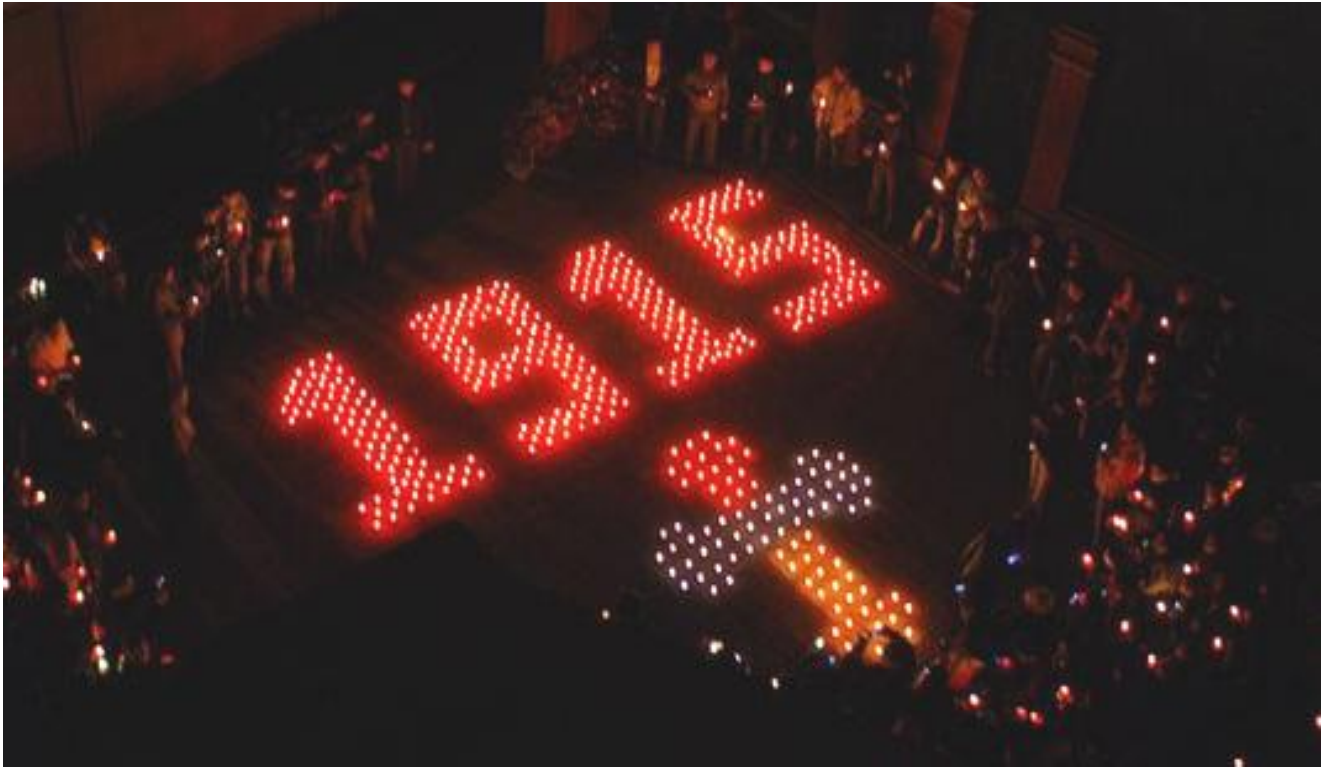




# “Joy of All Who Sorrow”

No. 78 May 2015



## Remembering the Armenian Genocide 1915 - 2015

**I**n 1900 Christians constituted around 32% of Ottoman Turkey’s population. Just 27 years later the figure was down to about 1.8%. In early 1915, a fatwa was issued against non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. Muslims were called to fight the Christian minorities with whom they had been living as neighbours, albeit not on equal or necessarily peaceful terms. Many refused to take part, but those who did inflicted colossal suffering and destruction on the Armenian, Greek and Assyrian Christians. It is thought that over 1.5 million Armenians, up to 750,000 Assyrians and up to 1.5 million Greeks — men, women and children — were killed in the state-sanctioned genocide over a 30-year period; yet their tragic loss is barely remembered today. The Armenians’ *Golgotha* and the Assyrians’ *Seyfo* (“sword”) is a forgotten genocide against forgotten peoples.

### Background

As the Ottoman Empire began to crumble in the late 1800s, the Sultan introduced new reforms to try to prevent the Empire’s non-Muslim minorities from seceding; the reforms supposedly provided religious equality, thus appeasing religious minorities. However, the Turks lost lands in the Balkans after Russia intervened to protect Slavic Christians from Ottoman brutality in Europe in the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish war. This loss of territory led to a change in Ottoman tactics: violent suppression of the non-Muslim subjects they feared wanted to secede.

