



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

The Stavronian

Monthly magazine and newsletter publicised by the Holy Cross Synodia



*Ἐθρονος 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 Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη!

Христос Воскресе! Воистину Воскресе!

Hristos a înviat! Adevărat a înviat!

Al-Masih-Qam! Hakkan Qam!

Le Christ est ressuscité! Vraiment Il est ressuscité!

Cristo ressuscitou! Verdadeiramente ressuscitou!

Cristo ha resucitado! Verdaderamente, ha resucitado!

Cristo è risorto! È veramente risorto!

Christus ist auferstanden! Er ist wahrhaftig auferstanden!

基督復活了 他確實復活了

ハリストス復活! 実に復活!

MYRRH BEARERS

I am always struck by the similarity of the Icons of Our Lord's Nativity and the Icon of the visitation to the tomb of the Myrrh bearing women. A dark cave –a dark tomb– angels are present at both events – women attend the birth– women attend the burial, there are swaddling clothes at the Nativity - there are burial clothes which had bound the body of our Lord in the Tomb.

Traditionally, eight women are identified as the myrrh-bearers who had come to anoint the body of our Lord Jesus Christ: (i) Mary, the Theotokos, (ii) Mary Magdalene, (iii) Joanna, (iv) Salome, (v)

Mary, the wife of Cleopas, (vi) Susanna, (vii) Mary of Bethany, and (viii) Martha of Bethany

On the second Sunday after Pascha we remember, and we celebrate, the Holy Myrrh-Bearing Women, as well as Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. They exemplify for the followers of Christ **perfect love in action, courage of the will and devoted faithfulness**. When other disciples fled and hid, they put themselves in harms way, they were proactive, they went to fulfil the funerary rites, shunning fear and the threat of persecution.

However, in their brave action we encounter a holy mystery, not just an empty tomb. Those who had come to anoint a body were anointed with the truth of the Resurrection and they would bring this sweet smelling fragrance of the gospel to the Church.

Indeed, is this not confirmed still in our day by the holy relics of our saints and the icons in our churches exuding a heavenly, sweet-smelling myrrh? This is a true and tangible reminder of God's sustaining grace in every age.

The priest anoints the newly illumined at Chrismation with the oil of *myron*. Furthermore, all Christians are called to "anoint" others in evangelistic mission. By action, such as we find with St Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus and the Myrrh bearing women we acquire the spiritual myrrh of the Resurrection. The ointment bearing women came to anoint a dead body and found the Living God. Who will anoint our bodies with the Resurrection? The same risen Lord Jesus Christ! As St John Chrysostom says in his Catechetical Paschal homily: Hades was embittered... It took a body and lo it discovered God. It took earth and lo it discovered Heaven!

Kontakion

You did command the myrrh-bearers to rejoice, O Christ! By Your Resurrection,

You did stop the lamentation of Eve, O God! You did command Your apostles to preach: The Saviour is Risen!

Indeed, He is Risen!

Fr Jonathan

PILGRIMAGE TO SAINT MELANGELL

Our pilgrimage to the only Church dedicated to Saint Melangell (†590) was quiet unexpected, it is often difficult to arrange pilgrimages and visits with small children, and hence we were hoping for the prayers of the Saint herself, to grant us to venerate her relics. From the beginning of arranging this very special trip, all of the obstacles and difficulties began to disappear. Many questions entered my mind: will the children manage to and behave during the nearly three-hour journey one way, will we find our way in rural Wales, will the Church be open, will we be able to venerate the relics and so on. As it turned out, that the trip itself was joyful and pleasant, the children were happy, and most important of all, the Church itself was open, and the Saint waiting for us to venerate her relics and ask for her intercessions in this trying Lenten period and thereafter.

Upon arrival to Pennant Melangell, the area where the Church is situated and where the Saint lived during her life on earth, filled us with unimaginable peace, most wonderful joy, and a tangible sense of holiness. The beauty of nature has taken me aback, the air filled with the prayers of Saint Melangell, the stillness, the feeling of thanksgiving pouring out of the soul. There are ancient yew trees growing around the Church, they look magnificent, perhaps bearing witness to the life of Saint Melangell herself. The

trunks of the trees, so big, that one could dwell in it. A truly hidden and completely unexpected treasure was revealed to us. One is able to say, through the prayers of this Saint, there was no sense of time there, our hearts filled with mystery and beauty of this holy place. There was a sense that, although in the company of others, in heart – a clear realisation of the presence of God as if alone with Him in a close relationship.

