



**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)***

THE FLIGHT OF THE GEESE

A little boy was pointing to the sky and asking his mother to witness an amazing sight. I too looked up to see and hear the wonderful spectacle and noise. There above us flying in chevron formation and “hooting and honking” with vigorous encouragement were a host of geese, perhaps 80-100 in number, travelling south for the winter. Their calls to one another reminded me of travellers on a bus chatting to one another. “*Where is Agatha? She is at the back of the bus next to Dorothy!*”, and “*Hello driver, you are doing a great job, but can you slow down a bit, Eric is driving the bus behind us and we seem to be losing him!*”

This flock of geese (*skein* is the proper collective noun for them) were migrating for the season; they were going to a warmer place and who can blame them for that?

I understand that the chevron or “V” formation enables the flock to conserve energy so that they fly in a greatly more efficient way than flying alone. This formation also helps them locate one another. Apparently they take it in turns to take the lead; working as a team they share the tasks reaching their destination sooner and more easily. The goose in front not only gives direction but creates tremendous uplift for the ones behind. They know the Way, so they know where they are going - they have a clear goal and destination. They travel together, trusting in one another secure in an orderly fellowship.

When a goose falls out of formation through exhaustion two companions follow it until it is recovered.

Well, I will leave you to extract from this true story (forgiving my own imagination of the conversation) a parable and its application!

Fr. Jonathan



St Nektarios of Pentapolis

GOD AND THE GEESE

There was once a man who didn't believe in God, and he didn't hesitate to let others know how he felt about religion and religious holidays. His wife, however, did believe, and she raised their children to also have faith in God and Jesus, despite his disparaging comments. One snowy eve, his wife was taking their children to service in the farm community in which they lived. They were to talk about Jesus' birth. She asked him to come, but he refused. “*That story is nonsense!*” he said. “*Why would God lower Himself to come to Earth as a man? That's ridiculous!*”

So she and the children left, and he stayed home. A while later, the winds grew stronger and the snow turned into a blizzard. As the man looked out the window, all he saw was a blinding snowstorm. He sat down to relax before the fire for the evening. Then he heard a loud thump. Something had hit the window. He looked out, but couldn't see more than a few feet. When the snow let up a little, he ventured outside to see what could have been beating on his window. In the field near his house he saw a flock of wild geese. Apparently they had

been flying south for the winter when they got caught in the snowstorm and couldn't go on. They were lost and stranded on his farm, with no food or shelter. They just flapped their wings and flew around the field in low circles, blindly and aimlessly. A couple of them had flown into his window, it seemed.

The man felt sorry for the geese and wanted to help them. The barn would be a great place for them to stay, he thought. It's warm and safe; surely they could spend the night and wait out the storm. So he walked over to the barn and opened the doors wide, then watched and waited, hoping they would notice the open barn and go inside.

But the geese just fluttered around aimlessly and didn't seem to notice the barn or realize what it could mean for them. The man tried to get their attention, but that just seemed to scare them, and they moved further away. He went into the house and came with some bread, broke it up, and made a bread crumb trail leading to the barn. They still didn't catch on.

Now he was getting frustrated. He got behind them and tried to shoo them toward the barn, but they only got more scared and scattered in every direction except toward the barn. Nothing he did could get them to go into the barn where they would be warm and safe. *"Why don't they follow me?"* he exclaimed. *"Can't they see this is the only place where they can survive the storm?"*

He thought for a moment and realized that they just wouldn't follow a human. *"If only I were a goose, then I could save them"*, he said out loud. Then he had an idea. He went into barn, got one of his own geese, and carried it in his arms as he circled around behind the flock of wild geese.

He then released it. His goose flew through the flock and straight into the

barn; and one-by-one, the other geese followed it to safety.

He stood silently for a moment as the words he had spoken a few minutes earlier replayed in his mind: *"If only I were a goose, then I could save them!"* Then he thought about what he had said to his wife earlier. *"Why would God want to be like us? That's ridiculous!"*

Suddenly it all made sense. That is what God had done. We were like the geese - blind, lost, perishing. God had His Son become like us so He could show us the way and save us.

--- Story from the website of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines

SAYINGS FROM THE FATHERS

"Concerning prayer in church, know that it is higher than prayers at home, for it is raised by a whole group of people, among which many are most pure prayers, offering to God from humble hearts, which He accepts as fragrant incense. Along with these our prayers are also accepted, even though they are feeble and worthless."

St. Macarius of Optina



NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE RE- MEMBERED THIS MONTH

Nov. 11: *Eleonora*

Nov. 12: *Sir John Tavener*

Nov. 29: *Ioanna*

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 Nov: *Sts Cosmas and Damian, the Holy Unmercenaries*

8th Nov: *Synaxis of Archangel Michael & Gabriel and the other Bodiless Powers*

9th Nov: *St. Nectarios the wonderworker, Metropolitan of Pentapolis*

10th Nov: *St. Arsenius of Cappadocia*

11th Nov: *St. Martin of Tours (†397)*

13th Nov: *St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople*

14th Nov: *St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica*

15th Nov: *Beginning of the Nativity fast*

16th Nov: *Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew*

17th Nov: *St. Hilda, Abbess of Whitby (†680)*

21st Nov: *The Entry of our Most-Holy Lady the Theotokos into the Temple*

23rd Nov: *St. Alexander Nevsky*

25th Nov: *Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria*

30th Nov: *Holy Apostle Andrew the first called*

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



All Saints of the British Isles



Services at St Martin's in November*

Sat. 3 rd	15:00	Great Vespers, Confessions and Catechism
Sun. 4 th	09:30	Matins and Holy Liturgy followed by Parish lunch
Sat. 10 th	10:00	Holy Liturgy
Sun. 11 th	09:30	Matins and Holy Liturgy followed by Parish lunch
Sat. 17 th	15:00	Great Vespers, Confessions and Catechism
Sun. 18 th	09:30	Matins and Holy Liturgy followed by Parish lunch
Sat. 24 th	10:00	Holy Liturgy
Sun. 25 th	09:30	Matins and Holy Liturgy 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](#).



Top and bottom sketches are created at the Holy Monastery of "The Annunciation of the Theotokos" Chios, Greece, courtesy of Fr Theodosios Dendrinos, Ithaca, Greece.
The skenth of Christ by Petros Komogios was scanned from the Orthodox calendar of the Apolloniá Diocese of the Church of Greece.