

# The Confessor's Tongue for April 21, A. D. 2019

## Palm Sunday: 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.

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### 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.

### 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.

### The Sayings of St. Anthony the Great 23

*Abba Anthony also said, 'God does not allow the same warfare and temptations to this generation as He did formerly, for men are weaker now and cannot bear so much.'*  
Saying 23 Sayings of the Desert Fathers

*Commentary:* Whether it is the declining age spans we find in Genesis or a comparison stretching from our grandparents and parents to ourselves and on to the generation of our children and grandchildren, it is a common idea that man is somehow in decline from one generation to another. Almost every civilization has looked back to a long departed “golden age” in comparison with which contemporary times appear base. If we compare the pioneers or our grandparents with ourselves, in many ways we come off worse by comparison: they were harder working, more honorable, less self-indulgent, more capable of doing things for themselves and able to endure hardship. Compare the current generation of movie stars and celebrities with the previous generation, and you get the distinct impression that the present crop are but children in adult bodies in comparison. Whatever the reason for the impression of decline and decay, it is hard to shake it.

Anthony finds the same thing among the monks of the desert. Already over his long life (he lived to be more than 100, he perceives a lessening of the trials and warfare God permits His people to experience, for they are weaker and cannot bear what the previous generation bore, especially in direct assaults from the demons such as he experienced to great degree. Indeed, this is biblical, for we know that “God does not permit us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear.” Though we wrestle with the enemy, the enemy has been bound—he does not have free reign to assault us with all his power. By the power of Christ’s victory and God’s mercy, he is unable to attack more than God permits, and God permits only what we can bear. And whatever we face, we know that God makes a way of escape for us, if we will but find it and use it.

Thus if our trials seem great, we should take heart, for God has declared that we are able to bear them and that He is with us in them. If the enemy assaults us strongly, we remember he is bound; God uses him on a leash as a trainer to test and develop our faith, though he ever seeks to destroy us. A hymn from the *Octoechos (Friday Vespers, tone 4)* expresses this well:

Thou who art compassionate hast given me the enemy for my profit, as a gift to scourge and teach

me; for his wickedness serveth as a test, which, without being good, leadeth me to the good: therefore it is now in thanksgiving that I cry: Save me, O Lord, before I perish utterly.

Indeed, we live in a generation weakened by pleasure and ease of life. Our fasting falls well short of the Church’s common norm, let alone the feats of the great ascetics. We struggle to pray our prayer rule each day and to make it to church only once a week, but who among us delights in prayer, in staying up late or rising early to give ourselves to prayer as so many have done through the ages? We struggle to read the Scriptures: who of us has read them through once, let alone five, ten, fifteen, twenty times? Who among us can quote passages, recite Psalms and other treasures of Scripture that we have laid up in our hearts? We struggle to tithe and give alms, thinking we can’t live on 90% of our income, where others such as St. Antony gave their all, or as Joachim and Anna, gave a third to the temple, a third in alms, and lived on a third. Even the Jewish rabbis permitted families to give up to twenty percent! The saints, their virtues, their exploits and accomplishments seem alien to us and impossible.

Yet despite the weakness of our times, God is merciful and does not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear. And He ever works to strengthen us and lift us higher. And in our time of moral and physical decay, our general weakness, and the mass of temptation that surrounds us, especially the most basic temptations to gluttony and sexual impurity and self-indulgence, which are probably greater than ever and unprecedented in scope, there is still the opportunity to win crowns, and glorious ones at that.

Let us hear what the desert fathers had to say about us in comparison with them, and take heart: The holy Fathers were making predictions about the last generation. They said, ‘What have we ourselves done? One of them, the great Abba Ischyrion replied, ‘We ourselves have fulfilled the commandments of God.’ The others replied, ‘And those who come after us, what will they do?’ He said, ‘They will struggle to achieve half our works.’ They said, ‘And to those who come after them, what will happen?’ He said, ‘The men of that generation will not accomplish any works at all, and temptation will come upon them; and those who will be approved in that day will be greater than either us or our fathers.’

We live in a generation where sinning through gluttony, fornication and lust, and luxurious living and self-indulgence is easier than ever and harder than ever to resist. We should not expect to have dramatic contests with the demons as Anthony did, or accomplish great feats in prayer, fasting, or even almsgiving as did so many before us. We have to fight for our very spiritual lives, to keep the flame of faith burning in a time when the whole nexus of modern life blows vigorously upon it to extinguish it. It may be that the feat of keeping faith in God alive, seeking

God through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving to the small degree our strength permits, and seeking to keep Christ's commandments and do His will in all things will be a greater accomplishment in our times than all the feats of the Saints in times of old.

