

## **Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

September 14, 2019

by

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Today's feast calls us to appreciate the value of our everyday existence, along with our value, because God loved us so much as to send His only Son for our salvation. His self-giving defines who we are and where we are going.

Everything that we understand in the word cross: pain, injustice, persecution, death, is incomprehensible when we look with our natural eyes. It is too vivid. The weight seems so heavy. I can only take so much. So often others and we ourselves are troubled by the mystery of evil in the world. Why does an eminently good God permit so much suffering?

However, in the eyes of faith and love, the cross is understood as a means of uniting ourselves with the One who first loved us. He became like the serpent held up in the desert: the sign of torment becomes the means of salvation and liberation. Therefore we no longer put up with suffering as an end in itself, but it is converted into a means of participation in the mystery of God, which leads us to salvation. It is not easy to reach that conclusion, because that conclusion requires growth.

In a very real way, the cross becomes the mirror in which we see our reflection and can begin to understand the real significance of life, the gates of hope, and the place of renewed communion with God. The cross reminds us that we have a special value. We are so precious that Almighty God wanted to assure our salvation, something we could not earn for ourselves.

As Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre we wear the Jerusalem Cross to remind us of the five wounds of Jesus Christ and our commitment to Christians in the Holy Land, the living stones who witness to the continued presence of the Body of Christ there.