

# THE NARTHEX

March-April 2016

'And the disciples were first called  
Christians in Antioch' (Acts 11:26)

The Orthodox Church of St Dunstan of Canterbury, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH14 9JG

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland. Archbishop: Metropolitan Silouan

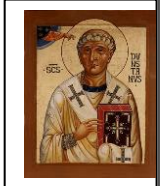
The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East. Patriarch: His Beatitude, John X

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## The Future

Without doubt, the recent enthronement of our first archbishop, Metropolitan Silouan, marks a new stage in our church life. What was once just a small Antiochian Orthodox Mission, taken like a cutting from an old vine, has now been planted out in the garden. May what we have planted and watered now be given growth by God!

For some time, a number of us have been considering how our parish here in Poole can move forward both in its common life and, now more crucially, in connection with the mission of our archdiocese. This matter was raised at the last Parish Council meeting. Our charity, also, the Bournemouth Poole Orthodox Christian Foundation (that owns and manages the building) has long been aware of this. Such thinking about the future has also been given a considerable boost by the recent arrival of Fr Dc Filip and his wife. Deaconissa Annemieke has, in fact, been able to take on a good deal of administrative work, allowing me to concentrate more on the priestly and pastoral ministry for which I was ordained.

Many of you will know that, with Met. Silouan's blessing, we have applied for a building repair grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Fairly soon, Columba Cook, the firm of architects with whom we are working, will begin a full survey of the building, assessing and costing what must be done. Our church is a listed Grade II\* building and is the only church in the borough of Poole noted as being 'in danger'. Although this sounds ominous, it is, in fact, greatly to our advantage in our application for a grant to complete the needed repairs.

But our future is not just congregational or restricted to our own parish. It is perhaps difficult at times to think outside our own spiritual needs, especially as we have (thank God!) a

very diverse congregation from many nations as well as England. We need to remind ourselves that the one, holy, orthodox-catholic Church of Jesus Christ does not consist of national churches but rather of local churches; our archdiocese is of *The British Isles*, a geographical location, not of *Great Britain*, a political state.

The point of all this, is that all our endeavours are not just about us, here in Poole but also concern our support for our new bishop and the wider archdiocese. I will state plainly that I, for one, can have no part in a parish that only looks inward; my priestly office is carried out in deputising for the archbishop. In every Orthodox church building there lies on the Holy Table the Antimension cloth, signed by the bishop; on this cloth the priest serves the Liturgy. It is, as it were, a license giving him the bishop's permission to preside over the Eucharistic assembly *on his behalf*. As such, we are duty bound to support our bishop.

In order to carry out this mission, therefore, it has become evident for some time that we shall have to reorganise the administration of our parish and thoroughly rethink the way it is financed.

In terms of paying for the running our parish and its building we are managing to survive quite well. We are supporting the bishop with contributions. However, it is clear that acting upon a little more 'smart' thinking, we could do even better and contribute more. The archdiocese is aware that we have a particular task in preserving the unique treasure of our building. We are, though, pursuing that separately through our grant application. We have a growing congregation and, as a result, greater funding from the donations of our people. Yet with certain readjustments

(not necessarily involving people digging deeper into their pockets) we could do even better.

Since 2011 we have had two organisations: the parish and the charity (BPOCF), each with its own account. We set up BPOCF as a limited company as well as a registered charity, separate from the parish. This originally protected properties belonging to the parish from liquidators, just in case our venture failed financially and we had to go into administration (like the charity that previously owned the building!) It is clear now that we are able to cover the basic costs of running the building affectively, largely through drawing rents from the hall users during the week.

With the recent changes in the laws governing charities, I am going to propose that it is greatly to our advantage now to merge these two entities: the parish and BPOCF. If this does happen, it means that we need to have an official roll of electors, registered members of the parish over the age of 18, who can both vote and stand for election to the newly combined parish-charitable foundation, responsible not just for the care and operation of the building but also for the administration of the parish. For all that, the only change most members of the congregation will notice would be a change in the way donations might be given, involving the use of envelopes and the possible recovery of tax through Gift Aid: if a parishioner who is a tax-payer in UK signs a Gift Aid form, the church treasurer can recover 25% from the government with no extra cost to the donor. So if you were to give £4, the church

eventually will get £5.

It is in order to inform, explain and discuss these proposals that we are calling together a conference of our parish. It is to be called **The Parish Future Conference** and will be held on Saturday 26th March at 10.30am. A bring-and-share Lenten lunch will follow. All members of the congregation are invited, so it would be good if most of our households could be represented. Following the conference, the BPOCF will hold its Annual General Meeting and vote on the proposed merger with the parish. Naturally, the parish Council will also have to vote formally on the proposal. Should this all proceed, I shall be inviting the Dean, Archpriest Gregory Hallam from Manchester to visit the parish and preach at our Liturgy on a Sunday to be arranged. Fr Gregory is a keen advocate of cheerful, proportionate and organised giving and what he says will greatly edify us all as we move ahead into the future.

