

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross

Today we're celebrating our church being dedicated to the Holy Cross. The full title of this feast is the 'Exaltation of the Cross.' That in itself is very strange. After all, the cross was a cruel and brutal instrument on which the Romans frequently executed criminals. There seems to be no reason to rejoice in such cruelty, involving so much pain and degradation. We Christians certainly don't do that, but rejoice in what Christ achieved through his death on the cross.

Although today's feast is entitled the 'Exaltation of the Cross' I want to shift the emphasis to the exaltation of Christ crucified. To all appearances Christ seemed to be a defeated failure. On the cross he seemed utterly powerless. He no longer posed a threat to orthodox Judaism, nor to the Roman occupying authorities. His followers had scattered. His enemies seemed to have silenced him.

And yet we believe that at the moment of apparent defeat the crucified Christ was victorious and triumphant. How? Certainly not by force of arms or the power of his eloquence. His victory lay in the power of his love, which defied and defeated all the forces of evil arraigned against him. It was as though, as God, he extended one loving hand to us sinners, and as man, he reached out to his heavenly Father. In his crucified person his love drew God and man together, making our peace with God. In John's Gospel Jesus says, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth (and exalted), will draw all people to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. [John 12:32-33].

Instead of being an utter failure, the crucified Christ was enthroned triumphantly on the cross. Everyone had mocked Jesus for claiming to be king. Yet no one understood the nature of his sovereignty, nor that he would claim his kingdom on the cross, not the battlefield, or in a palace.

Today we recognise the crucified Christ as king and rejoice in his victory over the power of sin and death. But we will only share in his victory if we die to sin in our lives and rise to new life in Christ.

Only if we follow Christ in his battle against evil will we share in the triumph of the cross. And so Paul exclaims, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me," [Gal. 2.19-20]. And again, "May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world," [Gal. 6:14].

Isidore O.P.

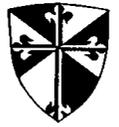
The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Year C

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The Newsletter of Holy Cross Priory Church, Leicester

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Sunday Masses	This week	Mass Intentions	Next week
7:30pm Vigil	Fr Tony	Irene Olszewska, RIP	Fr Fabian
8:00am	Fr Isidore	Ashberry family and friends, RIP	Fr Isidore
9:30am Family	Fr Euan	For the People	Fr David
11:00am Solemn	Fr Leon	Susan Donnelly, RIP	Fr Tony
7:00pm	Fr Fabian	Special Intention	Fr Leon

Sunday Evening Services	15 September	Confessions	22 September
5:45 Rosary	Fr Fabian	10:30-11:30am	Fr Leon
6:15 Sung Latin Compline	Fr David	4:00-5:00pm	Fr Fabian
6:40 Benediction	Fr Euan	7:00-7:20pm	Fr Isidore

Entrance Antiphon:	We should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for He is our salvation, our life and our resurrection; through Him we are saved and made free.
1st Reading:	Numbers 21: 4-9
Psalm Response:	Never forget the deeds of the Lord.
2nd Reading:	Philippians 2: 6-11
Gospel Acclamation:	Alleluia! Alleluia! We adore you O Christ, and we bless you; because by your Cross you have redeemed the world. Alleluia!
Gospel:	John 3: 13-17
Communion Antiphon:	When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself, says the Lord. At 11:00 - O God, by the sign of the Cross, save us from our enemies.

