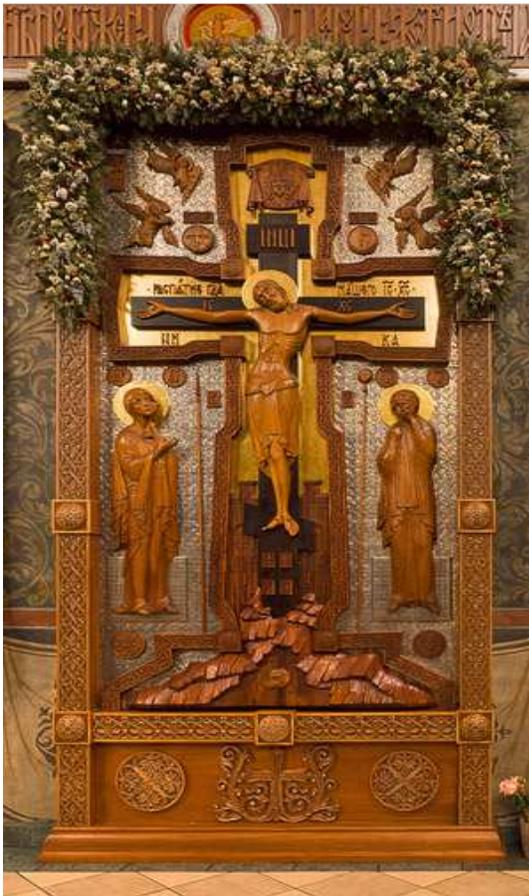


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**Sunday, March 19, 2023  
Divine Liturgy Sundays at 9:30 AM  
Confessions 8:45-9:15 AM**

**Sunday of the Cross  
Крестопоклонная**



***Крест хранитель всея  
вселенныя. Крест красота  
Церкви. Крест царей  
держава. Крест верных  
утверждение. Крест  
ангелов слава и демонов  
язва.***

***The Cross is the preserver of  
the whole universe. The  
Cross is the beauty of the  
Church. The Cross is the  
strength of kings. The Cross  
is the support of believers.  
The Cross is the glory of the  
Angels and the sting of the  
demons.***

On this Sunday of Lent we venerate the Precious and Life-giving Cross. It is placed before us now to refresh our souls and to encourage us who may be filled with a sense of bitterness, resentment or depression. It reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice. The wood of the

Cross sweetens the days of the Fast, which are bitter and often grievous because of our tears. Yet Christ comforts us during our course through the Fast, guiding and leading us by His hand to the spiritual Jerusalem on high by the power of His Resurrection.

As the Holy Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is placed in the middle of the Fast, as the

ancient tree of life was placed in the middle of the garden of Eden. By this our Holy Fathers wish to remind us of Adam's gluttony as well as of the fact that through this Tree, condemnation has been abolished. Therefore if we bind ourselves to the Holy Cross, we shall never encounter death but shall inherit life eternal.

*(excerpted from the Synaxarion)*

## **Неделя Крестопоклонная**

“Посреди Святой Четыредесятницы Святая Церковь предлагает чествованию и поклонению Святой Крест Господень... Она хочет внушить всем намерение до конца жизни шествовать вслед за Господом под крестом, который каждого принята на себя.

За Господом крестоносцем нельзя идти без креста; и все, идущие за Ним, непременно идут с крестом. Что же такое этот крест? Всякого рода неудобства, тяготы и прискорбности, налагающие извне и изнутри на пути добросовестного исполнения заповедей Господних, в жизни по духу Его предписаний и требований. Такой крест так сросен с христианином, что где христианин, там и крест, а где нет этого креста, там нет и христианина. Всесторонняя льготность и жизнь в утехах не к лицу христианину истинному. Задача его себя очистить и исправить. Он, как больной, которому надо делать то прижигания, то отрезания, а этому как быть без боли? ... Радуйся же, чувствуя на себе крест: ибо это знак, что ты идешь вслед Господа, путем спасения, в рай. Потерпи немного, Вот-вот конец и венцы!”  
*(Свя. Феофан Затворник)*



The attitude in the Church of God to the Cross of the Lord sometimes seems unusual and surprising to the world. Yes, and you and I, being people in many respects sincere, and not spiritual, also sometimes share these bewilderments with the world. For example, why has the attitude to the Cross been maintained in church tradition for two millennia as

a special, incomprehensible, but effective living force? After all, even now, during Great Lent, we pray every day during divine services: “Invincible and incomprehensible, and the Divine power of the Honorable and Life-Giving Cross, do not leave us sinners!”

What does it mean to “take up your cross and follow Christ”? We know that this is something very important - nothing less than a necessary condition for the salvation of each of us. “But what is it to take up your cross?” people ask. “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for the sake of Me and the Gospel will save it” (Mark 8:35).

Life and soul in ancient consciousness were a single concept. And whoever, for the fulfillment of the commandments of Christ, endures the inevitable suffering in our world - from people, from the devil, from a cruel struggle with his passions, who even loses his very life for the sake of God and the Gospel, he will gain the Kingdom!

This is the teaching of our Savior and Lord. And if we try to fulfill all this not only in words, but also in deeds, then we can hope that we are really His disciples. Let us remember that the Cross is an image and a victorious banner of the incomprehensible feat of Christ for us: the Lord alone, in spite of the whole world, won, fulfilling the will of His Heavenly Father.

But every Christian cross also absorbs the image of the feat of the innumerable army of the faithful disciples of Christ. In monastic cells and in dungeons, in suffering and in victories, in apostolic sermons all over the world and in modest lifelong labors of lay ascetics unknown to the world, they carried their cross, their feat of fulfilling the commandments of God in our world lying in evil.

Let us never be ashamed to show ourselves as Christians! And remembering everything that we thought and talked about today, passing by the temple crowned with a cross, we will never neglect the precious opportunity to draw strength and bow to all that holy, great and life-giving power that is contained in the saving image of the Cross of the Lord. Amen. *(Archim Tikhon Shevkunov)*