Meanwhile, we hope soon to issue a short document explaining these ideas and proposals for each household in our congregation. As it is important that all of us understand these proposed changes as clearly as possible, this document is being translated into Romanian, Russian and Greek for those who would prefer to read in their own languages.

*Fr Chrysostom*



### Fridays in Great Lent

The Office of Little Compline and

Akathist Hymn 6.00pm

To be followed by

A Catechetical Address 7.00-8.00pm

### *The Way the Truth & the Life*

All are invited to attend. The talk after Compline is intended especially for those who would like to be received into the Orthodox Church or those, already Orthodox, who wish to deepen their understanding of our faith during this holy season.

Reception into the Orthodox Church is through Baptism, Chrismation and First Communion and would involve preparation by instruction, first confession of past sins and spiritual formation in Orthodox practice. (For those already baptized in a heterodox Trinitarian church, their previous Baptism would normally be recognised as valid and after preparation could proceed to Chrismation etc.)

If you have been attending St Dunstan's and would like to become a member of the Orthodox Church, please telephone Fr Chrysostom or Fr Dc Filip in order to proceed.

### Catechetical Programme

#### *The Way the Truth & the Life*

#### 1] 18/3 **The Trinitarian Life**

Our teaching on the revelation of the mystery of God

#### 2] 25/3 **The Iconic Life**

Our teaching on Man as the icon of God and of salvation

#### 3] 1/4 **The Ascetic Life**

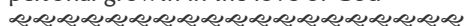
Our teaching on the synergy between God's grace and our struggle

#### 4] 8/4 **The Liturgical Life**

Our teaching on worship as life in the kingdom of God

#### 5] 15/4 **The Spiritual Life**

Our teaching on the Orthodox practice of personal growth in the love of God



### SERVICES

*Vespers is normally served on Saturday's at 5.00pm in the Saints of Britain chapel. Fr. Chrysostom is available for Confession afterwards.*

### MARCH

Sun 6th Sunday of The Last Judgement [Meatfare] Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Mon 7th **meat-fast begins**

Sun 13th Sunday of The expulsion of Adam [Cheesefare] Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Mon 14th **Beginning of the Great Fast**

Fri 18th Little Compline & Akathist (Part I) 6.00pm Catechetical Address 7.00pm

Sun 20th First Sunday of Great Lent Sunday of Orthodoxy Divine Liturgy and procession of Icons 10.30am

Fri 25th Annunciation to Our Lady (fish, wine & oil) Little Compline & Akathist(Part II) 6.00pm Catechetical Address 7.00pm



### Parish Future Conference

Saturday 26th March

At the Church Hall 10.30am

Followed by a bring-&-share Lenten Lunch



Sun 27th Second Sunday of Great Lent St Gregory Palamas Divine Liturgy 10.30am

### APRIL

Fri 1st Little Compline & Akathist 6.00pm (Part III) Catechetical Address 7.00pm

Sun 3rd Third Sunday of Great Lent Veneration of the Cross Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Fri 8th Little Compline & Akathist (Part IV) 6.00pm  
Catechetical Address 7.00pm  
Sun 10th Fourth Sunday of Great Lent St John Climachus Divine Liturgy 10.30am  
Fri 15th Little Compline & Akathist (Parts I - IV) 6.00pm  
Catechetical Address 7.00pm  
Sun 17th Fifth Sunday of Great Lent St Mary of Egypt Divine Liturgy 10.30am  
Sat 23rd Lazarus Saturday St George, Patron of England  
Sun 24th Entry of Our Lord (Palm Sunday) Divine Liturgy 10.30am (fish, wine & oil)

### Passion Week Begins

25th Great & Holy Monday  
26th Great & Holy Tuesday  
27th Great & Holy Wednesday  
28th **Great & Holy Thursday**  
Vespereal Liturgy of the Mystical Supper 11.00am  
Service of the Twelve Gospels 7.00pm  
29th **Great & Holy Friday**  
The Royal Hours 9.30am  
Vespers of the Shroud 4.00pm  
Lamentations Service 6.30pm  
30th **Great & Holy Saturday**  
Midnight Office, Rush Procession, Orthros & Divine Liturgy of Pascha 11.00pm Followed by the feast in the church hall.

### MAY

Sun 1st **Holy Pascha**  
Agape Vespers (Vespers of Love) 2.30pm



*With fear and reverence you should stand in church, for our Christ is invisibly present with the holy angels. He fills the attentive and reverent with grace and blessings, whereas He censures the inattentive as unworthy. Try to receive Communion as often as possible - you have my permission to do so freely - for Holy Communion is an excellent aid for those who struggle against sin.*



*Just as the athlete is tested in the arena and in the field of action, likewise the Christian is tested in the arena of struggles as to whether he truly loves God. Patience in the struggle against the various sins and courage at their onset to apply the divine commandments characterize the fervent worshipper of Jesus.*

The Elder Ephraim, *Counsels from the Holy Mountain*