

September 13, 2020

The Sunday before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Epistle: Gal. 6:11-18:

See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Gospel: John 3:13-17:



No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

On September 14 the Orthodox Church celebrates the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

This is the first Royal Feast of the Church (Ecclesiastical) year, which began on September the 1st.

Being such an important Feast, the Church Fathers decided to set aside two Sundays (before and after) for the celebration of this instrument of salvation: the life-giving Cross.

The Gospel reading for this Sunday is part of the conversation between the Lord Jesus and Nicodemus who came by night to Him. Right from the start, Jesus is telling him that the only way to enter the kingdom of God is through the gate of Baptism: "I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (3:5). Then, Jesus moves the conversation to the pinnacle of His public ministry: the salvation of the world through His voluntary Passion.

Pointing out the fact that the event of Crucifixion had been prefigured in the Old Testament, as part of the chosen people's journey from slavery to the promised Land ("as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up"), the Savior explains that God's infinite love for mankind was the reason for His voluntary and redeeming Passion (For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son), and the rewards for those who believe and follow Him: "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Fr. George Bazgan

Sunday Service Attendance

Due to the continuing State of Emergency, which limits the number of people attending Church services, we are asking our members to make sure that, for time being, only 1 (one) person from each family attend our Sunday Divine Liturgy.

We apologize for this inconvenience and hope that the restrictions will continue to be relaxed in the near future.

Those who attend, are kindly asked to observe the recommendations of the experts, such as: washing their hands, social distancing, etc.

Thank you all and may God keep us safe!

MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Directors extends a warm appeal to all supporters of our parish, asking them to pay their membership as soon as possible.

This way we can ensure that we have the necessary funds to fulfill our financial obligations for the rest of the year.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

Prayer at the time of pandemic

O Lord, our God, who are rich in mercy and, with Your wise care, guard our lives, listen to our prayer, receive our repentance for our sins, stop this pandemic, as You have ceased the punishment of the people in the days of King David. You who are the Physician of our souls and our bodies, give healing to those contaminated with this disease, hastily raising them from their bed of suffering, to glorify You, the Most Merciful Savior, and protect those who are healthy from any disease.

Bless, strengthen and shield, O Lord, with Your grace, all those who, with love of people and sacrifice, care for the sick at their homes or in hospitals. Remove all disease and suffering from the people and teach us to value life and health as gifts coming from You.

Grant us, O God, Your peace, and fill our hearts with unwavering faith in Your protection, with hope in Your help, and with love towards You and our neighbor.

For Yours is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and to You we give glorify: Father and Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen!