

14 SEPTEMBER 2025
+Exaltation of the Holy Cross

VESPERS

Lord I have cried

Tone 6

¹ O Lord, I have cried to you, listen to me;

O Lord, listen to me.

O Lord, I have cried to you, listen to me;

be attentive to the voice of my plea when I cry to you.

O Lord, listen to me.

² Let my prayer be presented before you like incense,
the raising of my hands be an evening sacrifice.

O Lord, listen to me.

Tone 6

S6: O Lord *our* Lord, if you mark offences,
who will stand?

But there is forgiveness with you.

S5: O Lord, I have waited for you for the sake of your name;

my soul has waited for your word,

my soul has hoped in the Lord.

The exalted cross calls all creation to praise the undefiled passion of Christ. He was exalted on it and killed the one who killed us. Christ has brought us back to life, has adorned us and made us worthy to live in the heavens. We rejoice, exalt his name and glorify his condescension. X2

S4: Let Israel hope in the Lord
from the morning watch until night,
from the morning watch.

S3: For there is mercy with the Lord
and abundant redemption with him.

He will redeem Israel
from all his offences.

O precious cross, Moses prefigured you when he stretched out his hands on high and put Amalek the tyrant to flight. You are the boast of the faithful, help of the suffering, glory of the apostles, champion of the just and the preserver of all the saints. When it sees you raised on high,

creation rejoices and celebrates. It glorifies Christ, who in his infinite goodness has joined together through you what was divided. X2

S2: Every nation, praise the Lord;
every people, acclaim him!

S1: For he has strengthened his mercy over us
and the truth of the Lord remains for ever.

O most precious cross attended by ranks of rejoicing angels, you are exalted today. By divine command you raise again all those who had been outcast and were sunk in death on account of the stolen fruit. Now we embrace you in faith with heart and lips. We draw sanctification from you and cry, "Exalt the supreme goodness of Christ our God and venerate his divine footstool." X2

Glory: Both now: Tone 2

All you people, come and fall down in worship before the blessed tree, for eternal justice has come to pass by the cross. The devil deceived Adam by the tree; now he has been deceived by the cross. He held the royal creation in bondage; now he has been cast down with an amazing fall. The serpent's venom is washed by the blood of God and the curse is destroyed by the just sentence of the just *Lord* who was unjustly condemned. The tree has been healed by the tree and the passion of the God without passion has destroyed the passions of the condemned. Glory to your dispensation, O Christ, our gracious King and the Lover of the human race!

Entrance

Prophecies

1: From the Book of Exodus (15:22-16:1)

In those days Moses led Israel away from the Red Sea and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days into the desert and found no water. ²³When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter. Therefore it was named Marah. ²⁴And the people murmured against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" ²⁵And he cried to the Lord. The Lord showed him a tree, he threw it into the water and the water became sweet. There the Lord made a statute and an edict for them. There he tested them ²⁶and said "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God, do what is right in his eyes, be attentive to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I put upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord,

your healer.” ²⁷Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; they camped there by the water. ¹They set out from Elim and all the assembly of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt.

2: From the Book of Proverbs (3:11-18)

- ¹¹ My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline
or be weary of his reprimand,
¹² for the Lord reprimands the one whom he loves
as a father the son in whom he delights.
¹³ Happy is the man who finds wisdom,
and the man who gets understanding,
¹⁴ for the gain from it is better than profit from silver
and its reward better than gold.
¹⁵ She is more precious than jewels
and nothing you desire can compare with her.
¹⁶ Long life is in her right hand;
riches and honour are in her left hand.
¹⁷ Her ways are ways of pleasantness
and all her paths are peace.
¹⁸ She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her;
those who hold her fast are called happy.

3: From the Prophecy of Isaiah (60:11-16)

- ¹¹ Your gates will be open continually;
they will not be shut by day or night,
so that men may bring you the wealth of the nations,
with their kings led in procession.
¹² The nation and kingdom that will not serve you will perish;
those nations will be completely laid waste.
¹³ The glory of Lebanon will come to you,
the cypress, the plane, and the pine,
to beautify the place of my sanctuary;
and I will make the place of my feet glorious.
¹⁴ The sons of those who oppressed you will come,
they will bend low to you;
and all who despised you will bow down at your feet.
They will call you the City of the Lord,
the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵ Whereas you have been forsaken and hated,
with no one passing through,
I will make you majestic for ever,
a joy from age to age.
¹⁶ You will suck the milk of nations
and suck the breast of kings.
You will know that I, the Lord, am your Saviour
and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Liti

Tone 4

O Christ, Moses prefigured the power of the precious cross when he put to flight Amalek, his adversary in the wilderness of Sinai, for when he stretched out his arms in the form of a cross the people became strong again. Now the fulfilment of these images has come to pass for us. Today the cross is exalted and the devils put to flight. Today all creation is set free from corruption. For every gift of grace shines on us through the cross, so we all fall before you with rejoicing and cry, "O Lord, how wonderful are your works; glory to you!"

