



*Jesus Christ, our
Saviour and Redeemer*

Holy Protection Orthodox Church

Greetings on this blessed Lord's Day! Please take a green information sheet if this is your first time here. You can put in any collection basket or hand to greeter

IN EMERGENCY CALL/TEXT 813-406-2620 (Fr.'s cell). If in middle of night and no answer, call 813-659-0123 or 813-451-9829 (Pani's cell). If they are off duty please call Parish Council President below

Schedule

Tone 7

Sunday, September 16

9:45 am Divine Liturgy
11:15 am Fellowship
Youth Education
Counters: Tom and
Mike B

Sunday, September 23

9:45 am Divine Liturgy
11:15 am Fellowship
Youth Education
Counters: Tom and
Natalie B

Sunday, September 30

9:45 am Divine Liturgy
11:15 am Fellowship
Youth Education
Counters: Tom and
Nancy C

Sunday, October 7

10:00 am Divine
Liturgy
11:15 am Fellowship
Youth Education
Counters: Pani and
Barbara

Sunday, October 14

10:00 am Divine
Liturgy
11:15 am Fellowship
Youth Education
Counters: Pani and
Svetlana

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Beginning October 7, start time for Divine Liturgy is 10 am.

Please allow the youth and their families to get their food first at fellowship so the youth can go over the church for their lesson.

We need a volunteer for fellowship next week. Please sign up in the hall if you can do it.

Keep Brian Delp in your prayers as he recovers from open heart surgery.

Did you notice? The floors of the hall and the church have been deep cleaned by Toney and Tina! Also, a few bushes were removed by Ilya, Vasily and Vladislav. We can now see the church sign.

Parish council contacts: Scottie (President): 813-629-6027, Brian (Vice President): (813) 763-5226, Rebecca (Treasurer): (813) 763-5225, Paula (813) 838-4554 (Secretary) Tom Moore Financial Secretary

September shopping list: napkins, Windex

Sign up for fellowship! It can be as simple as bagels or donuts. Please see the board in the hall, or a council member if you have any questions.

We are planning on having a church picnic at Andy and Kathy's on October 28 after church. More details to follow!

Holy Protection's Vision is to be an authentic continuation of Christ's Church locally planted, to operate and to live our lives Biblically according to the will of God, walking the path of salvation that He has given us, and bring others into the life in Christ that we might have the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, living and abiding within us and among us both in this age and in the age to come.

Holy Protection's Mission is that of every parish of God's Holy Orthodox Catholic Church: to strive as a parish, as families of the parish and as faithful individuals, to fulfill His commandments that are summarized with the love of God, neighbor, one another, and even our enemies. This culminates in the Divine Liturgy on the Lord's Day, also fulfilled in the other Sacraments and Services of the Church, and in our homes and lives in prayer, self-restraint, and charitable giving.

Holy Protection's Values Holy Protection Orthodox Church, as a parish of God's Holy Orthodox Catholic Church, is a parish family of God's faithful dedicated to put God and what He wants before ourselves and what we want, because God alone has unselfish motives and knows what is best for us with regard to the one thing needful, eternal life. Holy Protection, therefore, has resolved to put God-given principles first and practice Christianity as delivered by God in Scripture and the living deposit of faith given to the Church both as individuals and together as a church. [Epitome: to live Biblically as faithful followers of Christ and to operate Biblically as a Church]

We assembled the homeless bags. They are by the door, take a few for your car to hand out when driving. Some things you can add: fresh fruit (orange, banana, apple), a bottle of water, cash, granola bar, etc.

When leaving the hall, if you are the last person there, please make sure all the lights are turned off, including the bathrooms. Also, please make sure the air conditioning is turned off. If you are unsure of how to turn off AC, text or call Pani, 813-451-9829, and she will make sure it is off.

