



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

The Stavronian

Monthly magazine and newsletter publicised by the Holy Cross Synodia



*Ἐσθρονος Χριστός, Ζωοδότης.
(Φ. Κάρτογλου, 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.
Our Metropolitan is His Eminence Bishop Silouan.
Our Patriarch is His Beatitude John X.*

*The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch
(Acts 11:26)*

THE MYSTERY OF SPIRITUAL SISTERHOOD AND BROTHERHOOD

All the living stones of the Church are of such different shapes and colours, with so many odd angles and rough edges, that it seems impossible they should all fit together to form a house. But when this house is Christ's home and when He is the mortar, the stones fall into place, each different one in exactly the right place to form all together the Temple of the Lord.

In our own natural families, it is often so difficult to get on with every person and find our place, even when the bonds of affection and the flesh keep us together. We only need to look at Martha and Mary, natural sisters and sisters in Christ. Despite the closeness in flesh and spirit, they are not above being irritated with one another. Even the apostles had their falling out and their differences of opinion, as happens in Acts 15:39 when Paul and Barnabas disagree on whether John Mark should accompany them. *"Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another"*. This dispute was later settled, but how difficult it is sometimes to find harmony within the church, how hard to accept and love people as they are! And yet, within our small parish and in our group of spiritual sisters, we have discovered that in praying together, differences become smaller and love grows. And the more we pray and read together, the more we need to nurture each other and build each other and the less it matters that we come from different places because we are all heading in the same direction. And what comfort it is to know that if you stumble and fall your spiritual sister who walks along the same path will help you up and give you her arm to carry on along the path.

And as sisters come and go in our community, another mystery is that even when divided by geographical distance, by an ocean or a continent, the spirit continues to remain in unity. How beautiful is the story of St. Herbert and St. Cuthbert who were "soul friends". Although St. Herbert lived on an isolated island in Derwentwater, in Cumbria and St. Cuthbert lived in Lindisfarne monastery in Northumberland, their spiritual bond was of the strongest.

Such was the love between these two holy men that the Lord granted their petition to depart this world at the same time and both Saints, separated by geographical miles were united in repose on the 20th March 687.

The great mystery of spiritual sisterhood and brotherhood is that all differences of temperament, diversions of opinion, each and every person's foibles and peculiarities which separate us, the difference of culture, upbringing and status, present in our daily dealings with one another, even physical distance, are all swept away by the Holy Spirit in prayer and love, leaving behind only unity and peace. All the sisters and brothers in a church become one in Christ when they pray together and partake in the Holy Mysteries.

Martha and Mary

HUBRIS, INDIFFERENCE AND DESPAIR

Three of the main tricks of the evil one is first, that he tries to swell us with pride, second that he tries to fill us with despair and thirdly to instill in us a sense of indifference; all of which we must resist steadfast in the faith with hope in Christ. To follow Christ is to actively keep his commands and statutes. Our guide is the all Holy Spirit, the Holy scriptures, the doctrines of Holy Church, the teachings of our holy Fathers, the wise words of a spiritual father; they all instruct us on how we should live our Christian life. It is so easy to follow our own inclination, to espouse a particular emphasis or ideology, to revel in our own independence from God and to avoid or escape His authority. In brief, to follow our own will, not His. Human ingenuity and technology is good and God given but it must possess a moral and spiritual authority for our salvation which is found in Christ.

In the Greek myth of Icarus, his father Daedalus in an attempt to escape from the Labyrinth in Crete constructs wings from feathers and wax for them both. Icarus' father warns his son of complacency and of hubris asking that he neither fly too high or too low, so the sun would not melt the wax and the salt water

clog the feathers. Icarus ignores his father's instructions and with abandonment revels in his freedom to fly. The sun melts the wax and he falls to the sea where he is drowned.

Icarus

Ecclesiastes 1:16-18; *"I communed with my heart, saying, "Look, I have attained greatness, and have gained more wisdom than all who were before me in Jerusalem. My heart has understood great wisdom and knowledge." And I set my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is grasping for the wind. For in much wisdom is much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow."*

High flyers soar upwards to enthrall
Little knowing the sun's own awe filled ire
For "As wax melts before the fire"
So too "Pride comes before a fall."

