



ST. NICHOLAS OF MYRA
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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 Served by: Rev. Stephen Casmus



SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
Glory to Jesus Christ!

SEP 09, 2018
Glory forever!

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DIVINE LITURGY

Sunday 10:00 AM Holydays 7:00 PM

Confession: Sunday 9:00-9:30 AM or by appointment

Welcome to all visitors to St. Nicholas Church. If you are new and wish to register as a parishioner, please see Fr. Stephen after the Divine Liturgy.

Parish Membership

The Family of Saint Nicholas of Myra is open to any Catholic, and to anyone:

- Who is interested in seeking the Lord Jesus Christ through His Word and Sacred Mysteries.
- Who accepts the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Who will help us form a community based on the Lord's love.
- Who is willing to grow as a Christian within the legitimate traditions of the Byzantine Catholic Church.
- Who acknowledges the authority of the Pope, Bishop and Pastor.
- Who will attend Liturgical Services on Sunday, and on the Great Holydays.
- Who is willing to support the growth of the Church by sharing their Time, Talent and Treasure.
- Who will participate in the yearly Eparchial Appeal

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

SUN. SEP 09—Sunday before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy
 Gal 6:11-18, John 3:13-17

FRI. SEP 14—The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy
 7:00 PM Divine Liturgy
 1 Cor 1:18-24, John 19:6-11, 13-21, 5-27, 30-35

SUN. SEP 16—Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy
 Gal 2:16-20, Mark 8:34-9:1

Please join us in the hall after the liturgy for light refreshments and fellowship.

PRAY FOR THE SICK & INFIRMED OF OUR PARISH & PARISHIONERS RELATIVES:
 Paul Bruckler, Robert Gubany, Teresa Sandoval and Gloria Brissette.

The Fontana Breakfast Lion's Club hosts **BINGO** here at St. Nicholas on **Saturday evenings**. The kitchen has become a significant source of income for the parish. Please participate in this fundraising effort. It is a good opportunity to get to know your fellow parishioners. Many hands make light work, but currently there are few that regularly participate. Please sign up in the hall to ensure there are at least four working.

The Fontana Breakfast Lion's Club also sponsors a **potluck meal with BINGO** at 2:00 PM on the third Sunday of the month to thank the parish for the use of our hall.

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

by Scott P. Richert

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, celebrated every year on September 14, recalls three historical events: the finding of the True Cross by Saint Helena, the mother of the emperor Constantine; the dedication of churches built by Constantine on the site of the Holy Sepulchre and Mount Calvary; and the restoration of the True Cross to Jerusalem by the emperor Heraclius II. But in a deeper sense, the feast also celebrates the Holy Cross as the instrument of our salvation. This instrument of torture, designed to degrade the worst of criminals, became the life-giving tree that reversed Adam's Original Sin when he ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden.

History of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

After the death and resurrection of Christ, both the Jewish and Roman authorities in Jerusalem made efforts to obscure the Holy Sepulchre, Christ's tomb in the garden near the site of His crucifixion. The earth had been mounded up over the site, and pagan temples had been built on top of it. The Cross on which Christ had died had been hidden (tradition said) by the Jewish authorities somewhere in the vicinity.

Saint Helena and the Finding of the True Cross

According to tradition, first mentioned by Saint Cyril of Jerusalem in 348, Saint Helena, nearing the end of her life, decided under divine inspiration to travel to Jerusalem in 326 to excavate the Holy Sepulchre and attempt to locate the True Cross. A Jew by the name of Judas, aware of the tradition concerning the hiding of the Cross, led those excavating the Holy Sepulchre to the spot in which it was hidden.

Three crosses were found on the spot. According to one tradition, the inscription *Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum* ("Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews") remained attached to the True Cross. According to a more common tradition, however, the inscription was missing, and Saint Helena and Saint Macarius, the bishop of Jerusalem, assuming that one was the True Cross and the other two belonged to the thieves crucified alongside Christ, devised an experiment to determine which was the True Cross.

In one version of the latter tradition, the three crosses were taken to a woman who was near death; when she touched the True Cross, she was healed. In another, the body of a

dead man was brought to the place where the three crosses were found, and laid upon each cross. The True Cross restored the dead man to life.

The Dedication of the Churches on Mount Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre

In celebration of the discovery of the Holy Cross, Constantine ordered the construction of churches at the site of the Holy Sepulchre and on Mount Calvary. Those churches were dedicated on September 13 and 14, 335, and shortly thereafter the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross began to be celebrated on the latter date. The feast slowly spread from Jerusalem to other churches, until, by the year 720, the celebration was universal.

Why Do We Celebrate the Feast of the Holy Cross?

It's easy to understand that the Cross is special because Christ used it as the instrument of our salvation. But after His Resurrection, why would Christians continue to look to the Cross?

Christ Himself offered us the answer: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). The point of taking up our own cross is not simply self-sacrifice; in doing so, we unite ourselves to the sacrifice of Christ on His Cross.

When we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, the Cross is there, too. The "unbloody sacrifice" offered on the altar is the participation in Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross. When we receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, we do not simply unite ourselves to Christ; we nail ourselves to the Cross, dying with Christ so that we might rise with Him.

"For the Jews require signs, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness . . . " (1 Corinthians 1:22-23). Today, more than ever, non-Christians see the Cross as foolishness. What kind of Savior triumphs through death?

For Christians, however, the Cross is the crossroads of history and the Tree of Life. Christianity without the Cross is meaningless: Only by uniting ourselves to Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross can we enter into eternal life.