

The Lord is near, the Apostle Paul shouts thunderously, not only to the inhabitants of ancient Philippi, but to all Christians, of all centuries, of all ages! Don't settle down absorbed by earthly cares and temporal occupations of this age. Live a life worthy of the Lord's will. Don't face our Christ as something magical who will secure us an easy life and comfort in this life, don't call upon Him in the dimension of the here and now! His own logic is in the now and forever! His own perspective, passing by the time of temporal life, is in the unending eternity!

So for this reason, we also have every reason to have joy, to be lenient with all people, for daily life and its burdens to not choke us, but for us to pray with grateful thanksgiving making known simultaneously our requests to God, who already knows them. And thus the peace of God comes, whose perfection and goods the human mind cannot contain, in order to safeguard our hearts and thoughts, so long as we remain united with Christ.

But in the expectation of their Messiah, the Jews dramatically missed the mark! In the expectation of the Bridegroom of our soul, Christ, let us take advantage of the great opportunity of life, with the certain conviction that He is coming!

Archim. I. N.

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2015 PALM SUNDAY, *Monk-Martyrs Claudius, Diodore, Victor, Victorinus, and those with them, Theodora the Righteous of Thessaloniki, Agathopodes and Theodulos the Martyrs, George the new Martyr.*

tone of the week: Tone Two, Eothinon 10th Eothinon

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

GOSPEL *John 12:1-18*

NEXT SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2015 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA, *Basil the Confessor, Bishop of Parium, Anthoussa the Righteous of Constantinople, Akakios of Kavsoalyvia.*

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

GOSPEL *John 1:1-17*



63rd

April 5, 2015

Pamphlet # 14 (3227)

THE LORD IS NEAR

The panegyric atmosphere of Palm Sunday allows our Church to select today's Epistle Reading and to present it as a constant reminder, not of a historical event but of the certain expectation of all of us, that the Lord "is coming again with glory to judge the living and the dead whose kingdom shall have no end" ..

The welcoming of our Savior to Jerusalem is majestic and is described uniquely, both by the presented New Testament texts, as well as by the exceptional hymnology of Palm Sunday. Its echo is such, that it shakes up Jerusalem and hastens the decision of the Pharisees and the Scribes to finish once and for all with, the bothersome for them, Jesus. No one remains not participating or neutral in this event. Everyone places themselves, either hymning Christ, or raging against Him.

The moment of the Second Coming of the Kingdom of Glory in order to judge people is also described majestically by the prophetic texts. And this concerns the totality of humanity and no one can escape from it.

The opportunity

The Israelites awaited their Messiah for centuries. And unfortunately, influenced by the "mist of the ages", by the

St. Paul's Letter to the the Philippians 4:4-9

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

Psalm 117.26,1

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Verse: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His mercy endures forever.

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, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

historical adventures and secular happenstances, they reached the point of altering this awaiting and expectation of theirs into an inner worldly perspective, without a spiritual hope and dimension. Offended very deeply by the behavior of the conquerors at times, they used the prophetic texts which clearly speak about the Deliverer and Savior of humans, in order to interpret it in the dimension of political showing forth and their authoritative superiority over the other peoples. Three years of our Christ's public activity were not able to alter this mistaken interpretation. The unfolding of divine power through the action of so many

miracles did not end up a cause for glorifying God's loving approach towards fallen man, but it was interpreted completely narrow-mindedly and as a possibility of superiority over the Romans. Our Christ Himself was forced to denounce this, when He directly accused the Jews that they're not following Him because they love Him, or they accept Him as the Son of God, but because He satiated them in the desert, He healed their sick and resurrected their dead (Jn. 6:26)!

And again He gives them a final opportunity. He enters the Holy City triumphantly, not because He Himself pursued it, but because spontaneously the people and mainly "the children" are enthused and create all this glorificational atmosphere. What is Jesus' attitude? He is silent! He doesn't open his mouth to say one word! They are praising Him, and it's as if the shouts refer to someone else, He does not react at all! Because He does not go along with the reception of a king, a general, a ruler,, a leader, which they reserved for Him. He's not coming to Jerusalem in order to take it over, in order to prevail and to create an Empire. He's coming in order to be crucified, to voluntarily suffer and "give his soul as a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45). And with this silence He tries to make the Jews ponder, so that they are not awaiting all that they expect, but on the contrary to pay attention to everything He had told them and preached for so many years with them. And they again reject this opportunity also and conclude in "crucify him"! In the greatest crime which human history ever saw!

Our own opportunity

Christ also gives us many opportunities to approach Him, to live Him, to believe Him. The greatest opportunity of all is our own life. The fact that we're granted time of life upon earth is a gift of God with a specific goal. What is the goal? That we use this time to appear worthy of Christ and to obtain the quality of the citizen of the Kingdom of the Heavens.