

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2020**  
**FOREFEAST OF THE ELEVATION OF THE CROSS**  
**Commemoration of the Founding of**  
**the Church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem**

The Dedication of the Temple of the Resurrection of Christ at Jerusalem celebrates the dedication of the Church of the Resurrection, built by Saint Constantine the Great and his mother, the empress Helen.

After the voluntary Passion and Death on the Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the holy place of His suffering was long trampled on by pagans. When the Roman emperor Titus conquered Jerusalem in the year 70, he razed the city and destroyed the Temple of Solomon on Mount Moriah, leaving there not a stone upon a stone, as even the Savior foretold (Mt.13:1-2).

Later on the zealous pagan emperor Hadrian (117-138) built on the site of the Jerusalem destroyed by Titus a new city named Aelia Capitolina for him (Hadrian Aelius). It was forbidden to call the city by its former name.

He gave orders to cover the Holy Tomb of the Lord with earth and stones, and on that spot to set up an idol. On Golgotha, where the Savior was crucified, he constructed a pagan temple dedicated to the goddess Venus in 119. Before the statues they offered sacrifice to demons and performed pagan rites, accompanied by wanton acts.

In Bethlehem, at the place the Savior was born of the All-Pure Virgin, the impious emperor set up an idol of Adonis. He did all this intentionally, so that people would forget completely about Christ the Savior and that they would no longer remember the places where He lived, taught, suffered and arose in glory.

At the beginning of the reign of Saint Constantine the Great (306-337), the first of the Roman emperors to recognize the Christian religion, he and his pious mother the empress Helen decided to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. They also planned to build a church on the site of the Lord's suffering and Resurrection, in order to reconsecrate and purify the places connected with memory of the Savior from the taint of foul pagan cults.

The empress Helen journeyed to Jerusalem with a large quantity of gold, and Saint Constantine the Great wrote a letter to Patriarch Macarius I (313-323), requesting him to assist her in every possible way with her task of the renewing the Christian holy places.

After her arrival in Jerusalem, the holy empress Helen destroyed all the pagan temples and reconsecrated the places desecrated by the pagans. She was zealous to find the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and she ordered the excavation of the place where the temple of Venus stood. There they discovered the Sepulchre of the Lord and Golgotha, and they also found three crosses and some nails.

In order to determine upon which of the three crosses the Savior was crucified, Patriarch Macarius gave orders to place a dead person, who was being carried to a place of burial, upon each cross in turn. When the dead person was placed on the Cross of Christ, he immediately came alive. With the greatest of joy the empress Helen and Patriarch Macarius raised up the Life-Creating Cross and displayed it to all the people standing about.

The holy empress quickly began the construction of a large church which enclosed within its walls Golgotha, the place of the Crucifixion of the Savior, and the Sepulchre of the Lord, located near each other. The holy Apostle and Evangelist John wrote about this: "Now in the place where He was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been laid. Therefore they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day, for the tomb was nearby" (John 19:41-42). The Church of the Resurrection was ten years in building, and the holy empress Helen did not survive to see its completion. She returned to Constantinople, and reposed in the year 327. After her arrival in Jerusalem, the holy empress built churches in Bethlehem, on the Mount of Olives, at Gethsemane and in many other places connected with the life of the Savior and events in the New Testament.

The construction of the church of the Resurrection, called "Martyrion" in memory of the sufferings of the Savior, was completed in the same year as the Council of Tyre, and in the thirtieth year of the reign of Saint Constantine the Great. Therefore, at the assembly of September 13, 335, the consecration of the temple was particularly solemn. Hierarchs of Christian Churches in many lands: Bythnia, Thrace, Cilicia, Cappadocia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Arabia, Palestine, and Egypt, participated in the consecration of the church. The bishops who participated in the Council of Tyre, and many others, went to the consecration in Jerusalem. On this day all the city of Jerusalem was consecrated. The Fathers of the Church established September 13 as the commemoration of this remarkable event.

## GREAT VESPERS

***LORD I CALL: Four stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 5, followed by three for the Founding and three for the Forefeast***

***Resurrection, tone 5:***

By Your precious Cross, O Christ,  
You have put the devil to shame.

By Your Resurrection, You have blunted the sting of sin  
and saved us from the gates of death.//

We glorify You, the only begotten One.

2. Christ was led as a sheep to the slaughter  
in order to grant Resurrection to the human race.

The princes of hell were frightened by this,  
for the gates of sorrow were lifted.

Christ the King of glory had entered,  
saying to those in chains: "Go forth!"//

And to those in darkness: "Come to the light!"

3. Oh, great wonder!

The Creator of the invisible suffered in the flesh in His love for mankind  
and rose again immortal.