So let us patiently endure the burden of our times with faith in God, clinging to Christ our Savior, keeping faith alive despite our weakness and the great temptations of our times. Crowns are to be won for keeping the warmth of faith burning in our cold-hearted age. *Fr. Justin*

### 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 go that long are permitted to eat and drink after the Burial Vespers Friday afternoon.

Until three years ago, we put food out during the session of church cleaning and decorating on Holy Friday morning. Your priest was never comfortable with that, and decided three years ago that the time had come for us to strengthen our observance of Holy Friday. As we do not 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 would 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 all day; those who so desire are welcome to try), 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.

### The Tradition of the Pascha Basket

On the Great Feast of Pascha, in most parts of Eastern Europe, Orthodox Christians bring to the church a basket containing those foods that they have abstained from during the Fast—both meat and dairy products. It contains some of the foods we shall eat to break the fast after the Paschal Liturgy.

Some people include a nut roll, wine, cheese, butter, decorated hard-boiled eggs; and meats such as lamb, bacon, sausage, roast beef, or ham.

The rich Paschal Bread (kulich) 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. At Pascha, our Savior came forth from the tomb as chick after breaking the shell 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, we break the fast. Some head home to break it, others remain at the church to break the fast together, sharing the contents of their baskets with one another. 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.

### Paschal Greetings in Various Languages

*A chance to ahead of time. Be ready for any of them.*

*Greek:* Christos anesti! Alethos anesti!

*Russian:* Khristos voskresye! Vo istinu voskresye!

*Arabic:* El Messieh kahm! Hakken kahm!

*Serbian:* Cristos vaskres! Vaistinu vaskres!

*Romanian:* Hristos a inviat! Adevarat a inviat!

*Spanish:* Cristo ha resucitado! En verdad ha resucitado!

*German:* Christus ist auferstanden! Wahrlich er ist erstanden!

*Latin:* Christus resurrexit! Vere resurrexit!

*Japanese:* Christos fukkatsu! Jitsu ni fukkatsu!

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

*Finnish:* Kristus nousi kuolleista! Totisesti nousi!

*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! Totisesti nousi!

*Zulu:* Ukristu uvukile! Uvukile kuphela!

*Welsh:* Atgyfododd Crist! Atgyfododd in wir!

*Gaelic:* Taw creest eeren! Taw shay eeren guhdynne!

*Anglo-Saxon:* Crist aras! Crist sodhlice aras!

*Chinese:* Helisituosi fuhuole! Qeshi fuhuole!

*Coptic:* Pchistos aftooun! Alethos aftooun!

*Aleut:* Khristos agla-gikux! Agangu-lakan agla-gikux!

*Yupik:* Xris-tusaq Ung-uixtuq! Iluumun Ung-uixtuq!

### Regarding the Artos

The blessing of the Artos is one of the special paschal rites, "in honor and glory and memory of the glorious resurrection" of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Artos is understood to be a Prosporion with an image on it of the cross crowned with thorns or with the image of the resurrection of Christ as signs of victory of Christ over death. The word "Artos" is Greek; translated into Russian it means "bread".

The historical origin of the Artos is as follows: the Apostles, who were accustomed to partake a meal together with the resurrected Lord (Acts 10:41), after His ascension to heaven, remembering His covenantal words: "I am with you always" (Mt. 28:20), felt the invisible presence of the Lord through living faith in their assemblies, but could not see Him with carnal eyes. The natural expression of this burning faith of the disciples to their Teacher and their desire to have a constant reminder of His abiding with them, was that at a meal they left an unoccupied place for Jesus Christ to recline with them, but placed on the table before that place some bread as if for Him, and each time after the end of the meal, lifting up thanksgiving to God, lifted this bread, saying: "Christ is Risen."

When the disciples of Jesus Christ went away to various countries for the proclamation of the Gospel, they whenever possible tried to observe this custom: each of the Holy Apostles in whatever country founded a new society of followers of Christ and when beginning a meal left a place and a fragment of bread in honor of the Savior, and after the end of the meal together with them glorified the risen Lord, raising up the fragment of bread placed in memory of Him.

