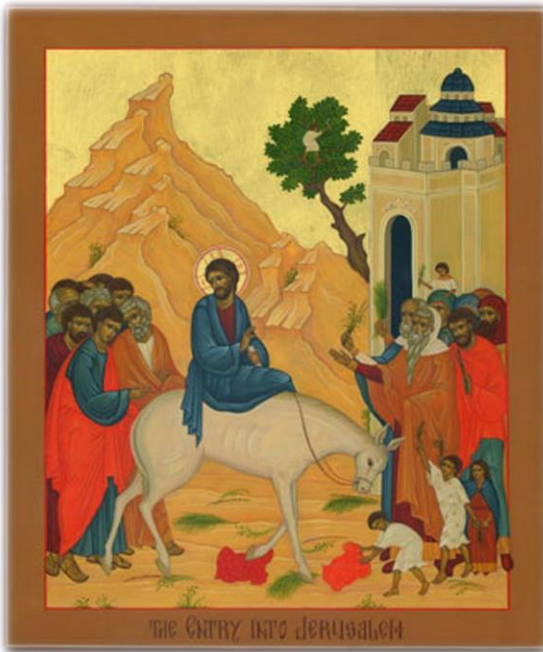


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross

Orthodox Church

Williamsport, PA.



The Feast of Palms

Palm Sunday

April 9th, 2023

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749
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Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, Pastor
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Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9

Gospel: St. John 12:1-18

A very warm welcome to everyone, and especially to our visitors this morning! Please join us for some fellowship after in the Parish Hall!

Services, Events & Announcements

+ HOLY WEEK +

+ BRIDEGROOM MATINS - Sunday April 9th – Tuesday April 11th at 5:30 each evening

+ HOLY UNCTION – Wednesday, April 12th at 5:30

+ VESPERAL LITURGY – Thursday, April 13th at 9

+ MATINS W/PASSION GOSPELS – Thursday, April 13th at 5:30

+ BURIAL VESPERS – Friday, April 14th at 3

+ MATINS W/LAMENTATIONS – Friday, April 14th at 6

**For a complete list of services for Holy Week and PASCHA, please see the Parish website or calendar.

Our Giving – April 2nd, 2023

Tithes/Offerings - \$1,934.00 / Online Giving - \$200.00

Candle Offerings – \$51.00 / Pascha Flowers - \$70.00

Thank you all for your generosity!

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have **properly prepared themselves** by **fasting, prayer [i.e., *Prayers Before Communion*], recent confession**, and who were *at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel* should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. *We should all be at peace with everyone too.* If you have any questions about Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday

The week following the Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt is called Palm or Branch Week. At the Tuesday services of this week the Church recalls that Jesus' friend Lazarus has died and that the Lord is going to raise him from the dead (Jn 11). As the days continue toward Saturday, the Church, in its hymns and verses, continues to follow Christ towards Bethany to the tomb of Lazarus. On Friday evening, the eve of the celebration of the Resurrection of Lazarus, the "great and saving forty days" of Great Lent are formally brought to an end:

Having accomplished the forty days for the benefit of our souls, we pray to Thee, O Lover of Man, that we may see the holy week of Thy passion, that in it we may glorify Thy greatness and Thine unspeakable plan of salvation for our sake . . . (Vespers Hymn).

Lazarus Saturday is a paschal celebration. It is the only time in the entire Church Year that the resurrectional service of Sunday is celebrated on another day. At the liturgy of Lazarus Saturday, the Church glorifies Christ as "the Resurrection and the Life" who, by raising Lazarus, has confirmed the universal resurrection of mankind even before His own suffering and death.

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion, Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children with the branches of victory, we cry out to Thee, O

Vanquisher of Death: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord! (Troparion).

Christ —the Joy, the Truth and the Light of All, the Life of the world and its Resurrection—has appeared in his goodness to those on earth. He has become the Image of our Resurrection, granting divine forgiveness to all (Kontakion).

At the Divine Liturgy of Lazarus Saturday the baptismal verse from Galatians: As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Gal 3.27) replaces the Thrice-holy Hymn thus indicating the resurrectional character of the celebration, and the fact that Lazarus Saturday was once among the few great baptismal days in the Orthodox Church Year.

Because of the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead, Christ was hailed by the masses as the long-expected Messiah-King of Israel. Thus, in fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament, He entered Jerusalem, the City of the King, riding on the colt of an ass (Zech 9.9; Jn 12.12). The crowds greeted Him with branches in their hands and called out to Him with shouts of praise: Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The Son of David! The King of Israel! Because of this glorification by the people, the priests and scribes were finally driven “to destroy Him, to put Him to death” (Lk 19.47; Jn 11.53, 12.10).

Palm Sunday

The feast of Christ’s triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, Palm Sunday, is one of the twelve major feasts of the Church. The services of this Sunday follow directly from those of Lazarus Saturday. The church building continues to be vested in resurrectional splendor, filled with hymns which continually repeat the Hosanna offered to Christ as the Messiah-King who comes in the name of God the Father for the salvation of the world.