Come, O sons of nations,  
let us worship Him,

for delivered from error by His compassion,//  
we have learned to sing of one God in three Persons!

4. We offer You our evening worship,  
O never setting Light,  
Who came in these last days to the world in the flesh;  
Who even descended to hell to dispel its darkness.  
You have revealed the light of Resurrection to the nations.//  
Glory to You, O Lord and Giver of light!

***Founding, tone 6:***

Dedication is to be honored,  
as was decreed in the Old Law;  
even more should the New Law be honored through dedication;  
for as Isaiah proclaims: “The islands are dedicated to God.”  
By this we understand the churches now built by the Gentiles,  
which receive a firm foundation from God.//  
Therefore let us spiritually celebrate this present feast!

Be dedicated anew, O people!  
Putting away the old man, live in newness of life,  
placing a bridle on everything from which death may come!  
Let us chasten all our members,  
hating every evil fruit of the tree!  
Mindful of this, let us avoid our ancient errors,  
that mankind may thus be restored!//  
Thus this day of dedication is honored.

O Christ, the pre-eternal Word,  
You set up Your Church as a tower of strength,  
founding it upon the rock of the faith.  
Therefore it abides in You, unshaken forever,  
for, without undergoing change,  
You became Man in these latter times for its sake.  
Therefore we give thanks to You and praise You in hymns, saying:  
“You are our King since before time began;//  
now and forever — glory to You!”

***Forefeast, tone 5:***

Hail, life-giving Cross, unconquerable trophy of godliness,  
Door to Paradise, help of the faithful,  
Rampart set about the Church.  
Through thee corruption is utterly destroyed,  
The power of death is swallowed up,  
And we are raised from earth to heaven:

Invincible weapon, adversary of demons,  
Glory of martyrs, true ornament of saints,  
Haven of salvation, bestowing on the world great mercy.

Rejoice, O Cross of the Lord,  
For through you, we have been freed from the curse!  
The enemy is shattered at your elevation,  
O Cross, the all venerable sign of true joy!  
You are the strength of kings,  
The power of the righteous,  
The majesty of priests, and the help of us all!  
You are a rod of strength under which we, like sheep, are tended,  
Weapon of peace surrounded by fearful angels  
And the freedom from danger for us who sign ourselves with you!  
You are the divine glory of Christ who grants the world great mercy!

Rejoice, O guide of the blind,  
Physician of the sick and resurrection of the dead!  
You have lifted us up when we had fallen into mortality!  
Through you, corruption is destroyed and incorruption flowers forth.  
As we are made divine and the devil is cast down!  
Today, you are glorified in the hands of bishops,  
We glorify Him who was crucified on you as we draw from you great mercy!

***GLORY... for the Founding, tone 6:***

Celebrating the memory of the dedication, O Lord,  
and glorifying You, the Giver of holiness,  
we ask that You hallow the senses of our souls,  
through the supplications of the glorious passion-bearers,//  
O good and almighty One!

***NOW AND EVER...the Dogmatikon in tone 5:***

In the Red Sea of old,  
a type of the Virgin Bride was prefigured.  
There Moses divided the waters;  
here Gabriel assisted in the miracle.  
There Israel crossed the sea without getting wet,  
here the Virgin gave birth to Christ without seed.  
After Israel's passage, the sea remained impassable;  
after Emmanuel's birth, the Virgin remained a Virgin.  
O ever-existing God, Who appeared as Man,//  
O Lord, have mercy on us!

***Old Testament Readings***

**The reading from the Third Book of Kings.**

Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven and said: “O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below —you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way. “But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! Yet give attention to your servant’s prayer and his plea for mercy, O LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, ‘My Name shall be there,’ so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place. Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.” **3[1]Kings 8:22-23,27-30**

### **The reading from Proverbs.**

By wisdom the LORD laid the earth’s foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place; by his knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.

My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble; when you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.

Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbor, ‘Come back later; I will give it tomorrow’— when you now have it with you. Do not plot harm against your neighbor, who lives trustfully near you. Do not accuse a man for no reason — when he has done you no harm.

Do not envy a violent man or choose any of his ways, for the LORD detests a perverse man but takes the upright into his confidence. The LORD’s curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous. He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.

**Proverbs 3:19-34**

### **The reading from Proverbs.**

Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out its seven pillars. She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine; she has also set her table. She has sent out her maids, and she calls from the highest point of the city. “Let all who are simple come in here!” she says to those who lack judgment. “Come, eat my food and drink the wine I have mixed. Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding.

“Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult; whoever rebukes a wicked man incurs abuse. Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you. Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning.

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For through me your days will be many, and years will be added to your life.”

