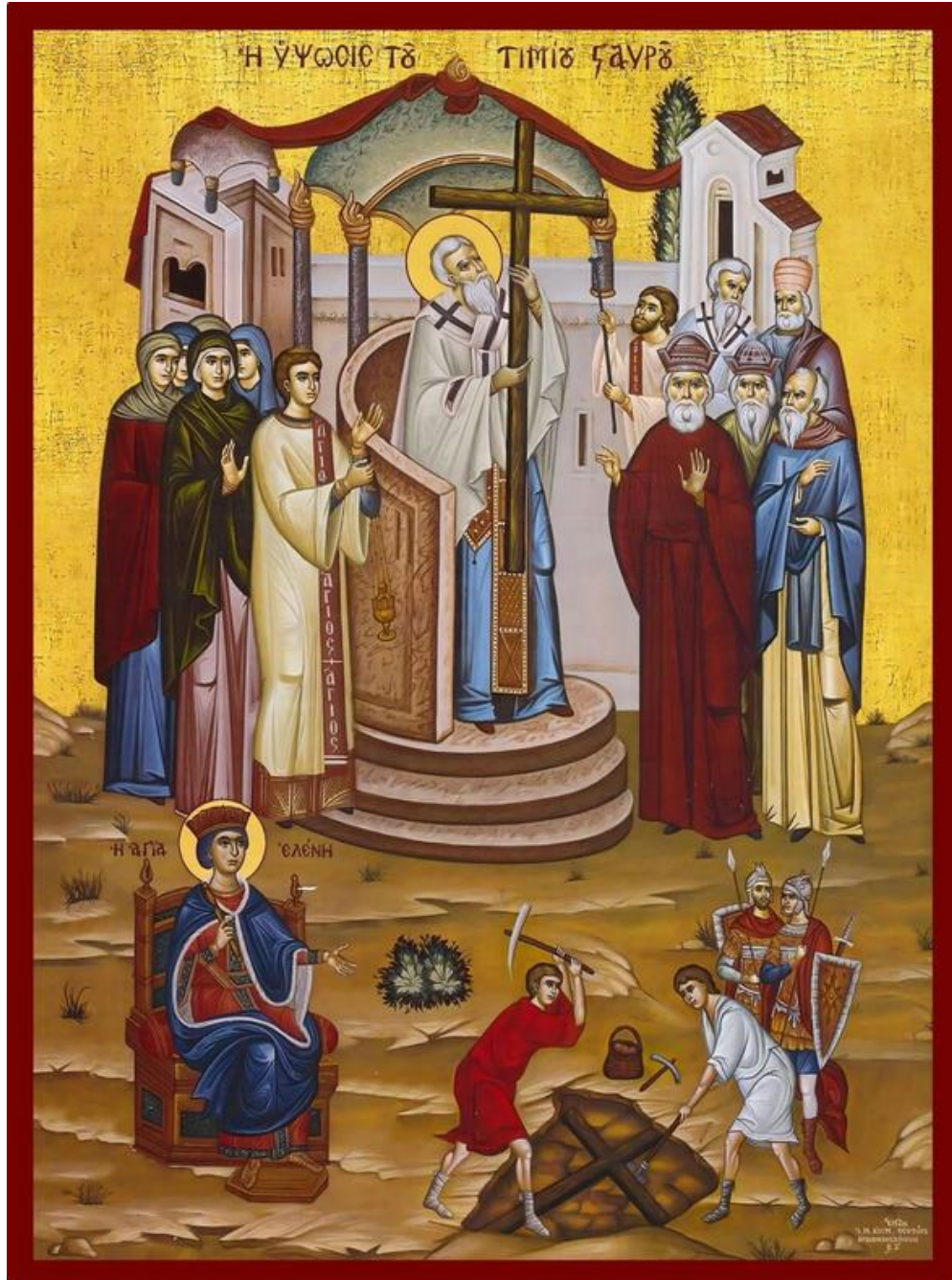
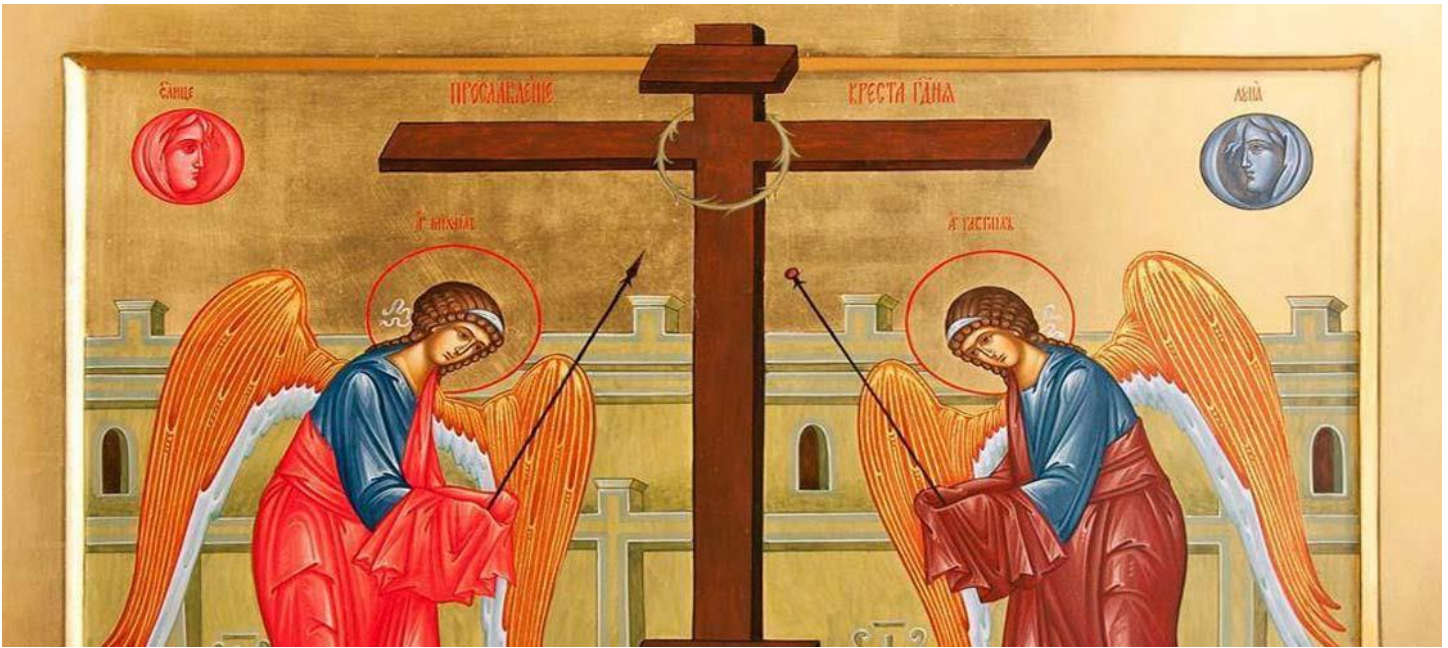


