

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church

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The Feast of Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem (04.09.2023.)

John 12:1-18

Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always. Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus. On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him. The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. **(KJV)**

By actively participating in the celebration of the Feast of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem believers further enter into the life in Christ. The complete mind, heart and soul become focused on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Holy Week has arrived. The Feast of the Entry into Jerusalem moves believers toward the coming days of Holy Week when the life and death of Jesus Christ receive complete attention.

Now is the time to think fully and completely about the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church offers Divine services to educate and enable believers to learn about, glorify and worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

Around the world and through the centuries, the Church has focused on Holy Week each year to transform the world. Holy Week enables believers to increase appreciation for Jesus Christ's humility, suffering and love.

The Lord Jesus Christ chose to enter Jerusalem riding on a simple animal. He chose the precise time in history for this Entrance. With the passing of centuries, the world continues to marvel and celebrate the Entry into Jerusalem.

Believers profess belief in Jesus Christ as King and as God at Holy Baptism. Jesus' identity as King is expressed in the Gospel for the Feast of the Entry into Jerusalem.

Holy Week focuses on Jesus' betrayal, arrest and death on the Cross. Holy Week leads to the celebration of Christ's Resurrection. The Feast of Christ's Entry into Jerusalem references Jesus' power over death with the raising of Lazarus.

Lazarus being raised from the dead is proof of Jesus' power over death. Embracing Christ's power over death is transforming. Believers' lives are transformed when immersed fully in the Church during Holy Week.

Each day of Holy Week has significance. Believers investing their lives in Holy Week open their hearts, minds and souls and join with Christ. Lives immersed in Holy Week become more Christ-like.

The Feast of the Entry into Jerusalem is a time of great joy in the Church. Jesus Christ's Entry is celebrated throughout the world. Jesus Christ is the complete focus of attention.

The world needs the focus on Jesus Christ to put life into perspective. Hearts, minds and souls are lifted above and out of the fallen world with the celebration of the Feast of the Entry into Jerusalem.

The focus on Christ is the focus of the life for eternity in God's Kingdom. Jesus is the Way to the Kingdom. Jesus is the Triumph of Life over Death. The raising of Lazarus is a glimpse of the Triumph.

Today each person chooses his or her personal focus. The Church focuses on the Lord Jesus Christ. Believers joining together throughout the world enjoy and are enriched by celebrating Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem.

Whether in Belgrade, Ukraine, Moscow, Egypt or Jerusalem, Orthodox believers celebrate Jesus Christ's Entry into Jerusalem. The joyful celebration occurs throughout the Orthodox Christian world.

The Lenten Journey has concluded. The journey to Pascha intensifies. This is the period for full immersion in the life in Christ. The Divine services of Holy Week include the full reading of the Gospels.

Persons wanting to learn about Jesus Christ and to experience Christ have the opportunity in Holy Week/. The choice to be immersed in the life in Jesus Christ is completely voluntary.

The Church welcomes believers with Christ's love. Christ is Love Incarnate. Christ's love for each person is fully demonstrated in Holy Week. Celebrating the Feast of the Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem is an expression of love for Christ.

**The Feast of the Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem. March 27/April 9, 2023.
Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic**

HOMILY ON PALM SUNDAY

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion; proclaim it aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, the King is coming to thee, just, and a Savior; he is meek and riding on an ass, and a young foal (Zach. 9:9).



Entry of The Lord Jesus Christ in Jerusalem

The prophet of God pronounced this prophecy over four hundred years before the event that we commemorate and celebrate today. Having completed His preaching on the earth, our Lord Jesus Christ made His triumphant entry into the royal city of Jerusalem, into the city where the true God was worshipped, a city in most ways Godly. The Lord made this entry as the King and victor, in order to finish His service by a decisive exploit: destroying death by death; removing the curse from the human race by taking this curse upon Himself. He made His entry into the royal city on the colt of an ass, *whereon yet never man sat* (Lk. 19:30), in order to restore to mankind the royal dignity which our forefather had wasted; to restore this dignity by ascending the cross. The unbroken colt was tamed beneath the wondrous Rider. The Apostles placed their garments upon the colt; great multitudes of people ran ahead to meet the Lord and walk alongside Him, shouting in their ecstasy, *Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he [the king (Lk. 19:38)] that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest (Mt. 21:9).* The

Lord is proclaimed King in the name of the Lord at His own beckoning—not accidentally, and not by conscious human will. In the course of four days, those same people who that day proclaimed Him King will cry, *Away with him, away with him, crucify him... We have no king but Caesar* (Jn. 19:15).

