



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

The After-feast of the Cross

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 6

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb. The guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure Body. Thou didst capture hell, not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin granting Life. O Lord who didst rise from the dead: Glory to Thee!

Troparion of Exaltation of 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.

Kontakion of Annunciation Tone 8

O Victorious Leader of triumphant hosts! We, your servants delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might set us free from every calamity so that we may sing: Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride!

The 14th Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 5, September 17th, Matt. 22:35-46

The Feast of the Elevation of the 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. 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...

Announcements and Activities

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30PM

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Coffee Hour— This week's Coffee Hour is our potluck . Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Jim F.

Church School/Adult Ed— summer recess until October. We need to get all the diocesan requirements for teachers completed in the interim. Elise and Michael Miller are helping with the processes.

Parish Council— will meet today after Liturgy and Coffee Hour.

Consecration Committee Meeting— our first meeting will take place today, during Coffee Hour.

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy**— who are ill. **Jonathan**— ill. **Reposed Barbara Ranjo**. . **Laure**— battling Cancer. **Paul**— ill **Ralph**—ill Archpriest Lawrence, from Canada, progressive eye disease. **Tsige Roman**— our beloved Tsige reposed on December 3rd. Please keep praying for her homeland of Ethiopia. **Brian**— ill.. **Jonathan**—ill. **Katia**— sister of Shkbarra's **Grace**, Heather's goddaughter. **Reposed Priest, James. Reposed Hierarch Tikhon. Rufin**— soldier in Ukraine. Elise, ill. **Sally**, surgery, **Reposed Patrick, Reposed Jim, Reposed Alex; Christian**, prayers. **Chris**, reposed. **Galina**, reposed. **Patrick**, reposed. **Clint Arsenios**—reposed. **Heather Mary**— uncommon fatigue **Lou Mendez**. Battling ongoing health issues. **George and Steve**, a request from Luci. F. Dr. Joseph—personal needs. **Lance**— special request for prayers. **Christian**— prayers. **Tonya**—husband took his own life. Car robbery of Laura Beth's neighbors.

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", "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 *Server's Handbook* (Nostal'naya Knige, by Bulgakov)

From the Lives of the Saints... THE HOLY MARTYRS VERA, NADA AND LYUBOV (FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE) AND THEIR MOTHER SOPHIA (WISDOM)

They all lived and suffered in Rome during the reign of Emperor Hadrian. Sophia was wise, as her name implies. She was left a widow, and had established herself and her daughters well in the Christian Faith. When the persecuting hand of Hadrian extended even over the virtuous home of Sophia, Vera was only twelve years old; Nada, ten years old; and Lyubov, nine years old. Brought before the emperor, these four held each other's hands "like a woven wreath," humbly but steadfastly confessed their faith in Christ the Lord and refused to offer sacrifices to the pagan idol Artemis. Before their suffering, the mother encouraged her daughters to endure to the end: "Your heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, is eternal health, inexpressible beauty and eternal life. When your bodies are slain by torture, He will clothe you in incorruption and the wounds on your bodies will shine in the heavens as stars." One by one the torturers inflicted cruel torments, first on Vera, then on Nada, and then on Lyubov. They beat them, slashed them, cast them into fire and boiling pitch, and finally beheaded them with the sword one after another. Sophia took the dead bodies of her daughters outside the town and honorably buried them. She remained at their grave for three days and three nights, praying to God. Then she gave her spirit to God, flying off to Paradise, where the blessed souls of her glorious daughters awaited her.

Taken from, Prologue of Ochrid, by St. Nikolai Velimirovich

"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)