

Exaltation of the Holy Cross

September 14, 2025

We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise You!



PARISH CALENDAR

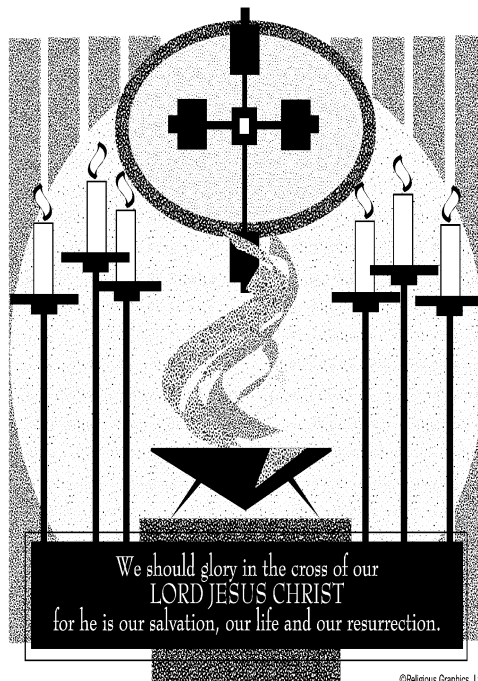
Saturday, September 13	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass
Sunday, September 14	..... 7:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 9:00 a. m.	Mass (<i>Live Stream</i>)
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass
	..... 6:30 p. m.	O.C. I. A. (Formerly RCIA) Class
Monday, September 15	..... 7:30 a.m	<i>Liturgy of Hours/Rosary</i>
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
Tuesday, September 16	..... 7:30 a.m	<i>Liturgy of Hours/Rosary</i>
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 7:00 p. m.	Building Committee - Kamiano Trailer
Wednesday, September 17	..... 7:30 a.m	<i>Liturgy of Hours/Rosary</i>
	..... 8:00 a. m	Mass
	.. 9:30am -11:30 am	Food Pantry Open
Thursday, September 18	..... 7:30 a.m	<i>Liturgy of Hours/Rosary</i>
	..... 8:00 a. m	Communion Service
Friday, September 19	..... 7:30 a.m	<i>Liturgy of Hours/Rosary</i>
	..... 8:00 a. m	Mass
Saturday, September 20	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 3:15-4:00 p.m.	Confession - Church
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass

NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

Am:8:4-7: Amos the prophet of God warned that greedy people who cheat the poor or take advantage of others' misfortune do not escape God's justice.

1 Tm:2:1-8: Paul urged Timothy to preach truth and justice: leaders should respect the dignity of all, and everyone should pray to God with blameless hands.

Lk:16:1-13: Jesus encouraged his disciples to have an enterprising spirit. He also warned them: "No servant can serve two masters. . . . You cannot serve both God and mammon."



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION: Aloha St. Rita Ohana, Once again we approach another year of our Religious Education Sacramental program. If you have children that still need to receive their sacraments or would just like to inquire about our Sacramental Program please see Brenda Levy outside under the banyan tree. Deacon Hal and Brenda Levy will once again teach the sacramental program this year.

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA:

Thank you for your generous support during the last week of collection for The Catholic University of America!

Worldwide Marriage Encounter: Married couples, are you looking to rediscover the spark and deepen your relationship? Worldwide Marriage Encounter provides a weekend experience to focus on each other, away from the distractions of daily life, and learn communication tools to keep your marriage vibrant and alive. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience is **November 14-16, 2025**, at the St. Anthony Retreat Center in Kalihi Valley, Oahu. For more information, contact Ed and Betty Coda at (808) 258-6688 or email codawwme@gmail.com. Our website can be found at www.hawaiiwwme.org. Space is limited. Get your spot reserved now.

