



# **Orthodox Church of the Annunciation**

## ***The Sunday After the Feast of the Cross***

### ***Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 4***

When the women disciples learned from the angel, the joyous message of Thy Resurrection. They cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the Apostles: death is overthrown, Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy.

### ***Troparion of Annunciation, Tone 4***

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

### ***Troparion for the Cross, Tone 1***

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.

## ***September 19th, Tone 4, Matt. 21:33-42***

**Reflections on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Life-giving Cross:** Originally this feast was established by the Church in commemoration of the finding of the Cross of the Lord. According to the description of ancient Christian historians, this event represents such a view. St. Constantine the Great, feeling awe for the cross of the Lord because he gained many victories through it, and gratitude to God for the consent of the Church granted at the First Ecumenical Council, desired to build a temple on Golgotha. For the fulfillment of this desire the pious mother of Constantine, Helen, went to Jerusalem in 326. And she also had a fervent desire to find the cross of the Lord at the special suggestion of God. Because of the custom to bury instruments of execution near the place of their use and by the indication of one aged Jew, the Cross was found but with it two other crosses. It was difficult to identify the cross of the Lord, as the plate with the inscription: Jesus of Nazareth king of the Jews lay separately.

The maximum witness to the Cross of the Lord was necessary. Rather than using human authority, the inherent wonderworking power of the Cross of the Lord demonstrated this witness. By the direction of Patriarch Macarius, the found crosses were brought to the bed of one sick pious woman, and the patriarch, in the presence of the pious Empress and a group of people, started to place the crosses on the sick woman. The touch of two crosses did not do anything, but the touch of the third cross wonderfully returned the health of the sick woman. In her returned health an even more wonderful proof was accepted, that the true Cross of Christ healed the woman.

Patriarch Macarius, having met a group bearing a dead body for burial, again began to place the crosses one by one on the dead person. And the dead person revived by the touch of the same Cross, which has shown the wonderworking power over the sick woman. The glory of wonders by the Cross of the Lord brought a great variety of people to Golgotha. As for many, as for the crowd, there wasn't any opportunity to not only come nearer and kiss the honorable Cross, but even to see it. Then the patriarch, standing on a raised place and raising the honorable cross, showed it even to those standing at a distance. And all the people in joyful delight cried out "Lord, have mercy"! A feast was established in the year of finding the Cross of the Lord and because the finding of the cross was near the feast of Pascha, then at first the feast was celebrated on the second day of Pascha...

In the church hymns for this holy day "the all honorable and life-bearing" Cross is hymned, as "the glory of angels", "the adornment of apostles", "the fortress of the righteous", "the praise of the faithful", "the elegance of priests", "the invincible victory of piety", "the door of paradise", "the haven of salvation", "the hope of Christians, guide of those who have gone astray, haven of the storm-tossed", "guide of the blind, physician of the sick, the resurrection of the dead",

## Announcements and Activities

**Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Conception of the Baptist**— Thursday, at 9AM.

**Great Vespers**— Saturday, at 5:30PM

**Divine Liturgy**— Sunday, at 10AM.

**Coffee Hours**— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Brian and Kerri and Robert and Rachel. Next week's Coffee Hour will be our monthly potluck

**Parish Council**— met. We adopted a treasurer's report in the black. We've now begun to do a monthly health check using our Goals, Objectives and Activities Document. We looked at Christian Education and Stewardship this past week. As we said after last week's meeting, we need to have a rotating crew for cleaning up after Coffee Hour. The person(s) scheduled for the Coffee Hour will take care of the Kitchen. The Crew we are organizing will be responsible for wiping down the tables, sweeping/cleaning any obvious trash or spills on the floors, taking out the trash and checking the bathrooms: toilet paper, paper towels, running sinks or toilets and turning off the Lights. We are currently working on finding a person to do periodically mop the floors once every couple of weeks. If we can get 2 or 3 volunteers, it should be done in 15 or 20 minutes.

