Cross-Veneration Wednesday  
Sister Carol Petrasovich

“Purifying the thoughts of our hearts with our tears, and being cleansed through fasting, come let us bow before the wood of the Cross. Through abstinence, it pacifies the rebellion of the flesh. Deem us worthy, O Savior, to adore the light of Your third-day Resurrection.”

Vespers for Cross-Veneration Wednesday

Cross-Veneration Week signals the mid-point of our journey into Light. As a child, did you ever run up to a see-saw and try walking to the center, struggling to keep your balance? You know that once you reach its mid-point, you need a foot planted on either side of the center to maintain your balance. However, one doesn’t remain in that position very long. Either you decide to jump off, or you maintain a steady, balanced position and descend the other side of the board.

Like children eagerly anticipating the challenge of the see-saw, we begin our greatest fast week with joy-filled hearts, determined to find our particular pattern of balance to carry us through this season of repentance. But, as we ascend the path, we begin to discover our bondage, our weaknesses, our frustrations—all the elements that keep us from reaching our balanced position. Maintaining our balance can become difficult, and we may easily get discouraged. We have reached the mid-point of our penitential journey to Holy Pascha. Are we ready to give in to the temptation to terminate the journey?

During this fourth greatfast week, our Byzantine Catholic Church sets before us the Honorable Cross as a symbol of hope. At a time when we may be tempted to “ease-off,” the Church brings us face to face with true love, true surrender, true abandonment, and complete self-giving.

The Holy Cross reminds us that if we wish to demonstrate our own love as Jesus did, then we must suffer the pangs of the journey, for such tribulations enable us, through the power of His precious and life-creating Cross, to loosen our bondage and to discover those diabolical actions within which cause us to lose our balance in that holy journey to the salvific Pasch.

We must keep the Precious Cross of the Lord as our focal point as we walk the second-half of the road to Jerusalem with renewed strength, asking Him to fortify us along the way with His love shown for us on the wood of the Cross.

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Isaiah 26:21 - 27:9  
Genesis 9:18 - 10:1  
Proverbs 12:23 - 13:9