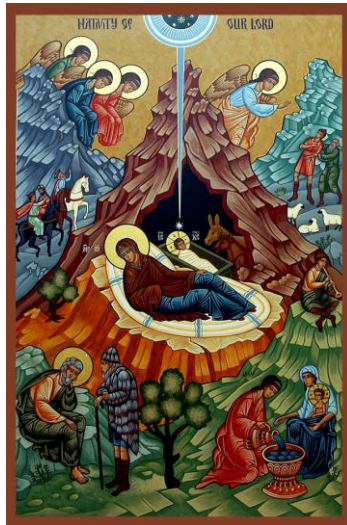


**The Orthodox Parish
of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,
Lancaster, UK**

The Stavronian

Monthly magazine and newsletter published by the Holy Cross Synodia



*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)***

Often, goes the Christ in the stranger's guise

NATIVITY HYMN – “THE MYSTERY”

*“For there is born to you this day in the city
of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord”
(Luke 2:11)*

*Based on the Nativity sermon of St. John
Chrysostom*

Look a new and wondrous mystery
Christ is born in Bethlehem,
Angels singing blend their voices
With the hosts of Cherubim.

Join in praise then all you living
Here on earth with those above,
He “Who is” comes down from heaven
Manifests the Father’s love.

Sun of Justice far outshining
Stars that led the kingly wise,
Today is born for our salvation
Him Unseen before our eyes.

Infants run then to adore Him
Shepherds come to be His sheep,
Priests to labour in His Vineyard
Wine and Bread His presence keep.

Fishers catch the world before Him
Sinful, lost and maimed repent,
That they may embrace together
This Child whom the Father sent.

Therefore let us sing together
Sharing in this choral dance,
“Christ is born!” the incarnation
So we may to heaven advance.

This our song, our hope, our story
This our life, so glory be
To the Father, Son and Spirit
Undivided Trinity.

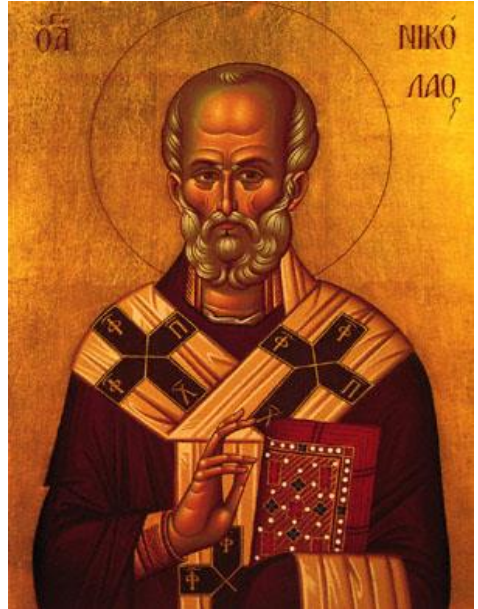
*Fr Jonathan,
to the glory of God, 31.12.2006*

True wealth, for me, is to see you in the Kingdom
of Heaven.

Elder Amphilocios

ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER, ARCHBISHOP OF MYRA

This Saint lived during the reign of Saint Constantine the Great, and reposed in 330. As a young man, he desired to espouse the solitary life. He made a pilgrimage to the holy city Jerusalem, where he found a place to withdraw to devote himself to prayer. It was made known to him,



however, that this was not the will of God for him, but that he should return to his homeland to be a cause of salvation for many. He returned to Myra, and was ordained bishop. He became known for his abundant mercy, providing for the poor and needy, and delivering those who had been unjustly accused. No less was he known for his zeal for the truth. He was present at the First Ecumenical Council of the 318 Fathers at Nicaea in 325; upon hearing the blasphemies that Arius brazenly uttered against the Son of God, Saint Nicholas struck him on the face. Since the canons of the Church forbid the clergy to strike any man at all, his fellow bishops were in perplexity what disciplinary action was to be taken against this hierarch whom all revered. In the night our Lord Jesus Christ and our Lady Theotokos appeared to certain of the bishops, informing them that no

action was to be taken against him, since he had acted not out of passion, but extreme love and piety. The Dismissal Hymn for holy hierarchs, *The truth of things hath revealed thee to thy flock...* was written originally for Saint Nicholas. He is the patron of all travellers, and of sea-farers in particular; he is one of the best known and best loved Saints of all time.

Troparion (Tone 4)

The truth of things revealed you to your flock as a rule of faith, / a model of meekness, and a teacher of temperance. / Through humility, you attained the heights; / and through poverty, riches. / O Father and Hierarch Nicholas, intercede with Christ God that our souls may be saved.