We were invited for the service of hours and to venerate the relics of Saint Melangell. The relics are enclosed inside the Shrine as it is not an Orthodox Church and therefore the customs are different, however, this did not stop the tears filling my eyes as I touched the Shrine and venerated the Saint, asking for her prayers.

After the service, we joined the local group of pilgrims at St. Melangell's centre for refreshments. It was a beautiful moment of Christian fellowship as we shared their food and a few words while gazing on the breath taking landscape.

In this valley, where 1300 years ago, St. Melangell offered refuge to animals, men and women alike, there is a pervading sense that through her presence, sanctuary is still to be found from the restlessness and business of modern daily life. As we drove further and further away from the valley of sanctuary, a little sadness clouded us as our souls were unwilling to depart from this space of holiness and peace. And if by the end of the day, our pilgrimage itself seemed only a dream, there was a real sense that Saint Melangell was with us and watched over us.

Martha and Mary





The icon of St Melangell



Old yew tree near St Melangell's church



The church of St Melangell near the village of Llangynog, Powys, Wales



The shrine of St Melangell

PILGRIMAGE TO THE MOTHER OF GOD AT WALSINGHAM

There is going to be a Pilgrimage to the Shrine of England's Nazareth at Walsingham, Norfolk, on Monday Sept. 30th to Thursday Oct. 3rd by coach travelling from Morecambe. Travel, bed, breakfast and evening meal in good accommodation all inclusive £250. There are 20 places available.

We will travel with the Church of the Ascension in Torrisholme, but have our own itinerary. Please let Fr Jonathan know if you would like to participate by **May 28th**, otherwise we may have to cancel.

A few photos of our last Pilgrimage in June 2005 follow:





The icon of the Theotokos at Walsingham

have many memories of this precious time together to share - and some photos!



Visit at St Patrick's Chapel, Heysham



Holy Cross pilgrims outside the Orthodox Church of St Seraphim, Little Walsingham, in June 2005



Visit at Alexa's house in Lancaster

PARISH NEWS

A most appreciative thank you to all who helped make His Eminence Silouan's visit such a joyous time and blessing to our Parish; those who gave their time as singers, as servers, to those who prepared food, those who washed up and cleaned the room, offered lifts - to those who engaged him with their warmth of welcome, faith, dialogue and hospitality. We will



Dinner with Parishioners in Lancaster



Hierarchical Liturgy at St Martin's



Parish photo after the Hierarchical Liturgy on Sunday, April the 7th



Hierarchical Liturgy at St Martin's



Blessing of the foundation of our Sunday School after the Hierarchical Liturgy.

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](#) and [Ioanna Nassiopoulou](#) for sending us candles and candle holders for Pascha from Athens. May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ give the reward!

NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH

May 26: *Paraskeui*

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

5th May: Thomas Sunday, and Great Martyr Irene

8th May: St. John the Theologian and St. Arsenius the Great

11th May: Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Equal-to-the Apostles

15th May: St. Pachomius the Great Martyr

21st May: St. Constantine and Helen Equal-to-the Apostles

22nd May: *Mid-Pentecost*

23rd May: The retrieval of the relics of St. Joachim of Ithaca

25th May: The 3rd Finding of the Precious Head of the Forerunner and Baptist John

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

Services at St Martin's in May*

Sat. 4 th	10:00	Divine Liturgy, Confessions and Catechism
Sun. 5 th	09:30	Matins and Divine Liturgy (at 10:30)
Sat. 11 th	10:00	Divine Liturgy, Memorial, Confessions and Catechism
Sun. 12 th	09:30	Matins and Divine Liturgy (at 10:30)
Sat. 18 th	10:00	Divine Liturgy, Memorial, Confessions and Catechism
Sun. 19 th	09:30	Matins and Divine Liturgy (at 10:30)
Sat. 25 th	10:00	Divine Liturgy, Memorial, Confessions and Catechism
Sun. 26 th	09:30	Matins and Divine Liturgy(at 10:30) followed by Parish Lunch

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

“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](#).

