

THIRD SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST
SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS



Icon of the Holy Cross

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CROSS ITSELF?

St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, in a letter written around 350 AD to Emperor Constantius, the son of Constantine the Great, states that the true Cross was found in Jerusalem during the reign of Constantine. From the beginning of the fifth century, church writers and historians attribute the finding of the true Cross to St. Helena, the mother of St. Constantine. In his *Catecheses*, theological discourses which Cyril delivered in Jerusalem beginning in 347 AD, he frequently mentions the sacred Cross. St. Cyril briefly describes a tradition that was followed in Jerusalem on the morning of Holy Friday. The bishop, the clergy and the faithful would gather in the Chapel of the Cross which had been constructed by Constantine near Golgotha, and there they would venerate a large relic of the true Cross which was kept in a beautiful silver and gold reliquary.

St. Cyril is the first writer to comment on the fact that relics of the true Cross had been distributed all over the world. By the beginning of the fifth century, fragments of the true Cross were found in churches, monasteries and even in homes. In fact, St. John Chrysostom (d. 407) observed that many individuals in his day wore small gold reliquaries containing particles of the Cross around their necks. The expression "knock on wood" comes from the time Christians touched their reliquary crosses in times of trouble.

CHANGE YOUR CLOCK



CHANGE YOUR BATTERY

Daylight Saving Time!

This coming Sunday (March 14) is the beginning of Daylight Saving Time. Don't

forget to set your clock **AHEAD** 1 hour before you go to sleep on Saturday, March 13.



He who has become aware of his sins has controlled his tongue, but a talkative person has not yet come to know himself as he should.

– St. John of the Ladder

HAVING COME TO THE MIDPOINT OF THE 40 DAY GREAT AND HOLY FAST...

LET ME REFLECT...

- Have I accepted Great Lent as a “gift” from God, with thanksgiving?
- Have I spent the last three weeks in a meaningfully different way?
- Have I participated in the lenten services that are held during the week, Mon-day through Friday?
- Have I used the lenten prayer of Saint Ephraim in my morning and evening prayers, and at other times throughout the day?
- In addition to the Holy Scriptures, what kind of spiritual reading have I done? Have I learned more about my Faith? Have I read spiritual works which can help me in my prayers, dealing with others, and spiritual faults and needs?
- Am I preparing myself to make a good, honest, and humble Confession? Do I really believe that I am confessing my sins to Jesus Christ? Am I aware that the Lord sees my inner heart and will know if I only recite my sins, instead of being truly sorrowful and deeply committed to avoid repeating them?
- In what ways will I struggle in the second part of Great Lent, that I have so far left unattended?
- What price am I willing to pay in order to die and live in Christ? Am I willing to trade the earth for heaven? Am I willing to deny myself, take up my cross and follow Him to His heavenly Kingdom?

Святкуємо 50-років!

Celebrating 50 Years!

**Українська Католицька Церква Святого Йоана Хрестителя
St. John the Baptizer Ukrainian Catholic Church**

4400 Palm Avenue
La Mesa, CA 91941
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

Pastor: Fr. James Bankston

Парох: о. Яків Бенькстон

frjames@mac.com

Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

A Great, Precious Treasure

Whoever possesses the Cross owns a treasure. By treasure I mean that it is the most excellent of all that is good - in name and in fact. Through the Cross our salvation attains its ultimate greatness and our state of original justice is restored. Without the Cross, Christ would not have been crucified. Without the Cross, He who is life would not have been nailed to the wood. If He had not been crucified the blood and the water, fountains of immortality, which purify the world would not have flowed from His side. The lien of the debt which our sins contracted would never have been torn in two. We would not have been released from bondage. We would not have enjoyed the fruit of the tree. Paradise would yet be closed to us. Without the Cross, death would not have been defeated nor the abode of the dead vacated.

Thus, the Cross is a great and glorious thing. Great. Because it is the source of countless favors which, like the miracles and sufferings of Christ play a decisive role in His work of salvation. Precious. Because the Cross signifies the suffering and at the same time the victory of God: suffering, because on the Cross He voluntarily tasted death. And victory: through the Cross the devil received a mortal wound, and death, with him, was overcome. On the Cross the gates of the kingdom of death were pulled down and the Cross became the salvation of all men.

St. Andrew of Crete