

# The Entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday)

31 March / 13 April

Extracts from the Vigil Service:

*Today the grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together, and we all take up Thy Cross and say: Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.*

*Today the Word and co-eternal Son of God the Father, whose throne is the heaven and whose footstool is the earth, humbles Himself and comes to Bethany, seated on a dumb beast, on a foal. Then the children of the Hebrews, holding branches in their hands, praise Him saying: 'Hosanna in the highest: blessed is He that comes, the King of Israel'.*

*Let us also come today, all the new Israel, the Church of the Gentiles, and let us cry with the Prophet Zechariah: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem; for behold, thy King comes unto thee: He is meek and brings salvation, and He rides upon the colt of an ass, the foal of a beast of burden. Keep the feast with the children, and holding branches in your hands sing His praises: Hosanna to the highest; blessed is He that comes, the King of Israel.*



*1st, 2nd 3rd Stichera of 'Lord, I have cried'*

**Tropar of The Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem, Tone 1:** In confirming the common Resurrection, O Christ God, Thou didst raise up Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion. Wherefore, we also, like the children bearing the symbols of victory, cry to Thee, O Vanquisher of death: Hosanna in the highest, blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

**Another Tropar of The Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem, Tone 4:** As by baptism we were buried with Thee, O Christ our God, so by Thy Resurrection we were deemed worthy of immortal life; and praising Thee, we cry: Hosanna in the highest; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**Kondak of The Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem, Tone 6:** Being borne upon a throne in heaven, and upon a colt on the earth, O Christ God. Thou didst accept the praise of the angels and the laudation of the children as they cry to Thee: Blessed is he that cometh to recall Adam.

**Vespers: Lord I have Cried, Tone 6, on 10: Feast 10 (Today the grace); G/N: Today the grace. 3 readings for the Feast: Gen. 49:1-2, 8-12; Zeph. 3:14-19; Zech. 9:9-15. Aposticha: Feast (Rejoice and be glad, O city of Zion); G/N: Today the grace of the Holy Spirit.**

---

**Matins Gospel: Matthew 21:1-11, 15-17**

**Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9**

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.

## **IF THERE IS ANY VIRTUE AND ... ANYTHING PRAISEWORTHY—MEDITATE ON THESE THINGS**

It is possible to grieve for our own sins and yet to rejoice in Christ. Or when your communion with God is not hindered, rejoice ...Is it best to envy, or to rejoice with one another? Let us search out all these things, and we will find that virtue, like a truly kind mother, places us in safety, while vice is a treacherous thing and full of danger ...That which is 'honourable' belongs to external virtue and that which is 'pure' to the soul ...If we will be at peace with each other, God will be with us ...Therefore we must make a beginning on our part, and then we will draw God towards us ...For he 'who digs a pit for his neighbour, falls into it' (Prov. 26:27) ...As we injure ourselves when we injure our neighbours, so by benefiting them, we benefit ourselves.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homily XIV on Philippians IV. B#57, pp. 246, 248, 249.*

### **Gospel - John 12: 1-18**

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. Then 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.

### **THE ENTRY OF CHRIST INTO JERUSALEM**

Brothers and sisters! So the Holy Church indicates for us spiritual spring. Winter is over. Ended is the state in which our heart was like ice, as if dead in languor, thirsting for Grace. And now, during the past six weeks the sun has been warming us more and more, and nature has gradually started to come back to life. And so our heart too should have come back to life.

Last night during the evening service, we sang, "Children were bearing the sign of Victory . . . " What sign? Pussy willows, branches which had already budded, indicating that spring was coming, as if saying to us: Look here, joy is already beginning, happiness. So through the pussy willows, the Church has been saying to us: This is the beginning for you too; just be Christians, and think it over, and you will begin to see a sign. A sign of what? —that Christ is Risen.

And we, brothers and sisters, we close our eyes like an ostrich who puts his head under his wing. We don't want to think that a limit will come, just as it comes to old people: hands stop working, eyes stop seeing, ears stop hearing—a limit. The end will come. And it seems that in these moments, when we begin to recognize the approach of old age, we involuntarily compare it with winter, with snow. Yes, but after winter comes spring. And in a spiritual understanding: after our eyes close, then comes Eternal Life, the joy of Life with Christ. This is what last night's pussy willows were telling us about, "bearing the sign." Abide not in grief; turn to joy. And now comes the moment when the Lord, by a special mystery, through Passion Week which we are approaching, will give us the feeling of this joy of Eternal Life.

Now we worry about a piece of bread, about a roof over our heads, about our social conditions. And it seems to us that the meaning of life consists of this. But the Church says, Look at the pussy willows: leaves will sprout and later flowers and fruit. So it is even in a Christian soul. Everything we are busying ourselves with, all this will remain here. But with us there will go another stream of life—spiritual life. You should think about this. But is it so? Maybe it's not. Brothers, it is so! Today the Holy Church speaks to us through the Apostle. What does the Church say? She says: "Rejoice in the Lord always, (Phil. 4:4). Today, at the conclusion of Great Lent, she says to us, rejoice! Do you have this joy? If this is joy about Eternal Life, then yes, you will have this joy, because Christ is Risen. And all our

sicknesses, our old age, our expectancy of death—all of this will dissolve. In what? In Christ. And when the moment of our departure comes (this is how we believe and what the Church says), God Almighty, the Giver of Life, will come to us and will perform for us the mystery of releasing our bonds, and we will enter eternal existence.

“Rejoice,” says the Apostle, “and again I say, Rejoice” (Phil. 4:4). See how the Apostle is exhorting us. But what is this? There is a condition: “Let all men know your meekness,” (trans. forbearance or moderation in English versions) continues the Apostle. Look here, spring has come to nature. But it will not stop here, it will go further; it will change into summer. And so it is with us—life goes on. “Let all men know your meekness.” This means that our life should move in such a way that pride will depart. It should dissolve in Christ’s patience, in Christ’s meekness. The Apostle says: May your meekness be of the Lord. And further, “Have no anxiety about anything,” but be always in prayer. Hear what promises the Lord gives. “Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your wishes (trans. requests in English version) be made known to God” (Phil. 4:6). What daring is given to us!

