

Sts. Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church

First-enthroned of the apostles, teachers of the universe: Entreat the Master of all to grant peace to the world, and to our souls great mercy!

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April 25, 2021

ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM PALM SUNDAY

THE ENTRANCE OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM PALM SUNDAY

Today	10:00am	Divine Liturgy
Wed. 28	7:00pm	Holy Unction
Thurs. 29	9:00am	Vesperal Liturgy
	7:00pm	Matins & Passion Gospel
Fri. 30	3:00pm	Vespers
	7:00pm	Matins & Lamentations
Sat. 01	9:30am	Vespers & Divine Liturgy
	11:30pm	Midnight Office
Sun. 02	12:00am	Matins & Divine Liturgy
	1:00pm	Vespers of Pascha

One must be baptized and chrismated an Orthodox Christian to receive Holy Communion. Guests are invited to receive a blessing at the chalice and partake of the post-Communion bread (Antidoron).

Fast Days: Every Day (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil, wine and hard spirits as you are able.)

Troparion – Tone 1 (Feast)

*By raising Lazarus from the dead
before Thy Passion,
Thou didst confirm the universal
resurrection, O Christ God.
Like the children with the palms 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.”*

Kontakion – Tone 6 (Feast)

*Sitting on Thy throne in Heaven,
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!”*

Prayers for those in our Sts. Peter and Paul community (parishioners, family, friends) can be listed for remembrance in our litanies during the Liturgy. Feel free to give names to Fr. Nicholas - please indicate how each person listed is connected to us (parishioner, family, friend, etc.), as well as why we are praying for them (health, memory, travel, etc.).

Confessions can be heard by appointment. If you need, I will come to you during the week. Please do not hesitate to call for a time to drop by the church or to have me visit you.

Remembrances for both the living and the dead during the prayers of preparation of the Eucharistic Lamb and during the Augmented Litany should be given the week before the desired remembrance so that the names can be put into the bulletin and given to the Deacons for the prayers. Any names of the living that are not marked as sick or traveling will be listed under general prayers.

SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK

Church Lectionary

Today

Philippians 4:4-9
John 12:1-18

Monday

Exodus 1:1-20
Job 1:1-12
Matthew 24:3-35

Tuesday

Exodus 2:5-10
Job 1:13-22
Matthew 24:36-26:2

Wednesday

Exodus 2:11-22
Job 2:1-10
Matthew 26:6-16

Thursday

1 Corinthians 11:23-32
Matt. 26:2-20; John 13:3-17; Matt.
26:21-39; Luke 22:43-45; Matt. 26:40-
27:2

Friday

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2
Matt. 27:1-38; Luke 23:39-43; Matt.
27:39-54; John 19:31-37; Matt. 27:55-61

Saturday

Romans 6:3-11
Matthew 28:1-20

Reading the Bible in a Year

Apr 25: Job 25-28
Apr 26: Job 29-33
Apr 27: Job 34-38
Apr 28: Job 39-42
Apr 29: Psalms 1-4
Apr 30: Psalms 5-8
May 01: Psalms 9-12

A man in this world must solve a problem: to be with Christ, or to be against Him. And every man decides this, whether he wants to or not. He will either be a lover of Christ or a fighter of Christ. There is no third option.

-St. Justin Popovich

I recently received an email from Fr. Gregory DuDash, asking me to share a note from him to our parish.

FROM FATHER GREGORY DUDASH:

I have asked the Metropolitan to release me from the priesthood and return to the laity. I have enjoyed the opportunity to serve the Church for 49 years but I have been retired from the activity ministry for about 20 years. All this is of my own request. Please pray for me at this critical juncture of my life.

We pray that God blesses Fr. Gregory as he takes these next steps in his life's journey, and that God grants comfort and peace to him and his family.

When despondency seizes us, let us not give in to it

As a priestmonk I am often troubled by the knowledge that I am a poor example to others, and that I fall short, daily, of living out the image of Christ in me. Yet I am compelled to live out every day with joyfulness of heart, no matter what. I am also compelled to preach, teach, and write of the things of the Lord, and to try to trust God, no matter what. I try, as best I can, to remember the words, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice (Philippians 4:4)".

The renowned 19th century Russian saint, Seraphim of Sarov (1759-1833), said of himself, "I don't know anything". These words were remarkable coming from a hermit who was the most sought after spiritual adviser of his age, with even the Tsar seeking out his counsel. Yet Saint Seraphim recognized that he was but a funnel from which anything good that came out of him, was from God.

I try to remember the words of Saint Basil the Fool for Christ, whose holy relics reside in Saint Basil's Cathedral in Red Square, who said, "winter is cold, but paradise is sweet". Knowing that true validation comes only from God, I try not to be hurt when I do not receive validation from my peers, remembering that I am called upon to give to others what I want to receive.

