

**Russian Orthodox Church of the  
Resurrection of Christ**

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**Schedule for the Week of September 27 – October 3, 2009**

Sunday Sep 27	Elevation of the Cross Воздвижение Креста
Saturday Oct 3	5:30 PM Vigil
Sunday Oct 4	Leave-taking of Elevation of the Cross 8:30 AM Confessions, Nocturns 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy / Литургия

**Возвижение Крста Господня**

Благочестивая Елена, мать императора Константина Великого, узнав, что Крест, на котором был распят Господь Иисус Христос, был зарыт в землю и над ним был выстроен языческий храм, решила отыскать эту дорогую для каждого христианина святыню. Когда, по приказанию Елены, капище, под которым находилось место погребения Честного Древа, было снесено и стали рыть землю, вместо одного было обнаружено три креста. Чтобы узнать, на котором из них был распят Спаситель, Патриарх Иерусалимский Макарий поочередно возложил кресты на покойника. Когда был возложен Крест Господень, мертвец ожил. Это событие произошло в 326 году. Кроме радостного воздвижения Креста для того, чтоб Его увидел народ, это событие напоминает и о другом «воздвижении» Креста – на Голгофе, для распятия Господа Христа. Поэтому в этот день, как и в Великую Пятницу, совершается строгий пост.

**Крест – Праздник**

...Мы празднуем, чтобы ты знал, что крест – праздник и духовное торжество. Прееде крест служил именем наказания, а теперь стал почетным делом; прежде был символом осуждения, а теперь знаком спасения. ...Он просветил сидящих во мраке, он примирил нас бывших во вражде с Богом... Благодаря кресту мы не терпещем пред тираном, потому что находимся около царя. Вот почему мы и празднуем, совершая память креста. Так повелел праздновать ради креста и Павел: «Посему станем праздноват, - говорит, - не со старою закавскою, не с

закваскою порока и лукавства, но с опресноками чистоты и истины» (1Кор.5,8). Затем, указывая причину, присовокупил, что «Пасца наша, Христос, заклан за нас» (1Кор.5,7). Видишь, каким образом повелевает он праздновать ради креста? На кресте «Хрисрос заклан за нас», а где жертва, там уничтожение грехов, там примирение с Господом, там праздник и радость. «Пасха наша, Христос, заклан за нас». (Свя. Иоанн Златоуст).

On this day are commemorated two events connected with the Precious Cross of Christ: the first, the finding of the Cross on Golgotha and the second the returning of the Cross to Jerusalem from Persia.

Staying in the Holy Land, the holy Empress Helena decided to look for the Precious Cross of the Lord. An old Jew called Judah was the only person who knew the whereabouts of the Cross, and he revealed that the Cross was buried under the Temple of Venus that the Emperor Hadrian had built on Golgotha. The Empress ordered that this idolatrous temple be pulled down, and then, digging deep below it, she found three crosses. While the Empress was in uncertainty about how to recognize which cross was the Lord's, a funeral procession passed by. Then Patriarch Macarius told them to place the crosses one by one on the dead man. When they placed the first and second on him, the dead man remained unchanged, but when they placed the third on him, he was restored to life. By this, they knew that this was the Precious and life-giving Cross of Christ. After that, they placed it on a sick woman, and she recovered. Then the Patriarch raised the Cross aloft for all to see, and the people sang with tears: 'Lord, have mercy!' The Empress Helena had a silver casing made, and placed the precious Cross in it.

Later, King Chozroes conquered Jerusalem, took the people into slavery and carried the Lord's Cross off to Persia, where it remained for fourteen years. In 628, the Greek Emperor Heraclius was victorious over Chozroes and brought the Cross back to Jerusalem with great ceremony. Entering the city, Heraclius was carrying the Cross on his back, but suddenly the aged Emperor was unable to take another step. Patriarch Zacharias saw an angel directing the Emperor to take off his imperial robes and walk beneath the Cross along the way that Christ had walked, barefoot and humiliated as He had been. He passed this vision on to the Emperor, who stripped himself of his raiment and, in poor clothing and barefoot, took up the Cross, carried it to Golgotha and placed it in the Church of the Resurrection, to the joy and consolation of the whole Christian world.

