



74th Year

September 13, 2026

Pamphlet #37 (3824)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (John 3:13-17)

"That the world may be saved through him"

The Lord said, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven. And 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, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him."

THE MISSION OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD

The Gospel passage read in today's Divine Liturgy comes from the dialogue of the Lord with Nicodemus, who was a teacher of Israel and a member of the Jewish Great Council. The passage is directly connected with the crucifactory sacrifice of Christ and, for this reason, the Church has appointed it to be read on the Sunday before the Feast of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross. The meaning of the forthcoming feast of the Cross is summarized in the final verses of the passage: "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."

The incarnation of the Son of God

When "the fullness of time" had come, the hour appointed by God, He sent His Son into the world (Galatians 4:4). This

mission refers to the mystery of the divine kenosis, the incarnation of the Word, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. The Son of God enters into historical reality. He becomes Jesus Christ, that is, in His hypostasis, in His Person, the divinity and humanity are united without confusion and without division. His human nature is anointed by His divinity, and thus He becomes the Savior of all people, "of the whole race of Adam."

He is sacrificed willingly for the life of the world and offers Himself as a ransom for the rebirth and salvation of man. He takes upon Himself the sin of the world, which He nails to His Cross, offering back to every believer, in freedom, true and eternal life. In this way, God expresses His infinite, ineffable, and inconceivable love for man, for only in the Person of Jesus Christ does God meet man in a redeeming union.

The encounter of God and man

This encounter, one that presupposes the consent and cooperation of man, becomes participation, communion, union of the created with the uncreated. Corrupt and finite man becomes, through the Grace of God, holy, eternal, immortal, filled with the Holy Spirit. Already from this present life he partakes of the new creation and life, in the coming Kingdom which the Lord's infallible mouth promises.

Therefore, the Lord becomes incarnate, becomes man, not to condemn man but to save him from the dominion of sin, the devil, and death. "That he might not perish," that He might preserve him whole, unharmed, without the fragmentation, division, and loss, brought about by self-love, selfishness, injustice, and other forms of failure arising from human folly. Christ is, without any distinction or partiality (Romans 2:11), the Light and the Savior of all nations, of the entire world, and of all people who desire their salvation and believe in His holy Name.

The salvation of the world in Christ

For this reason, the word *world*, which is repeated three times in the final verses of our passage, acquires particular

theological and spiritual significance. Quite often in Holy Scripture, this word bears a negative meaning, for it signifies the worldly mindset, that is, the alienation and estrangement of man from God, hostility or indifference toward the will and work of God, enslavement to corruption and vanity. Yet in our passage, as well as in other places of Scripture, world signifies the creation of God, as an expression of His love, His power, His wisdom, and His glory.

And the crown of this world is man, who is the image of the ineffable glory of God, “even though he bears the marks of transgressions” (Funeral Service). For this reason, Saint Gregory the Theologian says that man is “a kind of second world,” that is, a second cosmos who gives meaning also to the rest of creation: “another angel, a king over what is on earth, yet ruled from above, earthly and heavenly, temporal and immortal.” The Lord Jesus is the salvation and the adornment (eukosmia) of the world, the One who adorns and glorifies in return with His ineffable goodness and beauty those who glorify Him as God and Savior, as the radiance of the glory of the Father.

Archimandrite N. K.

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September 13, 2026: Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Cross

The Dedication of the Church of the Resurrection (335) and the Forefeast of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross. Cornelius the Centurion (1st c.). Aristides the Martyr, the Athenian.

Pl. 2nd Tone – Eothinon: 4 – Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18
– Gospel: John 3:13-17

NEXT SUNDAY: September 20, Sunday After the Exaltation of the Cross
Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20 – Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

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The Missionary Seminar resumes its operation, and its annual program of lectures will seek, as far as possible, to address the theological and contemporary spiritual, catechetical, and other needs and challenges of our time within the vineyard of Mission. The PURPOSE of the Seminar is to form a “reservoir” of well-trained people who desire to serve in the vital field of Mission. During the academic year 2026–2027, fifteen (15) two hour online meetings will be held, every fortnight, always on Saturday evening at 18:00.

The Seminar’s courses will begin on Saturday, October 17, 2026. A CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE is granted. Requirements: Students are accepted upon submitting: (a) Proof of studies (at least a High School Diploma), and (b) Two recent photographs.

For more information, those interested can contact:

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