

Help me, for me to resurrect you!

Christ emptied Lazarus's tomb, and He will at some point also empty our own tombs, without asking us. The resurrection of our dead bodies will occur without our consent. The resurrection however, of our soul, cannot occur by force. It presupposes our wholehearted own "yes" to Christ's calling. Christ is standing at our door and knocking, awaiting for us to open for Him. Whoever opens for Him, does it freely. He opens for Him, because he believes that He is coming "in the name of the Lord". He believed that God His Father sent Him, in order to save us from corruption and death.

He came in order to grant us the only real life, eternal life. And the true life is for us to believe and to feel with all our being, that He alone is the true God, the only genuine source of life, of truth and of undetractable joy. Let us also unite today our glorification together with the pure voices of the children, who are praising Him in Jerusalem. And let us call Him every day to become the King of our life and to resurrect our souls.

Archim. B. L.

SUNDAY APRIL 1, 2018 PALM SUNDAY, MARY OF EGYPT, Gerontios & Vasilides the Martyrs, Euthemios of Suzdal

tone of the week : *Second Tone*

EOTHINON : *Tenth Orthros Gospel*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's Letter to Philippians 4:4-9*

GOSPEL READING: *John 12:1-18*

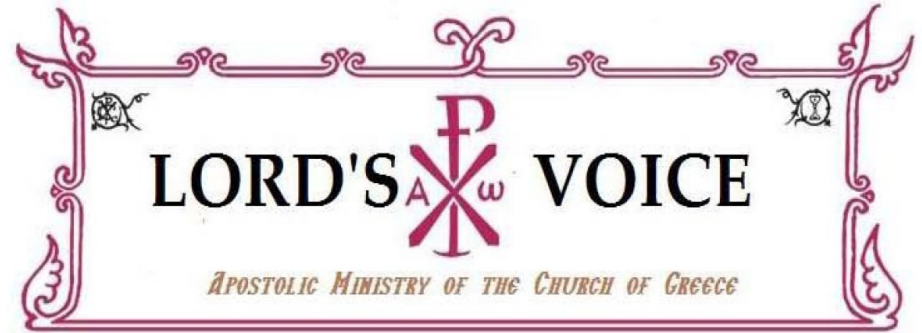
NEXT SUNDAY, APRIL 8, 2018 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA. *The Holy Apostles of the Seventy Herodion, Agabus, Rufus, Asyncritus, Phlegon, and Hermes, Rufus the Obedient of the Kiev Caves, Celestine, Pope of Rome, The Holy New Martyr John the Ship-BUILDER who was martyred in Kos.*

EPISTLE READING: *Acts of Apostles 1:1-8*

GOSPEL READING: *John 1:1-17*

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66TH YEAR APRIL 1 2018 PAMPHLET #13 (3383)

WITH PALMS OR WITH CLUBS?

Yesterday we celebrated the resurrection of the friend of Christ, Lazarus. Christ – probably for the first and last time in His life on earth – comes to a cemetery, to the cemetery of one of His closest friends, Lazarus. Martha and Mary, his sisters, together with all of Bethany, are there and are crying. Christ is shaken by their dirges. He hurts for the death of his friend. And He sheds tears.

Do the tears have an end?

Yes, Christ sheds tears! God descended to our cemeteries, and He sheds tears. Finally, God is not so far away.

He came in order to cry at the tomb of someone, whom He called his "friend." However, the Lord of glory did not only descend for this reason to the "valley of our tears". He came, in order to stop the tears, not only of Martha and of Mary, but also the tears of the entire world. Thus a troparion of the feast tells us: "having shed tears upon a friend, you ceased the tears of Martha, Oh Compassionate One. And by your voluntary passion, you took away every tear from the face of your people".

Christ stopped the tears of Martha and Mary yesterday, exercising His divine authority upon death. Today He comes to Jerusalem, in order to stop the tears of the entire world, with the utter humility of His voluntary passion and of His own death.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 12:1-18

Six days before Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus 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, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said "Why was this ointment 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 as he had the money box 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 he 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 comes in the name of the Lord, even 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 him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

Yes. The ceasing of the tears and our tortures will be the fruit of His

own, not simply pain, but crucifactory death.

Hosanna or let him be crucified?

He knows that He is coming to Jerusalem to be sacrificed. "He comes to slaughter, voluntarily". Not only does He know it. He longs for it. And so for this reason, not only is He coming but He is "hastening". "He hastens". He is in a hurry to reach the passion. Sitting on a foal, He hastens to come upon the passion." Most people did not realize, unfortunately, for where He is running. And they are preparing a gold-adorned throne for Him. They believed in Him rather as an earthly secular king. Christ however, knows that they themselves, a few days later, will capture Him, in order to nail Him upon the "Throne" of the Cross. "With branches having previously hymned, with clubs they captured afterwards..." today they are hymning and glorifying Him, holding the palms. The day after tomorrow, they will be blaspheming Him and will be judging Him, because He dared to make himself God.

Why, what else did the Jews want to see, in order to believe that He is the Son of God? Who else resurrected a dead person, who had started decomposing, four days in the tomb? What else did the victor of death have to do, in order to take us out of the tombs of our disbelief? There's why Christ, entering today into Jerusalem on a little donkey, continues crying. The people may be praising Him and glorifying Him, but He, within Him, continues the mourning, which set out yesterday in the tomb of Lazarus. Just that today He is not crying for the dead, who are in the tombs, but for those who are walking, supposedly "alive" outside of the tombs. He is crying for them who do not believe in His divinity and see Him only as a teacher of love or a social reformer.

He is crying also for us, who only in the "storms" remember Him and call Him saying "blessed is He who is coming", whereas on the "sunny days" we forget Him and – not rarely-crucify Him with our sins. The one day, we give Him promises of eternal faith, and in a little while, we "sell Him" for something that lured us. Often even for less than thirty silver coins.