

SUNDAY BEFORE THE  
EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



*Icon of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross -- September 14th*



## September 11, 2016 16<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 8

*SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS;  
POSTFEAT OF THE NATIVITY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS*

### **SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12 – SEPTEMBER 18**

**PLEASE NOTE:** There will be **NO** vespers during the Summer months unless noted in the bulletin.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

6:00 PM – Great Vespers for Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross (*satisfies obligation*)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 – *THE UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS (OBLIGATORY FEAST)*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 – *SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

---

## EPARCHIAL SOBOR

On September 24, there will be an Eparchial Sobor (gathering) held in Chicago at the Cenacle Retreat House. Bishop Bohdan Danylo from Parma will be presiding. The subject will be the “Vibrant Parish” program established by Patriarch Sviatoslav for the entire Church. Each parish must send at least 2 lay representatives along with the pastor. Cost includes airfare and a 1 night stay (\$105.00/person) at the Cenacle

Between now and Mid-September there will be a special collection taken at each Sunday Liturgy to raise funds for this very important event. Please be generous!

---

### Upcoming Events:

Next Sunday, September 18, Brother Petro Piasecky will be visiting our parish. He is a monk from Mt. Tabor Monastery in Redwood Valley, California. Following the Divine Liturgy he will be making a presentation about the Monastery.

Next Sunday there will also be a fundraising luncheon following the Divine Liturgy to help cover the expenses for the Eparchial Sobor. Please plan to stay and enjoy the opportunity for fellowship and to learn about the Monastic community in Redwood Valley.

## Strict Fast Day

Although the Exaltation of the Cross is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church, it is also traditionally a strict fast day. Please be attentive and reflect on the meaning of the Feast.

### Offerings to the Church:

- Your offerings: 1) help the Church fulfill her work; 2) help you grow in Christ. Offerings are a matter of faith not just finances.
- The Lord says: “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21,) teaching us: 1) that what we spend our money on indicates what is important to us, and 2) offering our money to the Lord and the poor can help us change our hearts.

.....

*The church is a hospital not  
a courtroom!*

*– St. John Chrysostom*

*“An old man saw a scorpion drowning and decided to pull it out from the water. When he tried to extend his hand to help the scorpion, it stung him. With much pain, the man tried again to rescue the scorpion, but it stung him again...and again.*

*A young boy standing by, approached the old man and said, “Sir! you are going to hurt yourself trying to save the evil-vicious creature, why do you insist? Don’t you realize that each time you try to help the scorpion, it stings you?”*

*The old man replied, “The nature of the scorpion is to sting and my nature is to love and help. I will not allow the nature of the scorpion to overpower and change my nature.” ... and so... the old man finally rescued the scorpion to safety.*

***Moral of the story:***

*Most times, we exchange our goodness with aggressiveness to face the unfair and hurtful treatment of people. However, as faithful Christians -and humans- we must deal with others according to our (good) nature and not based on their characters, even when they hurt us by their actions.*

**“VIBRANT PARISH” PRAYER**

O Lord Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd, as you once gathered lost sheep that they might hear Your voice and be Your flock, so also today graciously look down from heaven upon our parish community, and send down on it Your Holy Spirit, that it might be a place to receive the joy of Your Good News. Strengthen us with Your presence, and always gather us together in prayer. Grant us the spirit of serving others, so that in our parish all might encounter You, the merciful God. Bless our spiritual leaders with Your wisdom, and inspire us to generously give of our time, talents and treasure for the building up on Your Kingdom. Unite us in peace and harmony, as befits Your community of love. Instill in us a missionary spirit, and let our parish community shine with the light of the Gospel, with prayer and good works, inviting all to share in the divine life, so that Your Name, O Savior, may be praised, together with Your eternal Father, and Your most-holy, good and life-giving Spirit. Amen.



## ПРАЗНИК ВОЗДВИЖЕННЯ ЧЕСНОГО ХРЕСТА

### Обряд воздвиження на Русі-Україні

У пам'ятках нашої Церкви цей обряд уже згадується в XIII ст. У давні часи воздвиження святого хреста відбувалося тільки в єпископських катедрах і великих соборах, де був єпископ і багато священників. Патріярший Собор 1276 року дозволив здійснювати воздвиження у всіх церквах. Митрополит Кипріяні (1381-1382 і 1390-1406) у своєму “Поученні руському духовенству” пише: “А щодо воздвиження Чесного хреста, то в кожній церкві, по цілій землі, де живуть християни, хрест воздвигаютъ, хоча б був один священник, на славу чесного і життєдайного хреста”.

Опис обряду воздвиження наші пам'ятки подають з XV і XVI ст. Винос святого хреста в часі великого славослов'я на утрєні та прошення потрійної ектеїні в часі воздвиження, — відбуваються, як і сьогодні. Було п'ять воздвижень з усіх сторін тетраподу, а останнє воздвиження ще раз на схід. Під час кожного воздвиження народ співав сто разів “Господи помилуй”. Обряд закінчувався поклонінням і цілуванням святого хреста при співі кондака “Вознесийся на крест” і трикратнім “Кресту Твоєму”.