WORD OF LIFE: *"We pray to you, O Lord, that we always recognize each member of this human family as being made in your image and beloved by you, with worth and dignity."* **USCCB Prayer to Heal Racial Division**

WEEKLY READINGS

Sep 14 Sun: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Nm:21:4b-9; Ps:78; Phil:2:6-11; Jn:3:13-17

Sep 15 Mon: Our Lady of Sorrows

1 Tm:2:1-8; Ps:28:2, 7, 8-9; Jn:19: 25-27 or Lk:2:33-35

Sep 16 Tue: Saint Cornelius, Pope and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs

1 Tm:3:1-13; Ps:101:1b-2ab, 2cd-3ab, 5, 6; Lk:6:12-19

Sep 17 Wed: Ordinary Weekday

1 Tm:3:14-16; Ps:111:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Lk:7:31-35

Sep 18 Thur: Ordinary Weekday

1 Tm:4:12-16; Ps:111:7-8, 9, 10; Lk:7:36-50

Sep 19 Fri: Ordinary Weekday

1 Tm:6:2c-12; Ps:49:6-7, 8-10, 17-18, 19-20; Lk:8:1-3

Sep 20 Sat: Saint Andrew Kim Tae-gon, Priest, and Paul Chong Ha-sang and Companions

1 Tm:6:13-16; Ps:100:1b-2, 3, 4, 5; Lk:8:4-15



**BY YOUR CROSS
YOU HAVE SET US FREE**

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NOTES OF STEWARDSHIP

Among the primary themes in today's Gospel when we hear Jesus' well-known parable of the Prodigal Son is forgiveness and the need to repent. But from a stewardship point of view what is also interesting is one of the secondary themes: the failure to use responsibly the gifts that have been so generously bestowed. The youngest son who demanded his inheritance and left home broke no laws or religious commandments. His wrong doing was that he wasted his inherited wealth, the abundant gifts given to him. His sin was in his extravagant living; squandering his gift in pursuit of selfish pleasures. Good stewards acknowledge that everything they have comes from God, and they required to cultivate these gifts responsibly. What are our God-given gifts? Do we use them responsibly? Do we exercise good stewardship over them? (International catholic Stewardship Council)

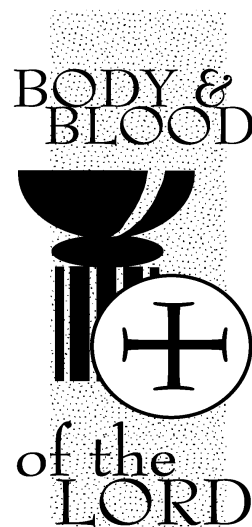
STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

Sunday Collection	\$ 3, 688.06
Candles	70.00
Mass Intention	175.00
Outreach	45.00
Total	\$ 3, 978.06

RESTRICTED COLLECTIONS

Building Fund	\$ 790.00
Repair & Maintenance	80.00
Total	\$ 870.00

MAHALO FOR SHARING YOUR TREASURE



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OFFICE HOURS

Mon, Tue, Thurs, Fri
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Closed Wednesday

Weekend Appointments
Available

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Open House

Come & See the Atrium!



Sept. 26, 2025
10:00am-11:00am

84 -597 Upena St.

Stay for refreshments after...

Patricia Huse 808-763-7200 & Maile Aiu Domingo 808-222-0644

24th Sunday C The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

September 14, 2025

Ka Leo O Ke Kahuhipa – Aloha ‘Ohana Nui’ia

Prayers & Condolences to Joseph Aubrey & Aubrey Ohana. His wife +**Ernestine** was laid to rest past Wednesday, at Hawai’i Veterans’ Cemetery in Kaneohe. Eternal Rest Grant Unto +**Ernestine** O Lord, and Perpetual Light Shine Upon Her. May +**Ernestine** and the souls of all the faithful departed in the Mercy of God, Rest in Peace, Amen.

Catechists of the Good Shepherd Open House: Announcements will be made by Patricia Huse regarding this program for our keiki after each mass this and next weekend.