But what kind of wishes should our prayers express? If they are the wishes which people experience in sitting rooms, theatres, worldly amusements—then of course, brothers, the Lord desires something else for us, because all of this will remain here. This senselessness, this commotion, this quarrelling, this adversity, this rage, all this will remain here. And only joy will depart with us. This is joy: if you wish for meekness, humility, prosperity, brotherly love, Christian living, quiet—then pray! The Lord will be with you. Rejoice! The Holy Day is approaching. Tomorrow there will come great moments when the Sacrament is being performed. And so in our hearts will be revealed this joy: Christ is Risen! May this joy abide with us in a joyous feeling of Eternal Life.

*Archbishop Andrei, “The One Thing Needful”*

Let us hasten, O believers, moving from one divine festival to another; from palms and branches to the fulfilment of the august and saving sufferings of Christ. Let us watch Him, bearing His sufferings voluntarily for our sake; and let us sing unto Him with worthy praise, crying, O Fountain of mercy, O Haven of Salvation, O Lord, glory to You.

*Palm Sunday Evening Vespers.*

### **Saints of the Week**

**31 March / 13 April — Metropolitan Innocent, Enlightener of Siberia and Alaska** - born John in the Irkutsk district in 1797 the son of a poor sacristan. His father died when he was seven leaving him and his family in great poverty. Fortunately his uncle took him in, provided for his education and taught him manual crafts himself. He entered seminary at age 9 and was a good student. Whilst there the rector changed his surname to Veniaminov. John married in 1817 at the age of 20 and became a deacon in Irkutsk. After a year he was ordained priest and in 1823 the Bishop sought a priest to undertake missionary work in the islands between Siberia and Alaska. Although at first unwilling, Father John was seized with the desire to preach the Gospel of Christ to the unenlightened. His bishop consented, and although his family were at first opposed they began the long journey. In the following year they arrived on the island of Unalaska. He began to teach the natives carpentry and building, and with their help erected a church and dwellings. He then began to study the native language, hoping to translate the Gospel and divine services. He preached to the natives in their own language, adapting concepts to their understanding. He travelled widely throughout the diocese, which stretched over several thousand kilometres, serving, preaching, and baptising. He sometimes traversed great distances on the open sea in a small canoe. He developed an alphabet for the Aleutian language and translated the catechism and the Gospel of St. Matthew. At this time he wrote his most famous work - Indication of the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven. He opened a school and himself taught the children to read and write. He spent 10 years in Unalaska, in which time he converted all the inhabitants to Christianity. He was then transferred to Sitka, an island port close to the mainland of Alaska. He laboured there for five years, learning the language and translating, preaching and baptising, and teaching the natives manual trades. He was greatly loved by the native peoples. In 1838 he returned to Russia to seek help for his work and for a blessing to print his translations. He was raised to Archpriest and at the same time his wife died. He accepted monasticism and in 1840 was tonsured with the name of Innocent eventually becoming Bishop Innocent and returning to Alaska to finish his work. In 1850 he was elevated to Archbishop and in 1857 was recalled to Russia where he laboured greatly for the conversion of the unenlightened peoples on the Russian-Chinese border. Finally in 1867, he was chosen to succeed the newly reposed Metropolitan Philaret. By now an old man he accepted this great burden with humility, fulfilling his duties to the glory of God until his repose on 31 March, 1879. This great worker planted the Faith of Christ amongst a great many pagan tribes, labouring for their salvation with true patience, humility and simplicity. For his labours, the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad resolved in May 1993 to recognise Metropolitan Innocent as a saint on January 17/30, 1994.

**Archbishop Averky of Jordanville** - the world known as Alexander Pavlovich Taushev) was born on October 19, 1906, in the city of Kazan. His father was employed by the government until the Revolution of 1917 and was required to travel widely. Thus Vladika, although only 14 when he was forced to leave Russia, knew a great deal of his beloved homeland. He read widely from a young age, and was especially moved by spiritual books which he father obtained from the Monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mt. Athos. In 1920 the family settled in Bulgaria amongst many other Russian refugees. Then in 1925, he met Archbishop Theophan who had a tremendous influence on this young man, and it was at this time he became firm in his desire for monasticism. He entered theological Academy and graduated in 1930 with top marks. Desiring greatly to labour for the Russian people, he decided to travel to Czechoslovakia, where many were returning from the Unia to Orthodoxy. Vladika Theophan blessed him, and Alexander was appointed secretary to the Diocesan Administrator. In 1931 he was tonsured a monk with the name Averky. The next day he was ordained to the diaconate, and in the next year was ordained priestmonk. In 1937 he was made Abbot before in 1940 he was forced as a result of World War II to move to Belgrade where he taught and laboured in the serve of the Synod. In 1951 he moved to America and was invited to teach at Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville. In 1961 he was made Archbishop - a great preacher and zealot of True Orthodox Christianity, Vladika suffered greatly as a result of the attacks of modernism and ecumenism on the Orthodox Faith. It was said that he was one of the last giants of 20th Century Orthodoxy. May his memory be eternal!

