

The Confessor's Tongue for April 24, A. D. 2016

Palm Sunday of Lent: Entrance of Our Lord into Jerusalem

In honor of St. Maximus the Confessor, whose tongue and right hand were cut off in an attempt by compromising authorities to silence his uncompromising confession of Christ's full humanity & divinity.

Entrance of Our Lord into Jerusalem

Fr. Dmitri Dudko

What is the message of the entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem? Look at your branches in your hands, what do they mean to us? Christ is coming. Nowadays for people who are used to driving around in all sorts of comfortable cars, an entrance on an ass may even seem amusing, we are proud of our comforts, but these comforts spoil our close relations with each other. For us an ass is a caricature. That is if you look at it from the outside, but from the inside, what stands behind a car, what petty selfish feelings, shallow pride, and if you look at it more deeply, then it gathers speed at a furious rate and all of a sudden, just one corner that you fail to take and everything is up in the air, smashed to pieces, nothing is left, earthly glory is just a heap of scrap...and it is funny and sad and bitter and painful and it hurts. Let us switch off from all this and be serious and turn our attention to the Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem.

The Lord is coming, Lazarus is raised from the dead, Martha serves, Mary wipes his feet. The people gather, they greet Christ.

Standing over there so freely, even rather casually, what do you think of this? Here is he who yesterday offended someone, who cheated him, what do you think of this? Is there not in your deceit something of the betrayal of Judas?

And that woman over there, weeping bitterly for her children, perhaps we did not pay attention to her, we do not think that her tears are like myrrh on the feet of Christ? And you over there, what were you planning? If your plans succeed, they will not help you.

And where is Lazarus, whom Christ raised from the dead, who despite his state of death came forth from the tomb? The world is old in all its affairs, as it was then, so is it now. The Lord enters into Jerusalem, the clapping hooves of the ass should be heard in our ears. What thoughts does all this bring to mind? Let us note that although today and tomorrow the hymn 'Having seen the Resurrection of Christ' is not sung, palms are blessed. Palms are the shoots of a tree. When shoots come forth, a tree lives. For our souls to rise from the dead, virtues must be sung in them. Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. Only in the Highest, only in heaven is there triumph, after triumph on earth may come suffering.

Here we are today, serving in triumph, but tomorrow we will say: He comes to voluntary suffering for our salvation. Everything that God does is for our salvation, but we must not remain passive. Without us, as they say, God will not save us. What is asked of us?

The Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem is the entrance of the Lord into this church, small, not able

to take many people, but many wanted to come in, we are happy to be here, side by side with the Lord Who rides on an ass.

The ass is a submissive animal, it can also symbolize people who submissively do the will of God, they offer themselves to the Lord, saying: O God, do Thy will.

The Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem is the entrance of the Lord into each of our homes. Just imagine how you would react if the Lord were to appear in your home.

The Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem is the entrance of the Lord into each of our souls. Just imagine that the Lord came into our souls. What does His entrance into our souls mean?

In general, what does the entrance of the Lord mean? It means continuing on the way the Lord took for our salvation. The Lord did everything that needed to be done on earth, now this earthly work must be affirmed and it can be affirmed only in suffering. Entering into Jerusalem, the Lord also goes to suffer, today we greet the entrance of the Lord in triumph, all things rejoice, as a sign of greeting we hold branches in our hands, but how will we follow Him tomorrow, already tomorrow He goes to His sufferings, will we follow Him? We are ready to rejoice in glory, but will we rejoice where there is no glory, in suffering, even though as Christians we often repeat, punishment, sufferings – this is Divine mercy, but in life we do not always put this into practice. Moreover, having come to the faith, we reject the Lord when trials come. *pravomir.com*

Holy Week Notes

During Holy Week, we accompany Christ to His Passion and death. We stand in awe before the sight of the eternal Son of God who made the world being rejected, condemned, mistreated, and put to death by His own creature. At this time more than any other during the year, we contemplate what Christ our God has done for us. Thus, all the faithful are strongly encouraged to make the services of Holy Week their priority out of love and respect for the One who gave His life for each of them.

The lenten melodies and the Prayer of St. Ephrem are used through the last Presanctified Liturgy of the week, on Holy Wednesday.

At Matins, candles are placed unlit in the candlestands before the service. They will be lit during the Alleluia after the Great Litany. Prostrations are made during Matins at the Troparion "Behold, the Bridegroom comes at midnight," the Exapostilarion "Thy bridal chamber I see adorned..." at the Prayer of St. Ephrem, and during the First Hour when the Priest comes out after the psalms for

the troparion of the hour and again during the prayer of St. Ephrem.

Holy Week is the most solemn week of the entire year, celebrating the events of our salvation. The Holy Services should be our primary task each day. Children should be regular participants. A blessed silence should reign in our homes with no television or radio, etc. Lipstick should not be worn when venerating holy objects: Cross, Winding-sheet, Chalice, Icons.