Kontakion (Tone 3)

You were shown forth in Myra as an officiant of the sacred rites, / for you fulfilled the Gospel of Christ, O Venerable Nicholas, by laying down your life for your people, / and saving the innocent from death. / Therefore, you were sanctified as a great initiate of God's grace.

ST. SPYRIDON THE WONDERWORKER OF TRYMITHOUS

Spyridon, the God-bearing Father of the Church, the great defender of Corfu and the boast of all the Orthodox, had Cyprus as his homeland. He was simple in manner and humble of heart, and was a shepherd of sheep. When he was joined to a wife, he begat of her a daughter whom they named Irene. After his wife's departure from this life, he was appointed Bishop of Trimythus, and thus he became also a shepherd of rational sheep. When the First Ecumenical Council was assembled in Nicaea, he also was present, and by means of his most simple words stopped the mouths of the Arians who were wise in their own conceit. By the divine grace which dwelt in him, he wrought such great wonders that he received the surname



“Wonderworker.” So it is that, having tended his flock piously and in a manner pleasing to God, he reposed in the Lord about the year 350, leaving to his country his sacred relics as a consolation and source of healing for the faithful.

About the middle of the seventh century, because of the incursions made by the barbarians at that time, his sacred relics were taken to Constantinople, where they remained, being honoured by the emperors themselves. But before the fall of Constantinople, which took place on May 29, 1453, a certain priest named Georgios Kalokhairetes, the parish priest of the church where the Saint's sacred relics, as well as those of Saint Theodora the Empress, were kept, took them away on account of the impending peril. Travelling by way of Serbia, he came as far as Arta in Epirus, a region in Western Greece opposite to the isle of Corfu. From there, while the misfortunes of the Christian people were increasing with every day, he passed over to Corfu about the year 1460. The relics of Saint Theodora were given to the people of Corfu; but those of Saint Spyridon remain to this day, according to the rights of inheritance, the most precious treasure of the priest's own descendants, and they continue to be a staff for the faithful in Orthodoxy, and a supernatural wonder for those that behold him; for even after the passage of 1,500 years,

they have remained incorrupt, and even the flexibility of his flesh has been preserved. Truly wondrous is God in His Saints! (Ps. 67:3 5)

Troparion (Tone 1)

At the First Council you appeared as a champion of Truth and a Wonderworker, O our God-bearing Father Spyridon. / For you spoke to one dead in her grave, and transformed a serpent into gold; / while chanting your holy prayers / you had Angels serving with you, most holy one. / Glory to Him Who glorified you. / Glory to Him Who crowned you. / Glory to Him Who, through you, grants healing to all.

Kontakion (Tone 2)

Wounded by the love of Christ, most holy one, your mind was given wings by the radiance of the Spirit, O God-inspired one, / you found your work in active contemplation, O God-pleasing Spyridon, / becoming a godly sacrifice, and entreating divine illumination for all.

ST ETHELDREDA (AUDREY)

In thee the Image of God was preserved, O noble Audrey, for thou didst take up thy cross and follow Christ. Royal virgin, thou didst teach the multitude by thine example that the flesh is to be scorned as fleeting, while the soul needeth great care as immortal. Wherefore, O holy Audrey, thou dost now make glad with the angels.

Holy Queen St. Etheldreda, Abbess of Ely (AD. 636-679), (Æthelthryth, Audrey) is the most venerated English female saint. A Saint renowned for her perpetual virginity -- despite her two marriages! -- and glorified by incorruption. Back on 18th July 2018, the Saint decided to make a powerful entrance into our lives, revealed herself as the patron Saint for our fellowship, and Father Jonathan organically became the fellowship's spiritual Father.

What we found most moving in St

Etheldreda's podvig was the central role her spiritual father, St. Wilfrid of York, "the Apostle of Sussex", played throughout her brief, yet tumultuous and full of suffering, sanctified life. This most powerful Patron Saint, always ready to help everybody in distress, especially married women in trouble with their husbands, humbly obeyed her spiritual father in every step she made and decision she took in her life. A holy rebel and a scandal she was, yet always under an Omoforon and an Epitrahelion.



