

SUNDAY September 27, 2020	SAINT NICHOLAS SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH Very Rev. Fr. George Veselinovic , Parish Priest 412-622-4714 (cell) 412-856-8166 (office) dj.veselinovic@yahoo.com www.stnicholasmonroeville.org stnicholasmonroeville@gmail.com
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UNIVERSAL EXALTATION (ELEVATION) OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS
16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The First Antiphon

God, my God, attend to me! Why have You forsaken me? (Psalm 21/22:1)
Why are You so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? (Psalm 21/22:1b)
O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. (Psalm 21/22:2)
You dwell in the sanctuary, the praise of Israel. (Psalm 21/22:3)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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

The Second Antiphon

O God, why have You cast us off forever? (Psalm 73/74:1)
Remember Your congregation, which You have purchased of old! (Psalm 73/74:2)
Remember Mount Zion, where You have dwelt! (Psalm 73/74:2b)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

God is our King before the ages; He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth. (Psalm 73/74:12)

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

Both now and ever... only Begotten-Son...

The Third Antiphon

The Lord reigns, let the people tremble! (Psalm 98/99:1)
The Lord reigns, let the people tremble! He sits enthroned upon the Cherubim; let the earth quake! (Psalm 98/99:1)
The Lord is great in Zion; He is exalted over all the people. (Psalm 98/99:2)
Bow down in worship to the Lord in His holy court! (Psalm 98/99:9)

Refrain: Troparion of the 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!

Entrance Verse

Extol the Lord our God: worship at His footstool for He is holy! (Psalm 98/99:5)

TROPARION - TONE I (ELEVATION OF THE CROSS)

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!

KONTAKION - TONE IV (ELEVATION OF THE CROSS)

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!

(Instead of the Trisagion): Before Your Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Your holy Resurrection, we glorify.

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18-24

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.

Gospel: John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35

At that time, when the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no crime in him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he has made himself the Son of God." When Pilate heard these words, he was the more afraid; he entered the praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore he who delivered me to you has the greater sin." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Pavement, and in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. But standing by the cross of Jesus were his

mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. Then when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished"; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.

Petition to Our Lord and Savior for His Help and Mercy during the COVID-19 pandemic

For our salvation during the time of this pandemic; for protection and deliverance from the Coronavirus; for the health and recovery of those suffering from this virus; and for the guidance of physicians and those who minister to the afflicted, let us pray to the Lord: ***Lord have mercy.***

Eternal Lord, God Almighty, in Your ineffable goodness and love for humankind, look upon us who have gathered in Your Holy Name and those who could not be present; be our constant helper and defender at the time of this pandemic and hear our prayer offered with contrition of heart: Compassionate Lord, save, protect and deliver us from the impending threat of the Coronavirus; grant health and recovery to those suffering from this virus; and guide the hands of physicians and preserve those who minister to the afflicted, let us all say with all our heart and mind Lord have mercy: ***Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.***

(Instead of "It is truly meet ...," we sing:) Tone VIII - 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 Elevation, as we bow in worship before it, we magnify you.

Commemorated Today: The Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving *Cross (Fast day)*; Repose of St. John Chrysostom (407)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **THANK YOU for all your prayers, love, calls, messages, and cooked meals** for Fr. George and his family. Thank God, his surgery went well, and by Our Lord's Grace, he is recovering well. Thank you for your continued prayers.
- **NUT ROLLS – We need YOUR help!** Do you love nut rolls? We know you do! Please – your help is needed so we can offer this delicious treat for Christmas! Even if you can only commit to an hour, or a few hours, contact Rose Cheran at (412) 824-7609 or (724) 953-4123. Helpers

meet on Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. (but that doesn't mean you can only help at that time!). Don't be a stranger – call Rose and have a great time baking while supporting your church.

- **Saturday, October 10 – MEMORIAL SATURDAY – Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.** followed by pomen/memorial service. Please bring with you a list of names for those you wish to commemorate.

