

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

The Cross stands at the heart of the Christian Faith. Holy Cross Day invites us to a fresh and more intense meditation upon the mystery of the Lord's Cross.

The Feast was established to recall two significant events: the finding of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem by St Helena in AD326, and the dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem in AD335.

This Feast invites the Faithful to enter afresh and with renewed devotion into the wonderful mystery of which the cross is the symbol, and the sacrifice of which the cross is the altar. Upon a Roman cross the incarnate Son of God entered into utter God-forsakenness, into the abyss and abandonment of death, for love of all mankind. It is why we cling to the cross, because for us our Saviour clung to it in love.

Inscribed upon the Cross we see
In shining letters, 'God is love!'
He bears our sins upon the tree,
He brings us mercy from above.

The Cross, it takes our guilt away;
It holds the fainting spirit up;
It cheers with hope the gloomy day,
And sweetens every bitter cup.

Prayer for Holy Cross Day

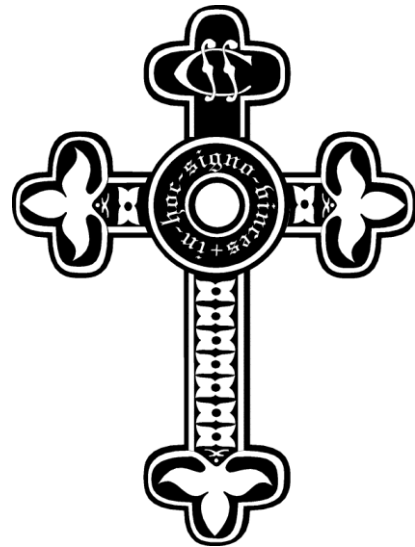
Almighty God, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the Cross that he might draw the whole world unto himself: mercifully grant that we, who glory in the mystery of our redemption, may have grace to take up our cross and follow him; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.



Sunday 14th Sept. 2025

Holy Cross Day

Gospel: John 3: 13 – 17



We hear in today's Gospel that "God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him." The Cross as a sign of our salvation was one of themes of the 19th century Catholic Revival in the Church of England. For example, the hymn 'Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim' dates from this period.

The emphasis on the Cross as a sign recalls the Emperor Constantine's vision and the words 'in hoc signo vinces', translated as 'in this sign thou shalt conquer', which acts as the motto of The Society of the Holy Cross (SSC). The SSC was founded in 1855 by a group of Anglo-Catholic priests and led by Fr Charles Lowder of London Docks and continues to this day.

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.