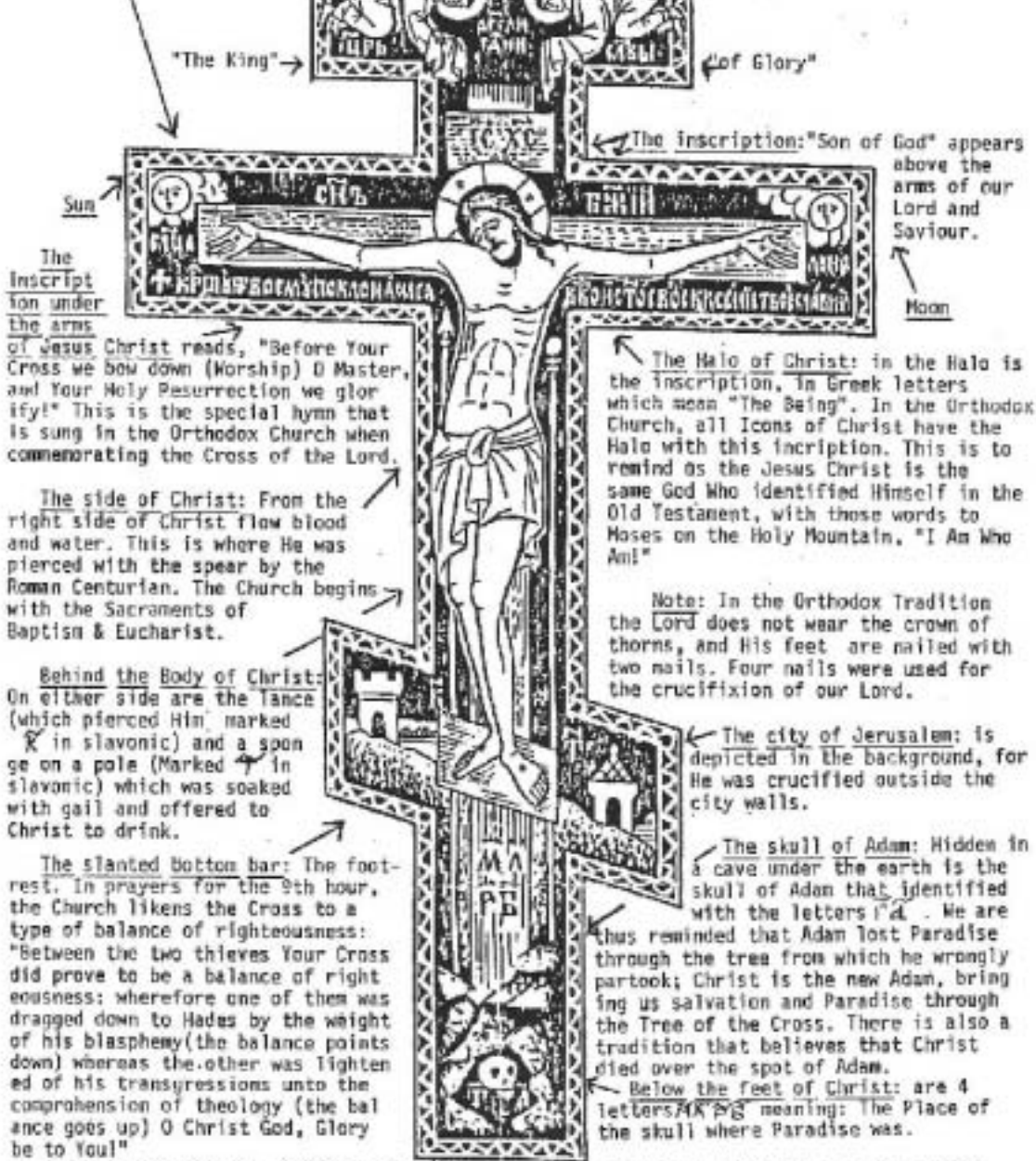
## An Explanation of the Three-Bar Cross!