Chaminade University News:

Sunday, October 12 at 4pm, Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe, New Mexico will deliver the next Marianist Lecture entitled; “**Nuclear Weapons:89 Seconds to Midnight – Does Anybody Care?**”

Place: The Mystical Rose Oratory on the campus of Chaminade University & St, Luis School. Scan the QR code on the postures displayed on the parish bulletin boards for detailed information.

Building Committee Meeting: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 at 7:00pm. Do keep in your prayers the special intention for our parish building project. Offer little prayers and little sacrifices for the graces we need to accomplish our parish goal and task. “**Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build...**” (Psalm 127:1).

LOOKING AHEAD: September 21st. Knights of Columbus Meeting & Nation-Wide Celebration of Catechetical Sunday. Knights are planning “a fund-raising breakfast.” The 2025-2026 Catechists – Faith Formation Teachers will be blessed and installed at 9:00am Mass.

Scripture Reflections

Old Testament: Numbers 21:4b - 9

Background Context: Our first reading taken from one of five Books that make up the Book of Torah. In the **Book of Numbers**, we read the story of the Israelites’ long journey through the wilderness after leaving Egypt. Historically the Israelites travelled around Edom (southern Transjordan). Archeological and geological studies suggest the area of Negev desert. This territory was difficult desert terrain and their detours meant hardships,

hunger, thirst and exposure to the desert. As they traveled, and on the account of the difficulties experienced, the Israelites grew impatient and murmured – complained against God and Moses as they had often done before in their desert sojourn.

They complained about food and their fear for their lives. Their grumblings showed not just hunger but also a total lack of trust in God's care and even insulting God fearlessly, **“Why have you brought us out up from Egypt to die in this desert where there is no food or water? We are disgusted with this wretched food!” (Number 21:5b)**. The Israelites sadly acted as though they had amnesia on all the mighty deeds God had done to deliver them from their slavery in Egypt.

We are astonished at the ungratefulness of the people of Isreal and most of all with the insulting words in which they addressed God and Moses; had not God freed them from their long bondage to Pharoah through many wonders and was present in their midst as pillar of fire (by night) and pilar of cloud (in the day)? Daily God fed them with manna and quail for their food which they had not labored to attained? In response for their sins God sent poisonous snakes among them, and many were bitten and died.

When the people realized of their sins, they asked Moses to pray for them. God told Moses to make a bronze serpent and mount it on a pole. Anyone who was bitten would look at it would be healed and live.

Later this object was preserved in the Temple until King Hesekiah destroyed it as an idol (**2 Kings 18:14**), calling it **Nehsuhtan, “a piece of bronze.”** The bronze serpent was not meant to be worshipped but to point Isreal back to God's saving power. God's mercy is the main message, even when people failed God offered forgiveness and path to healing.

Application to Life: The healing did not come from the bronze serpent figure itself, but from God's mercy and compassion and the Israelites' repentance. Looking up at the bronze serpent meant admitting their sins and their wickedness and their realization that they had to rely on God's saving power. Even as being worn out with impatience the Israelites lost all their prudence and spoke insultingly in their complaints to God. **“We are disgusted with this wretched food!” (Numbers 21:5b)**, God still had compassion for them.

This narrative revealed both God's justice and compassion. The punishment reminded the Israelites that sin has real consequences. Truly a great lesson for us, it is easy to grow tired or impatient with our life's struggles and we often voice our complains to God and forgetting all our countless daily blessings. Just as God did not abandon the Israelites nor would God abandon us in our human frailties. Just as God provided a path to life for the

Israelites so will God do the same for us in our struggles and failures in life. Instead of gazing inward in self-pity at the challenges we face, let us lift our eyes to God, to the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lifting of the bronze serpent foreshadowed a Savior who would be mounted on the Cross and be lifted high. The bronze serpent represents God's power to transform an instrument of death into instrument of life.

