

## Word for the Day

The Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross is celebrated each year on September 14. The Feast commemorates the finding of the True Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by Saint Helen, the mother of the Emperor Constantine.

In the twentieth year of his reign (326), the Emperor Constantine sent his mother Saint Helen to Jerusalem to venerate the holy places and to find the site of the Holy Sepulchre and of the Cross. Relying upon the oral tradition of the faithful, Saint Helen found the precious Cross together with the crosses of the two thieves crucified with our Lord. However, Helen had no way of determining which was the Cross of Christ.

With the healing of a dying woman who touched one of the crosses, Patriarch Macarius of Jerusalem identified the True Cross of Christ. Saint Helen and her court venerated the Precious and Life-Giving Cross along with many others who came to see this great instrument of Redemption.

The Patriarch mounted the ambo (pulpit) and lifted the Cross with both hands so that all of the people gathered could see it. The crowd responded with "Lord have mercy".

This became the occasion of the institution in all of the Churches of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross, not only in memory of the event of the finding of the Cross, but also to celebrate how an instrument of shame was used to overcome death and bring salvation and eternal life.

The Feast is an opportunity outside of the observances of Holy Week to celebrate the full significance of the victory of the Cross over the powers of the world, and the triumph of the wisdom of God through the Cross over the wisdom of this world. This Feast also gives the Church an opportunity to relish the full glory of the Cross as a source of light, hope and victory for Christ's people. It is also a time to celebrate the universality of the work of redemption accomplished through the Cross: the entire universe is seen through the light of the Cross, the new Tree of Life which provides nourishment for those who have been redeemed in Christ.

The **icon** of the Feast of the Precious Cross tells the story of the finding of the Cross and of its Exaltation. Patriarch Macarius is standing in the pulpit elevating the Cross for all to see and venerate (1 & 2). On each side of the Patriarch are deacons holding candles (3). The elevated Cross is surrounded and venerated by many clergy and lay people, including Saint Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine (4).

In the background of the icon is a domed structure that represents the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem. This church was one of the churches constructed and dedicated by Emperor Constantine on the holy sites of Jerusalem.