**Craft Faire**— next Saturday, we need manual laborers and helpers. Luci F. is organizing the event.

**Pray for... Hierarch Nikolai (Soraich)**—battling cancer. Samir's friend, Johnny, who has been improving in the battle to save his sight. Brian, Sunday's brother. George and Alex, health problems. Reposed Darrel, Kyle's father. Diane F. recovering from Surgery. Erika and Family. All those who have lost their lives or are suffering as a result of the current Pandemic. Archimandrite Alexander— Fr. Lawrence's long-time father confessor, who reposed. Kerrie Photine— recent surgery, Karen and Scott— battling health issues. Mitered Archpriest Basil— a longtime friend of Father's, newly reposed. Newly reposed Emiliane (Janie G.) and reposed Vadim. Our Vladyka Benjamin— battling on-set parkinsons. Tsige Roman and Abraham— I know we are always mindful of Tsige, but please continue to pray for the work and for Ethiopia, torn by civil war, with all the problems that go with a regional terror. Newly Reposed Maria S.—who fell asleep in the Lord on Wednesday, around 11:30 PM. Reposed Jonathan T. Reposed Vadim, Newly Reposed Donny. The newly reposed Protopresbyter Leonid, the long-time chair of the Department of External Affairs for the OCA, and brother-in-law to Olga H., Brian, Kerrie and family— asking prayers for family sickness. Oxana— traveling. George and Alesis, Brother and Daughter of Peter and Irene S. Matushka Ioanna R., Reposed. Matushka Priscilla, ill. Anya J— a longtime friend of the parish who is ill. Stephen F.— battling back pain. John F.— battling cancer. Archpriest Anthony— battling cancer. Julie— sister of Kathy M., battling health problems. Archbishop Benjamin— parkinsons.

"the scourge of demons", "the guardian of the whole world", "the weapon of peace", "victory in warfare", "strength of kings", "the beauty of the church", "the weapon invincible", "through it corruption is abolished, and through it the poser of death is crushed, and we are raised from earth to the heavens".

Hymning the power of the Cross of the Lord and salvation, and being committed to it, the Holy Church calls us to kiss the holy cross "with joy and fear: with fear, for we are unworthy because of sin; with joy, for upon it Christ God was crucified in His great mercy". The very ceremony of raising the cross of the Lord has deep spiritual value. As the cross of Christ is the instrument and together with it the symbol of our salvation, it is the sacred banner of our faith, a sign of the Christian and of Christianity. That also in the fulfillment of this day of the elevation of the Holy Cross we should see the depiction of the image of our salvation, the whole essence of our holy faith, all our past and present destiny and our part in all the future. The cross is lowered and again raised high: it is the image of our bitter fall in Adam and our raising again in Christ from the depths of Hades to the Kingdom of God and from death to the eternal, blessed life in God.

For those who understand and believe in the sacred action of the elevation of the cross of Christ, it is the perennial source of spiritual consolation, the strong cue to tender prayer, the reverential outpouring of our heart before God, the maximum encouragement to acts of piety and Christian love, the subject of divinely ideal reflections and gratitude to God for all eternity.

(taken from, *The Reader's Service Book*, by S. Bulgakov)

## From the Lives of the Saints... THE HOLY MARTYRS TROPHIMUS, SABBATIUS AND DORYMEDON

In the third century, during the reign of Emperor Probus, when Atticus was governing Antioch, two Christians, Trophimus and Sabbatius, both eminent and honorable citizens, came to that city. They arrived just as a pagan festival and sacrificial offerings to the idol of Apollo were taking place at nearby Daphne. Atticus made every effort to ensure that all citizens took part in this festivity. When someone noticed that Trophimus and Sabbatius were not participating in the festivity, he told Atticus. Atticus brought them to trial, and when they refused to renounce Christ he subjected them to tortures, one after the other. After he beat and tortured Trophimus, Atticus sent him to Phrygia to Dionysius, an even crueler torturer of Christians. Then Atticus took Sabbatius from prison and began to try him. When the torturer asked Sabbatius who he was and what his rank was, he replied: "My rank and dignity and homeland and glory and wealth is Christ, the Son of God, Who lives forever, and by Whose providence the universe exists and is governed." For that, he was beaten and torn and scraped with an iron implement until the bones showed through beneath his flesh. Under these tortures he reposed. In Phrygia, the torturer Dionysius subjected Trophimus to great torture, then kept him in prison for even greater tortures. A certain senator Dorymedon, a secret Christian, came to the prison and ministered to Trophimus. When the torturer learned of this, he began to torture both of them in the same way, and finally threw them to the wild beasts, but the wild beasts did not touch them. Holy Dorymedon even shouted at the she-bear, pulling her ears so that she would tear him apart, but in spite of all that, the bear became gentler. In the end, the torturer ordered that Saints Trophimus and Dorymedon be beheaded with the sword. The souls of both of these holy martyrs now reign in heaven.

Taken from The Prologue of Ochrid, edited and written by St. Nikolai

*"There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives" (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)*