

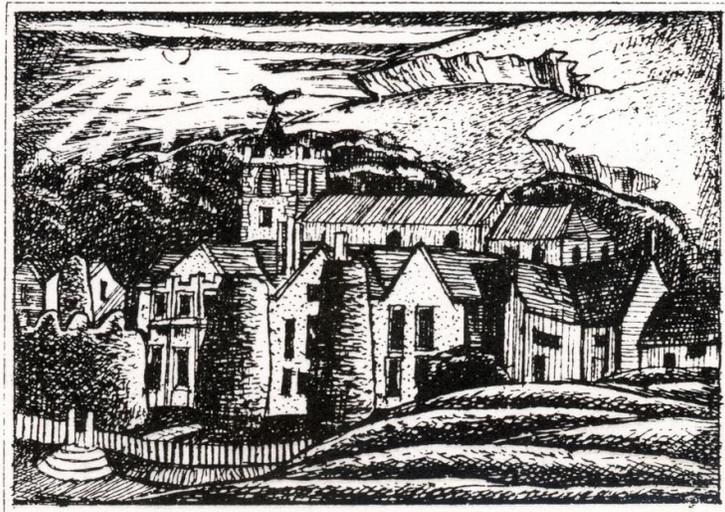
HOLY CROSS DAY – 14th September

The Church of the Holy Cross takes its name from the Cross on which Jesus was crucified.

The cross on which our Lord was crucified has become the universal symbol for Christians, replacing the fish symbol of the early church, though the latter has been revived in recent times.

After the end of the persecution era, early in the fourth century, pilgrims began to travel to Jerusalem to visit and pray at the places associated with the life of Jesus. Helena the mother of the emperor was a Christian and, while overseeing excavations in the city, is said to have uncovered a cross, which many believe to be the cross of Christ. A basilica was built on the site of the Holy Sepulchre and dedicated on September 14th in the year 335. The Feast of the Holy Cross is remembered on September 14th and celebrated.

More than history though, this feast day celebrates the same mystery that we celebrate on Good Friday. How in God's hand even the death of Jesus on the Cross can become a sign of God's saving power on earth and in heaven.



The Church of the Holy Cross at Owlpen is of medieval origins, and was enlarged in the nineteenth century in two phases. First the nave was rebuilt by Samuel Manning in 1828. Then the chancel was added in 1874 by J.P. St Aubyn, and “beautified” with mosaics and opus sectile designed by Charles Hardgrave in 1887. The baptistery was the final addition of 1912, when the Romanesque font was re-erected from use as a cattle trough. With its richly textured interior of stained glass mosaics and floor tiles by some of the leading craftsmen of the time, Owlpen church is according to David Verey “the most elaborate Victorian-Edwardian interior in the Cotswolds”.