- **Sunday, October 11 – FR. GEORGE'S LAST SUNDAY AS PARISH PRIEST – Luncheon following Divine Liturgy on the Patio.** Join us for a fundraiser meal while we gather for "Father's – not goodbye – Just Moving 20 Miles Away." *Social distancing and guidelines still apply.*

- **Transfer of Fr. George** – If you did not receive the email, please refer to Fr. George's letter attached to this bulletin regarding his transfer. Under the Act of His Grace Bishop Irinej, effective October 15th, Fr. George will be the new parish of Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in Whitehall, PA. His last Sunday will be Sunday, October 11th. Fr. Stefan Djoric, current parish priest of Holy Resurrection Church in Steubenville, will serve his first Divine Liturgy as the new parish priest of St. Nicholas on Sunday, October 18th.

- **HVAC – Please see the letter from Fr. George for an update on our HVAC.** To all of those who have donated towards this campaign, thank you!

- **AT-HOME RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** – Although we completed spring/summer Sunday School via Zoom virtual classes – *thank you to the hard-working individuals involved with that* – we will not offer virtual classes when the academic school year resumes in September. (*God willing, when we are permitted to continue with in-person Sunday School, this will be communicated*). As an alternative, Fr. George has compiled a guide for religious education at home. He strongly encourages it be used as a family (or individually for your own personal and spiritual growth). If you did not receive the email with the At-Home Religious Education guide, please contact Fr. George.

- **DONATIONS – Thank you, beloved parishioners, for your continued love and support during the pandemic!** If you have any questions on how to become an EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) Donor, please contact Jovi Jovanovich at jovanovich23@yahoo.com or visit our webpage at www.stnicholasmonroeville.org/onlinecontribution to safely and securely make an electronic donation.

- **SAVE THE DATE – St. Nicholas Christmas Cookie Sale on Saturday, December 4th** from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (pre-orders only). *See the flyer for more details or contact Sandy Tarbuck at (724) 744-2075.*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What do we commemorate on the feast of the Elevation of the Cross?

Saint Helen, the mother of Saint Constantine the Great, when she was already advanced in years, undertook, in her great piety, the hardships of a journey to Jerusalem in search of the cross, about the year 325. A temple to Aphrodite had been raised up by the Emperor Hadrian upon Golgotha, to defile and cover with oblivion the place where the saving Passion had been

suffered. The venerable Helen had the statue of Aphrodite destroyed, and the earth removed, revealing the Tomb of our Lord, and three crosses. Of these, it was believed that one must be that of our Lord, the other two of the thieves crucified with Him; but Saint Helen was at a loss which one might be the Wood of our salvation. At the inspiration of Saint Macarius, Archbishop of Jerusalem, a lady of Jerusalem, who was already at the point of death from a certain disease, was brought to touch the crosses, and as soon as she came near to the Cross of our Lord, she was made perfectly whole. Consequently, the precious Cross was lifted on high by Archbishop Macarius of Jerusalem; as he stood on the ambo, and when the people beheld it, they cried out, "Lord have mercy." It should be noted that after its discovery, a portion of the venerable Cross was taken to Constantinople as a blessing. The rest was left in Jerusalem in the magnificent church built by Saint Helen, until the year 614.

On this day, we also remember also another event connected to the Cross of the Lord, – its return back to Jerusalem from Persia after a 14 year captivity. During the reign of the Byzantine emperor Phokas (602-610) the Persian emperor Khozroes II in a war against the Greeks defeated the Greek army, plundered Jerusalem and led off into captivity both the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord and the Holy Patriarch Zacharios (609-633). The Cross remained in Persia for 14 years and only under the emperor Herakles (610-641), who with the help of God defeated Khozroes and concluded peace with his successor and son Syroes – was the Cross of the Lord returned to Christians from captivity. With great solemnity the Life-creating Cross was transferred to Jerusalem.

