



# HOLY TRINITY

## ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



723 N BODINE ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

# CHURCH BULLETIN

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## Palm Sunday

### Gospel Reading John 10: 32 – 45

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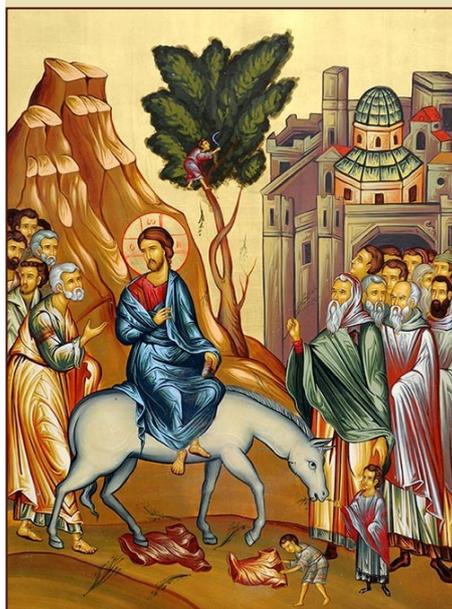
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*At that time*, six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.' When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from

the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus. The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, 'Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord - the King of Israel!' Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: 'Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!' His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify. It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him.



### Apostle Reading Philipians 4: 11 – 14

*Brethren*, rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in

Christ had raised from Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

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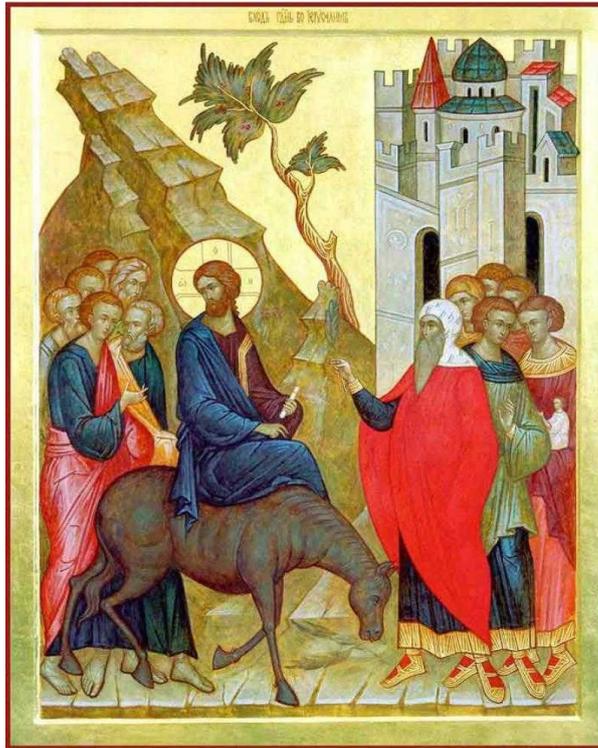
**Synaxarion.** Friday April 23 - Holy Great Martyr George. Sunday April 25, 2021 - Entry of Christ into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday). Fish, oil and wine allowed.

## Meditation for the Feast of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem

In conditions completely different from other years, we have journeyed spiritually through the 40 days of Great Lent. The signs of fear of the new disease were evident already at the beginning of Lent. But we journeyed *together in the Church* on the Sunday of Orthodoxy and that of St. Gregory Palamas. Already on the Sunday of the Holy Cross we discovered *together in prayer* the profound meaning of taking up the Cross and following Christ: taking up our calling as Christians in responsibility for our families, friends, and neighbors with patience, hope, and faith in

God's help. On the Feast of the *Annunciation* we understood that we are being tested like the Theotokos, whose soul was *pierced by a sword*, unto our "becoming" as prayerful Christians, trusting in the intercessions of the Holy Virgin. And we continued Great Lent with the examples of humility and repentance of St. John of the Ladder and St. Mary of Egypt. We have been encouraged to pray more in our own cells, in this isolation similar to their life in the wilderness, that we might gain spiritual understanding of the meaning of our earthly life.

And now we find ourselves at the Feast of the *Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem*, of our meeting of the King of Peace who waits to be received into our souls. The Savior enters Jerusalem riding on a donkey in order to proclaim peace to all: *the peace of God*, which means *reconciliation* with God, with ourselves, and with our neighbors. It is fitting that we too now follow the words of St. John Chrysostom, "*bearing and waving not leafy branches, but bringing as gifts to Christ kindness, virtue, fasting, tears, prayers, vigil.*" Had the Antiochian Father gone through the isolation and desperation of an epidemic? More likely the great preacher had experienced in a profoundly



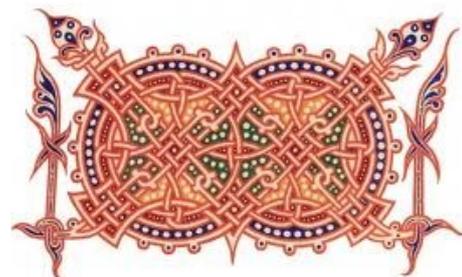
spiritual way this feast which introduces the Week of the Lord's Passion.

