



Parish Information Bulletin

Program for 11—17 September 2022

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER	SUNDAY BEFORE THE HOLY CROSS, John 3: 13-17 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
2022 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am until Church dismissal. We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.	
MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9.00am Service of Holy Unction• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall
WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS (Strict Fast)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos
SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER	GOSPEL READING: Mark 8: 34—9: 1 EPISTLE READING: Galatians 2: 16-20

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Fr Athanasios and
Fr Ephraim are available
at the Church every
Monday to Friday
between 4.00 and 6.00pm
for Holy Confession and
any spiritual need.

**The feast day of Saint Euphemia is September 16 in commemoration of her martyrdom.
Her miracle at the Council of Chalcedon is commemorated on July 11**

Saint Euphemia was from Chalcedon and lived in virginity. According to some, she suffered martyrdom during the reign of Diocletian, in 303; according to others, in 307. Her sacred relics are preserved in the Patriarchate in Constantinople.

**14th September is a day of strict fast because we remember our Lord's sacrifice
on the Cross for all humanity.**

**This Sunday is known as 'The Sunday before the feast of the elevation of the Holy Cross'
the reading of the Gospel is from St. John 3:13-17**

The feast and commemoration of the Elevation (Exaltation) of the Honoured and Life-giving Cross falls on September 14 in the Holy Orthodox Church's *ecclesiastical* calendar.

On this day we commemorate two events connected with the Precious Cross of Christ: the finding of the Cross on Golgotha by the equal-to-the-apostles King Constantine and his mother St. Helena, and the returning of the Cross to Jerusalem from Persia.

As we read during the service:

"Heaven has shown the good man of worship and the wise king of holy determination's use of the power of the Holy Cross in which the hostile enemies were destroyed, the heresy was stopped, and faith in God spread in the countries of the earth, so we praise Christ our God as He is Glorified."

Saint Constantine saw the sign of the Cross in the sky, shimmering with bright light, and around it this inscription *"With this sign you shall conquer."*

As this is a major feast in the Orthodox Church, the Church prepares the faithful to celebrate the elevation of the Holy Cross by reminding them during the preceding Sunday. This, if anything, demonstrates the importance of this feast and the relevance of the Cross in the life of a Christian.

A part of the Holy Church's mission is to prepare the believers spiritually and liturgically to celebrate the major feasts within the church, for example, the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour in the flesh is preceded by *"Sunday before Nativity"* or *"Sunday of the Fathers"* to remind us of the promises and prophecies that speaks of the coming of the Lord.

During the time preceding the Resurrection of Christ (Pascha), which is considered the Feast of Feasts and the Season of Seasons; preparations start on the Sunday week ahead of the major feast; The Palm Sunday, or Sunday of Entrance into Jerusalem and the start of the Salvific Passions. Thus, also with the feast of the Holy Cross, it is preceded

by the Sunday before the elevation, as a preparation for the feast, to remind the believers of the prophecies that spoke in the Old Testament of the Cross with symbolic images, confirmed by the voluntary and accepted death of the Lord on the Cross.

The significance of this feast is evident in the fact that it replaces the Resurrection if the feast falls on Sunday. In the sense that if the day of the Elevation of the Cross falls on Sunday, the readings shall be for the feast of the Cross, not for the Resurrection, and the gospel of the matins of the Resurrection is not read but for the feast.

The Gospel passage begins by reminding the faithful of an incident from the Old Testament that acts as a symbol and pre-figuration of Christ's rise on the cross. The Lord says: *"As Moses lifted the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up."*

In the Old Testament, Moses the prophet constructed a snake from copper and erected it on a pillar in the wilderness, according to the Lord's word, so that the children of Israel, who are inevitably bitten by the snake, should look at the copper snake as an antidote to their bites and eventual death.

