

# **Sunday, March 23, 2025 – Third Sunday of the Great Fast: Veneration of the Holy Cross; The Holy Venerable-Martyr Nikon and his two hundred disciples martyred with him.**

*The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is celebrated today.*

*Troparia and Kontakia Troparion, Tone 3:* Let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice,\* for the Lord has done a mighty deed with His arm.\* He trampled death by death. He became the first-born of the dead;\* He saved us from the abyss of Hades\* and granted great mercy to the world.

*Troparion, Tone 1:* Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance.\* Grant victory to Your faithful people against enemies,\* and protect Your community by Your cross.

+Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

*Kontakion, Tone 7:* No longer does the flaming sword guard the gate of Eden;\* the tree of the Cross has quenched its flames gloriously.\* The sting of death and the victory of Hades are banished,\* and You O my Saviour came and called to those in Hades: “Return again to Paradise!”

*Instead of Holy God, we sing:* To Your Cross, O Master,\* we bow in veneration,\* and we glorify Your holy Resurrection!

*Prokeimenon, Tone 6* Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance.  
*verse:* Unto You I will cry, O Lord my God, lest You turn from me in silence. (*Psalms 27:9,1*)

*Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 (NRSV)*

*A reading of the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews*

Brothers and Sisters, since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us

therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”

### ***Alleluia, Tone 8***

*verse:* Remember Your congregation which You acquired from the beginning.

*verse:* But God is our king before the ages; He has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth. (*Psalm 73:2,12*)

### ***Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1 (NRSV)***

The Lord said, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?

Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” And he said to them, “Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.”

***Hymn to the Mother of God*** In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices: the angelic ranks and all the human race. Sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, virgins’ pride and boast, from whom God is made flesh and became a little Child; and He who is our God before all ages, He made your womb a throne, and He made it wider than all the heavens. In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices. Glory be to you.

***Communion Hymn*** Let the light of Your countenance, O Lord\* shine upon us.\* Alleluia, alleluia,\* alleluia. (*Psalm 4:7*)