The complaints, the murmurings of the Israelites reflected a deeper lesson about impatience and ingratitude. They were manifestations of spiritual amnesia – quickly forgotten God's mighty and miraculous hand in their deliverance from Egypt. Do we find ourselves falling into the same trap? We are quick to point out difficulties in following Jesus Christ as His disciples but very slow to acknowledge the countless blessings that we have received, most of all eternal life that awaits us.

In the midst of our life's struggles to live a faithful Christian life, it is so easy for us to forget our gratitude to God for so many things given to us, things that are often much more precious like our faith, ohana, and even our life.

The scriptures always warn us that murmuring and complaining are a “**deadly disease**” and a “**spiritual breach**” that invites chaos and destruction, that is sin into our lives. Let us pray to overcome any tendency that may make us habitual complainer or murmurer. Forgetting gratitude or being ungrateful is perhaps one of the most cunning tools of the devil to mislead us for grateful heart opens us to the path of our Christian sanctity.

This story encourages everyone not to be overcome by life's struggles and to overcome our impatience and sin. Most of all to always to turn back and trust God's enduring love and mercy for each one of us.

New Testament: Philippians 2: 6 - 11

Background Context: The second reading taken from Paul to the Philippians is a beautiful hymn that may have been sung or recited in Baptismal or Eucharistic settings and in Christian liturgy-worship, affirming Jesus' Lordship in the early Church. It presents also the mystery of Jesus' humility and exaltation.

Paul reminds us that though Jesus is equal with God, did not cling to His divine glory. That Jesus emptied Himself, taking the form of the servant and becoming obedient to the point of death on the Cross. This is the paradox we celebrate on the **Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross**.

Unlike Adam (**Genesis 3**) who grasped at equality with God, Jesus freely renounced privilege and power, **kenosis, = empty Himself**, it is not loss of divinity but renunciation of

privilege for our sake and our redemption. The exaltation is God's response to Jesus' humility. **"The Name above every other name" = Kyrios = Lord.**

The divine title used for **YHWH** in the Greek Old Testament. So that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, echoes **Prophet Isaiah 45:23..."to me every knee shall bend, every tongue shall swear."** This is a universal Lordship, all creation, heavenly beings, humanity and dead acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord.

Application to Life: Jesus is God, His is from heaven, yet Jesus came into the world. **"And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us..." (John 1:14) (Incarnation).** There is an immense distance from heaven to earth, it was indeed a long step downwards that Jesus took when He became man.

Being God Jesus was not bound to die, yet He took that step down, too, that we might be saved. Who can ever measure the love that prompted Jesus to go to such an extreme to love us? Today, for few minutes let us gaze on the crucifix, where Jesus is mounted on the Cross and reflect deeply what the love of God for each one of us really meant and at what a price our salvation has been purchased for us!

The Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us that true greatness is found not in power or pride, but in self-giving love and humility. When challenged in life to be humble like Jesus may we recall the humble gaze of Jesus upon us from His throne, from His Cross. Let us think of Jesus who so humbled Himself for our sake.

Let us not be afraid or intimidated by inconveniences and sacrifices necessary in life for us to bear the Cross and to be a Christian witness in the world.

When we daily carry our own crosses; be suffering, rejection or sacrifice, we must unite them to Jesus on the Cross. In doing so, we discover in the depth of our soul that the Cross is not a burden but a pathway to glory, to our resurrection and the door to eternal life.

What was once a symbol of shame and humiliation has become the sign of victory and salvation. Historically the crucifixion was the most degrading form of punishment in the Roman Empire, reserved for criminals and slaves. Yet, it is precisely through this humiliating death that Jesus Christ revealed the depth of God's love. The Cross, rather than being the end, became life and the throne of glory.

As we celebrated this feast, we are invited not only to venerate the Cross, but to live its message daily, not only to wear the silver or golden crosses around our neck but to be the sure reminder of who we are, the disciples of Jesus Christ. Let us bow and bend our knees

humbly before the Cross to acknowledge Jesus Christ crucified and to carry the Cross to daily follow Jesus in love, service, and surrender.