Типік о. І. Дольницького подає обряд воздвиження згідно з традицією нашої Церкви з тією тільки різницею, що в Галичині при кожному піднесенні святого хреста співали не сто, а 24 рази “Господи помилуй”.

Богослужба празника Воздвиження Чесного Хреста — це величний гимн у честь святого хреста. Тут святий хрест безнастанно величається і славиться як знамено перемоги, сили і спасення. “Радуйся, життєносний хресте, — каже стихира на стиховні вечірні празника, — благочестя непобідна побідо, брамо райська, вірних кріпосте, Церкви захроно!”

Ти знищив і знівечив тлінність, поконав силу смерті і підніс нас зі землі до неба. Ти зброя непоборна, бісів покоритель, слава мучеників, справжня окраса святих, пристановище спасення, даруй світові велику милість”.

Празник Воздвиження за допомогою святого хреста пригадує про наш обов'язок святий хрест почитати, любити й визнавати. “Не стидаймося Христового хреста, — каже святий Кирило Єруса-лимський у своїй 4 катехизі, — хоча б хтось його укривав, але ти явно клади його на своєму чолі, щоб демони, бачачи царський знак, дрижали й далеко втікали. Роби цей знак, коли ти їси і п'єш, коли сидиш, лежиш, встаєш або ходиш, словом, при кожній нагоді”. А святий Йоан Золотоустий у *Проповіді про цвинтар і хрест* каже: “Хрест — трофей проти бісів, оружжя проти гріха, меч, що ним Христос проколов змія. Хрест — воля Вітця, слава Єдинородного, радість Духа, окраса ангелів, укріплення Церкви, похвала Павла, твердиня святих, світло всієї вселенної”.

«Церква не є культурною організацією, але сім'я Ісуса»

— Папа Франциск

## **The Rite of Exaltation or Elevation Of the Holy Cross**

### **Rite of Elevation in our Native Land Rus-Ukraine**

This rite was already mentioned in the thirteenth century in the documents of our Church. In ancient times the elevation of the holy Cross took place only in the cathedrals where there was a bishop and many priests. The Patriarchal Synod of 1276 permitted this rite to be performed in all the churches. Metropolitan Cyprian (1381-1382 and 1390-1406) in his “Instructions and life-giving Cross” in every church throughout the land where Christians live, even though there is only one priest.

Our documents of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries give a description of the rite of exaltation or elevation. The carrying out of the holy Cross during the Great Doxology in the Matins service and the petitions of the Fervent Ektenia during the elevation – are the same as today. There were five elevations at each side of the tetrapod, and the last elevation was made again toward the East. During each elevation the people sang “Lord, have mercy” one hundred times. The rite ended with a bow and the kissing of the holy Cross while the kontakion “Willingly raised upon the Cross...” and the threefold “O Lord, we honor your Cross, and glorify your holy Resurrection” were sung.

Fr. Isidore Dolnytsky’s Typicon gives the rite of elevation according to the tradition of our Church with only this difference – that in Galicia (Western Ukraine), at each elevation of the holy Cross, they sang “Lord, have mercy” not one hundred times but twenty-four times.

The service of the feast of the Exaltation or Elevation of the Venerable Cross is, strictly speaking, one glorious hymn in

honor of the Cross. Here the holy Cross is continuously praised and glorified as the sign of victory, power and salvation: “Hail, O life’giving Cross,” exclaims the stichera at the Aposticha in the Vespers service of the feast, “invincible victory of religion, gate to paradise, fortress of the faithful, defense of the Church. Through you, corruption is utterly destroyed, the power of death is swallowed up, and we are raised up from earth to heaven. You are an invincible weapon, subjugator of demons, glory of the Martyrs, true ornament of the Saints, the refuge of salvation, - grant the world great mercy.”

The feast of the Exaltation, by placing the holy Cross before our eyes, reminds us of our obligation to to venerate, love and confess the holy Cross. “Do not be ashamed of the Cross of Christ,” admonishes St. Cyril of Jerusalem in his fourth catechesis, “even if some hide it, nevertheless, you trace it clearly upon your forehead so that the demons, seeing the royal sign, may tremble and flee far away. Make this sign when you eat and drink, when you sit, lie down, rise or walk, in a word, at every occasion.”

St. John Chrysostom, in a sermon on the Cemetery and the Cross, speaks of the significance of the Cross for us: “The Cross is a trophy against the demons, a weapon against sin, a sword with which Christ pierced the serpent. The Cross is the will of the Father, the glory of the Only-begotten One, joy of the Spirit, ornament of the angels, fortress of the Church, the glory of Paul, stronghold of the Saints, the light of the whole world.”

