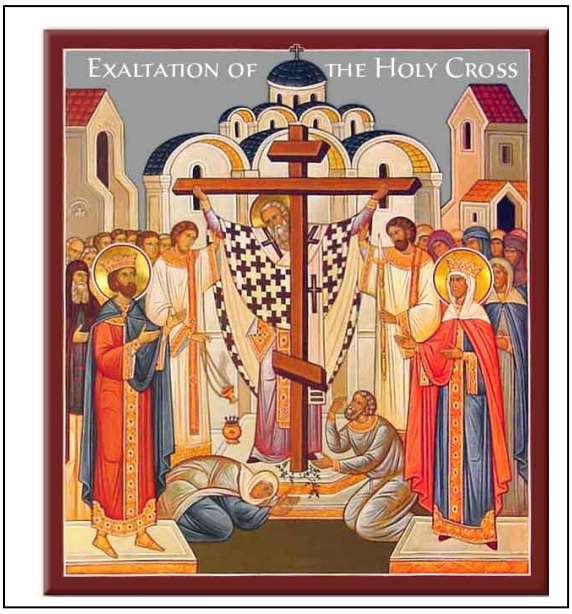
Prophet Elias News

News and Views for the Orthodox Church of the Holy Prophet Elias in Devon
September 2024

For service times see Noticeboard on P5

The **Elevation of the Holy Cross**



The Elevation of the Holy Cross - also referred to as the Exaltation of the Cross - is one of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church, celebrated on September 14. This is also a popular name day for Stavroula/Stavros (from "stavros" meaning cross).

This feast commemorates two events:
The finding of the Cross in 326 AD by the Empress Helen (the mother of St. Constantine the Great) on Golgotha, the place where Christ was crucified. On the spot where the Cross was discovered, St. Helen had found a hitherto unknown flower of rare beauty and fragrance, which has been named "Vasiliko," or Basil, meaning the flower of royalty. (Note that the word "Vasiliko" means "of the King," since the word "Basileos" in Greek means "King"; so, the plant Vasiliko, Basil, is linked to the Precious Cross of the King of Glory, our Lord Jesus Christ.) Underneath the Basil, the Cross of Christ was found, but with it were the other two crosses, those used to crucify the two thieves on either side of Christ. The sign with the inscription, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews", also lay among the three crosses. In order to determine which one was the true cross, a sick woman was told to kiss each of the three crosses. The woman kissed the first and the second cross with no result. However, when the ailing woman kissed the True Cross, she was immediately made well. It so happened that a funeral procession was passing that way, and so the body of the dead man was placed on each of the crosses, and when it was placed on the True Cross, the dead man came to life — thus the name the “Life-Giving” Cross, which gives life not only to that man, but to each person who believes in the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross and His all-glorious three day Resurrection.

When the true Cross was identified, it was lifted on high for all the people to see, who then continually sang *Kyrie eleison*, a practice which is still enacted to this day at celebrations of this feast.

The recovery of the Cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified from the Persians. The Persians had captured the True Cross as a prize of war when they sacked Jerusalem in 614 AD. It was recovered by the forces of the Byzantine Empire (Eastern Roman Empire) in 627 AD, when the Emperor Heraclius decisively defeated the Sassanid Persians at the Battle of Nineveh, surrounding their capital Ctesiphon, recovering the True Cross, and breaking the power of the Sassanid dynasty. The Elevation took place on March 21, 630 AD, when Emperor Heraclius entered Jerusalem amidst great rejoicing, and together with Patriarch Zacharios (609-632), transferred the Cross of Christ with great solemnity into the temple of the Resurrection, joyously held up for veneration by the Christian faithful.

This is one of the two feast days which is held as a strict fast. The other is the commemoration of the Beheading of St. John the Forerunner on August 29.

https://orthodoxwiki.org/Elevation_of_the_Holy_Cross

Sermon on the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross
by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

On the day we remember the Cross, we must pay particular attention to what Divine Love is. God so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son unto death, so that no-one, no-one should be forgotten and left aside.

But if that is true, how should we look at one another and treat one another? If each of us is so meaningful to God, if He loves him to such an extent that His life is given, His death is accepted – **how should we treat our neighbour?!**

There are people whom we love in a natural way, who are akin to us in mind, in emotion, in so many ways – but is that love? Does that mean that we love this person as the most precious person in the eyes of God and the most precious person in my eyes, because I want to be with God, share His thoughts, His attitude to life?

And how many there are whom we treat with indifference: we wish them no evil – they don't exist for us! Let us look around, here, in this congregation, now and week after week, and ask ourselves, 'What does this person mean to me?" Nothing; just someone who attends the same church, who believes in the same God, who receives the same communion – and we forget that those who have received this same communion have become part of the body of Christ, that God Himself lives in them, and that we should turn to them, look at them and see in them the temples of the Holy Spirit, an extension of the Incarnation.