For we will see Him who came to bring man's reconciliation with God accused of blasphemy against God, Him who came to bring peace and healing to our souls, spat upon and slapped like one unworthy to be called a Man. Him who came to bring us the true reconciliation born of love, crucified like a thief and enemy of His neighbors.

During this week it is fitting that we spiritually follow the Lord's steps toward crucifixion, that we desire to defend Him before His judges, that we demonstrate our steadfastness in faith, and that we

do not deny Him now, when we are being tested. That we discover in loneliness and understand His crying out to the Heavenly Father! And that we too suffer with the Man Jesus, who suffered His passion for us and offered His life on the Cross as redemption for us! With confidence that He has passed through death, conquering it as God, with joy that the powers of hell have been shattered, with faith that in every Divine Liturgy we too partake of the light of the Resurrection, and with the hope that if *Christ is risen we too will rise!*

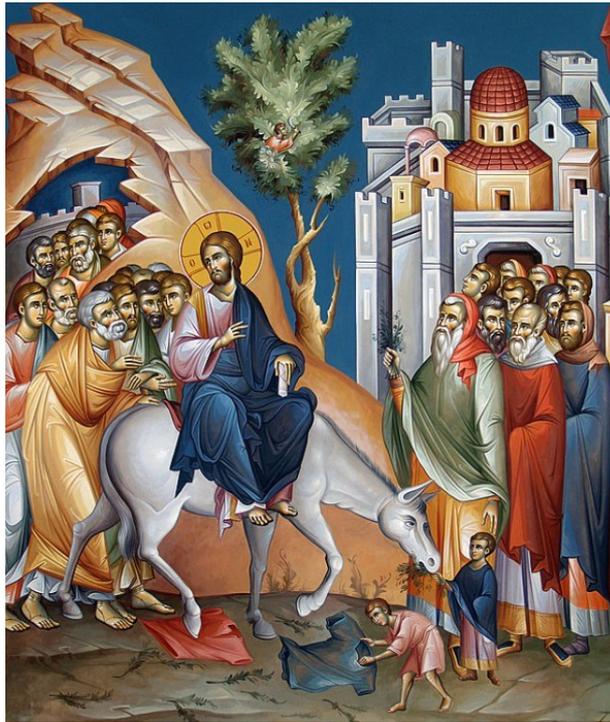
† Metropolitan NICOLAE



## Homily on Palm Sunday in the Orthodox Church

Human beings are blessed with the ability to focus on what is most important. So much of what we do at work or school, for example, requires that we tune out distractions and give our minds to the task before us.

St. Paul reminds us that we especially need to do so in the Christian life by giving our minds to what is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, virtuous, and praise worthy. Palm Sunday is a time that we all need this reminder as we enter into the mystery of our salvation as Jesus Christ journeys to His cross, descent into Hades, and glorious resurrection.



On Palm Sunday, it becomes clear that the Savior Who enters Jerusalem today is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He is the Passover Lamb whose death and resurrection will conquer death itself. Mary, Lazarus' sister, performed a prophetic act when she anointed Christ with the same kind of costly ointment that was used to anoint the bodies of the dead. This Messiah, this One who is truly anointed to save His people and the whole world, will be rejected by the leaders of the Jews and crucified under the authority of the Romans. And when He is lifted up upon the Cross, He will draw all who believe in Him — Jew, Gentile, male, female, rich, poor,

Nothing about this week comes naturally or easily to us. We understand wanting our enemies to suffer, but not freely suffering for their sake. We understand religious people judging others with self-righteousness, but not loving sinners to the point of dying on their behalf. We understand wanting our side to win, but not that true victory comes by laying aside all that looks like power in this world. We think that we understand a remote God in the heavens who does not understand how hard life is down here, not One who hangs on a cross, occupies a tomb, and descends to Hades.

There are times when what has been cloudy and confused becomes bright and clear, when what has been hidden is made manifest for all to see. Today is one of those times. For Jesus Christ, who revealed that He is the resurrection and the life by raising His friend Lazarus from the dead, now enters Jerusalem as the long-awaited Messiah to the welcoming cheers of the crowd.

But even before He gets to Jerusalem, the forces of darkness had decided to kill Christ because they could tell that someone who could raise the dead was a threat to their power; for He was neither a conquering general nor a Pharisee-like interpreter of the Law; and those nationalistic religious leaders had no use for a Messiah who did not serve their schemes of domination.

all nations, classes, and races — to the life of a Kingdom that transcends this world and our petty divisions.

Jesus Christ will not reign as a soldier, a politician, or a rich man, but as a Suffering Servant, a slaughtered lamb, a despised victim of torture and capital punishment. The crowds are right on Palm Sunday to welcome Him as a conquering King in Whom God's promises will be fulfilled. But they misunderstand what kind of King He is and how He will conquer. For He rules from a cross and an empty tomb; instead of killing Roman soldiers, He kills death by allowing Himself to be killed; in the place of a magnificent stallion fit for a king, He rides a humble donkey that would impress no one.

The crowd is right, "Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel." They shout "Hosanna," which is a plea for God's salvation to come upon the earth. And it does through the Lord's death and glorious resurrection. But that's not what the crowds expected; it's apparently not what the disciples or anyone else anticipated. For it goes against all our preconceived notions of what it means to be successful, to be powerful, to rule upon the earth, and to be respectable and religious.

And it's still a very hard lesson for us to accept, for there is too much of the world in all of us and the demons

never work harder than when we are trying to grow closer to Christ. That's why we need to follow St. Paul's advice to focus on what is truly holy this week, to rejoice always, and to "let your gentleness be known to all men." As St. Paul wrote, "The Lord is at hand" which is never more true than on this feast as He enters Jerusalem to the cheers of the crowds.

In Holy Week, what had been cloudy becomes clear; the truth is out in the open and we cannot ignore it any longer. Jesus Christ is the Passover Lamb, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world. He is our Champion, our Savior, our King, yet in His humility and love, the incarnate Son of God suffers on the cross as the lowest of the low in order to bring us to the heights of heaven and the joy of life eternal through His empty tomb.

And this week we journey with Him to that cross, becoming participants in His passion. Like Lazarus, we sit at table with Him. Like Mary, we anoint Him for burial. Like those gathered in Jerusalem, we welcome Him with palms and praises. Like the disciples, we eat the Passover with Him; like His mother Mary the Theotokos, the other faithful women, and the Apostle John, we kneel before His cross. Like Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, we bury Him. And like the stunned myrrh-bearers and the doubting apostles, we will marvel at the unspeakable joy of His resurrection. For what looks like complete failure is actually total triumph, as we will see in the early hours of next Sunday.

Holy Week is the climax of Jesus Christ's life and of ours, too. For He goes to the cross for us; He dies and rises for our salvation, to bring us into the unending joy of eternal life, to defeat our ancient foe. So it's time to lay aside our usual distractions, excuses and obsessions, and enter

into the passion of our Lord by worshiping Him in the services of the church, as well as in every thought, word, and deed this week. If we can't attend literally every service, can all pray at home, read the Bible passages for Holy Week, and give less attention to the world and more to God.

It's time to embrace the great mystery of our salvation, of our Savior's infinite love and mercy, and thus share already in the blessedness of the Kingdom of Heaven. Holy Week is the time to enter into the Light that shines brightly even from the terror of the cross and the darkness of the tomb. Yes, our Savior has endured all these evils for us purely out of love; and He will soon rise over them triumphantly.

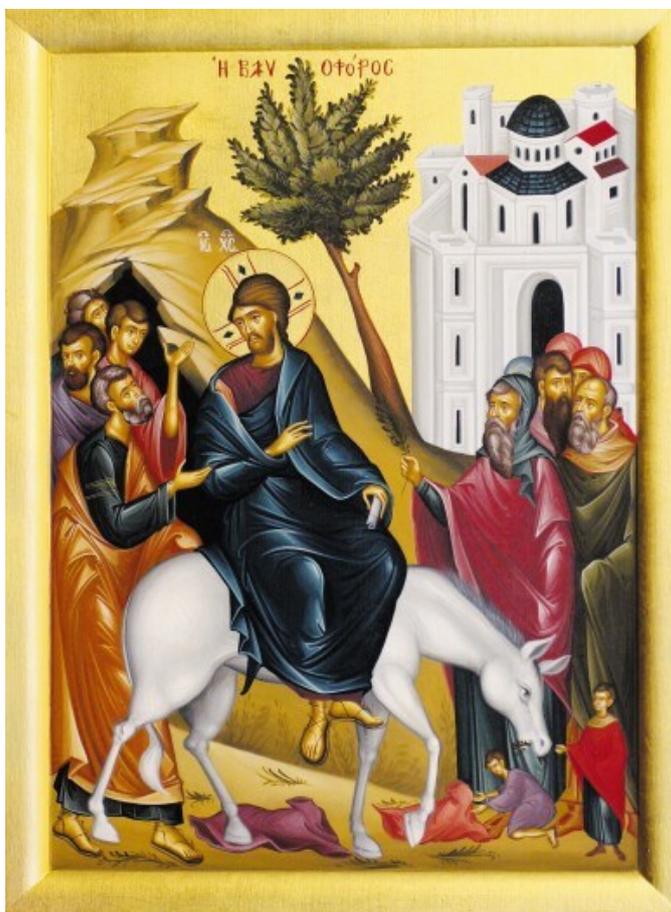
On Palm Sunday, it is clear who Jesus Christ is: The Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world. How will we respond to Him as He goes to the cross for us? Hopefully, with the fear of God and faith and love, we will draw near and not abandon or disregard Him.

