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**Sunday, September 20, 2020**  
**15th Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 6**  
**Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross**

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Troparion:

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure Body. Thou didst capture hell, not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord who didst rise from the dead: glory to Thee!

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve thy habitation.

O Prophet and Forerunner of the coming of Christ, in spite of our honor and devotion we are unable to give you worthy praise, through your glorious and noble birth your mother's childlessness was ended, your father's tongue was freed, and the incarnation of the Son of God was proclaimed to the world.

Kontakion:

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

As Thou wast voluntarily crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Thy name; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace.

Prokeimenon in the 7th Tone:

Extol the Lord our God; worship at His footstool for it is holy!  
(Vs.) The Lord reigns; let the people tremble!

Epistle:

The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Galatians. (Gal. 2:16-20)

Brethren, know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Brethren, for it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believed, and so I spoke," we too believe, and so we speak, knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into His presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. (2 Cor. 4:6-15)

Alleluia Verses:

Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased of old.

(Vs.) God is our King before the ages: He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Gospel:

The Holy Gospel According to St. Mark. (Chapter 8:34-9:1)

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who would save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will save it. For what does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, but suffers the loss of his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when He comes with the holy angels in the glory of his Father." And He said to them, "Amen I say to you, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death, till they have seen the kingdom of God coming in power."

At that time one of the doctors of the Law, putting Jesus to the test and questioning Him, asked, "Master, which is the great commandment in the Law?" Jesus said to him, "'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind.' This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like it, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus questioned them, saying, "What do you think of the Christ? Whose son is He?" They said to him, "David's." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand till I make thy enemies thy footstool?' If David, therefore, calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?" And no one could answer Him a word; neither did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him any more questions. (Matthew 22:35-46)