

## **Third Sunday of the Great Fast**

### **Service of the Exaltation of the Cross**

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*At the Matins Service or just before Divine Liturgy, the priest, vested fully in red, stands before the Holy Table on which lies the Precious Cross with branches of basil or flowers. As the faithful sing "Holy God" he goes around the Holy Table, incensing the Cross from four sides. As the conclusion of "Holy God" is sung, he takes the Cross, and placing it on his head, proceeds around the Holy Table and out of the sanctuary through the north deacon doors. The Cross is preceded with processional candles, the seraphic fans and by the deacon with the censer. The priest stops in front of the Holy Doors, facing the east, when the final "Holy God" is sung, and says:*

*Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive!*

*The priest then takes the Cross to the tetrapod and places it there. As the deacon incenses it from four sides, the faithful sing the Troparion of the Cross, three times:*

#### ***Troparion, Tone 1***

Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance, \* grant victory to Your faithful people against enemies, \* and protect Your community by Your Cross.

*Afterwards, the following is sung three times in the usual manner.*

To Your cross, O Master,  
we bow in veneration,  
and we glorify Your holy Resurrection.

#### ***At the Veneration of the Cross***

*The faithful now come to venerate the Precious Cross as the following verses are sung:*

*In Tone 2*

Come, O faithful, let us bow before the life-giving Cross  
on which Christ, the King of glory, freely stretched out His hands.  
By this He raised us up to our former happiness,  
which we had lost because of the ancient Enemy  
and the bitter pleasure that exiled us from God.  
Come, O faithful, let us bow before the Wood  
which lets us crush the head of the invisible enemy.

Come, all you families of the nations,  
let us venerate the Cross of the Lord with our hymns:  
Rejoice, O perfect redemption of the fall of Adam;  
Rejoice, O venerable Cross.  
Filled with fear and awe, we embrace you; we glorify God, and we say:  
O Lord, You were nailed on the Cross;  
in Your goodness and love, have mercy on us.

*In Tone 5*

Come, O people, let us contemplate the marvelous wonder;  
let us bow before the power of the Cross.  
For the tree of Paradise gave rise to the reign of death,  
and now a Tree has made our life blossom forth,  
when the sinless Saviour was nailed upon it.  
And now, all the nations that are nourished by this incorruptible food sing praises:  
You destroyed death by Your Cross and set us free.  
O Lord, glory to You!

The word of Your prophets Isaiah and David is now fulfilled,  
for they spoke of You, O Lord, and said:  
All the nations shall come to You and bow before You.  
Behold the people who are now filled with Your grace  
in Your sanctuary in the temple of Jerusalem.  
O God of goodness who suffered on the Cross for us  
and gives us life through Your holy resurrection,  
protect us with Your care, O Lord, and save us.

*In Tone 6*

Rising from the depths of the earth on this day,  
the Tree of Life strengthens our faith  
in the resurrection of Christ who nailed on it.  
His raised hands announce His ascension into heaven,  
which permitted Him to dwell in our nature in this fallen world.  
We also cry out in thanksgiving:  
O Lord who was raised on the Cross and raises us with You,  
grant heavenly joy to those who praise Your name.

The four corners of the earth are sanctified today, O Christ our God,  
by the four ends of Your exalted Cross.  
With it, exalt your faithful Christians  
who destroy the power of the enemy through your Cross.  
You are great, O Lord, and wondrous in Your works; glory to You!

The words of the prophets have told of the most holy wood  
by which Adam was delivered from the ancient curse and from death.  
On this day of its exaltation, creation raises its voice  
to beg God for the abundance of his mercy.  
O Lord, your compassion is beyond measure;  
spare us, O God, and save our souls!

*In Tone 8, Glory... Now...*

Behold the words of the prophet Moses are fulfilled, O Lord;  
for he said: You shall see your life suspended before your eyes.  
Today the Cross is exalted, and the world is freed from error.  
Today the Resurrection of Christ is renewed;  
the ends of the earth exalt with joy.  
At the sound of the cymbals of David,

they offer a hymn of praise and say:  
In your goodness and love for all,  
You have brought about our salvation in the middle of the earth, O our God.  
Through your Cross and Resurrection You save us.  
O Lord all-powerful, glory to You!