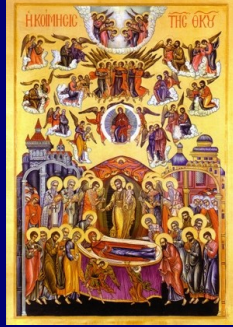


CHURCH STAFF

- Parish Priest: Very Reverend Archimandrite Christodoulos Margellos
- Parish Council President: Jim (Demetrios) Katsitis
- Philoptochos President: Eleni Giakoumopoulos
- Sunday School Directors: Susu Saba & Peli Galiti
- Greek School: Ilektra Kolokouri
- Choir Director: George Tzougros

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The Message

SEPTEMBER 2021

As another Ecclesiastical New Year has dawned upon us, we see the celebration of one of the Holiest days in the church on September 14th, the Elevation of the Holy Cross. Saint Helen played an instrumental role in this, as she took it upon her self at a very advanced age to travel to the Holy Land and discover many of the sites we hold as Holy today.

During this journey she discovered the True Cross as well as the tomb of our Lord. Saint Helen never let anything get in the way of her service to the church, and can be held as an example to all of us, in how to dedicate ones life to Christ. We can all ask ourselves, are we doing what we can for Christ, are we offering our time to God as well?

Many look at the church and believe the only thing they can do is offer money, and this is needed, but we must look also at offering our time. There are a lot of chances to serve Christ through service, and everyone is unique in what they can offer. There are many aspects of church life that are always in need of people with good intentions.

Christ call us all to live a good life, and to be an example to our youth, but all over the Archdiocese is short handed on youth workers, and we find our youth slipping through the cracks. In almost all the churches we find a lackluster attitude about Sunday school. Priests always needs to go out and try to get people to teach. The good thing is those that do volunteer there time, almost always make a wonderful teacher.

But, we need to ask ourselves, do we want our children going off to college, with little to no understanding of their faith, and then we ask ourselves why so many college students stray from their faith. They are being bombarded by false teachings and people telling them things contrary top their faith and they have no tools to fight off the assaults. So in their minds it makes sense to ignore their faith, because they lack the knowledge to defend it. So in keeping this in mind, next time lets not wait until you are asked to help in something, but let us all take the initiative to come out and say, we want to help.

God Bless!

+*Very Rev. Archimandrite Christodoulos*



September 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			Strict Fast		Strict Fast	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
11th Sunday of Matthew 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy	Happy Labor Day!		Strict Fast Nativity of the Theotokos 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice		Strict Fast	5:00 p.m. Great Vespers
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Sunday before Holy Cross 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School/Greek School Kick Off Barbeque following Liturgy		Strict Fast Day Elevation of the Holy Cross 8:30 p.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy with Special Procession of the Holy Cross 6:00 p.m. Philothonos Meeting	Strict Fast 11:00 a.m. Adult Religious Educa- tion Class 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice		Strict Fast Saint Sophia & her 3 daughters: Faith, Hope & Love 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy	+Sacrament No Vespers
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Sunday after Holy Cross 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy First Sunday of Sunday School & Greek School.		7:00 p.m. Parish Council Meeting	Strict Fast 11:00 a.m. Adult Religious Educa- tion Class 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	Conception of Saint John the Baptist 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed Divine Liturgy 6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Edu- cation Class	Strict Fast	Baking Day for Baklava + 5:00 p.m. Great Vespers
26	27	28	29	30		
Falling Asleep of Saint John the Evangelist 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School/Greek School			Strict Fast Day 11:00 a.m. Adult Religious Educa- tion Class 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice			
				6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Edu- cation Class		

The Parish Council Update

September 2021

Officers: Jim Katsihtis, President; Maria Molzahn, Vice President; Bruce Hansen, Secretary; Niko Papadopoulos, Treasurer; Scott Storck, Assistant Treasurer

Members: John Bayouth, Christy Chappell-Belkin, Conn Choles, Carol Griskavich, Mike Smith. **Alternates:** Saed Akkawi and John Soloninka

Blessed Ecclesiastical New Year!