The main troparion of Palm Sunday is the same one sung on Lazarus Saturday. It is sung at all of the services, and is used at the Divine Liturgy as the third antiphon which follows the other special psalm verses which are sung as the liturgical antiphons in the place of those normally used. The second troparion of the feast, as well as the kontakion and the other verses and hymns, all continue to glorify Christ's triumphal manifestation "six days before the Passover" when he will give himself at the Supper and on the Cross for the life of the world.

Today the grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together. Let us all take up Thy cross and say: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest! (First Verse of Vespers).

When we were buried with Thee in baptism, O Christ God, we were made worthy of eternal life by Thy resurrection. Now we praise Thee and sing: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord! (Second Troparion).

Sitting on Thy throne in heaven, and carried on a foal on earth, O Christ God, accept the praise of angels and the songs of children who sing: Blessed is he who comes to recall Adam! (Kontakion).

At the vigil of the feast of Palm Sunday the prophecies of the Old Testament about the Messiah-King are read together with the Gospel accounts of the entry of Christ into Jerusalem. At Matins branches are blessed which the people carry throughout the celebration as the sign of their own glorification of Jesus as Saviour and King. These branches are usually palms, or, in the Slavic churches, pussy willows which came to be customary because of their availability and their early blossoming in the springtime.

As the people carry their branches and sing their songs to the Lord on Palm Sunday, they are judged together with the Jerusalem crowd. For it was the very same voices which cried

Hosanna to Christ, which, a few days later, cried Crucify Him! Thus in the liturgy of the Church the lives of men continue to be judged as they hail Christ with the “branches of victory” and enter together with Him into the days of His “voluntary passion.”

Volume II - Worship

The Church Year – Fr Thomas Hopko



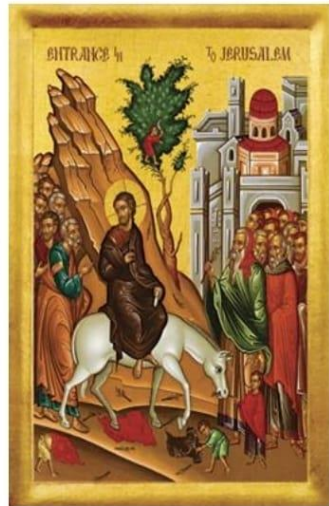
The Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA
The Most Rev. Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia

March 29, 2023

Palm Sunday

Dear to God,

Blessed Feast! Peace and blessings as we celebrate the glorious Feast of Palm Sunday. May the Lord bless and strengthen you day by day as we follow our Lord to His voluntary suffering, the Cross, the Grave and the Empty Tomb. As we gather for these blessed Services, we stand together before the Lord. I am reminded of the words of St Paul, that Christ endured the shame of the Cross for the joy that was set before Him. May we each look beyond the cross we have taken up and rejoice in Christ's Life Giving Passion and Holy Resurrection.



Yours in Christ,

+ Mark

+MARK, Archbishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania
Locum Tenens of the Albanian Archdiocese

Let's be wise and harmless

It is difficult for sheep to survive among wolves, but it is not impossible, because the Lord tells us how we can survive among wolves as His sheep. And that is: to be wise as a snake and harmless as doves. Wisdom will save us from becoming a prey, from being torn apart by wolves, that is, from being killed by enemies. And harmless and kindness will protect us from becoming wolves. Therefore, we must have wisdom. To develop God-given wisdom, more and more, and parallel to that develop goodness. Because wisdom without goodness turns into wickedness, and harmless without wisdom turns into obstinacy. Neither one nor the other, but to be "wise as snake and harmless as doves".

"They persecuted me, and they will persecute you," says the Lord. We must be clear with that and prepare ourselves to remain the way we should be, as our ancestors were: men of God, people of God. And then, when the end of our life comes, we will enter the joy of the bliss of the Kingdom of Heaven. That is the meaning and goal of our life.

+ Patriarch Pavle of Serbia

Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!

Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Archpriest Moses (Berry), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Pres. Rosy (Tanveer), Mat. Mary Lynn Henry, Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Phoebe Davis, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Sebastian Fillar, Infant John, Isaac Bannister, Barbara Cain, Vera Christopher, Paisios Sundin, Christine Perrin, & those suffering in Ukraine, Turkey & Syria

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

Protopresbyter Srboljub Jockovic +3/13, Those who have lost their lives in Ukraine, Turkey & Syria

X FRIDAY EVENING

As we forgive those who trespass against us

As I forgive, I ask to be forgiven! As I forgive N (think of the person you most dislike), how little mercy I deserve, for how little am I able myself to forgive! Were I to be judged as I judge others, what hope do I have?

O Lord, move my heart to love and forgiveness. Teach me true compassion, with kindness to look upon my neighbors' faults. Still within me the aggravations of this day and my unjust criticisms, let me see myself as I truly am, help me to judge my own reactions rather than dwell upon those of others. Help me to banish from my heart and memory all resentment, anger and annoyance. Even there where my dislike is justified, temper my feelings with charity and contrition for my own share in the world's sin. May I this night and at all times forgive seventy times seven and be worthy of Thee and not have to fear Thy judgment, for Thou art faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

AMEN

By Mother Alexandra