Let us ask ourselves severe, pertinent questions about the way in which we treat our neighbour and we see our neighbour. Let us devote a whole week perhaps to thinking of one person after the other and ask ourselves, 'Is there any love in me for this person?' Not a sentimental love, but the kind of love which in the light of God makes this person precious, – precious to the point that I should be prepared, ultimately, yes, to give my life for this person. This is not asked of us day after day, but what is asked is that we should give some warmth, some compassion, some understanding, some recognition to the existence of this person. And when we come to confession next week, let us bring that, among other things, to God: does my neighbour exist for me? Who is he to me? To God he is everything; if he is nothing to me, where do I stand before God?

Sermon given by Metropolitan Anthony on 4 October 1998: http://www.mitras.ru/eng/eng_188.htm

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Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, O Master, and we glorify Thy holy Resurrection.

Hymn in place of the Trisagion at the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross

Fence me about, O Lord, with the power of Thine All-Honourable and Life-Giving Cross, and preserve me from every evil.

Prayer before going to bed.

1st September – Day of Prayer for the Protection of the Environment

We Are Called to Be Stewards

Excerpt from a speech of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew at the Environmental Symposium, Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church, Santa Barbara, California, 8 November 1997



We invite Orthodox Christians to engage in genuine repentance for the way in which we have behaved toward God, each other, and the world. We gently remind Orthodox Christians that the judgement of the world is in the hands of God. We are called to be stewards, and reflections of God's love by example. Therefore, we proclaim the sanctity of all life, the entire creation being God's and reflecting His continuing will that life abound. We must love life so that others may see and know that it belongs to God. We must leave the judgement of our success to our Creator.

We lovingly suggest to all the people of the earth, that they seek to help one another to understand the myriad ways in which we are related to the earth, and to one another. In this way, we may begin to repair the dislocation many people experience in relation to creation.

We are of the deeply held belief, that many human beings have come to behave as materialistic tyrants. Those that tyrannize the earth are themselves, sadly, tyrannized. We have been called by God, to "be fruitful, increase and have dominion in the earth" (Gen 1:28). Dominion is a type of the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus it is that St. Basil describes the creation of man in paradise on the 6th day, as being the arrival of a king in his palace. Dominion is not domination, it is an eschatological sign of the perfect Kingdom of God, where corruption and death are no more.

If human beings treated one another's personal property the way they treat their environment, we would view that behaviour as anti-social. We would impose the judicial measures necessary to restore wrongly appropriated personal possessions. It is therefore appropriate, for us to seek ethical, legal recourse where possible, in matters of ecological crimes.

It follows that, to commit a crime against the natural world, is a sin. For humans to cause species to become extinct and to destroy the biological diversity of God's creation... for humans to degrade the integrity of Earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the Earth of its natural forests, or destroying its wetlands... for humans to injure other humans with disease... for humans to contaminate the Earth's waters, its land, its air, and its life, with poisonous substances... these are sins.

In prayer, we ask for the forgiveness of sins committed both willingly and unwillingly. And it is certainly God's forgiveness, which we must ask, for causing harm to His Own Creation. Thus we begin the process of healing our worldly environment which was blessed with Beauty and created by God. Then we may also begin to participate responsibly, as persons making informed choices in both the integrated whole of creation, and within our own souls.

The full text can be found at https://www.acton.org/public-policy/environmental-stewardship/theology-e/orthodox-churches-statement-environment

How manifold are Thy works, O Lord: In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Psalm 103

This Month We Celebrate

On Sunday September 1st: **THE CHURCH NEW YEAR**
Day of Prayer for the Protection of the Environment

On Wednesday 4th: **Holy Prophet and God-Seer Moses**
We wish **Moses K** and **Moses (Josh) W** a **Happy Feast** and **Many Years!**
New Martyr Gorazd, Bishop of the Czech Lands and Slovakia (1942)
Executed by the SS for giving sanctuary to the assassins of Reinhard Heydrich, 'Butcher of Prague' and architect of the Holocaust

On Thursday 5th: **Prophet Zachariah** and **Righteous Elizabeth,** Parents of St John the Baptist
We wish **Zac L,** Presbytera **Elizabeth C**, **Alice S, Lily S** and **Elizabeth T** a **Happy Feast** and **Many Years!**

On Friday 6th: **Saint Bega (Bee),** Abbess of Copeland in Cumbria (7thC)
We wish Matoushka **Jenny Bega M** and all those in the Parish of **Saint Bega, Saint Mungo** and **Saint Herbert** in Keswick a **Happy Feast** and **Many Years!**

On Saturday 7th: **Saint Kassiani the Melodist** (9thC)