Aposticha

Tone 5

Hail, O life-bearing cross, the invincible weapon of godliness, the gate of Paradise and the protection of the faithful. The cross is the might of the church. Corruption is abolished through it; the power of death is crushed through it and we are raised from earth to heaven; *it is* the invincible weapon of peace. The cross is the enemy of demons, the glory of the martyrs and the haven of salvation which grants the world great mercy.

Exalt the Lord our God

and worship at his footstool, for he is holy. Ps 98

Hail, O cross of the Lord! Through you the human race has been rescued from the curse and shatters the enemy by your exaltation. O cross, worthy of all honour, you are a sign of true joy, our help, the strength of kings, the power of the just and the majesty of priests. O rod of strength, under which we like sheep are tended, O weapon of peace round which the angels stand in fear, O divine glory of Christ our God, you grant the world great mercy. All who sign themselves with you are freed from anger.

¹² God *was* our king in the past;

he has accomplished salvation in the midst of the earth. Ps 73
Hail, O guide of the blind, physician of the sick and resurrection of the dead! O precious cross, you raised us up when we had fallen into mortality. Through you corruption has been destroyed; through you incorruption has blossomed. We mortals have been made divine and the Devil is completely overthrown. As we see you exalted today by the hands of bishops, we exalt the one who was raised high on you and fall in worship before you, while we freely draw great mercy from you.

Glory: Both now: Tone 8

O Christ our God, we poor sinners bow deeply today before your precious cross. Moses prefigured the cross and defeated Amalek; David ordered worship at your footstool. So today we sinners, O Christ, fall in worship before your precious feet. Together with the thief we cry to you, the crucified One, "O Lord, make us worthy of your kingdom."

Apolytikion

Tone 1

O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries and preserve your commonwealth through your cross. *X3*

ORTHROS

Kathisma 1

Tone 1

O Lover of the human race, we venerate the wood of your cross, for you, the Life of all, were nailed on it. O Saviour, you opened Paradise to the thief who turned to you in faith. You counted him worthy of blessedness when he confessed to you and cried, "O Lord, remember me." Accept us like him, as we cry, "We have sinned; do not despise us in your steadfast love." *X2*

Kathisma 2

Tone 6

O Christ our Lord, no sooner was the wood of your cross set up than the foundations of death were shaken. What Hades had swallowed in eagerness, it now let go with trembling. O holy *Lord*, you have shown us your salvation and we glorify you. O Son of God, have mercy on us. *X2*

Kathisma 3

Tone 3

O my Saviour, Joshua, the son of Nun, mystically foreshadowed your cross in ancient times when he stretched out his arms in the form of a cross. O God, the sun stood still until he had destroyed his enemies who were opposed to you. But now the sun has grown dark since it has seen you on the cross as you abolish the might of death and capture Hades. X2

Prokeimenon Ps 97 Tone 4

^{3b} All the ends of the earth have seen

the salvation of our God.

¹ Sing to the Lord a new song,

for the Lord has accomplished wonders;

his right hand and holy arm have brought his salvation.

Gospel

From the Holy Gospel according to John (12:28-36)

The Lord said, "Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time for judgement on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die. The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain for ever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?" Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

Resurrection Ode

P/R: Now that we have seen the resurrection of Christ, let us worship the holy Lord Jesus, the only sinless one. O Christ, we venerate your cross. We praise and glorify your holy resurrection, for you are our God, and we know no one else apart from you. We call on your name. All you faithful, come and venerate Christ's holy resurrection, for see, joy has come into the whole world through the cross. Let us always bless the Lord and praise his

resurrection, for he has destroyed death by death by enduring the cross for us.

Psalm 50

Glory: Tone 2

O three branched cross of Christ, you are my strong protection. Sanctify me by your might so that I may venerate and glorify you in love.

Both now:

O three branched cross of Christ, you are my strong protection. Sanctify me by your might so that I may venerate and glorify you in love.

Have mercy: Tone 6

O cross of Christ, hope of Christians, guide of those who have gone astray, haven of the storm-tossed, victory in warfare, firm foundation of the world, physician of the sick and resurrection of the dead, have mercy on us.