Yes, that will take intentional focus and the discipline to turn away from temptations, distractions, and unholy thoughts that become obstacles along our path. Nonetheless, we must follow St. Paul's guidance to "Be anxious for nothing" and allow "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding...[to] guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel. Hosanna in the highest!"

**Fr. Phillip LeMasters**

(Source: <https://orthochristian.com/>)



## The “Dumitru Stăniloae” Scholarship

The “Dumitru Stăniloae” Scholarship is a project of the Association of Romanian Orthodox Ladies’ Auxiliary (AROLA) from the Romanian Orthodox Mitropolia of the Americas. Its purpose is to provide financial support to young theologians who want to study at the prestigious St Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, in Yonkers, NY, in order to become priests in our Mitropolia and serve the Romanian Orthodox community in the USA.

Why “Dumitru Stăniloae Scholarship”? Because, as Olivier Clément stated, "Father Dumitru Stăniloae was certainly the greatest contemporary Orthodox theologian." Father Dumitru leaned with great love and meticulousness on the writings of the Holy Fathers (especially on those of St Gregory Palamas and St Maximus the Confessor), which he translated and commented on. As one young researcher states, “Father Stăniloae strives to connect the meaning of the Church’s dogmas to the inner life of man; he focuses on the authentic expression of a living Orthodoxy, based on Revelation, as it was preserved and taught by the Holy Fathers. Father Stăniloae reevaluates orthodox dogmatic theology, bringing back its patristic dimension.” (Adrian Ioniță, “The path of thought and spirituality of Father Dumitru Stăniloae”, in TABOR, no. 1, 2019, p.29.).

With the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicolae, all the parishes within the Mitropolia organize fundraisings for this scholarship.

Along with other parishes, the Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Philadelphia is determined, too, to support this wonderful initiative. Since the Feast of the Entry of our Lord Jesus Christ into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) is a day when we are allowed to enjoy fish-meals, we considered that this could be a good opportunity to organize such a collection. Thus, the distinguished ladies of our AROLA committee will organize a rich meal, with fish soup and other goodies suitable for this holiday.

We do hope that we will have a good attendance and we will be able to make a substantial contribution to the scholarship fund.

We know that this year is more difficult in terms of fundraising, due to the various restrictions imposed by the pandemic, and yet we do hope that our parishioners will find an opportunity to attend the Palm Sunday celebration and support this noble project.

We are looking forward to seeing you on Palm Sunday at the fish lunch. Thank you.

## HOLY TRINITY’S Liturgical Schedule from April 23 to May 4, 2021

### **Friday April 23 - Holy Great Martyr George:**

9:00 am - Utrenie  
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy  
5:00 pm - HOLY UNCTION

### **Saturday April 24 -**

#### **Lazarus Saturday (Soul Saturday):**

9:00 am - Matins  
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy  
11:30 am - Memorial Service  
12:00 pm - Sacrament of Confession

### **Sunday April 25 (Palm Sunday):**

8:00 am - Sacrament of Confession  
9:00 am - Matins  
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy  
12:00 pm - FISH LUNCH. Fundraising for Fr. Dumitru STANILOAE Scholarship

### **Monday April 26 –Holy Week begins**

#### **Wednesday April 28:**

5:00 pm - Bridegroom Matins (Vigil)

### **Thursday April 29– Holy Thursday:**

9:00 am - Sacrament of Confession  
10:00 am - Vespertal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great  
11:30 - Memorial Service

4:00 pm - Confessions

5:00 pm - Service of the Holy Passion (Matins with 12 Gospel Readings)

### **Friday April 30 - Holy Friday:**

12:00 pm - Vespers of the Veneration of the Epitaphios

4:00 pm - Confessions

5:00 pm – The Lamentations Service & Procession of the Epitaphios

### **EASTER NIGHT**

#### **(Saturday night May 1 - 2):**

11:30 pm - Easter Matins (Orthros)

12:00 am - Service of the Resurrection

1:15 am - Paschal Divine Liturgy

2:40 - Paschal Agape Feast (Fraternal Meal)

### **Sunday May 2 - Holy Pascha:**

4:00 pm - Easter Sunday Vespers (with Easter Gospel readings in several languages)

### **Monday April 3 – Holy Pascha:**

9:00 am - Matins

10:00 am - Paschal Divine Liturgy

### **Tuesday April 4 – Holy Pascha:**

9:00 am - Utrenie

10:00 am - Paschal Divine Liturgy