We give thanks to God for all of His creation. May He help make us good stewards over it.

As we enter this new ecclesiastical year, we ask everyone to prayerfully consider the level of engagement and help you can offer this year in worship, fellowship and ministry. One of the many opportunities is serving on the Parish Council and/or on Committees of the Council. We especially need a GreekFest+ Chair/Co-Chairs.

Safety Update

Public Health Madison and Dane County issued an emergency face covering order that went into effect on Thursday August 19 and will remain in effect until September 16.

Thanks again for following our safety guidelines and for showing such love for neighbor throughout the pandemic.

2021 Stewardship

If you haven't already, please return your 2021 Stewardship form and continue to pray for, and generously support, our parish. And as always, please let us know how we can serve you better.

Projects

The carpet in the Nave is old, worn and damaged, and in need of replacement. The Council is evaluating several options, including carpet squares. Please consider a special donation toward the beautification of our Lord's house. Thanks.

We are also exploring an iconography project with David Giffey to complete the two transepts in the Nave with some of the most significant icons depicting our faith, including the Nativity, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Pentecost. More information to follow in the weeks ahead or at our Fall General Assembly.

Save the Dates

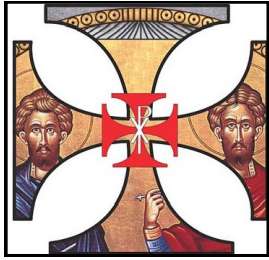
- The Back to School/Forsyth BBQ is scheduled for September 12.
- The Fall General Assembly is scheduled for November 21.
- The Annual St. Nicholas Dinner and Parish Council Elections are scheduled for December 5.

Next Parish Council Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 21. Parish Council meetings will typically be scheduled on the third Tuesday of the month.

On behalf of the Parish Council,

Jim
407-408-3096
jkatsihtis@gmail.com



FOCUS ON PHILOPTOCHOS HELP US TO HELP OTHERS

**President, Eleni Giakoumopoulos, lenagiak@gmail.com
608-556-8186**

**Vice President: Maria Molzahn, Secretary: Sue Soloninka, Treasurer: Maria Heide,
Asst. Treasurer: Jenny Glatch, Corresponding Secretary: Nancy Briamis, Asst. Corre-
sponding Secretary: Kathie Fafalios**

We look forward to continuing our work together and thank you again for your support to all our endeavors. If you are interested in joining us, please contact anyone of the officers:

We continue to be #PhiloStrong because of the support of this amazing community!!

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES:

2021 CHAPTER Elections

Thank you to the Selection Committee (Elene Pataneude, Athena Daniolos, Helene Georgalan and Barbara Karavolas) and the Elections Committee (Katherine Galanos, Irene Vivier and Barbara Karavolas) for their assistance with this election.

The Philoptochos Board 2021 – 2023 is:

Nancy Briamis
Patti Cameron
Katherine Fafalios
Beth Fatsis
Eleni Giakoumopoulos
Jenny Glatch
Korinna Hansen
Maria Papas Heide
Maria Katsaros Molzahn
Ilektra Kolokouri-Anagnostopoulos
Betty Luck
Elene Patenaude
Susan Soloninka

Upon taking the Oath of Office, the newly sworn in Board members will meet to elect Officers.

1st Philoptochos Virtual Auction

1st Philoptochos Virtual Auction – Charitable Treasures

Ilektra Kolokouri & Kathie Fafalios, Co-chairs;

Valerie Kazamias, Betty Luck, Faith Morledge, Elene Patenaude, Athena Daniolos and Lisa Beneker

Programmers: Lainey Skoumbouris and Barbara Vardalas

Congratulations to the organizers for a successful event. A very large thank you to the entire AGOC community for the tremendous support.

Monthly Tray

To continue maintaining a flow of revenue to our accounts, we thank you for considering making a contribution to Philoptochos and all our efforts. We invite all parishioners who are interested in making a donation to place a donation in the tray located as you exit the church.

