

PART III: SOLEMN VENERATION OF THE CROSS

This ceremony seems to have originated at Jerusalem, and is described at length by the Spanish pilgrim Etheria, when, in 385, she visited the holy places. The wood of the true Cross was honored and kissed.

The deacon brings the Cross in procession with lighted candles. When they reach the sanctuary, the Celebrant receives the Cross in the center of the altar. Bringing the Cross to the Epistle side on floor-level, the Celebrant stands facing the people and uncovers the top of the Cross a little, singing at a low pitch:

6. The Celebrant Ministers with Celebrant

E Cce lig-num Cru-cis, * in quo sa-lus

mun-di pe-pén- dit.

Behold the wood of the cross, * on which has hung the world's salvation.

All reply: R̄. Ve-ní-te, ad-o-ré-mus.

R̄. Come, let us adore.

All kneel and pray in silence for a few moments, except the Celebrant and candle-bearers.

The Celebrant then goes up the altar steps on the Epistle side and uncovers the right arm of the crucifix. Raising the Cross a little, he sings at a higher pitch than before:

Ecce lignum, etc. (*as before*) Behold the wood, etc. (*as before*)

The others join in the singing and kneel down, as before.

Standing at the center of the altar, the Celebrant uncovers the Crucifix completely. The chant Ecce lignum, etc. is repeated for the third and final time, at an even higher pitch.

Now that the Cross has been unveiled, the Solemn Veneration begins.

First are Celebrant, sacred ministers, clergy, and servers, who (if possible) take off their shoes. The Cross is then carried to the Communion rail for veneration by the congregation. Each one, after one simple genuflection, devoutly kisses the feet of the Crucified.

The Reproaches and other chants are sung by the schola while the Solemn Veneration of the Cross is taking place.

THE REPROACHES.

Pópule meus, quid feci tibi? Aut in quo contristávi te? Respónde mihi. (Micheas 6: 3)

Ÿ. Quia edúxi te de terra Ægýpti: parásti Crucem Salvatóri tuo. (Mich 6: 4)

Hágios o Theós.
Sanctus Deus.

Hágios Ischyrós.
Sanctus Fortis.

Hágios Athánatos,
eléison hymás.

*Sanctus Immortális,
miserére nobis.*

Ÿ. Quia edúxi te per desértum quadragínta annis, et manna cibávi te, et introdúxi te in terram satis bonam: parásti Crucem Salvatóri tuo. *Hágios o Theós . . .*

Ÿ. Quid ultra débui fácere tibi, et

O my people, what have I done unto thee? Or in what have I offended thee? Answer Me. (Micheas 6: 3)

Ÿ. Is it because I brought thee out of the land of Egypt, that thou hast made ready a cross for Me, thy Saviour? (Mich 6: 3-4)

O holy God.
O holy God.

O holy, O mighty One.
O holy, O mighty One.

O holy, immortal One,
have mercy upon us.

*O holy, immortal One,
have mercy upon us.*

Ÿ. Is it because for forty years I led thee through the wilderness, feeding thee with manna, and bringing thee into an exceedingly good land, that thou hast made ready a cross for Me, thy Saviour? *O holy God . . .*

Ÿ. What more could I have done

non feci? Ego quidem plantávi te vineam meam speciosíssimam: et tu facta es mihi nimis amára: acéto namque sitim meam potásti: et láncea perforásti latus Salvatóri tuo. *Hágios o Theós . . .*

for thee, and did not do? I planted thee to be of all my vineyards the most beautiful: yet exceedingly bitter hast thou been to me. For, I was athirst and thou didst give me vinegar to drink; and with a spear thou didst pierce thy Saviour's side. *O holy God . . .*

Ÿ. Ego propter te flagellávi Ægyptum cum primogénitis suis: et tu me flagellátum tradidísti.

Ÿ. For thee did I scourge Egypt and its firstborn, and thou hast given Me over to be scourged.

The following Refrain is repeated after each verse.

REFRAIN. *Micneas 6: 3*

Pópule meus, quid feci tibi? Aut in quo contristávi te? Respónde mihi.

O my people, what have I done unto thee? Or in what have I offended thee? Answer Me.

Ÿ. Ego edúxi te de Ægypto, demérso Pharaóne in Mare Rubrum: et tu me tradidísti princípibus sacerdotum. *℟.* Pópule meus.

Ÿ. I led thee out of Egypt, having drowned Pharaoh in the Red Sea; and thou hast delivered Me up to the chief priests. *℟.* O my people.

Ÿ. Ego ante te apéruí mare: et tu aperuísti láncea latus meum. *℟.*

Ÿ. I opened the sea before thee, and thou hast opened My side with a lance. *℟.*

Ÿ. Ego ante te præívi in colúmna nubis: et tu me duxísti ad prætóri-um Piláti. *℟.*

Ÿ. I went before thee in a pillar of cloud, and thou hast brought Me to the court of Pilate. *℟.*

Ÿ. Ego te pavi manna per desér- tum: et tu me cecidísti álapis et flagéllis. *℟.*

Ÿ. I fed thee with manna through the desert and thou hast smitten Me with heavy blows and hast scourged Me. *℟.*

Ÿ. Ego te potávi aqua salútis de

Ÿ. I gave thee wholesome water to

petra: et tu me potásti felle et acéto. *R.*

drink out of the rock, and thou hast brought Me gall and vinegar in My thirst. *R.*

Ÿ. Ego propter te Chananæórum reges percússi: et tu percussísti arúndine caput meum. *R.*

Ÿ. For thy sake I struck down the kings of Canaan: and thou hast struck Me on the head with a reed. *R.*

Ÿ. Ego dedi tibi sceptrum regále: et tu dedísti cápiti meo spíneam coránam. *R.*

Ÿ. I gave thee a royal sceptre, and thou hast given My head a crown of thorns. *R.*

Ÿ. Ego te exaltávi magna virtúte: et tu me suspendísti in patíbulo Crucis. *R.*

Ÿ. With great power I lifted thee up, and thou hast hung Me upon the gibbet of the cross. *R.*

ANTIPHON.

