

# Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

## Suggestions for Leading Worship



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**RE:** Liturgical Suggestions for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – Cycle A

**Sunday date:** September 13-14, 2008

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Dear Fathers and Deacons,

### **An Overview for this Sunday...**

The liturgical festival of the exaltation of the cross of Christ traces its origin to two historical occurrences in Jerusalem. The first is the choosing of September 14, as this was the date of the original dedication of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Constantinople during the fourth century. The second event is the recovery of the true cross from the Persians in the seventh century. This discovery led to the origination of this feast day. It is only once every five to six years [depending on leap year] that the feast falls on a Sunday.

The original “feast” of the cross, of course, is Good Friday. What is noticed in the selection of the *Lectionary* texts for the Exaltation is the absence of reference to Christ’s agony and passion. Instead there is given narration of Jesus’ willing acceptance of death on the cross as well as the place of the cross in salvation history. This is clear in the selection from John’s Gospel of the Nicodemus dialogue. Here is a reflection that the Son of Man had to be lifted up and exalted, not as a king, but in the uncommon way that as

King of all He would have to be lifted up on the wood of the cross as His throne as Lord of all.

Given the recent events in our local Church with Hurricane Gustav and the loss of property and peace of mind – reflections on the value of redemptive suffering, how that which appears to be the instrument of death can well be the instrument of new life, and the plight of those who live without basic necessities their entire lives – could be fruitful.

### **Faith Sharing Questions...**

1. What did my experience during and after Hurricane Gustav tell me about God and God's place in my life?
2. What kind of nourishment do I need from Christ at this point in my life?
3. When I think about the cross, what comes to my mind?

### **Some Other Considerations as You Prepare...**

1. For the Penitential Rite consider these samples: "Lord Jesus, you are the Lord of all creation, Lord, have mercy; Lord Jesus, you are the Word made flesh, Christ, have mercy; Lord Jesus, you are Son of the Father, raised on the cross for the salvation of the world, Lord, have mercy."
2. There is only one option for the Opening Prayer, referring to the Philippians reading of the obedience of Christ accepting His suffering on the cross.
3. The Preface can be either for the Holy Cross or the first of the prefaces for the Passion of the Lord.
4. Consider using Canon I or Canon III.
5. The best Solemn Blessing is the fifth of the blessings of Ordinary Time or use Prayer Over the People no. 17.

### **Looking Ahead...**

1. Next weekend is the 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time
2. In times of civil crisis or after events such as Hurricanes, the Mass Propers *For Any Need*, "B" can be a comforting set of Propers for daily Mass use.

## **Sample Prayer of the Faithful for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

*Priest:* Relying on the providence of God, we offer our prayers into the compassionate heart of God:

*Deacon* (or other reader if there is no deacon):

1. For the Church of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, and in particular for those Church communities suffering damage from Hurricane Gustav; for their well-being and encouragement, we pray to the Lord...
2. For the states of Louisiana and Texas; for the people of Haiti, Cuba and México; for those cities and towns recovering from the wind and water of Hurricanes Gustav, Hanna and Ike; for those who have lost their property and their lives, we pray to the Lord...
3. For the grace to embrace a life of discipleship by experiencing the cross of Christ in our own lives, we pray to the Lord...
4. For those who suffer on the bed of pain; for their healing, we pray to the Lord...
5. For the poor who remain in shelters; for those without electrical power; for those without food, water, human comfort and peace, we pray to the Lord...
6. For all who have died during Hurricane Gustav, and for those who mourn their passing, we pray to the Lord...
7. In peace and in silence, we offer our needs to the Father...

(pause; the presider alone will conclude)

*Priest:* We entrust our prayers to you, O Father,  
confident that you will hear and give answer.  
Receive these prayers, raised through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.