

**Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church**  
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**The Feast of Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem**  
**(04.13.2025.)**

**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)*

The present Gospel proclaims the Lord Jesus Christ's power over death. The Feast of Jesus Christ's Entry into Jerusalem is a great feast of the Church. Jesus' triumphal entry is celebrated every year.

The Church wants believers to remember and focus on Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Believers are to think deeply about the meaning this feast has in their personal lives and in the development of the world.

People gathered to see Jesus Christ. The onlookers were interested in seeing Jesus Christ who had raised Lazarus from the dead. Jesus Christ's power over death continues to draw people seriously seeking to know Him.

Jesus Christ verified His power over death when He rose from the Tomb following His Crucifixion. Believers have opportunities to learn more about Jesus' betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion in the days of Holy Week.

Learning about Jesus Christ continues throughout earthly life for believers taking their baptism seriously. Learning about Jesus and growing in Christ is unlimited.

Parents, Kumovi and relatives serve to teach the newly baptized and to foster the growth in tandem with the parish priest. The newly baptized assumes the responsibility for personal learning in Christ as he or she matures.

Love for Jesus Christ inspires interest in learning and personal growth in Christ. The on-lookers in Jerusalem wanted to know more about Jesus. They took the initiative to be present and act on their interest.

Believers have the benefit of the Divine services and the Church's teachings for further personal learning. It is important for believers to take responsibility to learn and address the hunger in the soul.

Joy exists in the Church today. Believers gather throughout the world to celebrate Jesus' entering Jerusalem. Jesus was hailed as King by the on-lookers. Each person determines whether Jesus is King in his or her personal life.

At Baptism believers' express belief in Jesus Christ as King and as God. This belief is to be lived out in each of the remaining days of earthly life. Christian baptism changes a person's identity forever.

Becoming a Christian carries the responsibility to live as Jesus Christ would have us live. Believers baptized into Christ are to manifest the teachings and way of Christ in daily life.

Following baptism, the person's relationships, actions and thinking are to be consistent with the way and teachings of Christ. Constant self-assessment enables believers to determine if they are living in Christ pleasing ways.

Each feast of the Church, each service of the Church intends nourishment of the believer's soul and growth in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is present and manifests in the Church's festal celebrations.

Believers with eyes to see and ears to hear will experience Jesus Christ in festal celebrations and in each Divine service. Those believers seeking to grow in Christ will be drawn to learning opportunities.

Choices made in daily life determine if the believer truly seeks the Kingdom of God and eternal life. The time of life comes only once and is not repeated. Life beyond the present moment is not guaranteed.

Individuals are wise to seek to constantly be united with Jesus Christ. Prayer makes unity with Jesus Christ constantly possible. Consistent repentance keeps the believer on the path to the Kingdom of God.

The Feast of Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem is celebrated each year in the Church. Believers desiring to grow in Christ will look deep within the heart, mind and soul to forever embrace Jesus as King and as God.

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**The Feast of the Entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. Palm Sunday. March 31/April 13, 2025. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic**

## HOMILY ON PALM SUNDAY

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; 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 Gornelia (Rees)*

**Donations April 6, 2025**

**Offering – \$1,400.00      Candles – \$52.00  
Dues – \$200      Donations – \$25.00**

**Large Candles**

**IMO Jeffrey Smith – 42 years of marriage from wife, Mariam Smith  
IMO Shawn Novatny from Joe & Rose Novatny  
IMO Shawn Novatny from Mike & Lindy Bakos  
IMO Shawn Novatny from Tom & Carole McAllister  
IMO Natalie Ofsanko from Olga Bulich  
IMO Linda Palmer from Olga Bulich**

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**Thanks to all our WONDERFUL volunteers for a very successful  
Lenten Fish Fry Season!  
A special Shout-out to Meara Gleason, Petar Vukovic and Maddie  
Zahurak for getting us through our final Fry!**

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**Sarma Sale!!!!  
Please fill-out the order form located in the church hall  
or see Suzette for more information.  
\$15/ ½ dozen – \$30/ dozen – Pick up Fri. April 18<sup>th</sup>**

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**REMINDER  
Egg Dying – Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup> – Noon  
Please have your boiled Eggs at the Church kitchen by  
noon on Friday!!**



# **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**\*Palm Sunday – Sunday, April 13, 2025**

**Great and Holy Thursday – April 17th**

9:30 am – Divine Liturgy

6:00 pm – Great Vigil (The reading of the 12 Gospels)

**Great and Holy Friday - April 18th**

Egg coloring and Lunch - Noon

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

**Great and Holy Saturday – April 19th**

9:30 am – Divine Liturgy

9:00 pm – Paschal Matins

**\* PASCHA! – Sunday, April 20, 2025**

**\* St. Nicholas Anniversary Celebration–**

Sunday, May 18, 2025

**\* Polka Fest – May 30, – June 1, 2025**

**\* Band of Brothers – July 10–12 & 16–19, 2025**

**\* Taste of Serbia – Saturday, August 9, 2025**

**\* Johnstown Slavic Festival –**

September 19–20, 2025