



Volume 19 Issue 4
www.stschsoc.org
September 2013

BULLETIN

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THIS ISSUE

Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos

Exaltation of the Precious and

Life-giving Cross

September Service Dates

SAINTS CONSTANTINE & HELEN PARISH HERALD

NATIVITY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

Although, the birth and early life of the Virgin Mary is not recorded in the Gospels or other books of the New Testament, however this information can be found in a work dating from the second century known as the Book of James. According to the story found in this book, Mary's parents, Joachim and Anna, were childless for many years. They remained faithful to God, but their prayers for a child were unanswered. One day, when Joachim came to the temple to make an offering, he was turned away by the High Priest who chastised him for his lack of children. To hide his shame, Joachim retreated to the hill country to live among the shepherds and their flocks.

As Joachim was praying, his wife Anna was praying at the same time at their house in Jerusalem. An angel appeared to both of them and announced that Anna would have a child whose name would be known throughout the world. Anna promised to offer her child as a gift to the Lord. Joachim returned home, and in due time Anna bore a daughter, Mary.

The Nativity of the Theotokos is one of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church, celebrated on September 8/21. The Holy

Virgin and Theotokos Mary was born to elderly and previously barren parents by the names of Joachim and Anna, in answer to their prayers. Orthodox Christians do not hold to the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, in which it is supposed that Mary was preserved from the ancestral sin that befalls us all as descendants of Adam and Eve, in anticipation of her giving birth to the sinless Christ. The Orthodox believe that Mary indeed received the ancestral sin, having been conceived in the normal way of humanity, and thus needed salvation like all mankind. Orthodox thought does vary on whether Mary actually ever sinned, though there is general agreement that she was cleansed from sin at the Annunciation.

The gospel reading is taken from Luke 10:38-42 and 11:27-28 together; this reading is also always read on all feasts of the Theotokos. In it, the Lord says, "blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

The Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross is celebrated each year on September 14/27, the Feast commemorates the finding of



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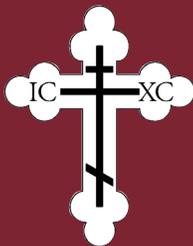
**Save this Date . . .
Sunday, October 20th**

His Grace, Bishop Longin, will be here to reconsecrate and bless our cemetery work.



All Divine Liturgies begin at 10:00 A.M. (Followed by fellowship, coffee and treats in our new hall)

As always, I can be reached by phone, email, Facebook and even twitter.
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the True Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by Saint Helen, the mother of the Emperor Constantine. In the twentieth year of his reign (326), the Emperor Constantine sent his mother Saint Helen to Jerusalem to venerate the holy places and to find the site of the Holy Sepulchre and of the Cross. Relying upon the oral tradition of the faithful, Saint Helen found the precious Cross together with the crosses of the two thieves crucified with our Lord. However, Helen had no way of determining which was the Cross of Christ.

With the healing of a dying woman who touched one of the crosses, Patriarch Macarius of Jerusalem identified the True Cross of Christ. Saint Helen and her court venerated the Precious and Life-Giving Cross along with many others who came to see this great instrument of Redemption. The Patriarch mounted the ambo (pulpit) and lifted the Cross with both hands so that all of the people gathered could see it. The crowd responded with - Lord have mercy”.

This became the occasion of the institution in all of the Churches of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross, not only in memory of the event of the finding of the Cross, but also to celebrate how an instrument of shame was used to overcome death and bring salvation and eternal life.

The Feast is an opportunity outside of the observances of Holy Week to celebrate the full significance of the victory of the Cross over the powers of the world, and the triumph of the wisdom of God through the Cross over the wisdom of this world. This Feast also gives the Church an opportunity to relish the full glory of the Cross as a source of light, hope and victory for Christ’s people, it is also a time to celebrate the universality of the work of redemption accomplished through the

Cross: the entire universe is seen through the light of the Cross, the new Tree of Life which provides nourishment for those who have been redeemed in Christ.

Your fervent intercessor before the Lord,
Fr. Serge

CALENDAR OF CHURCH SERVICES AND EVENTS AT SAINTS CONSTANTINE & HELEN

SEPTEMBER 2013

Sunday, September 1st

10th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday, September 8th\11th Sunday after Pentecost

Wednesday, September 11th

Beheading of St. John the Baptist (Strict Fast Day)

Friday, September 13th

Holy New Martyrs of Jasenovac

Saturday, September 14th

Venerable Simeon Stylite, Ecclesiastical New Year

Sunday, September 15th

12th Sunday after Pentecost

Saturday, September 21st

Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos

Sunday, September 22nd

13th Sunday after Pentecost
Holy & Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim & Anna

Friday, September 27th

Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross

Sunday, September 29th

14th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday after the Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross

Monday, September 30th

Holy Martyrs Faith, Hope and Love with their mother Sophia

All Divine Liturgies begin at 10:00am