The August tray collection is to be donated to the Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.



MOST NEEDED ITEMS

- Backpacks
- Lunch boxes
- Children's masks
- Headphones
- Disinfecting wipes
- Tissues
- Pocket folders
- Binders
- Spiral notebooks
- Loose leaf paper
- 3x5 notecards
- Sticky notes
- Scissors
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Highlighters
- Dry erase markers
- Pens
- Colored pencils
- Markers – thin & wide
- Glue sticks & glue
- Pencil cases

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

ASSUMPTION SUNDAY SCHOOL & GREEK SCHOOL KICK OFF BARBEQUE



On Sunday, September 12th following Liturgy our parish will be hosting a Sunday School and Greek School Kick Off Barbeque and Potluck.

Assumption will be providing the Burgers and Hotdogs and we are having a potluck for all the other side dishes. So please consider bring something to share.

This is open for everyone to attend so please join us!



METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO
MUSTARD SEED FUND
Growing Our Faith for the Future

3rd Annual
**METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO
GOLF OUTING** *at Arrowhead Golf club*
BENEFITING THE METROPOLIS' MUSTARD SEED FUND

SEPTEMBER 23, 2021
\$150 A PERSON | \$600 FOURSOME

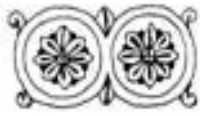
**LIMITED
TO THE
FIRST 140
REGISTRANTS**

VISIT CHICAGO.GOARCH.ORG/EVENTS

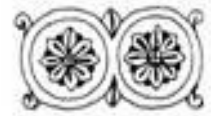
- FOUR PERSON SCRAMBLE FORMAT
- GOLFERS & SPONSORSHIPS DEADLINE AUGUST 16, 2021
- SPONSORSHIP LEVELS: HOLE SPONSOR \$400 | GREEN SPONSOR \$300
- REGISTRATION 11:00AM-12:00PM
- SHOTGUN START 12:00PM
- DINNER & RAFFLE 4:00PM-6:00PM
- QUESTIONS, CALL FR. ANDREW KARAMITOS (847) 888-2822 EXT. 111

ALL PROCEEDS, DONATIONS, AND SPONSORSHIPS WILL GO DIRECTLY TO THE METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO'S MUSTARD SEED FUND. THE PURPOSE OF THE FUND IS TO TEST AND SCALE PROMISING NEW MINISTRIES AND PROGRAMS THAT INSPIRE AND MOTIVATE A NEW GENERATION OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CHURCH. LEARN MORE AT: WWW.CHICAGO.GOARCH.ORG/MUSTARD-SEED

YOUTH CORNER



TRANSFIGURATION WORD SCRAMBLE



1. Who did Jesus take up to the mountain?

— e t P r e — — m s e a J — — h n J o —

2. What was the name of the mountain?

— t o M n u — — b o T r a —

3. Who became as white as the light?

— s u e J s — — o S n — — f o — — G d o —

4. Who appeared to the left of Jesus, to represent the Prophets?

— j l a E h i —

5. Who appeared to the right of Jesus, to represent the Law?

— o s M s e —

6. Who spoke from the cloud above?

— o d G — — e h t — — a h F r t e —

7. What did the voice say?

— h i s t — — s i — — y m — — e l b v e d o — — o S n —

8. Who does God want to become radiant with the Holy Spirit?

— u o Y —

COMMUNITY NEWS

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Will be held on Tuesday, September 21st at 7:00 p.m.

PHILOPTOCHOS MEETING: We be on Tuesday, September 14th beginning at 6:00 p.m. This meeting will be held via zoom and future meeting locations will be determined by Covid numbers.