In a sermon on the Exaltation of the Cross, Saint Andrew of Crete (commemorated on July 17) says: "The Cross is exalted, and everything true gathers together, the Cross is exalted, and the city makes solemn, and the people celebrate the feast".

Today we fast, in commemoration of this day.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son’ (John 3:16). The Cross is a sign of love: the limitless, immeasurable love of God the Father to humankind. The Righteous Father, Who in His righteousness showed mercy, and has so much mercy for fallen humankind that hands over His Only-Begotten Son for crucifixion. But this love is also shared by the Son. He spreads it with his hands upon the Cross, in both directions. His love is directed to the Father, Whose Essence He shares, with Whom He is consubstantial. His love extends to humankind, to the person whose flesh He assumed, yet without sin. This love illuminates us with the grace of the Holy Spirit. We can understand and receive this love only by the grace of the Holy Spirit, Who also, like the Father and the Son, not only loves, but is Love Itself. Within this fact, that the Lord Triune God is Love, lies our challenge: not only so that we have love ourselves, but that we commune with the Thrice-Holy Love, partaking of this Love, crucifying upon the cross all of our passions, all the pleasures of this world, everything that holds us back from ascending to Him, all our selfhood, our self-love, which divides us from real love, that is from God and our neighbor. We are challenged to love God as He loved the world. The Cross of Christ is the Cross of love, the Cross of Divine love, intersected by love for humankind.”

-Archbishop Mark of Berlin and Germany

ST. NICHOLAS SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

2110 Haymaker Road
Monroeville, PA 15146

Dear Parishioners:

It is time to get ready for the **St. Nicholas Christmas Cookie Sale on Saturday, December 4th from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (pre-orders only)**. It will be totally different this year due to the Covid 19 pandemic. People will not be able to choose the cookies they want, but will buy them already packaged in three sizes.

The nut rolls, apricot rolls, nut horns and lady locks will be prepared at the church by the committee and pre-packaged in one dozen containers and the remainder of the cookies will be prepared by you, our St. Nicholas parishioners. We will have a list of names, phone numbers and what kind of cookie you will be preparing (10 dozen of the same cookie please). In that way, we won't have duplicates and we know how many people will be baking, what kind of cookie they are making, and how many people we can accommodate. We ask that you not make "drop" cookies.

Please think about this now, so that you can call the committee person with your choice of cookie. You may freeze the cookies and drop them off at the church hall at 9:00 a.m. December 2, 2020.

We will have them packaged in containers and have their name and amount they owe on it. Then, we will have a cashier who will collect the checks, credit cards or cash. The buyers will not have to enter the building at all.

The committee person to call is **SANDY TARBUCK at (724-744-2075)**.

Please help us out so that we can help our St. Nicholas church. Thank you.

Rose Marie Cheran and
Sandy Mereles,
Co-Chairpersons

AT-HOME RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Below, you will find activities, crafts, and discussions for use at home. Depending on the ages in your household, read through the suggestions for the entire day, and then tailor your discussions and activities accordingly. I did my best to keep all ages in mind so that this can be a fruitful and enjoyable learning experience for all. (The "Activity" is geared towards younger children, whereas the "Discussion" is more appropriate for older children).

Sunday, September 27 –16th Sunday after Pentecost / The Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross

Read: Epistle: I Corinthians 1:18-24; Gospel: John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35

Activity: Color icon of the Elevation of the Cross attached. Discuss what the cross means to your child. Discuss how the Cross is a source of light, hope and victory for all of Christ's people. Discuss the Resurrection and what it means for us all.

Discussion: In the twentieth year of his reign (326), the Emperor Constantine sent his mother St. Helen to Jerusalem to venerate the holy places and to find the site of the Holy Sepulcher and of the Cross. Relying upon the oral tradition of the faithful, St. 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.

Ending Reflection: 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.

ELEVATION OF THE CROSS