**St Ignatios of Antioch
Melkite Greek Catholic Church
1003 Merry Street
Augusta, Georgia 30904
706 364-6219**



**Sunday After the Holy Cross
17 September 2023**

Sunday After the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross



Expiation for the World

THE GREAT FEASTS OF THE CHURCH are each celebrations of an aspect of the mystery of Christ: Of these feasts Pascha is considered “the Feast of Feasts,” the center of our Church life, the mystery of Christ’s resurrection. While Pascha is celebrated with feasting, the Great and Holy Week which leads up to Pascha observes the last events of Christ’s earthly life along with His death and burial by fasting.

Each Sunday celebrates the resurrection with the Eucharistic banquet, while each Wednesday and Friday remembers Christ’s betrayal and death – again, with fasting.

Next in importance to Pascha are “the Twelve Great Feasts” which celebrate events of Christ’s life, of His Mother, of His ascension and the coming of the Spirit. Several of these are preceded by days or seasons of fasting. The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is the only one observed by simultaneous feasting and fasting!

Our Reasons for Feasting

The immediate historical events celebrated on this feast are, first of all, the unearthing of the Cross in the fourth century during the expedition led by St Helena to adorn the Holy Land with fitting shrines to Christ. The second event remembered is the recovery of the cross in the seventh century by Byzantine forces fourteen years after it had been captured by Persian invaders.

Two traditions common among Eastern Christians celebrate the discovery of the cross. It is said that St. Helena’s workmen were led to the site of the cross by the fragrant aroma of basil growing there. It is customary to adorn the cross and, in some places, the entire church with sprigs of basil. Some basil would be given to people when they venerate the Cross to take home and adorn their icons. In some parts of Greece basil would be ground and added to the dough used to make prosphora.

A second festive act observed throughout the Middle East in both Byzantine and Oriental Churches is the lighting of bonfires, usually after the vespers or vigil of the feast. When the cross was unearthed by St. Helena's expedition, the news of this discovery was spread from Jerusalem to Constantinople by a series of bonfires set on the mountains along the coast through Asia Minor. Today's bonfires are a popular re-enactment of that event.

