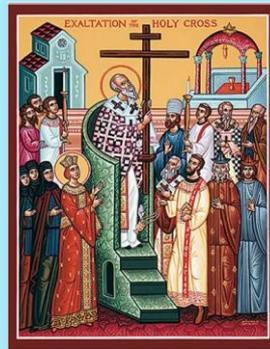


## BIOGRAPHY

Chosroes of Persia, having, in the last days of the reign of the Emperor Phocas, overrun Egypt and Africa, in 614, took Jerusalem, where he slaughtered thousands of Christians and carried off to Persia the Cross of the Lord, which Helen had put upon Mount Calvary. Heraclius, the successor of Phocas, moved by the thought of the hardships and horrid outrages of war, sought for peace, but Chosroes, drunken with conquest, would not allow of it even upon unfair terms. Heraclius therefore, being set in this uttermost strait, earnestly sought help from God by constant fasting and prayer, and through His good inspiration gathered an army, joined battle with the enemy, and prevailed against three of Chosroes' chief captains, and three armies. Chosroes was broken by these defeats, and when in his flight, in 628, he was about crossing the Tigris, he proclaimed his son Medarses partner in his kingdom. Chosroes' eldest son Siroes took this slight to heart, and formed a plot to murder his father and brother, which plot he brought to effect soon after they had come home. Then he got the kingdom from Heraclius upon certain terms, whereof the first was that he should give back the Cross of the Lord Christ. The Cross therefore was received back after that it had been fourteen years in the power of the Persians, and (in 629) Heraclius came to Jerusalem and bore it with solemn pomp unto the Mount whereunto the Saviour had borne it. This event was marked by a famous miracle. Heraclius, who was adorned with gold and jewels, stayed perforce at the gateway which leadeth unto Mount Calvary, and the harder he strove to go forward, the harder he seemed to be held back, whereat both himself and all they that stood by were sore amazed. Then spake Zacharias, Patriarch of Jerusalem, saying: See, O Emperor, that it be not that in carrying the Cross attired in the guise of a Conqueror thou showest too little of the poverty and lowliness of Jesus Christ. Then Heraclius cast away his princely raiment and took off his shoes from his feet, and in the garb of a countryman easily finished his journey, and set up the Cross once more in the same place upon Calvary whence the Persians had carried it away. That the Cross had been put by Heraclius in the same place wherein it had first been planted by the Saviour caused the yearly Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross to become the more famous thenceforward.



## EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

**FEAST DAY:  
14 SEPTEMBER**

## COLLECT

○ God, Who dost this day gladden us by the yearly Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, grant, we beseech thee, that even as we have understood the mystery thereof upon earth, so we may worthily enjoy in Heaven the fruits of the Redemption which was paid thereon. Through the Same Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son. Who Liveth and Reigneth with Thee, in the Unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen

## PRAYER TO THE HOLY CROSS

O Saving Cross of Calvary, Who bore the Saviour's Person and exalted Him above the earth to be adored as the Redeemer of mankind; O Venerable Tree of the New Eden, giving life, wisdom and knowledge to all by the Fruit of Thine arms, look mercifully upon us, Thy servants, as we carry the weight of our crosses, and grant us aid in the hour of our need, that beholding Thee, we may draw strength from Thee and live our lives according to Thy law and the Faith of the Holy Church, which Thou hast wedded, O Wood which radiates Divine Splendour.

Save us, O Christ, by the Power of Thy Cross.  
Let all hostile powers flee from Thee, Altar of Excellent Sacrifice.