Gospel: John 3: 13 - 17

Background Context: In today's gospel taken from John we find the explanation of what took place in the desert; the sin of the Israelites was the symbol of the sin of humankind.

The passage began with Jesus explaining to Nicodemus that just as Moses lifted up the bronze serpent in the desert so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that is, crucified on the Cross, **“so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.” (John 3:15b)**. The bronze serpent on the pole was the symbol of Jesus on the Cross. It revealed most of all God's unconditional love reaching out to rescue humanity, a message deeply connected to the **Feast of Exaltation of the Cross**.

The Israelites were tormented by the poisonous snakes on their desert sojourn because of their distrust and sin, but when they looked up at the bronze serpent they were healed. In the same way, humanity suffers from the poison of sin, but the Cross of Jesus Christ offers hope and healing. The feast of the **Exaltation of the Cross** draws our attention to a crucial truth; **the Cross is not just a symbol of suffering, but of God's love and victory over sin and death; eternal life.**

Application to Life: This passage invites a personal response. The Cross challenges everyone to love sacrificially and patiently as God loves, all peoples, in every condition. What are the poisonous snakes in our lives? Resentment, unforgiveness, anger, hatred, laziness, complacency, addiction, fear or lack of enthusiasm for eternal life? Will we keep staring at them, our weaknesses and sinfulness, or do we lift our eyes to the Cross and seek forgiveness, healing and strength?

When we look to the Cross in faith, we find forgiveness, healing and new life. The Cross reminds us that love is stronger than sin, and life is stronger than death. By being empowered by this truth and our hearts filled with gratitude, we are made capable by the grace of God to live a life of a genuine Christian.

Jesus made His mission clear once more when soon to enter into His passion He said to the Jews: **“Now the prince of the world is to be overthrown. When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself” (John 12:31-32).**

It is John himself who discloses the meaning of the words spoken by Jesus: **“By these words He indicated the kind of death He would die.” (John 12:33).**

My scripture teacher reflecting on those words of Jesus stated; **“In other words, Jesus meant to say, man and woman will find a remedy for their sins through my death on the Cross. Suffering and death are heavy price to pay but I will pay it so that everyone may be saved.”**

Today reflect and ask yourself to what extend Jesus went through for the love of me? Why isn't my heart inflamed and stirred with greater love for Jesus Christ? Let us pray in humility that God grant us the graces necessary to remove all obstacle and barriers that prevent me from fully living a Christian life.

That I desire salvation more deeply and fear anything, any situations, or anyone that may lead me away from eternal life purchased for me at such a great price? **“Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Proverbs 9:10).**

Jesus did not die just for His friends but also for those who rejected, mocked, or hated Him. This self-giving love is unique; history knows of people dying for loved ones, but Jesus Christ died even for enemies. **“But God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8).**

However, not everyone is automatically saved, just as for the Israelites only those who obeyed and looked to God's provision (bronze serpent on the pole) found healing. Just so we look on Jesus on the Cross in faith. Jesus insists that whoever believes in Him will have eternal life. But belief here means more than agreeing mentally, it means trusting, following, and living out a life formed by Jesus Christ's love – commandments. **“If you love me keep my commandments” (John 14:15).**

To exalt the Cross is to live by its message, choosing love over hate, forgiveness over revenge, hope over despair, and faithfulness over complacency. So today let us not only venerate the Cross mentally or in spirit but embrace it in our day to day living as disciples. Let us lift our eyes to Jesus Christ, who turns our pain into healing and our defeat into victory.

“Lift high the Cross, the love of Christ proclaimed till all the world adore His sacred Name. Come Christians follow where our Captain trod, our King victorious, Christ, the Son of God...” Traditional Christian Hymn.

Have a Blessed Week in the Lord!

Fr. Paulo ofm cap.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Paulo ofm cap." in a cursive script.