

LITURGICAL VARIABLES – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

Great Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

FIRST ANTIPHON

O God, my God, attend to me; why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my salvation are the words of my transgressions.

Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!

My God, I will cry by day, and wilt Thou not hearken? And by night, and it shall not be unto folly for me. But as for Thee, Thou dwellest in the sanctuary, O Praise of Israel. *(Refrain)*

Glory...Both now...*(Refrain)*

SECOND ANTIPHON

O God, why hast Thou cast us off unto the end? Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased from the beginning.

Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who art crucified in the flesh; who sing to Thee. Alleluia!

This is Mount Zion wherein Thou hast dwelt. *(Refrain)*

God is our King before the ages. He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth. *(Refrain)*

Glory...Both now...O Only-begotten Son...

THIRD ANTIPHON

The Lord reigneth, let the people rage; He sitteth upon the cherubim, let the earth be shaken. The Lord is great in Zion; and He is high above all peoples. Let them confess Thy great Name, for it is terrible and holy.

• During the Little Entrance, after the verses of the Third Antiphon, chant the Apolytikion of the Nativity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Then, the following Entrance Hymn:

ENTRANCE HYMN OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool; for He is holy. Save us, O Son of God, Who art crucified in the flesh; who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

• After the Entrance, sing the hymns in the following order below:

APOLYTIKION OF THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS (TONE 1)

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.

KONTAKION OF THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS (TONE 4)

Do Thou, Who of Thine own good will was lifted up upon the Cross, O Christ our God, bestow Thy bounties upon the new Nation which is called by Thy Name; make glad in Thy might those who lawfully govern, that with them we may be led to victory over our adversaries, having in Thine aid a weapon of peace and a trophy invincible.

ANTI-TRISAGION HYMN

Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, Master, and Thy Holy Resurrection we glorify. *(thrice)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

And we glorify Thy Holy Resurrection.

Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, Master, and we glorify Thy Holy Resurrection.

THE EPISTLE

Exalt ye the Lord our God. The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble.

Reading from the 1st Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (1:18-24)

Brethren, 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.

**Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John
(19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35)**


At that time, the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death. And they came to Pontius Pilate saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no crime in Him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die, because He has made Himself the Son of God." When Pilate heard these words, he was the more afraid; he entered the praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where art Thou from?" But Jesus gave no answer. Pilate therefore said to Him, "Wilt Thou not speak to me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to release Thee, and power to crucify Thee?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over Me unless it had been given you from above.

(continued...)

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called "The Pavement", and in Hebrew, "Gabbatha." Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" 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. So they took Jesus and led him away, and He went out, bearing His own Cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew "Golgotha." There they crucified Him, and with Him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the Cross; it read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Now standing by the Cross of Jesus were His mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw His mother, and the Disciple whom He loved standing near, 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 to his own home. After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now fulfilled, said, "It is finished"; and He bowed His head and gave up the spirit. Since it was the day of Preparation, in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers 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 that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true.

SYNAXARION

On this day, we commemorate two events connected with the Cross of Christ: the finding of the Cross on Golgotha, and the returning of the Cross to Jerusalem from Persia. While in the Holy Land, the Empress Helena learned that the Holy Cross was buried underneath the temple of the pagan goddess Venus built on Golgotha. She demanded it be torn down and the Cross be excavated. The search turned up three crosses. Uncertain which was the true Cross, the Patriarch Marcarius ordered that each cross be placed on the corpse in a funeral procession passing by. The first two produced nothing, but the third brought the man back to life, thus determining that this was the very Cross on which our Savior brought life to the world. Later, King Chozroes conquered Jerusalem, took the people into slavery and carried off the Lord's Cross to Persia. In 628, the Greek Emperor Heraclius defeated Chozroes, and brought the Cross back to Jerusalem with great ceremony.



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SAINT NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

3171 South 48th Street, Springdale, AR 72762
Mail: PO Box 6522, Springdale, AR 72766

(479) 379-6220 ✧ Please visit us at: StNicholasAR.org

Like us on Facebook:
Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church (@StNicholasAR)

Parish Priest:
Rev. Fr. Paul Fuller ✧ saintnicholasar@gmail.com

A parish in the Diocese of Miami and the Southeast within the Antiochian Orthodox
Christian Archdiocese of North America

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Welcome to our church community! We are blessed to have you worshipping with us today. We are the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Christian Church whose roots trace directly back to first century Antioch, the city in which the disciples of Jesus Christ were first called "Christians" (Acts 11:26). The Orthodox Church is the oldest and second largest Christian group in the world. We are called by God our creator to worship and follow Him, and to proclaim to the world His message of love, peace and salvation.