The recovery of the Cross is remembered by another festive act – the one which gives this feast its name. When the victorious Byzantine army returned the Cross to Jerusalem, Patriarch Zachariah “exalted” the Cross, lifting it high for the veneration of the people who continually cried out *Kyrie eleison* as they gazed on the Cross. In our ceremony of the exaltation, the Cross is raised high in each direction – north, south, east and west – to bless the entire world as the people repeatedly chant *Kyrie eleison*.

Our most basic reason for feasting on this day, however, is what took place on the Cross. As St. John Chrysostom described it, “The Cross has taken away sin. It was an expiation for the world, a reconciliation of the ancient enmity. It opened the gates of heaven, changed those who hated into friends; it took our human nature, led it up to heaven, and seated it at the right hand of God's throne. And it brought to us ten thousand other blessings” (*Homily 3 against the Judaizers*).

The first sticheron sung at vespers on this feast echoes this festive sentiment: “By its elevation, the Cross is like an appeal to the whole creation to adore the blessed Passion of Christ our God who was suspended on it, for Christ destroyed by this Cross the one who had destroyed us. In His great goodness, He brought us back to life after we had been dead, and He beatified us and made us worthy of Heaven, for He is merciful. Wherefore, we exalt His name with great rejoicing and glorify His infinite condescension.”

Our Reason for Fasting

We also observe the feast of the Cross by fasting – not in anticipation of the feast but on the feast itself. Church directives say that September 14 is a strict fast day, on whatever day of the week it falls. So we may be called upon to fast on Saturday or even on Sunday. The fast is mitigated on weekends (wine and oil are permitted) but not completely abolished. Since Sunday is always a Eucharistic day, today's fast means that we do not eat until we receive Holy Communion. After that, we do not eat meat, fish or dairy products.

The Church's reason for fasting on this day is not to lament the death of Christ, which as we have seen is a source of blessings. Rather we fast because of our sins, committed despite the fact that we know what Christ has done for us on the cross and still prefer to follow our own egos rather than following His way. We do well to be distressed when we look on the Cross – not for the Lord's sake (He is risen!) – but because our salvation, brought about on the Cross, means so little to us.

The mention of fasting usually prompts two reactions. Some overly meticulous people tend to overemphasize fasting rules in a legalistic way. Others, imbued with a pietistic ideas about devotion, see fasting and any discipline involving the body, such as prostrations, kissing icons, etc. as unspiritual.

St Paul would not agree. He definitely saw that the body becomes an important component in worship when we use it in a sacrificial way. “*I beseech you therefore, brethren,*” he wrote, “*by the mercies of*

*God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1). When we refrain from food and drink, from sleep, from sexual activity or from any normal physical activity we make our longing an offering to God. In this way we push the physical beyond itself into the spiritual realm. Surrendering our physical desires becomes a *logike latreia*, a reasoned or conscious act of worship of the One who has given us all things.*

Sharing in the Mystery of the Cross

“The Lord accomplished our salvation by His death on the Cross: on the Cross He tore up the handwriting of our sins; through the Cross He reconciled us with our God and Father; and through the Cross He brought down upon us grace-filled gifts and all heavenly blessings. But this is the Lord’s Cross itself. Each of us becomes a partaker of its salvific power in no other way than through our personal cross.

“When the personal cross of each of us is united with Christ’s Cross, the power and effect of the latter is transferred to us and becomes, as it were, a conduit through which ‘*every good gift and every perfect grace*’ (James 1:17) is poured forth upon us from the Cross of Christ.

“From this it is evident that the personal cross of each of us is as essential to the work of salvation as the Cross of Christ.”

~ *St Theophan the Recluse*

**Calling ALL Fathers and Sons**

**Trail Life USA is a church-based,
Christ-centered, boy-focused
mentoring and discipleship journey
that speaks to the heart of a boy.**

JOIN US **Thursdays at 6:30pm**
in St. Teresa of Avila's Ed Building
Rooms 3-4

 GA2011Troopmaster@gmail.com
TrailLifeUSA.com


Trail Life
Our Motto is
Walk Worthy



Upcoming Calendar

Sept. 27th, 5pm – Parish Growth Committee

Oct 9-13 – Annual Clergy Conference

Sunday Collections

Attendance	Date	Collection
44	23 July 2023	540.00
22	30 July 2023	0.00
55	6 August 2023	1,550.51
32	13 August 2023	133.81
37	20 August 2023	146.22
39	27 August 2023	21.00
29	3 September 2023	511.50
40	10 September 2023	618.00

Divine Liturgy Intentions:

