



Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

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The Third Sunday in Lent: *Notes on the Adoration of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross*
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Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory to Him forever!

“The Cross as an ensign of victory”

- Third Sunday in Lent.
 - Procession with the Holy Cross – in Jerusalem, the true cross of Christ
 - Elsewhere, segments or a segment thereof
 - A reminder of why we observe Lent; a means of encouragement and strengthening midway through the Great Fast
- The very fact that we consider the Cross to be a sign of victory is very strange
 - The cross is a device for killing and torture
 - The fact that Christ submits to it willingly, even though as He said to Pilate, He could have a legion of angels coming to His defence.
 - It seems as if He is giving in to evil, injustice, wrong
 - They crucified the One Who brought healing to the sick, gave sight to the blind, raised the dead, brought those on outside in
 - By every system of justice, this was the hugest of injustices, a wrong that should never have been
 - But the world lives by other standards

- It seeks to serve itself at the expense of the poor and the weak
- It puts itself first and casts a blind eye toward God's revelation – to feed the hungry, minister to the sick and imprisoned.
- Jesus was crucified essentially for stepping on the toes of the powerful in the Temple and outside of the temple.
- Even Pilate sensed the injustice of it, and by all accounts, Pilate was no gentle or compassionate angel
- The cross is many things:
 - Obedience; self-giving; sacrifice
 - A sign that God Himself provides the sacrifice as Abraham discovered before he could sacrifice his son Isaac
 - It is all these things,
- But above all – the ultimate representation that Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of the Father, aligns Himself completely with those who are abused, mistreated, poor, sick, hopeless.
- And through that alignment, He knows no limits to His submission of suffering for their sake.
- And ... most importantly, He overcomes the Bullies and Powermongers of this world by emptying the hopeless of Hades through His own resurrection.
- Thus, for this reason, the Cross is the ultimate sign of victory
- We must remember this when we consider the future of our own society. God is one with those in need, not with those in power!

Fr. Elias

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