Prayer Corner: Please pray for the ailing: Mary, Kathy, Susan, Helen, Neila, Olexander, Anna, John, Carol, Mat. Mary, P.Vera, SD. John, Randee, John, Ryan, Marie, Paul, Mary, Pangratios, Tikon, Vasili, Jeremiah, Dcn. Luke, Maria, John David, Elisabeth, Joshua, Alexander, Nicholas, Rebecca, Genevieve, Panteleimon, Vladimir, Margaret, David, Sarah, Jonathon, Simon, Gene, Judy, Fr. Michael, Fr. John, Anastasia, Demitrios, Alexandra, Israel, George, Michelle, George, Beth, Alex, George, Joseph, Jaqueline, Michael, Geverylyn, Thomas, Norma, Sally, Sarah, Derek, Susan, Lucy, Beth, Kathy, Phyllis, John, David, Shirley, Kalie, Madeline, Thomas, Patricia, Marie, Archimandrite David, Jake, Tom, Beverly, Taylor, Reghyn, Sylvia, Andreas, Josh, Nicole, Joyce, Sandy, Yamileth, Georgina, Kathy, Pam, Ann, Eli, Shay, Ocean, Lauren, Donna, Kim, Lori, Nancy, George, Sharon, Sylvia, Kristi, Gary, Tori

The Elevation of the Cross, celebrated on the fourteenth of September, commemorates the finding of Christ's Cross by Saint Helen, the mother of the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century; and, after it was taken by the Persians, of its recovery by the Emperor Heraclius in the seventh century at which time it was "elevated" in the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem. From this latter event the "universal elevation" of the Cross was celebrated annually in all of the churches of the Christian Empire.

The day of the Elevation of the Cross became, as it were, the national holiday of the Eastern Christian Empire similar to the Fourth of July in the United States. The Cross, the official emblem of the Empire which was placed on all public buildings and uniforms, was officially elevated on this day by the bishops and priests. They blessed the four directions of the universe with the Cross, while the faithful repeated the chanting of "Lord have mercy." This ritual is still done in the churches today after the solemn presentation and elevation of the Cross at the end of the Vigil service of the holy day following the Great Doxology of Matins.

The troparion of the feast which was, one might say, the "national anthem" sung on all public occasions in the Christian Empires of Byzantium and Russia, originally petitioned God to save the people, to grant victory in war and to preserve the empire "by the virtue of the Cross." Today the troparion, and all the hymns of the day, are "spiritualized" as the "adversaries" become the spiritually wicked and sinful including the devil and his armies, and "Orthodox Christians" replace the names of ruling officials of the Empire.

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by the virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation (Troparion).

As Thou was mercifully crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Thy name; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace (Kontakion).

The holy day of the Elevation of the Cross, although it has an obviously "political" origin, has a place of great significance in the Church today. It remains with us as a day of fasting and prayer, a day when we recall that the Cross is the only sign worthy of our total allegiance, and that our salvation comes not by "victories" of any earthly sort but by the only true and lasting victory of the crucifixion of Christ and our co-crucifixion with him.

When we elevate the Cross and bow down before it in veneration and worship to God, we proclaim that we belong to the Kingdom "not of this world," and that our only true and enduring citizenship is with the saints in the "city of God" (Eph 2.19; Heb 11.10; Rev 21-22).

The first Old Testamental reading of the Vespers of the day tells of the "tree" which changes the bitter waters into sweetness—the symbol of the Tree of the Cross (Ex 15.22-16.1). The second reading reminds us that the Lord chastens and corrects those whom He loves and that Divine Wisdom is "a Tree of life to those who lay hold upon her and trust in her, as in the Lord" (Prov 3.11-18). Again the reference is to the Cross which is, as the epistle reading of the day proclaims, "to those who are called . . . the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1.24).

The third Old Testament reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah which tells of the "city of the Lord" where both Jews and Gentiles will live together and "shall bow themselves down" at the place of God's feet and "shall know that I the Lord am Thy Saviour and Thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Israel" (Is 60.11-16). Here we have the direct reference to God's city where men shall worship at His feet; and together with the psalm line repeated constantly during the services which calls us to "bow before His footstool," we have once again the reference to the Holy Cross (Ps 99.5, 110.1, et al.).

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy resurrection, we glorify (Hymn of Veneration before the Cross).

This central hymn of the Elevation of the Cross which lasts for eight days in the Church is sung many times. It replaces the Thrice-Holy of the Divine Liturgy. The normal antiphons are also replaced by special verses from the psalms which have direct reference to Christ's crucifixion on the Cross (Ps 22, 74, 99). At the Matins, in the gospel reading from Saint John, Christ says that when He is elevated on the Cross He will draw all men to Himself (Jn 12.28-36). The long gospel reading at the Divine Liturgy is the passion account from this same gospel.

Thus, at the Elevation of the Cross the Christians make their official rededication to the crucified Lord and pledge their undivided allegiance to Him by the adoration of His holy feet nailed to the life-creating Cross. This is the meaning of this holy day of fasting and repentance in the Church today.