What is the significance of the Lord's riding into Jerusalem on an unbroken colt? According to the explanation of the holy fathers, this has a deep, prophetic meaning. The all-seeing Lord already saw the Jews' approaching final apostasy from God. He announced this apostasy even back when the Law was given to the Israelites on Mt. Sinai, through the lips of the inspired Law-giver. *They have sinned*, said Moses of the Jews' future sin against the God-man, as if he were speaking of something already done. *They have sinned, not pleasing him; spotted children, a froward and perverse generation. Do ye thus recompense the Lord?* (Deut. 32:5–6). *It is a nation that has lost counsel, neither is there understanding in them. They had not sense to understand: let them reserve these things against the time to come* (Deut. 32:28–29). *For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and their vine-branch of Gomorrha* (Deut. 32:32). While to the contrary: *Rejoice, ye heavens, with him—the Son of God—and let all the angels of God worship him; rejoice ye Gentiles, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him* (Deut 32:43). The entry into Jerusalem upon an unbroken colt is a repetition of Moses' prophecy—not in words, but in symbol. Moses foretold that the Gentiles would rejoice in the Lord, but the Jews would be rejected. Here, the unbroken colt, *whereon yet never man sat* (Lk. 19:30), is an image of the Gentiles. The Apostles' garments are Christ's teachings by which they would instruct the Gentiles, and the Lord seated Himself spiritually upon the Gentiles, making them God. He led them into Jerusalem, to the bosom of the Church, to the eternal city of God not made by the hands of men, to the city of salvation and blessedness. The rejected Jews were also present there. With their lips they cried, "the King of Israel," but in their soul, their Sanhedrin, they had already resolved to kill the Savior.

Here is another meaning of the *colt of an ass*. It is an image of every person who is led by irrational desires, deprived of spiritual freedom, attached to the passions and habits of fleshly life. Christ's teaching looses the ass from its attachment; that is, from fulfilling its sinful and fleshly will. Then the Apostles lead the ass to Christ, place their garments upon it; the Lord seats Himself upon it and makes His entry upon it into Jerusalem. This means that the person who has left his sinful life is led to the Gospels, and is clothed as if in apostolic vestments, in the most detailed and refined knowledge of Christ and His commandments. Then the Lord seats Himself upon him by spiritually appearing to him and spiritually abiding in him, as it was His good will to promise: *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him* (Jn. 14:21). *And my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him* (Jn. 14:23). The Lord's coming is accompanied by peace surpassing words and comprehension; peace that is full of grace, and worthy of the one Who grants it—the Lord. This peace is not to be compared with the natural rest of fallen man, who may feel rest and pleasure from fleshly delights, and who may consider his own insensibility, his own eternal death, to be rest. The Lord is seated upon the natural qualities of the person who has submitted to Him and

has assimilated His all-holy teachings; and He leads that person into the spiritual city of God, the city of peace—into the Jerusalem created by God, and not by man.