Kontakion

Tone 4

O Christ our God, since you were willingly raised on the cross, grant mercies to your new community which is called by your name. Make firm our faithful rulers with your power and grant them victories over their enemies. May your help be a weapon of peace and an invincible trophy.

Íkos

Paul was caught up to the third heaven and heard ineffable and divine words which were not lawful for the human tongue to speak. He wrote to the Galatians (as lovers of the Scriptures, you have read his words and know). "But God forbid," he said, "that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, on which he killed our passions by his passion." Therefore let us firmly hold fast to the cross of the Lord which is the glory of us all, for this wood is our salvation, a weapon of peace and an invincible trophy.

Synaxarion

Today we celebrate the universal exaltation of the precious and life-giving cross. The day commemorates the discovery of the true cross by St Eleni and its return to Jerusalem after its Seventh Century capture by the Persians. O Saviour, the whole creation praises your exaltation when it

sees the elevation of the cross. On the Fourteenth the cross was raised on Zion.

We also remember:

Empress Plakilla of Constantinople C5

Repose of John Chrysóstom C5

Fathers of the Sixth Council C7

New Martyr Makários of Athos C16

O God, have mercy on us through their holy prayers. Amen.

Katavasías

1: Moses inscribed the invincible weapon of the cross on the waters and marked a straight line before him with his staff. He divided the Red Sea and opened a path for Israel who went over dry shod. Then he marked a second line across the waters, united them in one and overwhelmed the chariots of Pharaoh. Therefore let us sing to Christ our God, for he has been glorified.

3: The rod of Aaron is an image of this mystery; it comes into bud to show who should be priest. So also the wood of the Cross has now flowered in the Church that once was barren. It has filled her with strength and steadfastness.

4: O Lord, I have heard the mystery of your dispensation. I have considered your works and glorified your divinity.

5: O three times blessed tree, on which Christ the King and Lord was stretched, the beguiler who tempted the human race with the tree fell because of you. He was caught in the trap set by God who was crucified on you in the flesh and grants peace to our souls.

6: Jonah stretched out his hands in the form of a cross within the belly of the whale and plainly prefigured your redeeming passion. He was cast out after three days and foreshadowed the mighty resurrection of Christ our God who was crucified in the flesh and enlightened the world by his rising on the third day.

7: The senseless decree of the wicked tyrant confused the people and breathed out threats and blasphemy hateful to God. Yet neither the fury of wild beasts nor the roaring of the fire could frighten the three children. As

they stood together in the flame and were fanned by the wind which brought refreshment like the dew, they sang, "Blessed are you and praised above all, our God and the God of our fathers!"

8: Let us praise, bless and worship the Lord.

O children, equal in number to the Trinity, bless God the Father and Creator. Sing the praises of the Word who descended and changed the fire to dew and exalt above all for ever the most Holy Spirit who gives life to all.

Canticle Nine

The Magnificat is not sung.

Tone 8

O my soul,

glorify the most precious and life-giving cross of the Lord.

O Theotokos, you are a mystical Paradise in which Christ blossomed.

Through him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth.

Now at its elevation we bow in worship before it and glorify you.

O my soul,

glorify the most precious and life-giving cross of the Lord.

Let all the trees of the wood rejoice, for their nature is sanctified by Christ.

He planted them in the beginning and was stretched out on a tree. At its exaltation on this day, we worship him and glorify you.

O my soul,

glorify the most precious and life-giving cross of the Lord.

The cross is raised up as a sacred horn of strength for all God's people whose foreheads are marked with it. All the horns of the spiritual powers of wickedness are crushed through it. At its exaltation on this day, we worship him and glorify you.

O my soul,

glorify the most precious and life-giving cross of the Lord.

Today the death, which came to man through eating from the tree, is made ineffective through the cross. The curse on our mother Eve, which fell on the human race, is destroyed by the pure fruit of the Theotokos, whom all the powers of heaven glorify.

9: O Theotokos, you are a mystical Paradise in which Christ blossomed. Through him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth. Now at its elevation we bow in worship before it and glorify you.

Exaposteilaria

Tone 2

The cross is the guardian of the whole earth! The cross is the beauty of the Church! The cross is the strength of kings! The cross is the support of the faithful! The cross is the glory of angels and the wounder of demons!

Today the cross is exalted and the world is sanctified. For you, O Christ, who are enthroned with the Father and the Holy Spirit, have spread your arms on it and drawn the world to the knowledge of you. Make those who have put their trust in you worthy of divine glory.