**St. Jonah, Metropolitan of Kiev, Moscow, and all Russia** - Sainted Jona, Metropolitan of Moscow and WonderWorker of All Russia, was born in the city of Galich into a pious Christian family. The father of the future saint was named Feodor. At twelve years of age the youth took monastic vows in one of the Galich monasteries, from which he transferred to the Moscow Simonov monastery, where for many years he fulfilled various obediences. One time Sainted Photii, Metropolitan of Moscow (Comm. 27 May and 2 July), visited at the Simonov monastery and after the molieben, having blessed the archimandrite and brethren, wanted also to bless the monks fulfilling obedience at the monastery tasks. When he came to the bakery, he saw then the monk Jona asleep from much work, and the right hand of the fatigued monk was bent in a gesture of blessing. Sainted Photii asked not to wake him; he blessed the sleeping monk and prophetically predicted to those present, that this monk would be a great hierarch of the Russian Church and would guide many on the way to salvation.

The prediction of the Saint was fulfilled. After several years Saint Jona was made bishop of Ryazan and Murom. In 1431 Saint Photii died. Five years after his death, Saint Jona was chosen Metropolitan of All Russia for his virtuous and holy life. When the newly chosen metropolitan journeyed to Patriarch Joseph II (1416-1439) in Constantinople, in order to accept confirmation as metropolitan, it turned out then, that shortly before this the nefarious Isidor, a Bulgarian by descent, was already established as Russian metropolitan. Spending a short while at Kiev and Moscow, Isidor journeyed to the Council of Florence (1438), - where he accepted Uniatism. A Sobor / Council of Russian hierarchs and clergy deposed metropolitan Isidor, and he was compelled to flee secretly to Rome (where he died in 1462). Saint Jona was unanimously chosen Metropolitan of All Russia. His consecration by the blessing of the Constantinople Patriarch Gregory III (1445-1450) - was the first time that it was done by Russian hierarchs in Moscow. On 15 December 1448 Saint Jona became Metropolitan and with arch-pastoral zeal he began to assert piety among the flock, encouraging the Orthodox faith in the land by word and by deed. And beneath his exalted dignity he continued as before with his personal monastic efforts.

In 1451 the Tatars unexpectedly advanced on Moscow; they burned the surroundings and prepared for an assault on the city. Metropolitan Jona with clergy made procession along the walls of the city, with tears beseeching God for the salvation of city and people. Beholding the dying monk Antonii of the Chudov monastery, - who was noted for his virtuous life, Saint Jona said: "My son and brother Antonii! Pray to the Merciful God and the All-Pure Mother of God for the deliverance of the city and all Orthodox Christians". The humble Antonii replied: "Great hierarch! We give thanks to God and His All-Pure Mother, - She hath heard thy prayer and hath besought Her Son, - the city and all Orthodox Christians will be saved through thine prayers. The enemy will soon take flight. Only I alone am destined by the Lord to be killed by the enemies". Just as the elder said this, an enemy arrow struck him.

The prediction of Starets Antonii occurred: on 2 July, on the feast of the Placing of the Robe of the Most Holy Mother of God, confusion broke out in the ranks of the Tatars, and in unexplained fear and terror they turned to flight. Saint Jona built in his courtyard a temple in honour of the Placing of the Robe of the Most Holy Mother of God, - in memory of the deliverance of Moscow from the enemies.

The blessed end of Saint Jona followed in the year 1461. By the grave of the Saint began to occur numerous healings.

In 1472 the relics of holy Metropolitan Jona were opened undecayed and placed in the Uspensky Sobor / Cathedral of the Kremlin (the feast of Transfer of the holy Relics is celebrated 27 May). A Sobor of the Russian Church in 1547 established the individual day of memory to Sainted Jona, Metropolitan of

Moscow. In 1596 Patriarch Job established the celebration to Sainted Jona in the Sobor / Assemblage of other Moscow Hierarchs, on 5 October.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Hypatius the Wonderworker, bishop of Gangra; Righteous Joseph the Fair, the son of Jacob; Venerable Acacius the Confessor, bishop of Melitene; Venerable Apollonius of Egypt; Martyrs Abdas, bishop of Persia and Benjamin, deacon; Venerable Hypatius, abbot of Rufinus in Chalcedon; Venerable Blaise of Amorium; Venerable Hypatius the Healer of the Kiev Caves; New Hieromartyr John Blyumovich, priest; 'Iveron' Icon of the Mother of God

**1 / 14 April — St Mary of Egypt** - The recorder of the life of this wonderful saint was St Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem. A hieromonk, the elder Zossima, had gone off at one time during the Great Fast a twenty-days' walk into the wilderness across the Jordan. He suddenly caught sight of a human being with a withered and naked body and with hair as white as snow, who fled in its nakedness from Zossima's sight. The elder ran a long way, until this figure stopped at a stream and called: 'Father Zossima, forgive me for the Lord's sake. I cannot turn round to you, for I am a naked woman.' Then Zossima threw her his outer cloak, and she wrapped herself in it and turned round to him. The elder was amazed at hearing his name from the lips of this unknown woman. After considerable pressure on his part, she told him her life-story. She had been born in Egypt, and had lived as a prostitute in Alexandria from the age of twelve, spending seventeen years in this way of life. Urged by the lustful fire of the flesh, she one day got into a ship that was sailing for Jerusalem. Arriving at the Holy City, she tried to go into one of the churches to venerate the Precious Cross, but some unseen power prevented her from entering. In great fear, she turned to an icon of the Mother of God that was in the entrance, and begged her to let her go in and venerate the Cross, confessing her sin and impurity and promising that she would then go wherever the Most Pure led her. She was then allowed to enter the church. After venerating the Cross, she went out again to the entrance and, standing in front of the icon, thanked the Mother of God. Then she heard a voice: 'If you cross the Jordan, you will find true peace.' She immediately bought three loaves of bread and set off for the Jordan, arriving there the same evening. She received Communion the following morning in the monastery of St John, and then crossed the river. She spent forty-eight whole years in the wilderness in the greatest torments, in terror, in struggles with passionate thoughts like gigantic beasts. She fed only on plants. After that, when she was standing in prayer, Zossima saw her lifted up in the air. She begged him to bring her Communion the next year on the bank of the Jordan, and she would come to receive it. The following year, Zossima came with the Holy Gifts to the bank of the Jordan in the evening, and stood in amazement as he saw her cross the river. He saw her coming in the moonlight and, arriving on the further bank, make the sign of the Cross over the river. She then walked across it as though it were dry land. When she had received Communion, she begged him to come again the following year to the same stream by which they had first met. Zossima went, and found her dead body there on that spot. Above her head in the sand was written: 'Abba Zossima, bury in this place the body of the humble Mary. Give dust to dust. I passed away on April 1st, on the very night of Christ's Passion, after communion of the divine Mysteries.' Zossima learned her name for the first time, and also the awe-inspiring marvel that she had arrived at that stream the previous year on the night of the same day on which she had received Communion—a place that he had taken twenty days to reach. And thus Zossima buried the body of the wonderful saint, Mary of Egypt. When he returned to the monastery, he recounted the whole story of her life and the wonders to which he had been an eyewitness. Thus the Lord glorifies repentant sinners. St Mary is also commemorated in the Fifth Week of the Great Fast. The Church holds her up before the faithful in these days of the Fast as a model of repentance. She entered into rest in about 530.

