

THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

SEPTEMBER 14TH 2006)



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The Exaltation of the Holy Cross every year on September 14th. The 14th commemorates the miraculous finding of the precious and life-giving Cross in A.D. 326 by St. Helen, mother of the then Roman Emperor Constantine, while she was on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire after converting to Christianity. This event is well described in our liturgical songs in the Holy Qurbana book on page 39. After Adam sinned by eating the forbidden fruit of the Tree, we are saved through the Tree of the Cross and are enabled to eat of its fruit, which is the Holy Communion. This is the liturgical importance of the Holy Cross in our worship.

The Cross is our pride, by which we accept the death of our Lord as the way to Resurrection for the deliverance from all sin. Most of our people wear the Cross around our neck to confirm our Christian faith and that we are attached to Jesus. When we Cross ourselves over the face, chest and shoulders, we feel the connection with the Lord. We do this every time the name of the Trinity is mentioned or glorified in our prayers.

According to the Orthodox Christian Calendar, and for the sake of uniformity in conducting services, our Church follows the Gregorian calendar, which is divided, into six parts. The sixth part is Sleeba (Exaltation of the Cross) and this sixth period begins with the Holy Cross Festival, celebrated on this day.

For convenience, we are celebrating this year s Holy Cross Festival on September 13th Wednesday night starting at 7.00 p.m. Today s service begins during the middle of the Holy Qurbana (at the end of Busmalko). There will be a procession inside the church. Our Achen will be carrying the holy cross, followed by all the acolytes. During the procession, the faithful will repeatedly sing the famous song (Sleebaye Vandippanaayi Heleneeragnji) from page 39 of the Malayalam Holy Qurbanakramam or from page 62 of The Living Sacrifice - English Holy Qurbanakramam. After entering the altar, there will be a special service to celebrate the Exaltation of the Holy Cross; after t he ceremonies, Holy Qurbana services will resume.

Let us unite in today's festival of the Holy Cross to thank God who had given His only begotten Son for the remission of the sins and saved us by His victorious cross".

Bible readings for Wednesday, September 13th, 2006.

(The Exaltation of the Holy Cross)

Before Holy Qurbana:

Numbers	-	21: 4-9
I Samuel	-	17: 37-53
Jeremiah	-	32: 36-41

Holy Qurbana

General Epistles:	Acts	-	13: 26-39
Epistles of St. Paul:	Galatians	-	2: 17 3: 4
Holy Gospel:	St. Luke	-	21: 5-28

With prayers,
Thomas Alex