

THE NARTHEX

March-April 2019

'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

Parish Priest: Fr. Chrysostom Tel. 01202-602628 email: fr.chrysostom@gmx.com

Asst Priest: Fr Filip Tel. 01308-868543 email: flommaert@gmail.com

Deacon: Fr Dc Alexander Tel. 07765417610 email: fr.Alexander@gmx.com

Subdeacon David Tel. 01209-217499

Parish web site: www.saint-dunstan.org Archdiocesan web site: www.antiochian-orthodox.co.uk



Living in Wonderland

One of the saddest effects that I have noticed during the current Brexit debate is that I can no longer readily trust the BBC, especially, that is, the news and current affairs broadcasting of Radio 4. It is sad because the BBC used to have a reputation for honest reporting with a vigorous impartiality. It was, of course, patriotic, presenting Britain to the world over the airwaves and maintained the highest standards of public service broadcasting. This, however, began to change slowly, probably around the 1980's when instead of reflecting the character of the nation, it gradually took on a campaigning role, subtly trying to adjust the nation's ethical thinking and mindset. It is curious but I now approach what was once a national treasure with the same skepticism and caution that I use whenever I venture onto the *Russia Today* satellite TV channel, and I certainly do not watch that without caution: *caveat auditor!*

For all its insistence that it operates under a policy of impartiality, any discerning member of the BBC's audience will have detected a very obvious bias during the current political debate. This is not, I hope, a result of some dark conspiracy hatched in the corporation's committee rooms, but more likely, a symptom of its current culture. It is sobering to discover, for example, that 75% of BBC employees all voted in a particular way in the 2016 Referendum; that 12% of its employees apparently belong to something called the 'LGBT Community' when, in the population as a whole, its numbers are less than 2%. Need we be surprised, therefore, that the BBC has taken on the task of bending the minds of the very young according to its own nostrums and features storytelling for little children where a fictional character has two fathers (an impossibility in biology). Presumably, this is to inculcate into pliable minds the notion that homosexual parenthood presents no natural, moral or social problem. It seems now that we are paying our television license fees, in part, to have our little ones gently pushed in a particular direction, contrary to the dictates of Nature herself, for reasons of social

engineering, which most people in our society, I suspect, certainly find disturbing.

The whole corpus of 'politically correct' and 'liberal-left' causes (favouring a United States of Europe, the end of the nation state, LGBT rights, Neo-Feminism, Climate Change as unbiased science, officious egalitarianism and witch-finding in the areas of Racism, Islamophobia and every other self-proclaimed-victimhood-phobia) will no doubt complain that popular, as well as high culture, has always formed impressionable minds in the past, as in the days when males and females (the only two sexes that actually exist - don't try and convince me that 'gender' is not a social construct...) got married, had children, father went out to work and mother stayed at home to rear the children, until they were old enough to look after themselves. Such an idea was indeed regarded as the norm in British culture, and it was also thought of as moral and proper. Obviously, there were variations at the time, and this state of affairs was not universally observed, but it was thought of as the natural order of things; it was what worked and it enabled and allowed a stable society to flourish.

The past in Britain, of course, was not a paradise for all and it is easy to find instances of hypocrisy and unfairness in the areas of human relationships and family life. But such things as the rise of globalization and the dominating interests of multinational corporations, have meant that we have witnessed real moral changes during the last two decades in particular. Fostered by such national institutions as the BBC, the universities and Education, civil and public services, various commercial interests, charities, government departments and even the Military, these changes have begun to have an effect. Not just, that is, in making it difficult for those who are disturbed by these trends to speak openly, but they have also taken charge of public conversation, even to the point of covert, or even open, censorship, the so called, 'non-platforming'. We might wonder now how much this has contributed to the increase of social anxiety and mental illness, especially among the young.

Along with all this we may also observe in the current moral climate, the

need that so many people seem to have developed, to alter their mental state through the use of chemical substances. The use of currently illegal narcotics is widespread and is no longer a vice restricted to an underclass of addicts and drop-outs but features among the affluent and professional middle-classes. This is interesting as an economic market because this particular consumer demand is the fuel for all kinds of crime, not just in the illegal sale of 'recreational' drugs to the user but further back down the chain; not just in the 'turf wars' fought between drugs gangs (and the resulting knife crimes that have affected certain black communities in particular) but in the way it has led to thousands of deaths in South America or has helped pay for the terrorist activities of Islamist organisations. If you use illicit cocaine-based drugs, you are at the end of a long line; you are the one ultimately paying for the fortunes earned by drugs barons; if you use illicit opium-based drugs, you have bankrolled the arms and explosives used by Islamic terrorists; if you use illicit cannabis-based drugs, you have probably contributed towards the 'modern slavery' that produced it. I wonder how many of the contemporary social liberals realise their moral responsibility in this respect? Without the market, which they provide, there would be no illegal drugs industry.

It will come as no surprise that we, as Orthodox Christians, stand against all this. This is not just because of the social and psychological damage that the promotion of this liberal moral agenda has promoted, dangerous though it be, but also because it is at variance with Truth, with Nature and with the way of salvation in Christ. It also calls for great vigilance on our part, especially where it concerns the upbringing of our own young people according to Orthodox belief and practice. Wherever we come across this pernicious new social agenda, let's be awkward, let's confront it, oppose it, even laugh at it, indeed and let's not be coy in labelling it for

