

**:: Fr. Alexander Schmemmann ::
On the Meaning of Palm Sunday**

[W]hen at the most solemn moment of our Liturgical celebration, we receive from the priest a palm branch, we renew our oath to our King, we confess His Kingdom as the ultimate meaning and content of *our* life. We confess that everything in our life and in the world *belongs* to Christ and nothing can be taken away from its sole real Owner, that there is no area of life in which He is not to rule, to save and to redeem. We proclaim the universal and total responsibility of the Church for human history and uphold her *universal mission*.

We know that the King whom the Jews acclaimed then and whom we acclaim today, is on His way to Golgotha, to the Cross and to the grave. We know that this short triumph is but the prologue of His sacrifice. The branches in our hands signify, therefore, our readiness and willingness to follow Him on this sacrificial way, our acceptance of sacrifice and self-denial as the only royal way to the Kingdom.

And finally, these branches, this celebration, proclaim our faith in the final victory of Christ. His Kingdom is yet hidden and the world ignores it. It lives it as if the decisive event had not taken place, as if God had not died on the Cross and Man in Him was not risen from the dead. But we, Christians, believe in the coming of the Kingdom in which God will be all in all and Christ the only King.

In our liturgical celebrations, we remember events of the past. But the whole meaning and power of Liturgy is that it transforms remembrance into reality. On Palm Sunday this reality is *our own involvement, our responsibility to, the Kingdom of God*. Christ does not enter into Jerusalem anymore, He did it once and for all. And He does not need any "symbols," for He did not die on the Cross that we may eternally "symbolize" His life. He wants from us a *real* acceptance of the Kingdom which He brought to us... And if we are not ready to stand by the solemn oath, which we renew every year on Palm Sunday, if we do not *mean* to make the Kingdom of God the measure of our whole life, meaningless is our commemoration and vain the branches we take home from the Church.

Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Wednesday each week to Fr. Andren, by email or phone.



St. George Orthodox Church of Spring Valley

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Sunday, April 13, 2014 – Palm Sunday
Morning Prayer (Orthros) and Children's Sunday School, 9:00 am
Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am

Holy Bread and Coffee Hour: Robert Abraham
Next Week's Coffee Hour: The Sanders and Medawar families

Troparion of St. Lazarus (Tone 1):

O Christ God, when Thou didst raise Lazarus from the dead, before Thy Passion, Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection. Wherefore, we, like children, carry the insignia of triumph and victory, and cry to Thee, O Vanquisher of death: 'Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He Who cometh in the Name of the Lord!'

Troparion of Palm Sunday (Tone 4):

O Christ God, when we were buried with Thee in Baptism, we became deserving of Thy Resurrection to immortal life. Wherefore, we praise Thee, crying: 'Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord!'

Troparion for St. George the Great-Martyr (Tone 4):

Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and succour of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among martyrs, the victory-clad George: Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

St. George is a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
The Most Reverend Metropolitan PHILIP, primate
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY, Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest
www.antiochian.org

Kontakion for Palm Sunday (Tone 4):

Upborne upon the heavenly throne, and seated upon the earthly foal, O Christ our God, receive the praises of angels and the hymns of men, exclaiming before Thee: Blessed is He that cometh to restore Adam.

Blessed is He Who cometh in the Name of the Lord.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians (4:4-9)

Brethren, rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice! Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety 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 passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, these do; and the God of peace will be with you.

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John (12:1-18)

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus who had died was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at table with Him. Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. But Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, one of His Disciples (he who was to betray Jesus), said, "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not because he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the moneybox he used to take what was put into it. Jesus said, "Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of My burial. The poor you always have 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 on account of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus also to death, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus. The next day a great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is He Who cometh in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel!" And Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon 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 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 crowd that had been with Jesus when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet Jesus was that they heard He had done this sign.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and services at St. George, consult the calendar on our website, www.stgeorgeorthodox.org. All extra services for Lent and Holy Week are now posted!

Holy Week is here! Schedules are available by the candles and downstairs if you do not have one already. **Please make plans to attend as many of these services as possible, so that we may walk together with our Lord Jesus through the events of His Passion and Resurrection!**

- The **sacrament of confession** will be available before and after each service.
- **Note some changes to our Good Friday schedule:** *Royal Hours* remains at 10AM, and we will gather to decorate the tomb of Jesus at 12:30. *Vespers* (where we take the Body of Jesus down from the Cross) will be at 6:00 PM (note the change in time) and *Lamentations* at 7:00 PM.
- **Our annual Easter Vigil will begin 10:00 PM this Saturday, April 19.** After the service, we will break the Lenten fast with a simple meal. Please bring finger-foods or snacks to share with everyone!
- **Next Sunday, Easter day:** We will have **Agape Vespers at noon**, a short service of joyful Easter hymns. This will be followed by an Easter Egg hunt (with prizes, of course!) for the children in the church yard.
- **Tuesday, April 22:** St. George Church in Cicero is having a 20th anniversary service in honor of the miraculous icon, Our Lady of Cicero. Service begins at 6:00 PM. If anyone is interesting in going, a group of us will leave around 3 PM. See Fr. Andrew for details.
- **Wednesday, April 23:** We will celebrate the **Feast of St. George**, our church's patronal feast day, **at 6:00 pm**, with a Divine Liturgy.

Children's Sunday School continues

Thank you to Patrice Nimee, Mary Miller, and Kh. Patty Kishler for working with the children on the beautiful processional candles! Sunday school is held each Sunday at 9:15 AM, before Liturgy. No registration is necessary; older youth are welcome to come and assist.

Collections for the Archdiocese

In addition to your regular support of the church, one of our most important Christian duties is almsgiving. Please consider designating a gift to any or all of the following collections, supported by our Antiochian Archdiocese. (Make your checks payable to St. George Church with the desired designation on the memo line.)

- Seminarian Fund - support the students and their families current studying in seminary
 - Patriarch's Offering - our annual support to our Patriarch and mother church in Syria
 - Food for Hungry People - your Lenten coin boxes
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