“The church is not a cultural organization, but the family of Jesus”

– Pope Francis

## **Saint(s) of the Day**

### **The Venerable Theodora**

Theodora was from Alexandria and the wife of a young man. Persuaded by a fortune-teller, she committed adultery with another man and immediately felt the bitter pangs of conscience. She cut her hair, dressed in men's clothing and entered the Monastery of Octodecatos, under the male name of Theodore. Her labor, fasting, vigilance, humbleness and tearful repentance amazed the entire brotherhood. When a promiscuous young woman slandered her, saying that Theodore had made her pregnant, Theodora did not want to justify herself, but considered this slander as a punishment from God for her earlier sin. Banished from the monastery, she spent seven years living in the forest and wilderness and, in addition, caring for the child of that promiscuous girl. She overcame all diabolical temptations: she refused to worship Satan, refused to accept food from the hands of a soldier, and refused to heed the pleas of her husband to return to him - for all of this was only a diabolical illusion, and as soon as Theodora made the sign of the Cross everything vanished as smoke. After seven years, the abbot received her back into the monastery, where she lived for two

more years, and reposed in the Lord. Only then did the monks learn that she was a woman; an angel appeared to the abbot and explained everything to him. Her husband came to the burial, and then remained in the cell of his former wife until his repose. St. Theodora possessed much grace from God: she tamed wild beasts, healed infirmities, and brought forth water from a dry well. Thus, God glorified a true penitent, who with heroic patience did penance for nine years for her sins. She reposed in the year 490.

### **Saint Paphnutius the Confessor**

Paphnutius was the Bishop of Taiski in the Egyptian Thebaid. He suffered greatly for the Orthodox Faith. The heretics gouged out one of his eyes and broke his left leg. He participated in the First Ecumenical Council [Nicaea, 325], refuting the heresy of Arius with great vigor. Emperor Constantine greatly respected him, and often kissed him on his missing eye, gouged out for the truth of Orthodoxy. He stood decisively against the western representatives at the Council who proposed that secular priests be completely forbidden marriage. Paphnutius was chaste his entire life.

At the present time, people in the world consider us believers to be foolish and stupid. They do not approve of our Orthodox faith, or ecclesiastical rules, laws and customs. They scornfully laugh at everything that is holy to us. You can often hear from believers, who are forced to live in a hostile environment, how difficult it is to endure constant mockery and derision. You should consider such treatment an honor:

*If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and God resteth upon you.* (1 Pet. 4:14) If people laugh at us, if they do not love us, it means we are not of this world. We should not be grieved or upset over such treatment... Persecution and oppression are beneficial for us, for they strengthen us in our faith.

– St. Nikon of Optina 1888-1931  
(*Living Without Hypocrisy* pg. 32)

*Some without fulfilling the commandments think that they possess true faith. Others fulfill the commandments and then expect the kingdom as a reward due to them. Both are mistaken.*

– St. Mark the Ascetic

*If we don't teach our children to follow Christ, the world will teach them not to.*

### PARISHIONERS THAT ARE HOME BOUND



If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. James would be more than pleased visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. It is no inconvenience at all.

Please be sure to schedule a visit.

## PARISH COMMITTEES

### FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Myra Heltsley  
Stephen Hojsan  
Maria Hughes  
Bohdan Kniahynyckyj

### PASTORAL COUNCIL:

Vladimir Bachynsky  
Olena Bankston  
Gabriel Espedal  
Mark Hartman  
Luke Miller

### STEWARDSHIP (FUNDRAISING) COMMITTEE:

Bohdan Knianynyckyj  
Susan Avant  
John Heltsley (*fundraising consultant*)

### SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Olena Bankston  
Olga Fedunyak  
Michael Miller  
Olga Miller  
Lubomyra Yoldas





**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква  
Святого Йоана Хрестителя  
St. John the Baptizer  
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

4400 Palm Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91941  
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

**Website:** [stjohnthebaptizer.org](http://stjohnthebaptizer.org)

**Pastor:** Fr. James Bankston  
[frjames@mac.com](mailto:frjames@mac.com)  
Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

***Glory to You, Lover of Mankind***

Master of all, alone without sin, for me the unworthy sinner were given over to death, death on a Cross, that you might free the sinner's soul from the bonds of sins. And what shall I give you in return for this, Master?

Glory to you, Lover of mankind! Glory to you, O Merciful! Glory to you, O Long-suffering! Glory to you, who pardon every fault! Glory to you, who came down to save our souls! Glory to you, incarnate in the Virgin's womb! Glory to you, who were bound! Glory to you, who were scourged! Glory to you, who were crucified! Glory to you, who were buried! Glory to you, who were raised! Glory to you, who were proclaimed! Glory to you, who were believed! Glory to you, who were taken up! Glory to you, who were enthroned with great glory at the Father's right hand, and are coming again with the glory of the Father and the holy Angels to judge every soul that has despised your holy

sufferings in that dread and fearful hour, when the powers of heaven will be shaken; when Angels, Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim will come all together with fear and trembling before your glory; when all the foundations of the earth will tremble, and everything that has breath will shudder at your great and unendurable glory.

In that hour your hand will hide me under its wings and my soul be delivered from the fearful fire, the gnashing of teeth, the outer darkness and unending weeping, that blessing you, I may say, Glory to the One, who wished to save the sinner through the many acts of pity of His compassion.

*St. Ephrem the Syrian*

**For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit  
[www.ecpubs.com](http://www.ecpubs.com)**