What is accepted by the first students of the Gospel from the lips of the Apostles and was done by them daily, that is what the fathers of the Church of the following centuries have applied to the feast of the Resurrection of Christ in order to keep forever the apostolic tradition in the Church. In this way this custom was really kept in the Church and through a number of centuries reached our time. As the Apostles during their assemblies have placed the particle of bread in the place appointed for the Savior reminded them of the risen Christ, so, intentionally the Holy Church even at the present time places an Artos on Holy Pascha in the temple in full view of the faithful to serve as their same reminder of the invisible presence of the risen Lord with us. Thus, preparing the Artos, the Holy Church imitates the Apostles and by these blessed loaves remembers the appearances of the risen Lord to the Apostles.

At the same time the Artos reminds us that Jesus Christ by His death on the cross also has become for us the rising of the truly living bread. Such is the meaning of the Artos and is revealed in the prayer of its blessing (see below). Besides, in this prayer the priest, calling down the blessing of God on the blessed Artos, asks the Lord to heal any infirmity and illness and to grant healing to all who eat of the Artos. According to the Supplemental Book of Needs in monasteries the sanctification of the Artos is done on the first day of Holy Pascha and is done as follows: "The Artos, which is bread usually with a cross on it prepared for this, is brought to the priest in the sanctuary. After the Prayer before the Ambo and the ending of the Divine Liturgy, the Deacon says: 'Let us pray to the Lord', and the choir: 'Lord, have mercy' and the priest reads this prayer over it:

O All-powerful God and Almighty Lord, Who by Thy servant Moses during the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, and the liberation of Thy people from the bitter slavery of Pharaoh, didst command that a lamb be slain, prefiguring the Lamb, Thy beloved Son our Lord Jesus Christ, who voluntarily was slain on the cross for us, taking away the sins of the whole world, do Thou now also, we humbly pray Thee, look down upon this bread and bless and sanctify it. For we Thy servants, in honor and glory and in commemoration of the glorious Resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we also have received remission, freedom and release from bondage of the eternal slavery of the enemy and from the indissoluble bonds of Hades, do now offer this before Thy Majesty on this bright, all-glorious and saving day of Pascha. Grant that we who offer this and kiss it and eat of it become partakers of Thy heavenly blessing, and by Thy power burn away from us every sickness and infirmity, granting health to all. For Thou art the source of blessings, and the Bestower of healing, and unto Thee we send up glory, to the Unoriginate Father, with Thine Only-begotten Son, and Thine All-holy, Good and Life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

"Immediately the priest sprinkles the Artos with Holy Water (of Theophany) saying: 'This Artos is blessed and sanctified by the sprinkling of this Holy Water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen', three times. And after this he goes out and places it on the Analogion, and the people, as they receive the Antidoron, kiss the Artos".

On the day of Pascha and during all Bright Week the Artos with an image of the Resurrection of the Lord is placed on an Analogion purposely arranged either in the sanctuary or in the temple. In monasteries after the Liturgy there is a procession to the refectory with the icon of the Resurrection of Christ, with the Artos, with a lampada or two, with the ringing of all bells simultaneously, and with the singing of "Christ is Risen!". After the meal there is a lifting up of the Artos. At the raising of the Artos, the cellarer says: "Christ is Risen!" once; and all respond: "Indeed, He is Risen". Then, having signed the Artos cross-wisely, he says: "Let us worship His three-day resurrection", and places the Artos on the Panagiaron (a special vessel). Then everyone kisses the Artos, singing the ninth ode of the canon of Pascha: "Shine, shine". After kissing the Artos sing the Hypakoe and the Kontakion of Pascha, then comes the Dismissal, and the Artos is then returned to the temple, according to the former order, and is placed in its proper place in the temple (for details see "The Order of the Blessing of the Artos on the day of Holy Pascha in the Ustav and the Pentecostarion). In parish churches during the cross processions done during Holy Pascha (see about them below), the Artos is carried around the temple. Both on the first day of Pascha and during all Bright Week the Artos with the image of the Resurrection of the Lord is placed on the Analogion in the temple.

### 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 15 dozen at least—Melanie Betz overseeing).
3. Roast the lamb at church Pascha morning (from 9:00 a.m. or so) and cut it up when done to eat at the picnic (young men: Terry, Jeremy)
4. People to read the Paschal Gospel from John chapter 1 (1:1-17, but this year we shall read 1:1-5, 11-14) 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. Bake Artos (Elisabeth Terry)
12. Make Cheese Pascha.
13. Learn Paschal Greetings (all)
14. Yard work.

### Upcoming Events 2019

28 April: 3:00 p.m. Agape Vespers & Picnic

GLORY BE TO GOD IN ALL THINGS!