



# Orthodox Parish of St. Silouan of Mt Athos Southampton, Diocese of Sourozh, Moscow Patriarchate



Православной Приход Св. Силуана Афонского  
Саутхемптон, Сурожская Епархия Московского Патриархата

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, MILLBROOK ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON SO15 OJZ TEL. 02380 428538  
RECTOR: FR JOSEPH SKINNER [WWW.STSILOUAN-SOTON.ORG](http://WWW.STSILOUAN-SOTON.ORG) WARDEN: DR PAULA NICHOLSON

## PARISH NEWSLETTER

13th Sunday of Pentecost. Tone 4.

Sunday, 22nd September 2013

### St Silouan of Mt Athos. Afterfeast of Nativity of the Mother of God.

Matthew 21:33-42

33 Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. 34 When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. 35 But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. 36 Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. 37 Finally he sent his son to them, saying, "They will respect my son."

38 But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance." 39 So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. 40 Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants? 41 They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes?"



### Troparion Tone 3

Thou wast given to the world to declare the love of Christ, O Blessed Silouan, most comforting of divines: For thou didst see Him that is meek and lowly, And didst learn of Him the same heart.

Wherefore all we, enlightened by thy words inspired of God, Glorify the Spirit that hath glorified thee.

Be a watchful guardian of the faith in everything it encompasses, and you will not fall. In this sense Saint John says that he who is born of God does not sin. [Gal. 6:11-18; John 3:13-17]

THOUGHTS FOR EACH DAY OF THE YEAR  
BY ST. THEOPHAN THE RECLUSE



*As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in*

*Him should not perish, but have eternal life. Faith in the Son of God, crucified in the flesh for our sake—is the power of God unto salvation, the living source of vivifying moral aspirations and dispositions, and the receptacle of the abundant grace of the Holy Spirit which abides always in the heart, and of secret inspirations in good time, at the hour of need, sent from above. Faith combines one's*

*convictions, attracting God's good will with power from above. Both of these are what make up the possession of eternal life. While this life is kept intact, a Christian is unyielding, because by cleaving to the Lord he is one in spirit with the Lord, and nothing can overcome the Lord. Why do people fall? From weakening of faith. Christian convictions weaken—and moral energy weakens as well. While this weakening occurs, grace is crowded out of the heart, and evil urges raise their head. An inclination toward these urges comes at a convenient hour, and there is a fall.*



**Saint Silouan the Athonite (1866–1938)**

*was born Simeon Ivanovich Antonov, of Russian Orthodox parents who came from the village of Sovsk in Imperial Russia's Tambov Governorate. At the age of twenty-seven, after a period of military service, he left his native Russia and came to the monastic state of Mt. Athos (an autonomous peninsula in Greece) where he became a monk at the Monastery of St Panteleimon, known as "Rossikon", an Orthodox monastery that houses Russian monks yet is, as all the Athonite monasteries, under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople, and was given the name Silouan (the Russian version of the Biblical name Silvanus).*

*An ardent ascetic, he received the grace of unceasing prayer and saw Christ in a vision. After long years of spiritual trial, he acquired great humility and inner stillness. He prayed and wept for the whole world as for himself, and he put the highest value on love for enemies. He became widely known as an elder. St Silouan reposed on September 24, 1938. His memory is celebrated on September 24.*

*Though barely literate, he was sought out by pilgrims for his wise counsel. His writings were edited by his disciple and pupil, **Archimandrite Sophrony Sakharov**. Father Sophrony has written the life of the saint along with a record of St. Silouan's teachings in the book **Saint Silouan the Athonite**.*

*Starets Silouan was canonized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1987.*

**On thought and vainglory**

Know two thoughts and fear them. One says: you are a saint; the other: you will not be saved. Both these thoughts are from the enemy, and there is no truth in them. You must think: I am a great sinner, but the Lord is merciful, He loves His children greatly, and will forgive my sins. But don't depend on your deeds, though you may have worked much. One ascetic said to me, "I must surely be forgiven, for I bow so many times per day," but when death came, he tore at his shirt. So, not for our labors, but in His grace the Lord dispenses mercy. The Lord wishes our souls to be humble, absent of hate and willing to forgive all, then the Lord shall forgive us with joy.

