

THE NARTHEX

September – October 2021
'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

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More Madness

More evidence has recently emerged of the continuing decline into senility of our contemporary society. It is painful to observe a once great nation, gradually decay into the demented state, whilst the figureheads of the establishment innocently imagine that they are presiding over social progress.

The Scottish government has announced that children as young as four will be entitled to change their name and what they call, their *gender*, should the notion cross the minds of the little mites, and all this without their parents' prior permission.

That any parent would sanction such an idea in the first place is bizarre enough, but that government of any form would promote it and make it possible indicates the extent to which collective sanity has departed north of Hadrian's Wall.

It is also evidence of the extent to which devious organisations such as *Stonewall*, have manipulated control over the major institutions of this country, demanding large amounts of cash in order to provide 'courses' promoting indoctrination into the LGBT+ cult for employees. This goes, quite illogically, with the invidious suggestion that there would be financial consequences for any business or institution that might be 'outed' as homophobic [NB Don't pay any attention to anyone who might label you as *phobic* regarding anything; as with Dr Johnson's quip against bogus patriotism, it is

evidence that you are in the presence of a scoundrel.]

I bring this to your attention this time, not because there will be hordes of heathen Scots, pouring over the northern defences and filling the land of England with the incoherent jumble of the alphabet soup and the rest of the 'wokery', but because, of course, it is already here in various guises.

In particular, I want to inform parents, if they do not already know, that such ludicrous thinking has appeared in our own schools, not so much in the provision of Sex Education, from which parents have the legal right to withdraw their children, but in what is called Relationships Education, for which there is no such right.

The question is not *whether* such matters should be covered in the school curriculum, but at what age. It is very important that parents are aware of what is being taught in their children's school and should ask awkward questions of teachers. In fact, it would be a socially useful thing if we, as professed Orthodox Christians, made a thorough nuisance of ourselves and, where necessary, ally ourselves with other Christians to draw attention to the utter wrongness of what is happening in education.

I cannot help but think that the inappropriately young age at which LGBT propaganda is being foisted upon little children amounts to nothing less than a form of grooming of the most suspicious kind; a perversion of

young minds and attitudes which can only result in greater confusion within many children, in a younger generation already burdened, it appears, by unusual levels of mental illness.

This is an important issue for us and is one which, I hope, the new parish Women's Group, *Antiochian Women*, will be able to take up and discuss and, where possible, pursue some positive action.

There are, of course, other serious social and ethical questions with which we, as Orthodox Christians, might align ourselves with others: abortion on demand and the pressure to legalize medical euthanasia immediately spring to mind. The Roman catholic hierarchy have often been vociferous in this country in commenting upon those two issues. It is strange that the Orthodox Hierarchs appear to have been less active in these areas and have certainly been silent. But there again, Orthodox Christianity has been largely invisible and inaudible in Britain for a long time, though present here in considerable numbers now. Is it our fault, or do the media types have a large blind spot when it comes to a form of Christianity that is rooted in the real tradition?

Many of you at work, have no doubt, had to attend 'awareness' courses aimed at fostering particular social attitudes. More sinister still, there have been cases of employers dismissing workers for holding and expressing

personal opinions that conflict with the subversive nostrums of the post-modern liberal agenda. It is bad enough that corporations and institutions can do this to adults (with the horrible Orwellian consequence of people's self-censorship); that such social manipulation can rob families of the right to raise their children as they see fit, must we worthy of our clear opposition. Obviously, in a modern education system it is right that aberrant forms of personal and sexual relations should be studied and understood, but in the context of what must still be regarded as normal and natural; that is, heterosexual monogamous marriage. It strikes me that raising such matters as homosexuality and transgenderism (so called) with four year-olds is tantamount to 'grooming'. When I was at school in the 1970's (when social attitudes were indeed changing) such matters were certainly discussed, but that was, quite properly, in the sixth form.

But whatever way a society lurches, one way or the other, the fact remains that the anthropology of the Orthodox Church is very clear about human sexual relationships: we are the creation of God, male and female and in the context of our discipleship of Christ there are two ways of life which God has blessed, that is, faithful heterosexual marriage, a mystery that depicts the unity of Christ and His Church, or alternatively, the chaste, celibate life lasting until marriage, otherwise, lived out in the monastic vocation.

Of course, people fall by the wayside in all sorts of ways, and we often fail to live out the ideal, but that does not legitimize what must be defined as sin, separation from the will of God. We cannot, for example, just make provision for so called 'gay-marriage,' just because the Law of the land permits it, and we must condemn what the Methodist have recently done and what the

the Church in Wales (Welsh Anglicans) are currently debating. The simple question to be asked here is, who has the mind of Christ? If we do not, then we are no longer Orthodox Christians. For when we fall into sin we have the blessing of confession, but that is only effective where there is real repentance, a changing of the mind. What we cannot do is accept, as has happened in certain Protestant denomination, that is, to pretend that sin is not sin in order to give the appearance of being *inclusive*, (another piece of 'Woke' terminology). Yes, there is, indeed, in Christianity a form of exclusivity: that between Sin and Righteousness and, as Our Lord said, following Him is a crucifixion. *'Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.'* [Matt.7:13-14]

Fr Chrysostom



Even though you are asleep, if only Christ has come to know the devotion of your soul, He comes and knocks at her door and says, "Open to me, My sister." "Sister" is well put because the marriage of the Word and the soul is spiritual. For souls do not know covenants of wedlock or the ways of bodily union, but they are like the angels in heaven. "Open to Me," but close to strangers. Close to the times, close to the world, do not go out of doors to material things do not abandon your own light and search for another's because material light pours out a dark mist, so that the light of true glory is not seen. "Open" therefore, "To Me;" do not open to the adversary or give place to the devil. "Open yourself to Me," and do not be confined, but expand, and I will fill you. And because, in My passage through the world, I have found very much trouble and vexation and have not readily had a place to rest, do you then open, that the Son of Man may rest His head on you, for Has no rest save on one who is humble and quiet.

From, Seven Exegetical Works,
By St Ambrose of Milan

SERVICES

Vespers is normally served on Saturdays at 5.00pm and on Wednesdays at 6.00pm. (Please enter by the side door)
Fr Chrysostom is available for Confession afterwards or by appointment. Fr Filip is available for Confession by appointment
Orthros is served before the Divine Liturgy on Sundays at 8.45am

Sept

- Wed 1 Beginning of the Church new Year
- Sun 5th 11th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am
- Wed 8 Nativity of the Theotokos *Fish, wine & Oil permitted*



- Sun 12th 12th after Pentecost Sunday before Exaltation of the Cross Divine Liturgy 10.30am Wedding 1.00pm
- Tues 14 Exaltation of the Holy Cross *Fast Day*



- Sun 19th 13th after Pentecost Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross Divine Liturgy 10.30am
- Sun 26th 14th after Pentecost Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Oct

- Sun 3rd 15th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am
- Sun 10th 16th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am
- Sun 17th 17th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am
- Sun 24th 18th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am
- Sun 31st 19th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am