



## *Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church*

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### *Celebration of the Holy Mysteries*

**RECITATION OF THE HOLY ROSARY AND CONFESSIONS:** ½ HR BEFORE DIVINE LITURGY

**BAPTISM & CHRISMATION / ANNOINTING OF THE SICK / COMMUNION CALLS & VISITATIONS:**  
CONTACT FR. IHOR TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS

**MARRIAGE PREPARATION:**  
CONTACT FR. IHOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS PRIOR TO SETTING THE ACTUAL WEDDING DATE

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN:**  
CONTACT MRS. CHRISTINA VOGEL AT (603) 686-2092 TO REGISTER YOUR CHILDREN

**SCHEDULE OF DIVINE LITURGIES:**  
SUNDAYS: 10 AM (September thru May)      MON THRU SAT: AS NOTED IN WEEKLY BULLETIN  
9 AM (June thru August)      HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION: 7 PM

### **DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2023**

#### **Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup> – Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

Divine Liturgy: 10 AM	Propers: Festal Tones	Vestments: Bright
Epistle: Galatians 2: 16-20		Gospel: St. Mark 8: 34-38; 9:1
Intention: For all Parishioners		

**Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

## ***Divine Liturgy and Vespers Service Schedule and Intentions for September and October***

**Sunday, September 24<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners (Parish Feast of the Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

**Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

### **Saturday Services**

Fr. Ihor is celebrating Vesper services every Saturday at 7 PM. All parishioners are invited to attend this service. Those who wish to have a Divine Liturgy celebrated for a loved one whether living or deceased or for a private intention are still able to do so. Please request your Divine Liturgy by contacting Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357 or cantor Jaroslaw Maksymowych at (603) 627-2042. Please note that Saturday Divine Liturgies will now be celebrated only at 10 AM (9 AM June thru August) whenever they are requested. If no Divine Liturgy has been requested for a particular Saturday, then none will be celebrated on that day. The Divine Liturgy schedule in the bulletin will only show Divine Liturgies on Saturdays when they have been requested. If the bulletin does not show a Divine Liturgy for a given Saturday, then this means that particular Saturday is available for your request.

### **Суботні Богослужіння**

Отець Ігор святкує Вечірню кожної суботи у 7-мі годині вечером. Ласкаво просимо усіх парафіян до участі. Парафіяни які бажають замовити Божественну Літургію в суботу для померших або на особисті інтенції можуть дзвонити до о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357 або до дяка п. Ярослава Максимовича на номер (603) 627-2042. Суботні Божественні Літургії будуть відслужені тільки о годині 10-тій ранком (9-тій ранку з червня по серпень) коли замовлені. Якщо Літургія в певну суботу не буде замовлена, то в цей день не буде жодна відправлена. Порядок Богослужінь в бюлетені покаже тільки ті суботні Служби Божі які є замовлені. Якщо в бюлетені не відображається Божественна Літургія на дану суботу, то це означає, що ця субота доступна на Ваше замовлення.

## ***Liturgical Propers, Readings and Sermon for Sunday***

### **Liturgical Propers for Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

#### **First Antiphon:**

VERSE: God, my God, hear me: "Why have You forsaken me?" You are far from my prayer, from my sinful voice.

**REFRAIN: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.**

VERSE: I call out to You during the day and You do not answer me, my God: and during the night there is no relief for me.

**REFRAIN: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.**

VERSE: Yet You are enthroned in the holy place, O Glory of Israel.

**REFRAIN: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.**

**Third Antiphon Refrain:** Son of God, crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You “Alleluia”.

**Resurrectional Tropar – Tone 7:** By Your Cross You destroyed death.\* You opened paradise to the thief.\* The tears of the myrrh-bearing women You wiped away;\* then You commanded them to tell the apostles the news\* that You are risen, O Christ-God,\* and have shown the world great mercy.