For the Living:

Bishop Francois, Fr. John Azar, Fr. James Graham, David Mangelsdorf, Brian Frank, Nookid Graham, Ali de la Vega, Dn. Kent & Diana Plowman, Mandie, Nick Baiad, Charlie & Kathleen Barnette, Richie Damici, Alfonso de la Vega, Medical Personnel and First Responders

For the Dead:

James Kupar

Announcements

We are live-streaming on our Facebook page at the following days & times:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 8:00AM, The Third Hour

Friday – 6:00 PM Weekday Vespers

Saturday – 6:00PM Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00AM Orthros & 10:00AM Divine Liturgy

WE'VE BEGUN PRAYING the 3rd Hour on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8am. This is a short prayer service from our version of the Liturgy of the Hours. It lasts less than 20 minutes or so. Come join us!

PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES AROUND TOWN –Most Holy Trinity parish will be hosting a Men's Holy Hour every Friday morning from 6-7am. There will also be a coffee hour and reflection time afterwards – Men from all parishes are invited to attend for whatever portion of the time they are available. For the Ladies – St. Joseph's will be hosting a Women's Holy Hour on the first Monday of each month at 7pm.

Resurrectional Troparion

(Tone 7)



You des-troyed Death by Your Cross, You o-pened Par-a-



- dise to the thief. You changed the weep-ing of



the Myrrh-bear-ers, and com-man-ded Your A-pos-tles to



pro-claim that You, O Christ God have ri-sen



gran-ting to the world great mer-cy.

Kondakion of the Holy Cross

(Tone 2)



O Christ our God who chose by Your free vo - li - tion



to be e - le - va - ted u - pon the Ho - ly Cross,



grant Your mer - cies to Your new peo - ple who are called



by Your name, in Your po - wer glad - den the hearts of our



Pub - lic Au - thor - i - ties, strenth - en them in ev - 'ry good



deed so that Your true al - li - ance may



be for them a wea - pon of peace and a stan - dard



of vic - to - ry.

Prokimenon

Reader: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.

All: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul! You are very great indeed, O Lord my God!

All: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Reader: How great are your works, O Lord!

All: In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Readings for the Week:

Monday:	Eph 1:22-2:3	Luke 4:38-44
Tuesday:	Eph 2:19-3:8	Luke 5:12-16
Wednesday:	Eph 3:8-21	Luke 5:33-39
Thursday:	Eph 4:14-17	Luke 6:12-19
Friday:	Eph 4:17-25	Luke 6:17-23
Saturday:	1 st Cor 14:20-25	Luke 5:17-26

Saints of the Week:

Sept. 17: 4th Day of the Cross; Holy martyr Sophie and her daughters, Faith, Hope and Charity
Sept. 18: 5th Day of the Exaltation of the Cross; Holy Father Eumenius, Bishop of Gortyna
Sept. 19: 6th Day of the Cross; Holy Martyrs Trophimus, Sabbatius & Dorymedes
Sept. 20: 7th Day of the Cross; Great-martyr Eustathius, his wife Theopista and their children Agapius and Theopista
Sept. 21: Leave-Taking of the Feast of the Cross; Holy Apostle Codratus of Magnesia
Sept. 22: Holy hieromartyr Phocas, Bishop of Sinope
Sept. 23: Conception of the Forerunner, John the Baptist
Sept. 24: Holy Protomartyr and Equal of the Apostles Thecla

Word Search

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Anyone
Ashamed
Cross
Death
Deny
Exchange
Father
Follow
Generation
Good News

Live
Lose
Loss
Power
Profit
Save
Soul
Take up
Wishes

Parish Information:

Rt. Rev. Michael Skrocki, JCD
Pastor

abounamike@aol.com

Knights of Columbus
JFK Council

1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm
Most Holy Trinity

4th Degree Assembly
2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm
St. Ignatios

Publicans Prayer Group
Postponed until Further Notice

New Parishioners:
Please register with Fr. Michael.

Mystery of Holy Confession
Please contact Fr. Michael to set up a convenient time.

Mystery of Christian Initiation
Expectant parents should notify Fr. Michael prior to the birth of the child. Adult converts should contact Fr. Michael so arrangements may be made for any necessary instruction and sacraments.

Mystery of Holy Crowning
Those planning to marry should notify the Fr. Michael
at least six months prior to the desired Wedding date.

Mystery of Holy Anointing
Please notify Fr. Michael when you or a family member is in need of anointing.

To report sexual abuse by clergy, parish personnel or volunteers of the Eparchy of Newton, please call the **Victim Assistance Coordinator** at 1-800-479-5910.