FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY		Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! FORGIVENESS SUNDAY Reading: Romans 13: 11-14; 4 Gospel: Matthew 6: 14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent FEBRUARY 25th		<i>GREAT FAST BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Reading: Hebrews 11: 24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1: 43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 4th		ST GREGORY PALAMAS Reading: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2: 1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent MARCH 11th		VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Reading: Hebrews 4: 14-5: 6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9: 1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bowl!
4th Sunday of Lent MARCH 18th		ST JOHN of the LADDER Reading: Hebrews: 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9: 17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent MARCH 25th		ST MARY of EGYPT Reading: Hebrews 9: 11-14 & Heb 2:11-18 Gospel: Mark 10: 32-45 & LK 1:24-38	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! April 1st GREAT WEEK BEGINS		<i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Reading: Philippians 4: 4-9 Gospel: John 12: 1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 6th		GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet, & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! APRIL 8th NO FASTING!		<i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1: 1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

For the times of the Holy Services and Akathists during our Journey to Pascha, please refer to the following list

1. Pre-Lent “*Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee*” Theme: *Metanoia*, i.e. Repentance, 28th Jan
2. “*Sunday of the Prodigal Son*” Theme: Returning to God 4th Feb.
3. “*Sunday of the Last Judgement*” Theme: Judgement. Meatfare Sunday 11th Feb.
4. Forgiveness Sunday Theme: Being forgiven and forgiving one another.
Cheesefare Sunday Expulsion of Adam from Paradise First Week of Great Lent:
Liturgy followed by Vespers of Forgiveness 18th Feb.
5. 1st Salutation to the Theotokos - 1st Akathist, 23rd February, at 6.30 p.m.
6. **First Sunday of Great Lent.** Theme: Sunday of Orthodoxy Liturgy of St Basil.
Procession of Icons “*This is our Orthodox faith*” 25th Feb.
7. 2nd Salutation to the Theotokos - 2nd Akathist, 2nd March, at 6.30 p.m.
8. Saturday of Souls 3rd March
9. **Second Sunday of Great Lent.** Theme: St Gregory Palamas 4th March
10. 3rd Salutation to the Theotokos - 3rd Akathist, 9th March, at 6.30 p.m.
11. Saturday of Souls 10th March
12. **Third Sunday of Great Lent.** Theme: “*Veneration of the Cross*” Lent mid-point- 11th March
13. 4th Salutation - 4th Akathist, 16th March, at 6.30 p.m.
14. Saturday of Souls 17th March
15. **Fourth Sunday of Great Lent.** Theme: St John Climacus - The Ladder of Divine Ascent 18th March
16. The Akathist Hymn in Full 23rd March, at 6.30 p.m.
17. **Fifth Sunday of Great Lent.** Liturgy of St John Chrysostom. Theme: “*The Annunciation to the Theotokos*” 25th March
18. Lazarus Saturday Theme: A foretaste of the Resurrection 31st March
19. **Holy Week:** Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem; Palm Sunday 1st April
20. Great and Holy Monday; Commemoration of the Unfruitful Fig Tree. Matins 6.00 p.m. 2nd April
21. Great and Holy Tuesday; Commemoration of the Parable of the Ten Virgins Matins 6.00 p.m. 3rd April
22. Great and Holy Wednesday; Commemoration of the Sinful woman who anointed the Lord with myrrh. *Euchelaion* 6.00 p.m. 4th April
23. Great and Holy Thursday; Commemoration of the Washing of the Feet, the Mystical Supper, the Prayer in Gethsemane and Betrayal; 10.00 a.m. Holy Liturgy; 6.00 p.m. The Twelve Gospels 5th April
24. **Great and Holy Friday:** The Holy and Redeeming Passion of Our Lord; 9.00 a.m. The Royal Hours 6th April
25. **Great and Holy Friday;** Preparation of the Epitaphion 10.00 a.m.
26. **Great and Holy Friday;** Prayers before the Cross and Confessions 11.00 a.m.
27. **Great and Holy Friday;** Great Vespers 1.00 p.m.
28. **Great and Holy Friday;** Matins Lamentations and Epitaphios 6.30 p.m.
29. **Great and Holy Saturday;** The Burial of our Lord and His Descent into Hell. Vespers Liturgy of St Basil 10.00a.m. 7th April
30. **Great and Holy Saturday:** 9.00 p.m. Reading of the Acts of the Apostles
31. **Holy Pascha:** The Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Receiving of the Light 10.00 p.m.
32. **Holy Pascha;** Liturgy of the Resurrection 10.30 p.m.
33. **Sunday of the Resurrection;** Vespers of Love 3.00 p.m. 8th April

Services at St Martin's in April*

Sun. 1st	10:00	Hours and Holy Liturgy of Palm Sunday
Mon. 2nd	18:00	Great and Holy Monday
Tue. 3rd	18:00	Great and Holy Tuesday
Wed. 4th	18:00	Great and Holy Wednesday - Euchelaion
Thurs. 5th	10:00	Great and Holy Thursday – Holy Liturgy
	18:00	The Twelve Gospels
Fri. 6th	09:00	Great and Holy Friday – The Royal Hours
	10:00	Preparation of the Epitaphios
	11:00	Prayers before the Cross and Confessions
	13:00	Great Vespers
	18:30	Matins, Lamentations and Procession of the Epitaphios
Sat. 7th	10:00	Great and Holy Saturday – Vespertal Liturgy of St Basil
	21:00	Reading of the Acts of the Apostles
	22:00	Receiving of the Holy Light
	22:30	Holy Pascha – Liturgy of the Resurrection
Sun. 8th	15:00	Sunday of the Resurrection – Vespers of Love
Sat. 14th	15:00	Memorial, Confessions, Synaxarion and Great Vespers
Sun. 15th	10:00	Hours and Holy Liturgy
Sat. 21st	15:00	Memorial, Confessions, Synaxarion and Great Vespers
Sun. 22nd	10:00	Hours and Holy Liturgy
Sat. 28th	15:00	Memorial, Confessions, Synaxarion and Great Vespers
Sun. 29th	10:00	Hours and Holy Liturgy followed by Parish lunch

*Help setting up the church is greatly appreciated and starts half an hour before the service.



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

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