Paschal Greetings in Various Languages

A chance to practice this week. Be ready for any of them.

English: Christ is risen! Indeed, He is risen!

Greek: Christos anesti! Alethos anesti!

Russian: Khristos voskresye! Bo istinu voskresye!

Romanian: Hristos a inviat! Adevrat a inviat!

Arabic: El Messieh kahm! Hakken kahm!

Spanish: Cristo ha resuscitado! En verdad ha resuscitado!

Serbian: Cristos vaskres! Vaistinu vaskres!

German: Christus ist auferstanden! Wahrlich er ist erstanden!

Latin: Christus resurrexit! Vere resurrexit!

Japanese: Christos fukkatsu! Jitsu ni fukkatsu!

French: Christ est ressuscité! En vérité il est ressuscité!

Norwegian: Kristus er oppstanden! Han er sannelig oppstanden!

Italian: Cristo e' risorto! Veramente e' risorto!

Eritrean-Tigre: Christos tensiou! Bahake tensiou!

Swahili: Kristo amefufukka! Kweli Amefufukka!

Georgian: Kriste aghsda! Cheshdmaritad aghsda!

Finnish: Kristus nousi kuolleista! Totistesti nousi!

Zulu: Ukristu uvukile! Uvukile kuphela!

Welsh: Atgyfododd Crist! Atgyfododd in wir!

Gaelic: Taw creest ereen! Taw shay ereen guhdyne!

Anglo-Saxon: Crist aras! Crist sodhlice aras!

Holy Friday Fast

The Typicon calls for a total Fast on Holy Friday, not eating or drinking at all in honor of Christ's death because of our sins. Strictly, this fast would not be broken until after the Liturgy on Holy Saturday. Those who cannot do this are permitted to eat after the Burial Vespers Friday afternoon.

Until last year we put food out during the session of church cleaning and decorating on Holy Friday morning. I had never been comfortable with that, and decided last year the time had come for us to strengthen our observance of Holy Friday. We don't put out meat and dairy at church functions during the fasts. Neither should we put out food on Holy Friday. We may feed our children as needed, even during the work time at church, but I'd ask that adults not put out food for general consumption. Water, coffee, and tea are blessed for partaking of, and we'll make coffee (don't think most of us are ready for abstaining from liquids on this day), but those adults who cannot or will not observe the Holy Friday Fast are asked to eat before they come or after they leave so that we may

all properly and lovingly support one another in the fast on the day of the Lord's death for us.

Holy Week Needs

You may volunteer or be recruited for these (and other) tasks!

1. Clean & decorate church on Holy Friday.
2. Boil and dye eggs for Paschal Vigil (we need 8 dozen for sure).
3. Roast the lamb at church Pascha morning (from 900 a.m. or so) and cut it up when done to eat at the picnic.
4. People to read the Paschal Gospel from John chapter 1 (1:1-17, but we usually read 1:1-5, 14) in various languages at the paschal liturgy.
5. Prepare egg hunt for children (candy into eggs).
6. Remove tomb during the Paschal procession, light all candles, reposition flowers.
7. Greet at Paschal Vigil, sell processional candles, and help guests.
8. Men and boys for processions on Holy Friday (to carry cross, winding sheet, etc.) and Pascha night.
9. Put out lights to mark the procession path.
10. Keep the Grave Watch Friday afternoon through Saturday night.
11. Build the fire pit, prepare the spit, gather dry wood to roast the lamb.

The Tradition of the Pascha Basket

On the Great Feast of Pascha, many Orthodox Christians bring to the church a basket containing those foods that they have abstained from during the Fast—both meat and dairy products.

The rich Paschal Bread (kulich, full of eggs and butter) symbolizes Christ, the living bread (John 6:51) who came down from Heaven to give life to the world. The meat products symbolize the sacrificial animals of the Old Testament, which foreshadow the true sacrifice of our Savior. The dairy products remind us of the prosperity of peace of the Messianic times which had been foretold by the Prophets. Eggs were always considered a symbol of resurrection—the emergence of new life. Our Savior came forth from the tomb as chick from its egg at birth.

The Pascha basket is usually covered with a decorated scarf or white cover. The baskets are blessed following the Paschal Liturgy. After the baskets have been blessed, our custom is to break the fast together. As we endure the struggle of the Fast together, it is fitting that we share together the joy of Christ's Resurrection and the Feast it brings to us.

Upcoming Events 2015-16

- 24-30 April: Holy Week
- 30 April 10:00 a.m. Skelton Baptism
- 1 May Holy Pascha, 3:00 p.m. Picnic, Egg Hunt
- 28 May Baptism of Estefania Dean 2:30 p.m.
- 11 June, Saturday, Installation of Bishop Alexander

GLORY BE TO GOD IN ALL THINGS!