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His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America releases Encyclical for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America has released the following Encyclical for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

Protocol 34/19

September 14, 2019

The Universal Exaltation of The Precious and Life-Giving Cross

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we commemorate this most blessed Feast of the Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross, we sing as an exclamation of faith and a witness of the Gospel to all the world, "The Cross is raised on high, and urges all the creation to sing the praises of the undefiled Passion of Him who was lifted high upon it." (Hymn of Vespers) Today, as Orthodox Christians we raise high the Cross as an emblem of victory and an invincible shield. We raise high the Cross of Christ our Lord, proclaiming the salvation that has come through Him. We raise high the Cross, affirming that God's love for us is greater than the power of death. And in raising high the Cross, we raise up Christ so that all the world may see our Resurrected Lord and believe.

This Feast of the Holy Cross is a very special day for us as Orthodox faithful, and it is also a special day for our Holy Archdiocese. It is on this Feast each year that we affirm our support for the sacred work of our dear *Schola*, our Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. On this Feast we offer our prayers for the students, faculty and staff, we encourage parishes and faithful to contribute to the mission of the school. In addition, you are encouraged to recognize seminarians from your parish and to commit to cultivating more leaders for the Church.

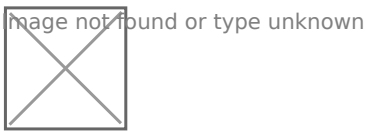
This year the Feast comes at a very critical time in the life of our *Schola*, and as we raise high the Cross of Christ in our communities, I ask that you raise your prayers on behalf of Holy Cross. We have begun the search for a new president for the institution. We are working diligently with His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios and the Board of Trustees to address issues and challenges so that our focus remains on preparing clergy and other leaders for a lifetime of service to God and His Church. Your prayers and support are needed so that our blessed *Schola* and its legacy of training and nurturing generations of clergy can be on firm foundations.

Today, we greet the Cross with joy, for the Cross has been given to us as a light

and the salvation of our souls. It illumines the path of holiness. It guides our journey of faith unto eternal life. In this joy may we also celebrate our Holy Cross School of Theology and the tremendous offering that has and will continue to be made from this holy hill. That offering has had an impact in taking the Gospel into all the world, in nurturing the faithful in our parishes across this land, and in serving as a community of spiritual formation, an academy that cherishes intellectual inquiry, and a beacon of truth and grace.

May the power of the Cross protect you, its light guide you, and this Feast inspire you to *take up your cross daily*, believing that *God gives us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord*. (I Corinthians 15:57)

With paternal love in Christ,



† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America

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- Source: goarch.org