**Festal Tropar – Tone 1:** Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance. Grant victory to all God-fearing leaders over Your enemies, and by the power of Your Cross, protect all of us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

**Festal Kondak (Tone 4):** O Christ-God, You chose of Your own free will to be raised upon the Cross. Grant Your mercies to the Christian people – those who bear Your name. Through Your power, enlighten all public authorities; strengthen them in every good deed, so that Your alliance of victory may be the standard of peace.

now and always and forever. Amen.

**Resurrectional Kondak – Tone 7:** No longer can the power of death hold man,\* for Christ descended and destroyed its might.\* Now hell finds itself in chains.\* The prophets join in voicing their joy.\* The Savior stands before those who believe and says:\* “Come forth, you faithful, and live!”

**Instead of the Trisagion,** we sing:

Khrestu Tvoyemy, poklonyayemosya Vladiko, ee svyatoye Voskreseenya Tvoye slavimo.  
We bow in worship to Your holy Cross, O Master; and we glorify Your holy Resurrection.  
Khrestu Tvoyemy, poklonyayemosya Vladiko, ee svyatoye Voskreseenya Tvoye slavimo.  
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever. Amen.  
... and we glorify Your holy Resurrection.  
Khrestu Tvoyemy, poklonyayemosya Vladiko, ee svyatoye Voskreseenya Tvoye slavimo.

**Prokimen (Tone 7):** Praise the Lord, our God,\* and worship at His footstool, for He is holy indeed.  
VERSE: The Lord reigns, let all people tremble.

**Prokimen (Tone 7):** Praise the Lord, our God,\* and worship at His footstool, for He is holy indeed.

### **Апостол (Гал 2: 16-20)**

До Галатян послання св. апостола Павла читання.

Браття, довідавшись, що людина оправдується не ділами закону, але через віру в Ісуса Христа, ми й увірували в Христа Ісуса, щоб оправдатися нам вірою в Христа, а не ділами закону. Коли ж, шукаючи оправдання у Христі виявилось, що й ми самі грішники - то невже Христос - служитель гріхів? Жадним робом! Бо коли я знову відбудовую то я себе самого оголошую переступником. Я бо через закон для закону вмер, щоб для Бога жити: Я розп'ятий з Христом. Живу вже не я, а живе Христос у мені. А що живу я тепер у тілі, то живу вірою в Божого Сина, який полюбив мене й видав себе за мене.

### **Epistle Reading for Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Galatians 2: 16-20)**

A reading of the letter of St. Paul to the Galatians.

Brethren: Nevertheless, knowing that a man is not justified by legal observance but by faith in Jesus Christ, we too have believed in Him in order to be justified by faith in Christ, not by observance of the law; for by works of the law no one will be justified. But if, in seeking to be justified in Christ, we are shown to be sinners, does that mean that Christ is encouraging sin? Unthinkable! If, however, I were to build up the very things I had demolished, I should then indeed be a transgressor. It was through the law that I died to the law, to live for God. I have been crucified with Christ, and the life I live now is not my own; Christ is living in me. I still live my human life, but it is a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

**Tone 7: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

VERSE: Remember the people You long ago made Your own.

**Tone 7: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

VERSE: Also remember God, the eternal King who works salvation upon the earth.

**Tone 7: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

VERSE: Пом'яни Свою громаду, яку Ти придбав Собі здавна.

**Tone 7: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

VERSE: Бог же, Цар наш предвічний, вчинив спасіння посеред землі.

**Tone 6: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

## **НЕДІЛЯ ПО ВОЗДВИЖЕННІ ЧЕСНОГО ХРЕСТА**

### **Євангелія (Мк 8: 34-38; 9:1)**

Ісус, прикликавши народ разом із своїми учнями, сказав їм: "Коли хтось хоче йти за мною, хай зречеться себе самого, візьме на себе хрест свій і йде слідом за мною. Бо хто хоче спасти свою душу мене ради та Євангелія, той її спасе. Що бо людина може дати взамін за власну душу? Хто, отже, буде соромитися мене й моїх слів перед цим родом перелюбним та грішним, того посоромиться і Син Чоловічий, коли прийде у славі Отця свого з святими ангелами." І сказав їм: "Істинно кажу вам: Є деякі з отут присутніх, що не зазнають смерті, аж поки не вздріють Царства Божого, що прийде у могутності."

