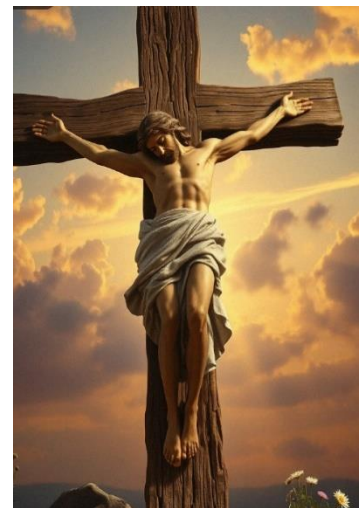


The Holy Cross

Reflection by Fr. Silas Henderson, SDS

In 1937, on the eve of the Second World War, Pope Pius XI wrote to the people of Germany: “The Cross of Christ, though it has become to many a stumbling block and foolishness, remains for the believer the holy sign of his redemption, the emblem of moral strength and greatness. We live in its shadow and die in its embrace. It will stand on our grave as a pledge of our faith and hope in the eternal light” (from *Mit Brennender Sorge*, no. 26).



The Cross of Jesus – which we honor in the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14 – is for us who believe much more than an ancient instrument of torture and death: it is the sign of salvation and victory. This is why the 9th century monk Saint Theodore the Studite could say: “The Cross is the glory of all the apostles, the crown of the martyrs the sanctification of the saints. By the cross we put on Christ and cast aside our former self.” Certainly, the cross was an important symbol and reference point for Blessed Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan, the founder of the Salvatorians.



The cross has the ability to confront and confound us, especially if we are looking for an easy Christianity. And, certainly, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross presents for us the somber images and language of Good Friday. But, as we recall that Jesus is the Father's gift of perfect love for our fallen world, the Mystery of the Cross ultimately invites us to believe ever more deeply in the One who has been lifted up, “so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life” (John 3:15).

In the Divine Savior,

Fr. Silas Henderson, SDS

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SALVATORIANS – Apostles for our Times