To begin with, it was her spiritual father, who blessed her vow of chastity at a very young age and guided her during all her patient waiting for 15 or more years, until she would become a nun. (And until she had been twice married!) St. Wilfrid was such a close adviser to her that Egrith, her lawful, second husband — her first husband had already reposed after three years of "marriage" — entreated him to use his influence to induce his wife to become, in fact, what, as yet, she had been only in name. He even promised Wilfrid great things for himself and for his churches, should he be able to persuade the Queen that her duty to God was her duty to her husband. But Wilfrid feigned to enter into the King's view of the matter, whereas, in fact, he steadfastly encouraged the Queen to persist in her celibate

life and even advised her to ask permission to leave the court and become a nun. (Egfrith never forgave him.)

During one of her escapes, it was St. Wilfrid who tonsured her a nun, and later on, when St. Etheldreda eventually retreated to Ely and founded a double monastery there with communities for monks and nuns, who lived separately but prayed together in the common church, and became the first Abbess, her spiritual father continued to support her. It was St. Wilfrid who made her abbess and gave the veil to her first nuns. He obtained special privileges for her, from the Pope, and often visited her and helped her with advice and suggestions useful in the management of her large establishment.

We found most moving this strong connection of the Saint with her spiritual Father. Nothing seemed to be able to separate her from him. Through her example, we understood more clearly how essential for all of us and vital in our sanctification is our obedience to a spiritual Father, through the sacrament of Confession, in the Church. Especially in times of suffering and temptation, when only the Church, the Saints and your spiritual father can truly support you and be your Rock, your icon of Christ the Rock.

This holy relationship between the faithful and their spiritual Fathers is a pattern we observed in many Celtic women Saints. For example, St Dymphna and her spiritual Father, St. Gerebernus, fled together defying the Father King's immoral demand to marry his daughter, crossed the Channel, and eventually faced martyrdom together. St Winifred and St Beuno is another like Celtic holy pair, where Winifred, from an early age, was instructed in the spiritual life by St. Beuno and lived under his care a chaste life, dedicated to God, until she met her martyrdom. Beuno took Winifred's head and replaced it to her body, then prayed to God that she be restored whole. By St. Beuno's prayers, Winifred came back to life. This miracle was just one of many in their holy relationship and life together until their glorification.

St Etheldreda, a queen and most powerful lady, is setting a clear example to us how important it is to endure the martyrdom of the dying of our will in our obedience to our spiritual father, in order to overcome our fallen nature, our old self tendency to become autonomous, form our own opinions, and become thus self-centred

rather than God-centred. In all our life's decisions, momentous or 'small'. St Etheldreda may have abandoned two husbands but understood all too well that following our conscience and not acting in obedience, even in our most 'pious' endeavours, is a very tricky path and most of the times, if not all, the beginning of prelest.

O holy and venerable Audrey. As thou now dost stand before Christ thy Bridegroom, remember us who venerate thee, when He wilt sit and judge our deeds.

St. Etheldreda Fellowship

Troparion — Tone 8

In you, O Mother; was preserved with exactness what is according to the image; / for you took up the Cross and followed Christ. / By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh, for it passes away; / but to care for the soul, since it is immortal. / Therefore, O Venerable Etheldreda, your spirit rejoices with the Angels.

Kontakion — Tone 2

(Podoben: "Having received the grace of healing...")
Having discarded a bed for rest, for the sake of your love for God, O Mother Etheldreda, / and illuminating your spirit with fasting, / you have completely vanquished your enemies; / and by your intercessions you destroyed the evil schemes of our adversaries.



GERONDA GREGORIOS' 10 COMMANDMENTS



1. Orthodoxy equals Orthopraxy -- we should always seek virtue engaging in a spiritual battle against our passions.

2. Paradise is not earned “from the armchair” [Greek idiom, meaning without any effort], but requires hard work. “*The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*” (Matthew 11:12)

3. We should endure with patience sorrows, trials, injustices, insults.

4. We should study the Gospel and the lives of the Saints so that we can see our spiritual poverty and wretchedness.

5. We should also pray alone “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us”, “Most Holy Theotokos, save us”, “Holy Saints of God, pray / intercede for us”.

6. We should chant so that our melancholy and spiritual idleness / akedia is dissipated.

7. Whatever we do, we should do it with all our heart. Life without a heart is not really life. We become robots if we have a mind, a sharp brain, if

we are very clever, yet do not have a heart; then we have nothing.

8. We should attend Church as often as we can and we should receive Holy Communion after Confession, and if that is not possible, when we have peace in our heart.

9. We should prepare before Confession so that when we go to the Sacrament, we should confess our own sins, and not those of others, without idle words, with self-knowledge, and real repentance.