### **Gospel Reading for the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (St. Mark 8:34 – 9:1)**

At that time, Jesus summoned the crowd with His disciples and said to them, "If a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and follow in my steps. Whoever would preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel's will preserve it. What profit does a man show who gains the whole world and destroys himself in the process? What can a man offer in exchange for his life! If anyone in this faithless and corrupt age is ashamed of me and my doctrine, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes with the holy angels in His Father's glory." He also said to them: "I assure you, among those standing here there are some who will not taste death until they see the reign of God established in power."

### **Sermon for the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

Slava Isusu Khrystu! My Dear Brother and Sisters in Christ!

When the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, St. Peter the Apostle fled from the Cross! When the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, St. James the Apostle fled from the Cross! When the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, St. Andrew the Apostle fled from the Cross! Where were the Apostles, the chosen disciples,

those future leaders of the Church? Hiding! Scared for their lives! They were as far from the Cross as they could possibly be in Jerusalem! Oh, how weak-willed, how human in the worst sense they were at that moment! But they were not and are not alone in their shame. In fact, the only Apostle who stood by Jesus in His hour of greatest trial was St. John—and he was a mere youth!

The cross was a terrible means of torture and dishonor, resulting in a painful death, but for Christians it has become a symbol of victory, love, forgiveness, and salvation! We wear the cross as a reminder of our fidelity to Christ and to witness on behalf of our Catholic faith to others. But is that all our Crucified Savior means when He tells us to take up our cross? Is wearing a cross enough? Is venerating the Holy Cross in church today enough? Is singing, "Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship," enough?

Today, on the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross of our Lord, we hear the Gospel in which the evangelist Mark tells us the words of Jesus Christ: "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me" (Mk 8:34). This means that we must renounce all that is associated with sin, selfishness, and a life that is beneficial only to ourselves. After all, he who lives only for himself will lose everything. And he who lovingly gives himself to the service of others, who knows how to share everything he has, will gain even more. "To deny oneself" means to look around and learn to see not only yourself and your own sorrows and joys, difficulties and successes, but also to see others, who also have their own joys and sorrows.

Each of us carries his or her own cross in this life. Sometimes we do not understand why the Lord allows us certain trials, difficulties, or sorrows. Sometimes we complain, for we do not know how to accept in a Christian way what we are going through. However, always remember that the Lord never allows what we cannot endure. If we trust Him, we will always feel His support, love, and blessing. The cross on which the Savior died opened the way to heaven and became an apology to our Heavenly Father for human sin.

Jesus Christ has remained in this world in the Holy Eucharist and is constantly with His people. The Savior comes to our aid in our fight against evil. He gave us His cross, a powerful weapon in the fight against the devil. The Savior pointed out the mighty power of the cross to Emperor Constantine. The emperor's mother, Helen, thought that if the image of the Cross had such power, what greater power must the cross on which the Son of God was crucified have. So she went to Jerusalem to find the True Cross of the Lord. After these events, the Emperor Constantine ended the persecution of Christians and by special decree gave freedom to the Christian faith. The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is a commemoration of this event.

