

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

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Department of
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

The Cross

September 14 is the date, each year, of the Feast of the Exaltation (or Elevation) of the Cross. Coming so soon after the beginning of the Church year on September 1st, this feast reminds us that during the whole year the cross will be central to our lives as Christians.

The story of the feast is familiar to most of us. We admire the persistence of Saint Helen, mother of Emperor Constantine, who despite her age traveled through the Holy Land, establishing churches in places that had special meaning in the life of Christ. One of the most important of these places, of course, is Golgotha, outside the city walls of Jerusalem. There Helen had workers dig, and there they discovered the True Cross. This was the place where she built the best-known of the churches she established, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The icon of the feast shows the church, standing in the midst of the city of Jerusalem. The Cross, as we would expect, is very prominent in the icon, and near it stand St. Helen and Emperor Constantine, both with crowns. The Bishop of Jerusalem, Saint Makarios, is shown elevating the Cross for believers to venerate. These figures are joined by a group that includes bishops and priests, monastics, and people who live in the city.

The readings for the day include this well-known verse from I Corinthians: "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1:18). Saint Paul encourages us here to do two things. First, we can confidently hold to our faith in spite of

Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, but we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Among them are:

Genevieve Bobenko, Nancy Filak, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazarczyk, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

ridicule and mockery; it is a given that we will face these things because those who don't believe or don't understand the faith will consider it "foolishness." If we know that other believers have faced skepticism before us, we can be prepared for it and not be shaken. Paul adds power to his own words by quoting God's own promise, which assures us that He will "destroy the wisdom of the wise" (Isaiah 29:14).

The second thing Paul encourages is patience. Verse 18 refers to "us who are being saved." This calls us to remember that our salvation takes place over the whole time of our life. We can expect that things may not go well for us in this world, because the world is fallen and it's a long journey to the Kingdom. But if we are patient, we will know that we are "being saved" through the course of our life so long as we earnestly strive to be what God wants us to be.

In this same passage, Paul expresses in four words the life work of a Christian: "We preach Christ crucified" (1:23a). We believe it and we also proclaim it. If we meet derision, we can lean on the words of the Troparion for the feast. We know that God will, "by the power of the cross, preserve [His] habitation."



Announcements

◆ Our first **Trustees' Meeting** after the summer break will be this Tuesday, September 15 at 7:00pm. All trustees are urged to attend.

◆ This **Saturday, September 19** the **Wonderworking Icon of Saint Anna** will be at the Holy Apostles Church in Saddle Brook. The Icon will be available for veneration throughout the day and three services will be held that day: 9AM Liturgy, 1PM Molieben, and 5PM Akathist.

◆ The celebration of the **Altar Feast of St. Sergius of Radonezh** Chapel at the OCA Chancery in Syosset, NY will be this **Saturday, September 19**. His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon will serve a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at 10AM outdoors in the walled garden. This is also a wonderful opportunity to visit the Chancery of the OCA, venerate the relics of our North American Saints as well as tour the building and the archives.

◆ The **Annual Diocesan Assembly** will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, **November 10 & 11, 2015** at Saints Peter and Paul Church, South River, NJ. As a special guest, His Eminence has invited His Beatitude, Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of All America and Canada to the Assembly. For more information visit our Diocesan website nynjoca.org.

Welcome Visitors

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy. It is our joy to have you with us today. If this is your first visit to our parish, we welcome you and invite you to return as often as you are able.

While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to join us in venerating the Cross, receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, and for fellowship in our Church Hall after the service.



September 13, 2015

15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Forefeast of the Elevation of the Cross
Sunday Before the Elevation
Founding of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

• 9:00am – Divine Liturgy

Epistles: Gal. 6:11-18(Sun. Before)
2Cor. 4:6-15 (Resurr.)
Ehb. 3:1-4 (Founding)

Gospels: Jn. 3:13-17(Sun. Before)
Mt. 22:35-46 (Resurr.)
Mt. 16:13-18 (Founding)

• Coffee Hour – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service.

• 6:00pm – Great Vespers with Litya

MON. SEPT. 14 – ELEVATION OF THE CROSS

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

9:00am - Divine Liturgy