Armenians, Assyrians and Greek Christians had been treated as second-class citizens for centuries, in accordance with Islamic sharia law, but they had also suffered, unprotected, from

Turkish and Kurdish raids. As they began to campaign for their rights, Sultan Abdul Hamid II dealt with them “not by reform but by blood.”<sup>1</sup> In 1894-1896 organised massacres against Christians took place, during which as many as 300,000 Armenians died. Many Christians believed their best chance of escaping Ottoman dominion was by appealing to “Christian” powers in the West and Russia. Bar sending warnings – which went unheeded – and some aid provided by Western Christian missionaries, no help came. By 1913, the Young Turks had come to power and begun adopting a new policy whereby the Ottoman Empire no longer accepted multiple ethnicities and religions; the militaristic leadership opted to force “Turkish”, subsequently Muslim, homogeneity on all its subjects.

### **The “Armenian Question”**

The former Christian kingdom of Armenia had become part of the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century, located in its north-eastern corner. Armenian people were a significant minority and lived throughout the Empire, making them a perceived threat. In late 1914, extermination became the authorities’ extreme answer to the so-called “Armenian question”. Though many Armenians fought for the Empire in the First World War, the government chose to systematically disarm and kill Armenian soldiers. Some were murdered in public squares or by using the Islamic method for slaughtering animals: tied-up, put on their backs and throats slit. On 24 April 1915, authorities arrested and later executed Armenian intellectuals and leaders. Christians were freighted by train, or forced to walk hundreds of miles without provisions, to concentration camps in the Syrian Desert for “manual labour”. Only one quarter of all deportees survived the exposure, starvation, violent attacks and other abuses to reach their destinations, whereupon many were murdered in organised killings. Those who tried to protect Armenians often met the same end. Killing units in Deir al-Zor smashed children against rocks, mutilated adults with swords, and burned people alive. Some 200,000 Armenians converted to Islam in order to be spared. In 1915 alone, approximately 800,000 Armenians were killed.

### **The Assyrian Seyfo**

Assyrians, a much smaller minority in the Ottoman Empire, comprising Assyrian, Syriac and Chaldean Christians, suffered the same experiences as the Armenians. In Van and Diyarbakir provinces, over 140,000 Assyrians were killed. The attacks against the Assyrians began on a relatively small scale, but after the Assyrians had joined with the Russians in 1915 to try to help liberate the Armenians in Van, they were subjected to a level of violence that almost annihilated them. Many Assyrians fled to Persia (Iran) but were persecuted by both Persians and Kurds, obliging them to move again to Hamadan, northern Persia, in 1918; this retreat led to the deaths and kidnappings of one third of their people. Their road became littered with the bodies of those who were starved, exhausted, diseased, or slaughtered by Turks, Persians and Kurds en route.

*We have lost by death and murder more than 12,000 souls... Unspeakably shameful acts were done to five-year-old girls by Persians. We have collected from Moslem villages more than 100 women who have been changed to Mohammedans and their husbands murdered in their sight.*

(Letter from the Rev. Gabriel Alexander, dated 6 August 1915, published in *The Times*, 9 October 1915)

### **Greek Genocide**

Ottoman Greeks have been described as the “first victims of the nationalising idea.” They lived in Anatolia, especially near the Black Sea. In 1914, plans were made to relocate them to Greece in

exchange for Muslims from the Balkans. The outbreak of World War One prevented this so, instead, communities were forced on death marches to central Anatolia under the guise of strategic military manoeuvring or made to perform manual labour. Muslim boycotts of Greek businesses were authorised by officials, and Christian properties were given to Muslims. An Australian newspaper reported:

*Several Greeks at Marsivan were compelled to dig a trench as a grave before they were shot. Greek women were given the alternatives of embracing the Islam religion or death. They refused to change their religion. Their lives were spared, but they were left to the mercy of the soldiers and compelled to accompany the troops on a long march. Some fell exhausted, and were abandoned with their babies.*

(Published in The Argus, Melbourne, 3 August 1915)

Unlike most men, women and children were often given the option of converting to Islam. Those that refused were treated very harshly or killed.

PEOPLES	APPROXIMATE POPULATION IN TURKEY 1914	APPROXIMATE POPULATION IN TURKEY 1922-3
Ottoman Greeks	2.5 million	500,000
Armenians	2.1 million	390,000
Assyrians	1 million	Fewer than 250,000

### Aftermath

Turkey continued to rid itself of all Christians. Thousands of Ottoman Greeks died and more fled, as Turkish armies sought reprisals on Christian populations following Greece’s failed invasion, 1919-1922. Armenians continued to be massacred, deported, or forced to flee, even after the Republic of Armenia was established in May 1918. Protection came when the Red Army brought Armenia under Soviet control in 1920. The Armenian Diaspora exists all around the world today.

Assyrians were expelled and forced to live in refugee camps in the southern Caucasus, though some women and children remained as slaves. They were to experience further massacres just ten years later in Iraq.

The psychological impact and immense suffering of these peoples, who so nearly came to complete destruction, continues today. This year, 2015, marks the 100th anniversary of the single worst year of the genocide. Armenians remember especially 24 April 1915, the day on which their intellectuals and leaders were destroyed, the day on which, they say, “our head was cut off”. Their sufferings have, for the most part, been forgotten, Turkey has never admitted responsibility, and, worst of all, the Christian presence in the Middle East is yet again in danger of eradication, this time at the hands of the Islamic State militants.