**St Meliton, Bishop of Sardis** - A well-known pastor of the Church in the second century, he was a man of great learning and laboured to codify all the books of Holy Scripture. He laboured also in meekness and devotion to bring peace to the Church in Laodicea, involved in a quarrel about the celebration of Easter. Apart from this, he defended Christianity against the pagans. He travelled to Rome in about 170, bringing a written apologia on the Faith and the Christian Church to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. St Meliton, this learned, devout and zealous man, entered peacefully into rest in the Lord in about 177.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyrs Gerontius and Basilides; Venerable Macarius the Confessor of Pelecete; Venerable Procopius of Sazava; Martyr Abraham of the Bulgars on the Volga; Venerable John of Shavta, bishop of Gaenati, Georgia; Venerable youth Gerontius, canonarch of the Kiev Caves; Venerable Euthymius, archimandrite of Suzdal; St. Pachomius, archbishop of Roman and Galați, Moldavia; Venerable Barsanuphius of Optina; New Hieromartyr Sergius Zavarin, priest; St. Macarius, Schema-bishop, confessor ; Righteous Achaz; Martyr George of Samos.

**2 / 15 April — Our Holy Father Titus the Wonderworker** - He conceived a love for Christ from his earliest years, and despised the vanities of the world. For His sake, he left the world, went off to a monastery and received the angelic habit. With not a backward glance, he gave himself to the sober and narrow way of monasticism. Through great patience, he attained the two basic virtues of humility and obedience, and in these virtues he exceeded 'not only the brethren, but all men'. He preserved his purity

of soul and body right from his youth. In the time of the iconoclast heresy, he was seen to be a steadfast pillar of the Church of God. For his great humility and purity, he was endowed by God with the gift of wonderworking, both in his lifetime and after his death. And when he went to the Lord, he left a large number of disciples behind him. He entered peacefully into rest in the 9th century.

**The Holy Martyrs Amphianus, and Edesius** - These two young men were blood brothers from the city of Patara of distinguished but pagan parents. While they were studying the secular sciences in the city of Beirut, they were enlightened by the Spirit of God, and acknowledging the falsehood of paganism, discerned the truth of Christianity. When they returned home they could no longer live with their pagan parents and kinsmen and secretly fled to Caesarea in Palestine to the presbyter Pamphilius, renown for his sanctity and spiritual learning. With Pamphilius, they studied the Law of God day and night and practiced Christian asceticism. It is said of Pamphilius that he was twenty years old according to the flesh but, in understanding and generosity, he was a hundred years old. When a persecution began during the reign of Maximian, many Christians fled the city and hid themselves. Others, willingly and rejoicingly, gave themselves into the hands of the persecutors in order to suffer for the Name of Him, Who first suffered for them. Amphianus was among the latter. Unafraid, he entered a pagan temple where Prince Urban was offering sacrifices to the idols, grabbed the prince by the hand which was holding the sacrifice and cried to him to refrain from serving and making sacrificial offerings to dead idols and to acknowledge the True God. Some of the pagans who heard these words and witnessing the great courage of Amphianus, repented and embraced the Faith of Christ. The enraged prince subjected Amphianus to torture. Among the other tortures, they wrapped the legs of Amphianus with cotton and set them on fire. When he remained alive, they tossed his body into the sea with a stone around his neck. The sea became turbulent and hurled his martyred body back into the city. At first, Edesius was sent to a cooper mine in Palestine and was later taken to Egypt. In Alexandria, Edesius was filled with holy zeal against a certain Prince Hierocles who, in the market place, assembled Christian nuns, maidens and virtuous women and handed them over to the most shameful perverts for derision. Edesius, filled with holy zeal, struck the disgraceful prince. For that, he was tortured and drowned in the sea as was his brother Amphianus. As two innocent lambs, they were sacrificed for Christ about the year 306 A.D. and were translated to the glorious mansions of the Lord.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyr Polycarp of Alexandria; St. Nicetius of Lyon; Venerable George of Atsquri, Georgia; St. Sabbas, archbishop of Sourozh; Venerable Gregory of Nicomedia.