**Proverbs 9:1-11**

**APOSTIKHA: All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 5:**

We magnify You in songs of praise,

O incarnate Christ and Savior.  
By accepting the Cross and death for our sake,  
as the Lord and Lover of mankind,  
You overthrew the gates of hell, //  
and arose on the third day, saving our souls.

By being pierced in the side, O Lover of mankind,  
You have poured out drops of life and salvation for all.  
By accepting death in the flesh, You have granted us immortality.  
You have freed us by being placed in the tomb,  
and have resurrected us with Yourself in glory, as God. //  
Glory to You, O Lord and Lover of mankind!

Your crucifixion and descent into hell are awesome, O Lover of mankind.  
You have captured it, releasing the ancient prisoners.  
You have opened Paradise and given it to us.  
Grant us purification of sins,  
who glorify Your Resurrection on the third day!  
Make us worthy of Paradise //  
and save us, O Lover of mankind!

For our sake, You accepted death in the flesh,  
to rise from the dead on the third day.  
Heal us from our earthly passions,  
and restore us from our evil transgressions; //  
and save us, O Lover of mankind!

***GLORY...for the Founding, tone 2:***

We glorify You, O Lord,  
as we celebrate the dedication of the most holy temple of Your Resurrection.  
You sanctified it and perfected it with Your all-perfect grace.  
You are adorned in it by the faithful  
with sacrifices that are sanctifying, mystical and holy,  
receiving them bloodless and all-pure from the hands of Your servants.  
To all those who rightly make offering, //  
You give great mercy and cleansing from sins.

***NOW AND EVER...Forefeast, tone 2:***

The Cross of the Giver of life,  
a divine treasure hidden in the ground,  
was shown in the heavens to the pious emperor,  
spiritually revealing a decree of victory over the enemy.  
Joyfully and divinely hastening to see it on high with faith and love,  
he zealously lifted it from the bosom of the earth, //  
for the deliverance of the world and the salvation of our souls.

### ***Troparia***

#### ***Resurrection, tone 5***

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,  
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,  
born for our salvation from the Virgin;  
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,  
to endure death,  
and to raise the dead//  
by His glorious Resurrection.

#### ***Founding, tone 4***

You have revealed the beauty of the holy dwelling place of Your glory on earth  
to be like the splendor of the heavenly firmament, O Lord.  
Through the prayers of the Theotokos,  
strengthen it for ever and ever  
and accept our supplication  
which we ceaselessly offer to You therein,//  
the life and resurrection of all!

#### ***Forefeast, tone 4***

We offer in supplication  
the life-creating Cross of Your goodness, O Lord,  
which You have granted to us  
although we are unworthy.  
Through the Theotokos, save all Orthodox Christians, O only Lover of man!

<b>THE DIVINE LITURGY</b>
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### **TROPARIA**

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the life-creating Cross of Your goodness, O Lord,  
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Through the Theotokos, save all Orthodox Christians, O only Lover of mankind.

**KONTAKIA**

**Resurrection, tone 5**

You descended into hell, O my Savior,  
shattering its gates as Almighty,  
resurrecting the dead as Creator,  
and destroying the sting of death.  
You have delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man, //  
and we cry to You: “O Lord, save us!”

**Founding, tone 4**

The Church has been revealed to be a heaven filled with light  
which enlightens all the faithful.  
Standing within it we cry: “Establish this house, O Lord.”

**PROKEIMENON, tone 6:** O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance!

**Vs.** To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!

**2<sup>nd</sup> PROK., tone 4:** Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore!

**EPISTLES: (215) Galatians 6:11-18** Brethren, see how large a letter I have written unto you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these try to compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the Cross of Christ. For not even they themselves who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh... But God forbid that I should glory, except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. **(170) 2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4** Brethren, He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who has also sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a deposit. Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more unto Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers for your joy; for by faith you stand... But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I



ought to have joy, having confidence in you all... that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you...

**(307) Hebrews 3:1-4** Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus who was faithful to Him who appointed Him as Moses also was faithful in all His house. For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.

**Alleluia in the first tone:** I have exalted one chosen out of My people.

**vs.** For My hand shall defend him and My arm shall strengthen him.

**vs.** Thy foundations are in the holy mountains; the Lord loveth thy gates, O Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

**GOSPELS: SUNDAY BEFORE: (9) John 3:13-17** And the Lord said these words: “No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. **(89) Matthew 22:1-14** And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.’” But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, ‘Friend how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.” **(67) Matt. 16:13-19** At that time, when Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

**COMMUNION HYMN:** Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! I have loved the beauty of Thy house, O Lord; and the place where Thy glory dwelleth. Alleluia....