Crucem tuam adorámus, Dómine: et sanctam resurrectionem tuam laudámus et glorificámus: ecce enim, propter lignum venit gaudium in univérso mundo. (Ps 66: 2) Deus misereátur nostri et benedícat nobis: illúminet vultum suum super nos et misereátur nostri. *Crucem tuam . . .*

Thy cross, O Lord, we adore; thy holy resurrection we laud and magnify: for behold it is by the wood of the cross that joy has come in all the world. (Ps 66: 2) May God have mercy on us and bless us: may He cause the light of His countenance to shine upon us, and have mercy on us. *Thy cross, O Lord . . .*

H Y M N. *Venantius Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers. VI. s.*

The Tree in Eden (Gen 3: 1-7) was perfidious, but the Tree on Calvary, beautifully described here as Crux fidélis, has become the very symbol of faith. What other tree can ever hope to bear foliage, flowers, and fruit of infinite worth and beauty? – Fr. Matthew Britt, O.S.B.

Cruce fidélis, inter omnes arbor una nóbilis: nulla silva talem profert fronde, flore, gérmine.

Faithful Tree of the Cross! thou noblest of all trees. No forest yields thy like, in leaf, or flower, or fruit.

* Dulce lignum, dulces clavos,
dulce pondus sústinet.

Pange, lingua, gloriósi láu-
ream certáminis, et super
Crucis trophæo dic triúmphum
nóbilem: quáliter Redémptor or-
bis immolátus vícerit.

* Sweet is the Wood, that hath
nails so sweet, and bears so sweet
a weight!

O sing, my tongue, the victory
of the glorious combat! Tell
how was won the noble triumph
on the trophy of the Cross, and
how the world's Redeemer, when
immolated, conquered.

*Crux fidélis is repeated as far as * Dulce lignum.*

De paréntis protoplásti frau-
de Factor cóndolens, quan-
do pomi noxiális in necem mor-
su ruit: ipse lignum tunc notávit,
damna ligni ut sólveret. * *Dulce
lignum.*

Deeply grieved by the infi-
delity of the first-created
man, when by the eating of the
fatal fruit he rushed headlong to
death, the Creator Himself then
chose the tree that would undo
the harm wrought by the former
tree. * *Sweet.*

Hoc opus nostræ salútis ordo
depopóscerat: multifórmis
proditóris ars ut artem fálleret: et
medélam ferret inde, hostis unde
læserat. *Crux fidélis.*

This was the plan designed for
our salvation, that artifice
divine should foil the artifice of
Satan, the arch-seducer; and turn
the very instrument, wherewith
the enemy had wounded us, into
our remedy. *Faithful Tree.*

Quando venit ergo sacri
plenitúdo témporis, mis-
sus est ab arce Patris Natus, orbis
Cónditor: atque ventre virgináli
carne amíctus pródiit. * *Dulce
lignum.*

When, therefore, the fulness
of God's time had come,
the Son, by Whom the world was
made, was sent from heaven; and
having clothed Himself with our
flesh, in the Virgin's womb, He
came among us. * *Sweet.*

V agit Infans inter arcta cón-
ditus præsepia: membra
pannis involúta Virgo Mater álli-
gat: et Dei manus pedésque stric-
ta cingit fáscia. *Crux fidélis.*

L ustra sex qui jam perégit,
tempus implens córporis,
sponte líbera Redémptor passió-
ni déditus, Agnus in Crucis levá-
tur immolándus stípite. * *Dulce
lignum.*

F elle potus ecce languet: spi-
na, clavi, láncea mite corpus
perforárunt, unda manat et cruor:
terra, pontus, astra, mundus, quo
lavántur flúmine! *Crux fidélis.*

F lecte ramos, arbor alta, tensa
laxa víscera, et rigor lentéscat
ille, quem dedit natívitas: et su-
pérni membra Regis tende miti
stípite. * *Dulce lignum.*

S ola digna tu fuísti ferre
mundi víctimam: atque por-
tum præparáre arca mundo náu-
frago: quam sacer cruor perúnxit,
fusus Agni córpore. *Crux fidélis.*

A s an Infant, He cries, hid-
den in a narrow manger:
the Virgin-Mother wraps His
limbs in swaddling-clothes. The
hands and feet of God are tied
with bands! *Faithful Tree.*

T hirty years he lived on earth,
and His mortal life was nigh
its end. He, our Redeemer, willing-
ly gave Himself up to his Passion;
He, the Lamb of Sacrifice, was
raised upon the Cross. * *Sweet.*

H is drink is gall; His strength
is gone; his tender flesh is
pierced with thorns, nails, and a
spear; and from it flows a stream
of water and blood, wherewith
the earth and sea, the stars and
world, are washed. *Faithful Tree.*

B end thy limbs, O lofty Tree,
relax thy tense fibers, and let
that hardness which thy nature
gave thee, unbend; and stretch on
thy softened trunk the members
of the heavenly King. * *Sweet.*

T hou alone wast found wor-
thy to bear the Victim of
the world. Thou wast the Ark
that led this ship-wrecked world
into the haven of salvation. The
sacred Blood that flowed from
the Lamb covered and anointed
thee. *Faithful Tree.*