

IMPORTANT NOTE: St. Andrews Management require us to vacate the church by 3pm every Sunday. There is no negotiation on this.

Fr. John

Church Security

After all Services, and any meetings and refreshments have finished, the church is locked and so is the main gate - please be careful that you are not locked in! **In an emergency telephone 07733227767**

The Parish of the Dormition of the Mother of God (Ecumenical Patriarchate)
Registered Charity Number: 1125574

Parish Clergy

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Parish Website: www.dormitionparishlondonep.co.uk

Our Parish is under the omophorion of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. The Church of St. George in the Phanar (Fener) is the fifth Patriarchal church in Constantinople (Istanbul) and home to the Ecumenical Patriarchate since the fifteenth century (website of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is at: www.patriarchate.org). We are within the Deanery of Great Britain and Ireland (website is at: www.exarchate-uk.org) and part of the Archdiocese of Orthodox Parishes of Russian Tradition in Western Europe under His Eminence Archbishop Gabriel of Comana, Exarch of Western Europe. The Archdiocesan Cathedral is the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, rue Daru, Paris, France (website of the Archdiocese is at: www.exarchat.eu).

The Dormition of the Mother of God (EP)



**Orthodox Parish Worshipping
at St. Andrew Holborn**

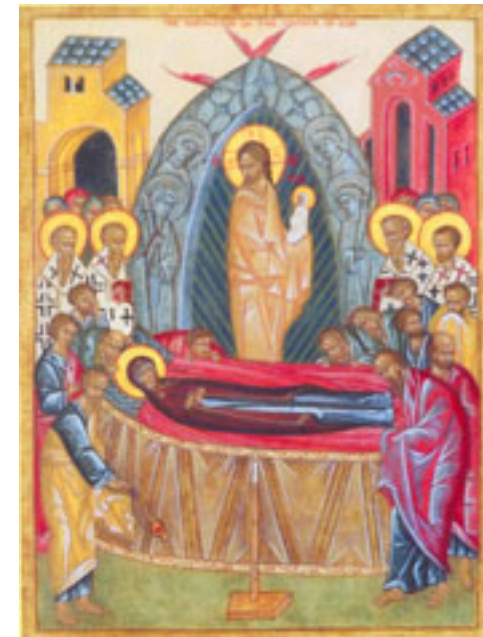
**Issue: 77; September, 2010
SERVICES THIS WEEK**

**Saturday: September 4th
5:30pm: Vigil**

**Sunday: September 5th
10:30am: The Holy Liturgy**

All services are celebrated in Church Slavonic and in English.

FIRST ISSUE IN SEPTEMBER



**"In giving birth, O Mother of God, Thou hast kept Thy virginity,
and in falling asleep Thou hast not forsaken the world. Thou, O
Mother of life, hast passed over into life and by Thy prayers dost
deliver our souls from death."**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

“It is September and soon it will be the season of the year we call autumn. The summer is over and people are coming home, settling in, knowing that winter lies ahead. The harvest is over, everything is stored ready for use over the cold dark months ahead. I always loved it, seeing everything and every one back in their rightful place.

Spring and summer are rather lightweight by comparison. Regularity is often set aside whilst we go on holiday, meet friends, do other things - no harm in that, we say, in September everything will be back to normal.

For us at St. Andrew’s it’s decision time. We are having parish elections for the first time and it is a chance to hear what everyone has to say in an official way. But I would be failing as a pastor if I did not speak frankly about certain things.

Firstly however I want to recall Christ’s words to those who refused to hear His message:

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites. Behold your house shall be left to you desolate and you shall not see me again until you say blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord.”

These were Christ’s words as He left public life. He went to stay quietly in Bethany with Martha and Mary until the Passover and He knew that He must go then to Jerusalem to face His trial, His torture and His death.

