

## **Sunday 14 September – Holy Cross Day**

### **Collect**

Almighty God,  
who in the passion of your blessed Son  
made an instrument of painful death  
to be for us the means of life and peace:  
grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ  
that we may gladly suffer for his sake;  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### **First Reading: Numbers 21:4-9**

<sup>4</sup>The Israelites set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. <sup>5</sup>The people spoke against God and against Moses, ‘Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.’ <sup>6</sup>Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. <sup>7</sup>The people came to Moses and said, ‘We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.’ So Moses prayed for the people. <sup>8</sup>And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.’ <sup>9</sup>So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

### **Psalms 22:23-28**

Praise the Lord, you that fear him; ♦  
O seed of Jacob, glorify him;  
stand in awe of him, O seed of Israel.

For he has not despised nor abhorred the suffering of the poor;  
neither has he hidden his face from them; ♦  
but when they cried to him he heard them.

From you comes my praise in the great congregation; ♦  
I will perform my vows  
in the presence of those that fear you.

The poor shall eat and be satisfied; ♦  
those who seek the Lord shall praise him;  
their hearts shall live for ever.

All the ends of the earth  
shall remember and turn to the Lord, ♦  
and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.

For the kingdom is the Lord's ♦  
and he rules over the nations.

**Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11**

<sup>6</sup>Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
<sup>7</sup>but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form,  
<sup>8</sup>he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death –  
even death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,  
<sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
<sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

### **Gospel: John 3:13-17**

Jesus said to Nicodemus: <sup>13</sup>‘No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup>And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup>‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

<sup>17</sup>‘Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.’