The soul that upholds the Lord is greeted by the Holy Spirit, Who offers that soul spiritual joy which is incorruptible and eternal. *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion*, the daughter of the Holy Church—because you belong to no one but God. *Proclaim it aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, the King is coming to thee, just, and a Savior; he is meek and riding on an ass, and a young foal* (Zach. 9:9). You have felt the grace-filled peace of Christ, and become a daughter of this peace; you have been renewed with spiritual youth and have come to know Christ's Kingdom by experience. The passions are tamed in you by the grace-filled power of Rider Who steers you; your natural qualities cannot break their natural laws, they cannot go beyond their boundaries and be transformed into uncontrolled passions! Taking all your thoughts, feelings and actions from the Lord, you can and must proclaim the *Name* of the Lord to your *brethren*, and hymn Him *in the midst of the Church* (Ps. 21:22). As one born of the Holy Spirit and a daughter of the Spirit, you are able to behold the spiritual procession of your King, you are able to behold the righteousness of your King. He is *meek and lowly in heart* (Mt. 11:29), and *He will guide the meek in judgment, He will teach the meek His ways* (Ps. 24:9). Our God is a Spirit which is incomparable to any created spirit, as He is in all aspects infinitely different from all creatures. The holy created spirits are His thrones and chariots. He is seated and rides upon the Cherubim; He is seated and rides upon those blessed human souls who have submitted to Him and brought all their natural qualities to Him as a whole burnt offering. The King rides upon such souls, and enters the holy city of God, bringing holy souls into it also. *Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh*. Amen.

St. Ignatius (Brianchaninov)
Translated by *Nun Cornelia (Rees)*

Services this Week

- ❖ **GREAT and HOLY THURSDAY (April 13th) 9:30 am – Divine Liturgy 7:00 pm – Great Vigil (The reading of the 12 Gospels)**
- ❖ **GREAT and HOLY FRIDAY (April 14th) 7:00 pm – Vespers Service Veneration of Plastica (Epitaphios)**
- ❖ **GREAT and HOLY SATURDAY (April 15th) 9:30 am – Divine Liturgy Egg coloring and Lunch Following Divine Liturgy**
 - **9:00 pm – Paschal Matins RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST – PASCHA**
- ❖ **(April 16th) 10.00 am – Divine Liturgy Liturgical Readings: Epistle (Acts 1, 1-8); Gospel (John 1, 1-17)**

Donations April 3, 2023

Offering - \$ 725.00
Dues \$50

Candles - \$105.00
Donations - \$500.00

Large Candles

In Memory of Mike & Mildred Tumbas from Kathleen McDowell
In Memory of Bosiljka & Lazo Vuckovich from Dan & Dyne Tomak
In Memory of Julia & Demetrias Lambrinos from Dan & Dyne Tomak
In Memory of Andrew Grisin from Richard Kondas
In Memory of Damenja & Lazo Gjurich from Diane and Dan Tomak
In Memory of Connie Bartis from Bartis & Pavich Family

Thanks to everyone who helped in in every way to make our Lenten Fish Fries a great success!!!

Thank you to Milo Kermin for his donation of the pussy willows for Palm Sunday. Mnogaja ljeta!

SCHEUDLE FOR HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA

LAZARUS SATURDAY (April 8th)

9:30 am – Divine Liturgy

6:00 pm – *Vrbica – Vesper Service - Sanctification of palms and pussy willows and procession following Vespers.*

PALM SUNDAY (April 9th)

10:00 am – Divine Liturgy

GREAT and HOLY THURSDAY (April 13th)

9:30 am – Divine Liturgy

7:00 pm – Great Vigil (The reading of the 12 Gospels)

GREAT and HOLY FRIDAY (April 14th)

7:00 pm – Vespers Service Veneration of Platanica (Epitaphios)

GREAT and HOLY SATURDAY (April 15th)

9:30 am – Divine Liturgy

Egg coloring and Lunch Following Divine Liturgy

9:00 pm – Paschal Matins

RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST - PASCHA (April 16th)

10.00 am – Divine Liturgy

Liturgical Readings: Epistle (Acts 1, 1-8); Gospel (John 1, 1-17)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, April 9th – Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 16th – PASCHA!

Sunday, May 21st – Anniversary Celebration

Polka-Fest June 2-4, 2023

Band of Brothers – July 13-15 & 19-22, 2023



Taste of Serbia – August 12, 2023



Slavic Festival – September 15-16, 2023