10. We should tolerate and forgive others so that God also forgives us.

*Geronda Gregorios († 19/11/2019),
Spiritual Father and Founder of
the Saint John the Forerunner
Monastery at Metamorfoosi, Chalkidiki, Greece*

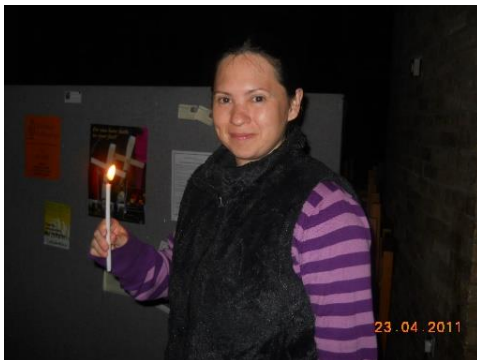


PARISH NEWS

Many thanks to Iryna for decorating the side panes of the Iconostasis with vine. May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ give the reward!



It is with great sorrow but in the sure hope of the Resurrection in Christ that we learned of the repose of Katrina Kazakina-Tisdall. It seems that our beloved sister fell asleep in the Lord on the eve of her name day of St Catherine, the 24th of November in the Slavic calendar. We commend her soul to our Lord Jesus whom she served with such love in our Parish. We extend our deep condolences to her family. The ladies of our parish are praying the psalter and monasteries in Greece are serving forty day liturgies for her. There will be a memorial service for Katya on Saturday on 2nd December at 15.45 in Church.



NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH

Dec. 2: Necoula
Dec. 5: Mary
Dec. 6: Shukria
Dec. 10: Èbraheem
Dec. 14: Alexandru
Dec. 28: Fr Augoustinos

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

4th Dec: Great Martyr Barbara

6th Dec: St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia

9th Dec: The conception of the Most-Holy Theotokos by Righteous Anna

11th Dec: Hieromartyr Metropolitan Seraphim (Chichagov)

12th Dec: St. Spyridon the Wonderworker, Bishop of Tremithus

13th Dec: St. Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker of All America

20th Dec: The repose of St. John of Kronstadt

25th Dec: **The Nativity according to the flesh of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ**

27th Dec: Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen

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

Online

Prayer Meeting

Weekly

on *Wednesday*
7:30 PM

via *Skype*



Click here to join the meeting
(no account needed):

[https://join.skype.com/K1CF
OgMGxDQU](https://join.skype.com/K1CF
OgMGxDQU)

**The Orthodox
Christian Parish of the
Holy and Life Giving
Cross – Lancaster
invites you to join our
Online Prayer Group “
Saint Seraphim & Saint
Etheldreda”.**

**With the blessing of
father Jonathan
Hemmings the prayer
meetings of our parish
group are back.**

**Included: Study of the
early British Saints
Akathists, Bible
studies and Homilies
with father Jonathan
Bonus: Q & A**

Services at St Martin's in December

Sat. 2 nd	15:45	Memorials.* Memorial service for Katya Kazakina-Tisdall
	16:00	Great Vespers
Sun. 3 rd	09:45	Divine Liturgy
Sat. 9 th	09:45	Divine Liturgy (Feast of the Conception of the Most Holy Theotokos by Righteous Anna)
Sun. 10 th	09:45	Divine Liturgy
Sat. 16 th	15:45	Memorials*
	16:00	Great Vespers
Sun. 17 th	09:45	Divine Liturgy (Sunday of the Holy Forefathers)
Sat. 23 rd	11:00	Holy Baptism
	09:45	Matins (Orthros)
Sun. 24 th	19:00	Divine Liturgy of St Basil for The Nativity according to the flesh of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ followed by carols and cakes
Sat. 30 th	15:45	Memorials*
	16:00	Great Vespers
Sun. 31 st	09:45	Divine Liturgy, followed by parish meal

Other possible services as announced.

*Memorials are offered at 15.45 on most Saturdays before Great Vespers. If you wish to commemorate your reposed loved ones, please contact Fr Jonathan beforehand.

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



For further information please contact:

Parish priest: Father Jonathan Hemmings
67 Sibsey Str., Fairfield, Lancaster, LA1 5DQ
Tel: 07951 722 877
Email: frjah@yahoo.co.uk

The Orthodox Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross:

www.orthodox-lancaster.org.uk

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of
the British Isles and Ireland: www.antiochian-orthodox.com

Orthodox online liturgical guide: www.antiochian.org/liturgicday

The following blogs of Old Stavronians are available in English at orthodoxcityhermit.com

