**Readings for Sunday 14th September: Holy Cross Day**

**COLLECT**

Almighty God, who in the passion of your blessed Son made an instrument of painful death to be for us the means of life and peace: grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer for his sake; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4-9**

*A reading from the book of Numbers*

The Israelites left Mount Hor by the road that leads to the Gulf of Aqaba, in order to go around the territory of Edom. But on the way the people lost their patience and spoke against God and Moses. They complained, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in this desert, where there is no food or water? We can't stand any more of this miserable food!” Then the Lord sent poisonous snakes among the people, and many Israelites were bitten and died.The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Now pray to the Lord to take these snakes away.” So Moses prayed for the people.Then the Lord told Moses to make a metal snake and put it on a pole, so that anyone who was bitten could look at it and be healed.So Moses made a bronze snake and put it on a pole. Anyone who had been bitten would look at the bronze snake and be healed.

**SECOND READING: Philippians 2:6-11**

*A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians*

He always had the nature of God, but he did not think that by force he should try to remain equal with God. Instead of this, of his own free will he gave up all he had, and took the nature of a servant. He became like a human being and appeared in human likeness. He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death — his death on the cross. For this reason God raised him to the highest place above and gave him the name that is greater than any other name. And so, in honour of the name of Jesus all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below will fall on their knees,and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**GOSPEL: John 3:13-17**

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John*

And no one has ever gone up to heaven except the Son of Man, who came down from heaven. As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its saviour.

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

Faithful God, whose Son bore our sins in his body on the tree and gave us this sacrament to show forth his death until he comes: give us grace to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is our salvation, our life and our hope, who reigns as Lord, now and for ever.