



HOLY TRINITY

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



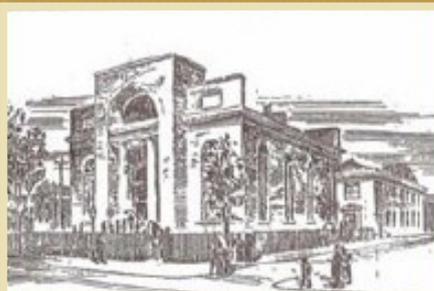
723 N BODINE ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

CHURCH BULLETIN

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Sunday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross

Gospel Reading John 3: 13 - 17



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723 N Bodine St.

PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

Tel./Fax: 215-922-7060 www.holytrinityphiladelphia.com

V. Rev. Fr. Nicolai BUGA, Rector

fr.n.buga@gmail.com

Rev. Fr. Timotei AVRAM, Assistant priest

fr.timavram@gmail.com

The Lord said, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him."

Apostle Reading Galatians 6: 11 - 18



Brethren, see with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory except in

the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Gospel & Apostle Readings	1
Fr. Antony Hugues: Sermon on the Sunday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross	2-3
St John of Damascus: On the Veneration of the Holy Cross	4-5
Liturgical Schedule: September 13 - 20, 2020	5
Traditional Romanian Food. Drive-by. Oct.10, 2020 , from 12 pm to 3 pm	6

Synaxarion. Sunday September 13, 2020 – Sunday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross: Holy Hieromartyrs Cornelius the Centurion and Ciprian, Bishop of Carthage; Saint Venerable John of Prislup; Holy Martyrs Macrobius, Gordian, Elias, Zoticus, Lucian and Valerian of Tomi (Constanța, Romania); Monday September 14 – The Elevation of the Holy Cross

Sermon on the Sunday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

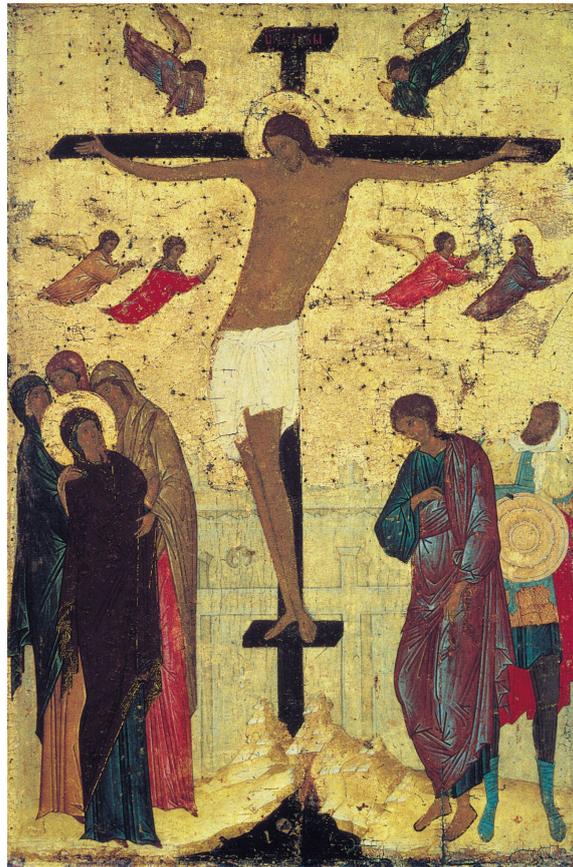
This verse is the very heart of the Gospel. It is the reason we are here, the reason the Church exists. It is the message we preach, Christ and him crucified, for the sake of love, for the salvation of the world. St. Paul claimed to preach this message and nothing else.

Love becomes incarnate. How could humanity ever go to God had He not first come to us?

Love to be love must be more than words, more than a concept, more than a hope, more than a possibility. Love that does not become incarnate is a false love. "Love without works is dead," teaches the Apostle James, but he learned it first from Christ. We are able to love because God first loved us.

"God himself is humble," writes Olivier Clement, "because he is love. God humbled himself out of love." "Humility," writes Isaac of Syria, "is the ornament of the godhead" for "the Word clothed himself in it when he became man." Love and humility is the infallible test, then, of a life lived in Christ.

The scandal of Christianity is the Cross because of what it says about God. The Cross means God,



The all-powerful, is the humblest and most compassionate of all. So compassionate that he would humble himself and become a human being in order to rescue us from death, sin and the devil, not by engaging them in some kind of mortal combat, by force of power, by a show of might, but by opening himself to ridicule by friend, family and foe and ultimately to the most serious kind of injustice, torture and death at the hands of the very creation upon which he showers his love and affection. Knowing what he would suffer at our hands he still came. Christ died for us "while we were yet sinners."

