

❖ ❖ ❖ THE CROSS "ELEVATES" OUR FAITH! ❖ ❖ ❖

Depicted on the cover of this morning's Church Bulletin is a beautiful icon of the Feast Day of the Elevation and Exaltation of the Holy Cross. It commemorates an actual historical event: the finding of the true Cross of Christ by St. Helen, who led an expedition to the Holy Land in the 4th century for the purpose of recovering this most precious of all Christian relics. Yet the real significance of this great holy day has nothing to do with HISTORY, but rather with MYSTERY - the mystery of discovering why the Cross is so important to our Faith.

Why do we venerate and exalt the Cross? Why do we kiss it and bow down before it? Why do we wear it around our necks and place it on our walls at home? Why is it the most predominant of symbols in a Faith full of symbolism? We hold the Cross in such reverence and awe because the Crucifixion which occurred on it - that treacherous, murderous act - brought us our salvation. Christ, the only sinless person who ever walked this earth, took the blame of all of our sins upon Himself and gave His life on the Cross. He died so that we may live. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: *"FOR 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."* Notice that Paul uses the phrase "being saved." Christ promises salvation for all who believe in Him and yes, we say that our sins are washed away by the precious Blood our Lord shed upon the Cross. But there is much soul searching that we all must do. We must be sorry for those sins. We must seek forgiveness and repent for those sins. Our Lord tells us plainly that there will not be one unrepentant sinner in the Kingdom of Heaven. May the Cross inspire us all to do a thorough and honest evaluation of our relationship with the Lord as we take our own cross upon our shoulders and follow Him.

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey Litho in U.S.A.

Welcome our Visitors! We invite you to venerate the cross at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. However, only Orthodox Christians who are in good standing and who have prepared by prayer, fasting, and Confession may receive Holy Communion.

A Gift of Blessing

Visit the Church Gift Shop.

See the Beautiful Icons, Crosses & Home Censers

2709 Washington St. Vicksburg, MS 39180

Parish Office: 601-636-2483

Fr. Gabriel's cell: 713-357-8871

Email: stgeorge2709@gmail.com web page: www.stgeorgevicksburg.org



Church Calendar: Check the Link. <http://www.stgeorgevicksburg.org/service.html>

SAINT GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Very Rev. Father Gabriel Karam, Pastor

Saturday Great Vespers 6:00 p.m. - Sunday Orthros 9:15 a.m.

Divine Liturgy 10:30 a.m. - Confessions: By Appointment

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

TONE 7/ EOTHINON 5

SUNDAY AFTER THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SEVEN

Thou didst abolish death by Thy Cross; Thou didst open Paradise to the thief; Thou didst transform the myrrh-bearers' lamentation, and didst bid Thine Apostles to preach that Thou art risen, O Christ God, granting great mercy to the world.

APOLYTIKION OF THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS IN TONE ONE

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.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. GEORGE IN TONE FOUR

As deliver of Captives: And defender of the Poor, Healer of the Infirm, champion of Kings, Victorious Great Martyr George, Intercede with Christ our God for our souls' salvation.

KONTAKION OF THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS IN TONE FOUR

*(**Thou Who wast raised up**)*

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.

We Celebrate Today

On September 20 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate holy Great-martyr **Eustathios, Theopiste** his wife, and their two sons **Agapios and Theopistos**.

Verses

A bronze bull burned up Eustathios' whole household;

And the whole household Thou, O Word of God, savest.

On the twentieth Eustathios with family was burned in a bull.

Eustathios, before his baptism, was an illustrious Roman general named Placidus in the second century. While hunting in the country one day, he was converted to the Faith of Christ through the apparition of an uncommonly majestic stag, between whose antlers he saw the Cross of Christ, and through which the Lord spoke to him with a human voice. Upon returning home, he learned that his wife Tatiana had also had a similar vision. They sought out the Christian Bishop and were baptized, Placidus receiving the name Eustathios, and Tatiana the name Theopiste; their two sons were baptized Agapios and Theopistos. The family was then subjected to such trials as Job endured. When the family refused to sacrifice to the idols—a public sacrifice from which no Roman general could be absent—the Emperor Hadrian had them put into a large bronze device in

the shape of a bull, which was heated with fire until they died. When their holy bodies were removed, they were found to be without harm. The martyrs suffered in the year 126.

On this day, we also commemorate the Venerable-martyr Hilarion of St. Anne Skete on Athos. By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O Christ God, have mercy on us. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

+Healing & Recovery Bishop Nicholas. Fr. Paul. Dea. Terry. Kh. Janet. Joy Logue.

Dolores Nossier. Rick Collins. George Michael Nasif. Lynne Abraham. Pam Smith. Irene

Tzotzolas. Michael Farris. Athena. Georgia. Andrea Simon. Chuck Abraham. Carla Leese.

Drew. Robert Taylor. Gregory Thomas. Helen Abraham. Hannah Bonelli. Alan Evans.

+Birthdays & Anniversaries. Sept. Stavros Tzotzolas (20), Michael Moses (21), Susie Angelo (22), Janet Gleason (24), Dani Kay Thomas, Richard & Peggy Thomas (26), Dobie Nossier (28), Mary Grace Mousa (29), Alan & Sandra Evans, Nicholas James Angelo (30).

+Keep in your prayers. Our Catechumens, Cole Gary, Who is preparing himself for the Holy Sacrament of Chrismation.

+Lazarus Account. Has been reestablished to help people in dire need of financial support. If you would like to help, make your donation online, cash or by check to St. George, earmark "Lazarus Fund".

+Sunday School Classes. Started on Sunday September 13th. after Divine Liturgy. Do not deprive your children from learning about their faith and the church.

+Upcoming * Fall Festival, Sunday November 1 @ 4pm. We will have a cake walk, bingo, cotton candy and popcorn. Hotdogs, chili and all the fixings will be provided by volunteers and will be cooked in our kitchen. please bring sweets and prizes for bingo.

*** Fall Kibbee Sale, Saturday October 17.**

+ 120th. Anniversary's Celebration for St. George Church. Save the Dates.

A 3-part series "reflection of our Ancestors"

Wednesday September 30th Wednesday October 21st and Saturday November 14th.

The Church Fathers Teach

Why, Justin Martyr, is Jesus nailed to wood?

"Elisha threw a piece of wood into the stream of the Jordan. By this means, he retrieved from the water the iron of the axe with which the sons of the prophets wished to cut the wood to build their house. So our Christ has ransomed us at Baptism from our heaviest sins by His crucifixion on the wood and Baptism in the water," *Dialogue with Trypho*.

How could this man be both divine and human?

If he was not flesh, who was hung on the cross? And if he was not God, who shook the earth from its foundations?

If he was not flesh, whose hands and feet were transfixed by nails? And if he was not God, how was the veil of the temple rent, the rocks broken and the graves opened?

St. Ephrem.

DIVINE LITURGY SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

"DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM"

SUNDAY AFTER THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

THE EPISTLE

[For Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross]

The Lord will give strength to His people.

Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of God, ascribe to the Lord glory and honor.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians. (2:16-20)

Brethren, you know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. Even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the Law died to the Law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ Who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.

THE GOSPEL

[For Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross]

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (8:34-9:1)

The Lord said, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God come with power."