Reader’s ‘Great’ Vespers on Saturday, September 26th

16th Sunday After Pentecost –– Elevation (Exaltation) of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of the Lord –– Tone 7

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Glory to Thee O God, glory to Thee!

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life, come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. ***(Thrice)***

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. ***(Thrice)***

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

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

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

O come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever.  The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand.  At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid.  The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them.  Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth.  He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run.  They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst.  Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.  He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works.  He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man.  To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart.  The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted.  There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them.  The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.  He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down.  Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad.  Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled.  Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return.  Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.  Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works.  Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being.  May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord.  O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night.  How magnified are Thy works, O Lord!  In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

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

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.  Glory to Thee, O God. ***Thrice****.*

Lord, have mercy. ***Forty Times***

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

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in Him with trembling. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Arise O Lord, save me, O my God! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Salvation belongs to the Lord: Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Glory to Thee, O God. ***Three Times***

Lord, have mercy ***Three Times***

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

In the 6th Tone: Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me.

Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord. \* Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; \* attend to the voice of my supplication, \* when I cry unto Thee. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth \* as incense before Thee, \* the lifting up of my hands \* as an evening sacrifice. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips.

Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins.

With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen.

The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head.

For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been.

They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades.

For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity.

The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by.

With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication.

I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare.

When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths.

In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare.

I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me.

Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul.

I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living.

Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low.

Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison:  that I may confess Thy name.

The righteous shall wait patiently for me until Thou shalt reward me.

Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice.

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

For Thy name’s sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.

For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

The exalted Cross calls all of creation

to praise the pure Passion,

the Passion of Christ who was exalted on it.

On the Cross He killed the one who had killed us!

Christ has brought us back to life!

He has adorned us, making us worthy to live in the heavens!

## We rejoice and exalt His Name, //

and we magnify His condescension!

O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.

Moses prefigured you when he lifted up his hands

defeating the tormentor Amalek.

O precious Cross, the glory of the faithful,

the confirmation of sufferers,

the protection of the righteous,

the salvation of all the saints.

Creation rejoices and celebrates seeing you exalted.

We glorify Christ through you,

for in His infinite goodness //

He brought us together who had gone astray.

For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, and the truth of the Lord abideth forever.

O precious Cross surrounded by angels,

today we exalt you,

with our hearts and lips we kiss you,

## receiving sanctification and singing:

“Exalt Christ and fall down in worship //

before His divine footstool.”

In the 2nd Tone: Glory … now and ever….:

Come, all people!

Let us fall down in worship before the blessed Tree

For by the Cross, eternal justice has come to pass.

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!

The curse is destroyed by the righteous sentence

of the Just One who was condemned unjustly!

The tree has been healed by the Tree!

The Passion of the passionless God has destroyed the passions of the

condemned!

Glory to Your dispensation, O Christ, //

our gracious King and the Lover of man!

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father, O Jesus Christ: Having come to the setting of the sun, having beheld the evening light, we praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: God.  Meet it is for Thee at all times to be praised with reverent voices, O Son of God, Giver of life.  Wherefore, the world doth glorify Thee.

Prokeimenon in the 6th Tone:The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

The Lord is robed with strength, and has girded Himself

For He has established the world so that it should never be moved

Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore

The Lord is King,/ He is robed in majesty!

**The reading is from the book of Exodus!**

Then Moses led Israel onward from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur; they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” And he cried to the LORD; and the LORD showed him a tree, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet.

There the LORD made for them a statute and an ordinance and there he proved them, saying, “If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases upon you which I put upon the Egyptians; for I am the LORD, your healer.” Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; and they encamped there by the water.

They set out from Elim, and all the congregation 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.

### **The reading is from the book of Proverbs!**

### My son, do not despise the LORD’s discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights. Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gets understanding, for the gain from it is better than gain from silver and its profit better than gold.

### She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called happy.

### **The reading is from the prophecy of Isaiah!**

### Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut; that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; those nations shall be utterly laid waste. The glory of Lebanon shall 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.

### The sons of those who oppressed you shall come bending low to you; and all who despised you shall bow down at your feet; they shall call you the City of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, with no one passing through, I will make you majestic forever, a joy from age to age. You shall suck the milk of nations, you shall suck the breast of kings; and you shall know that I, the LORD, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Lord have mercy. ***Forty times***

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

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin.  Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages.  Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.  Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Master, give me understanding of Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes.

O Lord, Thy mercy endureth forever; disdain not the work of Thy hands.  To Thee is due praise, to Thee is due a song, to Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.  Amen.

Lord, have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

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

At the Litiya: Tone 1

Today the divinely commanded Word of David is fulfilled.

We fall in worship before the footstool of Your most pure feet,

putting our trust in Your protection we cry, O Bountiful One:

Let the light of Your countenance shine on us!

By the exaltation of Your Cross, O merciful Christ, //

exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians!

In the 4th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Moses prefigured the power of the Cross,

when he stretched out his hands.

The people were strengthened and did prevail,

so Amalek, was defeated in the wilderness.

But now the Cross is exalted!

Today this power is realized in us!

Evil demons are driven away!

Creation is delivered from corruption

by the gifts which the Cross has brought.

We rejoice in worship and sing: //

“How manifold are Your works, O Lord, glory to You!”

At the Apostikha: In the 5th Tone:

Rejoice, O Life-bearing Cross,

the invincible banner of godliness;

the gate of paradise, the protection of the faithful!

The Cross is the might of the Church.

Through it corruption is abolished.

Through it the pow’r of death is crushed

and we are raised from earth to heaven!

The invincible weapon of peace!

The Cross is the enemy of demons,

the glory of the martyrs,

the haven of salvation //

which grants the world great mercy!

Verse: Extol the Lord our God; worship at His footstool for He is holy!

Rejoice, O Cross of the Lord,

through you mankind has been delivered from the curse,

shattering the enemy by your exaltation!

O Cross, worthy of all honor,

you are a sign of true joy;

you are our help, you are the strength of the faithful,

you are the pow’r of righteous men,

you are the majesty of priests.

All who sign themselves with you are freed from danger.

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, //

who grants the world great mercy!

Verse: God is our King before the ages, working salvation in the midst of the

earth!

Rejoice, O guide of the blind,

physician of the sick and resurrection of the dead!

O precious Cross, you raised us up when we were fallen into mortality.

Through you corruption has been destroyed;

through you incorruption has blossomed forth.

We mortals are made divine

and the devil is completely overthrown!

Seeing you exalted today by the hands of bishops,

we exalt Him who was lifted high upon you

and we fall in worship before you, //

freely drawing from you great mercy!

In the 8th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Moses prefigured the Cross and defeated Amalek;

David ordered worship at Your footstool.

So today we sinners fall in worship

before Your precious feet, O Christ.

We cry to You, who was crucified: //

“Make us worthy, with the thief, of Your Kingdom, O Lord!”

Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light of revelation for the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. ***(Thrice)***

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. ***(Thrice)***

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

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us. Amen.

In the 1st Tone:

O Lord, save Thy people

and bless Thine inheritance.

Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians

over their adversaries,

and by virtue of Thy Cross, //

preserve Thy habitation!

More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

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

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord bless!

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, by the Power of the Precious and Life-Creating Cross, and of all the saints, O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us. Amen.