

Exaltation of the Holy Cross
September 16, 2018
Fr. Rick Lorenz

Num 21:4-9
Ps 78
Phil 2:6-11
Jn 3:13-17

Reflection

I didn't write up my homily today, but preached from notes. At Holy Redeemer Parish, we are celebrating our patronal feast: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross, which the universal Church celebrated on Friday. It commemorates three things: the finding of the True Cross by Empress Helena (mother of Emperor Constantine) in the 4th century; the dedication of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem; and the recovery of the True Cross from Persia in the 7th century. We venerate the Cross to worship God, through the image of the Cross. There are many images of the Cross around us. Some simple, like the wooden cross on my Rosary - this reminds us of the simplicity of the wooden cross upon which Jesus gave himself for us. Some ornate, like my golden cross on the altar in the rectory - this reminds us of the adoration by Christians over the centuries. Some with our body, when we make the sign of the cross. I anointed people at Garden Terrace on Friday, and in their disability some were still able to make the sign of the cross. With our bodies, actions and decisions we venerate the Cross. I heard of a lady who recently died after living 12 years without a stomach, but who didn't surrender to resignation or despair; with her faith she witnessed to faith, hope and love of God and neighbour: she carried the cross.

All these are images of the True Cross upon which Jesus gave himself for us; he redeemed us and opened the doors to heaven. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him (Jn 3:16-17)."