**The Top Bar** - This is the title-board which Pilate hung on the Cross; On the inset drawing of the Cross, his words have been replaced with the Letters  $\text{XPI}\ \text{C}\ \text{C}\ \text{C}$ , the Greek initials for Jesus Christ. On the top bar, under the knees of the angels, we read instead of Pilate's "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" the Christian inscription, "King of Glory".

**The Second Bar** - The bar on which the Lord's hands were nailed. On either top corner we see the depiction of the sun and the moon, for "the sun hid its light, and the moon turned to blood." (Joel)

**Through the Cross came our Salvation;** we are constantly reminded that Christ died for us, and that He rose from the dead; the image of the crucified Lord reminds us of the former; the second image of Christ on the towel, depicting the Lord alive, reminds us of the latter. This image is called "Not painted by hands" and is thus inscribed in Slavonic

Worshipping the Crucified Lord; are two flying angels, with the inscription between them, "Angels of the Lord."



"The King" →

← "of Glory"

← The inscription: "Son of God" appears above the arms of our Lord and Saviour.

← Sun

← Moon

The inscription under the arms of Jesus Christ reads, "Before Your Cross we bow down (Worship) O Master, and Your Holy Resurrection we glorify!" This is the special hymn that is sung in the Orthodox Church when commemorating the Cross of the Lord.

← The Halo of Christ: in the Halo is the inscription, in Greek letters which mean "The Being". In the Orthodox Church, all Icons of Christ have the Halo with this inscription. This is to remind us the Jesus Christ is the same God who identified Himself in the Old Testament, with those words to Moses on the Holy Mountain, "I Am Who Am!"

The side of Christ: From the right side of Christ flow blood and water. This is where He was pierced with the spear by the Roman Centurian. The Church begins with the Sacraments of Baptism & Eucharist.

Note: In the Orthodox Tradition the Lord does not wear the crown of thorns, and His feet are nailed with two nails. Four nails were used for the crucifixion of our Lord.

Behind the Body of Christ: On either side are the lance (which pierced Him, marked  $\text{X}$  in Slavonic) and a sponge on a pole (Marked  $\text{P}$  in Slavonic) which was soaked with gall and offered to Christ to drink.

← The city of Jerusalem: is depicted in the background, for He was crucified outside the city walls.

The slanted Bottom bar: The footrest. In prayers for the 9th hour, the Church likens the Cross to a type of balance of righteousness: "Between the two thieves Your Cross did prove to be a balance of righteousness; wherefore one of them was dragged down to Hades by the weight of his blasphemy (the balance points down) whereas the other was lightened of his transgressions unto the comprehension of theology (the balance goes up) O Christ God, Glory be to You!"

← The skull of Adam: Hidden in a cave under the earth is the skull of Adam that identified with the letters  $\text{I}\ \text{A}$ . We are thus reminded that Adam lost Paradise through the tree from which he wrongly partook; Christ is the new Adam, bringing us salvation and Paradise through the Tree of the Cross. There is also a tradition that believes that Christ died over the spot of Adam.

← Below the feet of Christ: are 4 letters  $\text{ANPA}$  meaning: The Place of the skull where Paradise was.

Also, in the Russian tradition the Gospel of the Lord was brought by St. Andrew the Apostle. Tradition says that St. Andrew was crucified on an X shaped Cross. Another reason for the slanted or X shaped bottom bar.

Missing on this Cross: but usually found on others are the letters  $\text{P}\ \text{I}$  meaning Mount Golgotha.