

Vespers sung on Saturday 13th September for Sunday 14th September 2025
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
The Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross

“LORD, I CALL ...”

Tone 6

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Hear me, O Lord!
Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Receive the voice of my prayer,
when I call upon Thee!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise
in Thy sight as incense,
and let the lifting up of my hands
be an evening sacrifice!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!

Tone 6

As the Cross is lifted on high,
it urges all of creation
to praise the undefiled Passion of Christ, Who was lifted up on it.
For by the Cross He killed the one who killed us,
and brought us back to life when we were dead.
He adorned us in beauty,
and in His compassion made us worthy to live in heaven.
Therefore we rejoice and exalt His Name,//
and magnify His infinite condescension.

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

Repeat: As the Cross is lifted on high ...

If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.

Repeat: As the Cross is lifted on high ...

For Thy Name's sake I wait for Thee, O Lord. My soul has waited for Thy word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.

Moses prefigured thee, O precious Cross,
when he stretched out his hands on high,
and put the tyrant Amalek to flight.
Thou art the boast of the faithful, the support of those who suffer,
the glory of the Apostles, the champion of the Righteous,
and the preservation of all the Saints.
Therefore, beholding thee raised on high,
creation rejoices and celebrates,
glorifying Christ Who has joined together through thee that which was divided//
in His infinite goodness.

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope on the Lord!

Repeat: Moses prefigured thee, O precious Cross ...

For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

Repeat: Moses prefigured thee, O precious Cross ...

Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!

O most venerable Cross,
attended by ranks of rejoicing angels,
as thou art exalted today at the divine command,
thou dost lift up again
all those who through the stolen food
had been cast out and were sunk in death.
Therefore, as we venerate thee in faith with heart and lips,
we draw sanctification from thee and cry aloud:
“Exalt Christ, the God transcendent in goodness,//
and venerate His divine footstool!”

For His mercy is confirmed on us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

Repeat: O most venerable Cross ...

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

Tone 2

Come, all you nations,
let us fall down in worship before the blessed Tree,
by which eternal justice has come to pass!
For he who deceived Adam by a Tree
is caught by the lure of the Cross;
and he who held under his tyranny the creature endowed by God with royal dignity
is brought down in a headlong fall.
The serpent’s venom is washed away by the blood of God,
and the curse of just condemnation is undone
when the Just One is condemned by an unjust judgment.
For it was fitting that the tree should be healed by a Tree,
and that by the Passion of the passionless God
what was wrought on the Tree should destroy the passions of man, who was condemned.
But glory to Thy dread dispensation for our sakes, O Christ the King,
through which Thou hast saved us all,//
since Thou art good and the Lover of man!

OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

The reading from the book of Exodus.

Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the desert and found no water to drink. Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore he named that place Bitterness. Then the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” So he cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them. There He proved him and said, “If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is pleasing in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His ordinances, I will put none of the diseases on you that I brought on the Egyptians; for I am the Lord your God who heals you.” Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve fountains of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters. Now they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai.

[Exodus 15:22-16:1]

The reading from the Proverbs of Solomon.

My son, do not despise the instruction of the Lord, neither grow weary under His reproof. For whom the Lord loves He instructs, and chastises every son He receives. Blessed is a man who finds

wisdom, and a mortal who sees discernment; for the profits gained from wisdom are better than the treasures of gold and silver. And wisdom is more valuable than precious stones, and nothing evil will withstand her; she is well known to all who come near her, and no honour is worthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand, and in her left hand are riches and glory; righteousness proceeds from her mouth, and she carries law and mercy upon her tongue. Her ways are good ways, and all her paths are in peace. She is a tree of life for all who cleave to her, and she is security for those who lean upon her as upon the Lord.

[Proverbs 3:11-18]

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

Thus says the Lord: "Your gates shall be opened continually, and they shall not be shut day or night, to bring you the power of the Gentiles, and their kings leading them. For the nations and their kings who will not serve you shall perish, and those nations will be utterly desolate. The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, with the cypress, the pine, and the cedar together, to glorify My holy place. The sons of those who humbled and provoked you shall go to you in fear, and you shall be called City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Because you were forsaken and hated, and there was no one to help you, therefore I will make you an eternal joy, the gladness of generations to generations. You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles and eat the wealth of kings. You shall know I am the Lord who saves you and the God of Israel who delivers you.

[Isaiah 60:11-16]

LITYA

Tone 1

Today the holy saying of David truly has come to pass,
for behold, in the sight of all,
we venerate the footstool of Thine undefiled feet,
and, putting our hope in the shadow of Thy wings,
we cry aloud to Thee, O all-compassionate Lord:
"May the light of Thy countenance be marked as a sign upon us!
Exalt the horn of Thine Orthodox people
by the Exaltation of Thy precious Cross, //
O Christ of many mercies!"

The Tree of true Life was planted in the place of the skull,
and upon it hast Thou, the eternal King, worked salvation in the midst of the earth.
Exalted today, it sanctifies the ends of the world,
and the church of the Resurrection celebrates its dedication.
Angels in heaven rejoice,
and men upon earth make glad,
crying aloud with David and saying:
"Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His footstool, //
for He is holy, granting the world great mercy!"

