

Cross Veneration Sunday

In the Matins (Orthros) of our Church, we find a brief section of spiritual instruction for each particular day that is referred to as a synaxarion. Here are some profound thoughts expressed in the synaxarion for the 3rd Sunday of the Great Fast—they give us a wonderful insight into the reason this particular Sunday is set aside to worship and venerate the Precious and Life-Giving Cross: “Inasmuch as in the 40 days of fasting we, in a way, crucify ourselves and become despondent, the Cross is presented to us for refreshment, assurance and comfort. We are like those following a long and difficult path, who in their tired and weakened state, see a beautiful tree with many leaves. They sit in its shadow and rest for awhile and then, as if rejuvenated, continue their journey. Likewise the Cross has been planted in our midst by the Holy Fathers to lighten our burden and strengthen our courage for the remainder of our Lenten journey. For the Cross is called the Tree of Life, and it is placed before us in Mid-Lent to remind us that while Adam’s partaking of the fruit from the tree in Paradise brought him death, our partaking of this Tree will bring us eternal life.”

Yes, today the Cross is placed before us to show us God’s infinite love for us, to remind us of Christ’s suffering for our sake and to highlight our own obligation to carry our daily cross with great fervor and perfect obedience. Our Lord’s words in today’s Gospel lesson are meant for all of us: “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me.” (Mark 8:34)

Let us all bow reverently before the Cross today and proclaim as we venerate it: Your Cross we adore, O Master, and Your Holy Resurrection, we glorify!”

What Happened on the Cross by *John of Damascus (c. 675-749)*

By nothing else except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ has death been brought low:

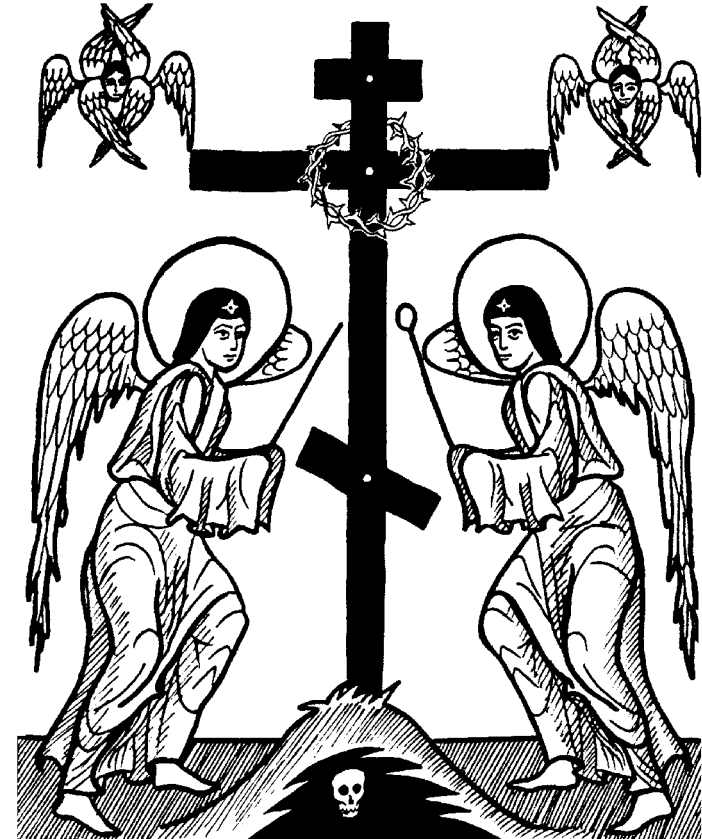
The sin of our first parent destroyed, hell plundered, resurrection bestowed, the power given us to despise the things of this world, even death itself, the road back to the former blessedness made smooth, the gates of paradise opened, our nature seated at the right hand of God, and we made children and heirs of God.

By the cross all these things have been set aright...

It is a seal that the destroyer may not strike us, a raising up of those who lie fallen, a support for those who stand, a staff for the infirm, a crook for the shepherded, a guide for the wandering, a perfecting of the advanced, salvation for soul and body, a deflector of all evils, a cause of all goods, a destruction of sin, a plant of resurrection, and a tree of eternal life.

Ss Constantine & Helen

Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Pacific



March 23, 2014

3rd Sunday of Great Lent: Veneration of Holy Cross

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Apolytikia - Entrance Hymns

Soson Kirie (Holy Cross) Tone 1
Save, O Lord, Your people and bless Your inheritance, granting victory to the faithful over the enemy, and by Your Cross protecting Your commonwealth.

Angelike Thinamis (Hymn of the Day) Tone 6

Tou Stavrou Sou (Hymn of the Church) Tone 8
Having seen in the sky the form of Your Cross and, like Paul, having received his calling not from men, Your apostle among Kings, Lord, placed his reigning city in Your hand, which you guard in peace forever, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, for You alone love mankind.

Kontakion

Ti ipermaho Tone 8
*O Champion General, I your City now ascribe to you * triumphant anthems as the tokens of my gratitude, * being rescued from the terrors, O Theotokos. * Inasmuch as you have power unassailable, * from all kinds of perils free me so that unto you * I may cry aloud: * Rejoice, O unwedded Bride.*

Instead of the Trisagion Hymn

Ton Stavron su proskinumem
Before Your Cross, we bow down, O Master, and Your Holy Resurrection we glorify.

Epistle Reading Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6
BRETHREN, since we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

Gospel Reading

Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

Today

Join the Dance Group Meeting

For Present/Former/New Members and Parents
Today in the Bookstore after Sunday School
Time to be announced at Coffee Hour
Also discussion on Greek Festival Performance

This Week

- ✘ MON, 3/24– *Great Vespers of the Annunciation*– 6:30 PM
- ✘ TUE, 3/25– *Annunciation: Orthros* 8:30 AM, *Divine Liturgy* 9:30 AM
- ✘ WED, 3/26 - *Pre-Sanctified Liturgy*- 6 PM
- ✘ FRI, 3/28 - *4th Salutations to the Theotokos* - 6:30 PM
- ✘ SAT, 3/29 - *Byzantine Chant*– 4-5 PM; *Bible Study*– 5-6 PM; *Great Vespers*– 6:30 PM
- ✘ SUN, 3/30– *St. John Climacus; Sunday School Teachers Meeting*

Announcements

Sunday School Teachers Meeting

Next Sunday, March 30, following Sunday School, our Sunday School Teachers will have a meeting to discuss plans for our Holy Week Retreat and upcoming plans for the rest of the School Year.

To Our Visitors:

We are pleased that you have chosen to worship with us. Just a reminder, however: the Sacrament of Holy Communion is a manifestation of the *unity of the Body of Christ*. As such, only those who are members in spiritual good standing of the Orthodox Church – and who have prepared themselves for the Sacrament – may partake of the Holy Chalice. However, *everyone* is welcome to come up with our people at the end of the service to receive blessed bread.

Please be sure to join us at Coffee Hour following Services.