Participation in the Vigil allows those present to make their confession on the evening before the Liturgy and avoids delaying the Liturgy on Sunday morning. In all circumstances, the Sunday communion is preceded by a eucharistic fast that begins at midnight on Saturday and is broken by the communion of the Holy Gifts.

Fasting means abstinence from food and drink. Of course, sick people who have to take medication in the morning can drink half a glass of water and eat a piece of bread. God doesn’t want to add to the afflictions of those who are already suffering by giving them a stomach ulcer as well...

The Liturgy is an anticipation of the Kingdom, often symbolised in the Gospels by a feast. It would not cross our minds to arrive late for a reception organised by a government official. Likewise arriving late for Church shows we have our priorities the wrong way around.

The Third and Sixth Hours are not private services reserved for the privileged few, nor are they background noise for the purpose of making confession more private. At these services we read the psalms that Christ Himself used to pray.

The Hours are services – in the full sense of the word – within the daily cycle. Like Vespers or the Vigil, they are a preparation for the Liturgy. And on Sunday morning, they are a sort of decompression chamber between the outside world and the church, where we “lay aside all the cares of this life” in order to devote ourselves to that which is essential.

A Happy New Church Year to you all!”

+GABRIEL

Archbishop of Comana

Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarch

We next meet here, at St. Andrew’s on Saturday, September 18th at 5:30pm for the Vigil and on Sunday, September 19th at 10:30am for the Liturgy.

“Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The first of September is the first day of the liturgical year. It coincides with the beginning of the school year and with the Day of the Protection of the Environment, instituted by the Ecumenical Patriarch.

At the start of the school year, pupils generally make good resolutions, similar to the ones that everyone makes on the first of January. So why shouldn't Orthodox Christians make good resolutions at the start of the liturgical year? This could be an opportunity, similar to that offered by each of the fasts instituted by the Church, to put things in order and to try to correct whatever is not right in our lives.

It may be helpful at this point to recall some of the rules and practices of the Orthodox Church.

The liturgy is at the centre of our life as Christians. It is the culmination of the cycle of services that occur over the twenty-four hours of the day. The Sunday liturgy, centred on the Resurrection, is our weekly Easter. Frequent communion is both progress and a return to basics.

Communion does, however, run the risk of becoming trivialised if done automatically, without being preceded by spiritual and material (physical) preparation. The obligation to confess before each and every communion is a practice belonging to the past in the majority of parishes in the Archdiocese – unless, of course, one has a grave sin on one's conscience.

The frequency of confession is determined jointly between the communicant and his or her confessor (who does not necessarily have to be the Parish Priest but can be another priest). This is a matter of vital 'spiritual hygiene'. We are always unworthy of receiving communion, even if we have confessed our sins the previous night, or immediately before the Liturgy.

If we are not conscious of our state as permanent sinners and if we do not know what to confess, let us not invent sins as children sometimes do and let us not confess the sins of others. In that case, the remedy could be worse than the original affliction.

Since there should be preparation for Liturgy, attending Vespers or Vigil on the Saturday evening is ideal for those who live within easy reach of their church. For others, this service may be replaced by reading the prayers of preparation for communion and the Sunday Epistle and Gospel.

“Jerusalem - Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest those sent to thee. I would have gathered thee as a hen does her chicks under her wings but that would'st not.”

But as we know, very few listened. The religious feast carried on. The priests saw the Temple coffers being filled with gold coins as the people made their festal offerings. From their point of view it was a success.

But in a very few days Christ would agonize in the garden, shed sweat mixed with blood, and would say *“Heavenly Father, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to the little ones.”*

We as a parish must be considered the *“little ones”* because we possess very little now... in the way of material things that is. Our resource now has got to be one another. Some of us have hardened our hearts and minds, convinced that only we and we alone have the right answers.

The only result of this will be as Christ said *“Our house will be left desolate.”* Pray God that it will not be so.

Amen.