**3 / 16 April — St Nicetas the Confessor** - He was born in Bithynia, in the town of Caesarea. His father, Philaret, losing his wife, became a monk. Nicetas remained with his paternal grandmother. After he had grown up and finished his schooling, he went to a monastery in Midikion, where Nicephorus, the abbot, tonsured him as a monk. After seven years of toil and asceticism, he was ordained hieromonk by Patriarch Tarasius. After the deaths of Nicephorus and Nicetas's great friend, Athanasius, the brethren chose Nicetas as abbot, much against his will. St Nicetas was a holy example of life and asceticism to his brethren for many years. But when Leo V, the Armenian, came to the throne, following the devout Empress Irene and the pious Emperors Nicephorus and Michael, the iconoclast heresy sprang up again. The Emperor deposed Patriarch Nicephorus and sent him into exile, and in his place put a heretic, Theodotus Cassiteras, a man of impure life. Nicetas was imprisoned and tortured, but remained unwavering in his Orthodoxy. He was taken from prison to prison and tortured by hunger and thirst, by cold and heat and malice. But he remained utterly unwavering. A certain Nicolas pestered him particularly with his derision and malice. But one night the dead father of this Nicolas appeared to him in a dream and said: 'Leave that servant of God alone!' From that moment Nicolas repented, and not only refrained from pestering him but prevented others doing likewise. When the Emperor Leo the Armenian had made an evil end, the throne passed to the Orthodox Emperor Michael Balbus, who freed all the Orthodox sufferers. Nicetas retired to a lonely place near Constantinople, where he spent the remaining days of his earthly life in prayer and thanksgiving to God. When he died, his body was taken to his monastery and, during that journey, many of the sick, on touching his body, were healed. His relics were placed close to the graves of his spiritual father, Nicephorus, and his friend Athanasius. This great hierarch entered into rest in 824.

**The Holy Martyr Ulphianus** - a young man from the city of Tyre. He suffered for Christ at the hands of Urban, the mayor of the city of Tyre, who also was the torturer of Amphianus [April 2]. Finally, he was tied in a sack along with a dog and a snake and tossed into the sea. He suffered and was glorified in the year 306 A.D.

**Also commemorated this day:** Martyrs Elpidephorus, Dius, Bithonius, and Galycus; Martyrs Cassius, Philip, and Eutychiuss of Thessalonica; Virgin-martyr Theodosia of Tyre; Martyrs Evagrius, Benignus, Chrestus, Arestus, Kinnudius, Rufus, Patricius, and Zosimus at Tomis in Moesia; Venerable Burgundofara of Faremoutiers; Venerable Nectarius of Bezhetsk; Venerable Illyrius, wonderworker of Mt. Myrsinon; 'The Unfading Bloom' Icon of the Mother of God.

**4 / 17 April — Our Holy Father Joseph the Hymnographer** - He was born in Sicily of devout and virtuous parents, Plotinus and Agatha. After the death of his parents, he moved to Salonica, where he became a monk. As a monk, he was an example to all in fasting, restraint, ceaseless supplication, psalmody, vigils and toil. The Bishop of Salonica ordained him hieromonk. The famous Gregory of Decapolis, visiting Salonica, loved Joseph with heart and soul for his rare character, and took him back with him to his monastery in Constantinople. When the flame of iconoclasm sprang up again under Leo the Armenian, Joseph was sent to Rome to call the Pope and the Roman Church to battle for the true Faith. But pirates captured him on the way and took him to Crete, where he was kept in prison for six years by the heretics. Joseph rejoiced that he was made worthy to suffer for Christ, and thanked God constantly, regarding the iron chains with which he was bound as golden ornaments. In the sixth year, around Christmas, the wicked Emperor was murdered at the morning service in church. At the same moment, St Nicolas appeared to Joseph in the prison and said to him: 'Get up and follow me.' Joseph felt himself lifted up in the air, and found himself all at once in Constantinople. His arrival was a source of rejoicing to all the Orthodox faithful. He composed Canons and hymns for many of the saints. He had the gift of insight, because of which Patriarch Photius made him spiritual father and confessor to his priests, recommending him as 'a man of God, an angel in the flesh, a father of fathers'. In great old age, he gave his soul into the hands of the God he had served so faithfully in work and song. He died peacefully on the eve of Holy Thursday in 883.

**The Holy Martyr Pherbutha** - During the reign of the Persian Emperor Saborius, St. Simeon, the bishop, was slain. At the wish of the empress, Pherbutha, the sister of Bishop Simeon, was taken to the palace. Pherbutha was exceptionally beautiful and because of that many suitors thronged to her among whom were many pagan priests and soothsayers. Pherbutha rejected them all and provoked much anger against herself. At that time, the empress became ill and all the pagan priests explained to the emperor that the empress was poisoned by Pherbutha and, as a cure for the ailing empress, they recommended the following: that Pherbutha, her sister and their slave, as Christians, be sawn and that three parts of their bodies be placed on one side and three parts on the other side and that the empress should be borne between them. The emperor agreed to the recommendation of these blood-thirsty pagan priests. Pherbutha, together with her sister and their slave, suffered for Christ in the year 343 A.D., thereby earning the incorruptible wreath in the eternal kingdom of their Lord.

**Our Holy Father, the Martyr Nicetas** - a Slav from Albania. As a monk of the Holy Mountain (Mt. Athos), he went to Serres where he debated with the Mullahs about religion. Being that they could not overcome him with reason, the Turks subjected him to torture under which Nicetas, the holy one, died and gave up his soul to his God in the year 1808 A.D.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Venerable George of Mt. Maleon; Venerable Zosimus of Palestine, who found Venerable Mary of Egypt; Venerable Joseph the Much-ailing of the Kiev Caves; Venerable Theonas, metropolitan of Thessalonica; Venerable Zosimus of Vorbosomsk ; Venerable James of Galich; New Hieromartyr Benjamin (Kononov) and Nicephorus (Kuchin) ; New Hieromartyr Nicholas, bishop of Velsk, and Nun-martyr Maria (Lelyanova) of Gatchina; Hieromartyr John Vechorko, priest; Martyr John Kolesnikov; Venerable Elia (Makeevsky); 'The Life-Giving Spring' or 'Gerondissa' Icon of the Mother of God.