Source:

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/04/remembering-the-forgotten-genocide/>



COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF THE IKON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD:



*"Joy of All Who Sorrow"*

College of Our Lady of Mettingham,  
Low Road, Mettingham, Suffolk, NR35 1TP  
01986 895176 | [www.mettingham.org.uk](http://www.mettingham.org.uk)



**ORTHODOX  
PILGRIMAGE  
IN HONOUR OF  
ST CEDD (664+)**

**CHAPEL OF ST PETER-ON-  
THE-WALL  
BRADWELL-ON-SEA  
CM0 7PX**

***Bank Holiday Monday:  
25 May 2015***

*2pm ~ Moleben*

*3.30pm ~ Afternoon Tea*

**For more information, please  
see our website:**

**[www.mettingham.org.uk](http://www.mettingham.org.uk)**



# Notes & Jottings

## ST CEDD PILGRIMAGE: Bradwell-on-Sea - Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May

On Bank Holiday Monday, the College will be leading a pilgrimage to the ancient church which St Cedd built dedicated to St Peter at Bradwell-on-Sea. We have been contacted by numerous Orthodox clergy and laity around the country and hope to see a good crowd of pilgrims. Following an initial expedition in early May, we can give the following advice:

- 1) Please be aware that there are no lavatories at the Chapel as it is situated in a remote location. Thus we advise pilgrims coming to make use of facilities before arrival. After the service, we will have full use of the facilities at the nearby Othona Community, which is a short 5 mins walk from the chapel.
- 2) There is about a 10 - 15 minute walk from the public car park down to the Chapel, so please take account of this if you have any mobility problems and make sure that you are wearing adequate footwear. I am afraid that there is no direct vehicular access down to the chapel.
- 3) If you are planning on coming, it would be very helpful if you could let us know so that we can liaise with the Othona Community about numbers for tea, coffee and light refreshments after the service.

## ST BOTOLPH PILGRIMAGE: Iken – Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June

As well as our pilgrimage for St Cedd, please also make a note in your diaries about our annual pilgrimage to Iken in honour of St Botolph on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June at 12 noon**. We will gather again in the beautiful church of St Botolph, built on the site of his original minster, and chant the akathist to him in front of the ikon. Through the hospitality of the Anglican Parish at Iken, all pilgrims are again cordially invited to a buffet lunch after the service.

## TOMB OF THE FOUNDRESS

At last the tomb of the Foundress is complete, although the work was not finished until Monday 20 April. The design is akin to the old fashioned altar tombs. In this case, the base, which is 75cms high, is made in sandstone brick with inset panels of napped flint, and the inscription on the top reads – PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOUL OF MARY, FOUNDRESS OF THIS CHURCH. The whole tomb is surmounted by a Russian Cross in York stone which adds another 120cms to the total height, making it a worthy tribute to the Foundress. The tomb was blessed after the Liturgy on Radonitsa (Tuesday 21 April) before the singing of the Paschal Panikhida.

## NAMEDAYS

To all who are celebrating a Nameday at this time, we send congratulations and wish them

**Many Years!**

- 4 May – **St Philippa, mother of St Theodore of Perge** – Matushka Phlipa Steer
- 6 May – **Great Martyr George, Patron of England** – George Tattum-Smith
- 8 May – **Apostle and Evangelist Mark** – Rdr Mark Tattum-Smith
- 15 May – **St Boris & St Gleb, Martyrs** – Boris Jermy, Gleb Jermy
- 18 May – **New Martyr Efrem of Nea Makri** – Efrem Carrasco
- 21 May – **Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian** – John Andrews
- 26 May – **St Alexander of Rome, Martyr** – Alexander Weston





*A Photogallery of the finished  
grave of Mary Bond, the  
Foundress of our church*

**MEMORY ETERNAL!**





COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF THE IKON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD  
*JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW*

**MAY 2015**

**Saturday 2 May**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 3 May**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (Sunday of the Paralytic)**

**Saturday 9 May**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 10 May**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (Sunday of the Samaritan Woman)**

**Saturday 16 May**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 17 May**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (Sunday of the Blind Man)**

**Wednesday 20 May**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**❖ Thursday 21 May ❖**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (Ascension)**

**Saturday 23 May**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**Sunday 24 May**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (Fathers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Oecumenical Council)**

**Bank Holiday Monday 25 May**

*2pm ~ Pilgrimage to St Peter's Church, Bradwell-on-Sea*

**Saturday 30 May**

*7.30pm ~ Vigil*

**❖ Sunday 31 May ❖**

**10.10am ~ Hours & Divine Liturgy (Pentecost)**

**2pm ~ Pentecost Vespers**



*He Who closed the abyss is seen as dead and wrapped in a shroud and spices; He, the Immortal, as mortal is laid in the tomb; women came to anoint Him, and they wept bitterly and exclaimed: This is the ever-blessed Sabbath on which Christ, Who fell asleep, shall rise on the third day.*

**Kontakion of Holy Saturday**

*Collegiate Church of the Ikon of the Mother of God: Joy of All Who Sorrow  
The White House, Low Road, Mettingham, Suffolk, NR35 1TP  
Tel: (01986) 895176*