Know that if your thought leads you to look at how others live, this is a sign of pride. Watch after yourself and you will see that as soon as your soul rises above your brother, this is followed by evil thoughts.

Our enemies (demons) fell because of their pride, and call us to follow them, and bring us feelings of praise. And if your soul accepts that praise, then grace will depart, until the soul becomes humble again. And so all your life you must learn the humility of Christ.

A person can fall into vainglory either through inexperience or pride. If it is inexperience, the Lord will quickly heal him, but if it is pride, the soul will suffer long before it learns to be humble. We fall into vainglory when we think we are smarter and more experienced than others, even our confessor.

If you see a light within you, or about you, do not believe it, if together with the light you do not feel tender emotion to God and love for your neighbor. But do not be afraid, and be humble, and the light will disappear.

If you see a vision, or an image, or a dream, do not believe it, for if it is from the Lord, the Lord will teach you. The soul that has not experienced the Holy Spirit cannot comprehend visions nor where they are from. The enemy gives the soul a sweetness mixed with vanity, and this is how to recognize vainglory. If a vision is from the enemy the soul will feel confusion and fear; but this is only a humble soul that feels itself unworthy of a vision; a vain person may not feel fear or even confusion, because he seeks visions and feels himself worthy, and as a result the enemy easily fools him.

The heavenly is experienced through the Holy Spirit, and the earthly through the mind: whoever wants to experience God with his mind through learning is in vainglory, for God can only be experienced through the Holy Spirit.

**Mount Athos – between Heaven and Earth** (continued, see August Newsletter)



*St Panteleimon Monastery, Mt Athos*

Our first day on the Holy Mountain was spent at the Russian monastery of St Panteleimon. This is one of the largest monasteries, which at the beginning of the 20th century was home to over a thousand monks, among them St Silouan, who arrived in 1892. After being given our rooms in the vast guest house and venerating the holy relics, including the skull of St Silouan, we were immediately invited to work at an obedience, weeding the borders in the monastery gardens. We had intended to walk to a nearby monastery but on Athos, plans are at best provisional and one has to accept what is offered. Immediately I rushed to perform the assigned task, picking here and there at the myriad blades of grass growing up through the beds of clover.

Noticing this, our host, a young man named Igor, said, 'Fr Joseph! No need to rush. One must pray! Pick them out one by one, like taking out sins.' Following his wise advice and working slowly but systematically, I was in fact able to get much more done than had at first seemed possible. This proved to be a recurring theme on Athos, external things become symbols of inner realities.



*The Mill House*

After Vespers and the evening meal, we asked to visit the mill

where St Silouan spent much of his early monastic life. A short walk brought us to a steep-sided valley where the mill house, now disused and overgrown, still stands. It is a peaceful place now, but one can imagine how busy it must have been in St Silouan's day. He was an overseer of the lay men who came from Russia to work at the monastery. Having given them their orders for the day, he would retire and pray for each of them by name.



It was noticed that they worked better and more cheerfully for him than for any of the other supervisors. His cell at the mill has been made into a small chapel. The icons of him there appear to be by the hand of Fr Sophrony. We walked down some way to take the water from the spring of the Prophet Elijah, remarkably pure and sweet in taste.

*To be continued*

**Fr Joseph Skinner,**  
*August 2013*

ST. SILOUAN THE ATHONITE AND THE EARTHQUAKE OF SEPTEMBER 14, 1932

On the 14th September 1932 there was a violent earthquake on Mount Athos. It took place at nine o'clock in the evening during Vespers on the eve of the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross. I was standing in the choir near the Father Prior's confessional, and Father Prior himself was standing outside the confessional beside me. Inside the confessional a brick fell from the ceiling and there was a shower of plaster. At first I felt a bit frightened but I quickly reassured myself and said to the Prior, "See, the Merciful Lord would have us repent." And we looked at the monks in the church and those in the choirs, and very few of them were alarmed - about a half dozen left the church but the rest remained where they were, and Vespers continued in the usual way, as quietly as if nothing had happened. And I thought to myself, "What an abundance of the grace of the Holy Spirit abides in

these monks that they can remain calm while a terrific earthquake shakes the whole of this huge monastery building, raining down stones and mortar, setting chandeliers and icon-lamps swinging to and fro, making the bells in the belfry ring and even the biggest bell of all toll with the violence of the vibration!" And I thought, "The soul that has come to know the Lord fears nothing except sin, the sin of pride, in particular. She knows that the Lord loves us, and if He loves us, what have we to fear? The Merciful Lord is speaking to us for our understanding: 'My children,' He says, 'repent and live in love. Be obedient and sober, and learn meekness and humility of Me, and you shall find rest for your souls.'"