**5 / 18 April — The Holy Martyrs Agathopous and Theodulus** - The first was a deacon and the second a reader in the Church in Salonica; the first adorned with the white hairs of age and the second with the chastity of youth. In the time of Diocletian's hunting of Christians, these two were summoned for trial. They went there joyfully, and, each holding the other by the hand, went in crying: 'We are Christians!' The whole court's urging them to deny Christ and worship idols was in vain. After long imprisonment and starvation, they were condemned to death by drowning in the sea. Their hands were bound behind them and a large stone tied to their necks, and they were taken off to be drowned. When they went to throw Agathopous into the depths, he cried out: 'Lo, by a second baptism we are washed from all our sins, and will go cleansed to Christ Jesus!' The sea quickly threw their drowned bodies onto the shore, and Christians gave them burial. St Theodulus appeared to his friends in the form of a shining angel in white raiment and commanded them to distribute all his remaining goods to the poor. These great soldiers of Christ suffered with honour under the Emperor Diocletian and Faustinus, the governor of Salonica, in the year 303;

**Our Holy Father Mark of Trache** - also called "Mark the Athenian" because Athens was the place of his birth. His parents died after he completed his higher education in Athens. He thought to himself that death, even for himself, was unavoidable and that one should sufficiently prepare beforehand for that honourable departure from this world. Distributing all of his possessions to the poor, he sat on a plank in the sea and with a tenacious faith in God's help, prayed that God direct him wherever He wills. God, in His Providence, protected him and brought him to Lybia (or Ethiopia) to a mountain called Trache. Mark lived an ascetical life on this mountain for ninety-five years, seeing neither man nor beast. For thirty years, he waged a violent combat with evil spirits and suffered from hunger, thirst, frost and heat. He ate

dirt and drank sea water. After thirty years of the most vehement suffering, the defeated demons fled from him and an angel of God began to bring him food daily in the form of bread, fish and fruit. St. Serapion visited him before his death and, afterward, made known the miraculous life of Mark. Mark asked St. Serapion: "Are there any Christians in the world now, who, if they were to say to this mountain, 'Arise from here and hurl yourself into the sea,' would it be so?" At that moment, the mountain upon which they stood moved in the direction of the sea. Mark raised his hand and stopped it. Such was the miracle-working power which this man of God possessed. Before his death, he prayed for the salvation of mankind and then gave up his soul to God. St. Serapion saw angels as they bore Mark's soul and he also saw an extended hand from heaven which received it. St. Mark lived to be one-hundred thirty years old and died about the year 400 A.D.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Venerable Publius of Egypt; Venerable Theonas, Symeon, and Phorbinus of Egypt; Venerable Mark of Athens; Venerable Plato the Confessor, abbot of Studion Monastery; Venerable Theodora of Thessalonica ; Translation of the relics of St. Job, patriarch of Moscow; Martyr George of New Ephesus; Martyr Panagiotes of Jerusalem; New Hieromartyr Alexis Krotenkov, priest; New Hieromartyr Nicholas Simo, priest.

**6 / 19 April — St Eutychius, Patriarch of Constantinople** - Born in Phrygia of devout parents, he was the son of an officer. Once, Eutychius was playing with some other children of his own age, their game being to write their names on a wall and put beside them the rank that they reckoned they would have in life. When Eutychius' turn came, he wrote: 'Eutychius—Patriarch!' He became abbot of a monastery in Amasea at the age of thirty, and ten years later the Metropolitan of Amasea sent him to the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 553 as his representative. At the Council, he shone like a bright star among the Church fathers, both for his learning and his devotion. When a quarrel arose about whether heretics could be anathematised after their deaths or not, he supported his belief that they could by citing III Kings (A.V. I Kings) 13:1-8, and IV Kings (A.V. II Kings) 23:16. He became greatly liked by both Emperor Justinian and Patriarch Menas. The Emperor very frequently turned to him for advice, and Menas (at that time very rich) designated him his heir and asked the Emperor to ensure that this happened. And so it came to pass. Eutychius governed the Church in peace for twelve years. But then the devil raised a storm against him. This storm reached the Emperor Justinian himself. The Emperor was deluded and fell into the Monophysite heresy of Aphthartodocetism, which taught the falsehood that the Lord Jesus, before the Resurrection, had a divine and uncorrupting body, not feeling hunger or thirst or pain. Eutychius stood firmly against this heresy, for which the Emperor sent him into exile to his first monastery. There Eutychius lived for twelve years and eight months, being shown to be a great wonder-worker, healing people of various diseases by his prayers and by anointing with holy oil. Justinian repented and died, and his successor, Justin II, called Eutychius back to the patriarchal throne, on which this saint remained till his death, governing the Church of God in peace. In 582, at the age of seventy, he went to the Kingdom of Christ the Lord; the Lord whom he had served so faithfully and courageously all his life.

**The One Hundred and Twenty Martyrs in Persia** - When the Persian Emperor Sapor plundered the lands of Byzantium, he enslaved one-hundred twenty Christians. Since his attempts to persuade them to deny Christ and worship fire proved to be in vain, the emperor tossed them into the fire and burned them alive. Among those martyrs, were nine virgins dedicated to God. They all suffered honourably between the years 344 A.D. and 347 A.D. and took up habitation in the mansions of Christ the King.; St. Govan of Cornwall.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyrs Jeremiah and priest Archilias of Rome; Venerable Platonida (Platonis) of Syria; Venerable Paul of Studion Monastery; Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Methodius, archbishop of Moravia, enlightener of the Slavs; Venerable Gregory of Mt. Athos; Martyr Nicholas of Lesbos; St. Aphonios, bishop of Novgorod; Martyr Paul the Russian; Hieromartyr Gennadius of Mt. Athos; New Martyrs Peter Zhukov and Prohor Mikhailov; Hieromartyr John Boikov, priest; New Hieromartyr Jacob Boikov, priest; Venerable Sebastian, confessor of Karaganda.



## ‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

**Monday** - Matthew 21:18-43 (Bridegroom Matins Gospel); Matthew 24:3-35 (Gospel)

**Tuesday** - Matthew 22:15-23:39 (Bridegroom Matins Gospel); Matthew 24:36-26:2 (Gospel)

**Wednesday** - John 12:17-50 (Bridegroom Matins Gospel)  
Matthew 26:6-16 (Gospel)

**Thursday** - Luke 22:1-39 (Bridegroom Matins Gospel); 1 Corinthians 11:23-32; Matthew 26:2-20; John 13:3-17; Matthew 26:21-39; Luke 22:43-45; Matthew 26:40-27:2; John 13:1-11 (At the Washing of the Feet, Gospel); John 13:12-17 (After the Washing of the Feet, Gospel)

**Friday** - John 13:31-18:1 (Matins, 1st Passion Gospel); John 18:1-28 (Matins, 2nd Passion Gospel); Matthew 26:57-75 (Matins, 3rd Passion Gospel); John 18:28-19:16 (Matins, 4th Passion Gospel); Matthew 27:3-32 (Matins, 5th Passion Gospel); Mark 15:16-32 (Matins, 6th Passion Gospel); Matthew 27:33-54 (Matins, 7th Passion Gospel); Luke 23:32-49 (Matins, 8th Passion Gospel); John 19:25-37 (Matins, 9th Passion Gospel); Mark 15:43-47 (Matins, 10th Passion Gospel); John 19:38-42 (Matins, 11th Passion Gospel); Matthew 27:62-66 (Matins, 12th Passion Gospel); Galatians 6:14-18 (Royal Hours - 1st Hour); Matthew 27:1-56 (Royal Hours - 1st Hour); Romans 5:6-11 (Royal Hours - 3rd Hour); Mark 15:16-41 (Royal Hours - 3rd Hour); Hebrews 2:11-18 (Royal Hours - 6th Hour); Luke 23:32-49 (Royal Hours - 6th Hour); Hebrews 10:19-31 (Royal Hours - 9th Hour); John 18:28-19:37 (Royal Hours - 9th Hour); 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2; Matthew 27:1-44; Luke 23:39-43; Matthew 27:45-54; John 19:31-37; Matthew 27:55-61

**Saturday** - 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 (Matins, Epistle); Galatians 3:13-14 (Matins, Epistle); Matthew 27:62-66 (Matins, Gospel); Romans 6:3-11; Matthew 28:1-20

### Holy Week.

Small Compline is served with a special triode from the Triodion, and in the evening Matins of Great Monday is served. At this Matins the Church calls us to meet "the beginnings of the passions of the Lord," to "accompany the Lord on the path to Jerusalem with purified mind and deadened passions," to "be crucified with Him and for His sake die to the sweetness of life," in order to "live with Him." At this Matins, after the "Alleluia," the compunctionate troparion, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh at midnight" is sung thrice, "slowly and with strong voice, evenly and with sweet singing." Then follow three kathismata with sedalia after each. The third sedalion is followed by the exclamation, "And that we may be vouchsafed the hearing of the holy Gospel..." and a Gospel is read containing an account of the deeds and words of the Lord in the last days of His earthly life, not long before His sufferings upon the cross, and in particular of His outstanding parables and discussions regarding the end of the world and His second coming. Throughout all of Holy Week the Menaion is completely suspended, and the entire service is performed according to the Triodion alone. The services for the saints from the Menaion which fall during Holy and Bright weeks are read ahead of time, throughout the duration of Great Lent, at Compline. Instead of a full canon, only a triode is read (on Great Tuesday, only a diode) from the Triodion, with the refrain, "Glory to Thee, O God..." On each of these days, up until Great Thursday, after the small litany, "slowly and with sweet singing," a compunctionate exapostilarion is sung: "I see Thy bridal chamber adorned, O my Savior, and I have no wedding garment that I may enter in. Illumine the vesture of my soul, O Light-giver, and save me."

The divine services are performed according to this outline on the first three days of Holy Week — Great Monday, Great Tuesday, and Great Wednesday. However, each of these three days has its own special commemorations, and its own liturgical hymns and readings of corresponding content.

On Great Monday we recall the chaste Joseph, sold into Egypt by his brothers out of envy, as a prefiguration of Christ, and the Lord's curse of the barren fig tree, as a prefiguration of the Jewish synagogue, which condemned the Lord to death.

On Great Tuesday we recall the parable of the Lord concerning the ten virgins, the talents, the second coming of the Lord, and the last judgment.

On Great Wednesday we recall how the sinful woman anointed the Lord in Bethany, in the house of Simon the Leper, and the betrayal of Judas which took place immediately thereafter. In the hymns the deed of the repentant harlot and of the disciple-betrayer are movingly and edifyingly compared. On Tuesday and Wednesday Great Compline is served; the vesture for these first three days is black, as for mourning.

On Great Thursday we recall the Mystical Supper, the humility of the Lord, expressed in His washing the feet of His disciples, and the establishment of the mystery of His Body and Blood. The Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is combined with Vespers, similarly to the way in which this occurs on the eves of the Nativity of Christ and of Theophany. Three prophetic lessons are read, followed by a small litany, the Trisagion, and then the Liturgy as usual, at which, instead of the Cherubic Hymn and the Communion Verse, during communion, and instead of, "Let our mouths be filled...", we sing, "Of Thy mystical supper, O Son of God, receive me today as a communicant; for I will not speak of Thy mysteries to Thine enemies, neither will I give Thee a kiss, as did Judas; but like the thief do I confess Thee: remember me, O Lord, in Thy kingdom." There is a special dismissal: "May He Who in His surpassing goodness..." (At this Liturgy, if it be necessary, reserve gifts are prepared for the communion of the sick).