The cross then is the power of God because we see in it Christ's victory over the greatest obstacle: sin and death. What Christ has assumed, He has healed, proclaims St. Athanasius. Christ has put on death, but being Life itself, its Creator, He won the victory by His holy resurrection. That same victory He gives to all who are willing to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him. The cross is the power of God because signing ourselves with the cross, we come to 'own' Christ's victory for ourselves: we proclaim Christ's victory inwardly and outwardly, we guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus from the demons and their vices, we learn to "take every thought captive to obey Christ," and we witness to those around us the truth that His victory is for all mankind because all are loved by God and are called to holiness and new life through communion with Him.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, let us ask God that the power of the Lord's Cross may help us to bear the daily crosses of life, to give us strength in patience and comfort in sorrow, to help us in the fight against evil, and to protect us against all temptations. Let us honor the Cross of the Lord early in the morning, when we get out of bed, by making the sign of the cross to glorify the Holy Trinity. We should do this with respect and faith, because it is a force against the devil. Similarly, in the evening, when we go to bed, let us mark ourselves with the sign of the Cross, so that our night may be calm and peaceful. May the Cross of the Lord instill in us strong faith, hope, and love for God. Remember, the Lord is always with us. By the power of the Cross we will overcome evil, and the peace of God will reign in our hearts and in our families. Amen!

## **ПРОПОВІДЬ НА НЕДІЛЮ ПО ВОЗДВИЖЕННІ ЧЕСНОГО ХРЕСТА**

Слава Ісусу Христу! Дорогі в Христі браття і сестри!

Впродовж нашого земного життя ми покликані стати учнями Господа. Господь каже нам: «Якщо хто хоче йти за Мною, нехай зречеться себе, візьме хрест свій та йде за Мною». Це послання було адресовано не лише апостолам, але й усій юрбі. Господь знав, що не всі приймуть це послання. Вони його відкинуть. Будуть ті, хто буде соромитися Ісуса та Його слова, послання Євангелії. Проте, Господь продовжує, кажучи, що Син Людський засоромиться їх, коли прийде у славі Отця зі святими ангелами. Це вказує нам усім на те, що існує зв'язок між нашим земним життям і вічним життям.

Господь не каже, що йти за Ним означає безболісно і безтурботно жити, але стверджує необхідність зречення від себе та несення свого хреста, щоби могли зватися Його послідовниками. Він до нас каже, щоб ми взяли свій хрест на себе, не чужий, не Його хрест, а свій! Шлях Христа – єдиний шлях життя і спасіння, всі інші – людські. Люди багато дізналися, багато здобули, подолали, проникли в далекі та важкодоступні місця, спускалися на дно моря і піднімалися в космос, розщепили атом, але це не зробило людське життя щасливішим, радіснішим, ані більш мирним. Ось чому Господь говорить нам ці слова: «Яка користь людині, коли вона здобуде увесь світ, а душу свою занепасть?» (Мк. 8, 36). Поміркуймо про це: чого б людина не досягла, якщо її душа одночасно духовно не зростає у досконалості, не стає шляхетнішою, не просвітлюється, – усе буде марно. І зараз ми це добре усвідомлюємо, дивлячись навколо себе, знаючи, що навіть матеріальний добробут не може зробити людей кращими та щасливішими. Потрібно, щоб людина оживотворювалась Божою правдою, просвітлювалась Його благодаттю, йшла дорогою Божих заповідей – тоді вона буде щасливою.

Отож Христос промовляє до кожного з нас: „Коли хтось хоче йти за мною, хай зречеться себе самого“. Це означає, що людина повинна зректися в першу чергу всього, що пов'язане з гріхом, із користоловством та життям тільки для себе. Адже той, хто живе тільки для себе, усе втратить, але той, хто з любов'ю віддає себе на служіння ближнім, хто вміє ділитися всім, що має, той ще більше здобуде. „Відректися себе“ означає подивитися довкола і навчитися бачити не тільки себе зі своїми скорботами та радостями, труднощами та успіхами, але й інших, у яких також є свої радості та печалі. Навчитися жити не тільки своїм життям, але також і їхнім життям.

Наступний заклик Христа – це „взяти свого хреста“. Тут хрест – не тільки всі прикрощі, біди чи страждання, що зустрічають нас в житті. Це також праця, яка вдосконалює людину, праця на благо родини і суспільства, тому що хрест – це щоденний подвиг в ім'я ближнього, в ім'я свого

народу. Цей хрест мусимо прийняти добровільно та зі щирістю. Спаситель закликає нас взяти хрест саме свій – тобто обирати спосіб життя і працю за покликанням і мужньо перемагати всі труднощі, котрі стрінуть нас на цьому шляху.