Another surprising thing is that God not only loves us, he honors and respects us. Hear the teaching of one the greatest Orthodox saints, Gregory of Nyssa. "Know to what extent the Creator has honored you above all creation. The sky is not an image of God, nor is the moon, nor the sun, nor the beauty of the stars, nor anything of what can be seen in creation. You alone have been made the image of the Reality that transcends all understanding, the likeness of imperishable beauty, the im-print of true divinity, the recipient of beatitude, the seal of the true light. When you turn to him you become that which he is himself...There is nothing so great among beings that it can be compared with your greatness. God is able to measure the whole heaven with his span. The earth and the sea are enclosed in the hollow of his hand. And although he is so great and holds all creation in the palm of his hand, you are able to hold him, he dwells in you and moves within you

without constraint, for he has said, 'I will live and move among them' (2 Corinthians 6.16)."

And if he has such great love for us ought we not also to love one another. It is inevitable that the message moves constantly back and forth between these two poles. There is no way to separate the Cross from the Beatitudes, devotion to Christ from devotion to his image in others. It is from this understanding, not some silly, faddish political correctness that our compassion and tolerance flow. It flows from the heart of God himself.

In the Cornerstone (our monthly news-letter) this month there is a letter sent by a woman whose son a graduate of BU, suffered a serious mental breakdown and had to be hospitalized. Three years ago she came to Liturgy here and in her distress met one of our parishioners who showed her great love and compassion. She never forgot his kindness and after three years wrote us a letter and enclosed a generous donation. I was greatly moved by that letter, but in this place such compassion is not rare at all. I know of numerous examples. That is the kind of community we have. It is the surest sign there is that Christ is truly among us.

Let me quote once again from the writings of Olivier Clement: "The key to spiritual progress according to the greatest exemplars of asceticism is, therefore, evangelical love for one's enemies. That is first of all

- something very simple, but very difficult - the refusal to judge, the refusal to assert oneself in

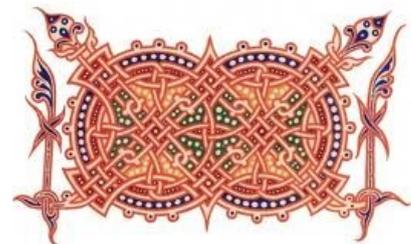
despising or condemning others. Only such an attitude of mind brings detachment and peace. The rest is secondary."

God showed this very thing to us through the example of his Son whom we are to follow not only in word, but in deed. I encourage you to reach out to one another, to everyone who enters this place and to everyone you meet. All have been honored with the image of God. To love then is not a duty it is an act of recognition.

"Let us," writes St. Augustine, "who wish to contemplate God purify our hearts by

faith and heal them by means of peace, for the effort we make to love one another is already a gift from him to whom we raise our eyes."

Fr. Antony Hughes



How On the Veneration of the Holy Cross

The word "Cross" is foolishness to those that perish, but to us who are saved it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:23). For he that is spiritual judges all things, but the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit. For it is foolishness to those who do not receive in faith and who do not consider God's goodness and omnipotence, but search out divine things with human and natural reasonings. For all the things that are of God are above nature and reason and conception. For should any one consider how and for what purpose God brought all things out of nothing and into being, and aim at arriving at that by natural reasonings, he fails to

comprehend it. For knowledge of this kind belongs to spirits and demons. But if any one, under the guidance of faith, should consider the divine goodness and omnipotence and truth and wisdom and justice, he will find all things smooth and even, and the way straight. *But without faith it is impossible to be saved* (Hebrews 11:6). For it is by faith that all things, both human and spiritual, are sustained. For without faith neither does the farmer cut his furrow, nor does the merchant commit his life to the raging waves of the sea on a small piece of wood, nor are marriages contracted nor any other step in life taken. By faith we consider that all things were brought out of nothing into being by God's power. And we direct all things, both divine and human, by faith. Further, faith is assent free from all meddling inquisitiveness.

Every action, therefore, and performance of miracles by Christ are most great and divine and marvelous: but the most marvelous of all is His precious Cross. For no other thing has subdued death, expiated the sin of the first parent, despoiled Hades, bestowed the resurrection, granted the power to us of contemning the present and even death itself, prepared the return to our former blessedness, opened the gates of Paradise, given our nature a seat at the right hand of God, and made us the children and heirs of God, save the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. For by the Cross all things have been made right. So many of us, the apostle says, as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into His death Romans 6:3, and as many of you as have been baptized into Christ,



have put on Christ. Galatians 3:27 Further, *Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God* (1 Corinthians 1:24). Lo! The death of Christ, that is, the Cross, clothed us with the enhypostatic wisdom and power of God. And the power of God is the Word of the Cross, either because God's might, that is, the victory over death, has been revealed to us by it, or because, just as the four extremities of the Cross are held fast and bound together by the bolt in the middle, so also by God's power the height and the depth, the length and the breadth, that is, every creature visible and invisible, is maintained.

This was given to us as a sign on our forehead, just as the circumcision was given to Israel: for by it we believers are separated and distinguished from unbelievers. This is the shield and weapon against, and trophy over, the devil. This is the seal *that the destroyer may not touch you* (Exodus 12:23), as says the Scripture. This is the resurrection of those lying in death, the support of the standing, the staff of the weak, the rod of the flock, the safe conduct of the earnest, the perfection of those that press forwards, the salvation of soul and body, the aversion of all things evil, the patron of all things good, the taking away of sin, the plant of resurrection, the tree of eternal life.