### **The Passion Gospels:**

On Great Friday we commemorate the holy and saving passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who for our sake willingly endured spitting, beating, blows, mockery, and death on the cross. The night of Great Friday is thus appointed to be passed in the hearing of the Gospel concerning the passion of Christ. The account of the sufferings of Christ is depicted, in chronological order, in twelve readings, taken from all four Evangelists. These readings continue throughout the entire duration of Matins of Great Friday, which is performed on Great Thursday evening, beginning by Ustav at the second hour of the night, i.e. seven o'clock in the evening. This Matins thus has a special name: The Order of the Holy and Saving Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- 1) Jn. 13:31-18:1 (Farewell conversation of the Savior with His disciples and His high-priestly prayer for them).<sup>5</sup>
- 2) Jn. 18:1-28 (the Seizure of the Savior in the Garden of Gethsemane and His suffering at the hands of the high priest Annas).
- 3) Mt. 26:57-75. (Suffering of the Savior at the hands of the high priest Caiaphas and Peter's denial of Christ).
- 4) Jn. 18:28-19:16 (Suffering of the Lord in the court of Pilate).
- 5) Mt. 27:3-32 (The despair of Judas by the new suffering of the Lord by Pilate and the judgment for His crucifixion).
- 6) Mk. 15:16-32 (Leading the Lord to Golgotha and his suffering on the cross).
- 7) Mt. 27:33-54 (The continuation of the narrative about the Lord's suffering on the cross, the wonderful signs accompanying His death).
- 8) Lk. 23:32-49 (The Prayer of the Savior on the cross for His enemies and the repentance of the wise thief).
- 9) Jn. 19:25-37 (Words of the Savior from the cross to the Theotokos and Apostle John and the repetition of the narrative of His death and perforation).
- 10) Mk. 15:43-47 (Removal of the body of the Lord from the cross).
- 11) Jn. 19:38-42 (Participation of Nicodemus and Joseph in the burial of the Savior).
- 12) Mt. 27:62-66 (Posting of the guards at the tomb of the Savior and the sealing of the tomb).

The service for Great Saturday is a reverent vigil at the tomb of the Lord. On this day is commemorated the Lord's resting in the tomb and His descent into Hades. At the seventh hour of the night, by Ustav, or about At the seventh hour of the night, by Ustav, or about midnight by our reckoning, Matins of Great Saturday is served. Today it is often performed in the evening on Great Friday. At this service, immediately after the Six Psalms, "God is the Lord" is sung, followed by the troparia, "The noble Joseph...", twice; Glory: "When Thou didst descend unto death, O Life Immortal...", Both now: "The myrrh-bearing women..." Then the seventeenth kathisma, "Blessed are the blameless," is sung, at which after each verse of the kathisma a short hymn is sung or read, called the funeral lamentations, in which the dead and buried Lord is glorified. This is, as it were, a funeral lamentation over the Divine Departed. During this the royal doors are opened, the clergy go out into the center of the temple to stand before the shroud, and a full censuring of the whole temple is performed, beginning at the shroud.

The Liturgy of St. Basil the Great on Great Saturday is performed later than on any other day of the year, "at the tenth hour of the day" by ustav, which by our reckoning is after three o'clock in the afternoon. Before it begins the usual Third, Sixth, and Ninth Hours with the Typica are performed, with the troparia and kontakia of Great Saturday. The Liturgy itself begins with Vespers, which already relates to the

following day, i.e. Sunday; hence, at Vespers triumphant resurrectional hymns are joined to the hymns for Great Saturday, specifically the first four stichera at "Lord, I have Cried" in the first tone. After "O Gentle Light" the prokeimenon is not said; rather, "Wisdom" is immediately exclaimed, followed by the reading of fifteen lessons containing prophecies concerning the redemption of the human race, accomplished by the death of the Son of God.

Following the reading of the sixth lesson the triumphant refrain, "For gloriously has He been glorified," is sung, and after the fifteenth lesson, the refrain of the three youths: "O praise the Lord and supremely exalt Him unto all ages." Instead of the Trisagion hymn, "As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia" is sung, in commemoration of the baptism of the catechumens, which in ancient times was appointed on Great Saturday. After the reading of the Gospel, which explains the significance of the mystery through which we are buried with Christ and arise with Him unto a new, sinless life for God, instead of the usual "Alleluia" the refrain, "Arise, O God, judge the earth, for Thou shalt have an inheritance among all the nations," is sung with the verses of Psalm 81. During this singing all the clergy in the altar remove their black garments and vest in white or resurrectional vestments. In the same way the hangings on the holy table, the table of oblation, and all the analoys are changed, so that nothing black should remain in the temple.

After the Liturgy follows the blessing of the bread and the wine (the same prayer is read as that for the Litia, but without mention of "wheat and oil"). The bread and the oil are blessed that the faithful might be strengthened, since in ancient times, after this Liturgy, which finished late (in the Ustav it is stated: "The ecclesiarch must take care, that when the Liturgy finishes it should be the second hour of the night"), the faithful did not depart to their homes, but remained in the temple, listening to the reading of the book of the Acts of the Apostles, right up until the Paschal Matins. By Ustav the book of Acts should be read entirely by the fourth hour of the night, i.e. ten o'clock at night, at which time the "Paschal Midnight Office" is appointed to be read — a service which is given no name in the Typicon, and which consists of the reading of the opening prayers, the canon of Great Saturday — "In the waves of the deep" —, the Trisagion through "Our Father," the singing of the troparion, "When Thou didst descend unto death, O Life immortal...", a short augmented litany (as at Small Vespers), and the resurrectional dismissal. During the ninth ode of the canon the clergy, having censed the shroud, carry it into the altar and lay it upon the holy table, where it lies until the leave-taking of the feast of Pascha.

*Archbishop Averky, Liturgics*