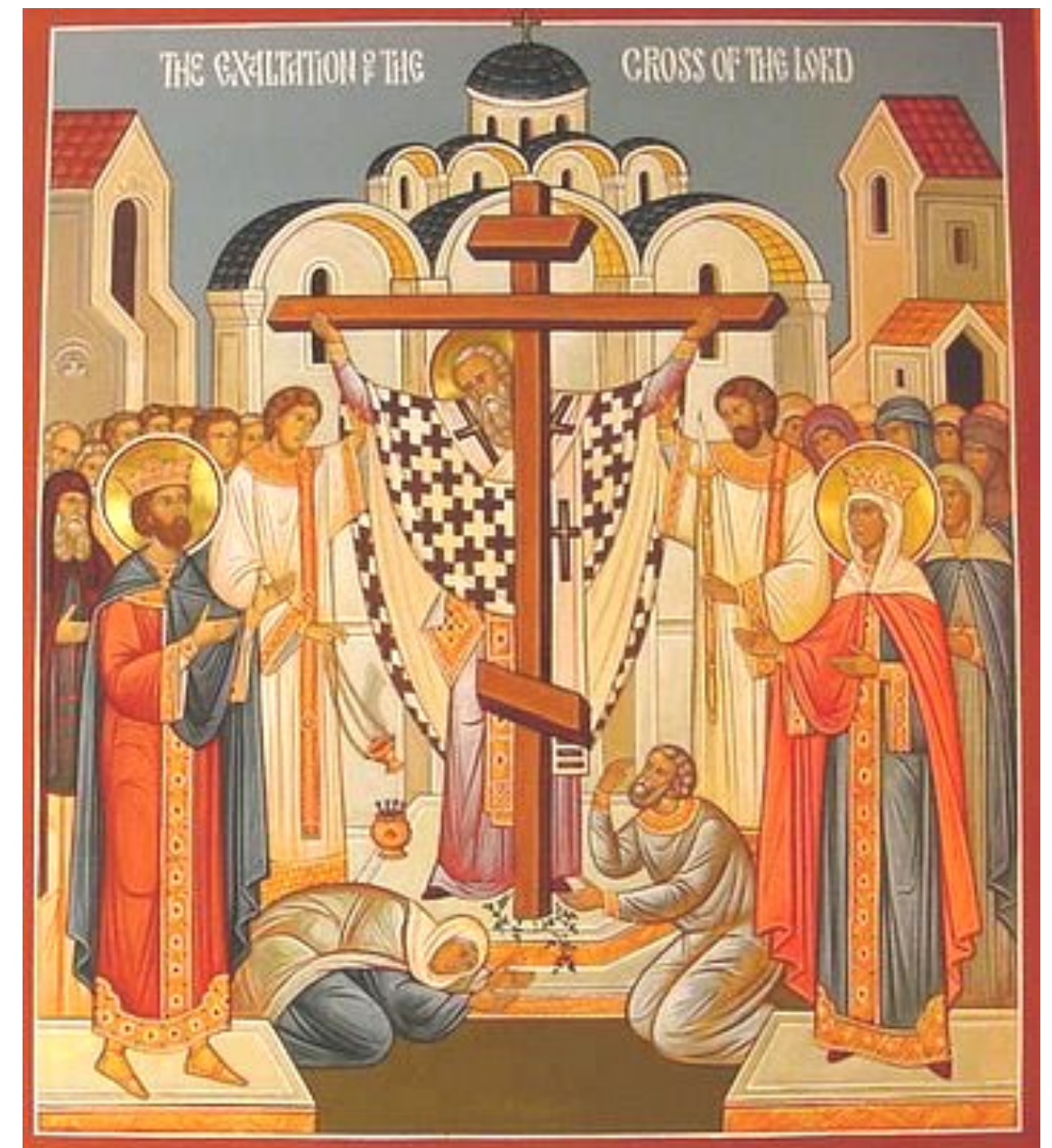
**GOA**

## ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish Of The New England Diocese ✙ Orthodox Church In America

**September 17, 2017**

**15th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 6. Afterfeast of the Elevation of the Cross. Sunday after Elevation.** Martyr Sophia, and her three daughters: Faith (Vera), Hope (Nadézhdá), and Love (Liubóv', Charity), at Rome (ca. 137). Martyrs Theodota at Nicæa (ca. 230). Martyr Agathocleia (ca. 230). 156 Martyrs of Palestine, including Bishop Peleus and Nilus, the Presbyter, Zeno, the Noblemen Paternuthius and Elias, and others (ca. 310).





## Divine Services

Today:.....Blessing and Veneration of the Life-Giving Cross  
 Saturday, Sept. 23.....No Reader's Vespers  
 Sunday, Sept. 24.....Divine Liturgy [note time change].....9:30 a.m.  
 (Hours Begin at 9:00 a.m.)

### Today's Readings

**Epistle:** 2 Corinthians 4:6-15  
**Gospel:** Matthew 22:35-46

### Next Week's Readings

2 Corinthians 6:1-10  
 Luke 5:1-11

### For Next Week, Sept. 24

Hours and Thanksgiving Prayers.....Steven Nikitas  
 Epistle:.....Yanni Tafet  
 Coffee Hour: .....Elena Papurkov

**In Memory: Avaline Nebesnak (July 20)** *Avaline visited frequently from Florida several years ago when her granddaughter was in college; she was a generous donor to St. Nicholas and loved this church! Her son Edward recently sent a donation in her memory with her funeral notice (posted on bulletin board).*

**For the health and well-being** of Archpriest Joseph and Matushka Julia, Abdullah, David, Tony, Stanislav, Leonard, Timothy, Helen, Fenaeda, Raya, Dennis, Svetlana, Konstantin, Vladislav, Nancy, Maria, Al, Michael, Ludmila, Nick, Koren, Gregory, Mat. Myra, Pam, Tim and Brian.

## September Birthdays

Sorin Fiscu (15), Mark Kurchenko (16), Eva Kurchenko (24)

## Announcements

**Parish Council Meeting Today after Coffee Hour**

**New Divine Liturgy Service Time - 9:30 a.m. September 24:** On September 24, we will begin Divine Liturgy services at 9:30 a.m. This is a practice, used by most

OCA and Orthodox churches. Sept 24 is also one of the days we will be working at the AppleSqueeze and will give us time to set up.

**September Charities.** We are collecting for the IOCC relief effort for victims of the disaster in Houston's hurricane/flooding.

## Upcoming Events

**September 21: Third Thursday** in Pittsfield from 5:00 to 8:00. Third Thursday is this week. We can use help plus donations of food or funds to purchase foods. See Rick Goudey for how you can help out.



**Lenox Apple Squeeze: September 23-24:** Next weekend is the 38th annual Lenox Massachusetts Apple Squeeze, ushering in the Berkshire Fall season. St Nicholas will participate, this year with a double tent area. There is a new setup this year and we will be located on Church Street (more details later in the week). We are adding more baked goods. **Sign up sheets are on the new bulletin board in the coffee room.** Please think about baking and helping. See Rick for more information.



**Fall Sunday School:** We will start the year with a get together and Movie Night on Friday October 13. If you can help out for Movie Night we can use your presence! Please let Tanya know. **First day of Sunday School will be October 15.**

**Daily Vespers and Adult Study Group:** We will begin our Fall Daily Vespers services October 11 followed by Adult Study Group, led by Tanya. Participants will listen to and discuss a podcast from Fr. Evan Armatas on Fr. Thomas Hopko's "55 Maxims" of faith.

### Sunday, October 15: By-Laws Update - Save the Date

Our updated by-laws were approved by the Diocese and now await a formal vote by our parish. On October 15 during coffee hour we will vote to officially approve them. The Parish Council will very soon make the new bylaws available to members of the parish. Please come on Oct. 15 to ratify them.

**St. Nicholas Food Basket:** Remember to donate to the local food pantry by bringing canned and nonperishable donations for the basket in the back.

### Collections

Last Week's Collection .....	\$2,314
2017 Budget .....	\$96,142
Progress Towards Budget .....	\$58,897