Fr. John

“Chers frères et soeurs,

Le 1 septembre est le premier jour du Nouvel an liturgique. Il coïncide avec la rentrée scolaire et la journée de la préservation de la Création, institué par le Patriarche œcuménique

En début d’année scolaire, les élèves prennent généralement de bonnes résolutions, ce que tout le monde fait aussi le 1 janvier. Pourquoi les chrétiens orthodoxes ne prendraient-ils pas aussi de bonnes résolutions au début de l’année liturgique ? Elle peut être l’occasion, comme chacun des carêmes institués par l’Eglise, de remettre les pendules à l’heure et d’essayer de corriger ce qui ne va pas dans nos vies.

Il est donc utile de rappeler certaines règles et usages de l’Eglise orthodoxe.

La Liturgie est au centre de notre vie de chrétiens. Elle est l’aboutissement du cycle des offices qui se répartissent sur les vingt-quatre heures d’une journée. La Liturgie dominicale, axée sur la Résurrection, est notre Pâque hebdomadaire. La communion fréquente est un progrès et un retour aux normes.

Elle présente cependant le danger de la banalisation si elle n’est pas précédée d’une préparation spirituelle et matérielle (physique) et si elle devient automatique. L’obligation de passer par l’étape de la confession de ses péchés avant toute communion est une pratique révolue dans la plupart des paroisses de notre Archevêché – sauf, bien entendu, si on a un péché lourd sur la conscience.

Le rythme des confessions est fixé conjointement par le fidèle et son confesseur (qui peut, bien sûr, ne pas être le prêtre desservant la paroisse, mais un autre prêtre). Il s’agit d’une hygiène spirituelle vitale. Nous sommes, en permanence, indignes de communier, que nous ayons confessé nos péchés la veille au soir ou juste avant la Liturgie.

Si nous ne sommes pas conscient de notre état de pécheurs permanents, et si nous ne savons pas quoi confesser, ne nous inventons pas des péchés, comme le font parfois les enfants et ne confessons pas les péchés des autres. Le remède pourrait alors être pire que le mal.

La Liturgie devant être précédée d’une préparation, les vêpres ou la vigile du samedi soir sont une excellente pour tous ceux qui n’habitent pas trop loin de l’église. Pour les autres, cet office peut être remplacé par la lecture du canon précédent la communion, et la lecture de l’apôtre et de l’Evangile du dimanche.

La participation à la vigile permet à ceux qui sont présents de se confesser la veille de la Liturgie afin de ne pas la retarder le dimanche matin. Dans tous les cas de figure, la communion dominicale est précédée du jeûne eucharistique qui commence samedi à minuit et est rompu par la communion aux Saints Dons.

Jeûner signifie s’abstenir de manger, mais aussi de boire. Il est évident que les malades qui prennent des médicaments le matin peuvent boire un demi-verre d’eau et manger un morceau de pain. Dieu n’attend certainement pas de ceux qui souffrent qu’ils ajoutent à leur maladie un ulcère à l’estomac...

La Liturgie est une anticipation du Royaume, souvent symbolisé par un festin dans les Evangiles. Il ne nous viendrait pas à l’idée d’arriver en retard à une réception organisée par un dignitaire quelconque de la mairie ou du gouvernement. Le retard à l’église manifeste l’inversion de nos priorités.

Le 3ème et 6ème heure ne sont pas des offices privés réservés à quelques privilégiés, elles ne sont pas non plus un fond sonore destiné à rendre les confessions plus discrètes. On y lit des psaumes que le Christ a, Lui-même, utilisés pour prier.

Les heures sont des offices à plein-titre du cycle journalier. Elles sont, comme des vêpres ou la vigile une préparation à la Liturgie. Et le dimanche matin, elles sont un sas de décompression et le monde extérieur et l’église où « nous déposons tous les soucis de ce monde » pour nous consacrer à l’essentiel.

Bonne année ecclésiale à tous ! “

+GABRIEL
Archevêque de Comane,
Exarque du Patriarche œcuménique