

three chief passions intertwine into many others, with a different combination, “a clinical image” we would say, in every person.

A classic example of lust for power is the desire of the two disciples who we are commenting on here. Judas is a classic example of avarice, whereas Herod is a classic example of pleasure-loving. These examples with their unending variations and their combinations characterize us all, as group “guilty archetypes”, as we say in the language of pastoral psychology.

Torture and witness

Christ, in speaking to the two disciples about the martyrdom of blood, depicted the journey of each Christian, who if he wants to live, like Him, ought to confess in each facet of his life, whether he is following the path of blessed marriage, or that of the blessed monastic celibacy.

The time of spectacular martyrdoms, at least on a mass scale, as occurred in the years of the persecutions, where merely the quality of being a Christian sufficed for one to be persecuted everywhere in the empire, has passed. Without us giving amnesty to many current circumstances of wild persecutions, today’s struggle of the Christians is tantamount mainly with that which we call a bloodless martyrdom of conscience. The Christian carries the light yoke of Christ, he fights with the weapons, which the Church places at his disposal against the triple evil, the world, the flesh and the devil, facing many times the bitter comments and the mockery, even the enmitous behavior of the world which wholly “lies in wickedness” (1 Jn. 5:19). Sometimes the battle becomes merciless. Governments, legislations, means of mass communication, worldwide mechanisms are enlisted, in order to wound the Church and the Christians. Although sometimes some people, fortunately very few, end up deserters, the majority of Christians struggle decisively and win, because Christ himself is standing, their glory and boast, at the rudder of the Church. And the infallible mouth of Christ declares definitively and irrevocably, that “the gates of hades shall not prevail against her” (Mt. 16:218). It seems sometimes that the noetic boat of the Church is storm-tossed, giving the impression that she will be drowned, but she is always preserved. Founded on the blood of her martyrs and on the rock of the saving confession, that Christ is the Son of the living God, she kneads, adopts, alters the world, making man a temple “making him incorrupt in a manner befitting God very much”, as we chant.

Humility

Man then feels his divine descent, a megacosm, whereas simultaneously he lives his “nothingness”, his zero-ness, his microcosm and fervently desires everyone as better than he to serve them: a “servant of everyone” (Mark 10:44), according to the model of Christ, Who came to serve, not to be served, giving his own life as a ransom.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, April 13, 2014 Palm Sunday, Martin the Confessor, Pope of Rome **TONE OF THE WEEK:** First Tone, **Ninth Eothinon,** **EPISTLE** St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 4:4-9, **GOSPEL** John 12:1-18

NEXT SUNDAY April 20, 2014 Great and Holy Pascha, Theodore the Trichinas ,Zacchaeus the Apostle of Caesaria Gregory & Anastasios, Patriarchs of Antioch.**EPISTLE** Acts of the Apostles 1:1-8, **GOSPEL** John 1:1-17



62nd Year

APRIL 13, 2014

PAMPHLET #15 (3176)

THE ROYAL ENTRY OF CHRIST INTO OUR HEART

Six days before Pascha, beloved brethren, Jesus comes to Bethany, invited to a supper. Lazarus was also there whom He had resurrected the previous day. Lazarus’ sisters, were also there, Mary, who was serving at table, and Mary, who anointed the feet of the Lord with myrrh and wiped them with her hair. Jews were also present because they had learned about the resurrection of Lazarus and they wanted to see him from up close. Their high priests in any case had such envy against Jesus, that they wanted to kill Lazarus to wipe out the testimonials of the miracle, the witness of the resurrection.

Judas, envying Christ mortally, protested for the squandering of the myrrh, supposedly, out of interest for the poor, while it was proven that he was holding what was put into the “money box”, being unworthy of the trust which the Lord showed him. His “interest” in the poor was being done for the legitimate covering of his true feelings for Jesus.