So, then, this same truly precious and august tree, on which Christ has offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sakes, is to be worshipped as sanctified by contact with His holy body and blood; likewise the nails, the spear, the clothes, His sacred tabernacles which are the manger, the cave, Golgotha, which brings salvation, the tomb which gives life, Sion, the chief stronghold of the churches and the like, are to be worshipped. In the words of David, the father of God, *We shall go into His tabernacles, we shall worship at the place where His feet stood*. And that it is the Cross that is meant is made clear by what follows, *Arise, O Lord, into Your Rest*. For the resurrection comes after the Cross. For if of those things which we love, house and couch and garment, are to be longed after, how much the rather should we long after that which belonged to God, our Savior, by means of which we are in truth saved.

Moreover we worship even the image of the precious and life-giving Cross, although made of another tree, not honoring the tree (God forbid) but the image as a symbol of Christ. For He said to His disciples, admonishing them, Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven Matthew 24:30, meaning the Cross. And so also the angel of the resurrection said to the woman, *You seek Jesus of Nazareth which was crucified* (Mark 16:6). And the Apostle said, *We preach Christ crucified* (1 Corinthians 1:23). For there are many Christs and many Jesuses, but One crucified. He does not say speared but crucified. It behooves us, then, to worship the sign of Christ. For wherever the sign may be, there also will He be. But it does not behoove us to worship the material of which the image of the Cross is composed, even though it be gold or precious stones, after it is destroyed, if that should happen. Everything, therefore, that is dedicated to God we worship, conferring the adoration on Him.

The tree of life which was planted by God in Paradise prefigured this precious Cross. For since death was by a tree, it was fitting that life and resurrection should be bestowed by a tree. Jacob, when He worshipped the top of Joseph's staff, was the first to image the Cross, and when he blessed his sons with crossed hands (Hebrews 11:21) he made most clearly the sign of the cross. Likewise also did Moses' rod, when it smote the sea in the figure of the cross and saved Israel, while it overwhelmed Pharaoh in the depths; likewise also the hands stretched out crosswise and routing Amalek; and the bitter water made sweet by a tree, and the rock rent and pouring forth streams of water (Numbers 20), and the rod that meant for Aaron the dignity of the high priesthood (Exodus 4): and the serpent lifted in triumph on a tree as though it were dead, the tree bringing salvation to those who in faith saw their enemy dead, just as Christ was nailed to the tree in the flesh of sin which yet knew no sin. The mighty Moses cried, *You will see your life hanging on the tree before your eyes*, and Isaiah likewise, *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a faithless and rebellious people* (Isaiah 65:2). But may we who worship this obtain a part in Christ the crucified. Amen.

Saint John of Damascus

(From *An Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Book IV, Chapter 11: Concerning the Cross and here further concerning Faith.
Source: <https://orthochristian.com/>)

HOLY TRINITY'S **Liturgical Schedule** **from September 13** **to September 20,** **2020**

Sunday September 13 **(Sunday after the Elevation** **of the Holy Cross):**

9:00 am - Matins
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
11:00 am - Sunday School
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

Monday September 14 - **Elevation of the Holy Cross** **(strict fast):**

9:00 am - Matins
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
11:30 am - Coffee Hour

Sunday September 20 **(Sunday after the Elevation** **of the Holy Cross):**

9:00 am - Matins
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
11:00 am - Sunday School
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour



Traditional Romanian Food Drive-by

HOLY TRINITY
Romanian Orthodox Church
Philadelphia

You're invited to
Traditional Romanian Food
Drive-by to pick-up only.

Place your order before October 3rd
by calling Marinela at **609-346-5622**

Pick-up your order

Saturday, October 10, 2020

From 12pm - 3pm

723 N Bodine Street, Philadelphia PA 19123

To ensure your order was accepted,
please pay when placing your order.

Menu



SARMALE
Stuffed cabbage rolls
**WITH SOUR CREAM
AND POLENTA**
Box of 5 - \$15



MITITEI
Casingsless sausage
**WITH MUSTARD
AND BREAD**
Box of 5 - \$15



Desert

ALBINUTA
Honey cake

ALBA CA ZAPADA
*Vanilla cake/lemon
buttercream*

Box of 5/each - \$15



SAVARINE
*Sponge cake soaked
in rum syrup and filled
with whipped cream*

Individual box - \$5



PAPANASI
*Romanian cheese
doughnuts with
cream sauce and jam*

Individual box - \$5

HOW TO PAY

Please make a payment the same time you place your order. Pay via phone or go to our church website [donations page](#), there under "write a note" section write it's for "Romanian Food Drive-by". If you pay by check send it to our church address: 723 N Bodine Street, Philadelphia PA 19123 before October 3rd. All donations are for philanthropic and restoration projects.

For any questions please call us!
Marinela: 609-346-5622
www.holytrinityphiladelphia.org