

THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULETIN VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY

THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

Our focus on the Third Sunday of Great Lent is the CROSS, the greatest of Christian symbols. After being brought out in solemn procession today, the Cross will remain in the center of Orthodox churches everywhere, calling us to remember that we must all “take up our cross” and follow Christ if we are to attain salvation.

A popular place to visit on a pilgimage to Jerusalem is the CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE. It was build by the Emperor Constantine in 335 A.D. as a means of enshrining the tomb of Jeus. Little emphasis was placed upon the spot of His Crucifixion, with a simple cross marking this sacred site. In the 12th century, the Crusaders fully integrated Clavary into the general structure of the reconstructed Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

**The hill of Calvary is a perfect example of the “ SACRED MOUNTAIN”:
The meeting of the three cosmic levels of the universe, namely, HEAVEN, EARTH, and the UNDERWORLD. On the summit of Calvary, heaven and earth meet in the crucified Christ. The Divine Life which came from above was not intended to stop at this summit, but to descent the axis to its very depths. The form taken for this was the Living Blood of Christ, which, after being shed on the Cross, seeped down through the earthquaked opened cracks in the rocks. It brought salvation and life to those lost in the darkness of the world below.**

The cross is an everlasting reminder to us of the sacrifice made by Christ for our sake. Through the Cross, our Saviour has redeemed us!