Like Saint Anthony the Great, I cry out to God, "where are You?", all the while floating in a river of grace. I want to be a friend of God, yet often feel like the chick who has been pushed out of the nest by the mother eagle.

Yet I am comforted by the counsel of Saint Seraphim, who instructed his spiritual children with the words: "When despondency seizes us, let us not give in to it. Rather, fortified and protected by the light of faith, let us with great courage say to the spirit of evil: 'What are you to us, you who are cut off from God, a fugitive from Heaven, and a slave of evil? You dare not do anything to us: Christ, the Son of God, has dominion over us and over all. Leave us, you thing of bane. We are made steadfast by the uprightness of His Cross. Serpent, we trample on your head.'"

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

April/May Events

April

- 25 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy **PALM SUNDAY**
- 28 – **Holy Wednesday**
7:00pm Holy Unction
- 29 – **Holy Thursday**
7:00pm Matins and Passion Gospel
- 30 – **Great and Holy Friday**
3:00pm Vespers
7:00pm Matins and Lamentations

May

Great and Holy Saturday

- 01 – 9:00am Vespers and Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Pascha Baskets
11:30pm Midnight Office with Procession
- 02 – 12:00am Matins and Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Pascha Baskets
1:00pm Vespers of Pascha
Blessing of Pascha Baskets
- 09 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
1:30pm *Blessing of the Graves (Oakland)*

Philippians 4:4-9 (Epistle)

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, 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 minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

John 12:1-18 (Gospel)

Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always." Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus. The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!" Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, 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 were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him. Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.

Growing with Holy Week

How many times have you heard the story of Holy Week? Five times? Ten times? Even more? Maybe you've heard something that you didn't understand, but then, the next time you heard it, you did understand! Today is Palm Sunday, and we all remember what we celebrate today. We read about it in the Gospel too! We hear how Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, and we hear how the people laid palm branches on the ground for Him. We hear how Jesus sat on a donkey, and He rode into the city. We've heard this story so many times, haven't we? The Gospel also tells us what Jesus's disciples, His friends, thought about the whole scene too. It says, "His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of Him and had been done to Him." The disciples didn't understand why Jesus rode in on a donkey! Lots of times, we might not understand things about God, but we can grow closer to Him. Then we will understand it, just as Christ's own disciples did. This Holy Week, we can go to church many times, and we can hear these same special stories again and again. When we listen to the words about God, we grow closer to Him, and we understand more and more each year. And do you know something? That is just what our Lord wants us to do!

PALM SUNDAY AROUND THE WORLD!

Do you have palm trees in your backyard? Probably not, but we will all still receive a beautiful palm cross after church today. Most of the palms in America have been shipped in from Florida. But did you know that Orthodox Christians in some countries celebrate this day without palms? In some places, palms are too hard to find. Let's look at how our fellow Orthodox Christians around the world celebrate this special day!

In Romania, faithful Christians call this day Flowers Sunday. Instead of palms, people bring spring flowers from their gardens, and after church, everybody brings home bouquets of flowers and basil.

In the Middle East, like Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria, Orthodox faithful carry branches from olive trees and palm trees. The priest blesses every body with an olive branch dipped in holy water.

In Russia and the Ukraine, the climate is too cold for palm trees to grow. Instead, Orthodox Christians receive pussy willow branches to remember the branches that Jesus' followers laid down on the ground. They use pussy willows in Albania as well!

Bulgarians also celebrate this day with flowers. If you have a flower-related name, like Lilia or Violeta, you would celebrate today as your nameday.

In Greece, the faithful carry bay leaves and palms. Sometimes the churches are decorated with olive branches too. The children carry these branches to the church, singing songs for the day! In Cyprus, the people call it Olive Sunday, because they carry olive branches instead. Later, they burn the branches to make incense!

Pandemic Ponderings Pascha—One Year Later

by Mother Christophora [Matychak]

During the pandemic, I have often heard people refer to this as “a crazy time.” Or they say that we are living in “a crazy world” now. Others refer to the pandemic in general as “all this craziness.” I have never felt comfortable with that word or description. I wanted to say that this is not a crazy time. The world God created is lovely and beautiful—not crazy. Maybe we are crazy. Maybe our society was already crazy before the pandemic. But I don’t think that any perceived craziness will simply go away when the pandemic becomes history.

I did a search of the Bible for the word “crazy,” and it does not appear, not even once. Then I thought: Perhaps the word “mad” is used in Scripture. So I searched that word and found it only seven times in the whole Bible.

Almost always, the word “mad” referred to a person, not to the world or society. One interesting exception can be found during the destruction of Babylon in Jeremiah 51:6-7, which reads:

*“Flee from the midst of Babylon;
let every one save his life!*

Be not cut off in her punishment,

for this is the time of the LORD’s vengeance,

the repayment he is rendering her.

Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD’s hand,

making all the earth drunken;

the nations drank of her wine;

therefore the nations went mad.”

If people see our time, this pandemic time, as a crazy time, what do they actually mean?

Is it because we can’t just go here and there,

Anytime,

Any place,

Anywhere?

Is it because we feel that

“They” have taken away “Our human rights”

(If we even ever had them),

Because we can’t gather in groups,

Or because we are required to wear masks?

Is it because plans have been curtailed,

Dreams shattered,

And events canceled?

Is it a crazy time because our financial resources

Have weakened,

Or dried up,

And “secure” jobs have been lost?

Is it because people died

Without saying goodbye,

Without loved ones being near,

Without proper funerals and burials?

Is it because even strong and healthy ones

Got sick,

Weakened by this unseen enemy?

Is it because we can’t visit family and friends,

Hug our grandkids,

Gather for graduations, celebrations, and marriages?

Is it crazy because schools were closed,

Bands practiced on split-screen,

Clubs met online,

And doctors diagnosed over video chat?

Is it crazy because churches were shuttered,

Services were canceled or streamed,

Communion became virtual, rather than physical,

And monasteries locked their gates?

Indeed, we have much to grieve,

Much to regret,

Much to heal.

And much to fulfill, and refill.

Yet, we discovered the Lord was not in the wind.

He was not in the earthquake.

He was not in the fire.

But He came, a still small voice.

He came to each one of us,

In our own quiet solitude,

In our social isolation,

In the inner chamber of our hearts,

In our rooms, once we had shut the door.

Last year it was there,

Where we were forced to flee,

Where we met Christ,

When we followed Him in our own painful isolation,

And the abandonment of Holy Friday;

Where we came to search for Him

In the oh, so very empty tomb,

Of our own hearts that Pascha night of the Pandemic.

But never were we separated from Christ;

No matter how lonely we were,

No matter how empty the tomb of our hearts,

And the nave of our churches.

Yes, in the long, endless, isolated hours of Holy Week,

And behind those locked doors of Pascha night,

It was Christ Who came to us!

It was Christ with Whom we broke bread that night.

And it was Christ Who said, “Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, even so I send you!”

And eight days later,

When Thomas demanded the physical proofs—

To touch with his hands, to see with his eyes—

Jesus asked, “Have you believed

Because you have seen me?

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe!”

As others walked and discussed

All that had happened in those days,

He, Jesus, walked with them.

He listened to their grief.

He felt their trauma.

It was He Who broke the bread and opened their eyes,

So that their hearts burned!

A crazy world?

No. Not with the Lord.

He asks us, “Have you anything to eat?”

Yes, we have seen, and we have tasted,

How good the Lord is!

We are not alone.

We have not been alone!

He has opened our eyes to see His face.

He is among us, in us, and with us.

Yes, indeed, Christ is among us!

He is and ever shall be!

And let us follow Him again this year,

On whatever road He leads,

And whatever path He demands.

As in each year that has already passed,

Let us follow Him,

To His Passion, and to

His Holy Third-day Resurrection!

“And unto us He has given eternal life.

Let us worship His Resurrection on the third day!”

Christ is among us! He is and ever shall be!

К Филиппийцам 4:4-9

Радуйтесь всегда в Господе; и еще говорю: радуйтесь. Кротость ваша да будет известна всем человекам. Господь близко. Не заботьтесь ни о чем, но всегда в молитве и прощении с благодарением открывайте свои желания пред Богом, и мир Божий, который превыше всякого ума, соблюдет сердца ваши и помышления ваши во Христе Иисусе. Наконец, братия мои, что только истинно, что честно, что справедливо, что чисто, что любезно, что достославно, что только добродетель и похвала, о том помышляйте. Чему вы научились, что приняли и слышали и видели во мне, то исполняйте, --и Бог мира будет с вами.