Як колись так і сьогодні основними запитаннями для кожної людини є: як «бути людиною»? Як навчитися мистецтва життя? Яка дорога веде до щастя? Що маю зробити, щоб мати життя вічне? Бог який відкрив Себе нам в Ісусі Христі і єднає нас у Вселенській Церкві, щоб ми з Ним і через Нього навчалися правдивого життя, щоб ми зберігали й утілювали критерії справжньої людяності. Коли людина більше не відчуває Бога, життя стає пустим, все стає недостатнім. Людина тоді починає шукати порятунку в алкоголізмі або насильстві, і ця небезпека все більше загрожує сьогоднішній людині. Бог живе, Він створив кожного з нас і тому одного дня заплатить усім, кожному та кожній згідно нашими вчинками.

Хрест допомагає збудувати міцний зв'язок віри, любові та довіри з Христом. Вшанування Хреста Господнього запрошує нас впевнено йти в житті за Ісусом – все переживати, вирішувати разом з Ним. Тоді не буде сумнівів у наших рішеннях, знеохоти, зневіри в їхньому виконанні, а завжди певність успіху, бо в його основі є постійна допомога Ісуса, як твердить апостол Павло: „Я можу все в тому, хто укріплює мене“. (Фил 4,13). Якщо ми йдемо життєвою дорогою разом із Христом і будуємо своє життя згідно з Його наукою, тоді світло Божої правди освітлює його, наповняє Божою любов'ю, і ціль життя – Царство Божої любові починається для нас вже тут на землі. Амінь.

### **Hymn to the Mother of God**

Величай, душе моя, у пресвятий хрест Господній.

**Ірмос:** Таїнственный Ти, Богородице,\* рай, що незбагненно зростила нам Христа.\* Він бо на землі посадив нам хресне живоносне дерево.\* Тимто нині, як підносимо і поклоняємось Йому,\* Тебе, Богородице, величаємо.

Rejoice, O my soul, in the most precious Cross of the Lord.

**Tone 1:** You are the Mystical Paradise, O Mother of God,\* for without seed you have nurtured Christ,\* from Whom the life-giving tree of the Cross was planted upon the earth.\* Today we exalt the Cross,\* and with our reverent bows, we also praise you.

**Communion Verse:** Хвалить Господа з небес, хвалить Його на висотах. Яви нам світло лица Твого, Господи. Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest. Let the light of Your face, Lord, shine upon us. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

## ***Parish Announcements***

### **We Welcome You!**

If you are visiting our church today, our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Thank you and God bless you for visiting with us today! We welcome all our visitors and guests who worship at our parish. We invite families and individuals who wish to become members to register by calling Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357.

### **Вітаємо Вас!**

Якщо Ви відвідуєте нашу церкву сьогодні, наша парафіяльна громада рада вітати Вас тут! Щире спасибі Вам, і нехай Бог благословить Вас за Ваші відвідини з нами сьогодні! Ми запрошуємо сім'ї та осіб, які бажають стати членами, зареєструватися у нас по телефоні о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357.

### **Please Pray for our Sick and Homebound Parishioners**

Fr. Ihor Papka, Fr. Zbigniew Brzezicki, Oleh and Valentina Babski, Michaelle Baker, Marylou Blaisdell, Carmel Horangic, Josephine Housty, Christine Kolagji, Helen Kucman, Martha and Ray Majkut, Karen and Jaroslaw Maksymowych, Jean Mandych, Sherri Martel, Katherine Masso, Jennifer McMillan, Katharine McNaughton, Jackie Morales, Lauren Morales, Jonathan Morales, Tanya and Ronald Morales, Elizabeth Mozina, Olympia Pasicznyk, Billie Sheesley, Derek Stanley, Pauline Stanley, John Terninko, Elisha Wallace, Cindy Wilson, Dr. Mark Windt, John Zelenski, Lauren Zelenski. Please contact Fr. Ihor if you would like to add a friend or loved one to this prayer list.