ALTAR BOYS MEETING OCTOBER 3rd: As School is in full swing we are seeking our young men to take a step in helping out Christ's church in the Altar. We are looking for boys ages 8 and up to come help server in the Altar. This is wonderful opportunity to serve Christ and help out with the liturgy as well. We will be holding an Altar boy meeting on Sunday, October 3rd immediately following Divine Liturgy to begin training our boys and beginning this beautiful ministry of the church. Anyone interested is welcome to come into the altar now and begin helping. If you are interested but unable to attend just see Fr. Christodoulos.

SUPER SUNDAY SIGN-UPS: In an effort to get as many of our children signed up for all of our Youth Programs. We will be dedicating 3 Sunday's to have as many of our Children Register Sign-ups for our Greek School, Sunday School, and youth programs. These will take place Sundays, August 22th & 29th, and September 5th.

YOUTH WORKERS WANTED: Our youth programs here at Assumption will rely on wonderful volunteers We could use some more parents to help our Youth programs to get off the ground. We are also in need of an Athletic Director so we can try to form a Junior Olympic team for Next year's Metropolis of Chicago Junior Olympics. Without parishioner support, especially our youth's parents, we will be unable to launch successful youth programs. Please offer your time and talent. If you are interested in helping in any capacity for our youth programs please contact Fr. Christodoulos.

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASS: A.R.E. classes will begin again for the fall. We will be continuing the Book of Acts. We will have in person classes on Wednesday's beginning September 15th at 11:00 a.m. here at the church. We will also have a virtual zoom class on Thursday's beginning at 6:30 p.m. on the 16th of September. The classes are the same and interchangeable. We look forward to continuing our journey together.

SUNDAY SCHOOL GREEK SCHOOL SUNDAY KICK OFF BBQ: Our Sunday School and Greek School programs will be starting on Sunday, September 12th, 2021. To celebrate this new begin of the school year we will be having a Kick Off Barbeque Potluck following Liturgy and Class on September 12th. The parish will be providing burgers and hotdogs and are asking for a potluck for all the side dishes. There is no charge for this meal just an invitation to our entire parish. So please join us to kick off the school year with style.

VASILIKO WANTED: We are in need of Vasiliko (Basil) plants for the celebration of the Litany of the Holy Cross that will take place on September 14th. If you can be of assistance, please bring them to church prior to the Orthros service of the day.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY CONFESSION: The Sacrament of Confession is one of the most important sacraments of the Church. We should always be striving to reconcile ourselves with God. Take a moment during the year to set up a time for this most blessed sacrament. Please call Fr. Christodoulos if you would like to schedule an appointment. God Bless

J & M HOME HELPERS: AGOC's handymen, John and Mike, will do minor home repairs and maintenance for \$25/hour, with the money for their work being donated to the church. Call Mike at (608) 516-9188 and John at (608) 575-1014 today!

FUTURE PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND: I have been blessed to lead a few trips to the Holy Land as a priest and I plan to lead another one for our parish here at Assumption. This will be in the fall of 2022. But if you are interested keep it in mind and more information will come when available.



THE NATIVITY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THE MOTHER OF GOD & EVER-VIRGIN MARY:

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary: The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that it seemed altogether impossible to restore them. People often said that God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind.

The Son of God chose to take on human nature for the salvation of mankind, and chose as His Mother the All-Pure Virgin Mary, who alone was worthy to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the

Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since Saint Anna was barren.

Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Saints Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them, to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin, and therefore the righteous Saints Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feast-days at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

Saint Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. Saint Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and of them would be born a most blessed daughter Mary, through Whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God, so the Church sings in its festal hymns: "the East Gate... bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls" (2nd Stikhera on "Lord, I Have Cried", Tone 6).

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks the change of the times when the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of the human race from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled. This event has brought to earth the grace of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of Truth, piety, virtue and everlasting life. The Theotokos is revealed to all of us by grace as a merciful Intercessor and Mother, to Whom we have recourse with filial devotion.



THE UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS & LIFE-GIVING

CROSS: The Elevation of the Venerable and Life-Creating Cross of the Lord: The pagan Roman emperors tried to completely eradicate from human memory the holy places where our Lord Jesus Christ suffered and was resurrected for mankind. The Emperor Hadrian (117-138) gave orders to cover over the ground of Golgotha and the Sepulchre of the Lord, and to build a temple of the pagan goddess Venus and a statue of Jupiter.

