

**Sunday, April 4, 2021**  
**Third Sunday of Great Lent - Tone 2**  
Veneration of the Precious CROSS

Troparion:

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life Immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead! And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: O Giver of Life! Christ our God! Glory to Thee!

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

Kontakion:

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross! The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for Thou, O my Saviour, didst come and cry to those in hell: Enter again into Paradise.

Prokeimenon in the 6th Tone:

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.  
(Vs.) To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me.

Epistle:

The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Hebrews. (Heb. 4:14-5:6)

Brethren, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt Himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by Him who said to Him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as He says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchiz'edek."

Alleluia Verses:

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

Gospel:

The Holy Gospel According to St. Mark. (Chapter 8:34-9:1)

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who would save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will save it. For what does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, but suffers the loss of his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when He comes with the holy angels in the glory of his Father." And He said to them, "Amen I say to you, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death, till they have seen the kingdom of God coming in power."



*Our holy Mother, the Church of Christ, now brings to our help the all-holy Cross, the joy of the world, the strength of the faithful, the staff of the just, and the hope of sinners, so that by venerating it reverently, we might receive strength and grace to complete the divine struggle of the Fast*