### **September Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries**

The following parishioners are celebrating a birthday or wedding anniversary this month:

September 1 – Fr. Ihor and Violeta P. (wedding anniversary)

September 6 – Karen and Jaroslaw M. (wedding anniversary)

September 9 – Shawn Y.

September 13 – Dorota and Jon M. (wedding anniversary)

September 13 – Bozhena H.

September 14 – Mariya H.

September 18 – John H.

September 23 – Karen M.

September 28 – Lesya Z.

September 29 – Mia H.

Our parish community wishes this month's birthday and anniversary celebrants peace, joy, love and good health on their special day as well as throughout the year. May our dear Lord grant all of you many more healthy, happy and blessed years. Happy Birthday, Happy Anniversary and На Мнугая літа! (Na Mnohaya Lita!).

### **Parish Feast Day and Pot Luck Luncheon**

On Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, our faith community will celebrate the parochial feast of the Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our parish founding. A potluck luncheon will be served in the church hall after Divine Liturgy. Please see Zhanna Samaruk to sign up to bring a dish to share at the luncheon. All are invited to partake in this celebration.

## ***Weekly Reflection***

### **Learning about Our Catholic Faith – The Transforming Power of the Cross**

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. John 3:16–17*

If Jesus would never have given His life on a cross for the salvation of the world, then a cross would never have been seen in "exultation." A cross, in and of itself, is an instrument of death, a horrific and violent death. It is also an instrument of humiliation and torture. Yet, today, the Cross is seen as a holy



and blessed object. We hang crosses in our homes, wear them around our neck, keep them in our pocket on the end of the rosary, and spend time in prayer before them. The Cross is now an exalted image by which we turn to God in prayer and surrender. But that is only the case because it was on a cross that we were saved and brought to eternal life.

If you step back and consider the amazing truth that one of the worst instruments of torture and death is now seen as one of the holiest of images on earth, it should be awe inspiring. Comprehending this fact should lead us to the realization that God can do anything and everything. God can use the worst and transform it into the best. He can use death to bring forth life.

Though our celebration of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is first and foremost a feast by which we give glory to the Father for what He did in the Person of His divine Son, it is also a feast by which we must humbly understand that God can "exalt" every cross we endure in life and bring forth much grace through them.

What is your heaviest cross? What is the source of your greatest suffering? Most likely, as you call this to mind, it is painful to you. Most often, our crosses and sufferings are things we seek to rid ourselves of. We easily point to crosses in life and blame them for a lack of happiness. We can easily think that if only this or that were to change or be removed, then our life would be better. So what is that cross in your life?

The truth is that whatever your heaviest cross is, there is extraordinary potential for that cross to become an actual source of grace in your life and in the world. But this is only possible if you embrace that cross in faith and hope so that our Lord can unite it to His and so that your crosses can also share in the exaltation of Christ's Cross. Though this is a profoundly deep mystery of faith, it is also a profoundly deep truth of our faith.

Reflect, today, upon your own crosses. As you do, try not to see them as a burden. Instead, realize the potential within those crosses. Prayerfully look at your crosses as invitations to share in Christ's Cross. Say "Yes" to your crosses. Choose them freely. Unite them to Christ's Cross. As you do, have hope that God's glory will come forth in your life and in the world through your free embrace of them. Know that these "burdens" will be transformed and become a source of exaltation in your life by the transforming power of God.

Let us pray: *My exalted Lord, I turn to You in my need and with the utmost faith in Your divine power to save. Please give me the grace I need to fully embrace every cross in my life with hope and faith in You. Please transform my crosses so that You will be exalted through them and so that they will become an instrument of Your glory and grace. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*