



Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Ukrainian Catholic Church
(St. Mary's)
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Reverend Alexander Dumenko — Pastor (301) – 421 – 1739

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Sunday Divine Liturgies: 8:30 a.m. Holy Days as scheduled in the Bulletin

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 16-23, 2018

Sunday, September 16 Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

EPISTLE GAL.6:11-18; GOSPEL: MK.8:34-9:1 TONE 8

8:00 a.m. – Confession 8:30 a.m. – For God's Blessings on Our Parishioners & in particular
 for Good health for Anca Nemonian from Ann Woroniak

Sunday, September 23 18th Sunday after Pentecost

EPISTLE 2 COR. 9:6-11; GOSPEL: LK.5:1-11 TONE 1

8:00 a.m. – Confession 8:30 a.m. – For God's Blessings on Our Parishioners & in particular
 for Good health for Marsha & Boyd families from Ann Woroniak

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Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross



On this Sunday after the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and we sing: "We worship Thy Cross, o Lord, and glorify Thy Holy Resurrection!" Today we are celebrating an event that happened in the early 4th century. This event had a profound impact on the life of the early Church and became a great feast in the Christian tradition. This feast relates to the discovery of wooden remains from the Calvary Cross of Jesus. A search for the Holy Cross was organized by Saint Helen, the mother of Saint Constantine (Emperor of Constantinople). At that time the Byzantine Empress visited many Holy places of Palestine and built numerous churches there.

During my own pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1998, the Lord blessed me to go to Mount Calvary (Golgotha) in Jerusalem – to the very spot, where Christ's Cross was found. Today Mount Calvary is adorned by the arches of the magnificent temple, built by the believers in honor of the Resurrection of Christ. Above the place, where the Holy Cross was found, there is an altar table, on which Divine Services are celebrated; above that table there are many hanging lamps that illuminate the Sanctuary. At the first time that I

saw this place, I felt that my eyes were streaming with tears of repentance and my heart was being filled with unspeakable joy, peace and gratitude to God... It appears to me that Saint Helen must have experienced the same feelings after finding Christ's Holy Cross... Having received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, Saint Helen devoted the rest of her life and resources to finding Christ's Holy Cross. This task was extremely difficult, for the enemies of Christianity for the first three centuries that had passed by then, made sure that The Holy Cross would be forgotten by the people...When Saint Helen found the Holy Cross at the Calvary Mountain, her joy knew no boundary. Our Church compares Saint Helen's joy to that, experienced by a couple in love, on the day of their wedding! The second longest prayer, read by the priest during the wedding ceremony, is "Let gladness come upon them, as that, which Saint Helen experienced after finding the precious Cross". One can imagine the joy of the people, whose hearts are filled with love, the smiles and congratulations of their friends, the tears of joy of their parents. Well, the joy of Saint Helen was greater still; there had never been, nor ever will be a greater joy than hers on the Day of Recapturing the Holy Cross! That joy, which she experienced, became a model of pure Christian joy for all people and times. This joy comes from salvation, from the continuation of life, from one's meeting with Our Heavenly Father. This joy is a source of fear, too, because each one of us is redeemed by the precious blood of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. Therefore, people, witnessing the Retrieval of the Cross, rise to the four corners of the earth, exclaiming: "Lord, have mercy upon us!" Let us remember that on the Feast of the "Exaltation of the Holy Cross", the Cross is brought to the middle of the church for us to worship It and also to feel the joy, which Saint Helen experienced herself after finding It. Repentance does not hinder this joy, but rather strengthens our hope and encourages our souls. Besides, this joy reminds us constantly to thank Christ for our salvation. May God help us find the Cross of Christ amidst the bustle of our earthly affairs, and to erect it in our personal lives; let the Exaltation of the Cross bring a maximum number of people as close as possible to Christ, and worship Him and thank Him, who saved us by His crucifixion. Let spiritual joy always be with us! *The Holy Ascension Russo-Greek Catholic Orthodox Church, Skaro*

