



Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

Sunday, September 13, 2020 - The Wedding Banquet

14th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 5.

Founding of the Church of the Resurrection (Holy Sepulcher) at Jerusalem



Hymns for Today

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

Thou hast revealed the beauty of the holy dwelling place of Thy glory on earth to be like the splendor of the heavenly firmament, O Lord. Through the prayers of the Theotokos, strengthen it for ever and ever and accept our supplication which we ceaselessly offer Thee therein, the life and resurrection of all!

We offer in supplication the life-creating Cross of Thy goodness, O Lord, which Thou hast granted to us although we are unworthy. Through the Theotokos, save all Orthodox Christians, O only Lover of man!

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior, shattering its gates as Almighty, resurrecting the dead as Creator, and destroying the sting of death. Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man, and we cry to Thee: O Lord, save us!

The Church has been revealed to be a heaven filled with light, which enlightens all the faithful. Standing within it we cry: "Establish this house, O Lord!"

Epistle Reading - 2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 22:1-14

And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding."' But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' So those servants went out into

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from Holy Trinity Orthodox Church. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive the Holy Sacrament through prayer and fasting.*

the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

THIS WEEK'S SERVICE SCHEDULE

(Services livestreamed on Facebook & Youtube)

TODAY: 8:40 AM Hours, 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy,
Great Vespers (10:30 AM), **Coffee Hour w/ Parish Council Meeting at Pavillion (Approx. 11:30 AM)**

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EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS

VESPERS TO BE HELD AFTER TODAY'S DIVINE LITURGY

SUN, September 13th @ 10:30AM - Great Vespers

MON, September 14th @ 9 AM - Divine Liturgy

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SAT, September 26: 5:00 PM Great Vespers

SUN, September 27: 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Nadine Breisch, Rosalie Bagenski, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Stephen & Mary Krill, Anna Hutz Lahr, Brian Cawley, Josie Bissett, Lisa & Scott Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Rebecca King, Connie Padrezas, Delores Karas, Joan Belcher, Antonette Terry, Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Mary DeBenedetto, Violet Filipi, Karl Pfeiffenberger, Lisa Vallone, Christopher Polk, Emma St. Romain & Infant, Catherine, Danny Gobish, Lorraine Pace, Anastasia Homick, Camden Thomas, Dr. Peter Kaminski, Peter Holoviak & Family **Departed:**

Altar Server Schedule

Sunday, Sept 13: Alex H, Tommy D, Andrew N

Sunday, Sept 20: Christopher D, Symeon C, Ephraim N

Sunday, Sept 27: Alec B, Kaleb D, Andrew C

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Parish Council Meeting TODAY

Sunday, September 13th @ 11:30 AM (approx)
Immediately following Services

A parish council meeting will be held TODAY following Divine Liturgy and vespers services. Due to the significance of this issue (HVAC system) we ask all council members to do their best to attend, provide input and vote. The meeting will be held in the church pavilion. Coffee and doughnuts will be provided. The outcome of this meeting will be presented during the annual parish meeting on October 4.

Annual Parish Meeting October 4, 2020

Annual Parish Meeting to be held on October 4, immediately following services. To allow for social distancing this meeting will be held in the church pavilion. Coffee and doughnuts will be provided.

CHURCH SCHOOL BEGINS OCT 11th - SIGN UP!

Attention all parents! Holy Trinity Church School will begin October 11th. Please sign your kids up using the signup sheet in the back of the church. If you have any questions or concerns relating to precautions being taken due to the pandemic please see Alexanne Conklin OR Joanne Dutko.

CALLING ALL HELPERS FOR AN OUTDOOR BI-WEEKLY COFFEE HOUR!

We are looking for volunteers to donate coffee and put out chairs for outdoor coffee hour. If you would be willing to help in either of these areas please speak with Fr. Innocent, Joanne Dutko or Alexanne Conklin.

HELP US COMPLETE OUR PARISH DIRECTORY

To complete the directory we need 2 things from each of you. The first is to confirm the information we have on file for you and your family. The second is for you to give the parish permission to include you (and your family) in the directory. We will not include your contact information in the directory without your permission. Please take a look at the copy on the podium in the vestibule, make necessary corrections to your listing, and write YES or NO to give (or not give) permission to be included. Once the directory is complete, each person or

family included in the directory will receive a copy. The directory will not be posted online or distributed outside of the parish. If you are not yet able to come to church, give Fr. Innocent a call or email to review your information. Thanks!

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES SHEET ON THE PODIUM: Please let us know if you have a birthday or anniversary by writing your name, if it's an anniversary or birthday, and its date on the sheet in the back. Thanks!

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross (Sept. 14)



"O Lord, save thy people and bless thine inheritance: To our Rulers grant victories over the barbarians, And by thy Cross protect thine own Estate." Each year on September 14 the Orthodox Church celebrates the feast of "The Elevation of the Honorable and Life-giving Cross." This is one of the great feasts of the Church year, and one which has an important historical background. Although one or two of the hymns for the day refer obliquely to the vision of the cross in the heavens, the actual commemoration is not that of Constantine's vision before his battle with Maxentius on October 28, 312. On that occasion, while he was in doubt about the outcome of the impending battle for Italy, he saw in the heavens the arms of the cross stretching far and wide, and the words. "In This Conquer." The battle won, he did begin to aid Christians, and ended by being baptized himself....