*From the book **Saint Silouan the Athonite** by Archimandrite Sophrony, pp. 473-474.*

## NEWS

### Pilgrimage to the Monastery of St John the Baptist



On the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Elisey, on **24 September 2013**, the day of memory of saint venerable Silouan of Athos, spiritual father of Archimandrite Sophrony (Sakharov), founder of the monastery, there will be a pilgrimage from London and other parishes to the Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Essex to join in the Church Feast. Anyone considering to join please contact Paula for more information.

#### A generous donation

A warm thank you to our friends **Fr Alexey Shiriaev** and his parish of Holy Trinity in Issad village of St Petersburg region for a very generous donation towards our Iconostasis.

#### Panikhida table for our Parish

Thank you to **Ksenia and Terry Worton** for donating the

Panikhida table in memory of Ksenia's father.

#### Vespers and Baptisms

Saturday **evening Vespers** now precede our Sunday Liturgies (unless otherwise stated). Please use this opportunity to join in this short but special service and also to have a chance to confess without a rush before the Liturgy.

**Baptisms** can be organised before the Vespers service on these Saturdays (by arrangement with Fr Joseph).

#### SUPPORT OUR PARISH

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The work of the Parish is entirely self-financed. We receive no financial help from the Diocese, the State or any other external source. As such, we are in need of the support of our parishioners and friends to enable the Parish to carry out its mission. To facilitate this kind of regular giving, please make your contributions here:

**Bank: NatWest**

**Name of organisation:**  
**Orthodox Parish Of St Silouan**

**Account number: 45137943**

**Branch sort code: 60-20-45**

*Thank you and God Bless!*

## NEW ICONOSTASIS



#### Dear Brothers and Sisters

We continue to ask for your support in helping us to raise funds to pay for our new beautiful handpainted iconostasis.

**The cost of the new icon screen is £10,000, which we still have to pay. As per middle of September we managed to raise £6350.**

If you wish to contribute, please, send your donations to:

**Bank: NatWest**

**Organisation: Orthodox Parish of St. Silouan**

**Acc. No: 45159726**

**Sort code: 60-20-45**

Alternatively, you can send a cheque payable to Orthodox Parish of St Silouan (**Icons a/c**) to the Treasurer, **Elvira Patrasco, 10 Monarch Way, West End, Southampton, SO30 3JQ.**

Holy Father Silouan, pray to God for us!

*The Parish Council*

## September / October Calendar 2013

### September 21st

Nativity of the Mother of God

### September 24th

St Silouan of Mt Athos

### September 27th

Exaltation of the Holy Cross

### September 30th

Martyrs Sophia and her daughters Faith, Hope and Love

### October 7th

Holy Thecla, first woman martyr and equal of the Apostles(I)

### October 9th

Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian. St Tikhon of Moscow and all Russia

### October 14th

Protecting Veil of the Mother of God

### October 19th

Holy Apostle Thomas

### October 21st

St. Thais (Taisia) of Egypt (IV);  
Virgin-martyr Pelagia of Antioch (303)

### October 22nd

Holy Apostle James, son of Alphaeus (I)

### October 24th

Holy Apostle Philip of the Seventy

### October 31st

Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke

### Next Services 2013:

**October 6, November 3, December 1**

**2014: January 12**

## Contributors

We invite our parishioners to contribute material to this Newsletter. Your ideas, news, announcements, writings could be interesting to reader. Any requests for prayers are very welcome. Please send your contributions to Evelina [benevelina@mac.com](mailto:benevelina@mac.com)

Texts for this edition were taken from [www.pravoslavie.ru](http://www.pravoslavie.ru), <http://silouan.narod.ru/indexe.html>, <http://oca.org/> [www.pravmir.ru](http://www.pravmir.ru) and other sites.