In Eden too we made our wings
And thought escape so great, so smart;
To ply our course in knowledge and scientific art,
As in the other tree a mocking bird sings.

Satan still whispers "bow to me"
"Be free!" and "all these kingdoms own."
Whilst angels standing round the throne
Weep at feathers floating on the sea.

Fr Jonathan

"Poor human reason, when it trusts in itself, substitutes the strangest absurdities for the highest divine concepts" ---St John Chrysostom



SUNDAY SCHOOL PLAN

October 6th: Holy Apostle Thomas; On this Sunday we will focus on Apostle Thomas. We will dedicate a page to St Thomas, which will help the children memorise him and distinguish him from other Apostles. Children can colour his Icon, glue pieces of map and photos showing his ministry in the world, they can make and add a paper boat, reminding them that he was a fisherman, but also recalling the words of our Saviour *"I will make you fishers of men"*.

October 13th: The Parable of the Sower; *"A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew, and yielded a hundred-fold."* Luke 8:5-15. This week we will focus on bringing our Lord's parable closer to our hearts, giving a living example of what happens when we sow seeds and how does it apply in our spiritual life. We will colour small plant pots in which we will plant watercress for children to take home and watch them grow, explaining what ground is necessary for it to grow, similarly how we need to plant and nurture the good things in our hearts, given to us by God.

October 20th: Giving and Thanksgiving; *"You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God."* Corinthians 9:6-11. This Sunday's focus will be on giving, sharing, thanksgiving. We will talk about, what can we give – not only through material things, but also, through smiles, kindness and sharing. How do we do it – as the Epistle indicates; cheerfully, bountifully and with generosity. We will create a picture list of what and how we can give to and help others, thus also focusing on how the Lord gives every good gift to us, we should always remember to thank Him. The Holy Liturgy is Thanksgiving!

October 27th: Healing and being healed; *"When the woman saw that she was not hidden, she*

came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed.” “taking her by the hand he called, saying, ‘Child, arise.’ And her spirit returned, and she got up at once”. Luke 8:41-56. Today, we read in the Gospel, how our Lord on two occasions heals those who are sick. Therefore, we will talk about how we can pray to the Lord, when we or someone else is feeling sick, sad or hurt to ask Him to heal us. We will use various craft materials to create a beautiful healing scene taken from the Gospel. We will also familiarise with the Sacrament of Holy Unction.

Marta Radford

SAYINGS FROM THE DESERT FATHERS

Abba Poemen said that Abba John said that the saints are like a group of trees, each bearing different fruits, but watered from the same source. The practices of one saint differ from those of another, but it is the same Spirit that works in all. Abba Hyperechios said “*Let your thoughts be ever in the Kingdom of Heaven and soon you will possess it as a heritage*”. Abba Evagrius said “*It is a great thing to pray without distraction but to chant Psalms without distraction is even greater*”.



The 14 Holy Elders of Optina Monastery

NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH

Oct. 10: *Barnabas*
 Oct. 17: *Garyfalos*
 Oct. 20: *Fr. Stephen Hatherly*
 Oct. 23: *Fr. Christopher Neill*

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

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 at St Martin's in October*

Sat. 5th	15:00	Great Vespers
Sun. 6th	09:30	Matins
	10:30	Divine Liturgy
	12:00	"Martha's house" Sunday School
	12:30	Parish lunch
Sun. 13th	10:30	Hours and Typica
	11:30	"Martha's house" Sunday School
	12:00	Parish refreshments
Sat. 19th	15:00	Great Vespers
Sun. 20th	09:30	Matins
	10:30	Divine Liturgy
	12:00	"Martha's house" Sunday School
	12:30	Parish lunch
Sat. 26th	15:00	Great Vespers
Sun. 27th	09:30	Matins
	10:30	Divine Liturgy
	12:00	"Martha's house" Sunday School
	12:30	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](#).