On Sunday 8th: **THE NATIVITY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THE MOTHER OF GOD**
Saint Maria, Fool-for-Christ of Diveyevo (1931)

On Friday 13th: **Saint Cornelius** the Centurion, first gentile convert to Christianity

On Saturday 14th: **THE UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE GIVING CROSS**
Repose of **Saint John Chrysostom** (407)

On Monday 16th: **Saint Edith** of Wilton (984)
We wish **Edie O** a **Happy Feast** and **Many Years!**

On Tuesday 17th: **Saint Sophia** and her daughters **Faith (Vera), Hope (Nadezhda**) and **Love (Lubov)** (2ndC)
We wish **Sophia R** and **Nadya K** a **Happy Feast** and **Many Years!**

On Sunday 22nd: **Saint Paraskeva,** Fool-for-Christ of Diveyevo (1915)

On Monday 23rd: **The Conception of the Holy, Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John**

On Tuesday 24th: Protomartyr and Equal-to-the-Apostles **Thecla** (1st C)
Saint **Silouan** of Mount Athos (1938)

On Wednesday 25th: Saint **Sergius of Radonezh** (1392)

On Thursday 26th: **Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian**
We wish **Father John** a **Happy Feast** and **Many Years!**

On Sunday 29th: Hieromonk **Kuksha of Odessa** (1875-1964) (*See* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuksha_of_Odessa)

Thy birth, O Mother of God, has brought joy to all the inhabited earth: for from thee has shone forth the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God. He has loosed us from the curse and given the blessing; He has made death of no effect, and bestowed on us eternal life.

O Undefiled One, by thy holy Nativity Joachim and Ann were set free from the reproach of childlessness, and Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. Delivered from the guilt of sin, thy people keep the feast as they sing to thee: the barren woman bears the Mother of God who sustains our life.

Troparion and Kontakion of the Feast of the Mother of God.

Noticeboard

Saturday August 31st: Akathist 'Glory to God for All Things' 6pm
Sunday September 1st: 10th after Pentecost Church New Year Typika 10.30am

Saturday 7th: Forefeast of the Nativity of the Mother of God Vespers 6pm
Sunday 8th: Feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Saturday 14th: Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross Vespers 6pm
Sunday 15th: Celebration of the Feast of the Cross Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Saturday 21st: Leavetaking of the Feast of the Cross

HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY WITH THE ORDINATION TO THE SACRED DIACONATE OF PHILIP SCORER 10.30am
followed by a Buffet Lunch at St Katherine's Priory (see details below)

Sunday 22nd: 13th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Saturday 28th: Vespers 6pm
Sunday 29th: 14th after Pentecost Typika 10.30am

All services in Saint Anne's unless stated otherwise

*For services in the Torquay parish either visit https://www.facebook.com/standrewtorquay/?locale=en_GB or telephone Robert Skrivanos on **07971 316416**. For services in Plymouth visit plymchurch.com*

*For services in the Romanian parish (Exeter and Newton Abbot) consult https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064673836911 or telephone Fr Julian on **07469 262827**.*

Philip's Ordination

At Saint Anne's on Saturday 21st September our beloved churchwarden Philip will move on to a further stage in his service to our community when HE Archbishop Nikitas ordains him Deacon at Divine Liturgy at 10.30am. Please come if you possibly can, to support Philip on this significant occasion. At various points in the ceremony we will be asked to declare 'Axios' – 'He is worthy'. It is by this declaration that we, the People of God, participate in and confirm his Ordination.

Please remember Philip, Alice, Bethany, Otto Elias and Eliza in your prayers at this important time.

After the service there will be a buffet lunch at Katherine's Priory, St Katherine's Road, Stoke Hill, Exeter EX4 7JY.
Please let our secretary Edward (hpeliasdevon@gmail.com or at church) know by Sunday September 8th if you will be attending the lunch, so that catering arrangements can be finalised.

Prophet Elias News *is the newsletter of the Parish of the Holy Prophet Elias, Devon, Deanery of Great Britain, Archdiocese of Thyateira (Ecumenical Patriarchate) - Archbishop: His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas (Lioulias)*

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Serving priest: Fr Brandon Gallaher b.gallaher@exeter.ac.uk Tel: 07837 983433
(Fr Trayan Goranov can be contacted at otrayan@gmail.com Tel: 07800 644 599 to arrange confession)
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Parish Warden (till 21st September) : Philip Scorer philip.scorer@gmail.com Tel: 07812 170139

Contributions for the October issue should reach the Editors at martinolsson827@btinternet.com or by post at Little Linhay, Bondleigh, EX20 2AJ by Friday 20th September, please.

Any opinions expressed in this newsletter are entirely those of the named authors or identified sources and should not be taken as representing the views of the parish as a whole.