



## On-Going Charitable Projects: *charitable giving includes canned goods collections, hygienic products collection, weekly plate collection, winter warmth items and the Lenten Drive*

- Contribute and participate in the **quarterly Mary House Service Program**
- **Hygiene Products – Toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, Kleenex, toilet paper, hand sanitizers, deodorants** – container is in Sunday School Hall
- **Keep Warm This Winter** – hats, gloves, mittens, sox, scarfs – to be donated to Mary’s House - drive from November to March --- container is in Sunday School Hall
- **Weekly Sunday School student plate donation**

### From DCE:

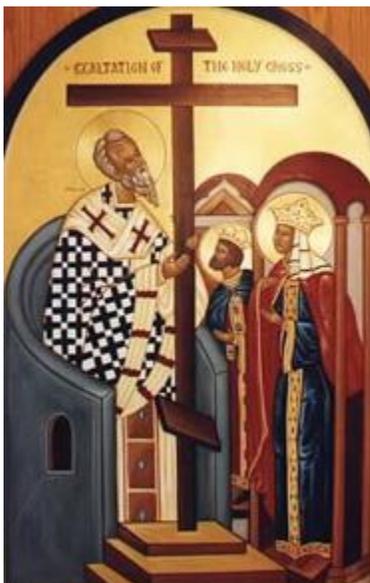
#### From Today’s Readings

**John 3:13-21** The Pharisee Nicodemus has sought Jesus to learn more. Here Jesus tells him that He came into the world to save it and will return to heaven for all who believe in Him to have eternal life; those who live by the truth and light of Christ are a powerful witness to God’s glory. *Discuss/reflect: It’s human nature to hide our sins and weaknesses from scrutiny (v.20), yet Jesus promises that living in His truth can free us from that burden. From what sins can faith liberate you? In what ways can you shine God’s light in the world?*

**Galatians 6:14-18** St. Paul declares that the cross is the only source of pride and joy to him and that in Christ the world has been “crucified to me.” His past, his “tribe,” his earthly affiliations mean nothing – he has been made new in Christ (v.15). *Discuss/reflect: Do you share in St. Paul’s declaration that we need boast of nothing except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (v.14)? Do you live this way? Does the church as a whole?*

**Isaiah 49:13-23** A refrain of joyous comfort from God who declares that His people will never be forgotten. ‘Lift up your eyes and look around you,’ (v.18) the Lord declares, ‘even in your forsakenness know that I will lift up my victorious banner.’ (vv18-23) The analogy of a mother’s love in verse 15 is another example of God’s tenderness expressed in female imagery. *Discuss/reflect: When you are absorbed in your everyday problems, what does it take to “lift up your eyes and look around” and notice God’s glorious presence in your life and in the world?*

#### Today is the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross



The Exaltation of the Holy Cross is one of the five major feasts (*daghavars*) of the Armenian Church, observed on the Sunday nearest September 14. On that day, there is a procession and an antasdan service or Blessing of the World (four corners).

In early times, the most important church in Jerusalem was named the Church of the Holy Cross. It had been built over the place where Jesus was crucified. Every year, the bishop would take out a relic of the cross and elevate it over his head for the people to honor and venerate. This ceremony is the origin of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

Traditionally, we connect another story to this Feast Day. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the Persians captured the cross of our Lord after devastating the city of Jerusalem. Emperor Heracles fought a battle against them – in which the Armenian army participated – and liberated the cross. Upon his return, he exalted it in Christian lands, including Armenia - through which the victorious army carried it back to Jerusalem. *Activity: On this feast day, put a small cross in your pocket and reflect reverently throughout the day on Jesus Christ, whose sacrifice has made your life transcendent now and for all eternity.*

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