



JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY – SEPTEMBER 2016
DISCOVERING WAYS TO LIVE THE YEAR OF MERCY

WE EXTOL YOU, O CHRIST THE GIVER OF LIFE AND WE HONOR YOUR PRECIOUS CROSS!

We honor the precious Cross! Therefore, the Cross on which Christ was crucified, instead of being a sign of sadness and mourning has become the sign of the greatest joy, the sign of the strengthening of faith and hope. It has become the throne of love, the sign of mercy, proof of forgiveness, the carrier of grace and the flag of peace.

At the same time the Cross is the mystery of our faith – the mystery of the redemption of mankind. How can we explain this mystery? It cannot be the subject of human investigation and human philosophy, but is experienced through sincere faith and love and our humble thanksgiving to God.

St. John Chrysostom writes of this: “Everything that is done for our sanctification is done in the sign of the cross. If we have to be reborn, this is done in the sign of the cross (baptism). When the mysterious food is prepared for us, it is done in the sign of the cross. Whenever any ritual is done we see the sign of the cross everywhere. Everything that is done in the service that relates to man’s sanctification is done in the sign of the holy Cross.” We are reminded by St. Cyril of Jerusalem says, “Let us not be ashamed to confess the Crucified. Let us make with confidence the sign of the Cross with our fingers on the forehead and all things – the bread which we eat, the glass which we drink, in our comings and goings, when we lay down and get up, before walking and before resting let us not forget this sign!”

We celebrate the Cross as a holy sign which helps us strengthen our faith. It is the sign which strengthens our hope in the victory of God and His justice. We wear it on ourselves and carry it in ourselves as a sign of God’s mercy towards mankind and we experience it as a sign of our mercy towards our neighbor. The Cross is a sign that witnesses to the fact that God forgives. At the same time, the Cross is a sign of our will to forgive. The Cross calls us to preach the crucified and resurrected Lord. It reminds us of all the things that our Savior did, who was crucified for our salvation. The Cross calls us to always proclaim “Christ crucified the power of God and wisdom of God” (I Cor. 1:23-24).

Our Prayer: “We extol You, O Christ the Giver of life, and we honor Your precious cross, through which we have been saved from the bondage of the enemy.”

Our activities: As we elevate the Cross of Christ, let us lift our souls and hearts higher towards the crucified Lord. Let us have a deeper and stronger experience of His Cross, in our daily lives and activities.