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Nor does the feast as celebrated refer to the finding of the cross in Jerusalem by Constantine's mother, St. Helena, about the year 326, according to the tradition. A great many stories sprang up about this event, but Constantine did erect a great church over the Holy Sepulchre, and in it the cross was enshrined in a reliquary. This church stood for three centuries before it was destroyed by the Persians, during their series of campaigns against the Empire. Whatever were the early feasts observed in Jerusalem in honor of the Finding of the Cross, they became overshadowed by the events of the reign of the Emperor Heraclius, which are what the Feast as it is today does commemorate.

When Heraclius was crowned Emperor on October 5, 610, after the overthrow of the unworthy Phocas, the provinces on all sides were overrun by the Persians, Avars, and Slavs. He started on a series of internal reforms, such as canceling the dole of grain, which enabled a great many able-bodied loafers in Constantinople to spend their time attending the circus and games instead of doing something useful, and in trying to improve the finances of the government. He embarked on a series of campaigns in due course of time to re-establish Byzantine rule in the neighboring parts of the Empire. The Persians had for some years been harassing Syria and Asia Minor, and in 613 they attacked the city of Damascus. The next year they took Jerusalem, and left a garrison in charge of the city. The population revolted as soon as the main body of the invading army left, and slaughtered the garrison. This brought back the conquerors, who are said to have killed 90,000 of the inhabitants, sparing only the Jews who aided them in the conquest. They took the Patriarch Zacharias and the case

containing the relics of the cross back to Persia with them.

This event was regarded by all the Christians as the greatest possible disaster, since they regarded the sacred relics as the palladium of the city. Added to this was the insolence of Chosroes, King of the Persians, who taunted the Christians with their religion and their Lord, who so obviously had failed to deliver them. For the next eight years Heraclius was busy with the Avars, and was not able to go out against the Persians until 622. He waged six campaigns between 622 and 627, and finally defeated Chosroes and his generals decisively, but at great cost. The Empire was in great danger: in 626 the Persians were in Asia Minor right across the Bosphorus from the City, while their barbarian allies were encamped on the north in Thrace. But Heraclius managed to fight them all off, and restore some control.

He brought back to Jerusalem the Patriarch and the relics of the cross, which had not been molested. The populace demanded to see and venerate the relics, and accordingly they were solemnly elevated for all to see and reverence. The Emperor took a part of the sacred wood back to Constantinople with him. From the time of the finding of the cross by the Empress Helena, small bits of the wood were sent all over the world as most sacred relics, and the part which remained, although large, was still portable.

The hard-won peace of 626 left both the Persian and Byzantine empires exhausted. At this very time a new danger appeared on the horizon: both Chosroes and Heraclius received letters from the Arab Mohammed, who invited them to adopt Islam, his newly founded faith. They both declined, but their contacts with the Moslems were to be many and difficult. In 629 Arab attacks on the empires began, and in 635 Damascus was taken, and Jerusalem in 637. Heraclius went back to Jerusalem and removed the sacred relics to Constantinople for safe keeping, but the Patriarch remained behind to greet the new rulers.

The ceremony of Elevation as performed in Church is actually a patriotic one, with prayers for the Rulers and their people, for Church and State, and for their establishment and preservation. The key to the observance is to be found in the Hymn for the Feast, the Troparion, which runs as follows:

"O Lord, save thy people and bless thine inheritance:

*To our Rulers grant victories over the barbarians,
And by thy Cross protect thine own Estate."*

To the Byzantines, their Empire was the civilized world, the Oikoumene, the habitation of law and order; outside the pale were the barbarians, the people who spoke some other language that no one could understand, and whose ways were violent and strange. The Christian religion was a part of this, the vehicle of salvation and civilization. This is the heritage that was transmitted down through the ages by the Byzantine Empire, the struggle for civilization against the power of the destroyers. When we celebrate the feast today, we should have this in mind; it is apt that the Feast of the Cross is always a Fast. This paradox is striking, but accentuates the understanding our ancestors had that victory comes hard, and that nothing good is achieved without sacrifice.

“What does it mean to take up your cross? It means the willing acceptance, at the hand of Providence, of every means of healing, bitter though it may be, that is offered. Do great catastrophes fall on you? Be obedient to God’s will, as Noah was. Is sacrifice demanded of you? Give yourself into God’s hands with the same faith as Abram had when he went to sacrifice his son. Is your property ruined? Do your children die suddenly? Suffer it all with patience, cleaving to God in your heart, as Job did. Do your friends forsake you, and you find yourself surrounded by enemies? Bear it all without grumbling, and with faith that God’s help is at hand, as the apostles did.”

+ St. Nikolai Velimirovich
