

Homily For The Triumphant Entry of Our Lord Into Jerusalem
April 5, 2015

In The Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

Glory Be To Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Before suffering the passion, Our Lord took his chief Apostles, Peter, James and John to the top of Mount Tabor, where he allowed them to have a most awesome experience. He allowed them to be able to see the Uncreated light of God shine from Him. He did this so that when they would see Him crucified, they would know that He indeed was the Son of God.

This weekend, in a sense, our Lord has invited us to draw close to him, and experience a foretaste of His Glorious Resurrection. Yesterday, we witnessed the incredible Miracle of the Raising of Lazarus who had been dead for four days and whose body was beginning to decay. What an incredible sight it was to see Lazarus come forth from the Tomb, wrapped in the grave clothes like a mummy, raised from the Dead! And Today, we have seen our Lord, ride into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, to a hero's welcome. The children waved palms and branches, and others laid down their coats, all shouting Hosanna in the Highest, Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.

What a drastic change from the darkness and subdued nature of Great Lent. Like Peter, James and John at the Transfiguration, our hearts are filled with joy, and peace and grace, and the most fitting words that come to mind are *Lord it is good for us to be here!*

I love this verse of Scripture, Lord it is good for us to be here. Which is taken from the Gospel of Matthew 17:4. That is how I feel right now, and I know you do as well. It is good to be here in this beautiful little Church this morning. It is good to be here with all of you, the members of my spiritual family. It has been a good weekend, many, many confessions have been heard, many, many sins, lifted off your backs. Your faces are brighter, there is a sense of peace and joy radiating from you. This brightness is contagious – look are like a little flame in the darkness, that despite its size casts out darkness. You now have the power and toe duty to go out and bring light to a darkened world.

Last night at Vespers, there was a hymn that we sang over and over that is truly inspired by God: If you were here last night or if you have ever been to this vespers service, You will know exactly what it is.

Today, the Grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together, and we raise on high Your Holy Cross and exclaim: "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest.

This Hymn describes the atmosphere in this very Church today. The Holy Spirit has indeed gathered us together. The Holy Spirit has brought us together, it has transported us here from the desert of the Fast or the isolation of our homes, if we have not been in Church for awhile. By your responding to the call to repentance, and making a good confession and promising most sincerely to turn over a new leaf in your spiritual life, You have made your self open to the Holy Sspirit, you have invited Him in to transform you, and to unite you more closely to the Church and to one another. In a few minutes we will approach the chalice together. We will receive the Body and Blood of Christ and we will be united in a very deep spiritual way to one another. I love this time of year, there is so much strength and grace and peace here.

But much like in the way it was so many years ago when our Lord entered into Jerusalem, welcomed as a king on Sunday, only to be abandoned by Friday, so too, the evil one today is working very hard to disunite us, to tempt us to go back

to our old ways, oh so soon, and remove Christ from the center of our lives. Right now, He is in the center, He is the foremost person in our lives! Lets do all we can to keep Him there!

This week is the most Holy, Sacred, and Awesome week of the Church Year. It is the time when Our Lord needs us and we need Him the Most. It is an intense week. It is truly a HOLY week. Those who were able to attend the Lenten Adult Education Program this year on the meaning and significance of Holy Week, have gained a new understanding and I pray a new zeal to more fully participate in the spirit of the Week. As you know there are services here each day, twice a day even beginning on Wednesday. We have the opportunity to re-live and re-experience the Saving Passion, Death and Resurrection of our Saviour. For those who are physically able, there is no reason whatsoever why we can't make a serious effort to attend most if not all of the services. If you don't come, what are you doing instead? If you have nothing better to do than watch TV and sit on the couch, this is not an absence that is worthy of a blessing. By coming to the services, yes we have to make sacrifices of our time, and no it is not easy, but when you think about it , was Christ's sacrifice on the Cross any easier? I dare say not. I challenge you this year to come to more services than you have in the past. I ask you to stretch yourselves, go beyond what you have done. Don't be stubborn

and be content to do what you always have done, I have always only Gone on Holy Thursday Evening Good Friday and Easter Liturgy. I have never gone to Royal Hours, I have never gone to the Holy Thursday Liturgy, the Last Supper. Its way too late for me to come at Midnight Matins. Holy Saturday Liturgy, What's that, I've heard it is a very long service. Let us make it a no excuse year. Let us not lose the Grace of the Holy Spirit which we have gained today. Do you really want to say no to God and stay home, when it is possible for you to come? I do understand do to extenuating circumstances that it may not be possible for you to attend every service. If distance is a factor, and you live near another Orthodox Church, go there instead during the early part of Holy Week. Let us show our Lord how much we love him, by walking along side of him step by step. I guarantee you this, the more services you attend, the greater your joy will be on Easter. Those who are young and able, why don't you offer to pick up a parishioner who does not drive at night and bring them to a service. Can't come to Midnight Matins because you think it is too late for you? I ask you to remember Josephine and Andy and Helen of blessed memory, who were well into their 80's and the hour of the service never kept them away. Let us stay together and walk together this week. Nothing, Absolutely nothing should be more important. The bottom line is do the best you can, if you are not feeling well, no worries, just pray extra hard at home, keep the TV watching to a minimum, read the daily scripture

readings, think about what our Lord is doing and going through. And know that we will remember you in prayer.

Indeed the Grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together, here, today, and it is so good to be here with the Lord and one another. May we stay together, may the bond we share in our common reception of the Eucharist, remain ever strong as we walk on the road to Golgatha. May we remain faithful to our Lord, Jesus Christ, the King of Glory, Who so loved us that he gave his life for you and me.

Stay strong, know that I love you, and walk with me, help me as I also struggle this week to stay strong, offering these services in a manner befitting the goodness of the Lord.

Christ is in our Midst!