The Lord said to Moses: *"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.' So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived."* (Numbers 21:8-9)

The Katavasia of the Feast of the Cross (from the Matins hymns) speaks of various images and symbols of the Old Testament; the rod of Moses, which struck the Red Sea in the form of a cross and saved the Hebrew people by helping them escape from the Pharaoh's chariots, the copper Serpent on a banner that heals from the snake bite just by looking at it. There is also the example of Moses, when he extended his hands in the form of a cross and triumphed over the Giants, as well as the blossoming rod of Haroun. The feast's Katavasia compares between the "old tree" (i.e. the tree of knowledge of good and evil) from which by eating from has exposed us in paradise and brought death to mankind and, the life-giving wood, thus the Tree of life, the Cross, which when it was planted in the earth, brought salvation and life to mankind.

"Today the death that came to man through eating of the tree is abolished through the Cross."

The Lord Jesus continues in the Gospel of John saying: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

The Cross has become the title of self-denial or self-emptying (Kenosis) as the Apostle Paul says in his letter to The Philippians:

"But he emptied himself by taking the image of a slave in the likeness of people. Found in the body as a human being, He emptied Himself and obeyed to death the 'death of the cross.'" (Philippians 2:7-8)

The Cross has become a path of giving, sacrifice and love for others. *"There is no greater love than for a man to offer himself for his loved ones."* The Cross has become an instrument of salvation, a title of love and a ladder that ascends believers from earth to heaven and is a source of pride for them if they follow the example of their Master, if they imitate His exemplary Divine Love and extreme humility.

"But God forbid that I should boast except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Galatians 6:14)

"To Thy Cross, O Master, we bow and Thy Holy Resurrection, we Glorify."

Source: Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese



St. Euphrosynus the Cook of Alexandria - 11 September

St. Euphrosynus, a monk in one of the monasteries of Palestine, carried out the obedience of working as a cook in the kitchen. While labouring for the brethren, St. Euphrosynus focused his thoughts upon God, and constantly fasted and prayed. He always remembered that the monk's first obligation was his obedience, and he therefore meekly obeyed his elder brethren. His patience was astounding: although he was often subjected to words of reproach, he never complained, and calmly endured all difficulties. With the internal virtue he kept hidden from others, St. Euphrosynus pleased the Lord, Who chose to reveal to the monastic brethren the spiritual loftiness of their modest brother. One of the presbyters of the monastery had prayed that God might show him the blessings prepared for the righteous in the age to come. In a dream, the priest saw what awaited in Paradise, and with fear and joy was able to sense its ineffable beauty. There he also saw the monk Euphrosynus, the cook from his monastery. Surprised by this meeting, the priest asked Euphrosynus how he had come to be there. The saint replied that he was there by the great grace of God. The priest then asked Euphrosynus whether he had the authority to give him something of the beautiful things that surrounded them. Venerable St. Euphrosynus invited the priest to choose what he would like to have, and the priest pointed to the wonderful apples that grew in the heavenly garden. The Venerable One picked three apples, wrapped them in a cloth, and gave them to him. Awakening just before Matins, the priest at first thought that his vision had been an ordinary dream. However, he suddenly noticed that next to him were the heavenly fruits, wrapped in a cloth and exuding a marvellous fragrance. Finding St. Euphrosynus in the church, he asked him to state under oath where he had been that night. The Saint replied that he had been where the priest had been. Then the Venerable One said that, in granting the priest's prayer, the Lord had shown him Paradise and had offered the fruits of Paradise through "the poor and unworthy servant of God Euphrosynus." After Matins, the priest told the monastery brethren of everything that had happened, pointed out the spiritual loftiness of Monk Euphrosynos, the hidden saint of God within their midst, and he showed them the fragrant, heavenly fruits. Profoundly moved by what they had heard, the monks went into the kitchen to bow down before the St. Euphrosynus. However, he could not be found there, for, avoiding human glory, he had left the monastery. Where he hid himself remained a mystery, but the monks always remembered that their brother, Venerable St. Euphrosynus, had had Paradise opened to him, and that they - those saved by God's grace - would meet him there. They reverently kept the heavenly apples, and would distribute pieces of them as a blessing and a source of healing.