

† Basildon Orthodox Community Bulletin

No. 1 ~ July 2011

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Having been formed for less than a year (our first Liturgy in October 2010 was attended by only seven people) we are still very much at the 'sapling' stage of growth. Nevertheless, we continually thank God that the Basildon Orthodox Community continues to grow. We are ever grateful for all the support that you have given. The prayer and work are a joy to those of us God has called to be here, with serving, singing, chanting, baking the prosfora, and the many other jobs and chores. We trust in your continued prayers for God's will to be done in this place.

In Christ,

Paul

MANY YEARS! Teydon Sebastian Schnel, born 10th February 2011, was the first child to be given a 40-Day Blessing in our new community. He will be Baptised in Greece later this month. May God bless his family and grant him many years

NEW ICON Anna has most kindly purchased from the Monastery a very beautiful handwritten icon of Χριστός Παντοκράτωρ. She has presented it to the church in memory of her beloved son, Daniel. The icon will be blessed by the Priest and placed on the Holy Table.

NEW BISHOPS The Holy Synod of Balamand has elected 12 new Bishops, including three new auxiliary Bishops for Europe. Details are sparse at present, but the new Bishops for Europe will be Archimandrite Yuhanna (Haykal), Archimandrite Ephrem (Ma'louli), and Archimandrite Ignatius (al-Hawshi). Please pray that the new hierarchs are able to further the work of God's Holy Church, especially in this country.

Please note: Due to the Holy Synod, HE Archbishop Yuhanna, could not visit Britain in June, as planned. Therefore, the Tonsuring/Ordination of Paul Brighton-Cross as Reader will have to be rearranged until later in the year.

LOCAL PRESS The local press has given us some coverage. A very small piece, with photo, appeared in the *Evening Echo* for 3RD December 2010. It is online at http://www.echo-news.co.uk/news/local_news/southend/8718973.Worshippers_welcomed_to_new_church_service/?ref=rss

A photographer was again here on 4th June, and a (not terribly good) short article together with a (decent, colour) photo appeared in the *Echo* on Monday 20th June (and was syndicated to other papers across the county). Copies of this issue should still be available from the Echo offices. Free (b/w) photocopies of the article are available in church.

PILGRIMAGE Some of us were able to attend the second Orthodox Pilgrimage to the Holy Saints of Barking. It was a blessing for us to commemorate the many holy ones who lived lives of blessed asceticism in the Orthodox faith, some of whom were martyred for that faith, in a place so close to where we ourselves live. We call constantly upon the Saints for help; in particular the intercessionary power of the local, Essex, saints ought not to be underestimated. Essex has numerous saints from the time before the west fell away from Holy Orthodoxy. In recent decades the ancient faith has been miraculously revived here, with flourishing Orthodox Churches at Colchester, Southend, the justly internationally-famous Monastery at Tolleshunt Knights, and now here at Basildon, the smallest, most recent outpost of the Holy Faith in Essex.

~ A beautiful and newly written icon of the Saints of Barking was blessed at the pilgrimage. Postcards of the icon are available to buy @ 25p each.

SUMMER Please note that the Priest will be away during August, so there will be no services here until the Divine Liturgy on Saturday 3rd September, at 11:00. Do have a prayerful and blessed summer.

FEASTS 3rd July: ALL SAINTS OF BRITAIN, NEW MARTYRS OF THE TURKISH YOKE; 11th July: REPOSE OF FATHER SOPHRONY; 18th July: NEW MARTYRS GRAND DUCHESS ELIZABETH & NUN BARBARA; 20th July HOLY PROPHET ELIJAH; 26th July: SAINT PARASKEVI; 27th July: GREAT MARTYR AND HEALER PANTELEIMON. 1st August: THE HONOURABLE AND LIFEGIVING CROSS; 6th August: HOLY TRANSFIGURATION; 15th August: THE DORMITION OF THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD; 29th August: BEHEADING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. 1st September: CHURCH NEW YEAR.

FASTING The Dormition Fast begins on 1st August and ends on the 14th. Fish, wine, oil are permitted on Sunday 6th September (Feast of the Transfiguration); wine and oil on the 7th, 13th and 14th.

From Saint Basil the Great ~

Utterly inexpressible and indescribable is Divine beauty blazing like lightning; neither word can express nor ear receive it. If we name the brightness of dawn, or the clearness of moonlight, or the brilliance of sunshine, none of it is worthy to be compared with the glory of true light, and is farther removed therefrom than the deepest night and the most terrible darkness from the clear light of midday. When this beauty, invisible to physical eyes and accessible only to soul and thought, illumined some saint, wounding him with unbearable yearning desire, then, disgusted by earthly life, he cried: 'Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!'... 'My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God'.

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+ GLORY TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS +