

September 14, 2025: Sunday of the Universal Elevation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross

The Sixth Ecumenical Council held in Trullo (680).

Epistle: 1 Cor. 1:18-24 – Gospel: John 19:6-11,13-20,25-28,30-35

NEXT SUNDAY: Sept. 21, After the Elevation
Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20 – Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

MISSIONARY SEMINAR (In Greek)

ORGANIZED BY THE OFFICE OF EXTERNAL MISSION

The Missionary Seminar will resume, and its annual program of lectures will aim, as much as possible, to address theological and contemporary spiritual, catechetical, and other needs and challenges of our time in the vineyard of Mission.

THE PURPOSE of the seminar is to create a “reservoir” of well-trained people who wish to serve in the vital field of Missionary work.

During the academic year 2025–2026, fifteen (15) online sessions will be held, each lasting two hours, every other Saturday at 6:00 PM.

The seminar classes will begin on Saturday, October 18, 2025. A certificate of participation will be awarded.

Requirements: Applicants must submit: (a) Proof of studies (at least a High School Diploma), and (b) two recent photographs.

For more information, you may contact:

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73rd Year

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THE SUNDAY EPISTLE (1 Corinthians 1:18-24)

The preaching about the Cross

Brethren, the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart." Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

For many centuries, on this day when the Elevation of the Precious Cross is celebrated, the bishop or priest stands in the center of the Church and lifts the Cross high above the congregation, blessing the faithful in the four directions of the horizon, while the choir chants “Lord, have mercy.” This was the celebration in the Christian empire, which was born under the sign of the Cross on the day when Emperor Constantine the Great saw the vision: “In this sign, be victorious.” It is the feast of the triumph of Christianity over kingdoms and civilizations, the feast of the Christian world which now lies upon the spiritual ruins of

its own progress and development, and which continues to collapse before our eyes, regardless of whether this collapse is beautified to appear as ascent and progress.

“The beauty of the Church”

This ancient festive ceremony is performed today during the Divine Liturgy. The chanters once again sing the magnificent hymn: “The Cross, the beauty of the Church...” However, the majority of people surrounding our Churches do not participate in this mystical triumph. Millions of people will continue to live their normal lives, with the inevitable upheavals of life, their joys and sorrows, without any reference to what is happening inside the Church. And this happens because people of our time do not want to realize that the Cross of Christ, which our Church so strongly presents continuously, is three essential things:

The life-giving wood

The Cross of Christ is the tree of life. The Cross, in the times of the Old Testament and up until the era of Christ, was the most dishonorable means of executing criminals and lawbreakers of the time, the ultimate symbol of death. But how great is the power of God! This horrifying instrument of execution was instantly transformed into the tree of life, a life-giving instrument, at the moment when the body of the God-Man was hung upon it and stained its wood with the blood of the innocent one. From that moment on, the Cross became a symbol of life, strength, and creation, continuously accompanying the creative journey of the Church through space and time.

Symbol of the Kingdom of God

The Cross of Christ is the symbol of victory and of the Kingdom of God. Our Lord was never more a king during His earthly life than when He ascended Golgotha, bearing the Cross on His shoulders. Never was His royal authority more evident than when Pilate led Him before the crowd – dishonored,

condemned to death – saying, “Behold your king” (John 19:14). Only here can we see the full mystery of Christianity, because through the despised, condemned, and crucified God-Man, the love of God began to illuminate the world and opened a kingdom that no one has the right or the power to close.

Symbol of universal human unity

The Cross of Christ became a symbol of unity among people. In an age of divisions and inequalities, where injustice reigns and personal interest overshadows everything, the Cross of Christ offers itself as the most genuine symbol of human unity. Christ ascended the Cross and, with His two bloodied arms outstretched, embraced all people, abolishing inequalities and divisions. He embraced everyone with the same sincere love and invited them to unite under the symbol of the Cross, all equal among themselves, united in the hope of His Kingdom.

Today, when for many, the Cross of Christ is considered “foolishness,” today when most Christians venerate the Cross of Jesus only mechanically, today when the Cross and the Crucified have been removed from the iconostasis of our souls, we are called – those of us who are still moved by the Passion of Christ and believe in the power of the Cross – to delve into the three truths mentioned above and be led from external veneration to inner union with the Crucified One. Only then will the Feast of the Elevation also lift our own soul to heavenly experiences. Amen!

Archimandrite E. Oik.

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The original text according to the edition of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, with a Modern Greek rendering by Emeritus Professor Christos Voulgaris.