От Иоанна 12:1-18

За шесть дней до Пасхи пришел Иисус в Вифанию, где был Лазарь умерший, которого Он воскресил из мертвых. Там приготовили Ему вечерю, и Марфа служила, и Лазарь был одним из возлежавших с Ним. Мария же, взяв фунт нардового чистого драгоценного мира, помазала ноги Иисуса и отерла волосами своими ноги Его; и дом наполнился благоуханием от мира. Тогда один из учеников Его, Иуда Симонов Искарот, который хотел предать Его, сказал: Для чего бы не продать это миро за триста динариев и не раздать нищим? Сказал же он это не потому, чтобы заботился о нищих, но потому что был вор. Он имел [при себе денежный] ящик и носил, что туда опускали. Иисус же сказал: оставьте ее; она сберегла это на день погребения Моего. Ибо нищих всегда имеете с собою, а Меня не всегда. Многие из Иудеев узнали, что Он там, и пришли не только для Иисуса, но чтобы видеть и Лазаря, которого Он воскресил из мертвых. Первосвященники же положили убить и Лазаря, потому что ради него многие из Иудеев приходили и веровали в Иисуса. На другой день множество народа, пришедшего на праздник, услышав, что Иисус идет в Иерусалим, взяли пальмовые ветви, вышли навстречу Ему и восклицали: осанна! благословен грядущий во имя Господне, Царь Израилев! Иисус же, найдя молодого осла, сел на него, как написано: Не бойся, дочь Сионова! се, Царь твой грядет, сидя на молодом осле. Ученики Его сперва не поняли этого; но когда прославился Иисус, тогда вспомнили, что так было о Нем написано, и это сделали Ему. Народ, бывший с Ним прежде, свидетельствовал, что Он вызвал из гроба Лазаря и воскресил его из мертвых. Потому и встретил Его народ, ибо слышал, что Он сотворил это чудо.

Filipianëve 4:4-9

Gëzohuni gjithnjë në Zotin; po jua them përsëri: Gëzohuni! Zemërbutësia juaj le të njihet nga të gjithë njerëzit; Zoti është afër. Mos u shqetësoni për asgjë, por, në çdo gjë, ia parashtroni kërkesat tuaja Perëndisë me anë lutjesh dhe përgjërimesh, me falënderim. Dhe paqja e Perëndisë, që ia tejkalon çdo zgjuarësie, do të ruajë zemrat tuaja dhe mendjet tuaja në Krishtin Jezus. Së fundi, vëllezër, të gjitha gjërat që janë të vërteta, të gjitha gjërat që janë të ndershme, të gjitha gjërat që janë të drejta, të gjitha gjërat që janë të pastra, të gjitha gjërat që janë të dashura, të gjitha gjërat që janë me famë të mirë, nëse ka ndonjë virtyt dhe nëse ka ndonjë lëvdim, këto mendoni. Ato gjëra që keni mësuar, marrë dhe dëgjuar nga mua dhe patë në mua, i bëni, dhe Perëndia i paqes do të jetë me ju.

Gjoni 12:1-18

Jezusi, pra, gjashtë ditë përpara Pashkës, erdhii në Betani, ku banonte Llazari, ai që kishte vdekur dhe Jezusi e kishte ringjallur prej së vdekurish. Dhe aty i shtruan një darkë: Marta shërbente dhe Llazari ishte një nga ata që rrinin në tryezë me të. Atëherë Maria mori një liber vaj erëkëndshëm prej nardi të pastër shumë të kushtueshëm, vajosi me të këmbët e Jezusit dhe i fshiu këmbët e tij me flokët e saj; dhe shtëpia u mbush me erën e këtij vaji. Atëherë një nga dishepujt e tij, Juda Iskarioti, bir i Simonit, ai që do ta tradhtonte, tha: “Pse nuk u shit ky vaj për treqind denarë dhe t’u jepej fitimi të varfërve?” Por ai e tha këtë, jo se kujdesej për të varfrit, por sepse ishte vjedhës dhe, duke qenë se ai e mbante qesen, mbante ç’shtinin atje brenda. Jezusi, pra, tha: “Lëre! Ajo e ka ruajtur për ditën e varrimit tim. Të varfrit në fakt, i keni gjithmonë me ju, por mua nuk më keni gjithmonë.” Ndërkaq një turmë e madhe Judenjsh mori vesh se ai ishte atje dhe erdhi jo vetëm për shkak të Jezusit, por edhe për të parë Llazarin, te cilin ai e kishte ngjallur prej së vdekurish. Atëherë krerët e priftërinjve vendosën ta vrasin edhe Llazarin, sepse për shkak të tij, shumë veta braktisnin Judenjtë dhe besonin në Jezusin. Të nesërmen, një turmë e madhe që kishte ardhur në festë, kur dëgjoi se Jezusi po vinte në Jeruzalem, mori degë palmash dhe i doli para, duke thirrur: “Hosana! Bekuar ai që vjen në emër të Zotit, mbreti i Izraelit!” Dhe Jezusi gjeti një kërraç dhe hipi në të, siç është shkruar: “Mos druaj, o bijë e Sionit; ja, mbreti yt po vjen duke kalëruar mbi një kërraç gomareje!” Dishepujt e tij nuk i kuptuan për momentin këto gjëra, po, kur Jezusi ishte perlëvduar, atëherë u kujtuan se këto gjëra ishin shkruar për të, dhe që i kishin bërë këto gjëra për të. Kështu turma, që ishte me të kur ai e kishte thirrur jashtë Llazarin nga varri dhe e kishte ringjallur prej së vdekuri, jepte dëshmi për të. Prandaj turma i doli përpara, sepse kishte dëgjuar se ai kishte bërë këtë shenjë.