The entry into the city of Jerusalem

The next day Christ enters into Jerusalem sitting on a colt. The crowd is shouting “Hosanna”, whereas by Holy Friday they will have switched and will be seeking “let him be crucified”. It was the rulers who were swaying the people to change opinion, fearing that the Lord’s popularity would deprive them of their own popularity. Furthermore the secular viewpoint which they had about the Messiah, was very far from the truth. The Prophets were remaining incomprehensible to them, when they were speaking about the entrance of the king of Jerusalem “meek” and “sitting upon “a colt the foal of an ass” (Zech. 9:10). The colt becomes a model for every Orthodox person in the following sense: he enthrones Christ, he becomes obedient in the direction which He gives him each time and remains indifferent to the cries of the multitude. Let us also accompany brethren, Christ, in His entry to the great city, noetically shaking the “palm branches” in other words, recognizing that in His person death was completely defeated, and

Palm Sunday

The Gospel of John 12:1-18

Six days before Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazaros was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Lazaros 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 Lazaros, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazaros 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 Lazaros 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.

spreading out our clothes for Him to pass over them, in other words, recognizing that the virtues and the gifts which adorn each one of us belong to Him.

Let's enthroned Christ in our hearts, let's completely obey His commandments, being completely indifferent to the insults of the multitude of the thoughts from the right and the left, which attack our heart from the side, imitating the "train of thought" of the colt.

The viewpoints about Christ

Some consider Him a social revolutionary who opposed violence and social injustice and not being able to do otherwise was killed, again due to social injustice. Others again believe that God-Christ is patient- until He takes fire and completely burns up the impious ones. All these are insults of their own soul's world and nothing more.

Christ is the Son of God-He became man to make man a God by grace. He died voluntarily on the cross and resurrected from the dead. He is the founder of the Church, who continues His work in history. Whoever believes in Him, lives in other words, the ecclesiastical manner of life, defeats death in His person and the Birth, Teaching, Betrayal and Capture, Crucifixion and Burial, the Resurrection and Ascension, but also Pentecost, become events of his personal history, as he constantly comes of age more in Christ. With His Second Coming He will come to take receive her.

Spiritual life

For one to understand all these things in depth, he must simultaneously be studying the Holy Scripture and the godbearing Fathers, alongside his correct participation in the saving mysteries of our Church. Then our Christ reveals Himself to him as personal God.

In the Church we offer the myrrh-breathing divine worship to God, through the services and the par-excellence mystery, the mystery of mysteries, the Divine Eucharist. Precisely as Mary with the myrrh and the tears worshipped Christ, thus we also with pain of soul for our many and varied falls, but also joy because a God of love was crucified and resurrected for us and puts up with us, let us offer sanctified and tear-drenched prayers to the King of glory, and let us resurrect like other Lazarus's, in the light of Christ.

Today's gospel passage prepares us, beloved brethren, to live the holy Passion of Christ and to favorably welcome His brilliant Resurrection in our hearts, so that we resurrect "in soul and body". Christ speaks very clearly to His disciples about all that will happen in Jerusalem, about all that He will undergo from the Jewish-Pharisaical establishment, tortures, mockeries, taunts, whippings, death, but He also speaks very clearly about His Resurrection.

Let's noetically transport ourselves also to Jerusalem, in a way pleasing to God, and let us accompany Christ. Furthermore it's not the place which takes us to God, but the way. Adam and Eve lost Paradise being inside it, whereas the three Children were living Paradise in the fiery furnace.

The spiritual state of the disciples of Jesus Christ

Nevertheless, the spiritual state of the two sons of Zebedee, of James and of John, doesn't help them to understand the things Christ is telling them. They obviously were seeing the Lord as a secular ruler who would show forth Israel, so for this reason they were also seeking honors and primacies. They didn't understand the words of Christ, since they had not yet received the Holy Spirit. He, on the contrary, spoke to them of afflictions, tortures and a baptism in His blood.

The same thing occurs with us many times, when we are studying, when we are praying, even when we are in the Divine Liturgy, where par excellence Christ is present through His Body and Blood, we are full of improper and disturbing thoughts, due to our bad spiritual condition.

The lust for power, pleasure loving, avarice are the three chief passions which rule in the gardens of the inner man, according to the teaching of our Fathers and this shows clearly in the three suggestions-temptations, which Christ received in the wilderness from the devil (Mt. 4:1-11). These