**The Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

14 September

This feast day is deeply connected to the identity and mythology of early Christians. Fundamentally, the feast remembers how an instrument of torture became a pathway to resurrection. [Read more.](https://www.thoughtco.com/feast-exaltation-of-the-holy-cross-542472)

Today, we are asked in a particular way to remember the Chaldean Catholic Church in Iraq, a community in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church. With ISIS and the tumultuous wars in the Middle East, these Christians have suffered much. We are asked to stand with them and pray for peace. [Read more.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaldean_Catholic_Church)

**Collect**

Let us pray.

O God, who willed that your Only Begotten Son

should undergo the Cross to save the human race,

grant, we pray,

that we, who have known his mystery on earth,

may merit the grace of his redemption in heaven.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,

who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

**The Liturgy of the Word**

**First Reading: Numbers 21:4-9**

**A reading from the book of Numbers**

The Israelites set out by the way to the Red Sea,

to go around the land of Edom;

but they became impatient on the way.

The people spoke against God and against Moses,

"Why have you brought us up out of Egypt

to die in the wilderness?

For there is no food and no water,

and we detest this miserable food."

Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people,

and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died.

The people came to Moses and said,

"We have sinned by speaking against the Lord

and against you;

pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us."

So Moses prayed for the people.

And the Lord said to Moses,

"Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole;

and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live."

So Moses made a serpent of bronze,

and put it upon a pole;

and whenever a serpent bit someone,

that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Responsorial Psalm: Ps 77:1-2. 34-38**

R. Do not forget the works of the Lord!

Give heed, my people, to my teaching;

turn your ear to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable

and reveal hidden lessons of the past. R.

When he slew them then they would seek him,

return and seek him in earnest.

They would remember that God was their rock,

God the Most High their redeemer. R.

But the words they spoke were mere flattery;

they lied to him with their lips.

For their hearts were not truly with him;

they were not faithful to his covenant. R.

Yet he who is full of compassion

forgave their sin and spared them.

So often he held back his anger

when he might have stirred up his rage. R.

**Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11**

**A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians**

Though Christ Jesus was in the form of God,

he did not regard equality with God

as something to be exploited,

but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death-

even death on a cross.

Therefore God highly exalted him

and gave him the name that is above every name,

so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia, alleluia!

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you,

because by your cross you have redeemed the world.

Alleluia!

**Gospel: John 3:13-17**

**A reading from the holy gospel according to John**

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

"No one has ascended into heaven

except the one who descended from heaven,

the Son of Man.

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,

so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world

that he gave his only Son,

so that everyone who believes in him may not perish

but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world

to condemn the world,

but in order that the world might be saved

through him."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**Homily**

**Prayer of the Faithful**

Presider: God exalted the Son by raising him up to life and returning him to eternal glory. Let us pray that we may share in that life.

May the cross always be a symbol of the Church which celebrates the victory of Christ who triumphed over death.

May all who honour the cross be lifted up to share in the glory of Christ.

May all those who are suffering, particularly those Christians in Iraq be given strength through the cross.

May all of us embrace lives of self-giving so that we might share in the new life of eternal glory.

Presider: God of victory, your Son was lifted up on the cross for our salvation: hear these our prayers that we might share in your everlasting glory. We ask this through that same Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.