Pagans gathered at this place and offered sacrifice to idols there. Eventually after 300 years, by Divine Providence, the great Christian sacred remains, the Sepulchre of the Lord and the Life-Creating Cross were again discovered and opened for veneration. This took place under the Emperor Constantine the Great (306-337) after his victory in the year 312 over Maxentius, ruler of the Western part of the Roman empire, and over Licinius, ruler of its Eastern part. In the year 323 Constantine became the sole ruler of the vast Roman Empire.

In 313 he had issued the Edict of Milan, by which the Christian religion was legalized and the persecutions against Christians in the Western half of the empire were stopped. The ruler Licinius, although he had signed the Edict of Milan to oblige Constantine, still fanatically continued the persecutions against Christians. Only after his conclusive defeat did the 313 Edict of toleration extend also to the Eastern part of the empire. The Holy Equal of the Apostles Emperor Constantine, having gained victory over his enemies in three wars with God's assistance, had seen in the heavens the Sign of the Cross, and written beneath: "By this you shall conquer."

Ardently desiring to find the Cross on which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, Saint Constantine sent his mother, the pious Empress Helen (May 21), to Jerusalem, providing her with a letter to Saint Macarius, Patriarch of Jerusalem.

Although the holy empress Helen was already in her declining years, she set about completing the task with enthusiasm. The empress gave orders to destroy the pagan temple and the statues in Jerusalem. Searching for the Life-Creating Cross, she made inquiry of Christians and Jews, but for a long time her search remained unsuccessful.

Finally, they directed her to a certain elderly Hebrew by the name of Jude who stated that the Cross was buried where the temple of Venus stood. They demolished the pagan temple and, after praying, they began to excavate the ground. Soon the Tomb of the Lord was uncovered. Not far from it were three crosses, a board with the inscription ordered by Pilate, and four nails which had pierced the Lord's Body (March 6).

In order to discern on which of the three crosses the Savior was crucified, Patriarch Macarius alternately touched the crosses to a corpse. When the Cross of the Lord touched the dead one, he came to life. Having beheld the raising of the dead man, everyone was convinced that the Life-Creating Cross was found.

Christians came in a huge throng to venerate the Holy Cross, beseeching Saint Macarius to elevate the Cross, so that even those far off might reverently contemplate it. Then the Patriarch and other spiritual leaders raised up the Holy Cross, and the people, saying "Lord have mercy," reverently prostrated before the Venerable Wood. This solemn event occurred in the year 326.

During the discovery of the Life-Creating Cross another miracle took place: a grievously sick woman, beneath the shadow of the Holy Cross, was healed instantly. The elder Jude and other Jews there believed in Christ and accepted Holy Baptism. Jude received the name Cyriacus and afterwards was consecrated Bishop of Jerusalem.

During the reign of Julian the Apostate (361-363) he accepted a martyr's death for Christ (see October 28). The holy empress Helen journeyed to the holy places connected with the earthly life of the Savior, building more than 80 churches, at Bethlehem the birthplace of Christ, and on the Mount of Olives where the Lord ascended to Heaven, and at Gethsemane where the Savior prayed before His sufferings and where the Mother of God was buried after her death.

Saint Helen took part of the Life-Creating Wood and nails with her to Constantinople. The holy emperor Constantine gave orders to build at Jerusalem a majestic and spacious church in honor of the Resurrection of Christ, also including under its roof the Life-Giving Tomb of the Lord and Golgotha. The temple was constructed in about ten years. Saint Helen did not survive until the dedication of the temple, she died in the year 327. The church was consecrated on September 13, 335. On the following day, September 14, the festal celebration of the Exaltation of the Venerable and Life-Creating Cross was established.

