

Vox Populi

9 September 2026

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross may seem like an odd celebration at first.

The cross was an instrument of destruction and death, of pain and torture. It was the cross that Jesus Christ was crucified on, where he breathed His last breath, and the place of the most horrific scenes of Christ's time on earth.

But in celebrating the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the Church embraces its transformative power. This symbol of death has been redeemed, and now becomes a symbol of eternal life.

“God saved us by showing Himself to us, offering Himself as our companion, teacher, physician, and friend, even to the point of becoming for us the Bread broken in the Eucharist,” Pope Leo XIV said in 2025.

“And to accomplish this work, He made use of one of the cruelest instruments of death ever invented by man: the Cross.”

“This is why we celebrate its ‘exaltation’: for the love with which God, by embracing the Cross for our salvation, transformed it from an instrument of death into a means of life, teaching us that nothing can separate us from Him, and that His love is greater than our sin.”

The feast was celebrated as early as the 6th century, recalling the finding of the True Cross by St Helena, the dedication of churches built by Emperor Constantine on the site of the Holy Sepulchre and Mount Calvary, and the elevation of the True Cross at the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople in AD 629, after it had fallen into the hands of the Persian Empire.

The Church will celebrate this feast on Monday, 14 September.