

September 14, 2023

Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross

Troparion:

O Lord, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries. And by virtue of Your Cross, preserve Your habitation.

Kontakion:

As You were voluntarily raised upon the cross for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Your Name, O Christ God; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Your power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the Invincible trophy, Your weapon of Peace.

Prokeimenon in the 7th Tone:

Extol the Lord our God; worship at His footstool, for it is holy!
(Vs.) The Lord reigns; let the people tremble!

Epistle:

The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Corinthians. (1 Cor. 1:18-24)

Brethren, For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart." Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Alleluia Verses:

Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased of old.
(Vs.) God is our King before the ages: He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Gospel:

The Holy Gospel According to St. John. (Chapter John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35)

At that time the chief priests and the elders took counsel among themselves against Jesus to put Him to death. And they went to Pilate saying, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him." The Jews answered him, "We have a Law, and according to that Law He must die, because He has made Himself Son of God." Now when Pilate heard this statement, he feared the more. And he again went back into the praetorium, and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to Him, "Will you not speak to me? Do you not know I have power to release you?" Jesus answered, "You would have no power at all over me were it not given you from above." Pilate therefore, when he heard these words, brought Jesus outside, and sat down on the judgment seat, at a place called Lithostrotos, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the Preparation Day for the Passover, about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your king!" But they cried out, "Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed Him over to them to be crucified. And so they took Jesus and led Him away. And bearing the cross for Himself, He went forth to the place called the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified Him, and with Him two others, one on each side and Jesus in the center. And Pilate also wrote an inscription and had it put on the cross. And there was written, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews therefore read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Greek and in Latin. Now there were standing by the cross of Jesus His mother and His mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus, therefore, saw His mother and the disciple He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. After this, Jesus, knowing all things were now accomplished, bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. The Jews therefore, since it was the Preparation Day, in order that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a solemn day), asked Pilate that their legs be broken, and that they be taken away. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other, who had been crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw He was already dead, they did not break His legs; but one of the soldiers opened His side with a lance, and immediately there came out blood and water. And the one who saw it has borne witness, and his witness is true.