

**Sunday, 17 September 2023,
15th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday After the Exaltation of the Cross
Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross
Martyr Sophia, and her three daughters: Faith, Hope, and Love**

The First Antiphon

God, my God, attend to me! Why have You forsaken me?

***Refrain:* Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!**

Why are You so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? ***Refrain***

O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. ***Refrain***

You dwell in the sanctuary, the praise of Israel. ***Refrain***

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Amen. ***Refrain***

The Second Antiphon

O God, why do You cast us off forever?

***Refrain:* O Son of God, crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!**

Remember Your congregation, which You have gotten of old! ***Refrain***

Remember Mount Zion, where You have dwelt! ***Refrain***

God is our King before the ages; He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth. ***Refrain***

Only Begotten Son and Immortal Word of God. Who for our salvation willed to be incarnate of the Holy Theotokos and ever Virgin Mary, who without change became man, and were crucified, O Christ our God, trampling death by death; who are one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit save us, save us.

The Third Antiphon

The Lord reigns, let the people tremble! ***Refrain:* Troparion of the Feast (Tone 1)**

O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance!

Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries;

and by virtue of Your Cross, preserve Your habitation!

The Lord reigns, let the people tremble! He sits enthroned upon the Cherubim; let the earth quake!

Refrain

The Lord is great in Zion; He is exalted over all the peoples. ***Refrain***

Bow down in worship to the Lord in His holy court! ***Refrain***

Troparion (Tone 6) (Resurrection)

The Angelic Powers were at Your tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Your grave,
seeking Your most pure body.
You captured hell, not being tempted by it.
You came to the Virgin, granting life.
O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You.

Troparion (Tone 1) (Feast)

O Lord, save Your people,
and bless Your inheritance!
Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians
over their adversaries;
and by virtue of Your Cross,
preserve Your habitation!

Troparion (Tone 3) (St. Matthew)

You heard the divine voice of The Word, and received the light of faith,
and abandoned the office of publican. Then you proclaimed the Good News
of the inexpressible condescension of Christ. Now intercede that those who praise you,
O Apostle Matthew, may be granted forgiveness of sins and great mercy.

Kontakion (Tone 6) (Resurrection)

When Christ God, the Giver of Life,
raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.
He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Glory to the Father . . .

Kontakion (Tone 4) (St. Matthew)

In casting off the tax collector's yoke to shoulder the yoke of justice,
you became a truly able merchant rich in the wisdom of heaven itself.
In preaching the word of truth, you vividly described the final judgment,
urging us to be ready at all times.

Now and ever...

Kontakion (Tone 4) (Feast)

As You were voluntarily raised upon the Cross for our sake,
grant mercy to those who are called by Your Name, O Christ God;
make all Orthodox Christians glad by Your power,
granting them victories over their adversaries
by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Your weapon of peace!

Prokeimenon (Tone 7) (Feast)

Extol the Lord our God: / worship at His footstool for He is holy! (Ps. 98:5)
v. *The Lord reigns, let the people tremble!* (Ps. 98:1a)

Epistle (Galatians 2:16-20) (Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross)

We know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Epistle (2 Corinthians 4:6-15)

It is God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believed, and so I spoke," we too believe, and so we speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia (Tone 1) (Feast)

v. Remember Your congregation, which You have gotten of old! (Ps. 73:2)

v. God is our King before the ages; He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth! (Ps. 73:13)

Gospel (Mark 8:34-9:1) (Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross)

He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

Gospel (Matthew 22:35-46)

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool' ' ? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

Theotokion (Tone 8)

Magnify, O my soul, the most precious Cross of the Lord!

You are a mystical Paradise, O Theotokos,
who, though untilled, have brought forth Christ;
through Him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth.
Now at its Exaltation,
as we bow in worship before it, we magnify you.

Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*

The light of Your countenance has been signed upon us, O Lord. *(Ps. 4:7)*

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!