Another event connected to the Cross of the Lord is remembered also on this day: its return to Jerusalem from Persia after a fourteen year captivity. During the reign of the Byzantine emperor Phocas (602-610) the Persian emperor Khozroes II in a war against the Greeks defeated the Greek army, plundered Jerusalem and captured both the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord and the Holy Patriarch Zachariah (609-633).

The Cross remained in Persia for fourteen years and only under the emperor Heraclius (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 the Christians.

With great solemnity the Life-creating Cross was transferred to Jerusalem. Emperor Heraclius in imperial crown and royal purple carried the Cross of Christ into the temple of the Resurrection. With the emperor went Patriarch Zacharios. At the gates by which they ascended Golgotha, the emperor suddenly stopped and was not able to proceed farther. The holy Patriarch explained to the emperor that an angel of the Lord was blocking his way. The emperor was told to remove his royal trappings and to walk barefoot, since He Who bore the Cross for the salvation of the world from sin had made His way to Golgotha in all humility. Then Heraclius donned plain garb, and without further hindrance, carried the Cross of Christ into the church.

In a sermon on the Exaltation of the Cross, Saint Andrew of Crete (July 4) 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".



A LOOK BACK A LOOK FORWARD: 15TH ANNIVERSARY WATCH PARTY

*JOIN US AS WE FILM THE TELETHON,
CELEBRATING THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF
THE SAINT IAKOVOS RETREAT CENTER*

LIVE WATCH PARTY

WILL BE FILMED TO AIR AT VIRTUAL WATCH PARTY
SEPTEMBER 30 | 7-10PM
THE CUBBY BEAR | CHICAGO, IL
\$50 ADMISSION | OPEN BAR & APPS



VIRTUAL WATCH PARTY

OCTOBER 3 | 7PM
STREAMING ON FACEBOOK & YOUTUBE



**HOSTED LIVE AND IN PERSON BY HGTV'S
ALISON VICTORIA**

SPECIAL GUEST
HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN NATHANAEAL

REGISTRATION
OPENS AUGUST 31 AT 9AM CST
LIMITED TO 200 REGISTRANTS
WWW.GOSIRC.ORG



Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

11 N 7th Street

Madison, WI 53704-4904

Phone: 608-244-1001 Fax: 608-244-1565

Email: office@agocwi.org

www.agocwi.org

What wondrous gifts our God has given us!

Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross September 14

+ In the 20th year of his reign (326), the Emperor Constantine sent his mother, the pious empress St. Helen, to Jerusalem to find the site of Christ's Holy Sepulchre and Holy Cross.

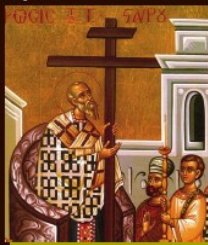


+ Relying upon the oral tradition of the faithful, St. Helen found the precious Cross together with the two crosses of the thieves crucified with our Lord.

+ Fragrant, flowering basil, the flower of royalty, indicated where the Cross was to be found.

+ Patriarch Macarius of Jerusalem witnessed as a dying woman was healed by venerating the Holy Cross, and as a man was raised from the dead by the touch of the Holy Cross.

+ He is shown reverently lifting the Most Holy Cross for all to see and venerate.



+ We celebrate this discovery every year as we praise God Who used an instrument of shame and torture to overcome death and bring salvation and eternal life.

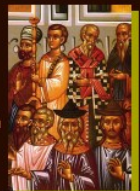


+ In the background of the icon is a structure that represents the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem.



+ This church was constructed and dedicated by Emperor Constantine on the holy sites of Jerusalem.

+ Those who are shown giving veneration to the Holy Cross include a broad cross-section of the faithful from Jerusalem.



+ Deacons hold candlesticks to each side of the Holy Cross.

+ A second bishop can be identified by the crosses on his vestments.

+ Two chanters or readers stand in the foreground, wearing pointed hats that were traditional for them at the time.



+ Lay people in various garments, as well as monastics in black veils, are among the many who come to reverence the Precious and Life-Saving Cross.