Prefiguring Thy Cross, O Christ,
Jacob the Patriarch, when he gave the blessing to his descendants,
laid his hands crosswise upon their heads.
And today, as we exalt Thy Cross, O Saviour, we cry:
"Give victory to Thine Orthodox people, //
as Thou once gavest it to Constantine!"

Tone 2

Divine treasure hidden in the earth,
the Cross of the Giver of Life appeared in the heavens to the godly king,
and its inscription spiritually signified his victory over the enemy.
Rejoicing with faith and love, and inspired by God
he made haste to raise on high the Cross which he had seen,
and with great zeal he brought it forth from the bosom of the earth //
for the deliverance of the world and the salvation of our souls.

When the Patriarch Jacob crossed his hands while blessing his children,
he foreshadowed the mighty symbol of Thy Cross.
Having this as our unshakable safeguard,
we drive out with almighty strength the ranks of demons;
and, casting down by it the arrogance of Belial,
we put to flight the all-destroying power of hateful Amalek.
Now as the Cross is lifted on high,
we the faithful piously offer it to Thy goodness for the cleansing of our sins,
crying out in a loud voice:
“Have mercy, O Lord, made flesh of the Virgin; //
take pity, O Good One, on the works that Thou hast fashioned in Thy wisdom.”

O three-branched Cross of Christ,
thou art my strong protection.
Sanctify me by thy might, //
that I may venerate and glorify thee in faith and love!

Tone 4

Let us proclaim today a festival of song,
and with radiant faces and with our tongues let us cry aloud:
O Christ, Thou hast accepted condemnation for us,
and, being spat upon, and scourged,
Thou wast robed in purple and didst ascend the Cross.
Seeing Thee, the sun and the moon hid their light,
the earth quaked in fear,
and the veil of the Temple was torn in two.
Grant us Thy precious Cross as our guardian and protector,
driving demons away,
that we may all embrace it and cry out:
“Save us, O Cross, by thy might!
Sanctify us by thy radiance, O precious Cross,
and strengthen us through thine Exaltation; //
for thou hast been given to us as the light and salvation of our souls!”

Thou, O Cross, as a sign radiant with light, formed of stars,
hast prophetically revealed a trophy of victory to the godly king;
and when his mother Helen found thee,
she displayed thee in the sight of all the world.
And we the choirs of faithful shout aloud, as we exalt thee today:
“Enlighten us with thy brightness, O life-bearing Cross!
Sanctify us by thy might, O all-venerable Cross,
and strengthen us through thine Exaltation, //
when thou art lifted on high before the ranks of our enemies!”

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

Tone 4

Moses prefigured the power of Thy precious Cross, O Christ,
when he put to flight his adversary Amalek in the wilderness of Sinai;
for when he stretched out his arms in the form of a cross, the people prevailed.
Now the fulfilment of these images has come to pass for us.
Today the Cross is exalted, and the demons are put to flight.
Today all creation has been set free from corruption,
for through the Cross all the gifts of grace have shone upon us.
Therefore, rejoicing, we all fall before Thee and cry: //
“How marvellous are Thy works, O Lord! Glory to Thee!”

APOSTICHA

Tone 5

Rejoice, O life-bearing Cross:
invincible triumph of godliness,
gate of Paradise, and protection of the faithful!
The Cross is the might of the Church,
through which corruption is abolished,
through which the power of death is crushed.
and we are raised from earth to heaven.
O invincible weapon, the adversary of demons,
the glory of martyrs, the true adornment of ven'rable saints,
and the haven of salvation,//
which grants the world great mercy.

V. Extol the Lord our God: and worship at His footstool for He is holy! (Ps. 98:5)

Rejoice, O Cross of the Lord,
through which mankind has been delivered from the curse!
Thou art a sign of true joy,
shattering our enemies by thine Exaltation.
O Cross, worthy of all honour,
thou art our help, thou art the strength of kings.
Thou art the power of the righteous.
Thou art the majesty of priests.
All who sign themselves with thee are freed from danger.
O rod of strength, under which we like sheep are tended,
thou art a weapon of peace around which the angels stand in fear.
Thou art the divine glory of Christ,//
Who grants the world great mercy.

V. God is our King before the ages; He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth! (Ps. 73:13)

Rejoice, O guide of the blind,
physician of the sick and resurrection of all the dead;
thou hast raised us up when we were fallen into mortality.
O precious Cross,
through thee corruption has been destroyed,
and incorruption has blossomed forth.
We mortals are made divine,
and the devil is completely overthrown.
Today, as we see thee exalted by the hands of bishops,
we exalt Him Who was lifted up upon thee,
and we fall down in worship before thee,//
drawing rich streams of great mercy.

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

Tone 8

Thy precious Cross, O Christ God,
which Moses of old prefigured in his own person
when he overthrew Amalek and put him to flight;
which David commanded to be worshipped,
calling it Thy footstool:
this same Cross we sinners worship today with unworthy lips.
We praise Thee Who wast pleased to be nailed upon it,
and we cry to Thee://
"With the thief, make us worthy of Thy Kingdom, O Lord!"

TROPARION**Troparion of the Cross in Tone 1**

[Music on website / White Book page 13]

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

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

Troparion of the Cross in Tone 1

O Lord, save Thy people,
and bless Thine inheritance!
Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians
over their adversaries;
and by the power of Thy Cross, //
preserve Thy habitation.
Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

Troparion of the Cross in Tone 1

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