Praises

Tone 8

Let everything with breath praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;

praise him in the heights.

To you, O God, is due a song.

Praise him, all his angels;

praise him, all his powers.

To you, O God, is due a song.

Tone 8

S4: Praise him with cymbal and dance;

praise him with strings and flute.

S3: Praise him with tuneful cymbals;

praise him with joyful cymbals.

Let everything with breath praise the Lord.

Most strange wonder! The most holy cross, the life-giving tree, is raised on high today and shown to the world. All the ends of the earth give glory and all the devils are frightened. How great a gift is here granted to mortals! O Christ, only compassionate *Lord*, save our souls through your cross

S2: Exalt the Lord our God

and worship at his footstool, for he is holy. Ps 98

Most strange wonder! The cross which carried the Most High as a cluster of grapes full of life, is seen today exalted high above the earth. Through the cross we are all drawn to God and death has been swallowed up for ever. O undefiled wood, we enjoy the immortal fruit of Eden through you as we glorify Christ.

S1: God *was* our king in the past;

he has accomplished salvation in the midst of the earth. Ps 73

Most strange wonder! The length and breadth of the cross spans the heavens for it sanctifies the whole world by divine grace. By the cross godless nations are conquered; by the cross rule and justice are confirmed. O divine ladder, through you we go up to heaven as we exalt Christ the Lord in song.

Glory: Both now: Tone 6

Today the cross of the Lord goes out and the faithful welcome it with love. They receive healing of soul and body and of every weakness. Let us kiss it with joy and fear: with fear, for we are unworthy because of sin; with joy, for Christ the Lord was crucified on it in his great mercy and granted salvation to the world.

Liturgy

Antíphon 1 Ps 21 Tone 2

S1: O God, my God, be attentive to me; why have you forsaken me?

R: At the prayers of the Theotokos, Saviour, save us!

S2: The words of my offences are far from my salvation. S3: My God, I will cry by day, *but* you will not listen. S4: O Praise of Israel, you will live in the sanctuary.

S5: Glory: Both now:

Antíphon 2 Ps 73 Own Tone

S1: O God, why have you completely banished us?

R: Save us, O Son of God.

You were crucified in the flesh. We sing to you, “Alleluia!”

S2: Remember your assembled people
whom you have purchased from the beginning.

S3: This is Mount Zion on which you have settled.

S4: God *was* our king in the past;

he has accomplished salvation in the midst of the earth.

S5: Glory: Both now:

Monogenes

Antíphon 3 Ps 98 Tone 1

S1: The Lord reigns; let the peoples rage.

R: O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries and preserve your commonwealth through your cross.

S2: He sits on the cherubim; let the earth be shaken.

S3: The Lord is great in Zion and high over all the peoples. S4: Let them acknowledge your great name
for *it* is terrible and holy.

Trisagion Substitute

O Master, we bow before yours cross
and glorify your resurrection. X3

Glory: Both now:

and glorify your resurrection.

Dynamis

O Master, we bow before yours cross
and glorify your resurrection.

Prokeimenon Ps 98 Tone 7

⁹ Exalt the Lord our God
and worship on his holy mountain;
for the Lord our God is holy.

¹ The Lord reigns, let the peoples rage;
he sits on the cherubim, let the earth be shaken.

Apostolos

From the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians (1:18-24)

Brothers, the message of the cross is foolishness 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; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through

its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Alleluia Ps 73 Tone 1

² Remember your assembled people
whom you have purchased from the beginning.
¹² Yet God *was* our king in the past;
he has accomplished salvation in the midst of the earth.

Gospel

From the Holy Gospel according to John (6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30)
At that time, the chief priests and elders took counsel about Jesus- how to destroy him. They came before Pilate and said, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him." The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God." When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Do you not realise I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified him, and with him two others - one on each side and Jesus in the middle. Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. Near the cross of

Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing near by, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Especially

O Theotokos, you are a mystical Paradise in which Christ blossomed. Through him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth. Now at its elevation we bow in worship before it and glorify you.

Communion Ps 4

O Lord, the light of your face has been signed on us. Alleluia!

Especially

O Theotokos, you are a mystical Paradise in which Christ blossomed. Through him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth. Now at its elevation we bow in worship before it and glorify you.

Communion Ps 4

O Lord, the light of your face has been signed on us. Alleluia!

Post Communion

Tone 1

O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance. Grant victories to the faithful over their adversaries and preserve your commonwealth through your cross.