

COMING EVENTS

Novena September 17th thru 25th.

Pilgrimage Sunday, September 22nd.

Mass at 11:00 AM

Rosary and Novena Prayers before Mass

Mass Times at St. Wenceslaus Home of the
National Shrine of the Infant Jesus

Saturday Night Vigil 5:00 PM

Sunday 11 :00 AM

Tuesday through Friday at 9:00 AM

Holy Hour 9:30 to 10:30 AM

First Friday and First Saturday Mass 9:00 AM

Holy Hour 9:30 to 10:30 AM

Gift Shop hours are Tues-Fri 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Sunday Shrine open till 2:00 PM

This newsletter is published monthly to promote
the devotion to the Infant Jesus of Prague at the
National Shrine in Oklahoma, USA.

www.shrineofinfantjesus.com

www.facebook.com/iopshrine

THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE INFANT JESUS OF PRAGUE

September 2024

THE MORE YOU HONOR ME
THE MORE I WILL BLESS YOU



Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

On 13 September 335, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (also called the Church of the Resurrection) was dedicated. The following day, the cross that Empress Helena had discovered on 14 September 320, was venerated in a solemn ceremony. In 614, the Persian King, Chosroes II, waged war on the Romans. After conquering Jerusalem, he confiscated many treasures, among which was the Cross of Jesus. The Byzantine emperor Heraclius initiated peace negotiations but were rejected. He then waged war and won near Nineveh, asking for the restitution of the Cross, which then returned to Jerusalem. Today, the cruelty of the Cross is not what is exalted, but the Love that God manifested to humanity by accepting death on the Cross: "Who, though in the form of God, emptied himself, taking the form of a slave. This is the glory of the Cross of Jesus!" (Pope Francis)

The Church's annual Liturgy sets aside September 14 to invite her children to celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross of Jesus with joy for their salvation. On this day, the Cross is presented not in terms of suffering, or the necessary burden of life that must be carried following Christ, but in terms of glory, as a reason for those who believe in Jesus to be proud and not to weep.

The Jews condemned Jesus to crucifixion. He died on the cross to show God's love for humanity. For more than twenty centuries, people have continued to hate and kill Catholic Christians. The cross is still present in life today, when people treat each other badly. The cross is present in the family when fidelity and love are betrayed. The cross is present in the parish community when people are divided and hate each other. The cross is present in life, when people treat each other with scheming and selfishness. The cross is still there, and we are called to bear it for each other by living honestly and kindly with each other. Do not add to the burden of life for your brothers and sisters, because life is already a difficult burden to bear.

In the social context of the Middle East and the world today, we Christians are called to join in prayer for our brothers and sisters who are carrying the cross. The mission of witness and martyrdom has always been closely linked to the Christian life. Here and there in this world, there are always bloody massacres for ethnic or religious reasons. The world hated the disciples of the Lord, as they had hated and condemned Him to death. A true Christian is someone who knows how to look up at the cross every day, to recognize the presence of the One who hung there, and at the same time feel God's love for us. Looking at the cross also helps us find the strength to walk in this life full of hardships and challenges. Thanks to that, we have confidence as the Lord tells us: "Take courage, I have conquered the world" (John 16:33).

The Triumph of the Cross

In 1825, a great storm hit the city of Macao. The magnificent Cathedral built by the Portuguese overlooking the harbor was left in ruins by the storm. However, miraculously, the facade of the church remained intact, and the bronze cross was still standing. When Hong Kong Governor John Bowring visited the scene, he was stunned to see it. That evening he wrote the following lines: "In the cross of Christ I glory, towering o'er the wrecks of time; all the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime."

More than two thousand years have passed since Roman soldiers forced Jesus to carry the Cross through the narrow streets of Jerusalem; and when he stumbled, forcing them to force a passerby to carry the Cross with him, helping him to reach a place called Skull Hill. Since then, the Cross has become the symbol of a religion with more than one and a half billion followers: present in 220 countries and territories all over the earth.

Based on the facts recorded in the Gospel, Dr. Wiham Eswari at Midio Hospital in the United States researched the punishment of the Cross. The research showed him that the Romans were not the first to invent the punishment of the Cross. Crucifixion was used by the Assyrians in the seventh century BC, but it was the Romans who perfected it into a form of torture capable of producing the slowest and most painful death. Crucifixion was reserved for foreign slaves and rebels against the empire, as well as for serious crimes committed in lands ruled by the Romans. Roman law generally protected its own citizens from crucifixion.

Crucifixion victims usually died of suffocation. This must have been the most brutal form of execution known to mankind.

Yet, miraculously, when Jesus lay on the Cross, He transformed the Cross into a symbol of His love for humanity.

On the Cross, not only is God's love fully manifested, but on the Cross the truth about man is also revealed in the clearest way, and it is from the Cross that the Lord achieved the most glorious victory. "Take courage, I have conquered the world" (John 16:33).

One of the most famous paintings by the 17th-century Dutch artist Rembrandt is "The Three Crosses." Looking at the work, everyone is immediately drawn to the center: between the crosses of the two criminals, the cross of Jesus rises proudly. At the foot of the cross is a crowd whose faces all express hatred and resentment. The artist seems to want to say that no one was excluded from being involved in the crucifixion of Jesus.

Looking closely at the crowd, one could see a face almost lost in the darkness, but a few features were enough for experts to guess that it was the face of the famous painter Rembrandt.

Why did Rembrandt insert his own face in the midst of the crowd of murderous participants in the massacre of Jesus? The only answer one can give to explain the presence of the artist among the executioners is his own sense of guilt.

Rembrandt wanted to confess that it was his own sins that contributed to the hanging of Jesus on the cross. And through his presence, the author also wanted to tell everyone who contemplated the painting that they also participated in the crucifixion of Jesus.

The Mother Church has prepared for us this day to look up on the cross and to contemplate its meanings. Let us look upon the cross to see that our sins are the reason why the Son of God must be nailed to the cross. Let us look upon the cross to feel the unlimited love of God for human beings. When we "make the sign of the Cross," we physically announce our faith. The Cross symbolizes the Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection. This is our faith: that Christ is Risen (Exalted!) after death—not an illusion or fantasy.

Sincerely in Christ,
Very Reverend Christopher Hai Tran, Rector



This photo was taken along the Via Dolorosa in February 2020 during a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. While doing the Way of the Cross in Jerusalem with my Mother and my family.

Walking in the Footsteps of Christ



**First Station:
Pilate Condemns Jesus to Die**

This station begins in the courtyard of the Omariya Moslem College on the street called the Via Dolorosa.

Very Reverend Christopher Hai Tran, Rector

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

SHRINE _____

PROMOTION _____

FLOWERS _____

TREES _____

Pavers _____

ALTAR CANDLES _____

SANCTUARY LAMP _____

6-DAY VIGIL @ \$5.00 _____

MASS STIPEND @ \$10 _____

MASS INTENTION FOR _____

_____ LIVING _____ DECEASED

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