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Archiepiscopal Encyclical for the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
The Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross

September 14, 2026

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Presvyteres and Diakonisses, the Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, the Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, the Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America.

While you have the light, trust in the light, that you may become children of light.
(John 12:36)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

On this present feast, we behold the Precious and Life-giving Cross of our Lord, the lampstand upon which He was exalted to be the *Light of the world*. The radiance of the Cross is the illuminating divine energy of God's love, God's mercy, and God's forgiveness for every sin and shortcoming of the human race. On the Cross–an instrument of unspeakable cruelty and hatred–our Lord Jesus Christ transformed all human suffering into a path toward happiness and eternal blissfulness.

While we yet await the General Resurrection, receiving the Lord's Arising and the Dormition of His Holy Mother as promissory notes for our everlasting salvation, we traverse the course of our lifetimes illuminated by the light rays of the Precious Cross. Each of us follows a path, the *"Way,"* as our Faith was called in the days of the Apostles

(e.g., Acts 9:2). And just as every day is composed of both *"evening and morning"* (as the Book of Genesis says), so the Cross brings light to our journey, even through the darkest of times.

This is one reason why our Seminary in Brookline, Massachusetts, is named for the Holy Cross: it is there that our clergy are trained to help bring the Light of Christ into the lives of their parishioners, particularly when and where the shadows fall. The theological education of our clergy encompasses much more than historical facts and rubrics for worship. It is an education in how to live by the very virtues which our Lord manifested on the Cross and how to bring those virtues and qualities to those unto whom we minister. Let us commit to ensuring that our Seminary and Hellenic College are supplied with all they need to keep that light shining. Your prayers and support offer a way to give back to this vital Institution and to provide fuel for the fire.

Therefore, beloved Brethren, on this feast of the Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross, the Holy Lampstand which never fails, let us trust in the Light while we yet have the Light. Thereby, we become the daughters and sons of Light, and our Way to a purposeful life, here and in the world to come, will be filled with the brightness of the First Day of Creation, when the Lord spoke, "Let there be light!"

With paternal blessings in the Radiance of our Lord Jesus Christ,



†ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America